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A Comparative Analysis of Neoliberal Education Reform and Music Education in England and Ontario, Canada

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Graduate Program in Music
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy
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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NEOLIBERAL EDUCATION REFORM AND
MUSIC EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND ONTARIO, CANADA

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Stephanie Horsley

Graduate Program in Music

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

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Abstract

This study provides an account and comparison of the ways in which neoliberal education reform and resulting music education policy, implementation, and provision were enacted in and responsive to social, historical, and institutional influences in England under Margaret Thatcher's and John Major's Conservative governments (1979-1997) and in Ontario, Canada under Mike Harris' Progressive Conservative government (1995-2003). It traces how global neoliberal economic policy has influenced education reform across the developed world by exerting pressure to restructure schooling to produce knowledge workers in response to the global knowledge economy. Curriculum and assessment standards play a vital role in this process, as does the creation of accountability measures. A conceptual map of neoliberal education is employed to examine the ways in which the governments of England and Ontario reformed their respective systems of elementary and secondary state-funded systems of education in relation to the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education. Music education policy development, implementation, and provision in each state are then placed within the wider contexts of these reforms. This study finds that neoliberal education in England and Ontario and the resulting processes and outcomes of music education policy converge and diverge based on the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education present in education reform and the ways in which history, ideology, and politics intersect in each state. Thus, it provokes a re-examination of a reified concept of neoliberal education in favour of one that is more nuanced and responsive to the locations in which reforms occur. It also reveals how a comparative approach to music education research can both broaden and deepen our knowledge of foreign systems of education, while at the same time dispelling taken for granted assumptions, based on experiences with our own educational systems, about the nature of neoliberal education reform and its effects on music education. Recommendations for future research are suggested. Useful tools for future research in music education policy include a conceptual map of neoliberal education and an overview of the history of comparative education and its research approaches and methods.

Keywords: Globalization, Neoliberalism, Neoliberal Education, Education Reform, Knowledge Economy, Standards, Accountability, Music Education Policy, Policy Convergence and Divergence, England, Ontario, Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Mike Harris, Comparative Education

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List of Acronyms

ANAR	A Nation at Risk (United States of America, 1983)
APS	Assisted Places Scheme
AT	Attainment Targets (England)
CACE	Central Advisory Council for Education
C(L)A(S)P	Composing (Literature) Audition (Skills) Performance
CTC	City Technology Centre
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CSR	Common Sense Revolution (Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario)
DES	Department of Education and Science (England)
DSB	District School Boards (Ontario)
EKSD	End of Key Stage Descriptions (England)
EKSS	End of Key Stage Statements (England)
EQAO	Education Quality and Accountability Office (Ontario)
ERA	Education Reform Act 1988 (England)
CGE	General Certificate of Education
GMS	Grant-Maintained School
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (England)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISME	International Society for Music Education
KS	Key Stage
LEA	Local Educational Authority
LMS	Local Management of Schools
MWG	Music Working Group (England)
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NC	National Curriculum
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act (United States, 2001)
NDP	New Democratic Party of Ontario
NPM	New Public Management
OC	The Ontario Curriculum

OCTA	<i>The Ontario Curriculum, The Arts</i> (Grades 1-8, 9-10, or 11-12)
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education (England)
OSIS	Ontario Schools: Intermediate Senior
PC	Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario
PISA	Program in International Student Assessment
PoS	Programmes of Study (England)
PSBR	Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (England)
SAT	Standard Assessment Task (England)
SC	School's Council (England)
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (England)
SEAC	School Examination and Assessment Council (England)
TGAT	Task Group on Assessment and Testing (England)
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem: The Reification of Neoliberal Education Reform and the Isolated Nature of Music Education Policy Studies

Over the past decade, there has been an increasing demand for research on the effects of neoliberal reforms on all aspects of education policy in both developed and developing states.¹ In addition, a growing body of literature in the field of education has expressed the need for policy analysis aimed at uncovering how political power is exerted to construct “seemingly” value-neutral policy, that is, policy as a constructed representation of implied unanimous agreement of what is beneficial to all, but which in actuality privileges specific sectors of society and specific forms of knowledge for specific purposes.² When combined, these concerns give rise to a call to document the ways in which educational policies, including curriculum, are created in neoliberal regimes where the construction of the “well-educated” workforce and enterprising individual are framed as vital to a state’s success. These calls for investigation into the effects of neoliberal education reform have been taken up by relatively few music education researchers.³ This is somewhat surprising given the strong emphasis on “the

¹ See, for example, Robert A. Morrow and Carlos Albert Torres, “The State, Social Movements and Educational Reform,” in *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*, 2nd ed., eds. Robert F. Arnove and Carlos A. Torres (Toronto: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003); Michael Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, 3rd ed. (New York, Routledge, 2004); and Bernard Regan, “Campaigning Against Neoliberal Education in Britain,” *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies* 5, no. 1 (May 2007), e-journal, accessed June 5, 2008, <http://www.jceps.com/>.

² See, for example, Robert Doherty, “Critically Framing Education Policy: Foucault, Discourse and Governmentality,” in *New Directions in Educational Research*, eds. M. A. Peters and T. Besley. (New York: Peter Lang, 2007); David K. Cohen, Susan L. Moffitt, and Simona Goldin, “Policy and Practice,” in *The State of Education Policy Research*, eds. S. H. Fuhrman, D. K. Cohen and F. Mosher (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007); and Sandra Taylor, “Researching Educational Policy and Change in ‘New Times’: Using Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Journal of Educational Policy* 19, no. 4 (2004): 433-45.

³ Some examples include John Shepherd and Graham Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture: A Sociological Case Study of the Development of A National Music Curriculum,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 15, no. 1 (1994): 27-40; Janet Mansfield, “The Arts in New Zealand Curriculum: From Policy to Practice” (PhD diss., The University of Auckland, 2000); Michael Apple, “Competition,

problem” of neoliberal reform in much of the general education literature. One of the main purposes of this study is to add to the slowly growing body of research on the effects of neoliberal education reforms on public systems of music education. However, it also seeks to address two problems within the scant literature that so far exists. The first is a lack of clear conceptualization of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education reform* in favour of a reification of the term and an often heavily biased (though frequently uncorroborated) negative view of this political ideology. A sub-problem resulting from this lack of conceptualization is that many studies that have analyzed specific neoliberal educational policies fail to recognize them as such and thus do not place them within a wider political context of economic, social, and education reform. The second problem addressed by this study is a lack of comparative research on political ideology and music education, or—for that matter—the overall lack of comparative studies on state systems of public music education within the field of music education research. Comparative research can help us place such “problems” as neoliberalism into social and historical context, enabling us to uncover similarities and differences among systems of music education. This, in turn, can help us better understand our own systems of music education, including how they might or might not relate to other systems. To that end, this study began with and was guided by following six research questions:

- (1) What is neoliberalism?
- (2) What is neoliberal education?
- (3) How was neoliberal education conceived of and enacted by the governments of England and Ontario, Canada? How did the economic, political, and social contexts of each state affect these conceptions and enactments?
- (4) How were music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affected by and reflective of the socio-political and economic ends and values of neoliberal education as they were conceived of and enacted by their respective governments?

Knowledge, and the Loss of Educational Vision,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 11, no. 1 (2003): 3-22; and Cathy Benedict, “Chasing Legitimacy: The US National Standards Viewed Through a Critical Theorist Framework,” *Music Education Research* 8, no. 1(2006): 17-32. Further examples are discussed and critiqued below.

- (5) How did the established values and traditions associated with music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affect the ways in which neoliberal education reform was undertaken and enacted in these programs?
- (6) How can a comparative approach to these questions help shape and broaden our understanding of neoliberal education reform and its effects on music education?

These questions are addressed herein by first closely examining the concepts embedded within the terms *neoliberalism* and developing a conceptual model of *neoliberal education*. This model is then used as a framework through which to explore and compare education and music education reforms in England from 1979-1997 and the province of Ontario, Canada from 1995-2003.

The Reification of Neoliberal Education Reform and Its Effects on Music Education

A detailed conceptual map of the core concepts and variations of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* are provided in Chapters Three and Four. To provide abbreviated versions here would oversimplify the concept and thus fall into my own critique of not properly conceptualizing the term within a study on music education. However, it is worth noting that music education as a topic of study within the neoliberal context is particularly problematic. Music education can be regarded as situated both outside and inside of the goals of economic neoliberalism and its conceptual goals for education reform. That is, while music education is not strongly related to the acquisition of testable “core” subjects such as literacy, mathematics, and science,⁴ a utilitarian construction of music education can emphasize music education’s possible role in the acquisition of abilities related to creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and effective teamwork. In addition, music education can be conceived of as job training in its own right for future workers within the music and entertainment industries or as a means of creating consumers of music that may contribute to sustaining an economy reliant upon mass consumerism.

⁴ This is not to say that music as a school subject is not sometimes subjected to the same types of standardized testing regimes as math and literacy. However, music as a subject is not used as an indicator of educational “quality” in international testing programs, such as those undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

As stated above, one of the main purposes of this dissertation is to provide a clear, conceptual model of *neoliberal education* so that research regarding the effects of neoliberal education policies on publically funded, school-based music education can be viewed as existing both within a wider educational and political ideology and yet still responsive to the specific nature of each respective system of education. That is to say that the aim here is to deconstruct the reified notion of one dominant *neoliberalism* entity exerting the same hegemonic pressures on every system of education that adopts it as a guiding ideology and to help situate existing and future policy studies within a broader neoliberal policy framework. Jere T. Humphrey's alluded to addressing these problems in 2006. When accepting a Senior Researcher Award from MENC, he observed that "one thing that blurs our thinking is the employment of jargon words and terms in apparent attempts to appear scientific, erudite, or distinctive."⁵ Specifically cited as one such example of jargon beginning to surface in music education research is the phrase *global neoliberal policy environment*. Humphrey stressed that "excessive use of such language seems to be more about carving out an ideological niche than about precise thinking and communication."⁶ A year later, Randall Allsup emphasized the need to view the history of music education as a construction of meaning situated within a particular political context. From this perspective, music education can have multiple histories at multiple sites of engagement. He asserted that, "in the present day context of neoliberalism and conservative values, especially 21st Century American fundamentalism, we should do well to ask how—not whether—such a fundamentalist sensibility shapes our way of doing and knowing."⁷ Allsup's observation is quite relevant to this study; however, it is notable that his definition of the term *neoliberalism* is relegated to a one sentence endnote.⁸

⁵ Jere T. Humphreys, "2006 Senior Researcher Award Acceptance Address: Observations About Music Education Research in MENC's First and Second Centuries," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, no. 3 (2006): 189.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Randall Everett Allsup, "Extraordinary Rendition: On Politics, Music, and Curricular Meanings," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 15, no. 2 (2007): 145.

⁸ Ibid., 149. This footnote reads, "neoliberalism is a market-based view of human agency that celebrates human choice though individualism, competition, and consumption."

Such abbreviated definitions of “neoliberalism” are quite common in the music education literature. Admittedly, this may be in part due to length restrictions imposed by journal publications; however, there is also an air of assumption of an agreed upon definition of neoliberalism, as exemplified by the Allsup article above. Neoliberalism is treated as a reified object rather than a system of core theoretical and philosophical beliefs that must be adapted to the historical context of the nation states in which it is enacted. Tina Beveridge’s short article “No Child Left Behind and Fine Arts Classes” is a clear example of one such reified treatment.⁹ Beveridge examined the implications of the American neoliberal education legislation known as No Child Left Behind (2002) (NCLB)—discussed further in Chapter Four as a seminal piece of neoliberal education policy—on funding and scheduling music classes. However, her conclusions were based largely on conjecture and anecdotal evidence. Subtitles such as “Will NCLB ever ‘go away?’”¹⁰ indicate a strong bias against the legislation, which in itself was not placed within a wider context of economic, social, and education reform.

In many cases, this lack of attention to the meaning of “neoliberalism” is also found in longer form publications on music education, such as the dissertation. One of the clearest examples of this is Ladona Martin-Frost’s 2009 dissertation “Pedagogy and Politics in Bolivian Music Education at the End of Neoliberal Reform,” which explored the Bolivian federal government’s encouragement or discouragement of certain forms of music for study in schools during the 1994 Education Reform as way of transmitting acceptable notions of national sentiment.¹¹ Here, the complete description of neoliberalism occurred over two paragraphs, where the author negatively construed neoliberalism as undermining “social rights to education, health, and welfare” as part of an “international hegemonic regime.”¹² More content was dedicated to the effects of neoliberalism on education reform in a two and a half page section entitled “The Neoliberal State and Education Reform.” Much of this section, however, discussed the

⁹ Tina Beveridge, “No Child Left Behind and Fine Arts Classes,” *Arts Education Policy Review* 111, no. 7 (2010): 4-7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹ Ladona Beth Martin-Frost, “Pedagogy and Politics in Bolivian Music Education Reform at the End of Neoliberal Reform” (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2009), 19.

¹² *Ibid.*, 25-26.

1990 Children for All United Nations conference, which decreed that there was a need for international cooperation focused on improving elementary education for the purposes of improving economic and cultural development.¹³ Martin-Frost also observed that Bolivian education reform in the 1990s “followed the World Bank’s advisory board for education much more closely than its own national educators’ suggestions.”¹⁴ While these two events do represent the nature and process of neoliberal reform, this section tacitly assumes that readers are already aware of the nature of neoliberal education reforms and how the events in Bolivia “fit” into this assumed, negatively construed, ideology. No real definition of what neoliberal education reforms entail and how they are implemented is given.

Other longer form publications engage with various aspects of neoliberal reform and educational policy in greater depth, but do not actually situate their research within this context. In his dissertation, “No Child Left Behind: Determining the Impact of Policy in Music Education in Ohio,” Kevin Gerrity analyzed the effect that NCLB had on support for and implementation of music education in Ohio. Yet, surprisingly, this dissertation contains very little information about NCLB itself—what little it does contain addressed NCLB’s emphasis on accountability for schools to teach math and literacy as evidenced by test scores.¹⁵ This is a clear case of assuming that readers know the nature and content of an educational policy and of how it might affect music education through the narrowing of the curriculum. In addition, there was no link between the development of NCLB and the broader neoliberal reforms that underpin it, either at the state level (i.e., within the United States) or at the international level.

A more promising example of research on neoliberal policies on music education is Ron Kos’s dissertation “Incidental Change: The Influence of Educational Policy Implementation on Music Education Programs and Practice.” Kos examined the effects that the implementation of several policies, including NCLB, had on music education classes in Wisconsin. Specifically, he addressed the direct and indirect effects of these policies and concluded that, while they had no direct effect, their indirect effect was

¹³ Ibid., 37.

¹⁴ Ibid., 38.

¹⁵ Kevin Gerrity, “No Child Left Behind: Determining the Impact of Policy on Music Education” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2007), 3, 5.

substantial. As Kos pointed out, the study of indirect outcomes of educational policy on music education practices is rare.¹⁶ Kos also asserted that “there is little research directly linking high-stakes testing and music education” and that any such links are “suggested” rather than the result of evidence.¹⁷ His dissertation is a fine example of how we in the field of music education research can meticulously deconstruct educational policy and infer its impact on music education. Yet, the policies that he examined were not placed within the wider context of the global neoliberal reform movement and change.

One study that has effectively situated system-wide education reform within the neoliberal context is Daniela Bute’s dissertation, “The Challenges of Democratization, Globalization, and European Integration for Music Education in Romania.” More than any other publication in the (admittedly limited) field of music education policy research, Bute’s work supplies a philosophical and theoretical explanation of neoliberalism and its effects on a system of music education. Bute, however, focused mostly on the elements of neoliberalism that stress the individual rights over the group as a whole and their right to live free of state intervention except in the most extreme of circumstances. This is extended to the ideas of “the right of choice.”¹⁸ Bute also acknowledged the effect that the structure of government has in relation to the implementation of policies.¹⁹ Her final summary of the implications of neoliberalism on education is quite nuanced compared to other discussions of neoliberalism in the music education literature, in part due to her careful analysis of the roots of neoliberalism.²⁰ Yet, her dissertation remains firmly focused on educational policy change as affected by globalization and neoliberal reform in a single nation state—Romania—with only occasional connections to other systems of education.

This overview of a sample of the small pocket of research on neoliberal education reform and policy change reveals several theoretical problems and gaps in the music education research literature. The first, and perhaps most serious, is a failure to conceive

¹⁶ Ron Kos, “Incidental Change: The Influence of Educational Policy Implementation on Music Education Programs and Practices” (PhD diss., The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007), 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁸ Daniela Bute, “The Challenges of Democratization, Globalization, and European Integration for Music Education in Romania” (PhD diss., The University of Western Ontario, 2010), 39-40, 43-46, 71-73.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 83-88.

of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* as a collection of core beliefs that may be enacted in different ways when applied in different contexts. By failing to understand and explain the nature and possible varieties of neoliberalism in education reform, music education research runs the risk (as exemplified in some of the above studies) of oversimplifying and reifying neoliberalism and its effects on music education. Secondly, the above review reveals a tendency to approach specific instances of policy and their implementation as existing independently of a broader political movement—a movement that is enacted in different ways in different political states. The result of this is two-fold: (1) Policy is treated tacitly as existing in a political vacuum. That is, while the policy does reflect certain ideological views, those views are not deconstructed and placed within the economic, social, and political milieu from which they arose; and (2) there is an implication that the results of these studies can easily be transferred to other systems of education. This second concern is the focus of the next section of the research problem.

Music Education and Comparative Education

Calls for comparative studies in music education have been few. This is not to say that music education researchers have not been interested in how “other” systems of music education function or how we might improve systems of music education through the study of foreign practices. Indeed, this has been one of the primary goals of the International Society for Music Education (ISME), which was conceived of at a 1953 United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization sponsored conference in Brussels.²¹ However as “a worldwide organisation for music educators that seeks to celebrate the diverse ways that people engage with, and develop in and through, music,” ISME has focused more on facilitating the distribution and discussion of a “co-ordinated approach to providing international perspectives for music education.”²² ISME’s work, and that of most other music education researchers who have focused on collecting information on music education in various nation states, has largely focused on *international education* rather than *comparative education*.

²¹ International Society for Music Education, “The Birth of ISME,” *International Society for Music Education: General Information*, accessed February 14, 2012, <http://isme.org/>.

²² Anthony Kemp and Laurence Lepherd, “Research Methods in International and Comparative Music Education,” in *The Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning*, eds. Richard Colwell and Carol P. Richardson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 774.

Comparative education research is not the same as *international education* research, although the two do share common roots and are often confused with one another, in part due to the tendency of the goals in each respective field to support the other and often intertwine to form a sort of “nexus.”²³ Nelly P. Stromquist provides a concise—albeit limited—explanation of the differences between the two:

In general, comparative education emphasizes the understanding of the dynamics of educational change and seeks to detect patterns of change across countries. International education concentrates primarily on developing countries and endeavours to gear education to the improvement and building of nation-states.²⁴

These definitions were explored in more detail by David N. Wilson, who concluded that *comparative education* research is situated within a carefully chosen, systematic methodology and aims to “describe the role of education in the transforming process of social change.”²⁵ *International education*, which is *not* always focused on developing countries, is conceived of as being “melioristic,” having as its goals (1) producing current, systematic descriptions of “other” systems of education for a local audience or readership²⁶ and (2) promoting international understanding and cooperation between political and education leaders to support positive growth within their respective systems of education and, at times, those of others.²⁷ *International education* is conceived of by Wilson as concerning issues of practice and implementation, focusing on “the improvement of national educational systems by the addition of models, practices, innovations, and the like borrowed or transferred from other national educational systems.”²⁸ This includes cross-national comparisons of educational achievement, which

²³*The International Encyclopaedia of Education*, 2nd ed., comp. E. H. Epstein (Oxford: England, 1994), s.v. “Comparative and International Education: Overview and Historical Development.”

²⁴ Nelly P. Stromquist, “Comparative and International Education: A Journey Toward Equality and Equity,” *Harvard Educational Review* 75, no. 1 (2005): 89. Stromquist’s emphasis on international education as focused mainly on developing countries is unusual, though not rare, in the literature.

²⁵ R. Freeman Butts, “Civilization as Historical Process: Meeting Ground for Comparative and International Education,” in *Education in Comparative and International Perspectives*, ed. Kalil I. Gezi (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971), 17, quoted in David N. Wilson, “Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins? A Preliminary Genealogy of Our Twin Fields,” *Comparative Education Review* 38, no. 4 (1994): 482.

²⁶ Wilson, “Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins,” 454-55. Wilson stated that descriptions are not “pure” comparisons, but rather promote a natural comparison in one’s mind between the “other” system of education and one’s own.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 457-58, 482.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 452.

are essentially intended to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of systems of education and (as discussed in Chapter Four) to incite improvement in those who come up on the undesirable end of such comparisons. *Comparative education*, on the other hand, is framed as theoretical and academically-oriented, or “an intersection of social sciences, education, and cross-national study,”²⁹ meant to provide historical, philosophical, or otherwise interpretive explanations of how two or more educational systems have developed, responded to, and/or influenced societal change. The selection of the unit of analysis is usually governed by a particular problem and systems are chosen based on their similarities or differences, as explained further in Chapter Two. For example, this study examines how public systems of music education in England and Ontario, Canada were affected by and responded to educational policy introduced during a time of intense neoliberal economic, social, and educational reform in each respective state.

While this study and the reviewed literature focuses on state systems of education, it should be noted that comparative education need not take the nation-state or large geopolitical states and their systems of education as its basic unit of analysis. Mark Bray and R. Murray Thomas, for example, identified seven levels at which comparative education could be undertaken: (1) world regions/continents, (2) countries, (3) states/provinces, (4) districts, (5) schools, (6) classrooms, and (7) individuals. Researchers might also combine levels to create a “multilevel analysis.”³⁰ Bray and Thomas examine these levels of education within the framework of a methodological “cube” that also accounts for factors concerning “nonlocational demographic groups” (e.g. gender, race, and category of work) along one axis and “aspects of education and society” (e.g., school curriculum, educational financing, and political change) along another. The importance of their work is discussed further in Chapter Two.

Comparative and international education are conceived of as having separate goals and methods; however, they are grouped together (and often misinterpreted)

²⁹ Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, *Toward a Science of Comparative Education* (New York: MacMillan, 1969), 127, quoted in Wilson, “Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins?” 481. Noah and Eckstein’s ideas are discussed in further detail in Chapter Two.

³⁰ Mark Bray and R. Murray Thomas, “Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analysis,” *Harvard Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (1995): 475.

because of their close relationship to educational practice and outcomes.³¹ As Erwin H. Epstein stated:

International education, by setting the framework for observations of education in other countries, is the starting point for comparative education. Comparison gives meaning to the observations made possible by international education, by expanding the possibilities of analysis. To understand how and why something functions requires inquiry into the relationship among its parts. . . . Countless statistics [and descriptions] can be amassed on education in a particular country, but unless they are incorporated within a comparative framework, the analysis will be limited.³²

Returning to the work of ISME, most of the research undertaken by that organization and which is published in its journal, the *International Journal of Research in Music Education*, has focused on descriptions of single systems of music education as they relate to a geo-political state and can be described as *international* in flavour and intent; that is having the intention of sharing knowledge of foreign systems and of looking at “global issues” that affect music educators in many countries in the interest of finding common solutions.³³ Of the two publications found that expressly focus on the status and worth of comparative and international education research in music education, both emphasize the value of the international work done by ISME, yet reinforce the need for more purely comparative research in music education. The first, Anthony Kemp and Laurence Lepherd’s 1992 chapter in the *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* entitled “Research Methods in International and Comparative Education,” summarized the research in both fields and concluded that “very few music educators formally engage in either systematic comparison or cross-cultural comparison . . . The

³¹ This was reflected in the Comparative Education Society’s decision to change its name to the Comparative and International Education Society in 1968. Among the reasons given for this change were that “a change in name would bring together people different from the academics attracted by comparative education, would better describe the membership of the Society, and would provide a basis for special interests.” See Elizabeth Sherman Swing, “The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES),” in *Common Interests, Uncommon Goals: Histories of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies and Its Members*, eds. Vandra Masemann, Mark Bray, and Maria Manzon, (Comparative Education Research Centre, 2007): 5, accessed February 12 2012, <http://www.cies.us/history.htm>.

³² *The International Encyclopaedia of Education* s.v. “Comparative and International Education: Overview and Historical Development.”

³³ Kemp and Lepherd, “Research Methods in International and Comparative Music Education,” 774. Kemp and Lepherd refer to ISME’s commissions, which at the time had addressed the following global issues: community music, early childhood, mass media policy, music therapy and special education, research, schools and teacher training, and the education of the profession musician.

current problem in international music education is that very little attention is paid to the development of theory and comparative methods.”³⁴ The second publication, Philip Tate’s chapter in the 2001 book *Issues in Music Teaching*, entitled “Comparative Perspectives,” reached a similar conclusion:

Lepherd noted in 1992 that although international studies in music education have increased since the 1950s, systematic comparative study in the field was relatively underdeveloped—the same holds true today. . . . Such studies will have the potential to play an important part improving international music education practice in the twentieth century.³⁵

All three authors agree that, while the field of international education research is quite well-developed in music education, it needs to be supported by systematic, methodologically sound comparative studies that explore the contexts from which the data presented in international studies are derived. This, in turn, will facilitate the further development of international education research in music education³⁶ and help us to better understand the unique qualities of our own systems of education (described further below). Despite this, however, the chapter on comparative and international education was dropped in the 2002 edition of *The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* and arguments in support of comparative education research up to the present time remain sporadic and less well-defined than those of Kemp and Lepherd and Tate.³⁷

One of the other few notable examples of support for a comparative approach comes from an address by Frede V. Nielson in 2006. Although it applied to the advantages of taking a comparative approach to music education philosophy, it proves quite useful when explaining the benefits of conducting comparative research in music education. Musing that “A wise Danish educator introduced one of his classic texts with the passage: ‘To learn is to discover, especially to discover differences and similarities,’” Nielson concluded that “this also applies to the philosophy of music education and . . . a

³⁴ Ibid., 786.

³⁵ Philip Tate, “Comparative Perspectives,” in *Issues in Music Teaching*, eds. Chris Philpott and Charles Plummeridge (Oxon: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001), 234.

³⁶ Kemp and Lepherd, “Research Methods in International and Comparative Music Education,” 786.

³⁷ One example of this is found in a 2008 article in which the authors pose the question “why comparative research?” and respond with three short paragraphs, the first of which is introductory. See Pamela Burnard et al., “Inclusive Pedagogies in Music Education: A Comparative Study of Music Teachers’ Perspectives From Four Countries,” *International Journal of Music Education* 26, no. 2 (2010): 112-113.

comparative strategy is appropriate.”³⁸ By taking a comparative approach to music education philosophies, music educators may move away from considering the world strictly through “their” philosophy and be forced to “make implicit philosophies explicit.”³⁹ The failure to do so leads us to seek “affirmation on a normative, ideological basis.”⁴⁰ While Neilson was discussing philosophy, a similar sentiment can be applied to this analysis of broader political and social movements and how we understand them in a national or local context. As noted above, one of the concerns of this study is a narrow, reified view of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* as well as studies that imply their results can be easily generalized to other systems of music education. By understanding that the way we see the world is not the way that others do (i.e., that the way policy enacted in our realm may not be the way in which it is enacted elsewhere), we obtain a broader worldview and may be able to help us conceptualize “coping” with, or the “effects of,” policy in a new light. One factor Neilson focused on is the problem of transferring pedagogies (and I would argue policies) from one country to another, something that has often been promoted (or at least tacitly implied) in international approaches to music education. Using the Orff approach as an example, he asked, “What has happened for the very basis of this concept in the whole developmental process from the 1930s to today and, for example, in the transferring of it from Europe to North America (from a sphere of *Didaktik* thinking to a curriculum tradition)?”⁴¹ Neilson’s question touches on one of the primary assumptions of comparative education: that we should not expect systems of education, or, extending the idea, policy or political ideologies, to be successfully transplanted wholesale into new territories without accommodating for local values and traditions. Indeed, as Kemp and Lephed pointed out above, this is one area where the development of comparative education research in music education could strengthen the international research that has been—and will continue to be—undertaken.

³⁸ Frede N. Nielson, “A View on the Future of an International Philosophy of Education: A Plea for a Comparative Strategy,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 14, no. 1 (2006): 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

As discussed above, very few true comparative studies with a nation or geopolitical state's system of music education as the unit of analysis exist in the field of music education. There are, however, examples of studies that are framed as such by their author(s). One example is a study by Edgar Cajas, which compared the music teaching practices of elementary schools in Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica, including an analysis of current government support, teacher training, and hindrances and successful initiatives to implementing music education at the elementary level. Cajas selected these three systems of education because (1) they were well known to him through his personal experience, (2) they included music within their public education system (not all Central American countries do), and (3) they provided a "good cross-section of Central American music education."⁴² What is missing in his work in order to make it a true comparative study, however, is a discussion of the value of comparing these three systems; nor are the education policies and music education policies to which he refers in each country situated in any kind of wider context. Also, the findings for each country are reported separately, with no real comparative element.⁴³ Cajas's study, with its emphasis on documenting current practices and issues in music education in these three countries, is thus better identified as a work of international education research.⁴⁴

Norman A Haltmeyer's study, "A Comparative Analysis of Secondary Education and Music Education in the United Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States"—completed in 1969 during the cold war—also reflects the goals of international education and was "made with the hope of achieving new and better understanding of similarities and differences between American and Soviet methods of educating youth, and, more specifically, education as it relates to music."⁴⁵ Haltmeyer's work in describing music education, however, is situated within the tensions between Soviet communism and

⁴² Edgar G. Cajas, "Music Education in Central America: A Comparative Study of Educational Policies and Practices in Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica" (PhD diss., The University of Oklahoma, 2007), 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 191-121.

⁴⁴ Cajas states, "The assessment of the current conditions in music education in this region is the initial step towards changes and improvements. Results of this assessment will help define the needs, means, accomplishments, and perspectives of future research projects." *Ibid.*, 43. And while Cajas does present a clear and detailed description of how the data was gathered and analyzed, nowhere does he refer to any literature from the field of comparative education.

⁴⁵ Norman A Haltmeyer, "A Comparative Analysis of Secondary Education and Music Education in the United Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States" (PhD diss., University of Wyoming, 1969), 1.

American liberalism. Haltmeyer intended to create a current account of music education practices in order to facilitate international understanding. Yet, while he did not intentionally draw on theories of comparative education to do so, his discussions of the development, structure, and content of each country's public education and music education systems in response to their respective political ideologies, social values, and constitutional laws situate his description of the current state of music education in each state within the comparative goal of describing, "the role of education in the transforming process of social change."⁴⁶ Ultimately, the reader understands why each system of music education developed along distinctly different patterns in each country.

Other examples, such as Laurence Lepherd's *Music Education in International Perspective: National Systems*,⁴⁷ and Gordon Cox and Robin Steven's *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education: Cross-Cultural Historical Studies of Music in Compulsory Schooling*,⁴⁸ demonstrate a much clearer understanding of the nature and potential role of comparative education in music education. Lepherd, perhaps not surprisingly, gave a fairly detailed description of his methodological approach, which is quite absent from most of the comparative music education literature.⁴⁹ Both books are edited volumes that unite the work of various authors who described a particular national system of music education. Both begin with an introductory chapter that outlines key issues concerning music that each chapter author was asked to address. For Cox and Stevens, these were "historical and political contexts; aims and content of music as a compulsory subject; teaching methods; training of teachers; experiences of pupils" and any other thoughts the author might have had on how present music education has been influenced by past developments.⁵⁰ Lepherd's authors focused on the aims, administration, financing, structure/organization, curricula, and teacher training in each nation and the authors were encouraged to consider socio-economic, historical, and

⁴⁶ R. Freeman Butts, "Civilization as Historical Process," 33, quoted in Wilson, "Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins?" 482.

⁴⁷ See Laurence Lepherd, ed., *Music Education in International Perspective: National System* (USQ Press, Toowoomba, 1995).

⁴⁸ See Gordon Cox and Robin Stevens, eds., *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education: Cross-Cultural Historical Studies of Music in Compulsory Schooling* (New York: Continuum Publishing Group, 2010).

⁴⁹ Lepherd, *Music Education in International Perspective*, 10-11

⁵⁰ Cox and Stevens, *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education*, 3.

geographical influences on music education.⁵¹ However, both books limit active comparison between the nations to broad observations in their introductory chapters. There are no final chapters to draw comprehensive comparisons between the nations either in general, or, more surprisingly, in relation to the key issues that were put forth as part of each book's methodology.⁵²

James Herbert Lyon Jr. employed a comparative approach to address the general question, "can the study of music education practices in other countries of the world assist music educators in the United States in determining the essential focus of their instructional programs?"⁵³ After describing Brian Holmes's comparative education methodology and modifying it for music education research, he analyzed American and English elementary music textbooks from the 1950s and 1960s and discussed how their contents reflected "educational concepts deemed essential" to each country.⁵⁴ His analysis and data collection centred on ways in which the nature of man and music, the nature of general education and music education, and the social foundations of society and music are conceived of and interact in each nation.⁵⁵ The resulting analysis revealed how this interaction influenced the content of English and American music textbooks in terms of teaching musical concepts, processes, and functions, as well as performance considerations.⁵⁶ Lyon himself admitted that his conclusions may be perceived of as quite general, yet their very existence call into question the need to further examine and refine his conclusions on an area of research so far largely overlooked by the music education community. This might hopefully lead us to "become even more reflective of the norms and valuations of the society whose musical and educational practices are under

⁵¹ Lephherd, *Music Education in International Perspective*, 9-11. Lephherd's method is based on the ideas of Brian Holmes, whose methodology is discussed in Chapter Two.

⁵² Lephherd is an acknowledged early leader in this field of comparative music education, having co-authored the *Handbook* chapter discussed above on this topic and published several "comparative studies." In the interest of brevity, I have not discussed his earlier comparative research here, as it tends to follow this same trend of discussing methodology and collecting data on multiple systems of music education, yet never quite making systematic comparisons with the data collected. See Herbert's discussion of this same issue in James Herbert Lyon Jr., "An Ideal-Typical Approach to Methodology in Comparative Music Education" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1999), 55-57.

⁵³ Lyon Jr., "An Ideal-Typical Approach to Methodology in Comparative Music Education," 13.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 168-69.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 247-76.

examination.”⁵⁷ His knowledge of the history of comparative education as it relates to the development of one particular methodology and the systematic way in which he carried out his research makes Lyon’s work one of the few truly comparative research studies in music education.

Another well-executed comparative music education system study with the national-state as unit of analysis is Alexandra Kertz-Welzel’s 2008 “Music Education in the Twenty-First Century: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of German and American Music Education Towards a New Concept of International Dialogue.” Even in 2008, Kertz-Welzel acknowledged that comparative research in music education is “not completely accepted as an explicit field of research.”⁵⁸ Kertz-Welzel effectively demonstrated, through comparison grounded in the social and historical nature of German and American cultural and educational values, why we cannot assume that terms such as *aesthetic education*, *general music education*, *performance-based music education*, and *multicultural music education*, which appear to embody the same concepts, have similar meanings across different educational settings. Her main lesson for the reader was to consider how an international education approach to educational borrowing or sharing of ideas might be deeply (and negatively) affected without a systematic comparison of the socio-historical roots of educational concepts to more fully explain their meaning and purpose.

This review of some of the scant music education research presented under the banner of *comparative education* has revealed some common misconceptions regarding the nature of comparative education held by some music education researchers. It has also touched on the potential value that the field of comparative education may hold for music education (discussed further in Chapter Two) and shown two examples of how such an approach might deepen our understanding of both native and foreign systems of music education. In addition, it indicates some of the difficulties that may arise when we fail to understand the fundamental economic, social, and educational underpinnings that shape different conceptions of the nature and value of *music education*.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 285.

⁵⁸ Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, “Music Education in the Twenty-First Century: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of German and American Music Education: Towards a New Concept of International Dialogue,” *Music Education Research* 10, no. 4 (2008): 440.

Purpose of the Study

This study analyzes the philosophical and economic origins of twentieth century neoliberalism with the goal of tracing the influence of the origins of neoliberal education reform and policy. It compares the extent and effects of these reforms on the public systems of elementary and secondary education in England and Ontario, Canada, both in the wider context of their social and political roles and as they have affected education and, subsequently, music education within each state. This study illustrates the need to break down the more reified treatment of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* and instead construct them as a set of theoretical concepts that are enacted differently in specific systems of education, particularly as it relates to music education in primary and secondary state-funded systems of education. In doing so, it adds to the relatively small body of literature on music education policy and the effects of neoliberal policy on music education.

Seeking to fill this historical, conceptual, and theoretical gap, this study draws on Rachel S. Turner's conceptual model neoliberalism to build a conceptual model *neoliberal education*. The model in this study implies that the term *neoliberal education* is flexible rather than rigid; neoliberal education in public systems of education, specifically in public music education, can be quite varied despite the influence of neoliberalism's core values. In addition, the application of this model to music education in England and Ontario reveals that the effect of neoliberal educational regimes on public music education is not always a top-down process: neoliberal educational regimes (and thus the systems of music education within them) are also influenced by local economies, longstanding socio-political values and traditions, and individuals at the local level who are in positions of power. Using a comparative education approach, it seeks to break down the conventional historical meta-narrative of the (often times detrimental) effects of neoliberalism on music education in the late twentieth century (a meta-narrative that still affects many scholars and policy makers even today) by demonstrating how the political traditions, notions of the role of education, and other social and economics contexts of England and Ontario interacted with the four main core concepts of neoliberal education as described in Chapter Four to form unique varieties of music education policies, practices, and outcomes.

A secondary purpose of this study is to emphasize the need for and utility of a comparative education approach to music education research. By employing a comparative education methodology, it is hoped that this study can serve as one early example of the benefits of studying systems of music education comparatively.

Definitions

State The term *state* is drawn from modern definitions of the term, and indicates a geographical area with clear territorial boundaries and a recognized legitimate government that has the legal authority and means to enforce its laws.⁵⁹ In this study, states can be nation-states, such as England, the United States of America, or Canada. They may also be distinct geo-political territories within nation-states that are accountable to the federal laws of the nation in which they are situated, yet have a great amount of political autonomy over their own affairs. This includes provinces such as Ontario and individual states within the United States of America. Thus, the term *state* in this study is used interchangeably to refer to nations, provinces, and states.

System of Education The term “system” is understood as a “group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent components forming a complex whole.”⁶⁰ In this study, *system of education* refers to publically-funded, state-wide structures and institutions intended to develop, fund, provision, and implement a specific set of educational policies (including curriculum) in order to educate its citizens up to a state-specified age or level of achievement, which is usually 16 years or the end of secondary school. This is a narrow definition of the term; clearly it might also apply to privately-funded educational endeavours or to post-secondary education. However, it is tedious for both this author and the reader to repeat the term “publically funded state system of elementary and secondary education” throughout the study. Thus, I have abbreviated that description to *system of education* and made note of any instances where this definition has alternative meaning.

Policy John A. Codd defined policy as “any course of action (or inaction) relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation of resources. Fundamentally,

⁵⁹ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*, s.v. “state,” accessed December 14, 2010, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100528892>.

⁶⁰ Mark Bray and Jiang Kai, “Comparing Systems,” in *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*, eds. Mark Bray, Bob Adamson, and Mark Mason (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 126.

policy is about the exercise of political power and the language that is used to legitimate that process.”⁶¹ As noted below, it is not the intention of this study to execute a critical theory-style analysis of the effects of neoliberalism on music education in the two systems of education examined within. However, it would be remiss and naive not to observe that neoliberal policy is an extension of neoliberal reform, which, as a manifestation of a dominant neoliberal ideology, contains certain values and assumptions as to what the nature and purpose of education should be. For this reason and for the purpose of this study, *policy* is defined as possessing the following traits. It:

- outlines what can and should be done in regards to specific resources, ideas, and actions;
- is political and not value-neutral;
- seeks to institutionalize a set of norms; and
- manifests dynamics of power and control

Further, each of these four elements is related to specific philosophical, social, economic and individual contexts. They also occur or are enacted at multiple levels and in multiple contexts: for example, at the supranational, national, provincial, regional, and local levels, or through the lens of the policy makers, school board and school administrators, classroom teachers, and students. Thus, there is “hard” policy, or the policy as it is written, and “soft” policy, which is the policy as it is enacted. These two may be very different due to conflicting values at one or more levels of implementation.

Benefits of the Study

Music education in general has come relatively late to the field of policy research, particularly compared to the broader field of education, of which policy studies in general and studies regarding the effects of neoliberal reforms in particular have been a major area of research focus over the last twenty years. By presenting an history and analysis of music education policy and implementation in England and Ontario, this study contributes to the relatively small body of work on the effects of neoliberal education reform and music education.

⁶¹ John A. Codd, “The Construction and Deconstruction of Educational Policy Documents,” *Journal of Education Policy* 3, no.3 (1988): 235.

Chapter Four of this study provides an extensive conceptual map of *neoliberal education* and emphasizes the role of the state in interpreting and implementing neoliberal education reforms. It is, to my knowledge, the most systematic and detailed construction of the ideology of *neoliberal education* in both the education and music education literature. As such, it can serve as a conceptual tool for future research in both education and music education. This is particularly beneficial to the field of music education given the lack of a clear conceptualization of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* reform that is evident in current music education literature. It will also encourage researchers to place research on specific policies underpinned by neoliberal ideology within the broader context of this political reform movement.

Finally, this study builds upon the very small body of truly comparative research in music education and further demonstrates the need to embrace such an approach in the field of music education, particularly given our long history with international education projects.

Limitations

This study presents a conceptual map of *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* and applies it to pre-existing literature on music education in two states, as well as to information obtained and analyzed using data collection procedures associated with historical research. It is not the intention of this study to take a critical theory approach to the analysis of this data. While negative consequences to music education resulting from neoliberal reforms are uncovered and discussed, this study does not begin with the assumption that neoliberalism is essentially hegemonic in nature, as has been assumed in some of the research discussed above, although as a political philosophy it has exhibited hegemonic tendencies in particular settings. This is intended to counteract the pervasiveness of these assumptions in the existing literature. Instead, I have tried to be as objective as possible in connecting events in the public music education systems of England and Ontario during and after neoliberal economic, social, and education reforms. This more objective account is meant to provide a “bigger picture” of the effects of neoliberal education reform on music education that has resulted in both positive and negative elements in specific systems of education.

In addition, this study of each state is bounded by particular time frames. Although the effects of neoliberal education reform continue to be transmitted and “felt” in each of these two systems up to the present day, the comparative analysis of effects on music education in each state is confined to the historical period where the change was first enacted and the most immediate effects of this reform were felt, ending with a state-wide regime or leadership change. By bounding the analysis within the regime that instituted neoliberal reform, a more plausible case can be made regarding the effects of that regime’s change.

Study Outline

This study consists of nine chapters, beginning with the introductory Chapter One. Chapter Two discusses the research methodology used in this study, including an introduction and historical overview to the field of comparative education.

Chapter Three traces the development of the neoliberal ideology, beginning with the 18th century classical liberalism of Adam Smith. Using Rachel S. Turner’s idea of a “conceptual map” of *neoliberalism*, it explains how and why neoliberalism—like the policy it underpins—differs across specific political contexts and states. It draws on examples of major social and economic changes undertaken in England and Ontario, Canada that reflect the core concepts that unite all varieties of neoliberal reforms.

Chapter Four presents a conceptual map of *neoliberal education* and clear examples of how the concepts that support neoliberal education reform can converge and diverge when implemented in different systems of education

Chapters Five provides a detailed summary of neoliberal education reform in Margaret Thatcher’s and John Major’s England (1979-1997). Chapter Six begins with key developments in the history of music education in England before discussing the effects of neoliberal education reform on music education in England’s system of education and how past and (then) current conceptions of music education shaped those reforms in turn. Chapters Seven and Eight address the same topics as Five and Six, but in relation to Ontario, Canada during Mike Harris’ time as its premiere (1995-2003), respectively.

Chapter Nine employs comparative analysis as outlined in Chapter Two to discuss the points of convergence and divergence among these two systems of education. It finishes with reflection upon and evaluation of the processes of undertaking this comparative study, its benefits, and possible future research avenues in comparative education for the field of music education.

Chapter Two: Comparative Education and Research Methodology

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter One, comparative education as both an academic field and an approach to research has yet to be embraced by the field of music education and music education researchers.¹ Yet, comparative education has much to offer the field of music education: it provides an approach through which researchers can explore and contrast the development, implementation, and effects of broad societal ideas or problems as they have existed and continue to exist and influence various systems of music education.

Comparative education is considered both a method of inquiry and a frame of analysis.² As explained below, there is no “one way” of doing comparative education analysis because “different questions require somewhat different ways of answering those questions.”³ However, by employing a systematically conceived and constructed methodology, it is possible to utilize a comparative approach as a framework for an analysis that will both define the ways in which *neoliberalism* and *neoliberal education* affected music education in England and Ontario and contrast their effects in order to

¹ Arguments there were drawn from Anthony Kemp and Laurence Lephed, “Research Methods in International and Comparative Music Education,” in *The Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning*, eds. Richard Colwell and Carol P. Richardson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 786; James Herbert Lyon Jr., “An Ideal-Typical Approach to Methodology in Comparative Music Education” (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1999), 55-57; Philip Tate, “Comparative Perspectives,” in *Issues in Music Teaching*, eds. Chris Philpott and Charles Plummeridge (Oxon: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001), 234; Frede N. Nielson, “A View on the Future of an International Philosophy of Education: A Plea for a Comparative Strategy,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 14, no. 1 (2006): 9; and Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, “Music Education in the Twenty-First Century: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of German and American Music Education: Towards a New Concept of International Dialogue,” *Music Education Research* 10, no. 4 (2008): 440

² António Nóvoa and Tali Yariv-Mashal, “Comparative Research in Education: A Mode of Governance or a Historical Journey?” *Comparative Education* 39, no. 4 (2003): 424.

³ Val D. Rust et al., “Research Strategies in Comparative Education,” *Comparative Education Review* 43, no. 1 (1999): 89.

highlight their similarities and differences. The benefits of this approach are twofold: (1) this allows for the critical examination of a particular set of educational systems as they relate to the field of music education and (2) through highlighting the different ways in which neoliberal education reform has been enacted in multiple states, it challenges taken for granted assumptions regarding the effects of neoliberal reform on music education. As Nigel Grant has stated,

An international perspective can . . . provoke re-examination of some of our educational concepts (or slogans) like ‘standards,’ ‘discipline,’ indoctrination,’ ‘excellence,’ ‘leadership,’ ‘freedom of choice,’ ‘general culture,’ and so on. We are not always clear, however, what we mean by them, and one incentive to clarify our definitions is seeing how different they are elsewhere.⁴

A Brief History of Comparative Education

Comparative education as a modern field of study was established in the early 1900s and, since then, has undergone several significant paradigm shifts. Patricia Broadfoot quipped that, “comparative education could be accused of being a rather promiscuous field of study. Seduced, it seems, by any passing dandy, its future may be one of spoiled promise and ultimate destitution with no name to call its own.”⁵ Harold Noah and Max Eckstein attributed the field’s fragmentation to the fact that comparative education “has one foot firmly planted in pedagogy and the other in the wider area of the social sciences.”⁶ Patricia Kubow and Paul Fossum added that “comparative education serves as a device to mediate the relationships among the foundations of education (e.g., history, philosophy, and sociology) and to challenge [us] to consider the interplay of philosophical, historical, and sociological factors as [we] analyze the educational approaches of foreign cultures.”⁷ For this reason, Kubow and Fossum labelled comparative education a field, rather than a discipline, as it does not have a “rigorous

⁴ Nigel Grant, “Tasks for Comparative Education in the New Millennium,” in “Comparative Education for the Twenty-First Century,” special issue, *Comparative Education* 36, no. 3 (2000): 316.

⁵ Patricia Broadfoot, “Editorial: Post-comparative Education?” *Comparative Education* 39, no. 3 (2003): 275.

⁶ Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, *Doing Comparative Education: Three Decades of Collaboration*. (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, 1998), 19.

⁷ Patricia K. Kubow and Paul R. Fossum, *Comparative Education: Exploring Issues in an International Context*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall, 2007), 7.

adherence to discipline-specific inquiry.”⁸ It is this lack of adherence that Broadfoot initially problematized as “promiscuity.” She ultimately concluded, however, that the variety of approaches available to comparative educators can, when thoughtfully selected and applied, allow for

an engagement with the global currents of twenty-first century life; a rigorous blending of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in well-justified comparisons; a commitment to the quest for more general insights about how the key building blocks of education—culture, learning, power and technologies—work together in a context of constant change.⁹

Comparative education, then, has evolved into “a field that draws on a variety of disciplines to better understand the complexity of particular educational phenomena.”¹⁰ Ultimately, most researchers assert that the variety of approaches and methodologies from which comparative education can draw only strengthens the field because it can consider research subjects from multiple angles.¹¹ The implication for researchers, however, is that determining a study’s methodology can be painstaking in formulation *and* justification in order to avoid an eclecticism that both weakens our research and the field of comparative education as a whole.¹² In addition, the lack of a systematic methodology with which to compare not just educational outcomes but also the sociological foundations that underpin them usually results in international education research rather than comparative education research.

As this is one of the few studies to employ comparative education methods to music education research, a short history of comparative education is not remiss here; this provides an overview of the major purposes for comparative education and the paradigms and approaches (and the tensions between them) from which a researcher can draw. It also allows me to clearly situate this study’s research methods within a specific comparative education paradigm and set of approaches. This lack of such situating is often a concern in the field of comparative education.¹³

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Broadfoot, “Editorial,” 276.

¹⁰ Kubow and Fossom, *Comparative Education*, 7.

¹¹ See, for example, Timothy J. Martin, “Divergent Ontologies with Converging Conclusions: A Case Study Comparison of Comparative Methodologies,” *Comparative Education* 39, no.1 (2003): 105-17.

¹² Broadfoot, “Editorial,” 275-76.

¹³ Rust et al., “Research Strategies in Comparative Education,” 108.

The Traveller's Approach

Modern comparative education practices began in the mid-eighteenth century, although William W. Brickman noted that comparative education has been around as long as formal education has. He cited Xenophon's (c. 430-355 BC) comparison of Persia's superior education system with that of his native Greece as the earliest known example of comparative education writings.¹⁴ The first work published with an intent to outline a comparative method was Marc-Antoine Jullien's 1817 *Esquisse et Vues Preliminaries d'un Ouvrage Sur l'Education Comparative (Outline and Preliminary Views of a Work on Comparative Education)*. Jullien suggested that in order to compare systems of education, we must first collect facts about systems and arrange them for statistical and analytical comparison. These first attempts at developing a system of comparative education were categorized by António Nóvca and Tali Yariv-Mashal as the "knowing the other" stage of comparative education and were usually carried out by those interested in education reform.¹⁵ In many ways, they conform more to the goals of *international education* as they coincided with the rise of national systems of public education and the desire for nation states to know how other systems of education were structured, usually with the goal of improving one's own.¹⁶ During this stage, researchers generally visited other countries, collected factual data on systems of education, and reported back to their own government with the ultimate goal of "borrowing" ideas for their own systems of education.¹⁷ This is known in the field of comparative education as the *traveller's approach*. Notable "travellers" were Victor Cousins from France, who reported on the Prussian educational system in the 1830s; Thomas Wyse from England who reported on the Prussian and Swiss systems in the 1830s; Horace Mann from the Boston, Massachusetts Board of Education, who toured Europe in the 1840s and suggested that Boston adopt the Prussian system of Education; and Egerton Ryerson from Upper Canada (now Ontario), who also toured Europe in the 1840s and then used his

¹⁴ William W. Brickman, "Prehistory of Comparative Education to the End of the 18th Century," *Comparative Education Review* 10, no. 1 (1966): 31-32.

¹⁵ Nóvca and Yariv-Marshal, "Comparative Research in Education," 424.

¹⁶ See Chapter One, pp. 8-11 for a discussion of the differences and similarities of *comparative* and *international education*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

knowledge to begin building Ontario's public school systems based largely on ideas from Prussia, France, and Massachusetts. In music education, Lowell Mason's 1837 visit to Europe to investigate techniques and methods of teaching singing that might be introduced into Boston's schools and John Spencer Curwen's travels throughout Europe at the end of the nineteenth century for the same purpose within the English education system fall into the *traveller's approach* of early comparative education work.¹⁸

After World War I, accumulating and sharing such "encyclopaedic" knowledge of international systems was further emphasized as a method of building international understanding and cooperation.¹⁹ This eventually led to debate within the field of comparative education as to whether clearer definition needed to be made between *comparative* and *international* education. One result of this debate was the Comparative Education Society's 1968 change of name to the Comparative and International Education Society.²⁰

The Forces and Factors Approach

The emphasis on "knowing the other" so that ideas might be borrowed and implemented in one's own system began to be questioned in the early 1900s. English education reformer Michael Sadler (1861-1943) led the way with his 1900 seminal address and question, "How Far Can We Learn Anything of Practical Value From the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?"²¹ Sadler's concern was that comparative education examined the "how" of educational institutions without critically considering the "why" of how these institutions came to be the way they were and the ways in which they reflected and nurtured the unique elements of a state's character:

In studying foreign systems of education, we should not forget that the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the schools, and govern and interpret the things inside. We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if

¹⁸ Tate, "Comparative Perspectives," 227.

¹⁹ Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, *Toward a Science of Comparative Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 4.

²⁰ See Chapter One, fn. 31.

²¹ Michael Sadler, "How Far Can We Learn Anything of Practical Value From the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?" in *Selections from Michael Sadler: Studies in World Citizenship*, ed. J. H. Higginson (Liverpool: DeJall & Meyorre International Publishers, 1979), 48.

we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant. A national system of education is a living thing, the outcome of forgotten struggles and difficulties and "of battles long ago." It has in it some of the secret workings of national life. It reflects, while it seeks to remedy, the failings of the national character. . . . But is it not likely that if we have endeavoured, in a sympathetic spirit, to understand the real working of a foreign system of education, we shall in turn find ourselves better able to enter into the spirit and tradition of our own national education, more sensitive to its unwritten ideals, quicker to catch the signs which mark its growing or fading influence, readier to mark the dangers which threaten it and the subtle workings of hurtful change? *The practical value of studying, in a right spirit and with scholarly accuracy, the working of foreign systems of education is that it will result in our being better fitted to understand our own.*²²

I reproduce this quote at length here to emphasize the weight that Sadler's words are given in the field of comparative education. In this oft-cited excerpt, Sadler's article and work are credited with drawing attention to the importance of the socio-political context of education.²³ N6vca and Yariv-Marshal have labelled the era beginning around the 1920s and inspired by the ideas embodied in Sadler's words as the "understanding the 'other'" stage of comparative education.²⁴ It is more widely known in the field of comparative education as the era where the *forces and factors approach* rose in popularity, which is best exemplified in the writings of Isaac L. Kandel (1881-1965) and Nicholas Hans (1888-1969), and which enjoyed its highest popularity after WWII.

In his seminal 1933 book *Comparative Education*, Kandel eschewed strictly statistical comparisons of factual data such as educational costs, facilities, and pupil retentions, as well as more tenuous correlations drawn regarding the effects of national education on conceptions of "national welfare" and "progress," as impractical because the raw data collected were simply not uniform, given the unique context of each system. Two critiques of past attempts at comparative education that guided his work were that (1) "the attempt has rarely been made either to allow for differences in national environment or to build upon the basis of comparisons some general trends or principles" and (2)

²² Ibid., 49-50 (original emphasis).

²³ See, for example, J. T. Higgensen, "The Centenary of an English Pioneer in Comparative Education: Sir Michael Sadler (1861-1943)," *International Review of Education* 7, no.3 (1961): 286-298; Sol Cohen, "Sir Michael E. Sadler and the Sociopolitical Analysis of Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1967): 281-294; and David Philips, "Michael Sadler and Comparative Education," *Oxford Review of Education* 32, no. 1 (2006): 39-54.

²⁴ N6vca and Yariv-Mashal, "Comparative Research in Education," 424.

“there is a tendency for each nation to regard its own problems as unique, and, therefore, to regard the educational practices of other countries as inapplicable.”²⁵ Instead, he asserted that, because nations have all grappled with similar educational problems and questions, we stand to learn the most about their systems of education (and our own) by studying the traditions and cultures peculiar to each nation that have underpinned educational decisions and solutions to the problems faced by many nations.²⁶ Kandel listed twenty “problem” questions that comparative researchers might ask, many of which are still relevant today. In fact, the concept of *neoliberal education* has ideological responses to each of these questions. They include:

What are the factors which determine the character of an educational system?

What is the relation of the individual to society or the State?

What is the meaning of freedom in a constituted society?

Who shall have control of the education of the child?

What is the place of private education and of private schools?

How far does the responsibility of society or of the State for the education of its members extend?

What should be the curriculum in each type of school?

What is the meaning of equality of educational opportunity?²⁷

Kandel applied this mode of thinking to a comparative analysis of the public education systems and education reforms efforts of post-World War I England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the United States, all the while emphasizing that

the *forces* and *factors* outside of the school matter even more than what goes on inside of it. Hence the comparative study of education must be founded on an analysis of the social and political ideas which the school reflects, for the school epitomizes these for transmission and for progress.²⁸

Nicolas Hans situated his 1949 publication *Comparative Education: A Study of Factors and Traditions* within Kandel’s work. Hans is known for his strong emphasis on historical methods, stating that the first step of comparing any systems of education is “to study each national system separately in its historical setting and its close connection with

²⁵ Issac L. Kandel, *Comparative Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), xvii.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, xi, xv-xvi.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, xviii-xix.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, xix. (emphasis added).

the development of national character and culture.”²⁹ Indeed, he noted that in some systems this has already been done—not by comparative education researchers, but by historians and philosophers. While Kandel alluded that some historical consideration should be taken into consideration when addressing his questions as listed above, Hans was insistent that “only the study of [educational systems’] historical development and their functional role in the social life of a particular nation can give a true insight into their values and thus lead to a valid comparison.”³⁰ Hans’s argument was underpinned by his belief that a nation’s laws, institutions, and art are the “outward expressions of national character and as such represent the nation in distinction from other nations.”³¹ Only by understanding the *forces* and *factors* bound up in a nation’s collective history can we understand why educational institutions function as they do.

In more recent years, William K. Cummings has also spoken of understanding the forces and factors that influence a society as related to the *institutional approach* to comparative education. In this approach, the researcher analyzes educational systems or institutions using ten main premises. These include the overarching desire of educational institutions to produce their society’s ideal citizen (although these ideals may change over time); that notions of what should be taught and how it should be taught relate to the production of the ideal citizen; and that past ideals, particularly those from the time at which an educational system is founded, are often embedded in the system and continue to influence the implementation of new ideal and ideas.³² These ideals are embedded in and shaped by the history of location in which they exist.

The *forces and factors approach*, with its emphasis on the elements of educational systems and how they interact with the ideals of society in which they are embedded, is firmly entrenched in the *structural-functionalist* or *functionalist* theory of

²⁹ Nicholas Hans, *Comparative Education: A Study in Educational Factors and Traditions* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1949), 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

³² William K. Cummings, “The InstitutionS [*sic*] of Education: Compare, Compare, Compare!” *Comparative Education Review* 43, no. 4 (1999): 425-427.

society.³³ That is, it perceives society and its institutions holistically, with each element within the society working together to support the development of a stable society.

The Scientific Approach

The *forces and factors approach* has never truly been abandoned in comparative education research. It continued to be practiced by some who “bravely swam against the tide” during the era of the *scientific approach*.³⁴ However, the rise of increasingly reliable and sophisticated statistical methods, particularly in the field of economics and sociology, during the Post WWII era that were further supported by the ideological tensions of the cold war reshaped the field of comparative education in the 1950s and 1960s.³⁵ Although still concerned with how society and education interacted, this *scientific approach* differed from the *forces and factors approach* in that it sought to provide concrete data and solutions to educational problems through emulating the empirical research methods of social scientists, which were also rapidly rising in popularity at the time. Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, leaders in developing and advocating the scientific approach, eschewed the forces and factor approach, stating that it “quickly descended into a familiar circularity: national character determines education, and education determines national character. Where to break in to this perplexing circle was a question not easily answered.”³⁶ Instead, they proposed a method that would “use cross-national data to test propositions about the relationship between education and society and between teaching practices and learning outcomes.”³⁷ Noah and Eckstein argued that previous attempts at comparative education had been too subjective in nature: if comparative education was ever to become a productive and “recognized” comparative field such as literature, religion, and political science, it would need to streamline its methods and focus on producing unbiased research with practical applications.³⁸ These arguments and resulting

³³ *The International Encyclopaedia of Education*, 2nd ed., comp. R. G. Paulson (Oxford: England, 1994), s.v. “Comparative and International Education: Paradigms and Theories.”

³⁴ W. D. Halls, “Comparative Studies in Education, 1964-1977: A Personal View,” in “Comparative Education: Its Present State and Future Prospects,” special issue, *Comparative Education* 13, no. 2 (1977): 83.

³⁵ Noah and Eckstein, *Toward a Science of Comparative Education*, 6.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 82.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.

methods were embraced by many researchers in the 1960s and 1970s, leading to what N6vca and Yariv-Marshal have labelled the “construction of ‘other’” era of comparative research.³⁹ It was a time of systematic, scientific exploration of how “other” systems of educations functioned in response to measurable educational variables.

The comparative methodologies put forth by George Bereday and Brain Holmes are examples of scientific methodologies that received much acclaim and implementation in comparative education. In his 1964 book *Comparative Methodology in Education*, Bereday proposed the simultaneous comparison between two or more systems of education in two steps in what has been labelled the “problem approach” to comparative education. The first, *juxtaposition*, involved systematizing data collection in each system so that data could be grouped under similar headings or categories. He describes this as “preliminary matching of data from different countries to prepare them for comparison.”⁴⁰ At this point, the researcher formed a “tight and rigorous hypothesis . . . made in terms of what the assembled data are likely to permit one to prove.”⁴¹ The data collected is displayed visually, usually in the form of graphs or tables. This step reflects the process of descriptive statistics, where the data gathered is presented before inferential procedures are carried out to determine the validity of the hypothesis. This is not to say, however, that this approach to comparative education must be based on statistical data. Indeed, Bereday used the example of documenting cases of student demonstrations from various countries that appeared to have no common motivating factors to hypothesize that alienation is an underlying factor in all demonstrations, but that demonstrations will only take place if their leaders perceive “sufficient backing” of a large section of the student body.⁴² *Juxtaposition* is not meant to draw rigorous conclusions; rather, it exists to collect preliminary information from which researchers can determine if consistent comparisons can be made (i.e., to determine what is being

³⁹ N6vca and Yariv-Mashal, “Comparative Research in Education,” 424.

⁴⁰ George Z. F. Bereday, “Reflections on Comparative Methodology in Education 1964-1966,” *Comparative Education* 3, no. 3 (1967): 171.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, 174. Bereday’s proposed problem was whether or not student demonstrations in America have anything in common with those from other systems of education.

compared and if it is really comparable) and, if so, from which a hypothesis might be formulated.

Juxtaposition is followed by *comparison*, which can be either *balanced* or *illustrative*. In *balanced comparison*, all data on one educational system must be matched with the same type of data from other systems. Ideally, each set of data is discussed separately as it pertains to all countries rather than discussing all data collected for one country before moving on to the next.⁴³ Bereday believed that this approach allowed researchers and readers to immediately see similarities and differences in each system for each data set, thereby making analysis more precise, detailed, meaningful, and transparent. This increases the generalizability of any conclusions drawn.⁴⁴ *Illustrative comparison* on the other hand, is framed as far less desirable because it is not systematic, drawing mostly on intuition and “random examples” to support the researcher’s argument (rather than a hypothesis), “and as everybody knows, there are few points of view or values in educational theory and practice that cannot be supported by some examples.”⁴⁵ He did, however, see a place for such comparative work. Bereday acknowledged that a balanced comparison was not always possible when dealing with systems with vastly different social structures that cannot reasonably be compared or when studying specific social problems that are deeply grounded in a socio-historical context (such as race relations). In this case, *illustrative comparison* (and we may assume by this he means something approaching the *forces and factors* approach) can, at the very least, become “enriched and strengthened in depth by the back-up of comparative illustrations,” thereby salvaging “what would be otherwise an abstract or at least tentative and unrelated sociological analysis.”⁴⁶

Brian Holmes built on Bereday’s methodology in his 1965 book *Problems in Education: A Comparative Approach* and then extended his ideas further in his 1981 *Comparative Education: Some Considerations of Method*.⁴⁷ In his self-labelled

⁴³ Ibid., 175-76.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 176-77.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 178.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Recall from Chapter One, fn. 51 and p. 16 that Holmes’s method was the basis for both Laurence Lephed’s (ed.) *Music Education in International Perspective* and Lyon’s study, “An Ideal-Typical Approach to Methodology in Comparative Music Education.”

“problem(-solving) approach” Holmes asserted that educational problems arose from social change and thus should be addressed by theories of social change: “Models are needed if the processes of policy (hypothesis) formation, adoption, and implementation are to be analyzed and compared.”⁴⁸ Problems should be addressed by:

- (1) identifying a problem and thinking critically about if it might be solved, at least in part, through educational means;
- (2) identifying the educational structures that might affect the problem and developing a system of classification to collect data on them;
- (3) establishing “ideal-typical normative models” (discussed below) that can be used to place the aims and attitudes of a system’s actors into a social context that might explain how educational decisions are made and schools operate;
- (4) analyzing and comparing the formation, adoption, and implementation of policies in various systems; and
- (5) based on the work done in steps one through four, predicting “the outcomes of adopted policy or of possible outcomes of proposed policies.”⁴⁹

Holmes was emphatic that data collected should meet exacting standards, having stated that “nation-specific information is not difficult to obtain. It will be useful in comparative cross-national studies only if it fits into a general taxonomy that meets previously listed requirements.”⁵⁰ He stressed the importance of universal indicators that could be interpreted in the same way in each country and that data be collected from publically accessible, replicable sources, such as “constitutions, legislation, decrees, memoranda, and the recommendations of advisory boards.”⁵¹ Holmes proposed a set of five categories, which he universally defined, that researchers should consider when comparing systems of education: (1) administration, (2) finance, (3) structure and organization, (4) curriculum, and (5) teacher education.⁵² Data collected and assembled using these categories presents a detailed profile of the nation, making possible the *juxtaposition* stage necessary for true comparison.⁵³ The goal would be to then hypothesize how

⁴⁸ Brian Holmes, *Comparative Education: Some Consideration of Method* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 76.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 92-93.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 97-108.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 109. Holmes does not actually use the term *juxtaposition*.

changing one or more element in a system of education as they relate to these categories might result in a policy that solves the educational problem.

The data, however, needs to be situated in and interpreted through “ideal-typical normative models” for each system. These models are constructed for the culture in which a system of education exists and are meant to reflect the national character of a state. Holmes was clear that these models are not meant to stereotype or suggest that all members of a nation have the same ideals and values, but that they “offer a pattern of logically related normative statements and give coherence to the multiplicity of beliefs that may exist in the society or nation to which they refer.”⁵⁴ Ideal-typical models are built on a careful analysis of system-specific data on “educational, political, religious, and economic aims and theories accepted (or debated) by members of an organized community of individuals.”⁵⁵ Normative ideals can be categorized as addressing the society’s conception of the nature of man, the nature of society, and the nature of knowledge, and further broken down in normative beliefs on the sub-categories of politics, economics, religion, education, social structure, fine arts, law, and “other.”⁵⁶ As with the five categories on which educational data should be collected for comparison, data which is used to construct an ideal-typical normative model should be accessible, replicable, and appropriately chosen. Holmes’ reasoning for not undertaking a comparison of systems without first considering the ideal-typical normative models of each state and how it influences educational policy is closely related to the ideas expressed by Sadler and which underpin Kandel’s “problem questions.” Holmes believed that educational borrowing from or influence of foreign systems on education policy could not be effectively predicted if one did not consider the socio-cultural context of the original policy and how the system wishing to adapt that policy may or may not be successful, in this case as based on a comparison of one or more of the five educational categories described above and the general ideal-typical normative model of each culture.

During the height of its popularity, the scientific approach appeared to be well-suited for the political and education demands of the day. With its emphasis on theory

⁵⁴ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 114.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 116-17.

testing and attempts to build universal laws governing educational decisions, the work of comparative education researchers could be used to support the development and implementation of educational policy.⁵⁷ Given the construction of new systems of education in countries formed after World War II and the deep political, social, and economic competition between the West and the U.S.S.R, the development and implementation of empirically-supported education policy was considered vital to the survival and improvement of state systems of education at the time.⁵⁸ Grounding comparative education in the positivist paradigm, specifically within a functionalist theory of state, reflected the belief that universal laws could be applied that would lead to an educational system that addressed society's problems and that was underpinned by a focus on educational efficiency and economy. In Anthony Welch's words, "just as the natural sciences had already brought nature under control, so, too, it was argued, would the science of society, this time in the guise of functionalism, bring society under control."⁵⁹

As a field, comparative research is somewhat ambivalent regarding the emphasis on the scientific approach that dominated the 1960s and 1970s. It is credited with bringing further attention to issues of methodology and emphasizing the role that educational research could play in policy development, yet criticized for producing too many studies that over-emphasized statistical data or empirically tested theories for only one system of education so that they *might* be used for comparison with others, but in actuality rarely were.⁶⁰ Other critiques include the implicit hegemonic assumption—embedded in ideas of positivism, modernity, and functionalism—that all nations strove (or should strive) to be like those in the industrialized West.⁶¹ This comparative approach

⁵⁷ Robert Cowen, "Comparing Futures or Comparing Pasts?" *Comparative Education* 36, no. 3 (2000): 335.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Anthony Welch, "Technocracy, Uncertainty, and Ethics: Comparative Education in an Era of Postmodernity and Globalization," in *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*, 2nd ed., eds. Robert F. Arnove and Carlos A. Torres (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 27.

⁶⁰ Halls, "Comparative Studies in Education," 83. Halls did note, however, that pioneers of the approach such as Noah and Eckstein, "were prepared to put their methodological theories to the test and also made invaluable contributions to the field." In many ways, scientific studies of the era focused more on international goals rather than comparative goals.

⁶¹ Welsh, "Technocracy, Uncertainty, and Ethics," 28-29.

was (and continues to be) supported by, and in turn supported, the development of international institutions, or branches of them, dedicated to collecting and disseminating data on various systems of education. These included the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Development, as discussed further in Chapter Four.

By the late 1970s, comparative education had reached a sort of existential crisis. Although it had always questioned its goals and methodological approaches, it seemed that many in the field felt that the scientific approach had failed in its attempt to give comparative education true “discipline” status, and, if anything, had left it less “comparative” than ever before, focusing too much on the nation-state as the main unit of analysis.⁶² Some researchers continued down this path, supported by the increasing competition between countries brought about by economic globalization and neoliberal economic and education reform in the 1980s through 2000s (as discussed in Chapters Three and Four). As Green stated:

increasingly, as governments became more obsessed with measuring national performance, and as the [International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement] and other bodies obliged with major international surveys of achievement, comparative education was drawn into a kind of cross-national Olympics—ranking education systems in terms of their effectiveness. Countless monographs from [international education agencies] also focused on the description and classification of national systems.⁶³

This stage of comparative education, which reached its peak in the 2000s, is categorized by Nývca and Yariv-Marshal as the “measuring the ‘other’” era of comparative education, “inspired by a need to create international tools and comparative indicators to measure the ‘efficiency’ and the ‘quality’ of education.”⁶⁴ As such, much of the work that has been labelled “comparative” by those outside of the field (and even some of those inside of it) is more international in scope as defined in Chapter One. It bears resemblance to both the scientific approach and the traveller’s approach, gravitating more toward one or the other depending on what is done with the data. For example, a scientific approach might take the data collected and develop testable theories regarding how the education system in question produced such data, then use the results of this

⁶² Andy Green, “Education, Globalisation and the Role of Comparative Research,” *London Review of Education* 1, no. 2 (2003): 86.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Nývca and Yariv-Marshal, “Comparative Research in Education,” 424-25.

study to examine how manipulating educational variables in another educational setting might produce effective policy. In a traveller's approach, the researcher might look at the data and decide that importing elements of the system perceived to be responsible for the data, without further study, is desirable.

The Mid-1970s and Beyond: Heterodoxy and New Directions

During the mid-1970s through the 1980s, despite (or perhaps because of) a continuing focus on comparing international data from state systems of education, many of those in the field of comparative education began once again to question its goals and methodologies. As in the 1960s, they looked to the social sciences to find and consider new research approaches. This trend continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s, resulting in a veritable explosion of new techniques and approaches. Cowen described this as a response to the “appalling” and somewhat single-minded emphasis on “effective” schools during both the 1960s and the 1980s to the present,⁶⁵ while Rolland Paulston provided a more in-depth explanation. Paulston explained that comparative education during the 1970s was heavily influenced by the work of educational researchers working in the social sciences who were rejecting positivism and traditional functionalist approaches in favour of those that problematized, critiqued, and sought to subvert the hegemonic nature of educational institutions.⁶⁶ Other theoretical lenses focused on the possibility and role of human agency within educational systems, which were not accounted for in a functionalist model of education.⁶⁷ The turmoil in and rapid expansion of the social sciences as they increasingly embraced qualitative methods led some comparative education researchers to assert that “no single paradigm can answer all questions” and that the field of comparative education might move away from “paradigm wars” to “something of a disputatious community as the use of knowledge became more eclectic and reoriented by new ideas and knowledge products, such as interpretations, simulations, translations, probes and conceptual mapping.”⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Cowen, “Comparing Futures or Comparing Pasts?” 335.

⁶⁶ *The International Encyclopaedia of Education*, s.v. “Comparative and International Education: Paradigms and Theories.” Paulston authored this entry.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

It is far beyond the scope of this condensed history to review the various directions that comparative education research has pursued from the 1980s until the present day. Instead, I will highlight some directions that comparative education research has taken in order to illustrate the ways in which the field diverged from a positive, functionalist perspective.

One of the first movements away from the positive functionalist paradigm was by those who wished to critique the idea that educational structures are beneficial to all and are focused on societal change and improvement. Paulston described how, in the 1970s and 1980s, comparative education as a field began to accept the ideas found in the work of neo-Marxist, radical functionalist, and critical pedagogues such as Basil Bernstein's *Towards a Theory of Educational Transmission* (1975) and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis' *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976).⁶⁹ Research following this theoretical perspective has focused on inequalities built into systems of education and, in particular, the relationship between colonization and systems of education. Paulston's conceptual map of the relationship of paradigms and theories in comparative and international education illustrates how the heterodox movement toward radical functionalism resulted in the introduction of conflict theory and dependency theory, in addition to other neo-Marxist perspectives, as valid and important interpretive lenses in comparative education.⁷⁰ Among one of the most respected and established researchers focused in this area is Martin Carnoy, who, in his 1974 book *Education as Cultural Imperialism* hypothesized that "the [international] spread of [Western public] schooling was carried out in the context of imperialism and colonialism—in the spread of mercantilism and capitalism—and it cannot in *its present form and purpose be separated from that context*."⁷¹ To examine his thesis, Carnoy selected five systems of education that, on the surface, appeared quite different and which ranged from systems under direct colonization (e.g., the British colonization of India) to examples of "internal" colonialism in the United States (he referred to the subjugation of minority groups within public education, specifically African Americans). His comparison of these systems led him to

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York: Longmans, 1974), 15. (original emphasis).

conclusions such as “formal schooling was not used to incorporate people into the [national] economic structure until capitalism began to dominate the economy,”⁷² and that, wherever Western education systems were implemented, some form of colonialism existed that would ensure “that powerful economic and social groups *acting in the common self-interest* succeed through legislation and influence to use schooling to further their own ends.”⁷³ Carnoy’s study was undertaken using historical data and an interpretive approach (one would suspect that Bereday might refer to it as an *interpretive* comparison). Carnoy emphasized that it was impossible to “prove” his hypothesis, but that the evidence presented by comparing systems would favour his analysis over others.⁷⁴ Such interpretive approaches became more popular as qualitative research ideas became increasingly embraced by the field, as is discussed below.

Also notable in this radical functionalist branch of comparative education was the introduction of a *world-systems* approach to comparative education, through which, it was argued, researchers should situate the nation as a unit of analysis within broader international education movements. Based on ideas from dependency theory and considering the influence exerted through international comparison profiles and what was increasingly viewed as a growing world economic system (the latter two of which are discussed in Chapters Three and Four), Robert F. Arnove asserted as early as 1980 that “While the expansion and reform of education take place within national boundaries, the stage on which these national units develop and compete is an international one.”⁷⁵ Essentially, Arnove made a convincing argument that comparative researchers must not only consider the social-historical context of the system under study, but that they must also consider the influence and pressures exerted on national systems of education by world-wide economic and ideological movements, namely the global spread of economic neoliberalism. Underpinning his ideas was an emphasis on how systems of education demonstrated *convergence* and *divergence*. Drawing on the work of John W. Meyer, John Boli-Bennet, and Christopher Chase-Dunn, Arnove argued that “the world market and

⁷² Ibid., 21.

⁷³ Ibid., 24 (original emphasis).

⁷⁴ Ibid. 20

⁷⁵ Robert F. Arnove, “Comparative Education and World-Systems Analysis,” *Comparative Education Review* 24, no. 1 (1980): 48.

society produce convergence by subjecting all societies to the same forces; they produce divergence by creating roles for different societies in the world stratification system.”⁷⁶ In making these arguments, he was one of the first in comparative education to emphasize the importance of viewing education reform through an “international dimension” that exerted pressure on nations-states to adopt what would later become known as neoliberal education reforms as disseminated through globalization, regardless of whether or not such reforms were beneficial to the state. Indeed, Arnove argued, such reforms were usually not beneficial to developing countries and rarely created positive structural and social change.⁷⁷

Others in the field of comparative education reinterpreted the idea of *convergence and divergence* as a way through which to explore how the types of global, economic and institutional pressures to reform state education as neoliberal education were adopted, adapted, subverted, or resisted within state education systems.⁷⁸ For example, Rosemary Deem reviewed previous studies on the effects of globalization and internationalization on reform at the university level. She argued that, while there was a growing discourse of reforming Western Universities around the neoliberal concepts of new managerialism, academic capitalism, and entrepreneurialism, it was “easy” for researchers to “forget about the importance of local or regional differences or to see these as largely subordinate to more global factors.”⁷⁹ She concluded by suggesting that methodological frameworks for analysis regarding globalized pressure to reform educational institutions consider how “social relations and human culture” present within a specific region or locality can affect how “different countries respond to international and global pressures.”⁸⁰ Likewise, Karen Monkman and Mark Baird challenged the notion of the decline “of the nation state” when faced with growing pressures to conform to neoliberal economic, social, and education

⁷⁶ Ibid. 49.

⁷⁷ Robert F. Arnove, “World-Systems Analysis and Comparative Education in the Age of Globalization,” in *International Handbook of Comparative Education* edited by Robert Cowan, Andreas M. Kazamias, and Elaine Unterhalter (Springer: Dordrecht, 2005), 106.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 107.

⁷⁹ Rosemary Deem, “Globalisation, New Managerialism, Academic Capitalism and Entrepreneurialism in Universities: Is the Local Dimension Still Important?” *Comparative Education*, 37, no. 1 (2001): 17.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 18.

policies disseminated through globalization.⁸¹ Their critique of comparative education anthologies which explored the influence of globalization on education reform concluded with the assertion that explorations of such reforms must consider two issues: (1) the ways in which international educational discourse shapes policy and creates an ideal of the purpose of education and the role of the actors within an education system and (2) who participates in education reform and how their actions “mediates the interactions between globalization and education.”⁸² The arguments made comparative education researchers such as Deem and Monkman and Baird moved away from a world-systems approach to education that viewed the outcome of global pressure to implement neoliberal education as benefiting the West while subjugating the developed world. Instead, they addressed tensions between the “global” and “local” through examining how individual nation states, regardless of their economic status, responded to globalization and its pressures to implement specific reforms and how those reforms then reflected both the dominant global education discourse and national, regional, or local “character.” The result was policy and policy outcomes that *converged* with or *diverged* from global pressures to enact particular educational policies.

While work supported by ideas of the above researchers illustrated the need to move past a structural functionalist perspective, as a form of radical functionalism, these ideas still focused on systems as a whole. In the early 1980s, works such as Paolo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and ideas drawn from other critical theorists, including branches of feminism and poststructuralism, were used to support the argument that a more *radical humanism* approach to comparative education was needed. That is, that comparative education needed to not only explore the hegemonic pressures exerted by the dominant, Western, male narrative of the value of and purpose of education, but to include the narratives and experiences of marginalized groups such as women, minorities, or the lower classes (i.e., those that Freire would label the “oppressed”).⁸³ Others argued that a radical humanist approach was still not enough, stating that only by moving from a

⁸¹ Karen Monkman and Mark Baird, “Educational Change in the Context of Globalization,” *Comparative Education Review* 46, no. 4 (2002), 497.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 507.

⁸³ *The International Encyclopaedia of Education*, s.v. “Comparative and International Education: Paradigms and Theories.”

structuralist (i.e., “macro”) view of society to a humanist (i.e., micro) view, where individuals’ perspectives on how education was lived, experienced, and, in some cases, resisted and subverted, would comparative education ever really come to understand the social reality of education and thus better understand the creation and implementation of education systems and policy.⁸⁴

Arguments over the need to view comparative education through a radical humanist or humanist lens ultimately became tied to the field’s debate over the value of undertaking research in a postmodern paradigm. By 1999, Paulston had identified five main knowledge positions taken by comparative education researchers working in the postmodern paradigm, with a sixth labelled *post-paradigmatic eclecticism*.⁸⁵ Postmodernism was understood by Paulston as a “growing reflexive awareness, as an increasing consciousness of self, space, and multiplicity,” where individuals reject the idea of universal knowledge or laws (particularly those which advance notions of Eurocentric modernity) and view knowledge as individually situated and adaptive to different contexts.⁸⁶ Implicit in this paradigm is that researchers do not search for “facts,” but rather put forth interpretations, moving from “grounded positions to narrative readings and from testing propositions to mapping difference.”⁸⁷ He concluded,

the single most important characteristic of postmodern sensibility is an ontological shift from an essentialist view of one fixed reality, that is, reason as the controlling principle of the universe, to an antiessentialist view where reality constructs are seen to resist closure and where multiple and diverse truth claims become part of a continuous agonistic, or contested, struggle.⁸⁸

Radical humanist and humanist approaches to comparative education span the fields of anthropology, feminism, postmodernism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, semiotics, and phenomenology to name a few. These approaches rely largely on historical and qualitative approaches to research, such as ethnography, narrative, discourse analysis, and hermeneutics and utilize data collection methods such as literature review, document analysis, participant-observation, and interview. Approaches such as these are not

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Rolland G. Paulston, “Mapping Comparative Education After Postmodernity,” *Comparative Education Review* 43, no. 4 (1999): 445.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 439-40.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 440.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

discussed in-depth here because the theoretical lens through which this study is undertaken lies elsewhere. However, there are several perspectives embedded within the humanist and qualitative paradigms that are salient to this study, including the acknowledgment of the hegemony of Western ideals, cultural resistance and tensions between actors within and among societies, and the advantages of interpretive over scientific analysis, which are discussed further below in relation to this study's methodology.

In summary, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, views of what could be compared (i.e., the unit of analysis) had expanded from that nation-state's system of education past a functionalist approach right to the level of the individual and every actor or sub-structure in between. In addition, conceptions of knowledge now included viewing it as a priori and universal or as constructed and individualistic. Finally, the field acknowledged that Western European ideals had underpinned many of the ways in which research had been approached and interpreted and that the interests of those who held power were often furthered through educational structures and reforms. By the 1990s, there seemed to be general agreement in the field of comparative education that "different questions require somewhat different ways of answering those questions,"⁸⁹ and that the multitude of theoretical lenses and methodological approaches available to comparative education researchers ultimately lead to the ability to address problems that previously had been overlooked as well as the ability to look at a problem from multiple points of view. In 1995, Mark Bray and R. Murray Thomas suggested that comparative education would benefit from approaching research problems and questions using "multilevel analysis," which would foster a better understanding of how systems of education worked at both the macro- and micro-levels.⁹⁰ Their model, which is show in figure 2.1, is sometimes referred to as "Bray and Thomas cube."⁹¹

⁸⁹ Val D. Rust et al., "Research Strategies in Comparative Education," 89. See also the opening pages of this chapter.

⁹⁰ Mark Bray and R. Murray Thomas, "Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analysis," *Harvard Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (1995): 473.

⁹¹ See, for example, Marion Manzon, "Comparing Places," in *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*, eds. Mark Bray, Bob Adamson, and Mark Mason (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 89.

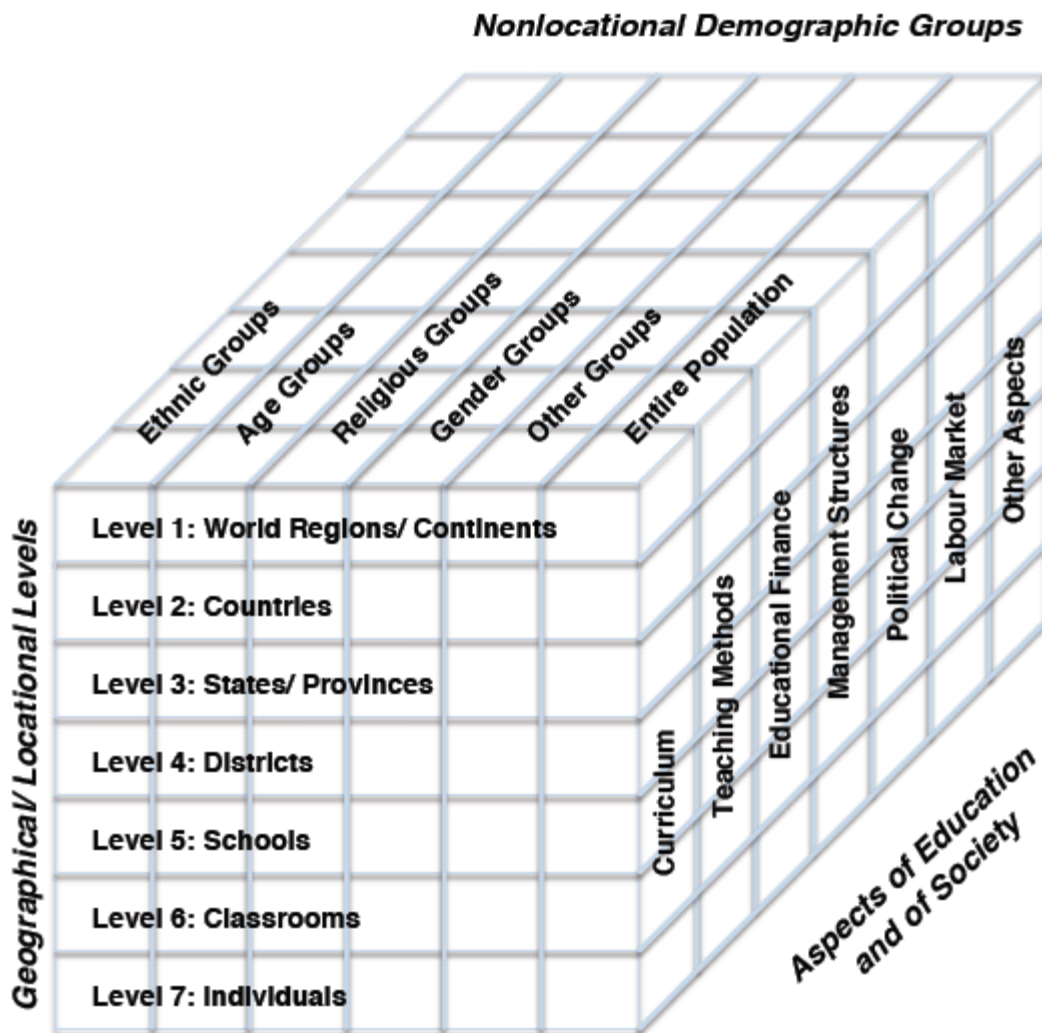


Figure. 2.1 The Bray and Thomas Cube.⁹²

The Bray and Thomas cube demonstrates how comparative education studies might be classified by level and type. While not a methodology in and of itself, it illustrates the complexities of and choices available when approaching comparative education research and provides a starting place for an analytical framework.

Bray and Thomas suggested that comparative education should be approached through three dimensions. These are (1) geographic/location, (2) nonlocational demographic groupings, and (3) aspects of education and society. The first concerns the unit of

⁹² Modified from Bray and Thomas, “Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies,” 475. They shade in a cube in their original model to represent a research project on curriculum plans for an entire system (general population) across two or more provinces.

analysis in terms of physical location and contains seven levels, beginning with “world regions/continents” moving through increasingly local units of analysis to reach “individuals.”

The second dimension suggests a variety of nonlocational demographic groups that might be considered in comparative research. How these groups, which are only suggested and to which others can be added, are included in the research depends on the research question and chosen theoretical lens. For example, an approach grounded in functionalist perspective might see gender as variable within the wider system and treat it as such, whereas research from a feminist perspective might seek to specifically privilege gendered points of view from the perspective of specific individuals. These nonlocational groups might be combined to consider several demographic elements or perspectives from within a location.

The third level, aspects of education and society, considers the elements that make up systems of education and society. Again, the categories here are suggested only and can be determined by the researcher in relation to the research question. For example, Holmes would list his five universal categories (administration, finance, structure and organization, curriculum, and teacher education) along this dimension. The elements that make up his “ideal-typical normative models.”⁹³ A first glance, the Bray and Thomas cube may seem to imply that socio-historical consideration is not necessary in the analysis, yet the cube allows researchers, particularly under the category of “other aspects,” to easily accommodate socio-historical considerations. Take, for example, Carnoy’s comparative research on colonization discussed above. Carnoy’s research relied heavily on historical methods to gather and analyze data and would be situated as a study addressing the geographical location of the country, with nonlocational demographic groups of colonizer and colonized, and considering each of the aspects of education and society given in the original cube. These aspects are then situated within the historical context of the original colonization of each country and the broader theory of capitalist accumulation (both of which might be considered as falling under the “other aspects” of

⁹³ Although a reasonable argument could be made that the elements in the ideal-typical normative model might also have to be considered through the lens of the nonlocational demographic dimension.

society) and interpreted through a radical functionalist perspective of society grounded in dependency theory.

Bray and Thomas stated that every comparative education study incorporates elements from each of the three dimensions⁹⁴ and argued that looking at comparative education questions and problems from different levels leads to different insights. Micro-level studies, which they categorize as Level 4 (i.e., districts) and lower, have the advantage of recognizing differences within systems of education and of understanding ways in which those differences have shaped and may continue to shape education and educational experiences. They also help to address some of the short-comings of macro-level analysis.⁹⁵ Indeed, Bray and Thomas clearly outlined the strengths and weaknesses of comparing educational systems at the macro-levels of world regions, countries, and/or provinces or states within a nation. One of the key weaknesses identified is the implication that systems may be represented as homogenous throughout the state. They caution that “broad generalizations obscure the features that distinguish one region, school, or pupil from another.”⁹⁶ However, there is a place for using these macro-levels as the units of analysis, particularly when little research has been done on a particular element of that state. Bray and Thomas list three primary benefits to such studies: (1) they provide a more “general framework” within which future researchers might place research conducted at the micro-level; (2) they “provide an initial basis for understanding and interpretation, and reduce the risk of overwhelming researchers and their audience with masses of particularistic detail,” specifically when new topics—such as systems of music education—are the focus of comparison; and (3) by taking a macro-level approach, they identify broader influences with systems of education, such as “economic considerations, political structures, cultural traditions, and forms of educational organization and administration.”⁹⁷

This review of the history of comparative education, the tensions between research paradigms, and the ongoing debate regarding defining and strengthening research methodology highlights the various choices available to those wishing to

⁹⁴ Bray and Thomas, “Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies,” 474.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 487.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

undertake research in this field. I turn now to a discussion of this study's research methodology and its relation to the above ideas.

Study Methodology

Research Questions, Assumptions, and Theoretical Perspectives

As stated in Chapter One, the research questions that underpin this study are:

- (1) What is neoliberalism?
- (2) What is neoliberal education?
- (3) How was neoliberal education conceived of and enacted by the governments of England and Ontario, Canada? How did the economic, political, and social contexts of each state affect these conceptions and enactments?
- (4) How were music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affected by and reflective of the socio-political and economic ends and values of neoliberal education as they were conceived of and enacted by their respective governments?
- (5) How did the established values and traditions associated with music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affect the ways in which neoliberal education reform was undertaken and enacted in these programs?
- (6) How can a comparative approach to these questions help shape and broaden our understanding of neoliberal education reform and its effects on music education?

The first question is answered in Chapter Three through exploring the socio-political roots of *neoliberalism* and drawing on the work of Rachel S. Turner and her conceptual map of neoliberalism. The second question is answered in Chapter Four by expanding on the work of Turner to create a conceptual map of *neoliberal education*. The work in these chapters reveals how neoliberal economic globalization causes both policy *convergence* and *divergence* in state systems of education in developed countries. That is, that it exerts a form of “soft” hegemony that situates systems of education in competition with one another. This is done through creating new academic standards meant to develop a certain type of citizen (i.e., the “knowledge worker” for a particular economic system (i.e., the “knowledge economy”) and also through requiring that the educational systems be efficient, transparent, and accountable to the public as measured by educational testing. Divergence, however, occurs when the core concepts of neoliberal reform encounter the

socio-historical traditions and political ideologies of individual states. This tension between the *global* and the *local* causes neoliberal ideology to manifest itself as different varieties of education reform. By exploring issues of policy *convergence* and *divergence* in this way, I align this study with the exploration of the tensions between the global and the local that grew out of the world-systems approach described above. Although this study is not concerned with the effects of a dominant world discourse on developing countries, it still acknowledges that it is a belief in the need to compete in a global economy that drives the work of educational reformers in state systems of education. In this, it takes into consideration the world region geographical location indicated in the Bray and Thomas cube.

Questions three, four, and five are addressed in Chapters Six through Eight. Work here relies on the assumption that music education is uniquely situated within systems of education in neoliberal reform because it may or may not be seen as a way in which to support neoliberal ideals of a “well-educated” citizen. That is, it can either be viewed as a “frill” subject that takes away time that may be devoted to increasing skills in internationally tested subjects, such as literacy and math, or it may be seen as a subject that develops those same skills (albeit indirectly), while also developing the creativity and flexibility needed for workers in the “knowledge economy.” In addition, music education has historically served as a site of cultural reproduction in that it aims to create discriminating consumers of music, and, in some cases, promote national identity. It may also provide training for workers looking to enter arts-related occupations.

Given these conflicting understandings regarding its value and purpose, I reasoned that music education within systems of education might prove to be a major point of divergence and therefore of interest for further investigation. Since this study examines music education as part of the systems of education in England and Ontario, Canada, it addresses the geographical locations of country and state/province, as indicated in the Bray and Thomas cube. However, since publicly funded education in Ontario falls completely under the jurisdiction of the province, this study does not need to explore the role or influence of the federal government on Ontario’s public education, although general economic conditions in Canada at the time of Ontario’s education reform that are considered influential are included in my analysis.

Question six is addressed in the final chapter through a comparison of these two systems of education guided by the influence of nonlocational demographic groups and the influence of society and education (discussed further below). As such, this study utilizes the Bray and Thomas cube to organize a general framework for analysis, placing it within the conceptual (and global) phenomenon of *neoliberal education*. The final chapter also contains a reflection upon and evaluation of the processes of undertaking this comparative study, its benefits, and possible future research avenues in comparative education for the field of music education.

In this study, each element within the educational system is seen as part of the whole system, and that changes in—or pressure from outside the system to change—one or more elements within the system affects other areas. As such, this study is more consistent with the position of radical functionalism because of the issues of power, tension, and control of educational agendas that arise when analyzing the incorporation of any political ideology—in this case neoliberalism—into systems of education. However, as mentioned in Chapter One, this study is not meant to take a critical theory approach to education. Rather, it is a first step in documenting the ways in which music education has served as a site of political and educational negotiation between the global and local pressures exerted on systems of education. Despite potential negative consequences for music education that may be revealed here, this study is not meant to be emancipatory in the critical sense of developing theory or methods for “throwing off” the “yoke” of neoliberal reform’s effects on music education (as some of the literature reviewed in Chapter One implies is necessary). Perhaps the findings might be used to do this in the future, but that is not the intent of this study. I am also not specifically concerned with analyzing these two systems of education for the purpose of “successful” future policy formation or planning. How policy was or was not effectively developed or implemented are important considerations within this study as they point to elements of convergence and divergence across the systems. However, I am not attempting to “test propositions” about effective policy formation but rather to “map difference.” This study, then, is interpretive rather than scientific and draws on Carnoy’s perspective of seeking not to support a hypothesis so much as suggest a favourable and well-supported analysis and

comparison of events. Again, this does not mean that findings here might not be used in the future to support policy development and implementation.

As noted above, the radical functionalist approach to the problem has some limitations, which are outlined in Bray and Thomas' discussion of the weaknesses of a strictly macro-level approach to a comparative educational problem. In each of the two systems of education studied here, there would, of course, be variations within school districts and even within schools in those districts, in part because each of these geographical levels had their own policies that would further influence how broader educational policy was implemented. This is in keeping with the definition of policy provided in Chapter One.⁹⁸ However, given the paucity of comparative research on the influence of global neoliberal ideology on music education in public systems of education, my goals are in keeping with the strengths of the macro-approach described by Bray and Thomas. That is, to (1) identify broader influences with systems of education, such as "economic considerations, political structures, cultural traditions, and forms of educational organization and administration;" (2) "provide an initial basis for understanding and interpretation, and reduce the risk of overwhelming researchers and their audience with masses of particularistic detail;" and (3) provide a more "general framework" within which future researchers might place research conducted at the micro-level.⁹⁹ Thus, the implications and conclusions drawn from this study are broad and general, but they present a starting point for future research. Indeed, as suggested at the end of this study, future work undertaken at the micro-level would further strengthen the ways in which the field of music education begins to understand the negotiation between global educational ideology and the experiences of policy implementation and interpretation at local sites of education.

⁹⁸ Chapter One, p. 20..

⁹⁹ Bray and Thomas, "Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies," 487. Indeed, this study reveals that variation of music education policy implementation at the school level was a consistent theme in both Ontario and England, but, in keeping with Bray and Thomas' descriptions of the strength of a macro-level, detailed case studies comparing local variation are not discussed here. They would, however, form an excellent basis for future research.

Selection of Systems of Education and Historical Period for Study

In choosing systems of education for this study, I have followed the advice of Maria Manzon:

Rather than a mechanical identification of similarities and differences between two or more places, it is suggested that attention be paid to the underlying context of these commonalities and differences, and to their causal relevance to the educational phenomenon being examined. In other words, any meaningful comparative study should be able to identify the extent and the reasons for commonalities and differences between the units of comparison, examining the causes at work and the relationships between those causes.”¹⁰⁰

Here, Manzon implies that the type of systematic “matching” of educational criteria proposed by comparative education researchers aligned with the scientific approach, such as Bereday and Holmes, is not strictly necessary. Rather, systems should be chosen based on the problem under study itself and contain enough similarities and differences to make the examination of the problem worthwhile. What determines “worthwhile” is at the discretion of the researcher, but cases should not be randomly selected. The cases under study here were chosen for several reasons, not the least of which was commonalities and differences, as well as their status as “critical” cases, which is defined below.

Beginning with their commonalities, Ontario, as part of the British Commonwealth, developed under English control and influence and still retains some of England’s institutional structures. Although England is a country and Ontario is a province, they both can be considered nation-states as defined in Chapter One, particularly as Canadian provinces have complete jurisdictional control of public education.¹⁰¹ Both England and Ontario experienced cases of sweeping neoliberal social and education reforms at the state level, which have been well-documented in scholarly publications—particularly regarding England—even if such reforms have not all been viewed through the same conceptual maps of neoliberalism and neoliberal education reform that are presented in Chapters Three and Four. Both states undertook reform in response to a perceived state-wide “economic crisis.” As a result of these reforms, each state asserted considerably more power over education (as discussed in Chapter Four),

¹⁰⁰ Manzon “Comparing Places,” 88.

¹⁰¹ British North America Act 1867, sec. 93, accessed March 10, 2012, <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/const/loireg/p1t1-3.html>.

including the areas of finance and curriculum development than at any point in its history. Both states are, or exist in, a developed country with English as an official language and have parliamentary governments. Comparisons among developing countries and other systems of government would not be inappropriate; however, in order to keep the study streamlined, it was felt that the inclusion of developing countries and/or other types of government would add too many new factors for consideration. Before neoliberal reforms, each nation was considered a “Welfare State,” because it promoted the positive rights of its citizens through providing such social services as universal health care, unemployment assistance, and education (described more in Chapters Three and Four). Indeed, each system of education was publically funded and had a long history of including music education in the curriculum relative to the age of the system. The longevity of music as a school subject likely indicated that the subject was considered of some value within the education system and, further, that certain traditions and purposes had been established regarding the role of music education in public education, such as using music education to support ideals of national identity, community building, or to foster certain musical tastes or habits of consumption. These socio-historical influences might have played a role in the ways in which music education found negotiated meaning within neoliberal education reforms.

Differences between England and Ontario include the length of time that each state has existed and thus the time over which customs, traditions, and ideas of national character have had to develop and become entrenched. Ontario—and Canada in general—as a “new world” state built largely through immigration and situated next to the cultural behemoth of the United States, has long struggled with issues of identity in ways that European nations have not.¹⁰² As is discussed in Chapters Three and Four, England possessed significant (if declining) economic and political status and global influence at the time of its neoliberal reforms, while Ontario’s global economic and political status and influence were practically non-existent, unless it is considered under the broader scope of Canada in general and, even then, would be considered limited in

¹⁰² That said, and as discussed further in Chapters Five and Six, England’s colonizer history prompted deep debates about the role and influence of multiculturalism in English society beginning the mid-1980s as diverse members of the British commonwealth came to live in England in increasing numbers.

relation to the global economic influence of nations such as England and the United States. In effect, England had a stronger global voice in directing the nature of neoliberal reforms while Ontario did not, which may have impacted how they were received at the local level. Another factor to consider is the historical timeline of events. England was one of the first states to institute neoliberal economic, social, and educational reform, and, while England implemented its reforms in a relatively shorter amount of time comparative to other countries such as the United States, the speed of reform in Ontario was unprecedented: most changes took place within 18 months. As is explained below, this last difference has also been used to establish the time periods on which the study focuses.

In this study, both England and Ontario are treated as *critical cases* of state-directed neoliberal reform. A *critical case* is one that encompasses a time of transition and change. Andrew Brown and Paul Dowling write that such cases allow us to gain unique insight into social relations and cultural practices and thus may be considered more generalizable than non-critical case studies.¹⁰³ These two particular cases are well-suited for study because the pace and extent of transition and change occurred over a relatively short span of time, particularly in Ontario, in comparison to other states that have undergone similar economic neoliberal social and education reform. Therefore, the historical period studied herein is limited to the time immediately preceding neoliberal reforms to the point at which the political party that introduced the reforms was voted out of office and new educational policies were introduced or neoliberal approaches to education relaxed (as is the case of Ontario) or the time at which the nature and effects of policy reform began to stabilize or be perceived as the new “norm” (as is the case in England). Thus, neoliberal economic and education reforms and their effects on music education are studied in England from just prior to the 1979 election of Conservative Party Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher until her successor, John Major, was voted out of office in 1997 and replaced by Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair. In Ontario, the study focuses on 1995-2003, which are the years that Progressive Conservative Premier Mike

¹⁰³ Andrew Brown and Paul Downing, *Doing Research/Reading Research: A Mode of Interrogation for Education* (London: The Falmer Press, 1998), 30.

Harris held office in Ontario before being replaced by Liberal Prime Minister Dalton McGuinty.

Data Sources and Collection Methods

This study is focused on past events. As such, its data sources and collection methods are largely based on historical research. Where possible, data collection has come from primary sources. A large variety of documents was gathered or purchased in the process of completing this study. They were acquired through online public or private databases; library physical and digital archives; or online booksellers. These included government documents from both England and Ontario, such as legislative material, curriculum guides, commissioned education reports, and press releases. In the case of England, it also includes white papers.¹⁰⁴ Others primary sources were formally requested from the Ontario government under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act and a fee was paid in order to obtain the requested information. These documents include many of the Government of Ontario “backgrounder” documents (e.g., press releases designed to prepare administrative employees and/or the general public for upcoming policy change), reports on the development of curriculum and allocation of resources for curriculum implementation, e-mails between members of government and civil service regarding curriculum development and implementation, and various documents indicating training held to facilitate curriculum implementation. In cases where government documents were no longer accessible or geographical distance hindered access to such documents, secondary sources were used. For this reason, consulting secondary documents was more frequently utilized when discussing education and music education reform in England, whose reforms are a decade older and which I was not able to visit. However, education reform and music curriculum development in England have been very well-documented by a variety of credible secondary sources, through which it was possible to identify narratives of consent and dissent over education

¹⁰⁴ White papers are government reports that address particular problems that are important to the government. They are published prior to policy change with the stated intention of educating and informing the public on a particular issue or state of affairs. While they are not policy themselves, they usually indicate the ideological stance that the government intends to take toward solving a particular policy problem and that new policy will soon be introduced.

and music education reform. These secondary sources are discussed in the study when relevant.

As this study is also concerned with the socio-historical content in which government policy is enacted and the public debates surrounding the role of music education in neoliberal education, it was important to highlight responses from major educational stakeholders, including music educators, as well as the general public to the introduction of legislation and curriculum reform. In these instances, data were drawn from books and scholarly and trade journals that have presented research on these issues, as well as other media sources, such as newspapers, news releases, and the publications of music education advocacy groups.

Method of Analysis

This study utilizes a conceptual framework of *neoliberal education* with the understanding that *neoliberal education* is actually composed of a set of interrelated core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts that allow adoption and enactment of neoliberal education reform and policy to be flexible and location specific. This conceptual framework is an extension of Rachel S. Turner's work in developing a conceptual model of *neoliberalism* and so is discussed in more detail in Chapters Three and Four, as is the procedure for its development. To summarize, Turner's map contains three types of concepts—core, adjacent, and peripheral—each type being more flexible in its implementation and interpretation as one moves across the map from left to right. The four core concepts—*The Market*, *Welfare*, *The Constitution*, and *Property*—are the ideals upon which neoliberalism is founded, while the adjacent concepts represent discursive ways of thinking about and constructing identity, legislation, and institutional structures that support those ideals. Peripheral concepts suggest the variety of ways in which the core and adjacent concepts can be interpreted and enacted when implemented at the state level.

Using Turner's conceptual map as a starting point, I reviewed examples of educational reform undertaken in various neoliberal states and examined scholarly literature on the subject of such reforms. Information from these sources was combined to identify and explain how Turner's core neoliberal concepts of *The Market*, *Welfare*, *The Constitution*, and *Property* were supported by adjacent concept and peripheral concepts

within an educational setting. Adjacent and peripheral concepts specific to education not accounted for in Turner's original map were identified and included in italics, while some of Turner's original adjacent and peripheral concepts were removed if they did not relate specifically to neoliberal education within the broader context of the neoliberal state.

Table 2.1 displays the conceptual map of *neoliberal education*, which is explained in further detail in Chapter Four.

Table 2.1. Modified version of Rachel S. Turner's conceptual map of neoliberalism to reflect a conceptual map of neoliberal education

Core Concepts	Adjacent Concepts	Peripheral Concepts
The Market	evolution, spontaneous order, limited knowledge, entrepreneurship, individualism, self-interest, <i>educational excellence, standards, centralization of standards, knowledge economy/workers, core skills, core curriculum</i>	the enterprise culture, short-term profit motives, income-tax relief, privatisation, deregulation, share-ownership, <i>standardized curricula and testing, high-stakes testing, parental choice, private schools, decentralization/devolution, managerialism, human capital</i>
Welfare	minimal state, equality of opportunity, freedom, personal responsibility, self-reliance, negative rights, <i>efficiency, lifelong learning, meritocracy</i>	reduced social expenditure, "workfare," QUANGOs, <i>education vouchers, charter schools, knowledge workers, learnfare, re-skilling, public-private partnerships</i>
The Constitution	freedom, private law, legal responsibility, abstract order, 'rules of just conduct,' evolution	legal state, a 'fiscal constitution,' balanced budgets, restrained democratic rule
Property (related to Knowledge Economy rather than Post-Ford material accumulation: Ideas and skills rather than capital, though one does have the right to invest capital in education)	ownership, possessive individualism, legal privilege, individual initiative, negative justice (conformity to universal rules), private associations, <i>educational consumer, knowledge as commodity, accountability</i>	<i>educational investments, accreditation and certification, user fees donations and fundraising</i>

This conceptual map allowed me to clearly identify which aspects of neoliberalism were present in the education reforms undertaken in Ontario and England. This was done using J. Amos Hatch's nine step typological analysis model:

- (1) Identify the typologies to be analyzed
- (2) Read the data, marking entries related to your typologies
- (3) Read entries by typology, recording main idea in entries on a summary sheet
- (4) Look for patterns, relationship, themes within typologies
- (5) Read data, coding entries according to patterns identified and keeping a record of what entries go with which elements of your patterns
- (6) Decide if your patterns are supported by the data, and search for the data for nonexamples of patterns
- (7) Look for relationships among the patterns indentified
- (8) Write your patterns as one-sentence generalizations
- (9) Select data excerpts that support your generalizations¹⁰⁵

Hatch summarized this approach as one that begins with “dividing the overall data set into categories or groups based on predetermined typologies. Typologies are generated from theories, common sense, and/or research objectives.”¹⁰⁶ In this study, the predetermined typologies are based on the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts identified in the conceptual map of neoliberal education. Following Hatch's model, I was able provide an interpretive account of the ways in which neoliberal education reform in each state was constructed and enacted in response to the socio-economic and political traditions and current climate of each state (Chapters Five and Seven, respectively). Subsequently, I explored how such reforms were constructed and enacted with consideration to the policies, structures, and traditions affecting and underpinning music education in each state (Chapters Six and Eight, respectively), as well as the broad outcomes for music education programs as a result of neoliberal education reform.

¹⁰⁵ Amos Hatch, *Doing Qualitative Research in Education Settings* (Albany: State University of New York, 2002), 153.

This study relied on organizing analysis around the three dimensions of the Bray and Thomas cube in order to facilitate comparisons among the two states. In this respect, typologies were analyzed not just in terms of their general presence in each system, but in relation to the ways in which they were reflected in or affected the actions and experiences of various nonlocational demographic groups and aspect of society and education. Although this study is not situated within the scientific approach, I, like Lephherd in much of his work, chose to employ Holmes' five categories as a "starting place" for comparison due, as he argued, to their nearly universal presence in formal systems of education. To this end, nonlocational demographic groups and aspects of society and education included in this study included the role of administrators and administrative structures, educational financing, institutional structures, curriculum, and teacher education. To this were added nonlocational demographic groups that were either responsible for or affected by neoliberal educational reforms in each location: elected official and bureaucrats; Quasi-autonomous, non-governmental organizations (QUANGOs); teachers; parents; students; and, to a lesser extent, the general voting public. Aspects of Society and Education were expanded to reflect the more influential and far reaching concepts from the conceptual map of neoliberal education: assessment and reporting and accountability practices. "Resource provision" was added as an aspect of society and education since this study is concerned with the extent to which reforms were implemented, as were "Economic and Labour Change," and "Cultural Change," as these two forms of societal change underpinned, to varying extents, state movement toward and adoption of neoliberal economic, social, and education reforms. Figure 2.2 displays these comparative elements along the three dimensions of the Bray and Thomas cube.

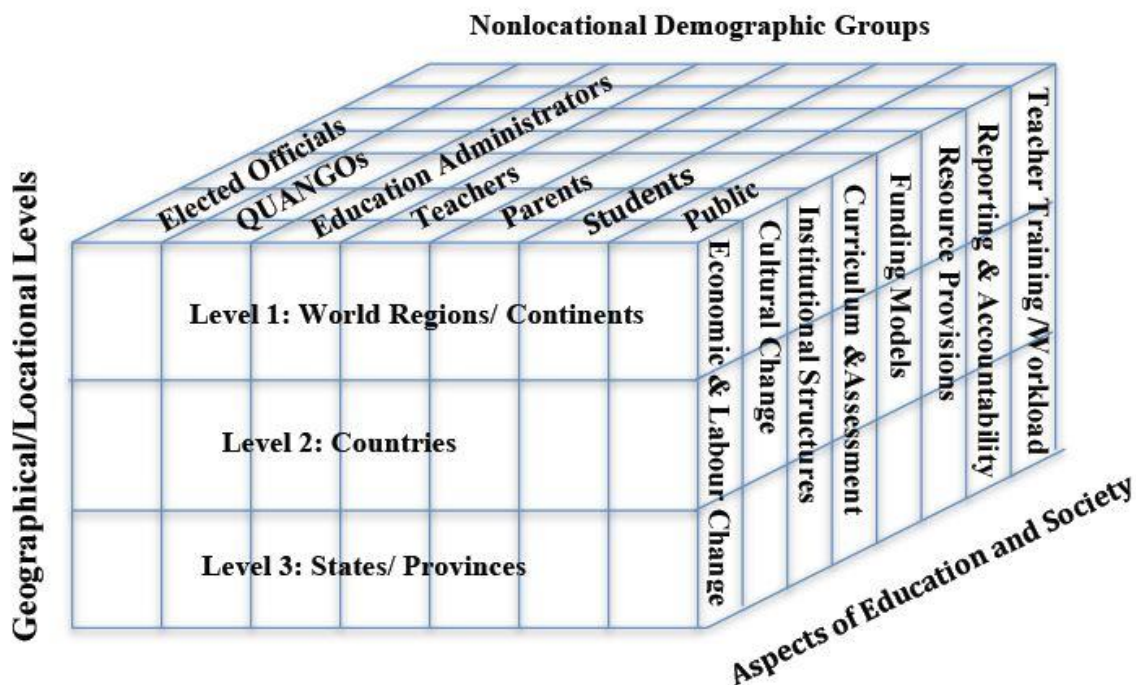


Figure 2.2 The Bray and Thomas Cube Modified for Present Study

In conclusion, this chapter has presented an overview of the history of paradigms and methodologies commonly used in comparative education research and situated this research project within comparative education research traditions. The next chapter begins the work of addressing the first research question of this study: “what is *neoliberalism*?” The answer to this question underpins the remainder of the research herein.

Chapter Three: The Concept(s) of Neoliberalism and Neoliberal Reform in England and Ontario

For any way of thought to become dominant, a conceptual apparatus has to be advanced that appeals to our intuition and instincts, to our values and desires, as well as to the possibilities inherent in the social world we inhabit. If successful, this conceptual apparatus becomes so embedded in common sense as to be taken for granted and not open to question.

-David Harvey¹

The Problem of Defining Neoliberalism

Before the work of examining the effects of neoliberal education reform on music education within the English and Ontario education systems can begin, we must first reach some conceptual agreement on what is meant by “neoliberalism.” Yet, arriving at a clear cut definition of neoliberalism is no easy task. Neoliberalism as an ideology is an interpretation, reinvention, and sometimes distortion of classical liberalism, particularly the work of Adam Smith (1723-1790). Neoliberalism as an ideology was introduced in the 1930s as an approach to certain social and economic dilemmas of the twentieth century. The concepts that support this ideology were and continue to be distributed through “a huge intellectual network of foundations, institutes, research centres, ideologues and scholars who relentlessly publish and package new ideas that would restore the liberal faith and redirect the course of Western civilisation.”² Due in no small part to its dissemination throughout a multitude of states with vastly different social, historical, political, and geographical contexts, neoliberalism as both an ideology and as the guiding force in policy creation is difficult to succinctly define. The field of research on neoliberalism is rapidly expanding, however “there almost appears to be an inverse relationship between the volume of scholarship produced on neoliberalism and the

¹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.

² Rachel S. Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology: History, Concepts and Policies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 2.

agreement over exactly what it means!”³ Concomitant to this dilemma is the scarcity of relatively unbiased writings on the nature of neoliberalism. As described below, from its earliest days, proponents of neoliberalism sought to frame it as a type of utopian alternative to the Welfare State, regardless of the possibilities of achieving an ideologically true neoliberal state with all of its asserted benefits.⁴ Conversely, those critiquing neoliberalism have labelled it a hegemonic ideology that universally undermines human rights and creates vast social injustices by placing profit over people.⁵ Addressing these biases means acknowledging that “the process of neoliberalization . . . is neither monolithic in form nor universal in effect.”⁶

Further, such politically constructed definitions of neoliberalism often fail to account for “the ways in which ideologies of neoliberalism are themselves produced and reproduced through institutional forms and political action.”⁷ Consider, for example, David Harvey’s broad and seemingly quite detailed description of neoliberalism:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual economic and entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of the markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action, if necessary. But beyond these tasks, the state should not venture. State

³ Kevin Ward and Kim England, Introduction to *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, Peoples*, eds. Kim England and Kevin Ward (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 8. Indeed, the multiple interpretations and effects of implementing neoliberal ideology form the backbone of a wealth of edited scholarly books describing specific state or regional experiences with neoliberalism. For some recent examples, see Ravi K. Roy, Arthur T. Denzau, and Thomas D. Willett, eds. *Neoliberalism: National and Regional Experiments with Global Ideas* (New York: Routledge, 2007); and Paul Bowles et al., eds., *National Perspectives on Globalization* (New York: Plagrave MacMillian, 2007).

⁴ Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, “Neoliberalizing Space,” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 381. Peck and Tickell refer to this “proselytizing” of neoliberalism’s virtues as a type of new religion. For an example see Philip Booth, ed., *Towards A Liberal Utopia* (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, 2005).

⁵ See, for example Noam Chomsky, *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and the Global Order* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1999); Mike Davis and Daniel Bertrand Monk, *Evil Paradises: Dreamworlds of Neoliberalism* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2007); and Henry Giroux, *Against the Terror of Neoliberalism: Politics Beyond the Age of Greed* (Boulder Co: Paradigm Publishers, 2008).

⁶ Peck and Tickell, “Neoliberalizing Space,” 384.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 383.

interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit.⁸

While this definition may provide a reasonable approximation of neoliberalism in its idealized form, its rigidity fails to account for the local, regional, or even national contexts that ultimately foster the rise of new or modified varieties of neoliberalism. For that matter, it does not account for the influence of certain interest groups that support neoliberal reforms, which, contrary to Harvey's somewhat misleading description, often support a neoliberal agenda to further their own fortunes as well as their political and religious beliefs. This makes the ideology itself somewhat distorted and biased.⁹ This definition also under-emphasizes the minimal role the state must play in all aspects of civic life, including the non-provision of social services. Finally, this idealized or reified version of neoliberalism outlined by those such as Harvey does not account for how ideology is often bent and shaped to the needs and desires of the local electorate as politicians and reformers seek the votes necessary to remain in office. Nor (less cynically) does it account for how longstanding and deeply embedded social and moral beliefs held by the reformers may restrict the wholesale implementation of neoliberal ideology (to say nothing of geographical, economic, or structural challenges to implementation).

⁸ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2.

⁹ Perhaps the clearest example of this is the support given by neoconservatives to the neoliberal agenda in the United States. The ideal neoliberal model calls for open markets that should be free to develop in response to individual needs and desires. This potentially gives rise to the moral decline of society as individuals make choices that may be considered by some "unethical" or "immoral." Neoconservatives often see this as an opportunity to build a moral purpose into the framework of neoliberal reforms by grounding neoliberalism in their own traditional and/or religious values. In the United States, and particularly under the government of George W. Bush, neoliberalism has been supported by, and aggressively lobbied for, the interests of a particular group of evangelical Christians, typically from the white, upper middle (i.e., traditionally ruling) classes. Ironically, Harvey does draw attention to this in his *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, but, as with the description of neoliberalism given above, applies the concept of a marriage between neoconservatism and neoliberalism rather too broadly, pointing to anti-emigration legislation in Europe and a resurgence of nationalism in France, Mexico, and Indonesia as proof of the intimate connection between the two ideologies (see pp. 81-85). While it is true that this marriage does exist in many countries and under many neoliberal regimes, it can and will be plausibly argued through the below comparisons of both economic and education reform in England and Ontario that neoconservatism should not be viewed as an inherent element of neoliberalism, but rather as an element in a particular variety of neoliberalism.

Reification of the ideology, then, even if it is critically discussed in relation to a specific location, does not explain or account for the social democratic traditions of Ontario, a province in which many a politician has lost both public support and elections over suggestions of applying user fees or privatization schemes to “sacred cow” social services such as health and education. Also problematic to an idealized definition of neoliberalism in an Ontarian context is the fact that, while the Progressive Conservative Party most embodied classical liberal economic ideals prior to the 1995 election and ultimately imposed neoliberal reforms on the province, it had previously been the party responsible for creating the province’s extensive social network and bureaucracy during the “boom” years of the 1950s, 60s, and early 70s. This change of ideology was not an issue for Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative government, however, as England’s rise to a Welfare State was legislated by the ruling Labour Party during the 1940s.¹⁰ At the time of Thatcher’s election, the Labour Party had traditionally supported the Keynesian Welfare State, while her Conservative Party had adhered to classical liberal economics combined with traditional, conservative moral values. This meant that the division between parties in terms of their political and economic ideologies remained relatively unchanged up to the 1979 election. That said, by the time Thatcher assumed the role of Prime Minister, England was well and truly a Welfare State and her regime had to make some concessions and delays when implementing its neoliberal agenda in order to retain public support. By contrast, in 1995 Ontario’s Progressive Conservative Party was in essence seeking to reform its own past traditions of social democratic governance. The ramifications of these and other social, historical, geographical and political factors will be discussed in more detail below, but to summarize the problem here: while Ontario in 1995 was ready for some aspects of the Harris political reforms, in many respects it was not (and to this day is still not) a region where some of the concepts that support core neoliberal ideals—particularly those associated with privatization and free markets—were acceptable. With this in mind, we turn our attention to the dilemma of how one classifies a state and its reforms as neoliberal when key aspects of that state (e.g., the

¹⁰ Nigel Knight, *Governing Britain Since 1945* (London, Politico’s, 2006), 76-77, 86.

retention of expensive and highly bureaucratic social services such as health care, welfare, and education) remain a defining part of the state's identity.

A first step in addressing this dilemma is to acknowledge the often “all too neat doctrinal coherence” applied to definitions of neoliberalism that promote its reification, such as Harvey's definition given above.¹¹ Such inflexible definitions problematize the wide variety of neoliberal policies, which at times seemingly conflict with neoliberal ideals and can certainly conflict with the ideas expressed in the policy of different political regimes. This inflexibility can also promote the kind of one-sided arguments so often found biasing the literature on neoliberalism. Instead, we can view the various neoliberal reforms that have taken place in states such as England, the United States, Australia, and Ontario as “diversity within convergence.”¹² Sean Phelan has stated that understanding the story of neoliberalism's dissemination and implementation throughout the world is much like creating “an anthology of stories, which often have as many points of difference as convergence.”¹³ This interpretation of *neoliberalism* is also in keeping with the approach of exploring policy divergence and convergence due to the tension between the global and the local described in Chapter Two.¹⁴ Accordingly, this study draws upon Rachel S. Turner's “conceptual map” of neoliberalism as the main model of *neoliberalism* employed in its analysis. As discussed in more detail below, Turner acknowledged the futility of interpreting specific courses of neoliberal reform through the lens of a neoliberal grand narrative and instead asserted that neoliberalism is supported by four core concepts that direct policy, yet allow policy to be shaped by the concerns and histories of the locations in which it is created and implemented. Turner's model is an excellent tool for tracing neoliberal reform at the state level and, through its deference to local concerns and influences, can be used to examine how policy embodies neoliberalism across political and social regions within a state.

¹¹ Sean Phelan, “Messy Grand Narrative or Analytical Blind Spot? When Speaking of Neoliberalism,” *Comparative European Politics* 5 (2007): 328.

¹² Philip G. Cerny, George Menz, and Susanne Soederberg, “Different Roads to Globalization: Neoliberalism, the Competition State, and Politics in a More Open World,” in *Internalizing Globalization: The Rise of Neoliberalism and the Decline of National Varieties of Capitalism*, eds. Susanne Soederberg, Georg Menz, and Philip G. Cerny (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 21.

¹³ Phelan, “Messy Grand Narrative or Analytical Blind Spot?” 337.

¹⁴ See Chapter Two, pp. 41-42, 49.

Because neoliberalism is a continuation of classical liberalism, this chapter first proceeds with a description of ideas and traditions upon which many of the core concepts of neoliberalism rest. Next, it gives a brief overview of the history and structure of Keynesian economic policies, as neoliberal reform in Welfare States such as England and Ontario are almost always framed as a backlash against such policies. The discourse with which this backlash is undertaken largely frames neoliberalism's core concepts. As discussed below, the concept of the collective society (represented by Keynesianism) vs. the individual (represented by neoliberalism), with the latter framed as advantageous, is one of the key elements of persuasive neoliberal discourse. With the historical backgrounds of both classical liberalism and Keynesian economics in place, the chapter moves on to a discussion of Turner's conceptual map, during which major social and economic changes undertaken in the United States of America and England (two of the most influential early neoliberal reformers) are given as examples of neoliberal reform. This is followed by a review of the creation and implementation of some neoliberal reforms in England during Margaret Thatcher's regime and in Ontario during Mike Harris's Progressive Conservative regime. These reforms are situated in the context of Turner's map.

Some Aspects of Classical Liberalism Relevant to Neoliberalism

Liberalism, like neoliberalism, is a “complex and pluralistic political ideology.”¹⁵ By tracing liberalism's history, neoliberalism can be framed as a continuation and reinvention of classical liberalism intended to meet the needs of the post-war twentieth century in various countries.¹⁶ Neoliberalism draws upon three main sources of classical liberal thought: Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), the German *Rechtstaat* or

¹⁵ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7. See also Harland Prechel and John B. Harms, “Politics and Neoliberalism: Theory and Ideology,” in *Politics and Neoliberalism: Structure, Process and Outcome*, ed. Harland Prechel (Oxford: Elsevier Ltd, 2007), 3-5; and Andrew Vincent's overview of why “classical liberalism has been anything but dead” since the 1940s in his book *Modern Political Ideologies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 30.

“constitutional state,” and John Locke’s ideas as interpreted through the lens of American Revolution and independence.¹⁷

Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*

Smith’s book, properly titled *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations* (1776) but today referred to only by the title’s last three or four words, is the classical liberal work most associated with neoliberal ideology. Smith’s free market economy forms the basis of neoliberalism’s first core concept and deserves detailed attention here both because neoliberals claim Smith’s ideas as the foundation of their ideology and because they often misrepresent his ideas in their discourse.¹⁸

It is common for modern political and economic interpretations that cite his economics as the foundation of the neoliberal approach to frame Smith as an economist who endorsed continuously rising national productivity and wealth through unregulated free markets that would adapt and cater to unbridled capitalistic self-interests. However, this is not what he envisioned. Unlike some modern neoliberal calls for an ultra-free market economy, the market should not, in his Smith’s view, serve as its own ethical code.¹⁹ As Gavin Kennedy wrote, the “serious transformation of [Smith’s] political economy from what he wrote originally to what he was represented to have written . . . persists today, namely that he was the progenitor of the economics of capitalism, especially in its *laissez-faire* variations. This is an embarrassing error.”²⁰ Before the 1776 publication of his landmark book *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith was best known as a moral philosopher. He was an important figure in the eighteenth century Scottish enlightenment and drew inspiration for his work from his friend and Oxford university

¹⁷ To be fair, other liberal ideas are influential in the development of various forms of neoliberalism, but these three underscore all four of Turner’s core concepts of neoliberalism, so are most relevant to this discussion.

¹⁸ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 21-23. See also James D. Marshall, “Varieties of Neoliberalism: A Foucaultian Perspective,” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 33, no. 3-4 (2007): 293; and Kevin Ward and Kim England, Introduction to *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, Peoples*, 7.

¹⁹ For example, Raymond Plant wrote that the neoliberal conception of the market could be considered a “morally free zone” because of its stress on individual needs and disregard of the collective. *Politics, Theology and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 200. It is interesting to note that it is often on this premise that neoconservatives in the United States engage neoliberalism.

²⁰ Gavin Kennedy, *Adam Smith’s Lost Legacy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2005), 96.

professor of ethics, jurisprudence, and politics Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746),²¹ as well as philosopher David Hume (1711-1776), who wrote extensively on the subjects of sympathy and altruism.²² Smith's first book, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, was published in 1759 while he was employed as a professor of ethics at Glasgow University. It laid the moral and philosophical foundation of much of what was written almost twenty years later in *The Wealth of Nations*.²³ For this reason, Jack Russell Weinstein suggested that Smith is best thought of "not as an economist who happened to write philosophy, but, rather, as a philosopher who wrote some economics."²⁴ Smith was, in fact, enormously concerned with the fair and ethical treatment of all members of a society. In *The Wealth of Nations* he asserted that,

No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable. It is but equity, besides, that they [i.e., lower class workers] who feed, clothe and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed and lodged.²⁵

Moral sentiments such as these abound in *The Wealth of Nations*. In actuality, the book is not just a reflection on economy and markets, but on the political and economic structures required for all members of society to support themselves, with enough revenue left over to enable the state to carry out key public services.²⁶ These discrepancies between Smith's work and its interpretation and representation in neoliberal ideology are pointed out here as examples of the integral aspect of neoliberal discourse that seeks to polarize the concepts of the collective and the individual (discussed in more detail below). For Smith, such polarization was not appropriate.

Smith's vision of a political economy was built upon the concept of the division of labour. He argued that the wealth of a nation should be measured by its productive

²¹ Jack Russell Weinstein, *On Adam Smith* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning Inc., 2001), 16.

²² *Ibid.*, 19.

²³ *Ibid.*, 3. Weinstein et al., have explicitly cautioned against reading the two books as separate texts with conflicting ideas (historically referred to as the *Adam Smith Problem*) rather than as a complementary set of texts that systematically lay out a theory of human behaviour and an appropriate political and economic model that promotes wealthy societies whose members collectively benefit from individual actions.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

²⁵ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York: Everyman's Library, 1991), 70.

²⁶ Weinstein, *On Adam Smith*, 58.

capabilities, particularly by how much can be produced by labourers within a given time frame.²⁷ Smith wrote that a division of labour that allocated one or two facets of production to an individual increases a society's productive capacity in three ways: (1) increased performance through repetition, (2) time recovered from not switching tasks, and (3) new technologies invented by the labourers to make work easier or more efficient.²⁸ Smith also categorized labour as productive or unproductive. Productive labour occurs when "a vendible, tangible product" that can be added to the nation's value is produced. Unproductive labour, however, "consumes part of the consumption fund [i.e., wages] but produces no tangible output."²⁹ Smith gave the example of servants as unproductive labour, but Duncan K. Foley added that "lawyers and judges also fall into the unproductive category (as do opera singers and doctors)."³⁰ As will be seen below, however, Smith believed there is a critical place for unproductive labour in society. In addition, neoliberals, as discussed in Chapter Four, expanded the idea of physical production to include the intellectual production of goods, or "intellectual property," which is a vital element of neoliberal education systems, particularly in developed countries.

Another key idea in *The Wealth of Nations* is that, through the pursuit of our own self-interest, we contribute to the good of the society as a whole. The (now famous) example Smith gave is that of the butcher, brewer, and baker:

But man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. Whoever offers to another a bargain of any kind, proposes to do this. Give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want, is the meaning of every such offer; and it is in this manner that we obtain from one another the far greater part of those good offices which we stand in need of. It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own

²⁷ Duncan K. Foley, *Adam's Fallacy: A Guide to Economic Theology* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006), 4.

²⁸ Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 7. The famous example given by Smith is of pin construction. One pin would take one man with little experience almost a day to make, but if the construction of a pin was broken down into 18 stages with a person assigned to repeatedly carry out only one or two of those stages, these few men could produce almost forty-eight thousand pins in a day. See *Wealth of Nations*, 5.

²⁹ Foley, *Adam's Fallacy*, 30.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages.³¹

The wealth of a nation, then, depends on increased productivity, which allows workers to obtain more material goods when coupled with “mixed-motivations and co-operation.”³² Both needs are considered: those of the person who has the product and those of the person who wishes to obtain the product. It is an extension of the bartering process, where the “transaction transforms our selfishness into a mutually wilful exchange.”³³ Because there is need on both ends of the market transaction, each individual must keep his demands to a minimum. Our self-interest is moderated by the desire to achieve our needs and wants, and in achieving our goal, we help another meet her needs and wants. In this respect, Smith balanced self-interests with cooperation. The oft-quoted metaphor of the “invisible hand” was given when Smith explained how this concept might be extended to the man who believes it is most profitable and beneficial for himself to keep his capital within domestic rather than foreign markets. Such a man

intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. . . . By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.³⁴

Here, Smith posited that self-interest does not just benefit one or two individuals, but their society as a whole. As a point of information, this is the only reference of the invisible hand in *The Wealth of Nations*, although the phrase is synonymous with neoliberalism and is often applied incorrectly to mean the free-market itself.

Smith’s belief in the pursuit of self-interest and the altruism it begets lead him to support a free and open economic market, albeit only to an extent. He reasoned that it is the competition inherent in the bartering process that helps regulate pricing, keeping prices close to their “natural” (i.e., the cost of production) state. Products that are priced too high above the natural price can be forced down in several ways. They may simply cease to be purchased because of their expense, or other producers, seeing the profit to be made, will produce their own products, thereby driving the cost down through either the

³¹ Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 13.

³² Kennedy, *Adam Smith’s Lost Legacy*, 102.

³³ *Ibid.*, 108.

³⁴ Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 399.

wider availability of the product or the lowering of prices to undercut the competition. Conversely, a shortage of product will drive up prices.³⁵ Since the wealth of a nation is measured by its productive capabilities, Smith stated that it is in the best interest of the state and of producers to keep prices near their “natural rate,” as this promotes the purchase, and thus more production of, goods. As discussed below, this argument would underpin much of Margaret Thatcher’s arguments regarding the need to address England’s high level of inflation by restricting the power of the trade unions during the 1980s.

It should also be noted that Smith believed that the division of labour would constantly create new products and markets for those products (and vice versa), thereby creating further divisions of labour and constantly increasing the overall production of a nation and thus its wealth. While not an exact reflection of this principle, this idea would be echoed during neoliberal social and education reforms through an emphasis on the creative *knowledge worker* who is capable of developing new, marketable technologies and services. As discussed further in Chapter Four, the production of a knowledge worker had specific ramifications for the role and content of public education in society. It would also affect justifications for music education England and Ontario, as discussed in Chapters Six and Eight.

According to Smith, unemployment levels are kept low because those individuals who become unemployed as a result of their products not meeting market demand are then employed in new endeavours as the market finds new “niches” that arise to fill ever-changing consumer demand. Smith believed that this low unemployment would also reduce demand on state social services as people became more affluent.³⁶ Smith also asserted that people must be free to invest their capital wherever they see fit. As individuals make choices in the market, they direct the flow of industry through demand. This leads to greater efficiencies as more productive businesses flourish, a concept which underpins much of the neoliberal emphasis on educational market competition as

³⁵ Ibid., 49-50.

³⁶ Smith referred to this cycle to as “universal opulence.” In short, “he supplies [workers] abundantly with what they have occasion for, and they accommodate him as amply with what he has occasion for, and a general plenty diffuses itself through all the different ranks of the society.” *Wealth of Nations*, 10. See also Foley, *Adam’s Fallacy*, 10.

encourage through the concepts of excellence, standards, and accountability (discussed in the next chapter).

It is these elements of his economic vision that have led to the commonly held belief that Smith promoted a pure *laissez-faire* economy. Translated literally as “leave it to do” or, more colloquially, “leave things alone and they will take care of themselves,” Smith never actually used the term in his writings, although there is evidence to suggest that he was aware of it.³⁷ He did, however, call for government non-interference in trade, particularly in the realm of international trade and purchase of goods, believing that government imposed trade restrictions (e.g., tariffs) or subsidies on exports and imports did not allow products to maintain their natural value.³⁸ But Smith also asserted that government must play a key role in the regulation of the economy, chiefly by instituting policies to prevent the rise of monopolies.

Smith’s opinion of monopolies was best expressed in his statement that, “to narrow the competition must always be against [the good of the public], and can serve only to enable the dealers, by raising their profits above what they naturally would be, to levy, for their own benefit, an absurd tax upon the rest of their fellow citizens.”³⁹ To Smith, monopolies strangled the cooperative spirit of market exchange and thus its ability to maintain equilibrium. They were self-interest unchecked, as lack of competition meant that there was no need to consider the needs of the other. He recognized that merchants would, in their own self-interest, be naturally tempted to pay workers lower wages than their due and to set up monopolies if given the opportunity.⁴⁰ His call for the government to create policies that discouraged such practices reveals that,

Smith’s vision of *laissez-faire* is not a one-sided encouragement of private enterprise and the market to neglect of political and governmental institutions, but a balanced understanding of the interplay between market and state institutions in allowing the virtuous circle of economic development to proceed.⁴¹

³⁷ Kennedy, *Adam Smith’s Lost Legacy*, 143.

³⁸ Foley summarizes this process nicely: “the subsidy induces citizens to sell assets (commodities produced within the country) to foreigners at a loss, that is, effectively at prices lower than the world market price. Similarly, a tariff on imports prevents citizens from exchanging gold for commodities that might be worth more than the gold given up.” *Adam’s Fallacy*, 34.

³⁹ Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 232.

⁴⁰ D.P. O’Brien, *The Classical Economists Revisited* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 37.

⁴¹ Foley, *Adam’s Fallacy*, 39-40.

Overall, then, Smith's is not a truly *laissez-faire* system of economics, as it relies on the government for protection of property rights and other carefully instituted policies that encourage equilibrium and cooperation in the market. That said, and as discussed in the next chapter, the concept of market competition would become a major discursive element in neoliberal education reforms as governments asserted that, without a competition amongst schools, public systems of education would stagnate and fail to improve their educational services.

Smith also believed that a wealthy nation was obligated to meet those needs that a citizen alone, despite purchasing power, could not meet. The state's three main duties were:

the duty of protecting the society from violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals, to erect and maintain.⁴²

It is in the three duties of the state that Smith demonstrated the place of unproductive labour: although nothing tangible is produced, this unproductive labour supports the production of goods. The first duty clearly refers to national defence and the right of citizens to live and work peacefully. The second duty encompasses, but is not limited to, the creation of a legal system that the government must institute in order to keep goods near their natural value and the markets in equilibrium. The third refers to public institutions and structures that perform such duties as maintaining the infrastructures necessary for general commerce (e.g., roads and bridges) and, surprisingly, public education, to which a critical role is given in *The Wealth of Nations*.

While the division of labour creates a labourer who is highly educated in his area of expertise, Smith expressed concern that this would lead to a general stagnation of the mind, alienation from society, and a disinterest in its workings:

⁴² Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 620.

[The worker's] dexterity at his own particular trade seems . . . to be acquired at the expenses of his intellectual, social, and martial values. But in every improved and civilised society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless the government takes some pains to prevent it.⁴³

Smith asserted that public education benefitted the state because it allowed the public to make informed decisions regarding their personal welfare—decisions which could affect the market and the government.⁴⁴ He acknowledged that, while public education could not provide the same results as the types of schools accessible to the children of “people of rank and fortune,” the “essential parts of education”—reading, writing and accounting—“can be acquired at so early a period of life, that the greater part even of those who are to be bred to the lowest occupations have time to acquire them before they can be employed in those occupations.”⁴⁵ Education, then, not only played a central role in the wealth of nations, but also in the quality of life for each individual and was central to the idea of informed decision making on issues that affected both the self and collective society, even if it was restricted to the educational basics for the lower socio-economic classes.

Taken as a whole, Smith's ideas as presented in *The Wealth of Nations* represent “a unified concept of an economic system with mutually interdependent parts.”⁴⁶ Based on the principle of the division of labour and the productive capacity this brings to a nation in a government-protected free market economy, Smith nevertheless emphasized the right of all citizens to a basic quality of life. He stressed harmony among all parts of a state's economic and social systems, where self-interest is balanced by cooperation. The result of this is a “universal opulence” that reaches all members of society, although there is no intention that all members should share equally in the wealth. This right is protected and enhanced through the three duties of the government. In this, Smith possessed a

⁴³ Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, V.1.178, accessed February 9, 2009, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN.html>. Somewhat tellingly, it can be challenging to find a complete version of *The Wealth of Nations*. Most versions contain only the first four sections, which detail Smith's economic theory. Those aspects of the book which deal with suggestions for how the state should spend its revenue and its “debts to society” (i.e., section five) are commonly omitted. Thus, all of the material from Part V of *The Wealth of Nations* is drawn from the Library of Economics and Liberty complete online version of Smith's publication.

⁴⁴ Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, V.1.189.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, V.1.182.

⁴⁶ O'Brien, *The Classical Economist Revisited*, 35.

“teleological view of the universe,” stressing free markets based on the demand for goods priced at their natural value as means to an end rather than for their own sake.⁴⁷

The *Rechtsstaat* or Constitutional State

The second classical liberal idea drawn upon in the formation of neoliberal ideology is that of the German *Rechtsstaat*, or constitutional state bound by the rule of law. Built on the philosophical ideas of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), the *Rechtsstaat*'s main function is to create a constitution that will enable the state to uphold laws ensuring the personal liberty of its citizens. As Turner states, “it is paramount to the freedom of the individual that the state’s functions are limited to the sphere of a legality compatible with the rule of law.”⁴⁸ Rather than dictate how a citizen should behave, the *Rechtsstaat*'s constitution removes barriers to personal freedoms. This “freedom from interference” promotes what is commonly referred to as *negative rights*, which are associated with such concepts as *negative freedom* and *negative justice*.

Negative rights are rights that allow individuals to pursue their own fortunes and are meant to foster a society where individuals are responsible for their own welfare. They include such rights as the right to free speech, the right to own property, the right to engage in a free and open economic market for personal gain, and the right to a fair trial. This stands in contrast to social or *positive rights*, which guarantee that certain provisions and standards of living will be provided to all individuals within a state. These include the right to quality health care, to a basic standard of living, to public education, and to not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, or race, etc.. In other words, negative rights protect an individual from being acted upon by another individual or political body and assume that individuals will make self-motivated and informed choices that promote their own well-being. Positive rights assure individuals that they will have a certain quality of life regardless of their social and economic choices. Negative rights are meant to remove barriers so that all individuals will have an equal opportunity to succeed in life (this of course assumes that all individuals are able to take advantage of the opportunities a system of negative rights affords them), while positive rights are meant to

⁴⁷ Ibid. In other words, Smith’s political economy aimed to ensure a particular level of quality of life for all citizens, rather than simply an adherence to the free-market principle for its own sake.

⁴⁸ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 27-29.

lessen the need to compete for social and economic gain and instead foster a base-level of social and economic equality among individuals within a state.⁴⁹ Negative rights, then, are associated with the individual, while positive rights are associated with collective society. As discussed below, it is from the tension found between these two sets of rights that neoliberals most often draw their most persuasive discourse regarding the need for economic, social, and education reform. It is interesting to note that, while many neoliberals eschew positive rights because they are not the result of individual competition, Smith's three "duties of the state" imply that he believed the state should ensure certain positive rights. As discussed in the next chapter and seen in the Chapters Five and Seven discussion of English and Ontario education reforms, positive and negative rights lie at the heart of the discussion of whether education should foster educational *equality* or educational *equity*. The former suggests that all students should be treated equally and so succeed based on their respective merits and work ethic, while the latter suggests that all students should be able to achieve at the same level as long as the system "levels the playing field" by addressing individual disparities among students.

Lockean Philosophy

The final mode of liberal thought drawn upon as a frame for neoliberalism in this study is that of philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) as interpreted in the United States during that nation's revolutionary birth and subsequent independence. Locke believed that humans had a moral right to individually pursue those experiences and material objects that produced happiness, as long as a minimal set of laws or "rules of conduct" were in place to sustain society. These "natural laws" were discoverable through one's ability to reason and our relationship with God.⁵⁰ According to Ruth Weissbourd Grant, "in Locke's view, what is right and what is useful are related. God governs men according to rational laws whose end is the general happiness of mankind. Consequently,

⁴⁹ Ibid., 150-152. See also Ran Hirschl, "'Negative' Rights vs. 'Positive Entitlements': A Comparative Study of Judicial Interpretations of Rights in Emerging Neo-Liberal Economic Order," *Human Rights Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (2000): 1071.

⁵⁰ Ruth Weissbourd Grant, *John Locke's Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 40-47.

what is right is also useful, but it is not right simply because it is useful.”⁵¹ These codes may seem arbitrary, but they are actually part of a moral system designed to aid a multicultural, immigrant-based society in resolving its differences while allowing individuals the perceived God-given right to pursue self-interest. They lay at the heart of the American Revolution and Constitution.⁵² As the basis for the first and only political system in that country, they are deeply ingrained in the American psyche, as are the ideas of the “self-made individual”—an extension of the Lockean ideal of the moral value of usefulness—and the protestant notion of the moral rightness of hard work and diligent pursuit of success in honour of the abilities given to one by God. As summarized by Turner, “American liberalism rested on the fundamental assumption that the ethical basis for *laissez-faire* is that the public good is best achieved through competition between individuals to promote their own good.”⁵³ As discussed in the next chapter, in neoliberal education, this translates into the belief that students who make informed education decisions and work hard will be rewarded with the necessary academic credentials to achieve economic prosperity once they enter the workforce.

These liberal ideals, however popular and widely employed during the nineteenth century, would fall into decline in the early twentieth century after World War I as the world headed into the Great Depression. As explained next, the rise of Keynesian economics underscored the importance of government planning for social improvement, and, ultimately, would “set the stage” for the backlash that would reintroduce classical liberal ideas into public policy in the post-WWII era.

History and Overview of Keynesian Economics

Keynesian economics draws its name from British Economist John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946). His policies reflected a growing belief that economic liberalism,

⁵¹ Ibid., 44.

⁵² Examples include the Declaration of Independence’s claim of an individual’s right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (a rephrasing of one of Locke’s key ideas); the motto “no taxation without representation;” and the constitutional rights to free speech, to bear arms, to freedom of assembly, etc..

⁵³ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 35. This idea is also discussed in Steven Watts, *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790-1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 7-11. Although Watts does take exception to an over-reliance on Lockean ideals, he supports the culture of entrepreneurialism, self-made individualism, civic society, moral order, and liberalism discussed by Turner.

with its promotion of the free market's ability to keep unemployment low and quality of life high, had failed to provide for society's needs. Keynes was an active critic of various post-World War I economic plans and he predicted the social and economic instability of Europe that resulted from forcing Germany to pay WWI reparations. He also predicted the deflation of the pound that arose from Churchill's post-war economic policies in Britain.⁵⁴ In response to these economic crises and the growing economic depression, unemployment, and deflation in countries such as the United States and England in the 1930s, Keynes published *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), a work that is widely acknowledged to be "the most influential work in economics certainly of the first two-thirds and possibly of the entire twentieth century."⁵⁵

By the end of the 1940s, Keynesian economic ideals were embedded in British economic policy and became entrenched in the policies of most Western countries in the affluent post-World War II era.⁵⁶ On a historical note, Keynes was instrumental in fostering the ability of post-World War II Western European nations to fund his own policies. He was a key player in the negotiations that created the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (originally known as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). These structures, which ironically played and continue to play a large role in the spread of neoliberalism, were originally conceived as a means of bringing stability to world markets through monitoring member countries' impact on exchange rates and lending money to the war-devastated European countries for reconstruction of infrastructure and economy. Keynes himself was among the British representatives that signed the IMF and World Bank into existence at the Bretton Woods conference during June-July of 1944, making the American dollar the "all-important national currency."⁵⁷ The American dollar could now be exchanged against a fixed gold rate, thus allowing countries to stabilize their currency by investing in the dollar or borrowing from the IMF, enabling the United States to "become de jure as well as de

⁵⁴ Foley, *Adam's Fallacy*, 181. Churchill was Chancellor of the Exchequer when, in 1926, he decided that the pound should be converted to its pre-war gold parity.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

⁵⁶ John Phillip Jones, *Keynes's Vision: Why the Great Depression Did Not Return* (London: Routledge, 2008), 5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

facto the financial center of the world.”⁵⁸ The implications of the American dollar’s domination of the financial world are presented in Chapter Four as part of a discussion on the effects of globalization and neoliberalization on education reform, as well in the discussion below regarding England’s need to borrow money from the IMF in the 1970s.

At its heart, Keynesian economics posited that economic markets are not always self-correcting or able to respond to the needs of the people. In other words, variations in the market do not all “even out” in the end, as Adam Smith proposed. For example, workers laid off because of a dip in demand for a particular product are not guaranteed that demand for a new product will lead to future employment. Keynes believed it necessary for governments to regulate the market in order to control issues such as widespread unemployment and fluctuations in currency.⁵⁹ Keynes asserted that the government should maintain the economic health of the nation through two types of policy: *monetary* and *fiscal*. Monetary policy controls the rate of interest: the lower a central interest rate, the easier it is for consumers to borrow money and use it to stimulate the economy. Increasing interest rates discourages inflation. Fiscal policy stimulates public demand for goods and refers to policy that “manipulates public spending.”⁶⁰ Examples of fiscal policy, which is generally accepted as more effective than monetary policy, include public works spending (e.g., large-scale infrastructure projects and government monopolies on services such as water and electricity), investments in public programs (e.g., unemployment insurance or health care), or, as we have seen more recently, economic “bailouts.”⁶¹ Fiscal policy allows citizens the monetary stability to

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Keynes’s preoccupation with unemployment is hardly surprising given the times in which he wrote his book. Decreasing unemployment was seen as a key factor in restoring the economy as not only would this ease the demand for social assistance on governments, but it would also place money in the hands of consumers, who could then put that money back into the economy.

⁶⁰ Jones, *Keynes Vision*, 13.

⁶¹ For example, the economic crisis which began in the United States in 2008 and subsequently rippled out to affect the economies of even the wealthiest states in the world was so sudden and disruptive that many state governments, including that of the United States, responded with Keynesian policies in order to rapidly stabilize banks, housing markets, and spiralling unemployment. Measures taken included multi-billion dollar government-funded projects to provide jobs, massive infusions of government dollars into the banking system in order to prevent bank failure, and significant and immediate lowering of prime interest rates. The latter element is an example of monetary policy. For a succinct overview of the American reaction to the 2008 economic crisis and its relation to Keynesian economics, see Steve Pressman, “A Time to Return to Keynes,” *Critical Perspectives on International Business* 5, no. 1/2 (2009), 157-61.

continue injecting money into the economy, usually through the creation of employment, but also through decreasing the need to pay for health and social services, such as education. In turn, these health and social services help ensure that citizens are able to work.

Keynes's economic policies gave rise to the *Keynesian Welfare State*. Expanding on the principle that government spending on public welfare programs would foster demand, stabilize the markets, and lead to continuing economic growth and employment, Western countries in the post-World War II era began to expand their social welfare programs.⁶² Such expansions were contingent upon economic surpluses and the manpower necessary to implement broad social programs. According to Jill Quadagno, the period after World War II provided the perfect combination of factors to foster the Welfare State: "the high level of economic development between 1945 and 1973 provided the economic means, Keynesian economics provided the rationale, while the centralization of federal government during national wartime mobilization expanded national bureaucratic capacity."⁶³ Concomitant to the implementation of the Welfare State was the belief that its various social programs would promote "social equality, social stability, social integration and inclusion, and reduce poverty" through support given to all citizens.⁶⁴ Such programs, although perhaps framed by Keynes as an economic activity, became widely accepted as a state-driven process to take social responsibility for its citizens by establishing a gradual reform in social practices. It is worth noting, however, that Keynes believed economic models had an ethical obligation to address the needs of the poor. He viewed the poor as "unjust victims of economic forces beyond their power as individuals to control."⁶⁵ In essence, a social democracy was created that built a bridge between the affluence that might be achieved through an effectively functioning market with relatively free democratic rights and the

⁶² Jill Quadagno, "Theories of the Welfare State," *Annual Review of Sociology* 13, no. 1 (1987): 110.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁶⁴ Josefina Figueira-McDonough, *The Welfare State and Social Work: Pursuing Social Justice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007), 303.

⁶⁵ Calvin Woodard, "Reality and Social Reform: The Transition From *Laissez-faire* to Welfare State," *The Yale Law Journal* 72, no. 2 (1962): 293.

revolutionary ideals of complete socialism embodied by communism.⁶⁶

Many at the time believed that a nation's ability to provide citizens equal access to programs such as health care, education, and pensions and to guarantee a certain quality of life through either full employment or assistance for those who could not find or were unable to work would greatly reduce class disparities arising from socio-economic circumstance, in effect building a system of positive rights.⁶⁷ From an economic perspective, the Welfare State of the mid-1940s to the mid-1970s can be identified as a time of massive government spending, regulation of economic markets, expanding bureaucracy, and increased employment of citizens in social works programs in order to keep unemployment rates low. From political and sociological perspectives, governments purportedly assumed responsibility for their citizens through the provision of various services such as health care, education, pensions, and unemployment insurance, all the while asserting greater control over the economy in order to promote the redistribution of wealth, full employment, and a higher, more equal standard of living for all citizens. Both perspectives are evident in countries such as Canada, England, Australia, and, to a lesser extent, the United States during this time period.

The Rise of Neoliberalism and Turner's Conceptual Map

During the inflation and recession that followed the 1973 and 1979 oil crises, economists and national governments in many developed countries began to assert that a new state-centered economic model was needed. Dramatically increased inflation, coupled with decreased productivity and increased unemployment despite continuing Keynesian policies prompted many economists in the mid- to late-1980s and 1990s to suggest a return to the economic liberal principals of the free-market. As discussed below, this movement began even earlier in England as part of the rhetoric leading up to

⁶⁶ For a more thorough discussion of the forms of social democracy and how it offers an alternative "third way" between economic liberalism and communism, see Brad Rose and Gary Ross, "Socialism's Past, New Socialism and Socialism's Future," *Social Science History* 18, no. 3 (1994): 439-69.

⁶⁷ In the years since the Welfare State became common place, many theories regarding whether or not it enabled such change (or was in fact counterproductive in this respect) have been put forth. Calvin Woodard's 1962 article "Reality and Social Reform" gives a provocative account written during the heyday of the Welfare State of changing moral standards and the sharing and redistribution of wealth. For a more contemporary reflection on theories of the impact of the Welfare State on social reform, see Joel Blau, "Theories of the Welfare State," *The Social Science Review* 63, no. 1 (1989): 26-38.

Conservative's 1979 election victory. Governments wanted a dramatic reduction of state spending on social provisions in order to pay down burgeoning state deficits created by "spending their way out" of recession and unemployment, as per the Keynesian model. An end to state economic regulation and taxation to support sprawling state bureaucracies and inefficiently run social systems was called for.⁶⁸ One solution was the introduction of a new form of economic liberalism. With this in mind, this chapter now turn to the task of defining neoliberalism.

As stated previously, "defining neoliberalism" is no easy task. Turner acknowledges that "pure" neoliberalism does not exist and that to attempt a grand narrative is pointless: neoliberalism's development throughout the last few decades of the twentieth century has been fraught with theoretical tensions arising from conflicting schools of thought and practical tensions resulting from its implementation in a variety of contexts, making it a "complex and varied ideology."⁶⁹ Her solution to defining neoliberalism as an ideology, and, I would argue, analyzing the neoliberal elements in a particular regime, rests on Michael Freeden's three-pronged approach of analyzing political ideologies. This involves "an analysis of the ideology's internal structure; a contextual analysis of the ideology's historical contingencies; and an analysis of the ideology's core concepts."⁷⁰ The second point approaches ideologies as "historically contingent entities." That is, it views ideological thought as arising from a set of traditions and social circumstances created in response to historical events, which is not unlike the *forces and factors* approach to comparative education discussed in Chapter Two.⁷¹ Turner advocates the use of Michel Foucault's genealogical analysis to identify and trace the development of those concepts central to a political ideology.⁷² In doing so, the analyst is able to uncover the "motives, institutional pressures and anxieties which coalesced" in such a way that the development of neoliberalism was "rational and

⁶⁸ Although various factions had argued for a course of economic liberalism throughout the Keynesian era, their voices were largely ignored.

⁶⁹ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 5. See also Marion Fourcade-Gourinchas and Sarah Babb, "The Rebirth of the Liberal Creed: Paths to Neoliberalism in Four Countries," *American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 3 (2003): 533-79; and Cerny, Menz, and Soederberg, "Different Roads to Globalization," 1-30.

⁷⁰ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 9. See also Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁷¹ See Chapter Two, pp. 28-32.

⁷² Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 9.

necessary” to those who developed and supported it.⁷³ The first and last parts of Freeden’s analytical approach state that, while certain core concepts must remain unchanged for the ideology to remain intact, ideologies also undergo a “process of change and adjustment” where the “general parameters of the ideology . . . remain fragile and elusive.”⁷⁴ This accounts for the complex varieties of neoliberalism in existence: as long as the core and most of the adjacent concepts are present, “boundaries may be traversed—either consciously or unconsciously—to broaden an ideology’s appeal and to take account of what were peripheral issues and concerns [of a particular state].”⁷⁵ The internal consistency of neoliberalism is maintained by the core principles, so that although it occurs in various forms, it is recognizable as a “particular logic of thought.”⁷⁶ Freeden’s approach, then, accounts for *convergence* and *divergence* in the application of political ideology in various states with different social, political, and economic traditions and values.

Following Freeden’s approach of analyzing ideologies, Turner constructs her conceptual map of neoliberalism with core concepts, adjacent concepts (those concepts which give meaning to the core concepts), and peripheral concepts (concepts which are not essential to the ideology, but which allow it to relate to “cultural, historical and geographical setting”).⁷⁷ Table 3.1 presents Turner’s conceptual map.

While there is nothing particularly controversial about the historical connections and events upon which Turner draws to trace the development of neoliberalism, nor of identification of neoliberalism’s core or adjacent concepts, Turner’s conceptual map is a more rigorous, yet flexible “definition” of neoliberalism in that her map allows it to take a variety of forms. It is a more sensitive approach that avoids the reification that often accompanies less rigorous examinations of the term “neoliberalism.”⁷⁸ In this, Turner’s approach to “mapping” neoliberalism is particularly compatible with the definition of policy given in Chapter One, which stresses that there is no such thing as “neat and clean”

⁷³ Ibid., 11.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁷⁷ Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 68.

⁷⁸ Please see the footnotes throughout this chapter for additional sources that indicate where Turner’s ideas on the nature of neoliberalism are echoed by others.

policy: policy must be interpreted in context to understand its construction, the meanings embodied in its interpretation, and how these processes are influenced by context.⁷⁹

Table 3.1. Rachel S. Turner's Map of Neoliberalism's Conceptual Configuration⁸⁰

Core Concepts	Adjacent Concepts	Peripheral Concepts
The Market	evolution, spontaneous order, limited knowledge, free exchange, individualism, self-interest, entrepreneurship	the enterprise culture, short-term profit motives, income-tax relief, privatisation, deregulation, share-ownership
Welfare	minimal state, equality of opportunity, freedom, personal responsibility, self-reliance, negative rights	reduced social expenditure, education vouchers, private insurance, 'workfare,' negative income tax
The Constitution	freedom, private law, legal responsibility, abstract order, 'rules of just conduct,' evolution	the legal state, a separation of powers, independent administrative courts, a 'fiscal constitution,' balanced budgets, restrained democratic rule
Property	ownership, possessive individualism, legal privilege, individual initiative, negative justice, private associations	capital accumulations, voluntary savings, private inheritance, maximised shareholder profits

Neoliberalism's Rise and Dissemination

To situate neoliberalism as an extension of classical economic liberalism, Turner supplied an historical account of the development of neoliberalism in Britain, Germany, and the United States. A complete review of this perspective is not necessary here, although two key themes are worth restating. First is the ideological tension between collectivism and individualism. Turner observed that the reaction of those who support classic liberal values is often framed as a direct backlash to collectivism as supported by Keynesian economics. The idea of allowing government to embark on a program of social planning for the good of the people—in neoliberal words, taking the ability of the people to control their own lives out of individual hands—is often phrased as nothing short of repugnant by those who wish to revive elements of classic economic liberal

⁷⁹ See Chapter One, p. 20.

⁸⁰ Source: Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 13.

ideology. Among the given reasons are that this: violates negative rights; promotes massive regulation of the markets; promotes government owned monopolies on sectors of the economy; encourages slothfulness on the part of the individual because a certain quality of life is guaranteed regardless of work ethic; and requires massive governmental bureaucracies. Also, the idea that collectivism can lead to dictatorship is often implied.⁸¹ Although such opinions had been expressed prior to the post-World War II years, Turner centred the ideological “rallying point” for neoliberalism around the formation of the Mont Pelerin Society (MPS) in 1947, particularly around the ideas and work of Friedrich Hayek (1899-1992), an Austrian economist and philosopher who founded the MPS because he believed that “the revival of liberalism would ultimately be determined by the success of liberal intellectuals in recapturing the ideological ground from collectivists.”⁸² Hayek’s argument against collectivist policies were fully outlined in his seminal book *The Road to Serfdom*, first published in 1945. This leads to a second theme: the power of discourse and dissemination of ideas.

Hayek believed that the most effective way to deal with collectivism’s entrenchment in the politics and economies of the West was to launch an “intellectual assault” against them.⁸³ He argued that the main reason why social planning was so successful was because it offered an agreeable vision of the future.⁸⁴ Hayek asserted that liberals must offer an alternative utopian vision of the future that could challenge the collectivist vision and persuade the political and intellectual elite that their version of utopia was superior, even if, privately, they knew it would not be fully realisable.⁸⁵ He asserted that the MPS must create a psychological change in society that would embrace liberal principles and lead to an “alteration in the character of the people.”⁸⁶ The MPS was thus dedicated to persuading intellectuals, who would then go forth and persuade

⁸¹ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 48, 63-64, 75. Indeed, those supporting this point of view made no real distinction between the ills of collectivism in any form, be it Keynesianism, Socialism, Communism, or Fascism. All held the same threat and, particularly in the McCarthy era in the United States, were grouped together to promote a culture of fear around social planning. See also Foley, *Adam’s Fallacy*, 201-202.

⁸² Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 70. See also Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 19-22 and Colin Hay, *Re-stating Social and Political Change* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1996), 132-33.

⁸³ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 69. See also Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 21.

⁸⁴ Hayek devotes an entire chapter to this topic. See “The Great Utopia,” in *The Road to Serfdom*, ed. Bruce Caldwell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 76-82.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁸⁶ Hayek quoted in Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 70.

leaders and policy makers, to adopt a new liberalism suited to the time. This discourse ultimately led to a “common sense” approach to neoliberalism, where the core and adjacent concepts of neoliberalism and their supporting reforms are positioned as the *only* rational solution to a state’s problems. As seen in the following chapters, neoliberal “common sense” was a significant discursive element employed in persuading English and Ontarian citizenry of the need for and practicality of both Thatcher’s and Harris’ proposed education reforms. Indeed, as discussed in Chapters Six and Eight, this discourse had significant implications for the content and purpose of music education in each state.

Turner admitted that the line of causation between MPS and specific public attitudes and policy decisions is “often impossible to draw.”⁸⁷ Yet, her historical documentation of the involvement of members of the MPS, most notably Hayek and Milton Friedman (1912-2006), in multiple intellectual societies, think tanks, and as policy advisors for various political candidates and government administrations, as well as their roles as mentors and advisors to younger generations of neoliberals who would also participate in such activities, certainly speaks to the impact the formation of the MPS had on the development of neoliberalism. For example, she credited Friedman as a significant influence in the “ultra-free market” approach to neoliberalism prevalent in the United States. As a leader of the Chicago school of economics, Friedman trained generations of economists. He also served as economic advisor to Barry Goldwater during his failed 1964 presidential campaign—the first campaign with which future president and noted neoliberal reformer Ronald Reagan is associated—and was a member of such seminal think tanks as the American Enterprise Institute (a conservative republican advisory body), the Hoover Institute (which would later draft Ronald Reagan’s neoliberal reforms) and the Heritage Foundation (a think tank responsible for bringing neoliberal ideas to the wider public through hundreds of published papers).⁸⁸ Hayek’s ideas can also be traced through the neoliberal reforms in England, most notably through think tanks such as the Institute of Economic Affairs (through which Hayek published material that stressed

⁸⁷ Ibid., 74.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 102-106. See also Andrew Rich, *Think Tanks, Public Policy and the Politics of Expertise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 52-53, 67-68.

minimizing the impact that powerful trade unions could have on the market economy and productivity and, like the Heritage Foundation, published hundreds of papers in support of neoliberal reforms and ideas) and the Centre for Policy Studies. The latter, as discussed below, was instrumental in helping Margaret Thatcher formulate and justify policy ideas and political applications based on the research and publications of the Institute of Economic Affairs.⁸⁹ In addition, the concept of think tanks lent a perception of expertise and intellectualism to neoliberal ideas and policy, thereby helping to further “sell” the ideology.

Having traced the historical context of the development of neoliberalism in several countries, Turner draws a map of neoliberalism’s core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts, as illustrated in table 3.1. Below is a summary of the concepts in Turner’s map, with some examples of neoliberal reforms that embodied these concepts.

Turner’s Conceptual Map

Core Concept 1: The Market

The core concept of the *Market* is derived from the free market as envisioned by Adam Smith, although neoliberals place even fewer constraints on the market than Smith. This core concept is shaped by several adjacent concepts, the first of which, *evolution* and *spontaneous order*, are grounded in the belief that societies develop organically. It is not possible to determine a priori what a society’s, or even an individual’s, needs might be, so the development of “universally appropriate rules” for all are not advisable. This is in direct opposition to collectivist ideas of social planning. Markets should instead be left to develop in response to needs as they arise.⁹⁰ Also associated with this core concept is the adjacent concept of *limited knowledge*. Neoliberals believe that individuals, or even governments, are not omniscient. They are not capable of collecting enough information to forecast future needs and cannot be aware of the objectives and pursuits of all individuals. Only the market, with which individuals are constantly interacting, can adjust

⁸⁹ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 91-98. For an excellent discussion of the politics of think tanks during the Thatcher reforms, see Ivor Shelly, “The Idea Brokers: The Impact of Think Tanks on the British Government,” *Public Administration* 71, no. 4 (1993): 491-506.

⁹⁰ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 121.

for and accommodate the needs and desires of millions of individuals.⁹¹ For these reasons, the market must be allowed to function without interference, allowing for *free exchange*. This adjacent concept, along with the concept of *self-interest*, rests on the ideas of Adam Smith, and, to some extent, those of John Locke: individuals in the pursuit of unfettered *self-interest* on a free and open market build prosperity in a society through the improvement of their own stations. The final adjacent concept, *entrepreneurship*, supports these other adjacent concepts through the idea of the self-made individual who, through hard work and innovation, creates a better quality of life for herself and her family. In effect, the neoliberal state is a meritocracy containing the embedded assumption that those who do not succeed are at best “unlucky” and at worst “lazy,” with “incapable” and/or “uncreative” positioned somewhere along this spectrum. The morality of the protestant work ethic underpins this spectrum: prosperity is the result of hard work and application of intelligence.

The peripheral concepts of the market are approaches and discourses that support the adjacent and core concepts. For example, Turner pointed to the active “spirit of enterprise” (or *enterprise culture*) cultivated by both Thatcher and Reagan during their neoliberal reforms as not only a part of improving the economy, but of also decreasing citizen reliance on public assets and social programs.⁹² Various programs and laws are created by these administrations that were designed to *privatize* and *deregulate* public institutions such as health care and pensions in order to encourage competition amongst service providers as well as encourage citizens to take care of their own future needs.⁹³ Further, privatization of public services is believed to not only increase government efficiency by placing fewer demands on the government, but also—and perhaps more importantly—by increasing the standards of the privatized service, as it affords the opportunity for competition among service providers. This reasoning also allows the state to “sell off” its social and regulated services both for an immediate injection of revenue and to unburden itself of potentially costly undertakings (i.e., *short-term profit motives*). For example, throughout the 1980s, Thatcher “organized a systematic implementation of

⁹¹ Ibid., 123.

⁹² Ibid., 131.

⁹³ Ibid.

an agenda of deflation, privatization, deregulation and downsizing of the public sector,” which ultimately relied on “massive privatizations as a means to raise public revenues.”⁹⁴ As discussed below, these included the sale of the crown companies British Oil, Enterprise Oil, British Aerospace, the Association of British Sea Ports, British Telecom, and the National Freight Company.⁹⁵ And, when the public purchased shares in these newly created markets, they became more invested through *share-ownership*.

A final peripheral concept of the Market core concept, which is not mentioned by Turner but is relevant to reforms in Ontario, is the concept of managerialism, or *New Public Management* (NPM).⁹⁶ Managerialism asserts that all organizations are in some way similar and thus can be properly run by applying business management skills to increase competitiveness in the market place. Thus, it downplays the importance of professionals in a given field in favour of managers who have been trained in management techniques rather than in the field in which they are placed to manage.⁹⁷

Core Concept 2: Welfare

Neoliberalism itself is hostile toward the concept of the Welfare State as defined by Keynes, yet the concept of *Welfare* is essential to the ideology of neoliberalism. It is through this core concept that the idea of personal choice and responsibility for one’s own actions and the consequences of those choices are imprinted on the public consciousness. The freedom and responsibility to make these choices is supported by the adjacent concepts of the *minimal state*, *equality of opportunity*, *personal responsibility*, *self-reliance*, and *negative rights*. Turner traced many of these ideas back to the work of Smith, who believed the state should provide only those services that it was impractical or impossible for an individual to obtain (such as military defence) and examined the commonly held belief prior to the development of the Welfare State that the poor were

⁹⁴ Fourcade-Gourinchas and Babb, “The Rebirth of the Liberal Creed,” 556.

⁹⁵ George Yarrow et al., provide an excellent overview, timeline, rationale, and analysis of the effectiveness of those public assets that were privatized during the Thatcher regime as it was happening in their article “Privatization in Theory and Practice,” *Economic Policy* 2, no. 1 (1986): 324-77.

⁹⁶ Here we see the flexibility of Turner’s map, as it allows for the addition of peripheral concepts that are associated with the implementation of neoliberal policies and reforms in some locales, but not others.

⁹⁷ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 64-66. See also Jan-Erik Lane, *New Public Management* (London, Routledge, 2000).

responsible for their own lot in life.⁹⁸ In neoliberalism, this belief is reborn in *negative rights* meant to ensure *equality of opportunity* for every citizen and the assertion that each citizen will fail or succeed based upon his or her ability to make rewarding choices in life, specifically in terms of interaction with the market.⁹⁹ Here again, the idea of meritocracy is at work. Neoliberalism often goes so far as to position the Welfare State as repressive, rebuffing the notion of social justice on the grounds that the markets cannot have planned outcomes. Those who fail to succeed in it cannot be said to suffer injustice: the market is not sentient and so lacks the intention necessary to foster injustice. The attempts of government to ensure that all citizens lead a high quality of life through social planning and the redistribution of wealth are, in a neoliberal discourse, a violation of the personal *freedoms* and the right of the individual to succeed through his own merits.¹⁰⁰

This translates into a belief that the individual is ultimately responsible for herself (i.e., *self-reliance* and *personal responsibility*), and that this is good for society. The state should not provide anything but a minimal “safety net” for those individuals who ultimately fail or who, for whatever reason, cannot succeed. Further, vast, bureaucratic systems that provide such social provisions as health care, pension plans, unemployment insurance, and even education, are not only a drain on the state, but, as with all monopolies, fail to provide quality services because they do not need to be competitive. During campaign for neoliberal reform, these services are often framed as fostering a lazy, selfish populace with a sense of entitlement who fail to recognize the value of hard work and to take personal responsibility, which ultimately leads to a nation’s moral decline.¹⁰¹ Here is the Lockean philosophy of one’s moral obligation to be useful combined with the protestant work ethic as discussed above. Nowhere was this more noticeable than during both Reagan and Thatcher reforms. As Turner states, the belief under these governments was that, “by reducing welfare spending, entrepreneurial and competitive drive in the

⁹⁸ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 143. However, as the above discussion details, Smith’s conception of welfare is not as sparse as that positioned by neoliberals.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 151-53.

¹⁰⁰ Friedrich Hayek, “Freedom, Reason and Tradition,” *Ethics* 68, no. 4 (July 1968): 230-31. See also Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 149. For an excellent example of the discourse of enterprise and the shift from state dependency to self-made individual in Thatcher’s Britain, see Michael Peters, “Education, Enterprise Culture and the Entrepreneurial Self: A Foucauldian Perspective,” *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 2, no. 2 (2001): 58-71.

¹⁰¹ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 152-53.

economy would be superseded by an individualist mentality of familial self-reliance and personal responsibility.”¹⁰² Thatcher even went so far as to state “there is no such thing as society but only individuals.”¹⁰³ In the United States, Thatcher’s contemporary, President Ronald Reagan, embarked on a historical implementation of neoliberal policy designed to combat that nation’s economic challenges. The early 1980s saw a “burst” of legislated tax cuts, deregulation and downsizing of government programs that were implemented so quickly that they became known as the essence of the “Reagan Revolution.”¹⁰⁴ In both countries, those who relied on public services were villainized. For example, during the Reagan administration, stories of “Welfare Queens” (women who abused the welfare system to live posh lifestyles without having to do work) were popularly cited as a reason for government rollbacks and retrenchments.¹⁰⁵ Systems of *workfare* and *learnfare*¹⁰⁶ were implemented stipulating that citizens could only receive public funding if they met certain requirements demonstrating that they were either looking for work or trying to increase their human capital through education and experience. Further, citizens were encouraged to look after their own welfare by investing in *private insurance*, pension funds, health care, and schooling, or were encouraged to make their own choices in such matters. In education, this was facilitated through the development of charter schools and voucher systems. These systems, which are the hallmark of several states’ neoliberal education reforms, are discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

Core Concept 3: The Constitution

Some of the adjacent concepts supporting the core concept of the *Constitution* have already been discussed above in relation to the core concepts of the *Market* and

¹⁰² Ibid., 158.

¹⁰³ Margaret Thatcher, quoted in Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 82.

¹⁰⁴ Monica Prasad, *The Politics of the Free Markets: The Rise of Neoliberal Economic Policies in Britain, France, Germany and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 43. Ironically, by the time Reagan left office, his government and its bureaucracy had actually grown in size.

¹⁰⁵ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 53. For a more extensive discussion, see Marieke de Goede, “Ideology in the US Welfare Debate: Neo-Liberal Representations of Poverty,” *Discourse & Society* 7, no. 3 (1996): 317-357; and Basak Kus, “Neoliberalism, Institutional Change and the Welfare State: The Case of Britain and France,” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 47, no. 6 (2006): 488-525.

¹⁰⁶ *Learnfare* is not in Turner’s conceptual map, but has been added to the conceptual map of neoliberal education in Chapter Four.

Welfare (i.e., *freedom, private law, legal responsibility*, etc.) and so will not be discussed further here, except to note that the adjacent concepts of *abstract order* and *evolution* are outgrowths of the *Market* concept of *spontaneous order*. As human needs and desires spontaneously arise over the course of social, cultural, technological, and financial *evolution*, society adapts by creating rules that “facilitate the achievement of diverse and unknown ends.”¹⁰⁷ That is, the *abstract order* allows individuals the legal freedom to pursue their wants and needs, whatever they may be.

The idea of the *Rechtstaat* is integral to the core concept of the Constitution. Neoliberals believe that it is their duty to ensure that the state has a constitution and set of laws that both limit the power of the state to interfere in the freedom of the individual and allow the markets to function freely. In this, Turner succinctly stated that neoliberals “must emphatically engage in politics in order to free society of politics. In neoliberalism, the principles or operating procedures of a specific form of constitutional order represent the only acceptable means of both limiting the coercive power of the government and upholding the rules of the market.”¹⁰⁸ This is believed to curtail the ability of those within the government to pursue their own interests while laying out the *rules of just conduct* that ensure that all citizens will be treated equally before the law. Much as within the core concept of *Welfare*, individuals are expected know the laws and obey them (or even use them to their advantage) in the pursuit of their own interests in the market.¹⁰⁹

Further, many neoliberals believe that there is a difference between laws and legislation. Laws should exist “outside of the state” and be made by judges who are not affiliated with the government or a particular political party. Much as with the concepts of *evolution* and *spontaneous order*, *abstract order* dictates laws should be made as a society and the market evolve and new needs and problems arise, and they should always be made for the purpose of ensuring personal and market *freedom* (i.e., negative law making). The state itself is answerable to the laws and should not be able to amend them

¹⁰⁷ Raymond Plant, *The Neoliberal State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 32-33.

¹⁰⁸ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 167.

¹⁰⁹ For further discussion on this point, see Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, “Political Power Beyond the State: The Problematics of Government,” *British Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 2 (1992): 179-80 and Mark Olssen, “Neoliberalism, Globalisation, Democracy: Challenges for Education,” *Globalization, Societies and Education* 2, no. 2 (2004): 243, 254-56. Although Olssen observed that this idea is not sufficient to meet the needs of the individual, he does give an accurate outline of the liberal argument.

at will. Legislation, on the other hand, is made by politicians, and it should not be able to alter the law as it exists and evolves in relational to the spontaneous order of the liberal society.¹¹⁰ In other words, politicians make legislation, which directs the way in which institutions and individuals should behave. Law, however, is made by the courts, and is therefore independent of legislation. Legislation can be challenged and overturned should the courts rule that it in some way violates law. For this reason, many neoliberals believe in the separation of powers in a state, such as in the United States. There, the legislature and law government branches are separate bodies and the Supreme Court has the “final say” when determining whether legislation violates law or constitution.

Core Concept 4: Property

For neoliberals, the core concept of *Property* extends beyond possession of inanimate objects and is essentially supportive of the core concepts of the *Market* and *Welfare*. Through *negative justice*, laws both support what constitutes property and give individuals *the legal privilege* to acquire and sell property freely. As Turner states, “[property] gives individuals independence and a sense of self-reliance, enabling them to participate freely in the market.”¹¹¹ Property ownership supports the *Welfare* core concept through *entrepreneurship* and the *self-reliant* individual because of the assumption that property is accumulated through *individual initiative* and the *legal privilege* to undertake activities that lead to property accumulation. It is important to note that, for neoliberals, unlike Smith, property is not confined to material goods and therefore does not rely on the division of labour. Property can be extended to fiscal investments, and so encompasses such peripheral concepts as *capital accumulations* and *voluntary saving* for both immediate and future needs. As discussed in Chapter Four, the possession of intellectual ability, ingenuity, and labour skills—usually measured by standardized tests and the accumulation of certifications and degrees from accredited education institutions—are often conceived of as reflections of *individual initiative* that support employment. This, in turn, facilitates *self-reliance* and one’s ability to successfully engage in the *Market*. The result of which is greater individual success and prosperity.

¹¹⁰ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 170-80.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 200.

These four core concepts—the *Market*, *Welfare*, the *Constitution*, and *Property*—and their adjacent and peripheral concepts allow us to look at political reforms in any context and understand how they create varieties of neoliberalism that may have diverged from and yet still converge with the broader ideology of neoliberalism. Having defined and explained these concepts and their implications both for neoliberal government reforms and for how individuals are expected to participate in a democratic neoliberal society, we can now examine the varieties of neoliberalism reform introduced in England and Ontario leading up to and including the Thatcher and Harris government, respectively.

Neoliberal Reforms in England

Prior to Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party election in 1979, England was considered a Welfare State, although it had not always been so. It was, in fact, John Maynard Keynes himself, as well as other economists who supported his ideas and who were also brought in to consult with the government during World War II, which led to England's adoption of Keynesian policies in the wake of World War II.¹¹² The 1944 "Full Employment" white paper signalled Winston Churchill's Conservative coalition government's intention to "accept as one of their primary aims and responsibilities the maintenance of a high and stable level of employment after the war."¹¹³ The installation of a majority Labour government led by Clement Attlee from 1945-1951 saw the introduction of the pillars of England's Welfare State: the National Health Service, nationalization of various state industries, national insurance, and further measures to maintain full employment. By the time a new Conservative government was voted into office in 1951 (again headed by Winston Churchill), "the radical leftward shift in public opinion . . . meant that Churchill, having opposed the Labour manifest in 1945, was now,

¹¹² Michael J. Oliver and Hugh Pemberton, "Learning and Change in 20th-Century British Economic Policy," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administrations, and Institutions* 17, no. 3 (2004): 423. Keynes died in 1946, but he had been employed by the Treasury since World War I.

¹¹³ Andrew Britton, "Full Employment in the Market Economy," *National Institute Economic Review* 150, no. 62 (1994): 62. While it may seem unlikely that a Conservative government would introduce such a piece of legislation, Churchill's government was actually comprised of a coalition between the Conservative and Labour Parties. The Full Employment white paper represented "the very limits of coalition consensus." The Conservatives agreed to support it because it demonstrated to the public that they supported post-war reconstruction, while the Labour party saw it as policy integral to advancing their social democratic vision. See Kevin Jeffreys, *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics, 1940-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 171-74.

through political pragmatism, obliged broadly to adopt it.”¹¹⁴ Thus, although they did not ideologically support the Welfare State, various Conservative governments up until Margaret Thatcher’s 1979 election actually supported (at least publically) the Welfare State agenda in order to cater to public opinion.

Adoption and various modifications to Keynesian-inspired unemployment and economic policies kept unemployment in England to below 2.5% until the summer of 1971, when it rose to 3.8% by the end of 1972. The government responded by increasing public spending and cutting taxes, yet inflation and unemployment continued to grow. This, combined with an unexpected and rapid quadrupling of oil prices and subsequent inflation of other commodities in 1974, led to both a government and a workforce whose income could not match their necessary economic expenditures.¹¹⁵ Ultimately, Prime Minister Edward Heath’s Conservative government was replaced with Harold Wilson’s Labour government because of the economic policy choices and their consequences made by the Conservative government leading up to the 1974 election. Wilson himself retired in early 1976 and was replaced by James Callaghan.¹¹⁶

Michael J. Oliver and Hugh Pemberton asserted that “1976 was one of the defining moments in [England’s] move toward neoliberalism,”¹¹⁷ with the time between 1974 and 1976 serving as a “transition phase” between the two policy paradigms.¹¹⁸ During this time, a series of external pressures—including a drop of approximately one-third of the pound sterling’s value against the international standard of the American dollar—increased inflation. In addition, the government was unable to settle union wage contracts, which resulted in a three-day work week for several months in 1974 when a coal miner’s strike led to electricity shortages. These external and internal pressures made it increasingly impossible for the Wilson government to continue implementing Keynesian style economic and social policies.¹¹⁹ In addition, the IMF, from which the British government had continued to borrow heavily and extensively in order to support

¹¹⁴ Knight, *Governing Britain Since 1945*, 1-2.

¹¹⁵ Oliver and Pemberton, “Learning and Change,” 429.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Mark D. Harmon, “The 1976 UK-IMF Crisis: The Markets, the Americans and the IMF,” *Contemporary British History* 11, no. 3 (1997): 4.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

the stability of the pound sterling, had begun to consider the advantages of actively enforcing its “major shift” clause. This clause stated that the IMF would be consulted and serve in an advisory capacity if a developed country required a serious revision of economic policy.¹²⁰ In September of 1976, the British government decided that it would halt the rapid slide of the pound sterling by securing a loan from the IMF.¹²¹ In return, and at the end of a bitter and protracted six-week negotiation process that the government tried to circumvent by going to the Americans for support (which they refused), the IMF lent Britain almost US\$4 billion, but with specific conditions that were the beginning of English neoliberal reform. These included limiting the amount of money that could be borrowed to support the public sector, a £500 million sell-off of state-owned British Petroleum shares, and a promise to cut a total of £2.5 billion in public expenditures over the next two years.¹²² The result was that the government no longer had the ability to engage in the style of Keynesian macro-economic policies that it had in the past.¹²³ Instead, it had to focus on selling off assets and reducing both its social expenditure and the members of its public service, reflecting the adjacent and peripheral concepts of minimal state and reduced social expenditure found in the core Welfare concept.

Employment and economic conditions continued to deteriorate through the remainder of the decade, however. The Callaghan government, as a Labour government, continued to be supported by the unions even though it had imposed a “wage restraint” policy. This policy allowed unions to negotiate raised wages, but limited those wages in order to prevent a “wages explosion” in response to inflation. When a fourth phase of wage restraint at 5% was introduced in the autumn of 1978, the Trade Union Congress (representing Britain’s trade unions) rejected it, bringing about the “Winter of Discontent.”¹²⁴ Running from December 1978 until February 1979, it began with an

¹²⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹²¹ Ibid., 11. The British government went first to the United States, but the United States would not agree to lend money until the IMF guaranteed that it would, essentially, take over the loan if the British government could not pay it back within six months. This being an impossible feat, the Americans basically steered the British into an agreement with the IMF that would see the types of reforms the Americans did not have the authority to impose placed on the British government through IMF intervention.

¹²² Ibid., 13.

¹²³ Oliver and Pemberton, “Learning and Change,” 430.

¹²⁴ William Rodgers, “Government Under Stress: Britain’s Winter of Discontent 1979,” *The Political Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (1984): 172-73.

“unofficial” strike led by oil tanker drivers, followed by a more general road haulage strike (sometimes referred to as the “lorry strike”) that crippled both commerce and the day-to-day functioning of public institutions, such as schools, and essential services, such as health care and waste collection. In the meantime, unions argued for wage increases of up to 23% and the Ministry of Defence was told to have troops on standby in case military intervention was needed (ultimately, troops were never deployed).¹²⁵ William Rodgers summarized the situation by stating that “the complacency of the Prime Minister and the paralysis of his Government were measured against the appearance of Britain under siege.”¹²⁶

James Thomas wrote effectively that the Conservative’s “found their most powerful expression in the myth of the winter, symbolizing an ideological failure to which the only answer was the neoliberal alternative that could and had made Britain great again, economically, politically, internationally, and even morally” throughout their time in office (1979-1997). The Winter of Discontent, and the events leading up to it, served as fodder for Conservative discourse expounding the need for—and the common sense of—neoliberal change. Indeed, it allowed the Conservatives to re-introduce the economic liberal values on which the party was originally founded. Thatcher herself, in the wake of the 1974 Conservative election loss and the run-up to her 1975 election as Conservative Party leader, was quoted saying,

One of the reasons for our electoral failure is that people believe that too many Conservatives have become socialists already . . . My kind of Tory party would make no secret of its belief in individual freedom and individual prosperity, in the maintenance of law and order, in the wide distribution of private property, in rewards for energy, skill and thrift, in diversity of choice, in preservation of local rights in local communities.”¹²⁷

Embedded in this statement are direct references to the neoliberal concepts of *individualism, self-interest, entrepreneurship, the enterprise culture, privatisation, minimal state, freedom, personal responsibility, the legal state, ownership, and individual*

¹²⁵ Ibid., 174-176.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 177.

¹²⁷ Margaret Thatcher, quoted in Geoffrey K. Fry, *The Politics of the Thatcher Revolution: An Interpretation of British Politics, 1970-1990* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2008), 17.

initiative. Thatcher's intentions, then, for the Conservative party, were clear from before her election as party leader.

In keeping with this neoliberal ideology and prior to the 1979 election, Thatcher released the *Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, which began by positioning the Welfare State's collectivism against the freedom of individuals, stating,

FOR ME, THE HEART OF POLITICS is not political theory, it is people and how they want to live their lives.

No one who has lived in this country during the last five years can fail to be aware of how the balance of our society has been increasingly tilted in favour of the State at the expense of individual freedom.

This election may be the last chance we have to reverse that process, to restore the balance of power in favour of the people.¹²⁸

This anti-collectivism discourse, which as discussed above is typical when convincing the electorate of the need for neoliberal reform, was also positioned as common sense: “[This manifesto] sets out a broad framework for the recovery of our country, based not on dogma, but on reason, on common sense, above all on the liberty of the people under the law.”¹²⁹ It also drew upon neoconservative ideology—hardly surprising as the Conservative Party was typically the party of the educated, upper classes who cherished pre-War World Two memories of Britain as a naval superpower and global colonizer—stating, “here has been a feeling of helplessness, that we are a once great nation that has somehow fallen behind and that it is too late now to turn things round.”¹³⁰ “What has happened to our country” she asked, “to the values we used to share, to the success and prosperity we once took for granted?”¹³¹

The 1979 Manifesto outlined five tasks necessary to restore the nation to its past splendour and free individuals from the state:

1. To restore the health of our economic and social life, by controlling inflation and striking a fair balance between the rights and duties of the trade union movement.

¹²⁸ Conservative Party (UK), “Forward,” *1979 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed Feb. 29, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1979/1979-conservative-manifesto.shtml>. (original emphasis).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., Section I.

2. To restore incentives so that hard work pays, success is rewarded and genuine new jobs are created in an expanding economy.
3. To uphold Parliament and the rule of law.
4. To support family life, by helping people to become home-owners, raising the standards of their children's education, and concentrating welfare services on the effective support of the old, the sick, the disabled and those who are in real need.
5. To strengthen Britain's defences and work with our allies to protect our interests in an increasingly threatening world.¹³²

The first task spoke to immediate concerns on the part of the electorate that had grown out of the Winter of Discontent. In addition, by limiting the ability of the unions to demand wage increases, the government could help ensure that the price of goods and services stayed closer to natural cost of production and fair market value, thereby also addressing issues of inflation and facilitating *free exchange* and creating an *enterprising culture* in the market place. The second task was related closely to the core concepts of the *Market* and *Welfare*: Individuals should be encouraged to work hard within a system that will reward them for such work and allow them to achieve success so that they need not draw on the resources of the state. Indeed, the Manifesto stated (in a very common-sense discourse) that the Conservatives wanted “to work *with the grain* of human nature, helping people to help themselves—and others. This is the way to restore that self-reliance and self-confidence which are the basis of personal responsibility and national success.”¹³³ The third task embodied the core concept of the *Constitution* whereby the state enacts negative laws to support the neoliberal state. The core concept of *Property* was invoked in the fourth task, which emphasized *ownership* (including educational ownership, discussed further in Chapter Four). This task, along with the fifth task, also drew on neoconservative ideals of focusing on the family unit and defense of the nation. In reviewing the manifesto, it becomes clear that the Conservative Party approached the 1979 election with two main discourses: (1) a neoliberal discourse based economic liberalism (referred to at the time as *corporatism* or *monetarism*) that would lead to greater individual freedom from the state and foster self-reliance and (2) a

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid. (original emphasis).

neoconservative discourse focusing on the family unit and on restoring England's past glory.

The 1979 Manifesto also contained specific suggestions for how the five tasks were to be enacted, many of which also reflect neoliberal concepts. They included reduction in government borrowing (*balanced budgets*), removal of price controls (*free exchange*), reduced income taxes (*income-tax relief*), selling off state assets (*short-term profit, privatization, share-ownership*), exploring the creation of jobs in promising new sectors and cutting back subsidies in floundering sectors (*evolution*), denationalizing state industries (*privatization, minimal state, short-term profit, share-ownership*), instituting fair trade policies (*free exchange*), supporting small business development (*enterprise culture, ownership, entrepreneurship, individualism*), and increasing parents' right to choose their children's schools (*deregulation, education vouchers, legal privilege*),¹³⁴ the last of which is discussed at length in Chapter Five.

The Conservative party instituted all of these changes under Thatcher's administration and continued to refine them when she was replaced by John Major as Prime Minister in 1990. A complete discussion of the neoliberal reforms made by the Conservative administration during its eighteen years in office is beyond the scope of this study; however, some illustrative example are provided here in order to provide a "snapshot" of the scope of reforms and the manner in which they were enacted. These examples are drawn from Thatcher's administration, as that is the time in which the largest and most far-reaching neoliberal reforms were enacted.

Thatcher's first term in office (1979-1983) was marked by a struggle to reduce public expenditure, reduce income-tax, and remove exchange controls (i.e., invoke free trade). Britain was the first country to perform the latter (in October, 1979), much to Margaret Thatcher's personal satisfaction.¹³⁵ She was determined not to "bailout" faltering manufacturing industries during her first years in office—facing considerable opposition from the media, economists, and even her own cabinet—insisting that by allowing the demand for goods to run a natural course, inflation would be reduced and

¹³⁴ Ibid., sections I-V.

¹³⁵ Brendan Evans, *Thatcherism and British Politics, 1975-1999* (Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing, 1999), 58.

the economy would recover as it evolved to meet the actual demands of consumers.¹³⁶ As discussed in Chapter Five, this particular line of argument proved particularly important when arguing for the need to restructure England's public education system to better suit the needs of the economy. While initially the lack of government industry subsidies helped feed an economic recession and record unemployment numbers, by the end of 1982, the rise of unemployment had slowed considerably¹³⁷ and inflation had fallen from a high of 21.9% in May of 1980 to 5.4%.¹³⁸ In addition, the unemployment that ensued from the decline of the manufacturing sector undercut the power of the trade unions. This allowed the Thatcher administration to institute a series of anti-union legislation, including outlawing secondary picketing and giving employers the right to legally act against unions if they violated other newly introduced legislation, such as the requirement to conduct strike votes by secret ballot and to elect union officers.¹³⁹ Believing that "public expenditure was at the heart of Britain's economic difficulties,"¹⁴⁰ she incurred much criticism for reducing the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR) during this time of recession and unemployment, shaving £5.9 billion off the expected PSBR in the 1981 budget.¹⁴¹ Unemployment benefits, in particular, were targeted for reduced social expenditure during the Thatcher administration due to both the demand on government finances during the peak unemployment of the mid-1980s and to combat the "why work?" attitude that the Conservatives asserted was fostered by such benefits.¹⁴² Thus Thatcher's first administration set the tone of neoliberal reform for its tenure in office: A tough, no-back down, monetarist stance coupled with the need to change the nature of both government spending and the ways in which the government interacted with its people was presented to the public as necessary to drag England out of the depths it reached under Labour government and into the modern era where it could reclaim its

¹³⁶ Ibid., 62.

¹³⁷ Jock Bruce-Gardyn, *Mrs. Thatcher's First Administration: The Prophets Confounded* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1984), 125.

¹³⁸ *The Guardian*, "UK Inflation Since the 1940s—CPI and RPI," accessed March 2, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2009/mar/09/inflation-economics>.

¹³⁹ Knight, *Governing Britain Since 1945*, 135. These latter two pieces of legislation were meant to limit the power of union heads.

¹⁴⁰ Kus, "Neoliberalism, Institutional Change and the Welfare State," 508.

¹⁴¹ Evans, *Thatcherism and British Politics*, 63.

¹⁴² Kus, "Neoliberalism, Institutional Change and the Welfare State," 508.

past glory. The remainder of this outline of England's neoliberal reforms focuses on changes meant to minimize the role of government in public sector management and in citizen's lives.

Richard A. Chapman listed five "key" changes that Thatcher's conservative government made to public sector management structures in the 1980s, of which four are relevant here. The first was to take greater control of arms length governmental agencies by moving some of their responsibilities directly under the jurisdiction of the government or by dismantling them completely and subsuming all of their responsibilities.¹⁴³ While this expansion of administrative government may seem to conflict with the emphasis on smaller government that supports the neoliberal core concept of Welfare, these decisions were rationalized as a way to increase the efficiency of an organization both in terms of financing (since the organizations would be completely under government control, allowing the government to "downsize" the civil service at will) and in terms of achieving the neoliberal policy outcomes more in keeping with the government's agenda.¹⁴⁴ Thus, it exhibits the concepts of a *fiscal constitution*, *reduced social expenditure*, and *balanced budgets*.

A second key change was related to how government reviewed current policies and undertook research for future policy. Perhaps the most significant change here was the 1983 dismantling of the Cabinet Offices' Central Policy Review Staff (established 1970) and its replacement with the Centre for Policy Studies, which was widely known to be a Conservative Party think tank (and which is mentioned above as a major contributor to the creation and dissemination of pro-neoliberal political ideology). In essence, Thatcher helped found this think tank to advance her own agenda in face of the "consensual mentality" of her in-party detractors.¹⁴⁵ Ultimately, the government shifted review and research of policies away from a purportedly non-partisan approach to one

¹⁴³ Richard A. Chapman, "Concepts and Issues in Public Sector Reform: The Experience of the United Kingdom in the 1980s," *Policy and Public Administration* 6, no. 1 (1991): 2.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Chapman used the example of the abolishment of the United Kingdom's Civil Service Department in 1981 to illustrate this point, stating that, "Thatcher thought it was being weak in dealing with the unions and high pay increases were contributing to inflation." Most of the duties formerly assigned to the Civil Service Department were re-assigned to the Treasury.

¹⁴⁵ Simon James, "The Idea Brokers: The Impact of Think Tanks on British Government," *Public Administration* 71, no. 4 (1993): 495.

that supported its own neoliberal agenda.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, Simon James has noted that two of the defining traits of think tanks is that “they are intellectually independent from government but their output is geared toward government needs” and that they are usually “politically partisan.”¹⁴⁷ The Conservatives under Thatcher used such partisan think-tanks to help create and sustain the “common sense” perception of their approach to policy.

Thirdly, the Government strove to reduce the scope of institutional inefficiency by either deeming some institutions “unnecessary” or by removing them from under the jurisdiction of the public sector.¹⁴⁸ For example, a 1980 report undertaken and submitted by Leo Piatzky at the request of Prime Minister Thatcher recommended that 30 executive bodies and 211 advisory bodies be eliminated in order to save approximately £12 million.¹⁴⁹ However, the Thatcher government most notably embraced privatization to reduce inefficiency, advancing it as “a weapon for reducing trade union power, encouraging wider share-ownership, redistributing wealth, and improving the public finances.”¹⁵⁰ Over the course of the Thatcher administration, public housing units were sold off and the government and local authorities were encouraged to contract out previous public services such as garbage collection, cleaning of public institutions (e.g., hospitals and schools), and pest control. A move they embraced with enthusiasm.¹⁵¹ The former allowed the government to further its agenda of promoting property *ownership* while injecting cash into the Treasury; the later promoted competition among service providers while still allowing the government to be seen as overseeing vital public services—the importance of which is also discussed below in relation to Ontario’s neoliberal reforms. By 1984, the government had sold off large shares of its national oil, aerospace, telecommunications, and rail industries.¹⁵² This allowed it to dismantle various industry monopolies held by the government (supporting the *Market* concept), reduce the PSBR (*reduced social expenditure, balanced budgets*), increase *share-ownership*, and

¹⁴⁶ Chapman, “Concepts and Issues in Public Sector Reform,” 3.

¹⁴⁷ James, “The Idea Brokers,” 493-94.

¹⁴⁸ Chapman, “Concepts and Issues in Public Sector Reform,” 4.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Yarrow et al., “Privatization in Theory and Practice,” 323.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 326.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 238.

place the wealth generated by those industries back into the hands of individuals and the free market, all while injecting large amount of cash into the Treasury.¹⁵³

The fourth relevant change to public sector management was a restructuring of the relationship between local and central governments.¹⁵⁴ Two examples made by the Conservative government are of particular importance to this study due to their relationship to education reform as discussed in Chapter Five. The first was a restructuring of finance. The 1982 Local Government Act required local authorities to obtain central government approval before levying a tax meant to address unforeseen costs, while the 1984 Local Government Act allowed the central government to cap levy rates. In effect, local governments could no longer control their income from levys—a mainstay of local government budgets.¹⁵⁵ The second example was a tightening of pre-existing legislation that permitted the central government to control, among other things, schools and their inspection systems.¹⁵⁶ In essence, through these two policies, the Conservative government was able to tighten its control over more aspects of society in the name of making the municipalities more accountable both fiscally and in terms of service provision. This idea is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five as it is directly related to education reform.

Finally, as mentioned above, the Conservative government sought to reposition its relationship with the individual citizen by fostering a spirit of *individualism*, *self-reliance*, and *self-interest*. Some of the discourse related to and actions taken by the government have been mentioned above and therefore a detailed description of further actions is not necessary here.

In summary, the above outline of neoliberal financial and social reforms in England illustrates the importance of the individual-collectivist dichotomy that underpins much of the neoliberal discourse on the need for change. In addition, this discourse was mixed with neoconservative ideology that blamed Labour’s collectivist ideology for England’s fall from global economic supremacy and the rise of a population too dependent on a “nanny” state to realize the value and rewards of hard work. Although

¹⁵³ Ibid., 327.

¹⁵⁴ Chapman, “Concepts and Issues in Public Sector Reform,” 6.

¹⁵⁵ Knight, *Governing Britain Since 1945*, 25.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 22.

Thatcher was elected on a platform of change, instilling change was difficult during her first term due to what was later positioned as necessary “growing pains” in response to newly implemented policy. Throughout her term in office, however, Thatcher and her Conservatives worked toward instituting the types of neoliberal reform first outlined in the 1979 Conservative Party Election Manifesto.

Neoliberal Reforms in Ontario

Neoliberal reforms in Ontario are almost summarily attributed to Premier Mike Harris and his Progressive Conservative (PC) party over their two terms in office, which spanned from 1995-2003. Much like the 1979 Conservative Party election in England, prior to the 1995 election, the would-be Harris government used the (quite accurate) public perception that economic conditions in Ontario were in dire straits in order to position Premier Bob Rae’s incumbent New Democratic Party (NDP) government as overly bureaucratic, inefficient, and ineffective, and to campaign on a set of economic reforms that echoed those of the Thatcher administration.¹⁵⁷ This “witches brew of deteriorating economic conditions” that existed at the time of the 1995 election, as well as the perceived failure of the Rae government to improve them—including a social contract that outraged public employees by forcing them to take unpaid leave to reduce government expenditure—primed the electorate to accept the strongly neoliberal platform of reforms as a solution to the social and economic issues the province was facing.¹⁵⁸ In essence, both the Thatcher and Harris governments capitalized on economic conditions and social discontent to introduce a platform of neoliberal reform. Randall White summarized the Harris philosophy as, “in the elsewhere-revived ancient English-speaking tradition of Adam Smith and free markets and the dismal science of economics and *The Wealth of Nations*, that which governs least governs best.”¹⁵⁹ Just as Thatcher had, Harris

¹⁵⁷ David Clark, “Neoliberalism and Public Service Reform: Canada in Comparative Perspective,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35, no. 4 (2002): 774-75. See also Chapter Four of George W. Wooten, “Unpacking the Klein and Harris Governments: Assessing the Impact of Party Position on the Rationalization of Policy Reform Agendas” (master’s thesis, The University of Western Ontario, 1999).

¹⁵⁸ Scott Prudham, “Poisoning the Well: Neoliberalism and the Contamination of Municipal Water in Walkerton, Ontario,” *Geoforum* 35 (2004): 450. See also John Ibbitson, *Promised Land: Inside the Mike Harris Revolution* (Prentice Hall Canada Inc.: Scarborough, ON, 1997), 61, 94-95.

¹⁵⁹ Randall White, *Ontario Since 1985* (Toronto, Eastend Books, 1998), 263. Note White’s misinterpretation of Adam Smith’s depiction of government’s role in the social lives of citizens.

engaged in an anti-collectivist discourse that depended on persuading the public to embrace the core concepts of neoliberalism as the only available option for reform.

The PC's platform for the 1995 election was framed as leading Ontario through a Common Sense Revolution (CSR). It was laid out in a document of the same name, which, ultimately, served as platform, policy, and mandate once the party was elected.¹⁶⁰ It is worth reviewing some of the CSR's statements because they exhibit all of the core and most of the adjacent concepts of neoliberalism. The CSR opened by simplistically stating that Ontario's government "isn't working anymore," and that Ontarians were "governed by a system that was designed to meet the needs of the 1950s, not the challenges of the 1990s or beyond."¹⁶¹ It pointed to several areas where public spending had risen dramatically, but where the quality of service had declined.¹⁶² In true "individualist" neoliberal discourse, it emphasized the individual and family unit by stating that "the first place the government has looked to satisfy its appetite for money has been your pay cheques, leaving each of us with fewer dollars to spend on the things we need for ourselves and for our families."¹⁶³

The CSR promised to create 750 000 jobs, cut taxes by 30% over three years, balance the budget, downsize government to make it more efficient, and to cut government spending by 20%. Neoliberal concepts of *privatization*, *balanced budgets*, and *minimal* state were embodied in statements such as, "We will provide the people of Ontario with BETTER for LESS. There isn't a household in this province that hasn't had to make the family budget stretch further, and there isn't a company in Ontario that hasn't found creative ways to cut costs and improve products or services at the same time."¹⁶⁴ The value of the private sector was highlighted in the promise that "Performance standards will be set for all government services. The best people, *in or out* of the public service, will be hired to provide those services."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Wotten, "Unpacking the Klein and Harris Governments," 82-84.

¹⁶¹ Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, *The Common Sense Revolution* (Toronto: Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, 1994), 1. Note that the 1950s are symbolic of a Keynesian style government.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.* (original emphasis).

The CSR also vowed to “end inter-provincial trade barriers” and eliminate regulatory red tape that impeded the free market (invoking the concepts of *limited knowledge* and *free exchange*). Although funding for social services such as health care, education in the classroom, and law enforcement were guaranteed, the CSR stated that such services could be run more efficiently and that “Consensus among Ontarians is that there is plenty of fat to be cut, and many ways that government can reduce its spending without affecting [these] services.”¹⁶⁶ The province itself was positioned as a sort of “service state” where Ontarians would still be able to enjoy the benefits of a health care, education, and (if they qualified), a social-safety net, but the provision of these services would be efficient and less costly. This included minimizing the government by cutting the number of Members of Provincial Parliament by 24% (130 to 99) and releasing approximately 13 000 government employees, with reassurances that growth in the private sector, through *spontaneous order* and *evolution*, would provide jobs for those who were cut (a direct reflection of Smith’s ideas on the evolutionary nature of the free market and employment). The PC party promised it would break “the cycle of dependency” on welfare by introducing *workfare* and *learnfare* systems that “reward individual initiative and demands [*sic*] responsible behaviour from recipients of public assistance, even as it expands opportunities to achieve self-sufficiency” because “the best social assistance program ever created is a real job.”¹⁶⁷ The emphasis on the *enterprise culture*, *self-interest*, *self-reliance*, *personal responsibility*, and the *individual* is clear in this statement.

The CSR also promised to cut government grants and subsidies to small businesses because, “with increased economic activity, fewer subsidies to business will be necessary.”¹⁶⁸ Reductions to funding in arts and culture projects would also be made because “with billions of tax dollars back in the hands of consumers and businesses . . . worthy causes will find additional support in the private sector,”¹⁶⁹ insinuating that, through *evolution*, only those organizations that could attract enough patrons to survive were truly valuable to the public. The CSR stated that the Harris government would also

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 8. (emphasis added).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 13.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

seriously address welfare fraud, scrap the jobsOntario program, which “generated a massive bureaucracy,” was an “abysmal failure” and even (in Reagan-esque rhetoric) “resulted in people such as a drug dealer in St. Catharines receiving funding.”¹⁷⁰ It would also remove barriers to “job creation, economic growth, savings and investment.”¹⁷¹ Finally, it promised to sell off public assets in order to pay down public debt and to “look at creative ideas for increasing the private sector's role” in governing the province.¹⁷² In addition, an extensive section dedicated to reforming public education was included in the CSR. Its foundations were based on promises to make the system more efficient and to produce more competitive human capital for the global marketplace. These reforms are discussed in detail in Chapter Seven in relation to the nature of neoliberal education reforms in Ontario.

The CSR's neoliberal underpinnings are obvious, as is its positioning of individualism against collectivism.¹⁷³ Many of Turner's core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts are exhibited in the promises. For example, the promise to remove barriers to economic growth and investment were based on the core concepts of the *Market*, *Property*, and *Constitution* and the adjacent and peripheral concepts of *self-interest*, *entrepreneurship*, *income-tax relief*, *deregulation*, *freedom*, *private law*, *legal state*, *ownership*, *legal privilege*, and *capital accumulations*. The reform from welfare to workfare encompasses *Welfare's* concepts of *minimal state*, *personal responsibility*, *self-reliance*, *reduced social expenditure*, and *workfare*. “Trimming the fat” of bureaucracy invokes *Constitution's* concepts of *legal responsibility*, *restrained democratic rule*, *fiscal constitution*, and *balanced budgets*. The selling off of public assets and exploration of public-private partnerships draws on the *Market* and *Constitution* core concepts, while the elimination of legislation that impeded job creation and the promise to explore the ability of the private sector to support individuals and prepare them to engage in the market are tied to various adjacent concepts that support the core concepts of the *Market*, *Welfare*, and *Constitution*.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 14.

¹⁷² Ibid., 16.

¹⁷³ For a more in-depth discussion of this topic, see Wotten, “Unpacking the Klien and Harris Governments,” 76-108.

As with the above discussion of Thatcher's neoliberal reforms, a detailed summary of the actions by the government and in the legislature used to enact these reforms is outside the scope of this study. However, a few examples of actions taken by the Harris government once elected serve to further underscore the neoliberal nature of its reforms.¹⁷⁴ For the most part, the Harris government accomplished all of the reforms promised in the CSR in fairly short order. *Managerialism*, or *NPM*, was introduced into the government through what John Ibbitson called a "caucus of shopkeepers": a government largely comprised of men who were successful entrepreneurs or lawyers and a cabinet made up of ministers assigned to portfolios in which they had minimal experience so that they could govern "objectively."¹⁷⁵ The managerial approach was taken so far that, in November of 1995, each public service ministry was directed to create a Business Plan.¹⁷⁶ The goal of these plans was to "define what the ministries' roles should be," "explore the most cost-effective ways to carry out those roles," and "set proposed performance standards so government and the public can judge how effectively ministries are doing their jobs."¹⁷⁷ The plans identified the primary responsibilities of the ministry, which were then labelled "core businesses."¹⁷⁸ "Key strategies" would "explain how the ministry is making changes to its core businesses."¹⁷⁹ In a document entitled *Doing Better for Less: Introducing Ontario's Business Plans*, the government cautioned that "many ministries are moving away from delivering programs and services themselves. Where analysis proves that services can be protected and costs reduced, ministries are creating partnerships, contracting out, privatizing or transferring functions to other levels of government."¹⁸⁰ While many subsequent actions were taken by the

¹⁷⁴ An extensive discussion of the Harris education reforms and deconstruction and dismantling of the state needed to enact them (including wide-spread downloading of social services to the municipalities and tax reform) is included in Chapter Six.

¹⁷⁵ Ibbitson, *Promised Land*, 106-108.

¹⁷⁶ White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 251.

¹⁷⁷ Government of Ontario, *Canada, Doing Better for Less: Introducing Ontario's Business Plans (1996-1997 Business Plan)* (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1996), 1.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2. White adds that "ultimately, a business-like system of performance bonuses was put in place . . . to reward senior public servants who proved especially successful in meeting various targets and objectives prescribed in the ministry business plans." *Ontario Since 1985*, 251.

Harris government that reinforced a NPM approach to governance, these Business Plans are perhaps the most symbolic of the neoliberal peripheral concept of *managerialism*.

Even before these Business Plans were released, however, the government announced in its first Throne Speech (November 1995) some \$8 billion dollars in cuts to government spending over the next three years, much of which was accomplished by giving increased powers to those who would be affected by the cuts, for example, permitting universities to raise tuition by 20%, allowing school boards to drop junior kindergarten programs, and encouraging the use of user fees for some public education programs and drug prescription plans.¹⁸¹ This was quickly followed in late January, 1996 by the passing of Bill 26, fully entitled “An Act to Achieve Fiscal Savings and to Promote Economic Prosperity through Public Sector Restructuring, Streamlining and Efficiency and to Implement Other Aspects of the Government’s Agenda,” but more commonly referred to as the “Savings and Restructuring Act.” The Bill was “a foot-thick piece of legislation” known as an omnibus bill and its length was said to be intended to discourage objections to the myriad changes it introduced to Ontario’s social services.¹⁸² Nevertheless, it attracted considerable criticism. While proposals such as forcing doctors to relocate to underserved areas, giving the government the right to review medical records to detect billing fraud, and giving municipalities the right to sell off their utilities with no public consultation in the name of saving taxpayer dollars ultimately had to be struck from the bill to ensure its passage, it systematically laid the ground for extensive reform of Ontario’s social services. These reforms included the right of the province to amalgamate municipalities in any ways it saw fit, extensive restructuring of health care, and either the downloading of provincial services such as welfare to the municipalities or selling them outright (such as water testing).¹⁸³ These reforms will be discussed further in Chapter Seven, as they were particularly pertinent to deals brokered in order to restructure the province’s public education funding model. At this point, however, it is useful to note that the seizure of power necessary to implement neoliberal reforms

¹⁸¹ Ibbittson, *Promised Land*, 140-41.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

exhibited in the Savings and Restructuring Act is not unlike that carried out by the Thatcher government.

Although the Harris regime was devotedly neoliberal in its economic ideology, it did encounter several challenges to implementing neoliberal ideology in the public sector. First, the government contradicted itself in the way that it sought greater power through centralized control in order to execute its vision of greater government efficiency. This goes against the neoliberal concepts of *minimal state*, *deregulation*, and *individual freedom*. However, such approaches to neoliberal reform are quite common, as initially states centralize control of their social services through legislation in order to bring about the types of reforms they feel will eventually increase the efficiencies of these services and perhaps allow the state to download and/or privatize them all together. This tendency toward centralization is compounded when states institute systems of public indicators to measure or test the efficiency of their social systems.¹⁸⁴ Education reform in both England and Ontario, as discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight, are particularly salient examples of the conflict between centralization and decentralization in neoliberal reform.

Another challenge to neoliberal reform in Ontario was that Ontarians—and Canadians in general—are committed to their core social services of health care, public education, and, to a lesser extent, welfare and unemployment insurance. Outright privatization and the marketization of such services is almost inconceivable to Ontario's electorate. Constrained by this, the Harris government had to find ways to implement neoliberal concepts without the full privatization (i.e., a completely free-market approach) that is so integral to neoliberalism. This meant, as described above, seizing power in order to swiftly implement radical change (as is the case with education and health care) or, alternatively, downloading social services, such as welfare, onto the province's municipalities so that these services could still be perceived of as in the government's trust.

Indeed, it is in the field of Ontario's health care that the usefulness of Turner's conceptual map of neoliberalism becomes quite apparent. Described in its ideal state, neoliberalism does not extend to a fully funded, user-fee free system of public health care

¹⁸⁴ Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert, *Public Reform Management*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 89.

where all citizens are entitled, regardless of their wealth or contributions to society, to equal care. Such a concept is decidedly anti-neoliberal in its Keynesian, collectivist roots. Health care in Canada, although administered by the provinces, is considered a “sacred cow” of the people and a “sacred trust” of the government. It is nearly impossible for a provincial government to survive if it is perceived as wishing to download, deregulate, or “sell off” its public health care system.¹⁸⁵ As already suggested, this “sacred trust” argument is also applicable to education, as discussed in Chapter Seven. Yet, provincial health care in Ontario underwent substantial neoliberal reform during the Harris regime.

The first indication of neoliberal reforms to health care was the creation of the *managerial* style Business Plans. Although still a government service, it was placed under a NPM structure. Also, the government found ways to encourage market competition within the health care service by contracting out large portions of the sector to private companies. For example, long-term home health care had previously been managed and supplied by non-profit, government funded organizations such as the Victorian Order of Nurses. Under a new “managed competition” model, the government allowed private companies to compete with non-profit agencies for contracts related to these services, drawing on a neoliberal market approach to increase efficiencies and service through competition and *enterprise*.¹⁸⁶ Finally, the government simultaneously took a more narrow view of both what constituted health care and its duties under the umbrella of health care, while enacting such measures as downloading services such as the Public Health Units onto the municipalities and ruling that paying for many of the drugs formerly covered under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan did not constitute an act of health care.¹⁸⁷ In short, although it remained in the realm of a “positive right” (and therefore anti-neoliberal in conception), the Harris regime “neoliberalized” health care in Ontario to the extent that it imposed “managed competition” to increase efficiency and off-loaded services to other groups or municipal governments to reduce its expenditures.

¹⁸⁵ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, *Canada Since 1945*, revised ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 446.

¹⁸⁶ Kim England et al., “Home Care: Managed Competition and Restructuring Home Care in Ontario,” in *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, People*, eds. Kim England and Kevin Ward (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 181-182.

¹⁸⁷ Ibbittson, *Promised Land*, 134, 239.

In addition to these changes to Ontario's social services, some of the Harris regime's earliest legislation involved repealing NDP labour legislation from Bills 79 and 40. These bills were originally passed to strengthen the rights of unions and to encourage employment equity.¹⁸⁸ As discussed above, both of these concepts were considered adverse to the neoliberal state, as they limit the freedom of employers to hire (or fire) a particular worker and, specifically in the case of unions, can drive up the natural price of goods due to increased cost of production (i.e., increased wages through union negotiation).¹⁸⁹ Harris also created the "Red Tape Commission," whose sole purpose was to review government legislation and regulations and determine if they impeded economic and business growth. This resulted in a series of eight bills introduced in June of 1996 designed to repeal former legislation or regulations that impeded such growth in eight of the major ministries.¹⁹⁰

The discussion of effects of Ontario's neoliberal reform on primary and secondary education occurs in Chapter Seven, however, it is interesting to note the effect the Harris reforms had on Ontario's universities as well. In an effort to create an educational market, the government de-regulated fees in some of the public universities' professional schools, such as business, dentistry and medicine, while also establishing an accreditation system so that private institutions could compete with Ontario's public universities.¹⁹¹ In the name of efficiency, the Harris government dramatically reduced transfer payments to the universities, stating that once the universities implemented systems of accountability for the management of public funds, as well as cost-saving restructuring, the reductions

¹⁸⁸ White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 268.

¹⁸⁹ As one can no doubt surmise, the Harris government was extremely unpopular with unions and public service workers. Under the Harris regime, particularly in its first three years, Ontario saw more labour strikes and days of action in protest of government action (some of which were the biggest ever to occur in North America) than in any other comparable length of time during its history. This included a strike by elementary and secondary public school teachers, which was the largest labour strike ever in North America. This strike is discussed in Chapter Seven.

¹⁹⁰ These were the ministries of the Attorney General; Citizenship and Recreation; Consumer and Commercial Relations; Economic Development, Trade and Tourism; Environment and Energy; Health; Northern Development and Mines; and Solicitor General and Correctional Services. See Kate Bezanson and Fraser Valentine, "Act in Haste . . . the Style, Scope and Speed of Change in Ontario," *Speaking Out Project: Report #2* (Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998), 16, accessed Feb 20, 2009, <http://www.caledoninst.dreamhosters.com/Publications/PDF/462ENG.pdf>

¹⁹¹ Donald Fisher et al., "The Political Economy of Post-Secondary Education: A Comparison of British Columbia, Ontario and Québec," *Studies in Higher Education* 57 (2009): 553.

would not be missed.¹⁹² Further, money would be given back to the universities once such accountability systems were in place, and the universities could show through various performance indicators that student enrolment and university performance—both in terms of student success and researcher output—had risen. Public-private partnerships were encouraged as a method of funding research and developments in areas that were particularly salient to Ontario’s market economy.¹⁹³ This would save the government money, while at the same time allowing the evolutionary interests of the market to indicate where research was desired and considered necessary. As Donald Fisher and others wrote, these changes created a “re-definition of the public space as part of the academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime.”¹⁹⁴

In closing, the Harris government proved to be one of a growing number of neoliberal reformer governments that began in earnest with the Thatcher and Reagan administrations of the 1980s. From the time of the CSR, neoliberal discourse played an essential role in convincing the public that the proposed reforms were necessary and based on common sense. Reform was constrained by public desire and the general Canadian worldview that health care and education are fundamental positive rights and thus should remain firmly in the hands of government. Yet, the PCs nonetheless managed to impose a systematic regime of neoliberal reform in Ontario framed around the idea of free-market economic stimulus achieved through the hard work and innovation of its citizenry and the reduction of both government inefficiencies and taxation in order further stimulate a sagging economy. Governing these changes was the NPM model, which is associated with the neoliberal peripheral concept of managerialism.

Summary and Comparison

This chapter has provided a general background on the nature of neoliberalism through an examination of three main sources of classical liberal thought upon which much of that ideology is based. It discussed the significance of an ideological dichotomy between the collective and the individual and the creation a neoliberal discourse around

¹⁹² Ibid., 556-57. In other words, Harris was implying that cost-savings could be achieved without raising the cost of tuition, yet other policy permitted universities to raise tuition by 20%.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 561.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 565.

this dichotomy, which is essential to the dissemination of neoliberalism. It employed Rachel S. Turner's conceptual map of neoliberalism to underscore that, while neoliberalism may have a distinct set of core concepts, a flexible definition of the term is needed when comparing political change in different states.

When comparing the broad neoliberal reforms of England and Ontario, it is clear that both were centered on a response to economic crisis and a perception that the previous government had somehow "lost control" of and damaged the state in some way. In England, loss of control centered on the Labour government's inability to control trade unions in the face of mounting economic pressures and also on its inability to produce self-reliant citizenry. Elements of this neoliberal discourse were melded with neoconservative ideas on the need for a strong government capable of protecting its people from financial hardship and the restoration of England as a cultural and economic superpower. In effect, a strong collectivist-individual dichotomy was created. In Ontario, critique of the government focused mostly on the New Democratic Party's inability to control its spending and balance its budget. While an individualist agenda was hinted at in the Common Sense Revolution, it was framed in terms of putting more money back into the pockets of individuals, not as any particular threat to the citizenry in general. Those taking advantage of social services were shamed, but they were given as the reason for changes to specific services, not as an indication of the moral character of the population in general. Either way, both governments employed the "common sense" approach to disseminating their neoliberal ideologies and policy, and both supported the concepts of the individual as self-reliant and enterprising.

Both governments pointed to ineffectiveness and overspending embedded in the structure of government by past regimes as a significant reason for economic hardship, and both sought to sell off state assets or privatize public services to accommodate this. England, as a central government of a formerly largely nationalized economy, obviously benefitted more from this plan of action. In addition, the Harris government faced intense opposition to such actions later in its regime, in large part due to the "Walkerton incident" where seven people died and thousands became ill after the private company that had assumed water-quality management responsibilities failed to detect bacteria in the

water.¹⁹⁵ Privatization of state assets, then, was far more widely accepted in England than in Ontario. Also exerting pressure on the Harris government to limit deregulation and privatization of systems such as health care and education was a nationalistic belief in the “right” to such government-administered services. Although England also had such social provisions, an argument is made later in this study that traditional class divides that had stratified the society for much of its history made some of the Thatcher government’s changes to educational governance more palatable to the English citizenry than they might have been to Ontarians.

In addition, both governments downsized through eliminating members of the public service and justified the elimination of public jobs by asserting that private industry would evolve to supply jobs in new technologies. As a result, both governments also supported the creation of new private industry that promised to create jobs in previously unexplored or in-demand sectors of the economy. And, of course, both governments introduced deep budget cuts related to social expenditures. In the case of England, these cuts took place over the course of Thatcher’s regime, while in Ontario, much of the cutting was done relatively swiftly and began as soon as the government assumed power.

To facilitate policy changes, in part by seizing more power, both governments restructured how local or municipal governments were financed, in part by altering the ways in which local governments could collect and distribute taxes in order to provision local services. As this particular reform was crucial to education reform in both states, a more detailed discussion of it is given in Chapters Five and Seven.

Overall, these two states demonstrate a variety of similarities and differences in their neoliberal reforms. Perhaps the most notable difference as it applies to this study was the strong individual-collective dichotomy with its notion of self-reliance and national pride and its undertone of neoconservatism that accompanied Thatcher’s reforms. As discussed in Chapter Nine this, combined with a greater public acceptance of marketization supported through accountability schemes, held major implications for the ways in which England’s and Ontario’s public education reforms—and the subsequent

¹⁹⁵ See Prudham, “Poisoning the Well,” 343-359.

effects on its music education programs—would converge and diverge under each respective regime.

Turner's map, and its subsequent application to some of the Thatcher and Harris government reforms as summarized in this chapter, lays the ground work for a much more detailed discussion of the *neoliberal education*. Chapters Four presents discussion of this more specific area of government reform, which, depending on the social, economic, geographical and political demographics, and histories of a particular state or region, can manifest in widely varying and seemingly contradictory varieties of neoliberal education reform.

Chapter Four: Education Reform in a Neoliberal World

Introduction

A discussion of neoliberalism as an ideology applied to education reform is not truly complete without observing globalization's role in the formation and dissemination of neoliberalism and vice versa. The two are widely considered mutually reinforcing phenomena.¹ This, in turn, has affected the development of education curriculum. Yet globalization, like neoliberalism, is a highly complex and dynamic phenomenon that both acts and is acted upon at the supranational, state, and local levels.² "Varieties" of globalization are influenced by and/or affect the decisions of actors ranging from supranational political and economic organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, to state governments, and even individuals as they go about their daily lives.³ Globalization affects the economic, political, and social spheres of both the developed and developing worlds and its scope and influence over the last twenty years is epic, as the literature available on this topic reflects. Accordingly, this chapter must place certain constraints on its discussion of this phenomenon as is relative to music education reform. These constraints are guided by two main considerations: (1) England and Ontario are considered states in the industrialized, or "developed," world and (2) the main topic of this dissertation is economic neoliberalism and its effect on education and curricular reform, specifically music education reform in England and Ontario during the

¹ See, for example, Ramesh Mishra, *Globalization and the Welfare State* (Cheltenham, UK: E. Elgar, 1999); Dieter Plehwe, Bernard Walpen, and Gisels Neunhöffer, eds. *Neoliberal Hegemony: A Global Critique* (New York: Routledge, 2006); and Ulrike Schuerkens, ed., *Globalization and Transformations of Local Socio-Economic Practices* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

² See, for example, Linda Wiess, *The Myth of the Powerless State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Dani Rodrick, *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalizations, Institutions and Economic Growth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Martin J. Gannon, *Paradoxes of Culture and Globalization* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008).

³ See, for example, Keith Suter, *Global Order and Global Disorder: Globalization and the Nation State* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Margaret P. Karns and Karen A. Mingst, *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publications, 2004); and Marjorie Mayo, *Global Citizens: Social Movements and the Challenges of Globalization* (Toronto: CSPI, 2005).

Thatcher and Harris regimes, respectively. This is not to say that this chapter or study will not focus on the social or political effects of globalization or neoliberalism as they relate to music education in England's and Ontario's educational systems. Indeed, as Andrew Gamble observed, neoliberalism requires us to concede that one of its "most essential features" is "understanding . . . politics through political economy."⁴ Discussions of a social or political nature will be considered through a frame of the effects of neoliberalism on education reform in general and, more specifically, on music education.

Guided by these considerations, this chapter begins with a brief overview of "neoliberal globalization," or globalization as it relates to economic neoliberal reform in developed countries. It then discusses how globalization facilitated the manifestation of neoliberalism's core and many of its adjacent concepts as the underpinning ideology in the majority of education reform in the developed world from the 1980s on, while neoliberal's peripheral concepts have led to different varieties of neoliberal education reform in specific locations. This discussion includes specific examples from different state systems of public education. Although some of these examples include education reforms undertaken by the Thatcher-Major and Harris regimes, a more thorough review, analysis, and comparison of those reforms' core, adjacent, and peripheral neoliberal elements is provided in Chapters Five and Seven.

Globalization and Neoliberalism

Globalization's roots lie in the economic trade that began with the end of the European feudal state and the rise of capitalism in that region during the late sixteenth century. The newly arising market economy was buoyed by extended trade routes and improved modes of transportation that gave access to foreign products and resources. Better transportation also supported the search for a greater variety of new products for domestic markets and opened up capital expansion into foreign locales.⁵ This could occur either through trade or by force, but what should be recognized is the economic impetus

⁴ Andrew Gamble, "The Western Ideology," *Government and Opposition* 44, no. 1 (2009): 12.

⁵ Taitu Heron, "Globalization, Neoliberalism and the Exercise of Human Agency," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 20, no. 1-4 (2008): 86.

behind the beginnings of globalization.⁶ Today, the process of globalization is infinitely faster than in the days of limited communication and travel, and is still largely driven by economic gain and improved communication technology. Diane Perrons and Silvia Posocco describe modern globalization as “the contemporary transformation of economic, social and political relations across the globe arising from the increased intensity, frequency, and speed of interconnections between people and places via flows of money, goods, services, people, and ideas,” which are “framed within the neo-liberal market rationality and . . . widely accepted as the politically and economically optimum, or perhaps only, model.”⁷ Though an extensive history of contemporary globalization is not necessary here, a few key points should be observed, particularly in relation to why globalization is framed by “neo-liberal market rationality” and how this affects labour markets and consequently education reform.

To begin, it is important to note that globalization is often viewed as a hegemonic force. That is, it is widely accepted that (1) the neoliberal ideology of the West (as described in Chapter Three) is the foundation of neoliberal globalization, and that (2) it is the powerful countries of the West, particularly the United States, that are responsible for the global spread of neoliberal policies in the form of neoliberal globalization.⁸ Two historic events, the end of World War II and the collapse of the Iron Curtain and Eastern European socialism, provided the opportunities for the United States to gain global ascendancy in the formation and dissemination of global economic policy. This was further supported by the creation of, and American interaction with, the World Trade Organization (WTO). As Charles S. Maier observed, “the close of World War II brought American policy makers a rare and heady chance to reshape the guidelines of the

⁶ This is not to say that political and cultural ramifications were not concomitant with these economic endeavours. Indeed, it was inevitable that, as trade within regions occurred more frequently, so would the spread of new ideas and cultural exchanges, as well as political battles over rights to territory and resources. This is an example of understanding “politics through political economy.” See footnote. 4.

⁷ Diane Perrons and Silvia Posocco, “Globalising Failure,” *Geoforum* 40 (2009): 131.

⁸ See, for example, Mishra, *Globalization and the Welfare State*, 8-11; Pawel Bożyk, *Globalization and the Transformation of Global Economic Policy* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008); and . Frank J. Lechner, *Globalization: The Making of a World Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009): 84-95.

international economic order.”⁹ With Europe in financial shambles and the Soviets occupied in reconstruction, the Americans were able to negotiate favourable international trade, loan, and labour terms with Europe as it began the process of post-war reconstruction under the Breton Woods agreement. This agreement also created the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (then called the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and made the American dollar the international currency. In effect, the United States became “the financial capital of the world.”¹⁰ Adding to American power was the World Bank’s voting structure, which is based on the number of “shares” a country possesses. As the holder of the largest share of World Bank votes (17%), the United States is able to choose its president. It is also the only member state able to exercise a veto.¹¹ The United States, combined with the European Union, who would become another strongly neoliberal political block, controlled 44.94% of the votes at the World Bank and 48.88% of the votes at the International Monetary Fund, and was (and still is) therefore in a position to direct economic policy—policy which, during the 1980s through 2000s, was distinctly neoliberal in nature.¹²

The interaction of developing countries with the IMF and World Bank beginning in the 1980s provides an excellent example of the exercise of American neoliberal economic ideas over other countries’ fiscal policies. Such countries often came to rely upon loans from the IMF and World Bank and found that loans would only be given out upon agreement to restructure the state in a neoliberal fashion (a more in-depth

⁹ Charles S. Maier, “The Politics of Productivity: Foundations of American International Economic Policy After World War II,” in “Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States,” special issue, *International Organization* 31, no. 4 (1977): 608. This battle for supremacy was not limited to the economic sphere. With the Soviet launch of Sputnik I in 1950, America and the Soviets also became embroiled in a battle for technological, military, and cultural dominance until the eventual collapse of the U.S.S.R in 1989. See David Couste, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1-7.

¹⁰ See Chapter Three, pp. 79-80, and also Maier, “The Politics of Productivity,” 619.

¹¹ Robert Hunter Wade, “US Hegemony and the World Bank: The Fight Over People and Ideas,” *Review of International Political Economy* 9, no. 2 (2002): 203. As of 2010, the World Bank voted to change its voting structure to give developing countries a slightly greater share, bringing the combined total of all shares from developing countries up to 47.19%. The Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, “New World Bank Voting Structure, Bank Watchgroups Question Reforms,” (May, 17, 2010) accessed June 1, 2012, http://www.pnowb.org/admindb/docs/New%20World%20Bank%20voting%20structure_190510.pdf.

¹² John Asimakopulos, “Globally Segmented Labour Markets: The Coming of the Greatest Boom and Bust, Without the Boom,” *Critical Sociology* 35 (2009), no. 2: 179.

application of the IMF's conditions placed on England in 1976).¹³ John Asimakopoulos summarized that, in the 1980s,

the World Bank and IMF went from providing development assistance/project loans to reorganizing the economies of the poor nations in crisis through policy/structural adjustment loans. For example, when poor nations are forced to seek help from the IMF (as a lender of last resort) they must agree to neoliberal reorganization of their economy—especially privatization—before obtaining assistance from the World Bank and transnational banks. In addition to privatization of state resources, these measures, which reflect the 1980s Thatcher/Reaganite ideology, include severe reductions in public spending, currency devaluation, and wage reductions to attract ‘foreign investment’ as a result of decreased export prices.¹⁴

The United States’ position as a global influence on economic policy was further solidified in the 1990s after the fall of the Iron Curtain and collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Beginning in 1989, many countries in this region restructured their governments and economic models, and presently are continuing to do so. In fact, the fall of these communist countries and their subsequent transformation into economically liberal states has been upheld by some as a validation of the liberal economic model over its socialist counterpart.¹⁵

The World Trade Organization (WTO) also deserves particular mention in terms of Western, specifically American, influence on the global spread of neoliberal economic ideology. This organization began in 1947 as the “General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs” (GATT), and now “provide[s] the legal ground-rules for international

¹³ See Chapter Three, pp. 96-97.

¹⁴ Asimakopoulos, “Globally Segmented Labour Markets,” 179. Although the World Bank and IMF often overlap in practice, their charters state, in theory, how they should differ. The IMF was intended to solve short term or immediate financial crises, such as supporting the immediate stabilization of a currency and giving credit to a country on the verge of bankruptcy. The World Bank was intended to address long term economic plans in economically stable countries, such as investments in mining and infrastructure projects. Thus, a loan from the IMF was and is generally seen as a “last measure” to a nation seemingly desperate to avoid economic and perhaps even political and social failure, and can be the first step to gaining funding from the World Bank. Countries borrowing from the IMF are therefore more likely to accede to the structural adjustments required as a condition of the loan. See Richard E. Feinberg, “The Changing Relationship Between the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund,” *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988): 548. These conditions, often labelled “Structural Adjustment Plans/Programs/Policies” (SAPs), have also been heavily implemented as part of developing world loan packages, particularly throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

¹⁵ Gamble, “The Western Ideology,” 2.

commerce.”¹⁶ It re-emerged at the WTO after extensive negotiations (known as the Uruguay round negotiations) between 1986-1994 and now seeks to “to help trade flow as freely as possible,” mainly through liberalizing trade policies in each of its 155 member countries. Its mission statement declares that it provides a “forum for negotiating agreements aimed at reducing obstacles to international trade and ensuring a level playing field for all, thus contributing to economic growth and development.”¹⁷ In effect, it provides a world-wide Constitution in the neoliberal sense, in that it attempts to govern the global free market through *rule of just conduct*. It also provides a “court” of sorts through its “Dispute Settlement Body,” which addresses conflicts that arise when “a member government believes another member government is violating an agreement or a commitment that it has made in the WTO.”¹⁸ It is interesting to note that, although approximately two-thirds of its member countries are classified as developing nations,¹⁹ and thus subject to the rules of trade as determined by the WTO, the lion’s share of power in this organization rests with the United States, the European Union, Japan, and Canada (known as “the Quad”). In fact, it was not until these four states could come to an agreement on certain trading issues that the WTO could even come into existence.²⁰ As summarized by Ngaire Woods and Amrita Narlikar, “the reality of trade negotiations is that states with large market-shares enjoy significant input and influence over [WTO] decisions; indeed, one might describe them as decision makers, while states with smaller market-shares are effectively decision takers.”²¹ Because its dollar was regarded as the international currency and it held so much influence at the WTO, IMF, and World Bank, the United States was able to actively facilitate the spread of neoliberal economic policies

¹⁶ World Trade Organization, “Understanding the WTO: The Basics: What is the World Trade Organization?” accessed July 5, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/who_we_are_e.htm.

¹⁷ World Trade Organization, “Understanding the WTO: The Basics: About the WTO – a Statement by the Director General,” accessed July 5, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/wto_dg_stat_e.htm.

¹⁸ World Trade Organization, “Dispute Settlement,” accessed November 17, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/dispu_e.htm

¹⁹ World Trade Organization, “Understanding the WTO: Developing Countries,” accessed July 5, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/dev1_e.htm.

²⁰ World Trade Organization, “Understanding the WTO: The Basics: The Uruguay Round,” accessed July 5, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/fact5_e.htm.

²¹ Ngaire Woods and Amrita Narlikar, “Governance and the Limits of Accountability: The WTO, the IMF and the World Bank,” *International Social Science Journal* 170 (2001): 573.

on a global scale throughout the 1980s to 2000. In Jon Peitese's words, "The United States set the rules: in economics, through the Washington consensus, in trade, through the WTO, in finance, through the dollar standard and the IMF, and in security, through its hegemony and large military."²²

Another organization of interest in the spread of neoliberal economic globalization is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Also growing out of post-World War Two reconstruction, the OECD began life as the Organisation for European Economic Development (OEED) and consisted of the European nations that initially drew up economic plans to submit to the United States for reconstruction aid in 1947.²³ After 12 years of political turmoil, the OEED was reconfigured as the OECD, when the need to address conflicts and "commercial problems caused by the co-existence of multilateral and European economic regional organizations" could no longer be ignored.²⁴ At this time, the United States and Canada became OECD members, making the group North Atlantic-centric rather than only Eurocentric.²⁵ Today, as in the 1980s and 1990s, the OECD's mandate is to "promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world."²⁶ It does this through providing

a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. We work with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change. We measure productivity and global flows of trade and investment. We analyse and compare data to predict future trends. We set international standards on a wide range of things, from agriculture and tax to the safety of chemicals²⁷

To support this mandate, the OECD has engaged in a long history of research and publications on economic development, which quite notably frame solutions to economic dilemmas in neoliberal ideology. For example, its highly influential Job Strategies

²² Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Globalization the Next Round: Sociological Perspectives," *Futures* 40 (2008): 707.

²³ Robert Wolfe, "From the Reconstruction of Europe to Constructing Globalization: The OECD in Historical Perspective," in *The OECD and Transnational Governance*, eds. Rianne Mahon and Stephen McBride (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2008), 25.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 27

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, "About the OECD," accessed July 5, 2009, <http://www.oecd.org/about/>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

reports, released in 1994, “championed . . . deregulation, market liberalization and the removal of labour rigidities” as the most suitable measures for reducing high unemployment.²⁸ The OECD, which has 34 member countries, also maintains official relations with other international organizations, such as the World Bank and IMF, which support and disseminate its neoliberal approach to economic cooperation.²⁹

Concomitant to, and arguably because of, the rise of the United States as an economic powerhouse and shaper of liberal economic policy on the global stage, was the adoption of neoliberal economic policies in other economically influential nations (such as The Quad) and their adoption of international trade agreements based on liberal “free trade” principles. This coincided with the development of the Internet and E-technology in the 1990s to eventually culminate in the global spread of neoliberal market concepts. Trade agreement such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which was ratified between Mexico, the United States, and Canada on January 1, 1994, aligned trading practices and eliminated tariffs among nations, while other international endeavours led by economically liberal states further enforced a global neoliberal ideology. These included annual meetings of the Group of Seven countries, otherwise known as the G7 (which first met in 1975 and included the United States, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Canada, and Italy), where finance ministers from the richest countries in the world generally advocate for some version of co-ordinated neoliberal economic policy.³⁰

Taita Heron, among others, has asserted that the way in which economically and militarily powerful countries such as the United States have used their influence to disseminate neoliberal ideology throughout the world means that “globalization is essentially tied up with imperialism” and that “domination” is a trademark of globalization.³¹ Alternatively, Robert Hunter Wade categorized the spread of neoliberal

²⁸ Stephen McBride, Kathleen McNutt, and Russell Alan Williams, “Policy Learning? The OECD and its Jobs Strategy,” in *The OECD and Transnational Governance*, eds. Rianne Mahon and Stephen McBride (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2008), 154.

²⁹ OECD, “Members and Partners,” accessed June 1, 2012, http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_36734052_36761800_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.

³⁰ Since the 1997, these meetings have expanded to include Russia (i.e., the G8) and, since 2008, more commonly include the top 20 richest countries in the world as the G20.

³¹ Heron, “Globalization, Neoliberalism and the Exercise of Human Agency,” 86.

globalization as an occurrence of “soft power” or hegemony that occurs when a dominant group “convince(s) subordinate groups that its rule serves not only its own interests but also those of the subordinate groups.”³² In retrospect, it seems clear that neoliberal globalization began with the adoption of neoliberal economic principles in certain regions and countries that held political power in key global organizations, in particular the World Bank, IMF, WTO, and OECD. It then spread through two main devices: (1) the somewhat more aggressive “imperialism” introduced through conditions applied to World Bank and IMF loans, and (2) the “soft power” exerted by economically influential states and political blocks such as the European Union and the promised bounty found through membership in the WTO, OECD, and various trade agreements like NAFTA. This convinced other countries that bringing their economic policies “in line” would lead to a more successful and prosperous state through improved access to a growing and lucrative global free market.

By the year 2000, the neoliberal approach to economics had become “such a taken-for-granted way to represent and act upon the economic world” that it had reshaped “established social and ideological arrangements along market lines.”³³ To be more specific, these “re-shapings” or reforms included abolishing trade tariffs, allowing for the free movement of skilled workers across borders, and facilitating the relocation of foreign and multi-national businesses to open, competitive markets through the lowering or abolishing of state restrictions and taxation, much of which was done under the governance and sanction of the WTO. In Heron’s words “large scale, long term flows of capital, commodities, technology and labour across national boundaries, have always defined the process of globalization.”³⁴ In essence, states become “open for business” and seek to make themselves as competitive as possible in a global free market.

As with neoliberalism, in the economics of globalization, “all the relations of production and of labour are geared towards capitalist and materialist accumulation.”³⁵ In other words, the core concepts of neoliberalism (*Market, Welfare, Constitution,* and

³² Wade, “US Hegemony and the World Bank,” 204.

³³ Marion Fourcade-Gourinchas and Sarah L. Babb, “The Rebirth of the Liberal Creed: Paths to Neoliberalism in Four Countries,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 3 (2002): 434.

³⁴ Heron, “Globalization, Neoliberalism and the Exercise of Human Agency,” 87.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

Property) are present and convergent in the economics of globalization, although, as discussed in Chapter Three, they do diverge into different forms in any particular region, nation, and locality.³⁶ The same ideological belief that one (or in this case each) business competes for prosperity in a free and open market, and that those who are able (or just plain lucky) to prosper will, applies, but at the state level. The concept of trimming or eliminating Keynesian ideas of welfare to reduce government spending and bureaucracies in order to provide more efficient markets also applies. By the late 2000s, as Gamble notes, “while there certainly remain important choices between alternatives within this neoliberal framework, few any longer make the argument that there are realistic choices between alternative frameworks.”³⁷ In essence, the discourse and core concepts of neoliberalism had become the discourse and core concepts of global economics. And like neoliberalism, peripheral concepts allowed for economic globalization to diverge in various localities while still converging with the ideological core and adjacent concepts of economic neoliberalism. We now turn to consider how this global economic view shaped the structure and reform of state-level education systems in the 1980s and 1990s.

Globalization, Neoliberalism, and State-Funded Education Reform

This section of the chapter builds on Rachel S. Turner’s conceptual map of neoliberalism to describe how global economic neoliberalism shaped and informed public school reform in the developed world during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Turner’s map serves as a foundation for my own conceptual map of the nature of *neoliberal education*. This conceptual map, as illustrated in table 4.1, incorporates all of Turner’s core concepts of neoliberalism and, in addition to incorporating most of its adjacent and peripheral concepts, it includes several others that are specific to the realm of education reform. These additions are listed in italics.

³⁶ Gamble, “The Western Ideology,” 4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

Table 4.1: Turner’s Map of Neoliberalism’s Conceptual Configuration as Modified to Exhibit the Core, Adjacent, and Peripheral Concepts of Neoliberal Education

Core Concepts	Adjacent Concepts	Peripheral Concepts
The Market	Evolution, spontaneous order, limited knowledge, entrepreneurship, individualism, self-interest, <i>educational excellence, standards, centralization of standards, knowledge economy/workers, core skills, core curriculum</i>	The enterprise culture, short-term profit motives, income-tax relief, privatisation, deregulation share-ownership, <i>standardized curricula and testing, high-stakes testing, parental choice, private schools, decentralization/devolution, managerialism, human capital</i>
Welfare	Minimal state, equality of opportunity, freedom, personal responsibility, self-reliance, negative rights, <i>efficiency, lifelong learning, meritocracy</i>	Reduced social expenditure, “workfare,” <i>QUANGOs, education vouchers, charter schools, knowledge workers, learnfare, re-skilling, public-private partnerships</i>
The Constitution	Freedom, private law, legal responsibility, abstract order, ‘rules of just conduct,’ evolution	Legal state, a ‘fiscal constitution,’ balanced budgets, restrained democratic rule
Property (related to Knowledge Economy rather than Post-Ford material accumulation: Ideas and skills rather than capital, though one does have the right to invest capital in education)	Ownership, possessive individualism, legal privilege, individual initiative, negative justice (conformity to universal rules), private associations, <i>educational consumer, knowledge as commodity, accountability</i>	<i>Educational investments, accreditation and certification, user fees donations and fundraising</i>

The flexibility of Turner’s map proves once again useful as one considers the multiple systems of educational structuring and loci of control that exist in public education throughout the Western world. In England, for example, the national government controls the development of curriculum and testing for every student in the country. In the United States, where states rather than the federal government have jurisdiction over education, federal departments associated with public education can only create a suggested set of curriculum standards, which it then urges the states to use as guidelines for their own

standardized curriculum development. They can also allocate funds designed to encourage the states to follow federal curricular and organizational suggestions. In Canada, the federal government has no control whatsoever over public elementary and secondary education and must necessarily leave all curricular decisions to the provinces. Despite different centres of control, Turner's map can be applied to neoliberal reforms in each of these education systems regardless of organizational structure and social context.

As Jenny Ozga and Bob Lingard have told us, "globalisation foregrounds education in specific ways that attempt to harness education systems to the rapid and competitive growth and transmission of technologies and knowledge linked to the national competitiveness of nations within the global economy."³⁸ Education, then, is most clearly linked to the core neoliberal concept of the *Market* and is conceived of and structured to promote job training for a competitive workforce. Education in a neoliberal society responds to a state's need to compete in an increasingly globalized world, where both financial and human capital can easily traverse national borders and markets, while entrepreneurs, established businesses, economic capital, and skilled workers freely move about in order to secure the highest economic benefits for themselves based on the choices available to them. Employment and employability are major neoliberal concerns, as states seek to train their citizens to compete for employment in the global market; hold basic, necessary employment skills, thereby reducing unemployment and thus the demand on the welfare state; and generate new products and services that generate jobs and contribute to the state's economy.³⁹

Educational reform is thus central to broader neoliberal reforms within the state because it is a platform to train future global workers who engage in free markets and, by implication, it serves as a measure of a state's potential economic worth, all the while decreasing the burden on the state. Education is considered so important to the neoliberal ideology of economic reform that both the World Bank and the OECD have education branches. In keeping with their mandates, the World Bank's focus on education is on

³⁸ Jenny Ozga and Bob Lingard, "Globalisation, Education Policy and Politics," in *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Educational Policy and Politics*, eds. Bob Lingard and Jenny Ozga (New York: Routledge, 2008), 71.

³⁹ Michael Apple, "Creating Difference: Neo-Liberalism, Neo-Conservatism and the Politics of Education Reform," *Educational Policy* 18, no. 1 (January and March 2004): 15.

providing monetary support to “help countries achieve universal primary education and to help countries build the higher-level and flexible skills needed to compete in today's global, knowledge-driven markets, what we call Education for the Knowledge Economy.”⁴⁰ The OECD’s educational mission is to “develop and review policies to enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness of education provisions and the equity with which their benefits are shared,” with an emphasis on “collecting detailed statistical information on education systems, including measures of the competence levels of individuals.”⁴¹ Discussion of the role of the World Bank in education reform is limited in this study because its efforts are focused more on developing nations. However, it is worth noting its emphasis on building skills in order to prepare students for the “knowledge economy,” as this is one of the adjacent concepts of education discussed below. The OECD’s role in and influence over education reform are focused on both developing and developed countries, and so is discussed below, particularly in relation to the core concepts of the *Market* and *Constitution*.

The primary discourses through which neoliberal education reforms take place are those of *educational excellence* and *standards*. They are the most dominant adjacent concepts in the conceptual map of neoliberal education presented below and they underpin most of the adjacent and peripheral concepts in all four of the core neoliberal concepts. They have been listed under the core concept of the Market, however, because they are most strongly associated with competition and choice, which are a manifestation of the adjacent concepts of *evolution*, *individualism*, *entrepreneurship*, and *self-interest*. In accordance with their primacy in the neoliberal conceptual map of education, this discussion of the nature of neoliberal education reforms begins with these two adjacent concepts.

⁴⁰ World Bank, “Education,” accessed June 23, 2010, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTSITETOOLS/0,,contentMDK:20934346~currentSitePK:95474~pagePK:98400~piPK:98424~theSitePK:95474,00.html>.

⁴¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “Education: About,” html accessed June 23, 2010, http://www.oecd.org/about/0,3347,en_2649_37455_1_1_1_1_37455,00.

Core Concept 1: The Market

(1) Educational excellence

The discourse of excellence that arose as part of neoliberal education reforms beginning in the 1980s and continuing through the 1990s and early 2000s grew from three distinct, yet related, perceived problems or trends: (1) lack of improvement in local, regional and national student performance despite previous reforms, (2) the introduction of international standardized testing, and (3) declining national employment. At the local, regional and national levels, states had begun to notice that, despite previous reforms, the level of knowledge and skills acquired by students in their public education systems was either static or falling when compared to previous generations. For example, in early 1980s America, little to declining improvement was made on national assessment measures such as the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), the American College Test, and the National Assessment of American Progress when compared to earlier decades.⁴²

Anxiety over tests results as an indicator of educational excellence became even greater with the introduction of international standardized tests developed and administered throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. These tests were designed to assess the quality of education attained by students in particular subject areas when compared to other nations. They were developed and administered by several international organizations, such as the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and the education branch of the OECD. They included tests such as the IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, first administered in over 45 countries in 1995), followed in 1997 by the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA, with 43 participating countries), and the IEA's 2001 Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, with 37 participating countries). The purpose of the first and third assessments is self explanatory. PISA assesses "the extent to which students near the end of compulsory education have acquired the

⁴² James G. Cibulka, "The Evolution of Education Reform in Great Britain and the United States: Implementation, Convergence of Two Macro-policy Approaches," in *The Reconstruction of Education: Quality, Equality and Control*, eds. Judith D. Chapman et al. (London: Cassell, 1996), 108.

knowledge and skills essential in everyday life” by measuring the reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy of students about to exit secondary school.⁴³

The failure to exhibit excellence in educational attainment on both national and international assessments in the face of growing global markets was correlated with many of the adverse effects exhibited by national economies in countries such as the United States, Australia, and England throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The 1983 American report issued by the National Commission on *Excellence in Education* [italics added] entitled *A Nation at Risk* (ANAR) captures the sense of crisis and urgency portrayed by educational reformers early in this era. It would go on to inspire the ideology and structure behind most of the American neoliberal education reforms of the 1990s and 2000s.⁴⁴ This highly influential document noted soon after its opening that,

Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged pre-eminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation is being taken over by competitors throughout the world. . . . The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people.⁴⁵

Similarly, in England, Margaret Thatcher defended the neoliberal education reforms introduced in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) by stating, “if education is backward today, national performance will be backward tomorrow.”⁴⁶ In Ontario, the Progressive Conservative’s 1995 election platform included statements such as “our children aren’t able to get the kind of education they need to secure a good and prosperous future.”⁴⁷ As these examples show, the concept of *educational excellence* is strongly tied to ideas of competition and global economic success, and thus to the core

⁴³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “About PISA,” accessed April 10, 2010, <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/>.

⁴⁴ For a detailed account of the path from *A Nation At Risk* to the Goals 2000 Act, see Robert B. Schwartz and Marian A. Robinson, “Goals 2000 and the Standards Movement,” *Brookings Papers on Education Policy* no. 3 (2000): 175-181.

⁴⁵ National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation At Risk* (Washington DC: Department of Education, 1985), 5, quoted in David Hursh, “Assessing No Child Left Behind and the Rise of Neoliberal Educational Policies,” *American Educational Research Journal* 44, no.3 (2007): 498-99.

⁴⁶ Margaret Thatcher, quoted in James W. Guthrie and Lawrence C. Pierce, “The International Economy and National Education Reform: A Comparison of Education Reforms in the United States and Great Britain,” *Oxford Review of Education* 26, no. 2 (1990): 185.

⁴⁷ Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, *The Common Sense Revolution*, 4th printing (Toronto: Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, 1994), 1.

neoliberal concept of the *Market*. This has particular implications for the way in which the individual is conceived within a conceptual map of neoliberal education (more on this below) and, as a logical outflow of the conception of what a well-educated individual should be, on the educational standards needed to measure the attainment of *educational excellence*.

(2) Standards

The concepts of *standards* is a reflection of the concepts of *educational excellence*. Neoliberals see standards as a method for measuring educational excellence and for displaying their educational achievements to the world. As discussed below, in theory this will help nations achieve economic success—or even economic supremacy. Indeed, it is difficult to say which came first: the drive for excellence was in part spurred on by lacklustre results on standardized tests such as the SAT and TIMSS as well by the perceived role of education in rising unemployment. Yet, the drive to increase educational excellence was undoubtedly most strongly manifested in the concept of *standards* and *standardization*.⁴⁸ Joel Spring noted that “the concept of academic standards has a dual meaning. First, the creation of academic standards means creating a common curriculum for schools. . . . Secondly, raising standards means increasing student knowledge about a prescribed subject.”⁴⁹ In the latter case, we can equate the idea of “raising standards” with the concept of *educational excellence* discussed above. It is through the first of these two conceptions of standards—creating a common curriculum and, subsequently, a mechanism for evaluating the educational/social investment made in order to ensure educational excellence occurs—that the nature of neoliberal education and its relation to core concept of the *Market* is most clearly manifested. However, before a proper discussion of the role of standards can occur, it is necessary to consider which knowledge and skills students must obtain in order to exhibit educational excellence under neoliberal reforms in a globalized market. For this, we must look again to the core

⁴⁸ Suzanne Harris, *The Governance of Education: How Neo-Liberalism is Transforming Policy and Practice* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), 52. See also William A. Proefriedt, *High Expectations: The Cultural Roots of Standards Reform in American Education* (New York: Teachers College Press), 154.

⁴⁹ Joel Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Global Economy* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 1998), 159.

concept of the *Market* and acknowledge that, as discussed above, one of the key ideas in the discourse of educational excellence is the ability of educational institutions to produce *enterprising* individuals who engage in the market and who are marketable in and to a world of global enterprise. As Spring wrote, “in this context, education becomes a form of economic investment and, consequently, the value of education is measured by its contribution to economic growth.”⁵⁰

Spring identified this system of measurement as “human capital accounting,” where states view funds allocated to education as a social investment that will allow their citizens to better compete in a world-wide neoliberal global market economy, thereby contributing to greater state economic growth.⁵¹ Mark Olssen, John Codd, and Anne-Marie O’Neill broadly summarized the main tenets of Human Capital Theory in relation to education as first put forth in the 1950s:

- that education and training increase an individual’s cognitive capacity;
- which in turn increases productivity; and
- an increase in productivity tends to increase an individual’s earnings
- which becomes a measure of human capital.⁵²

By the mid-1990s, the OECD had re-defined human capital as “the knowledge that individuals acquire during their life and use to produce goods, services, or ideas in market or non-market situations.”⁵³ The difference between these two conceptualizations of human capital lies in the motivation behind an individual’s actions. As Suzanne Harris observed, man is considered “*homo economicus*” in the classical liberal state, which we can equate with Olssen, Codd, and O’Neill’s definition of human capital theory. Here, the individual’s actions are governed by pure self-interest. While the state prospers indirectly from those actions, it does not directly foster them, but rather removes impediments to the pursuit of *self-interest* and *self-enterprise*, usually through a system of *negative rights*. In a neoliberal state, *homo economicus* is replaced by “*manipulated man*,” whose

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid. 159-160.

⁵² Mark Olssen, John Codd, and Anne-Marie O’Neill, *Education Policy: Globalization, Citizenship & Democracy* (London: Sage Publications, 2004), 148.

⁵³ The OECD’s Education Committee and Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee, quoted in Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Global Economy*, 169.

actions are directed by the state and its various institutions—including educational institutions—so that they are purposely entrepreneurial in the interest of the state’s prosperity.⁵⁴ In Harris’s words, “the role of the state is seen as an enabling force which aims to create individuals who are enterprising and competitive,” rather than letting individuals decide if they wish to be so.⁵⁵ In doing so, citizens are encouraged to take *personal responsibility* for themselves.

(a) The knowledge economy and knowledge workers

Harris’s conception of *manipulated man* necessitates states identifying what are or might be the core strengths of their economy and workers in order to create the standards for educational excellence that foster participation in the global market. For example, David Wilson observed that, by 1998, one in eight jobs in Canada relied on “knowledge-intensive” skills rather than labour-related production-line oriented skills (up from one in sixteen in 1971).⁵⁶ As free trade agreements such as the NAFTA were implemented in the 1990s and world markets began to expand, labour-related jobs began to move from their home countries to less developed countries. There, skill levels required to complete manufacturing jobs were low and the local economies allowed transnational corporations to save considerable amounts of money in production costs and in paying foreign workers much lower wages. Faced with a loss in production-related jobs, industrialized nations such as Canada, Australia, the United States, and England moved to reform their education systems in order to produce individuals that would cater to the newly dubbed global *knowledge economy*. In this economy, states with a high standard of living poise themselves as producers of high-technology, high-value goods and suppliers of new, innovative ideas and products.⁵⁷ A *knowledge economy* is essentially a “value-added” economy: workers (usually referred to as *knowledge workers*) in such an economy strive to be innovative and or/entrepreneurial in order to create new goods and services, or to enhance pre-existing goods and services. Leonard J. Waks described such workers as,

⁵⁴ Harris, *The Governance of Education*, 18.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁶ David Wilson, “The Education and Training of Knowledge Workers,” in *The International Handbook on Globalisation, Education and Policy Research: Global Pedagogies and Policies*, ed. Joseph Zajda (Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2005), 50.

⁵⁷ Wilson, “The Education and Training of Knowledge Workers,” 49.

Knowing how to access, interpret and apply new knowledge and information to add value to an organization. They see themselves as professionals, but are not limited by narrow professional identities. . . . They are learning oriented because their unique human capital derives from continuous learning in their professional endeavours. . . . They apply knowledge to create new knowledge and information that can be combined and permuted to create new products or services.⁵⁸

Knowledge workers need to be forward thinking, flexible, and team-oriented. Rather than performing a single task at a single job throughout their lives, knowledge workers are expected to have a set of basic, transferable skills that can be applied as they encounter new situations and problems. They are directly related to the adjacent market concepts of *evolution* and *spontaneous order* as their primary job is to devise new goods and services that meet the needs of (or create a need in) society and/or to devise new, more efficient solutions to problems. Table 4.2 illustrates how Wilson drew on the work of G. S. Tjaden to demonstrate the differences between the goals and roles of workers in Fordist “Industrial Age Organizations” and workers in global free-market “Information Age Organizations” (i.e., the *knowledge economy*). Rather than undertake the kind of repetitive, unskilled, industrial age work that Adam Smith feared would lead to a deterioration of the mind and disengagement from work and society,⁵⁹ *knowledge workers* stay engaged in and have a certain feeling of ownership over their work because it is in their very nature to take their knowledge and apply it to solving new problems.

Table 4.2: Qualities of Organizations and Workers in Industrial vs. Information Age Organizations⁶⁰

Industrial Age Organizations	Information Age Organizations
Mass production	Mass customisation
Labour serves machines or tools	Tools and machines serve labour
Labour performs repetitive tasks	Labour applies knowledge
Command and control management structure	Common control management structure
Capital-intensive	Knowledge-intensive
Capitalists own the means of production	Labour owns the means of production
Capital is the primary driver	Knowledge is the primary driver

⁵⁸ Leonard J. Waks, “How Globalization Can Cause Fundamental Curriculum Change,” *Journal of Educational Change* 4 (2003): 399.

⁵⁹ See Chapter Three, pp. 74-75.

⁶⁰ G.S. Tjaden, reproduced by Wilson, “The Education and Training of Knowledge Workers,” 59.

Tjaden's chart outlines quite well the contrast between the two systems: The Industrial age consists mostly of mass production and repetitive tasks, with the monetary resources needed to fuel production supplied and controlled by a few powerful individuals. The Information Age Organization relies on a creative approach to specific problems that is fuelled and controlled in large part by those who possess the knowledge, skills, flexibility, and creativity to solve unique problems. In essence, the workers "own" the means of production because it is their knowledge and skills that produce new ideas and solve problems. The worker's knowledge drives the company's production of unique ideas or products designed to fill market niches or address specific problems in design and development. Workers may work on their own, but, more often than not, responsibility is shared between workers and management as they collaborate to solve specific problems and challenges. As discussed below, in order to engage in this *knowledge economy*, neoliberal education policy dictates that knowledge workers should engage in *life-long learning*.

(b) Core skills

At the core of the *knowledge worker* concept is a basic set of skills, which is purportedly grounded in literacy/communication, math, science, and technology.⁶¹ These skills are often labelled *core skills* or "key learning areas/strategies" in education reform and are considered the foundation of one's ability to continue learning throughout one's life in an effort to meet the demands of a knowledge economy.⁶² They are remarkably similar from one state to another and are invariably linked to the promotion of the national or state economy. In Australia, for example, the relationship among the economy, education, and marketable skills grew over the course of the 1980s, culminating in the 1987 restructuring of the Department of Education into the Department of Education, Employment, and Training. Amanda Weate noted that this restructuring was an overt "re-statement of the purposes of education" as "being in need of renovation

⁶¹ Wilson, "The Education and Training of Knowledge Workers," 61.

⁶² Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Global Economy*, 106. It is interesting to note that Adam Smith supported these same basic qualities in his proposed basic education for all citizens. See Chapter Three, pp. 74-75.

to more efficiently address the failing economy and increased unemployment statistics.”⁶³ In 1991, the Finn Report, commissioned by the Australian Education Council (AEC) recommended that school curriculum be “more oriented toward the world of work,” and that “employment related generic competencies” be developed in order to facilitate basic employability skills that “constitute the foundation for the success of Australian industry.”⁶⁴ By 1992, the AEC had released a list of eight “Key Learning Strategies” for all Australians. They were:

- Collecting, analyzing and organizing information
- Communicating ideas and information
- Planning and organizing activities
- Working with others and in teams
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques
- Solving problems
- Using technology⁶⁵

Such strategies draw upon the core skills of literacy/communication, math, science, and technology, while also indicating the need to problem solve and work well with others, and are clearly meant to conform to the concept of the *knowledge worker*. In America, President Bill Clinton’s Goals 2000 Act (1994)—which was directly influenced by ANAR—stated that, by the year 2000, “every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well so that they may be prepared for . . . further learning and productive employment in our modern economy” and that “the percentage of all students who demonstrate the ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, and write and communicate effectively will increase substantially.”⁶⁶ The eight National

⁶³ Amanda Weate, “The Economics of Creativity,” in *Arts Education: Beliefs, Practices and Possibilities*, ed. Edward Peter Errington (Victoria: Deakin University Press, 1993), 33.

⁶⁴ Doug Boughton, “Shaping the National Curriculum: Issues for Australian Art Education,” in *Arts Education: Beliefs, Practices and Possibilities*, ed. Edward Peter Errington, 19-30 (Victoria: Deakin University Press, 1993), 24-25. The AEC was comprised of state and federal education ministers. As in Canada, Australia’s states have jurisdiction over education. Unlike in Canada, however, the federal government has some authority to override state decisions.

⁶⁵ Joan Livermore and Gary E. McPherson, “Expanding the Role of the Arts in the Curriculum: Some Australian Initiatives,” *Arts Education Policy Review* 99, no. 3 (1998): 12.

⁶⁶ “Section 102: National Education Goals,” *America 2000: Educate America Act*, Public Law 103-227. *U.S. Statutes at Large* (1994), accessed November 22, 2009, <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/GOALS2000/TheAct/index.html>.

Education Goals contained in the Act are broken into several items, with an entire goal devoted to the study of mathematics and science. This goal states that “By the year 2000, United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.”⁶⁷ Connections between the economy and learning are explicit in goal six, which is devoted to “Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning.” Here, the Act states that “by the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship” and that “every major American business will be involved in strengthening the connection between education and work.”⁶⁸ Finally, Goals 2000 states that “all workers will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills, from basic to highly technical, needed to adapt to emerging new technologies, work methods, and markets.”⁶⁹ These educational principles were further solidified by the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Further discussion of the role of academic standards in relation to neoliberal education reform is given in Chapters Five and Seven as they related to education reform in England and Ontario. What is clear from the above two examples, however, is that academic standards in such reforms are meant to “fit into a model of educational achievement based on competition similar to economic competition”⁷⁰ Their discourse was and continues to be linked heavily to national economic gain and the ability to pursue future “lifelong learning” in order to keep labour skills relevant to and evolving with shifting global markets. Thus, the types of core skills and key learning areas given above would become the backbone for setting the terms of *educational excellence* through *academic standards* and *standardized curricula and testing*.

(c) Core curriculum and centralization of standards

If states were to demonstrate the excellence of their public education systems in preparing students for lifelong learning and economic prosperity in the knowledge economy however, they needed a method of assessment and a standard to which such

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Global Economy*, 138.

assessment could apply. In most education systems in the Western developed world, this meant developing a set of common or *core curriculum* or national *standards* that clearly stated what each child should learn and by when, particularly in the areas of the *core skills*. *Standardized curricula and testing* to demonstrate student competency were widely developed by state governments over the course of the 1990s, in effect centralizing control over what educational excellence should be. It should also not go unnoticed that much of the educational policy passed regarding standardized curricula and the monitoring of educational standards through standardized testing occurred just before or just after the first administration of TIMSS (1995), although England legislated its National Curriculum into existence in the 1998 Education Reform Act. Thus these reforms occurred in the midst of a growing trend of international testing meant to establish the competency of a state's students in the fields of literacy, mathematics, and science—all considered necessary for attaining personal and regional economic success in a globalized economy.

As noted above, England instituted its National Curriculum in 1988. By the early 1990s, it had introduced standardized curricula in the areas of English, math, science, technology, history, geography, modern languages, music, and physical education, along with standardized tests to measure students' progress in the "core" subjects at various stages throughout elementary and high school.⁷¹ Ontario began introducing standardized curriculum at the elementary level in 1998 and had completed its development and implementation through to the end of secondary school by 2001. Testing of students in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 10 for abilities in literacy, mathematics, and science were implemented as new curriculum appeared for each grade. The first attempt to legislate national standards and testing in America was introduced in the America 2000 package (an earlier incarnation of the Goals 2000 Act introduced by George H. Bush that failed to pass) and further supported by the Goals 2000 Act, which was heavily influenced by the National Council on Education and Testing.⁷² The passage of the Goals 2000 Act in 1994 allocated funding for states to develop and implement standards-based reforms and inspired the

⁷¹ Guthrie and Pierce, "The International Economy and Education Reform," 193.

⁷² Schwartz and Robinson, "Goals 2000 and the Standards Movement," 177-78.

development of standardized curricula in many states.⁷³ At the same time, it legislated the creation of the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC), whose main purpose was to review and certify any past or future federal performance standards and to approve any state performance standards developed under funding made available through the Goals 2000 act.⁷⁴ This act also called on the NESIC to organize and approve of the writing of national standards in the “core” subject areas. While they were not mandatory for the states to enact, many states did use them as guidelines when writing their own educational standards, including those in music education. Thus, when the creation and implementation of curricular standards were finally legislated in NCLB, many states already had systems in place to deal with the legislation. Australia went through a particularly messy and ill-fated attempt to construct a national curriculum in several “core” subjects during the 1990s, ultimately failing due to changing political leadership and the historical tension between federal and state governments in the area of public education. Yet, many of the states still adopted state-wide curricula in the 1990s that were based on these attempts at a national curriculum.⁷⁵ As a point of interest, currently Australia is engaged in another attempt to develop a national curriculum for all subjects in its public education system.⁷⁶ Reflected in all of these attempts at *centralized* and *standardized curricula* was an emphasis on a *core curriculum* of literacy/English, math, science, and technology intended to impart the neoliberal *core skills* to students as future workers in a *knowledge economy*. Their varying paths to curriculum development, as well as their success, relied strongly on the pre-existing educational structures and jurisdictions (and historical tension between them, in the case of Australia).

⁷³ Ibid., 180-81.

⁷⁴ Benjamin Michael Superfine, “The Politics of Accountability: The Rise and Fall of Goals 2000,” *American Journal of Education* 112 (November 2005): 17.

⁷⁵ Alan Reid, *Rethinking National Curriculum Collaboration: Towards an Australian Curriculum*. (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2005):18.

⁷⁶ See the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, “Australian Curriculum,” accessed June 10, 2011, <http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum.html>. Somewhat surprisingly, history is also included in this list. The arts curriculum will be written in the next phase of curriculum development. As another point of interest, Australia has also come quite late to widespread state-mandated standardized testing. While it has participated in TIMSS, PIRLS, and PISA since their first administrations, state mandated tests did not begin until 2008.

(d) Standardized and high-stakes testing

As states felt that it was important to standardize the facts and skills that their education system would impart to their students, yet it was also necessary to demonstrate that students had learned these facts and skills, particularly in an era of growing economic globalisation. To do this, *standardized testing* was developed and implemented by various states and framed as an *accountability* measure to ensure that *standardized curricula*—usually and particularly in the *core curriculum* area—were adequately taught and learned. A strict definition of the term “standardized educational test” indicates that “conditions and contents [are] equal for all examinees,” including the test’s evaluation procedures.⁷⁷ In reality, however, some of the parameters, such as time allotment or materials and resources used (e.g., computers, learning aids, and/or placement of a student in a special testing environment) are often flexible if students have adequately proven they have a unique learning need.⁷⁸

The standardized testing and curriculum movement that began in the 1990s and continues to grow today is arguably the most consistent and publicly recognizable element of neoliberal education reforms. Standardized tests purportedly serve as both an internal “check” on the learning that has occurred at the local level and, by implication, as a measurement of a school’s or school district’s *efficiency* in terms of measuring investment of state or parental resources against meeting curricular goals. They also are meant to serve as an indicator of how prepared a particular student, region, and even nation is to compete in the global economy. They are, in essence, the primary measurement tool that schools, states, and nations use to hold education systems, institutions, and individuals *accountable* in terms of *educational excellence*. And, as discussed below under the core concept of *Welfare*, they also factor heavily in measuring the *efficiency* of investment in *human capital* through education. In the words of William E. Segall,

⁷⁷ Amy M. Olson and Darrell Sabers, “Standardized Tests,” in *21st Century Education: A Reference Handbook, Volume I*, ed. Thomas L. Good (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2008), 423.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 424.

It is as if schools, in neoliberals' minds, were corporations employing teachers they regard as knowledge managers, whose task it is to produce students they liken to products or *human capital*. [In] competing in the *free-market* academic economy through *high-stakes testing*, academic enterprises are held *accountable* for the knowledge their students display."⁷⁹

England and the United States are particularly known for their emphasis on *high-stakes testing*. High stakes testing is testing that, if failed, restricts "students' ability to graduate, be promoted from one grade to another, or be placed in a particular track."⁸⁰ However, this type of testing not only impacts the individual student, but also the institutions in which they are educated. Examples from England are discussed in the next chapter. In the United States, however, high-stakes testing became prevalent when NCLB was signed in 2001 and states were given money to develop testing procedures. This funding, known as Title 1 funding, is contingent upon schools meeting their state's requirements on specific state-wide standardized tests. The states that took the funding were then held *accountable* for ensuring that an acceptable percentage of students at schools within the state both took and met a predetermined state-wide objective for improvement on the tests.⁸¹ Failure of individual schools to meet what was subsequently deemed "Adequate Yearly Progress" on those tests results in escalating action against the school, including allowing students to transfer to other schools with higher test scores.⁸² High stakes testing is also used in many American states to determine teacher and administrative bonuses and has even been shown to affect the price of housing in particular school districts as parents' move to these districts in order to ensure a quality education for their children.⁸³ It should be noted as per the above discussion on *educational excellence* that these tests centre on students' abilities in mathematics, literacy, and science, which are most strongly associated with the development of *knowledge workers*, *lifelong learning*, and *market competition* in the global economy. In these circumstances, *high stakes testing* is strongly associated with the adjacent concepts of *individualism* and *self-interest*, as parents make what they believe is the best *choice* for their children based on test results.

⁷⁹ William E. Segall, *School Reform in a Global Society* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 181. (italics added).

⁸⁰ Superfine, "The Politics of Accountability," 12.

⁸¹ Spring, *American Education*, 180, 158.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 158.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 181.

Both England and the United States exemplify the drive to foster educational excellence by increasing educational standards through a focus on a core set of skills and curriculum that is assessed by *standardized tests* and intended to increase economic prosperity. With such economic, cultural, and military nation-giants forging the way, supported as they were by institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and OECD, it was not long before other developed nations followed suit in their educational policies and reforms. In the words of Scott Davies and Neil Guppy: “the ever-expanding web of market relations fostered a standardization of knowledge systems in all core industrialized nation states.”⁸⁴ We will return to this idea in the discussion of the neoliberal core concept of the *Constitution* presented below.

(3) Relating educational excellence and standards to the Market

At first glance, the manifestation of *educational excellence* in the form of *standardized curriculum* and *testing* appears to go against some of the adjacent concepts of the *Market* because a plausible argument might be made that they contradict the adjacent concepts of *evolution*, *spontaneous order*, *deregulation*, and *minimal state interference*. It is through the concept of *standardized curriculum and testing* that we can fully understand the implications of Suzanne Harris’ observations regarding *homo economicus* vs. *manipulated man*. In a truly free market, schools would be able to develop curriculum at the local level based on the needs and desires of the individuals within them. National or regional standardized curriculum, however, removes power from the local and individual levels, sanctioning and regulating knowledge and skills for all citizens, regardless of local or individual needs and self-pursuits. In the case of neoliberalism, the knowledge is imposed in order to achieve *educational excellence* in the *core curriculum* areas (i.e., literacy, mathematics, science, and technology) that facilitate participation in the global *knowledge economy*.⁸⁵ All students are expected to learn similar core skills that lead to greater economic prosperity; hence the state seeks to direct all individuals down a particular ideological path: that of the *self-reliant, enterprising*,

⁸⁴ Scott Davies and Neil Guppy, “Globalization and Educational Reforms in Anglo-American Democracies,” *Comparative Education Review* 41, no. 4 (1997): 436.

⁸⁵ Segall refers to this as the creation of a Euroamerican curriculum. *School Reform*, 181.

knowledge worker.⁸⁶ This centralization of power, as already discussed in Chapter Three and in the present chapter, is common to neoliberal reforms: Reformers seek to create systems of educational *accountability* measured by performance indicators—such as standardized tests— in the name of maintaining a “level playing field” that ensures that individuals can compete in an (hopefully) ever growing and prosperous market.⁸⁷ While this removes some of the *personal choice* and *freedom* from students and families, its emphasis on the *entrepreneurial* spirit and competitive engagement in world *markets* is in keeping with the adjacent concepts of the *Market*.

Additional factors also support the education system as a site of neoliberal reform. Neoliberalism calls for the increased *privatization* of the school system and/or *tax relief* given to such schools and views education as a profit making enterprise. Further, it emphasizes both the *deregulation*—or “*devolution*”—of many elements of schooling outside of curriculum and testing (e.g., creation of charters or “niche” educational markets, creation of *share-ownership* through parent advisory committees, or control of budget lines) as well as *parental choice* of school. These factors, coupled with a strong emphasis on *high-stakes testing*, do, in fact, allow for the co-existence of highly *centralized standards* and *testing* while still promoting the adjacent and peripheral concepts of the *Market*.

The first two of these factors, that is, support of an education system as a private and profit-making enterprise, can be further supported in, or introduced as an alternative to, some public education systems and not in others, once again demonstrating the usefulness of this adaptation of Turner’s conceptual map of neoliberal education. Ontario’s government, as discussed in Chapter Seven, believed in raising the province’s standard of educational excellence through the types of standardized curriculum and testing discussed above, and by increasing the efficiency of its public system of education. However, privatization of the public school system was not an option for the Harris government because of the social-democratic context in which it sat. In fact, when

⁸⁶ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁷ William Bruneau and Donald C. Savage, *Counting Out the Scholars: The Case Against Performance Indicators in Higher Education* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 2002), 147. Although Bruneau and Savage are referring to post-secondary education, the same kind of centralization is common to reforms to elementary and secondary education.

the Harris government introduced a bill giving tax breaks on private school tuition, the general public and political opposition were so incensed that it led to legislative hearings on the fairness of the bill, leading the government to delay the bill for one year.⁸⁸ When the “Equity in Education” tax credit was finally introduced in 2003, it met with an uproar and very likely contributed to the Progressive Conservative Party’s defeat in the election of that year. The legislation was promptly repealed by the newly elected Liberal government.⁸⁹

Privatization and profit making are trends more common to England and the United States. American economist Milton Friedman (whose influence on the development and dissemination of neoliberalism was discussed in Chapter Three) was a particularly avid supporter of privatized, for-profit education.⁹⁰ Applying market concepts and using the United States as an example, he argued that the publically owned education system would grow complacent and lose sight of the prime goal of education: to meet the needs of its consumers who live and function in an economically competitive world.⁹¹

As discussed in Chapter *Three*, the Market, supported by the adjacent concepts of *privatization*, *self-interest*, *evolution*, and *spontaneous order*, is a core value of neoliberalism. Neoliberal reformers argue that by converting public systems of education into free market systems, education systems can accumulate all of the perceived benefits of competition: greater efficiency, greater relevance to consumer needs, and closure of schools that, through consumer choice (or lack thereof) have proven to be undesirable to the general public.⁹² In the United States, where great discrepancies in wealth occur between individuals, federal and state governments have sought to encourage for-profit education and competition among schools through voucher programs. Friedman himself advocated this approach. He felt that allowing the richer classes of society the choice of sending their children to private schools while the poorer segments of society had no

⁸⁸ Caroline Mallan, “School Tax-credits on Hold for One Year; Postponement of Second Phase Will Save \$15 Million,” *The Toronto Star*, June 18, 2002, Ontario Edition.

⁸⁹ Bradley Walchuck, “Changing Union-Party Relations in Canada: The Rise of the Working Families Coalition,” *Labour Studies Journal* 35, no. 1 (2010): 38-39.

⁹⁰ Friedman devotes a whole chapter to education in his seminal book *Free to Choose*, which was first published in 1980. “What’s Wrong With Our Schools,” in *Free to Choose: A Personal Statement* (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 1990).

⁹¹ Friedman, *Free to Choose*, 155-58.

⁹² Spring, *American Education*, 183-84.

choice but to send their children to the designated public schools in their districts fostered “the stratification of society” and created “highly unequal educational opportunity.”⁹³ In Friedman’s voucher system, parents are given vouchers by the government and granted the right to enrol their children in any private or public school of their choice. The government then reimburses part or all of the cost of the child’s education.⁹⁴ While England rejected a voucher system, a sequence of legislation beginning with the 1980 Education Act lifted the restriction on parents enrolling students in schools based on geographical location and allowed them to more freely choose a school based on their own preference.⁹⁵

Related to the voucher system is the charter school system. Many states in the United States now rely heavily on the existence of charter schools to educate their children. A charter school receives public funding, but is allowed to ignore certain state and federal regulations. It creates its own “niche” by offering courses or embodying values and practices that will interest a particular section of the educational market (a manifestation of spontaneous order). This is similar to Grant Maintained Schools in England, where school boards were permitted to remove themselves from the Local Education Authority and be governed by an appointed group of individuals,⁹⁶ or the earlier, more limited, manifestation of this concept in the 1980 Education Act. Here, students who showed a particular level of aptitude would receive funding to attend an elite independent school.⁹⁷

Both the voucher and the charter systems of education draw on the entrepreneurial spirit of the market that invokes choice and competition in response to the *spontaneous evolution* of educational markets. They still rely, in some part, however, on government

⁹³ Friedman, *Free to Choose*, 158.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 154-55. It should be noted that myriad voucher systems exist in the United States, as the decision to offer school vouchers is a state, not a federal, decision. However, for the purposes of this dissertation, this more general description will suffice.

⁹⁵ Education Act, 1980, c. 20: s. 6(1-3).

⁹⁶ Judith D. Chapman et al., “Introduction and Overview” to *The Reconstruction of Education: Quality, Equality and Control* (London: Cassell, 1996), 10.

⁹⁷ Education Act, 1980, s.2(5).

regulation and funding and thus fall into the category of “quasi-markets.”⁹⁸ However, in the case of public education, Adam Smith himself gives permission for the government to oversee the process of schooling—particularly for those who could not otherwise afford to enrol in school.⁹⁹ As Olssen, Codd, and O’Neil wrote, such “choice policies” are usually facilitated by the idea of institutional autonomy. That is, that the school or district must have, in some shape or form, considerable control over certain elements of the educational process, although not over its educational standards and student testing. This control usually comes in the way of *decentralizing* the day-to-day running of the school by increasing administrative and parental power over, and community influence on, school decisions in a type of share-ownership. Schools are meant to show that they operate more *efficiently* both fiscally and academically than competing schools through a mix of administrative decision making and results on *accountability* measures such as *standardized tests*. Such *deregulation* or *devolution* of power reflects the opportunity for growing for-profit corporate ownership and control in public education systems, which is facilitated through high-stakes testing as a measurement of a school’s or school district’s success. It also allowed for *public-private partnerships* whereby the private sector could offer educational services to public educational institution in order to realize greater economic efficiencies and/or address a particular educational niche. This variety of neoliberalism was very important to English education reforms, however, they are not applicable in Ontario, which, as noted above, has always had strong public support for a more equity- rather than equality-based system.¹⁰⁰ What is applicable to the cases of both England and Ontario’s neoliberal education control, however, and which is discussed in detail in Chapters Five and Seven, is a move to *decentralize* decision making to local administrators and attempts to increase parental and community involvement (or *share-ownership*) in the day-to-day running of local schools.

For-profit concerns extend far beyond the actual privatization of a school system. Nelly P. Stromquist, for example, wrote at length of the infiltration of the private sector

⁹⁸ Liz Gordon and Geoff Whitty, “Giving the ‘Hidden Hand’ a Helping Hand? The Rhetoric and Reality of Neoliberal Education Reform in England and New Zealand,” *Comparative Education* 33, no. 3 (1997): 454-55.

⁹⁹ See Chapter Three, pp. 74-75.

¹⁰⁰ In fact, in the global context, this remains a defining aspect of Ontario’s education system.

into public education in the United States. She notes that the size of the K-12 education market in the United States meant that, beginning in the 1990s, through the “promise and positive evidence of profit in education, public education emerges as one of the prime business targets in the globalization world.”¹⁰¹ Paths through which the corporate sector have profited from and influenced public education include hiring private corporations to administer and evaluate standardized tests; to provide janitorial, food, and tutoring services; and to regulate and certify school performance (the latter of which is now a hallmark of England’s education system).¹⁰² Also of note are corporate sponsorship and procurement of school provisions through *public-private partnerships* in the form of donation of materials such as televisions and cable (complete with advertisements for the sponsoring companies), and computers and software potentially designed to “train” students on those companies’ products.¹⁰³ Often, these services are awarded through a tendering process, which promotes *market* competition between potential services providers, further entrenching neoliberal practices into the education system by fostering efficiency through holding market prices at their “true” (i.e., competitive) value. Such reforms are similar to those discussed in Chapter Two regarding Health Care in Ontario¹⁰⁴ and are also related to the core concept of Welfare discussed below.

The last peripheral concept of the Market, *managerialism*, also has strong ties to the standards movement. As discussed above, in the neoliberal state, states can appoint administrators to take over the management of schools or school districts if, for whatever reason, the institution in question has in some way “failed.” These appointments are regularly given to professionals whose field of expertise lies not in education but in the field of business management.¹⁰⁵ Such tactics were employed both in England and in Ontario. And of course and as discussed above, underpinning all of these *Market*-related concepts is the desire to create individuals who are competitive, and through *lifelong*

¹⁰¹ Nelly P. Stromquist, *Education in a Globalized World: The Connectivity of Economic Power, Technology, and Knowledge* (Oxford: Roman and Littlefield Publishing, Inc., 2002), 49-50.

¹⁰² Olssen, Codd and O’Neill, *Education Policy*, 210.

¹⁰³ Harris, *The Governance of Education*, 92 and Stromquist, *Education in a Globalized World*, 48-52.

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter Two, pp. 112-13.

¹⁰⁵ Spring, *American Education*, 145.

learning, can continue to compete in the global economy. This desire also underpins many of the concepts found in the core concept of *Welfare*.

Core Concept 2: Welfare

At first glance, and in addition to appearing to undermine many of the adjacent concepts associated with the neoliberal concept of the *Market*, *standardized curriculum and testing* also appear to undermine some of the adjacent concepts of *Welfare*, such as *minimal state* and *freedom*. This position argues that, as in the concept of the *Market*, a public system of education designed to foster a particular type of worker who interacts with the markets in a certain way (i.e., *manipulated man*) violates individuals' *negative right* to pursue the type of education that they deem is in their own best interests. However, in the same way that *deregulation*, *privatization*, and *share-ownership* (i.e., parental and community involvement) and an emphasis on *self-interest* and the *enterprise* culture support the "quasi-marketization" of schools, so they support the neoliberal core concept of *Welfare*.

As discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 110-12), the neoliberal core concept of *Welfare* is heavily tied to the core concept of the *Market*. States remove impediments to individuals' ability to compete in the market and, in return, they expect individuals to be *self-reliant* and assume *personal responsibility* for their own welfare through the choices made available to in free markets. Both *charter* and *voucher school* systems are excellent examples of the adjacent concepts of *minimal state*, *negative rights*, *equality of opportunity*, *freedom*, *personal responsibility*, and *self-reliance* that support the core concept of *Welfare*. As discussed above, in theory, these schools allow governments to dictate some of what students should learn through *core curriculum* and *testing*, yet also allow the schools to adapt to fit local demands. They give students and parents the *freedom to choose* which school is best suited to their needs and goals, albeit these choices are guided and framed by the neoliberal concept of *educational excellence*. This, of course, assumes that these *educational consumers* are both willing and able to adequately research and to make good educational *choices*. It also assumes that they have the financial resources needed to pursue their choice. As discussed later in this study, this is not always the case. So, while students retain the positive right to elementary and

secondary education (in keeping with the ideas of Adam Smith), they are not forced to attend a particular school based on their income level and geographical location—something neoliberals would argue is an authoritarian practice.¹⁰⁶ And, even in systems such as Ontario’s, where students must adhere to geographical boundaries and can only attend schools in the areas in which their parents reside and pay their taxes, parents are free to purchase property in locations that will permit their children to attend the best schools possible.¹⁰⁷ Of course, Friedman would disagree with this particular line of argument, accurately pointing out that this wrongly supposes that anyone can afford to purchase property in the school district of her choice, thereby restricting one’s right to choose and pursue a “quality” education.¹⁰⁸ Ontario, as discussed below, countered this issue by promising to ensure that *all* of its public schools would meet rigorous standards, implying that choice of school would not affect the quality of a student’s educational experience. The extent to which this was realizable is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

This emphasis on *freedom, self-reliance, and personal responsibility* reflects the concept of *meritocracy*, which also supports the neoliberal core concept of *Welfare*. It implies that, since the government theoretically has removed impediments to the access of education, *educational consumers* are responsible for how well they succeed in those schools. For this reason, the concept of meritocracy is also strongly associated with the *Market* peripheral concepts of *standards* and *educational excellence*. Once access to a quality education is ensured, individuals are expected to learn and be tested on the same material as their peers, and it is assumed they will be successful based on their own *self-interest*.¹⁰⁹ This underscores the neoliberal emphasis on equality (i.e., the removal of personal impediments though as system of negative rights) over equity (i.e., provision provided to ensure student success through system of positive rights) as exemplified in the federal policy of allowing American students whose schools fail to meet their designated Annual Yearly Progress two years in a row the option to change to a school

¹⁰⁶ Friedrich Hayek, “Freedom, Reason and Tradition,” *Ethics* 68, no. 4 (July 1968): 241-242.

¹⁰⁷ Parents can apply to a local school board to have their children enrolled in a school outside their designated zone, though this is not a common practice and requires special permission. See Government of Ontario, “Which School Can My Child Attend?” accessed December 15, 2010, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/faq-parents.html#schools1>.

¹⁰⁸ Friedman, *Free to Choose*, 158.

¹⁰⁹ Spring, *American Education*, 56.

with more successful test scores (see the above discussion on holding schools accountable). As with the idea of the ability of consumers to make informed choices, this reliance on self-motivation and -interest is also not without problem.

While the adjacent concept of *minimal state* is integral to the concepts of free *choice* and *personal responsibility*, it is also an important concept in and of itself. As outlined in Chapter Three, the *minimal state* concept relies on three main state-driven actions: (1) ensuring that citizens are adequately equipped with the economic and social skills they need in order to avoid relying on the state for a basic quality of life, (2) withdrawal from state-supported social activities, and (3) an emphasis on the implementation of cost-saving measures in those social areas in which the state is still involved. The first of these three actions is underpinned by the concepts of free *choice* and *personal responsibility* found in the neoliberal education system described above: by motivating or manipulating *educational consumers* to become participants in the *knowledge economy* and to take the best personal advantage of educational *choices* available to them, states intend to produce citizens who are *self-reliant*. It is not the task of the neoliberal government to ensure that its citizens have a high quality of life. Rather, the government is to provide educational opportunities that will allow citizens to acquire the tools they need to achieve a high quality of life on their own, while simultaneously removing impediments to doing so. In fact, knowing that such a “safety net” is available to citizens may only make them less motivated to obtain a quality education.¹¹⁰ A more extreme example of this line of thinking is the state of Wisconsin’s “Learnfare” program, implemented in 1988. Under this program, families who relied on government payments to support raising their children would see this monthly funding reduced if a child had two or more unexcused absences from school.¹¹¹

Reducing one’s reliance on state social welfare through education is a major goal of neoliberal economic reform. For this reason, public elementary and secondary school reform is often among the first step of the many reforms undertaken by neoliberal governments as they endeavour to create *enterprising* individuals. However, these

¹¹⁰ See Chapter Three, p. 92.

¹¹¹ David Stoesz, “Welfare Behaviorism,” *Society*, 34, no. 3 (1997): 72. According to Stoesz, however, independent researchers determined that the program did not improve attendance.

reforms are also commonly enacted in relation to adults who are unemployed. Such reforms underpin the concept of *lifelong learning*, which, as described above, is intended to ensure that individuals stay current (and thus employed) in a fast-paced, competitive, *knowledge economy*. It also underpins the adjacent concepts of *re-skilling*, another type of *learnfare* program where individuals who have lost their jobs are only allowed to receive social assistance if they enrol in government-regulated and designated programs designed to teach workers skills for the new *knowledge economy* and its jobs.

Withdrawal from state-supported social activities is the second government action taken to minimize state intervention. This topic has been laid out in the above discussion of the conflict between centralization and decentralization in the creation of “quasi-markets” and so will not be presented at length here. To summarize, while the neoliberal state seeks to control major policy decisions, such as curricular content, standardized testing and, in some cases, the funding of education (as discussed below), it has also sought to minimize its interference in the schools through *devolving* other educational decisions and giving schools and school boards more autonomy. The argument behind this increased local autonomy stems from the idea that “bureaucratic control is necessarily riddled with inefficiencies caused by the self-interest of bureaucrats,” whereas self-government and self-interest will keep a school running efficiently.¹¹² Perhaps nowhere does a more vivid example exist of removal of bureaucratic control over educational decisions than in England as a result of the 1988 ERA, which gave parents the right to vote a school “out” of its Local Education Authority. The school would then receive grants directly from the government and be designated as a self-governing Grant Maintained School.¹¹³

An additional method by which states decrease governance over public school systems is through agencies known as Quasi-Autonomous Non Governmental Organizations (QUANGOs). These are “arms length” organizations created and at least partially funded by the government—often through some sort of regulation or legislation—that are then given the responsibility for some specialized aspect of the

¹¹² Gordon and Whitty, “Giving the Hidden Hand a Helping Hand,” 456.

¹¹³ Bray, “The Political Economy of Education Reform,” 265.

public education system. In addition, they often undertake research and advise governments on possible courses of action and reform. A classic example of a QUANGO is Ontario's Education Quality and Accountability Office, which is responsible for the creation, delivery, and evaluation of the standardized literacy and mathematics tests that every student in Ontario must undertake several times during their elementary and secondary education. Others, discussed in Chapter Seven, include the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) and the Education Improvement Commission (EIC). Since QUANGOs are usually established by neoliberal governments with a set purpose in mind, it comes as no surprise that the research and advice they offer to their sponsoring governments often support a neoliberal agenda.¹¹⁴ Further, as Ranu Basu would observe in relation to educational QUANGOs created during Ontario's neoliberal reforms, "the presence of centrally-controlled advisory-agencies . . . provided a way of assuring the public that decisions were fair, just and non-partisan."¹¹⁵ In other words, the government appears to solicit advice from a neutral organization, but the fact that it is usually created by that same government to fulfill a specific agenda often means biased research agendas and narrow approaches to carrying out the QUANGOs educational duties. While this idea is re-visited in Chapters Five and Seven, what is relevant here is that the QUANGOs are, technically, a device through which the state downloads some of its educational responsibilities while also insulating itself against public criticism if policy implementation goes awry.

Withdrawal from state-supported social activities is also associated with the *privatization* of various elements that support the day-to-day functioning of schools. However, this particular form of withdrawal is also strongly associated with the third action taken to minimize the state's role in education: the creating of quasi-markets to implement cost-saving measures. It is to this action that we now turn.

Recalling that one of the goals of neoliberal education reform is to create "quasi-markets" when creating free markets is not feasible, we can see how much of the above discussion of the core concept of *Welfare* is related to the core concept of the *Market* and

¹¹⁴ Ranu Basu, "The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario's Public Education System," *GeoForum* 35 (2004): 625.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

the *enterprising* individual who engages in it. However, the “quasi” in “quasi-market” indicates that there are still loci of government control in education and it is in these loci that the third action aimed at minimal state interaction is found: the implementation of cost-saving measures in those social areas in which the state is still involved. In virtually all neoliberal calls for education reform are statements that schools and public education systems are not run efficiently, that the system can do “more” or “better for less,” and that overblown educational expenditures are simply not yielding the desired results.

In many neoliberal education reforms, the first step to implementing cost-savings in education is simply to implement an overall and usually sizable cut to the funds allocated to public education. This cost-savings method is particularly relevant to neoliberal education reforms in Ontario and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. As an example from elsewhere in Canada, however, in 1994 Alberta’s Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Premier Ralph Klein began its neoliberal reforms to education by announcing a 12.5% budget cut to education funding and, in a move that would be followed by Ontario in 1995, its assumption of all responsibilities for funding education, which had previously been shared between the province and municipalities.¹¹⁶ In other words, all money given to schools by a government body would come from the provincial government. Municipalities would no longer be able to determine and collect the tax revenue they felt was needed to support their schools and school boards.

Complete control of education funding allows governments control over the approval and distribution of funding to schools and school boards as determined by their criteria, which is meant to enhance efficiency and curb economic waste. Decisions such as this are similar to those made by neoliberal governments who disband arms lengths organizations, executive bodies, or advisory committees and assume their responsibilities in the name of promoting *efficiency*.¹¹⁷ One common reform made when governments move to control educational funding is the creation of a new funding formula meant to allocate monetary resources more “fairly” based on student enrolment. In England, for

¹¹⁶ Alison Taylor, *The Politics of Education Reform in Alberta* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, Limited), 76.

¹¹⁷ See Chapter Three, pp. 103-104 for examples from England.

example, the 1998 ERA tied funding to parental choice and then based 75% of funding for schools on enrolment. This meant that, in order to be adequately funded, schools had to be attractive to parents and students, which—as discussed above—meant in large part ensuring that students would do well on standardized tests and perhaps finding a unique market “niche” to meet students’ other personal interests.¹¹⁸ In theory, policy decisions such as these assure a cycle of efficiency, where only schools that do well attract and retain enough students to remain open, while ensuring that government dollars are well-spent rather than wasted on “unsuccessful” schools (as usually defined by results on *standardized tests*). It is also worth noting for future discussion that, although governments may control raising and distributing educational funding, the decisions on how funding allocated to schools and school boards is actually spent is often *devolved* to those institutions, thus further distancing the government from day-to-day operations (and from any problems that arise from decisions regarding these operations). It should be observed, however, that this particular manifestation of neoliberal education reform only occurs when nations have direct control over education. So, for example, the federal governments of Canada, the United States, and Australia could not assume this kind of budgetary control because they are constitutionally or legislatively not permitted to do so. In these cases, it is the provinces and states that control the allocation of education funding. However, as seen in the case of the United States and its Goals 2000 and NCLB legislation, federal governments may offer monetary incentives for states to make these types of reforms, thereby exerting a kind of “soft power” over their member states and adding another degree of influence over local education policy and implementation.

As in Ontario, the Klein government in the province of Alberta asserted that budget reductions (i.e., *reduced social expenditure*) would not affect the quality of the province’s education because it was currently being wasted through structural inefficiencies and bloated bureaucracies. Cost savings would be achieved by reducing the number of trustees, amalgamating schools boards, and reducing kindergarten.¹¹⁹ This type of justification is common in neoliberal education reforms when spending is cut. In

¹¹⁸ Guthrie and Pierce, “The International Economy and National Education Reform,” 193.

¹¹⁹ Taylor, *The Politics of Education Reform in Alberta*, 76. Unlike Harris, however, Klein also introduced charter schools.

England, for example, the Thatcher government “dismantled” the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) shortly after passing the ERA, alleging that this organization spent too much money on “‘progressive’ educational activities for [inner-city] low-income and minority children at the expense of more traditional content and appropriate educational practice.”¹²⁰ While there is an underlying neoconservative element to the elimination of the ILEA, the justification is also markedly neoliberal in nature, as the duties of the ILEA were then given to local schools and smaller LEAs. This allowed the ILEA to be labelled as a largely redundant, and therefore expendable, organization.¹²¹ Other areas commonly given as those in which greater cost-savings can be achieved through restructuring time and resources include reduced teacher preparation time, increased teacher and administrator duties, removal of some subjects from the paid teaching day (including arts and sports-related classes), reallocating funding to increase student performance in those areas that are subject to standardized tests, and restructuring school time tables. All of these elements will be discussed in further detail in Chapters Five and Seven in relation to England’s and Ontario’s neoliberal education reforms.

Finally, in addition to simply removing overall budget funding, changing educational structures, and encouraging privatization and profiteering, neoliberals cultivate economic efficiencies in school systems by privatizing or “contracting out” various elements of the educational system. *Public-private* partnerships are encouraged. As described above, this creates markets within the quasi-market where greater efficiencies are achieved through competition—often in the forms of tenders—for coveted school contracts.

Core Concept 3: The Constitution

As with the previous two core concepts, *Constitution* as a core concept in some ways appears problematical in a discussion of neoliberal education reform. Education systems do not have constitutions. However, they exist within a constitutional state, and therefore must conform to the *rule of law* laid out by the state’s constitution. In other words, they may be governed by legislation and policy, but as stated in Chapter Three

¹²⁰ Bergman et al., “The Political Economy of Education Reform,” 265.

¹²¹ Ibid.

(pp. 91-93), legislation and policy must conform to the rules laid down by a state's constitution and its laws, which are meant to protect individuals from decisions made by political parties who might otherwise alter the law as they see fit. Education in a neoliberal society, then, does reflect the adjacent and some of the peripheral concepts of this core concept because all of the structures and institutions within a neoliberal state should be constructed around and reflect the guiding rules for society that are outlined by its constitution. After all, it is the neoliberal core concept of the *Constitution* that is responsible for ensuring that all elements of society conform to the pre-determined set of peripheral concepts upon which all of the core concepts rest. Thus, under neoliberalism, education systems are reformed (as discussed above) to reflect the concepts of individual *freedom to choose* one's own fate with *minimal state* interference, because in the neoliberal constitutional state, this falls within the *negative rights* of every citizen. The concept of the *Constitution* underpins the right (given through *deregulation* and *devolution*) of individuals and other local administrators to make decisions about the everyday running of schools and school boards. It means that they are legally responsible for many of the personal and fiscal choices made in schools and throughout schooling. Further, *devolution* gives school administrators, at least to some extent, the ability to respond, or *evolve*, to the demands of the educational consumer, reflecting the concept of *abstract order*, while students and parents are given the *freedom* and responsibility to *choose* what is best for them.

In order to ensure these personal legal rights and responsibilities, those who make education policy often invoke the adjacent and peripheral *Constitution* concepts of *private law*, *'rules of just conduct,'* *legal responsibility*, and *restrained democratic rule*. As Rachel S. Turner told us, the neoliberal constitution "restricts the coercive powers of government, encourages economically productive behaviour, both safeguards and embodies the liberty of the individual, and ensures equality and justice by making every individual accountable to law and by preserving the legal system."¹²² Turner admitted that this is a somewhat paradoxical way of thinking, since the state must exert a certain

¹²² Rachel S. Turner, "Neo-Liberal Constitutionalism: Ideology, Government and the Rule of Law," *Journal of Politics and Law* 1, no. 2 (2008): 50.

amount of control over its citizens through the rule of law in order to ensure their freedom and continued prosperity.¹²³ Interestingly, this paradox is reflected in the tension between centralization and *decentralization* that occurs during neoliberal education reform and is discussed above in the *Market* and *Welfare* sections. That is, the state must gather more power to itself in order to ensure that its citizens are free to choose their educational path and become economically productive in the global markets, and also to ensure that schools have more local control over their daily operation yet remain economically viable, while still producing enterprising individuals. This is done through making citizens and educational institutions *accountable* to the government, often through some form of *legal responsibility* that theoretically exists to ensure that all *educational consumers* are treated equally and all adhere to the same rules and procedures (i.e., *rules of just conduct*). The mechanisms through which this is done (discussed at length above) include, but are not limited to, the seizure and distribution of school funding through funding formulas, the (often legalized) requirement that schools and school boards keep their *budgets balanced*, and the emphasis on *high-stakes testing* that often dictates which tests students must pass in order to graduate, as well as designating a percentage of students which need to pass these tests in order for a school to receive state funding or even to remain open. It is, perhaps, the paradox between *law* and *freedom* that lies behind Suzanne Harris's conception of *manipulated man*: in theory, students and parents do have a certain freedom of choice throughout the public education process, but the neoliberal state's conception of a successfully educated person as one who engages in the market prompts that freedom to take a certain direction.

In addition to the ways in which the neoliberal concept of Constitution influences education reform at the state level, a plausible argument can be made that a "pseudo" constitution is imposed on states through the hard and soft power exerted on state educational reforms by global organizations such as the World Bank, IMF, and the OECD. Recalling the statement above by Davies and Guppy that "the ever-expanding web of market relations fostered a standardization of knowledge systems in all core

¹²³ Ibid., 47.

industrialized nation states,”¹²⁴ we begin to see that, while no actual constitutional document governing educational reforms exists at the international level, the policies of these organizations and the power behind them certainly encouraged, if not forced, a certain amount of homogeneity among education reforms from the late 1980s onward. As seen by the mission statements of the World Bank and OECD, these policies are distinctly geared toward encouraging “economic behaviour.” Combined with the creation, implementation, and publication of results of global standardized tests, as well as the dissemination of OECD educational research, these policies actively promoted the neoliberal *Market* peripheral concepts of *knowledge economy/workers*, *core skills*, and *core curriculum*. In effect, they exerted pressure on states to ensure their citizens could compete in a global economic world. Of course, to say that organizations such the World Bank, IMF and OECD impose an educational constitution on their member countries would be inaccurate, as there is no legal mechanism through which such an agenda might be legally upheld—the exception to this being structural adjustments plans imposed on governments by the IMF that demand neoliberal-style reforms to education as a condition of monetary loans. However, the fact that the influence of these organizations led to certain globally held conceptions of what education must be and do in order for a state to be economically successful is, arguably, almost a *rule of just conduct* unto itself: states conform to the neoliberal ideas regarding education put forth by these institutions because to ignore them foreshadows an inability to compete in the economic marketplace and, from there, economic ruin.

Core concept 4: Property

Susan Robertson and Roger Dale wrote that in a neoliberal conception of education, “accumulation *is* legitimation.”¹²⁵ That is, the neoliberal emphasis on accumulation at *all* levels through engaging in competitive markets—supranational, national, sub-national, and local—becomes a justification for the necessity of education reforms.¹²⁶ The accumulation process begins at the local level with the student and the

¹²⁴ Davies and Guppy, “Globalization and Educational Reforms in Anglo-American Democracies,” 436.

¹²⁵ Susan Robertson and Roger Dale, “Local States of Emergency: The Contradictions of Neo-Liberal Governance in Education in New Zealand,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 23, no. 3 (2002): 464.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

schools. The student is usually framed as an *educational consumer*, while the school is the “educational service provider.” As Peter Jarvis stated, “knowledge production has become an industry, cultivating the desire of people to learn so that they can be seen to be modern.”¹²⁷ In the neoliberal state, as discussed above, “to be modern” means to be able to be economically competitive in the *knowledge economy*. Thus, one must obtain the education necessary to compete in the global marketplace: this is the idea of “manipulated man” put forth by Suzanne Harris and discussed above. Turner’s original conceptual map of neoliberalism does not clearly identify the importance of intellectual property (accumulated through education) in her discussion of the core concept of *Property*. However, the accumulation of intellectual property, particularly in the form of *certified academic credentials*, most definitely supports this core neoliberal concept. Recall Turner’s statement from Chapter Three: “[property] gives individuals independence and a sense of self-reliance, enabling them to participate freely in the market,” and my own that “property ownership supports the neoliberal conceptions of *Welfare*, *entrepreneurship*, and the *self-reliant* individual.”¹²⁸ In essence, educational consumers enter into what is often framed as a business relationship with the consumers researching and choosing the school that will fit their own needs and provide a quality education that will give them the credentials (i.e., property) they need in order to pursue their chosen career paths and be successful in life.

Knowledge as a commodity—and so as a thing to be obtained and displayed—underpins much of the neoliberal conception of the purpose of education because it is tied so heavily to the core concepts of the *Market* and *Welfare*. Without reiterating all of the above discussion of these two core concepts, it is fair to say that any action described above that is meant to increase competition amongst and efficiency within a school or school district in some way or another is tied to the core concept of *Property*. Because market or quasi-market competition is meant to foster higher performance in delivering education to students and allow them greater choice, students come to see education as a

¹²⁷ Peter Jarvis, “Globalisation, the Learning Society and Comparative Education,” *Comparative Education* 36, no. 3 Special Number (23): Comparative Education for the Twenty-First Century (2000): 351.

¹²⁸ See Chapter Three, p. 94. Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 200.

commodity, or a form of property. Schools view students as *consumers* that they must attract through their educational offerings and their “track-record” of students’ achievement on standardized tests.¹²⁹ As with any form of property, the onus is not just on those who “sell” or provide the commodity, but on consumers to ensure that they obtain a wisely-chosen commodity and, in the case of education, use it to their best advantage. There is also the status-added value of having an academic credential from a highly regarded institution—value that is particularly relevant to opinions surrounding neoliberal education reform in England and that is discussed more extensively in Chapter Five.

While it may be up to individuals to choose the institution that will give them the best qualifications and credentials, to support these credentials, educational institutions must have clear *certification* and *accountability* measures in place to regulate and legitimize the educational experience they provide.¹³⁰ Examples of legitimating strategies are many and varied, and are often tailored to the specific location in which the institution is set. Some common examples (that are also listed above) include the publication of students test results and school financial statements; power given to the state to appoint outside managers should a school fail to meet educational or financial targets; tighter government control over educational standards, curriculum, and teacher certification; and developing and enforcing certification standards for educational programs and institutions. These concepts are discussed in further detail in Chapters Six and Eight as they related to provision for music curriculum implementation in England and Ontario, respectively.

Finally, it is worth noting that, in a neoliberal conception of education, people are encouraged to purchase education or to supplement public education through user *fees* and *fundraising*. This is particularly applicable in situations where funding cuts, or a discourse that emphasizes the importance of *core skills*, has led to underfunding of

¹²⁹ Carl Bagley, “School Choice and Competition: A Public-Market in Education Revisited,” *Oxford Review of Education* 32, no. 3 (2006): 347.

¹³⁰ Xavier Bonal, “The Neoliberal Education Agenda and the Legitimation Crisis: Old and New State Strategies,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 24, no. 2 (2003): 163.

subjects (such as music) that may be considered outside of the “core” designation.¹³¹ In these cases, parents and other educational stakeholders who value these forms of intellectual property and experiences will often *fundraise* or pay *user fees* in order to sustain certain educational programs and resources within the public schools. In fact, viewed through a neoliberal lens, *fundraising* and *user fees* are clear examples of choices that may be made in regard to students’ educational experience and support the neoliberal notion of cultural activities supported and surviving by patronage rather than state funding. As discussed further in Chapters Six and Eight, this approach has led to issues of access and equity in those subjects, such as music education, that rely heavily on financial support from parents and the wider community.

Conclusion

The adjacent and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education reveal a complex relationship among the four core concepts of the *Market*, *Welfare*, the *Constitution*, and *Property* that frame the neoliberal conception of education. While many systems in the Western world now reflect the four core and most of the adjacent concepts, the peripheral concepts of *neoliberal education* vary by location due to influences such as government structure and jurisdiction, existing educational organization and infrastructure, and socio-economic history. With this in mind, we now turn to a discussion of the development and implementation of neoliberal education reforms in England before continuing on to a discussion of how these reforms affected and were affected by current and historical approaches to and attitudes toward education and music education in that state. This is followed by a similar analysis of education and music education in Ontario, Canada.

¹³¹ Michael Apple, “Competition, Knowledge and the Loss of Educational Vision,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 11, no. 1 (2003): 3.

Chapter Five: Neoliberal Reforms to England's State-Funded Education System (1979-1997)

Introduction

The material presented in this chapter describes the period of wide ranging reform to England's education system undertaken by the Department of Education and Science (DES) during Margaret Thatcher's and John Major's Conservative political rule (1979-1997). It also discusses reaction to those reforms from educational administrators, teachers, parents, academics (often referred to as "educationalists" in British literature), and, at times, the general public. However, since the object of this chapter is to situate these reforms within a neoliberal context, they are not simply presented chronologically, nor are multiple examples of a particular conception of neoliberalism given when one example suffices. In order to more concisely present this information and to keep the scope of this study within reasonable limits, certain aspects of schooling in England have been left out. For example, I have not addressed the case of *special schools*, which exist to support students with special education needs and which can, at the discretion of the Education Secretary, be exempted from certain legislation.¹ Also problematic is education between the ages of 16-18 as the school leaving age in England is 16 and England's National Curriculum and assessment programs were not developed for post-16 education, relying instead on assessment and curricular schemes associated with the already existing O- and A-level certificates. Because this stage of education is optional and not the target of curricular reform and assessment, it is not discussed here. As discussed below, education in England during the Conservative's regime was divided into four Key Stages from the ages of 5-16. While National Curriculum was developed for

¹ See, for example, Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 43, accessed June 26, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents>. The Secretary in charge of Education for England and Wales is referred to by various titles in the education literature, including Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Education and Science, Secretary of Education, and Education Secretary. In the interest of consistency, the final—and most concise—form of the title has been used throughout this study.

some subjects at KS 4, music was an optional in Key Stage 4 so only suggested curriculum guidelines were given, and assessment practices were based on another pre-existing assessment practice: the General Certificate of Secondary Education. Thus, discussion of music education as it related to Key Stage 4 is limited only to those elements of neoliberal education reform that proved problematical to developing, implementing, and assessing music education curriculum and programming in general and which are discussed in further detail in Chapter Six. In general, this discussion of England's public schools system was guided by legislation and policy aimed at reforming education for the majority of children in England: those ages 5-14 (or Key Stages 1-3) enrolled in state schools and without special needs, except for those policy decisions that may have affected music education in post-14 education, as music education was not required past Key Stage 3. A chronological timeline of important events related to England's neoliberal education reform can be found in Appendix A. In addition, a chronological list of relevant legislation passed by the Thatcher and Major governments, with content summary, is included in Appendix B.

One of the main goals of this study is to examine and compare how neoliberal reform in England and Ontario reflects the concepts of *convergence* and *divergence* in education policy development and to discuss how resulting policy similarly and differently affected music education curriculum and implementation in each location. As discussed in Chapter Two, to best understand how and why education reform converges and diverges across particular states, we must first consider the established structures, values, and traditions held in each state in relation to education and music education. We can then apply this knowledge to elements from the Bray and Thomas cube² to describe and understand policy reform in a particular state before comparing it to that in another. As such, this chapter describes general education reform in England while music education reform and outcomes are described in the next chapter. Similarly, Chapters Seven and Eight perform the same functions in relation to the province of Ontario.

² See Figure 2.1, Chapter Two, p. 59.

Background: Education in England Prior to the 1979 Election

Denis Lawton wrote that the two dominant cultural features in the evolution of English education have been “the importance of social class in the structure of society and thus in education” and “the suspicion, in the nineteenth century, that education should not be entrusted to the government.”³ This short review of the development of the English education system up to the election of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister certainly supports Lawton’s assertion. It also demonstrates how the education reforms implemented by the Conservative government from 1979-1997 were a continuation of an ideological struggle between Conservative traditions of preserving educational practises for the elite and those who wished to “better themselves” through “hard work” versus Labour traditions of breaking down social class barriers through educational systems and structures. It reflects ideological tensions between a belief in the ability of educational administrators and teachers to know “what is best” for students, more typically associated with the Labour Party, and the belief that parents ultimately have the right and responsibility to choose what is best for their children—a point of view most often supported by Conservative Party discourse. Finally, it helps explain the complex structure of the English school system, which is necessary to understand the scope, complexity, and underpinning discourse of Conservative education reform from 1979-1997.

The roots of public education in England lie within organized, Christian religion. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, churches began building schools and administering education to poor children. In 1833, Parliament voted to grant funds to the two main national religious societies organizing schools (the Church of England and Non-Conformist) in order to build more schools and improve their programs.⁴ A state-wide system of education for all students was slowly legislated throughout the 1870s to 1943 with (1) the Elementary Education Act (1870), which created school boards—transformed in 1902 to Local Education Authorities (LEAs)—that were meant to facilitate the expansion of schools into under-serviced areas; (2) the establishment of

³ Denis Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” in *Secondary Education at the Crossroads: International Perspectives Relevant to the Asia-Pacific Region*, ed. Phillip Hughes (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 69.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 70.

compulsory education up to a specific school leaving age (10 in 1888, 11 in 1893, 12 in 1899, and 14 in 1918); and (3) an increasing amount of the fiscal burden for public education falling on the government.⁵

The early developments of English public education led to three main underpinning traditions in its modern education system. First, it entrenched the policy that the state would not own schools or be responsible for their day-to-day operations or provision. State funded schools in England have thus developed as owned and operated by (1) churches and affiliated charitable organizations, whose schools are known as *voluntary-aided schools* when they are run by a governing body outside of a Local Education Authority (LEA) or as a *voluntary-controlled schools* when they are run by an LEA; (2) other governing bodies, whose schools are known as *foundation* or *trust schools*; and (3) LEAs, whose schools were called *county schools*, but which presently go by the name of *community schools*.⁶ In each case, property, facilities, and control of staff and provision of education are owned or managed by either the governing body (which may or may not have a religious affiliation) of the school, by the LEA, or by some combination thereof.

A second repercussion of the development of the English education system is that England has always included religious education in its public schools, even if they are not affiliated with a particular religion.⁷ The third repercussion is the development of what would later be formally named “Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education” when, in 1839, Parliament assigned two inspectors to ensure that any money granted for education was spent according to government stipulation. Thus, from the early inception of state-funded schools, the English government served a primarily fiscal function in education and respected popular opinion that it should support the educational agenda of the LEAs and/or governing bodies that founded and operated the schools.⁸ The entire system was

⁵ Paul Trowler, *Education Policy*, 2nd ed. (New York, Routledge, 2002), 1-2.

⁶ Directgov, “Types of School,” accessed June 20, 2012, http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/ChoosingASchool/DG_4016312.

⁷ For example, an entire section of the first Chapter of the 1988 Education Reform Act is dedicated to religious education. See Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 6-13, accessed June 21, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents/enacted>.

⁸ Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 69.

designed to be responsive to local needs and has given rise to the common description of England's state education system as "a national system, locally administered."⁹

In addition, roughly 7% of today's English children attend Independent Schools. These private educational institutions, such as Eton and a wide variety of other private educational institutions, were established to cater to the children of the upper classes at a time when no state-funded education was available and which continued to flourish alongside the state-funded schools. Some cater to the nation's monetary and academic elite, often feeding into Oxford or Cambridge and, as Nigel Knight noted, educating a disproportionate number of those who would go on to the English civil service (i.e., those who helped reform education in the 1980s and 1990s).¹⁰ Others cater to the aspirational middle classes or to specific religious or cultural groups. The quality of education provided and received varies as do the higher education destinations of students.

Compulsory secondary education was established in the 1944 Education Act, commonly known as the Butler Act, as it was introduced by Conservative Education Secretary R. A. Butler. This act established the "norm" for much of the structure of England's schools during the twentieth century, including the division of compulsory education into primary (ages 5-11) and secondary (ages 12-15, but later raised to age 16) and the non-compulsory advanced level (16-18).¹¹ The Butler Act also introduced the tripartite division of secondary education into secondary modern, technical, and grammar schools as well as a testing system designed to "discriminate between pupils with essentially practical skills and those with intellectual skills."¹² This "11-plus" test, as it was called, was given at the age of 11 in conjunction with an IQ test. Those who failed the test were assigned a place in a secondary modern or technical schools, which focused respectively on early departure from the educational system into a trade or those destined to become middle managers and engineers. Students who passed were enrolled in grammar schools that were geared toward the academically elite. While lacking the

⁹ Geoffrey Walford, "The 1988 Education Reform Act for England and Wales: Paths to Privatization," *Educational Policy* 4, no. 2 (1990): 128.

¹⁰ Nigel Knight, *Governing Britain Since 1945* (London: Politico's Publishing, 2006), 95. The 7% statistic has remained fairly constant since the middle of the twentieth century.

¹¹ Trowler, *Education Policy*, 2.

¹² Knight, *Governing Britain*, 95.

prestige of Independent Schools, grammar schools were considered the most desirable form of schooling for middle class parents who could not afford a private education for their children.¹³ Students in grammar schools undertook the General Certificate of Education exam (CGE), while those in the technical and secondary modern schools generally undertook the Certificate of Secondary Education Exam (CSE), both of which were given at the age of 16 in subjects that students had chosen to study in their final year of schooling. This remained the practice until they were combined into the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 1986.¹⁴ Placement in schools was determined by catchment area—a designated area in proximity to each school—and so school choice was limited by perceptions of measured intelligence and geographical area.¹⁵ Thus, from an early juncture, the Conservative government has been associated with programs of high-stakes testing meant to determine the ability or *merit* of students and thus assign them a suitable place in the economic (and social) hierarchy of English society. In Lawton's words,

throughout the twentieth century, education was closely related to the social class structure . . . And although access to secondary education was improved for all children, there still existed a strong association between Independent Schools and upper class children, as well as grammar schools and middle class children. The vast majority of 11 year-old boys and girls were allocated to secondary modern schools which were inferior in many respects.¹⁶

The Butler Act and the 11-plus system of selection of testing and placement fell under criticism in a series of reports during the 1950s and 1960s while the Conservative government remained in power. These reports focused on issues of retention and accommodation in specific relation to the disadvantages of students in living in socio-economically challenged areas and the failure of the 11-plus test to account for this.¹⁷ By the time Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson was voted into office in 1964, research showed that almost 80% of students failed the 11-plus test (and thus most were placed in secondary modern schools) with a disproportionate number of those from lower socio-

¹³ Ibid., 95-96.

¹⁴ Martin McLean, "'Populist' Centralism: The 1999 Education Reform Act in England and Wales," *Educational Policy* 3, no. 3 (1989): 235.

¹⁵ Ibid., 96.

¹⁶ Lawton, "Education Reform in England and Wales," 72.

¹⁷ Trowler, *Education Policy*, 3.

economic classes. At the same time, parental opinion questioned whether or not such a test was even effective in terms of designating career paths at such an early age.¹⁸ Wilson's government restructured educational financing in 1965 so that the LEAs were encouraged to change their focus from the tripartite systems to one focused on comprehensive schools: Schools would accept all students from their catchment areas without a placement test and so cater to the abilities and interests of many different types of students.¹⁹ Comprehensive schools grew in popularity throughout the 1960s and 1970s and the 11-plus exam was eventually abandoned. However, as incentives to move from grammar schools to comprehensive schools were financial, many grammar schools controlled by LEAs whose elected governors were Conservative refused to make the change.²⁰

Interestingly enough, when the Conservative government was voted back into power from 1970-1974, Margaret Thatcher served as Prime Minister Heath's Education Secretary. One of her first decisions was to withdraw the previous Labour Party's request for LEAs to submit plans to build or convert grammar schools to comprehensive schools. However, because the government had no authority over the LEAs in regard to their decision to support either a grammar or comprehensive system, Thatcher found herself in the position of being legally required to approve more LEA conversions to comprehensive schools than any other Education Secretary before her term in office.²¹ Furthermore, although she had adopted a discourse of parental choice and a return to traditional standards in education (the implication being a return to what the elite Independent Schools were teaching) and even touched on the idea of curriculum reform, Thatcher was not able to affect much change in England's state-funded education system due to her lack of experience both as a Secretary (in general) and with education (more specifically), as well as her lack of time in the position during this one-term government.²²

¹⁸ Knight, *Governing Britain*, 96.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Lawton, "Education Reform in England and Wales," 3.

²² Denis Lawton, *Education and Politics in the 1990s: Conflict of Consensus?* (London: The Falmer Press), 36-37.

One very important outcome of Thatcher's time as Education Secretary, however, was her interest in education once she was elected Conservative Party Leader in 1975. Indeed, the Centre for Policy Studies, which she had helped establish with Keith Joseph (who would later become an Education Secretary in Thatcher's government) in 1974, contained a sub-group devoted to education.²³ Throughout her time as Education Secretary, Leader of the Opposition, and Prime Minister, she was advised by a variety of right-wing think tanks and individuals, including the authors of the Black Papers (discussed below), the National Council for Educational Standards, the Centre for Policy Studies, and Stuart Sexton (also discussed below) on the merits of such neoliberal reform concepts and reforms as *voucher systems*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, publishing examination reports for *accountability*, and the benefits of returning to a traditional "English" curriculum.²⁴

In the history of England's state-funded education, the comprehensive/tripartite debate of the 1960s to mid 1970s reflected the ideological tension between Labour and Conservative governments regarding the role of schooling in relation to the structure of traditional English society. These tensions are also related to the neoliberal concepts of *meritocracy* and *parental choice*. The Conservative argument against comprehensive schooling focused on a lack of *excellence* and *standards*, stating that schools that mixed all abilities did not allow children to succeed based on their innate abilities or to cater to individual preferences. This argument also implied a natural stratification of academic ability. In the 1975 publication *The Crisis in Education*, Conservative Member of Parliament and member of the National Council for Educational Standards Rhodes Boyson invoked the concepts of *centralization of standards*, *parental choice*, *standardized curriculum and testing*, and *accountability* when he wrote that

The present disillusionment of parents arises from their resentment that their children's education now depends upon the lottery of the school to which they are directed. Standards decline because both measurement and comparison are impossible when aims and curriculum become widely divergent These problems can be solved only by making schools again accountable to some

²³ Clyde Chitty, *The Education System Transformed* (Manchester: Baseline Books, 1992), 20.

²⁴ Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 36-39.

authority outside them. The necessary sanction is either a nationally enforced curriculum or parental choice or a combination of both.²⁵

Rather than all children succeeding, such arguments suggested that standards had been lowered to accommodate less able students and no comparison could be made between students and schools.²⁶ Conservative discourse also suggested that parents should have the right to choose where and what kind of schools their children attended, including those outside of the public system.²⁷

The “Black Papers,” published by Labour critics and Conservative supporters from 1969-1977, exemplified Conservative ideology of a “stratified educational system as the natural and efficient consequence of . . . a distribution of intelligence,” where “individuals at variance with the general social class pattern could be selected out and promoted into appropriate schools.”²⁸ Labour Party initiatives during the 1960s, however, focused on comprehensive schooling as a way to facilitate pupil success and lessen the social stratification of society by mixing children of different abilities within the comprehensive system.²⁹ Conservative policies focused on the need for choice and the right of the student to not be impeded in her education (a *negative rights* argument) and the advantages of an informed, competitive *meritocracy*, while Labour policies focused on equality of access and equal levels of education for all students, regardless of social class (i.e., positive rights). The argument surrounding the tripartite vs. comprehensive systems, then, is related to neoliberal “individual vs. collective” discourse.

Related to these ideological debates was the question of educational control and the role of government in making educational decisions, particularly those surrounding curriculum and teaching methods. Due to the emphasis on local control of schools described above, the English education system evolved in such a way as to support the notion that “teachers knew best and that the ignorance and incompetence of parents

²⁵ Rhodes Boyson, *The Crisis in Education* (Woburn Press, London, 1975), 141, quoted in Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 22.

²⁶ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 34-35.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

²⁸ Walford, “The 1988 Education Reform Act,” 130. It is important to note that not all Conservatives agreed with the entire content of the Black Papers. It is clear, however, that Conservative ideology strongly supported the tripartite and Independent School systems over the comprehensive system because they felt the latter was anti-egalitarian. For a more in-depth discussion, see Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 35.

²⁹ McLean, “‘Populist’ Centralism,” 236.

threatened true education.”³⁰ That is, teachers were considered professionals; “outsiders,” such as parents, had no business interfering with decisions made by school administrators and teachers. This distrust of “outsiders” extended to the government.³¹ Because the government had no official power over what was taught and the manner in which it was delivered, schools were able to develop their own curriculum and teaching methods relatively free of interference. This meant that there was rarely uniformity in curriculum development and implementation throughout an LEA, never mind the entire system, except perhaps in age 16 courses, as students were required to take the state-administered GSE or the CSEE exams.³²

In the mid-1970s, however, the government was criticized by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) for its failure to facilitate co-ordination among the various types of schools and LEAs and to have an educational vision for the country. Its lack of voice in curriculum development was particularly noted.³³ In addition, the growing criticism from the right-wing think tanks and the Conservative Party (mentioned above) began to specifically point to the progressive teaching practices utilized in many comprehensive schools as allowing too much freedom in the classroom, resulting in discipline problems and outrageously low standards. This included a published inquiry about a school that let its students choose whether or not to learn to read, which was held up by the Conservatives as an example of the failed progressive “experiment.”³⁴

By the time Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan was installed in office in 1976, the Conservative discourse of falling standards and lack of discipline, coupled with England’s economic crises³⁵ and OECD criticism, prompted Callaghan to steal “the Conservative thunder” by giving a now-famous 1976 speech that expressed his concern

³⁰ Ibid., 235.

³¹ See fn. 3 above.

³² Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 82.

³³ Bob Morris, “1944-1998” in *Central and Local Control of Education After the Education Reform Act 1988*, ed. Robert Morris (Essex: Longman, 1990), 14. As noted in Chapter Four, the OECD had created an education branch for its research in the hopes of improving global economic prosperity through improving state systems of education. See Chapter Four, pp. 130-31.

³⁴ Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 37-38.

³⁵ See Chapter Three, pp. 96-97.

over many of the educational areas at which the Conservatives had been taking aim.³⁶ The *Ruskin Speech*, as it became known,³⁷ specifically mentioned the need to raise educational standards in the face of a changing and expanding society and made it clear that there was “nothing wrong with a non-educationalist, even a prime minister talking about [education].”³⁸ He asked that a dialogue be opened among “parents, teachers, learned and professional bodies, representatives of higher education and both sides of industry, together with the government” regarding “formulating and expressing the purpose of education and the standards that we need.”³⁹ This dialogue was later referred to by the media and historians as “The Great Debate.” He also expressed the need to develop student interest in industry, technology, and practical skills (rather than just academia and the civil service) as well as to relate the content of schooling to the needs of industry, particular in the areas of science and numeracy. In addition, Callaghan stated that progressive teaching methods were not always effectively employed and that he personally believed that a “basic curriculum with universal standards” was appropriate for the English school system.⁴⁰ He concluded:

Let me repeat some of the fields that need study because they cause concern. There are the methods and aims of informal instruction, the strong case for the so-called 'core curriculum' of basic knowledge; next, what is the proper way of monitoring the use of resources in order to maintain a proper national standard of performance; then there is the role of the inspectorate in relation to national standards; and there is the need to improve relations between industry and education.⁴¹

These statements by a sitting Prime Minister would have been quite revolutionary at the time.⁴² The Ruskin speech signalled potentially significant (and threatening) change for education professionals and authorities. These included (1) disrupting a long history of

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

³⁷ The speech was given at Ruskin College on October 18, 1976.

³⁸ John Callaghan, “Towards A National Debate,” reprinted by *The Guardian*, accessed June 24, 2012, <http://education.guardian.co.uk/thegreatdebate/story/0,9860,574645,00.html>.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² These statements would have been even more surprising coming from a Labour Prime Minister. However, as discussed in Chapter Three, Callaghan found himself in the difficult position of having to enact neoliberal economic policies due to IMF demands and the economic crisis in England at that time. A consideration of similar policies in relation to education and potential benefits for the economy therefore may not have seemed too large an ideological leap under the circumstances.

general non-interference by the state and parents, (2) limiting the freedom schools had to design their own curricula and decide the qualifications of their teaching staff, (3) altering the fairly entrenched progressive approach in most comprehensive schools, and (4) addressing an overall lack of “national standards” (with the exception of the GCE and CSE). In addition, Callaghan’s speech revealed a growing concern with the “fit” between the “gold standard” of British education as focused on the academic programs offered by Independent and grammar schools and the usefulness of such an education in an economy that increasingly focused on vocational and applied skills in technology and science. Such training was not seen as prestigious by the public.⁴³ Yet, Callaghan remained firmly committed to the comprehensive system and valued the work of well-trained teachers.⁴⁴

As with the previous Conservative government, however, the Labour government found it challenging to enact reform because it lacked the legislative power to do so. For example, in 1977, the Education Secretary requested that LEAs submit information on the curriculum taught in their schools. Replies, which were not returned in full until the end of 1978, indicated that many LEAs did not have a co-ordinated plan for curriculum content within their schools and, in some cases, knew little of what was actually taught.⁴⁵ Other initiatives, such as the work done by the School’s Council (1964-1984) to improve curriculum development frameworks, 1978 and 1979 reports by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate on lack of curriculum continuity, and a 1979 report by the DES regarding the need for LEAs to establish curriculum policy and incorporate the needs of industry were not legally binding. That is, the government did not possess legislative central control to implement the advice given in these reports and instead relied on the hope that LEAs and foundation schools would “see the light” of adopting suggested policies.⁴⁶

Entering the 1979 election, then, there was considerable discussion over the state of England’s public education system. Both parties were concerned with perceived falling

⁴³ Dinah Tuck, “Management of the Curriculum in School: ‘Blitzkrieg or Voluntary Surrender,’” in *Central and Local Control of Education After the Education Reform Act 1988*, ed. Robert Morris (Essex: Longman, 1990), 33. Tuck wrote of the need to convince parents that such technical and vocational jobs led “not to low level non-skilled dead-end occupations, but rather a range of opportunities to use technologically based skills at every academic level up to university and beyond.”

⁴⁴ Callaghan, “Towards A National Debate,” accessed June 26, 2012.

⁴⁵ Morris, “1944 to 1988,” 15.

⁴⁶ Tuck, “Management of the Curriculum in School,” 31.

school standards and the need to educate youth for employment in challenging and changing economic times. Both were concerned that comprehensive schools and progressive education were not “working.” The Labour government believed the problem was more the result of a lack of consistent teacher training, curriculum planning, and some common educational standards. The Conservative Party’s concerns were more wide-ranging. It felt that lack of curricular cohesion; failure to focus on “traditional” subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and religion; the absence of standards by which to measure student performance; and the comprehensive approach simply were not compatible with the structure of English society and the diverse needs, abilities, and interests of its children, all of which underpinned the failings of England’s education system. Indeed, as discussed above, Thatcher herself had indicated this in some of her statements as Education Secretary, and a variety of think-tanks and advisors to the Conservative Party had published widely circulated reports and papers stating these beliefs to varying degrees. They were also echoed in the 1979 *Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*.

Thatcher Government pre-Election Rhetoric

As discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 98-100), the 1979 *Manifesto* employed anti-collectivist and common sense discourse to argue in support of the benefits of *self-reliant*, personally responsible, hard working citizens interacting with open *markets* and a government that would remove barriers preventing them from making *self-interested* choices aimed at “helping people to help themselves—and to help others.”⁴⁷ Task Four specifically stated that the government promised to “support family life, by helping people to become home-owners, raising the standards of their children's education, and concentrating welfare.”⁴⁸ Education reform itself was discussed under the section entitled “Helping the Family” and subtitled “Standards in Education.” It promised to repeal 1976 Labour Party legislation that encouraged the formation of comprehensive schools and criticized the failure of schools to teach basic skills, stating, “We must restore to every

⁴⁷ Conservative Party (UK), “Section I,” *1979 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed June 27, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1979/1979-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

child, regardless of background, the chance to progress as far as his or her abilities allow.”⁴⁹ This included introducing an “Assisted Places Scheme” that would place academically gifted but financially under privileged children in Independent Schools.⁵⁰ The Manifesto promised that the government would “set national standards in reading, writing and arithmetic, monitored by tests worked out with teachers and others and applied locally by education authorities.” Further, “the Inspectorate will be strengthened. In teacher training there must be more emphasis on practical skills and on maintaining discipline.”⁵¹ Another Section Five subsection entitled “Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities,” outlined the Conservatives’ program for ensuring parental choice and the rise in standards that would come from this:

Extending parents’ rights and responsibilities, including their right of choice, will also help raise standards by giving them greater influence over education. Our Parents’ Charter will place a clear duty on government and local authorities to take account of parents’ wishes when allocating children to schools, with a local appeals system for those dissatisfied. Schools will be required to publish prospectuses giving details of their examination and other results.⁵²

These 1979 Manifesto statements embody the neoliberal concepts of *parental choice*, *minimal state*, *core curriculum*, *centralized standards*, *meritocracy*, *negative rights*, *accountability*, and *private school*. As discussed in the next section, these neoliberal education concepts would re-occur throughout Conservative Party education reform discourse. They were underpinned most strongly by the concept of *parental choice* and *accountability*. The power of that choice, when given the appropriate data regarding school performance as measured against nationally set standards and *transparency* in relation to the day-to-day operations of schools, would raise educational standards to the point of *educational excellence*. Parents would concentrate on giving the best education possible to their children as it matched their *self-interest* and abilities, with a clear implication that not all students were expected to have the same abilities. For this reason alone diversity among types of schools would be necessary. In this, England’s neoliberal education reforms focused strongly on the family unit and a *minimal state* discourse that

⁴⁹ Ibid., “Section Five: Helping the Family; Standards in Education,” accessed June 27, 2012.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid. “Section Five: Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities,” accessed June 27, 2012.

would give parents the *negative rights* to ensure their children received a(n) (appropriate) quality education, while increasing state control over curriculum and standards in order to develop a level of *accountability* and *transparency* that would facilitate *parental choice* and *education consumers*. It placed responsibility for good educational choices firmly in the hands of parents and the responsibility for educational delivery in the hands of schools and LEAs. In the following section, we trace the development of this discourse from the beginning of Thatcher's rule to the mid-1990s.

From “Producer-Dominated” to “Consumer-Dominated” Education: Conservative Education Reform Discourse 1979- 1997

Prior to the 1987 Election

Despite publishing a fairly clear vision for education reform in its 1979 *Manifesto*, education reform in England happened slowly in the first eight years of Thatcher's rule. This was in part because the Conservative government had more pressing concerns to address during this time, including the state of the economy, labour relations, and downsizing government.⁵³ Leading up to the 1987 election, however, Thatcher stated in a public radio address that she wished the Conservative party “had begun to tackle education earlier. We have been content to continue the policies of our predecessors. But now we have much worse left-wing Labour authorities than we have ever had before—so something simply has to be done.”⁵⁴ In another interview, she promised that there would be a “revolution in the running of the schools.”⁵⁵ The coming reform was seen as an extension of the *privatization* and *free market* practices introduced in other sectors of society during the Conservatives' first two terms in office.⁵⁶

These comments, however, should not imply that the Conservatives had nothing to say about or had taken no action regarding public education before the 1987 election. Indeed, as the 1979 *Manifesto* indicated, the Party clearly thought that education needed

⁵³ See Chapter Three, pp. 101-103.

⁵⁴ Margaret Thatcher, quoted in Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 36.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

to be reformed in such a way as to promote a system of measurable *standards*, the facilitation of *parental choice*, and greater *accountability* on the part of LEAs and schools. These neoliberal concepts appeared in Conservative discourse on education throughout its first two terms in office. Thatcher's years as Education Secretary left her with the criticism that the education system was "producer-oriented" rather than "consumer-friendly."⁵⁷ Her first two Education Secretaries, Mark Carlisle (1979-1982) and Sir Keith Joseph, were pressured by Conservative think tanks and Stuart Sexton (who served as education advisor) to adopt a voucher system in order to extend full choice to parents.⁵⁸ Although both Secretaries ultimately rejected such a system, reforms were introduced in the 1980 Education Act that made it easier for parents to select which schools their children attended and required state-funded schools to publish their public examination results (GCE, CSE, and A level) (discussed further below). Indeed, in its *1983 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, the Thatcher government proudly discussed how it had made school choice more available to parents and promised to continue advocating for *parental choice* and school *transparency* in order to make schools more *accountable*.⁵⁹ The section devoted to education was entitled "Schools: The Pursuit of Excellence," pinning these issues strongly to the concept of *educational excellence*. The concept of *accountability* was invoked with a promise that HMI's reports on schools would be made publically available and that schools would be encouraged to "keep proper records of their pupils' achievements . . . and carry out external graded tests. The public examination system will be improved."⁶⁰ Policy statements such as these reflected the general lack of information that had been available to parents for most of the history of England's education system. Indeed, as late as 1985, that government was still making statements such as "by the end of the decade . . . all pupils leaving school will be provided with a record which recognises their achievements at school, including their

⁵⁷ Lawton, "Education Reform in England and Wales," 77.

⁵⁸ Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 38-39.

⁵⁹ Conservative Party (UK), "Schools: The Pursuit of Excellence," in *1983 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed June 30, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1983/1983-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, accessed June 30, 2012.

examination successes.”⁶¹ Greater access to information would help foster more educated choices on the parts of parents and hopefully improve school standards through accountability and competition.

This discourse on standards had been extended to a consideration of “a national agreement about the purposes and the content of the curriculum” by the time the 1985 *Better Schools* White Paper was published.⁶² The main governmental aims outlined in the paper were to “raise standards at all levels of ability” (which reflected the Conservative ideology of natural varying abilities and *merits* among students) and to “secure the best possible return for the resources which are invested in education” (reflecting the concept of *human capital* and economic *efficiency*).⁶³ *Better Schools* suggested that “broad agreement about the objectives and content of the school curriculum is necessary for the improvement in standards which is needed” and stated that the government would work in consultation with the HMI (who would publish discussion papers) and education authorities to develop curricular policies that would guide schools and LEAs in making more coherent and relevant curriculum.⁶⁴ As discussed in a subsequent section of this Chapter, however, this discourse, which supported the LEA’s authority to set curriculum, would soon be abandoned in favour of one that placed *accountability* ahead of local control of curriculum and assessment.

A discussion was also begun on how to bring the goals of schooling and its curriculum more in line with the changing economy (a reflection of the neoliberal concepts of *evolution*, *public-private partnerships*, and *knowledge economy/workers*). For example, Thatcher spoke of the need to accept that England would no longer be a major manufacturing power due to expanding globalization and the resulting need to align its industry and vocation with a burgeoning *knowledge economy*, specifically the introduction of “micro-computers” in the workplace and home. To this extent, the government introduced the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in 1982,

⁶¹ Department of Education and Science, *Better Schools – A Summary (1985)* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1985), 8, accessed July 2, 2012, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/des/betterschools.html>.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

which Thatcher touted as expanding “the ability of our education system to equip young people leaving school with the skills required by industry and commerce.”⁶⁵ The TVEI was a voluntary initiative aimed at matching the technological interests of local industries with schools in their geographical area and focused on four year programs for students ages 14-18 (what would later become Key Stage 4 and post-16 education). As Gordon Kirk noted, the TVEI, which was run through the Department of Employment rather than the DES, indicated “a swift and decisive orientation of the curriculum towards what is considered to be of immediate relevance to the skills and know-how required by a technological society.”⁶⁶ Indeed, an emphasis on technology and its potential for reshaping the economy was recognized early by the Thatcher administration. England became the first country to place computers in all of its public schools, and, in its *1983 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, it promised to “build on the successes of our ‘Micros-in-Schools’ scheme and our network of Information Technology Centres for the young unemployed so that they are equipped with tomorrow's skills.”⁶⁷ *Better Schools* stated that the government needed to “encourage schools to do more to fulfil the vital function of preparing all young people for work.”⁶⁸ “School education” it stated, “should do much more to promote enterprise and adaptability and to fit young people for working life in a technological age.”⁶⁹ To this end, new City Technology Centres (CTC) were announced in 1986 that would be non-fee charging secondary schools largely funded by private industry, the purpose of which was “to provide a broadly-based secondary education with a strong technological element, thereby offering a wider choice of secondary schools to parents in certain cities and a surer preparation for adult and

⁶⁵ Margaret Thatcher, “Section III—The Government’s Direct Responsibilities,” in *Speech Opening Conference on Information Technology*, Dec. 8, 1982, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 2, 2012, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105067>. The TVEI was also a way to help increase the status parents assigned to practical, vocational education. See footnote 43.

⁶⁶ Gordon Kirk, “The Growth of Central Interest on the Curriculum,” in *Curriculum Policy*, eds., Robert Moore and Jenny Ozga (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 30.

⁶⁷ Conservative Party (UK), “Help for the New Technologies” in *1983 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed July 3, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1983/1983-conservative-manifesto.shtml>. Information and Technology Centres were established in 1982 to train unemployed youth in the new field of computer technology and electronic skills

⁶⁸ Department of Education and Science, *Better Schools*, 1, accessed July 3, 2012.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

working life to their children.”⁷⁰ Discussion of the CTCs, then, also invoked the concept of *parental choice* as an extension of education for employment in the *knowledge economy*, which was made possible through *public-private partnerships*. The overall Conservative discussion of technology focused on *the enterprise culture* and the ability of students to innovatively *evolve* and adapt to the *spontaneous order* of changing society.

During her first two terms in office, Thatcher also directed many of her criticisms regarding the lack of standards and inefficiencies in the education system at teachers, replying to a question in a 1981 television program about the possible need to hire more teachers with “are we getting real value for money? Not do we want more teachers, do we want them better trained, do we want more appropriate teachers? Something is not quite right, when the money is there and the teachers are there, but some of us feel that we're not getting the best out of our children and we should be.”⁷¹ The 1983 *Manifesto* promised that the Conservatives would examine the issue of teacher training.⁷² This argument was to some extent an extension of the purported failure of the universities, which they held as bastions of liberal, progressive thinking, to train teachers and of the LEAs to select traditional teaching methods. The Conservatives invoked the concepts of *human capital* and *efficiency* by sometimes focusing on the need to create better and more consistent teacher training policies rather than invest more money in the system. For example, a booklet published by the DES further explaining the policies outlined in *Better Schools* contained a large section on teaching quality in schools, stating that “a significant number of teachers are performing below the standard required to achieve the planned objectives of schools.”⁷³ Further, it invoked the concepts of *standards* and *educational excellence* in the statement that “a good match between teachers' qualifications and their teaching programmes is one of a number of factors which promote high standards. Work of excellence is rarely found where match is poor.”⁷⁴ The government vowed to amend legislation so that LEAs and schools had to take teachers'

⁷⁰ Department of Education and Science, *A New Choice of School: City Technology Colleges* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1986), 2, quoted in Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 64.

⁷¹ Margaret Thatcher, “TV Interview for Thames TV *Afternoon Plus*,” Jan 6, 1981, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 4, 2012, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104546>.

⁷² Conservative Party (UK), “Schools: The Pursuit of Excellence,” accessed July 4, 2012.

⁷³ Department of Education and Science, *Better Schools*, 11, accessed July 4, 2012.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 12

qualifications (such as their undergraduate degree specialties) into account.⁷⁵ *Better Schools* also stated that “one crucial local education authority responsibility is to see that the teachers' professional commitment, skills and knowledge are used to best effect in the schools,” and promised forthcoming legislation (discussed further below) that would require regular teacher assessments, thereby associating the issue of teacher training with *accountability*.

The final, but very important, neoliberal concepts evident in Conservative discussions of education reform before 1987 were those of *decentralization* and *share-ownership*. That Thatcher's Conservatives wanted to give parents a greater diversity of choice in education was always clear; however, they were also concerned with the issue of educational governance and the power that schools and LEAs had to direct education regardless of the wishes of government and parents. Having concluded that a voucher system was not viable for the English education system, the government began considering the value of reforming local control of education so that parents' and local industry's needs and desires might be considered.⁷⁶ Much of the policy related to this discourse manifested itself in the 1986 (no. 2) Education Act and is discussed further below. To summarize, however, the Act proportionally increased the numbers of parents and industry representatives who sat on school and LEA administrative boards.

As the above discussion of Conservative government education policy discourse from its 1979 election to just before beginning to campaign for 1987 election indicates, the government was focused on *Market* concepts of *self-interest*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, *knowledge economy/workers*, *core skills*, *core curriculum*, *evolution*, *share-ownership*, *parental choice*, *private schools*, *human capital*, *decentralization/devolution*, and *public-private partnerships*, and the *Welfare* concepts of *negative rights*, *efficiency*, and *knowledge workers*, with a strong focus on the need for *accountability* in order to facilitate parental choice when choosing a school. This, in turn, supported the core concept of *Property*, particularly *accreditation* and *certification*. Yet, the Conservative government was not able to raise the level of standards in education to its desired level, in

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

large part because of the long-standing tradition of non-legislative interference in curricular control and assessment (outside of school leaving exams).⁷⁷ Thus, although it had taken some legislative steps to introduce greater parental choice and shared governing power of schools among education authorities, parents, and the local community, the issue of *choice* was still problematic because there was no common benchmark or set of standards with which parents could make an informed choice.⁷⁸ To address this problem, the government would have to convince the public that it needed to take greater central control over education in order to place more market freedom (in the form of school choice) into the hands of parents. In doing so, it would have to overturn the long-standing tradition of LEA and school autonomy over curriculum and assessment.

1987 Election to 1997

The Conservative Party revealed its main arguments and plans for significantly reforming education in its *1987 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, using press conferences and public appearances throughout the election campaign to clarify and reinforce its message: Standards in schools would only be raised through the development and implementation of a National Curriculum (NC) and greater accountability measures for the schools and LEAs. Giving parents greater choice of schools would then put schools in direct competition with each other and also foster schools catering to specific interests. In the words of the *1987 Manifesto*,

The most consistent pressure for high standards in schools comes from parents. They have a powerful incentive to ensure that their children receive a good education. We have already done much through the 1980 and 1986 Education Acts so that parents can make their voice [*sic*] heard. But parents still need better opportunities to send their children to the school of their choice. That would be the best guarantee of higher standards.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Conservative Party (UK), “Raising Standards in Education,” in *1987 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed July 6, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1987/1987-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

⁷⁸ The exception to this being the results of leaving exams and an annual report issued by schools once a year that was vaguely referred to as “the discharge of its function.” See Department of Education and Science, *Better Schools*, 17, accessed July, 8, 2012.

⁷⁹ Conservative Party (UK), “Raising Standards in Education.”

Further, “there must also be variety of educational provision so that parents can better compare one school with another.”⁸⁰ Statements such as these continued the Conservative discourse around the concepts of *parental choice, standards, personal responsibility, negative rights* and *educational consumership*. *Standards* and *choice* were inextricably linked.

Raising standards was not just to satisfy parental desire, however. England needed to compete in a growing global, *knowledge-economy*. To be successful in “tomorrow's world—against Japan, Germany and the United States—we need well-educated, well-trained, creative young people. Because if education is backward today, national performance will be backward tomorrow.”⁸¹ Education, Thatcher stated, should be “part of the answer to Britain's problems, not part of the cause.”⁸² To that end, students needed to “master essential skills: reading, writing, spelling, grammar, arithmetic; and that they understand basic science and technology.”⁸³ This list of essential skills corresponds to the concept of *core skills* and also hearkens back to the idea of a “basic” or “traditional” English education (as discussed below).

Greater central control of the curriculum was not just positioned as a matter of facilitating competition, choice, and economic supremacy, however. In order to further convince the public of the need for such unprecedented control over curriculum, the Conservative Party combined arguments for falling standards with lack of choice *and* a neoconservative attack on LEAs and the Labour party. The latter part of this argument stated that schools were using the curriculum to indoctrinate “left-wing” political beliefs and lower the moral standard of the nation through neglecting religious education and teaching sex education (or “sexual propaganda”).⁸⁴ “Parents and employers are rightly concerned that not enough children master the basic skills,” stated the *Manifesto*, “that some of what is taught seems irrelevant to a good education and that standards of

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Margaret Thatcher, “Education” in *Speech to Conservative Party Conference*, Oct. 9, 1987, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 8, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106941>.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

personal discipline and aspirations are too low.”⁸⁵ Thatcher reiterated these ideas in a February 1987 speech to the Institute of Directors when she stated that the CTCs were created “to give excellent technological and basic education—but the real reason is not only that; it is to give some parents the choice to enable them to get out of the hands of some of the local education authorities who are not giving the children proper education.”⁸⁶ At an election press conference, Thatcher explained how standards, choice, and combating political indoctrination could all be addressed by a national curriculum:

As you know, under the 1944 Education Act, the Government had no control over the curriculum whatever, save that they insisted on some religious education. That absence of control over curriculum was to prevent indoctrination of the children under the circumstances of the last war. It was right at that time. The very absence of that has now led to indoctrination in some of the Left wing local authorities, and we have a duty to step in both with schools that will stay local education authority maintained and other schools to see that there is a certain national core curriculum. . . . There is not the slightest shadow of doubt that some of the local education authorities have gone much much Laffer [*sic*] and are using a state monopoly position in the education of children, which is something that no Government could leave untouched.⁸⁷

Education Secretary Kenneth Baker referred to this “state monopoly” on education as offering “no hope to parents who see standards slipping and education hijacked by educational bigots.”⁸⁸ To this end, the Conservatives stated that what parents really wanted was “schools that will encourage moral values: honesty, hard work and responsibility”⁸⁹ coupled with a “basic” education of the type provided before the LEAs adopted progressive policies (i.e., pre-1960s). This argument appealed to the Conservatives’ neoconservative agenda of supporting the traditional family unit and returning to the traditional values upon which England was built⁹⁰ and allowed the

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Margaret Thatcher, *Speech to the Institute of Directors*, Feb. 24, 1987, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 8, 2012, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106753>.

⁸⁷ Margaret Thatcher, *General Election Press Conference*, May 27, 1987, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 8, 2012, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106844>.

⁸⁸ Kenneth Baker, *General Election Press Conference*, May 27, 1987, reprinted by The Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed July 8, 2012, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106844>.

⁸⁹ Conservative Party (UK), “Raising Standards in Education,” accessed July 8, 2012.

⁹⁰ See Chapter Three, pp. 100-101.

Conservatives to position those who objected to these reforms as “unreformed establishment reactionaries.”⁹¹

Combined with these reforms in support of parental choice and basic, traditional education was the argument that schools needed to have greater autonomy over their own affairs. By applying the concept of *decentralization/devolution*, schools would be able to better cater to the local and individual demands and interests while at the same time compete for students through their demonstrated ability to have high levels of academic standards and discipline. School autonomy was to be achieved in several ways. The first was to give LEA-managed schools greater control over their budgets (later referred to as Local Management of Schools, or LMS). This would require instituting a per-pupil funding formula that the LEAs must use to determine how much money would be given to each school. The governing bodies and head teachers “know best the needs of their school. With this independence they will manage their resources and decide their priorities, covering the cost of books, equipment, maintenance and staff.”⁹² Part of this change would involve compelling schools to accept students up to their physical capacity so that “popular schools, which have earned parental support by offering good education, will then be able to expand beyond present pupil numbers.”⁹³ A per-pupil funding model was meant to accommodate this expansion.

These measures would decrease the power of the LEAs substantially: While they would still administer funds to schools and play a co-ordinating role between them, they would have less control of how schools spent money. This was also in part an argument for *efficiency* as it gave school administrators greater control over how to maximize their monetary resources, but also made them more *accountable* for their spending. Finally, because the 1986 (no. 2) Education Act had put a large number of parents and community members on school governing bodies, an argument could be made that the money given to the schools was quite literally guided (at least in part) by parent and community wishes. As Baker stated in 1987, “Under the 1986 Act. . .we increased the number of parents on governing bodies. That is changing this year and next year, so the voice of the

⁹¹ Morris, “1944 to 1988,” 16.

⁹² Conservative Party (UK), “Raising Standards in Education,” accessed July, 10, 2012.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

consumer—the parent—is heard. That is a voice that must be heard, because they are insistent on improving standards.”⁹⁴

But the Conservatives also wished to convince the public that involvement with the LEAs was not even desirable in some cases. To this extent, they stated that LEA schools would be allowed to opt out of the LEAs and become Grant-Maintained Schools (GMS). These schools, which would be fully funded through a grant given by the Department of Education and Science, would become “independent charitable trust” schools.⁹⁵ The decision to opt out would be presented upon agreement by the school’s governing body and then voted on by parents, with a 50% parental majority needed to remove the school from the LEA. The Education Secretary, however, would have to approve a school’s conversion to GMS, thereby raising the level of accountability to the state and public:

When the application is first made to become a grant maintained school, I will have to satisfy myself that, in fact, if they become a grant maintained school that they will be able to manage it competently as managers—a very important point because they will be receiving grant funds from me. It will be public money, state money, taxpayers' money and I must be assured that that will be handled properly and managed properly. I will also want to be satisfied that they provide a high standard of education. The grant maintained schools will, of course, have to conform to the national curriculum, and will be subject to inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors.⁹⁶

Thus the concept of GMS (and LMS in general) was strongly associated with *accountability, standards, choice*, and, to a lesser extent, *managerialism*, as control of the schools would be shared by a governing body consisting of both educationalist and non-educationalists such as parents and community members. In addition, Baker’s comments reflect the combination of *devolved* control from LEAs to local schools in order to justify greater central control of the state that was also found in the Conservatives’ justification of the National Curriculum.

All of the changes promised in the *1987 Manifesto* were enacted in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and are discussed in more detail below. It is notable that the ERA was not given the usual title of Education Act that was previously bestowed on

⁹⁴ Baker, *General Election Press Conference*, accessed July 10, 2012.

⁹⁵ Conservative Party (UK), “Raising Standards in Education,” accessed July, 10, 2012.

⁹⁶ Baker, *General Election Press Conference*, accessed July 10, 2012,

legislation meant to introduce new or refine older education-related laws. In this, the ERA's very title indicated a complete structural and ideological change regarding how education would be controlled and enacted in England.

The discourse and changes introduced in the *1987 Manifesto*, the election campaigning of that same year, and in the 1988 ERA continued as the underpinning discourse of education reform in England until the Conservatives were voted out of office in 1997. Many legislative changes to education after 1988 focused on further refining and intensifying the 1988 reforms. As such, further education policy discourse is not discussed in great depth here, except to note the increasing emphasis on GMS as well as on national testing and assessment schemes after John Major replaced as Thatcher as Conservative Prime Minister in 1990. The emphasis on the latter is hardly surprising given that testing in relation to the newly implemented National Curriculum had begun in the early 1990s and the government was struggling with ways to reasonably assess—both in terms of economic and teacher-workload efficiency—Key Stages 1-3 in relation to the curriculum.⁹⁷ In addition, as the above discussion reflects, while Conservative discourse around 1987 focused largely on *standards*, *core skills*, and *standardized curriculum*, little specific mention was given to *how* assessment would take place.⁹⁸ The main arguments put forth by the Major government (and as exemplified by the discussion of the structure of national tests found below) were that “paper and pencil tests” and criterion-referenced assessments were needed to assess standards.⁹⁹ Kenneth Clarke, who, in 1991, was the Education Secretary under John Major, stated that opposition to these tests was “largely based on a folk memory in the left about the old debate on the 11-plus [placement test] and grammar schools.”¹⁰⁰ At any rate, since testing had been made mandatory as part of

⁹⁷ Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 84. This is also discussed in more detail below.

⁹⁸ McLean, “‘Populist’ Centralism,” 235.

⁹⁹ *Criterion-referenced assessments* evaluate students against a specific, set standard or criterion. Previously, assessment in many English schools had used *norm-referenced assessment*, which places students in rank order. See Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office, *National Curriculum Task Group on Assessment and Testing: A Report* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office), 62, accessed July 11, 2012, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/1988-TGAT-report.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ Kenneth Clark, quoted in P. Black, *Ideology, Evidence and the Raising of Standards: The Second Annual King's College Lecture* (London: King's College, 1995), 2, quoted in Richard Daugherty, “National Curriculum and Assessment: The Experience of England and Wales,” *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997): 206.

the ERA, it could be carried out through secondary legislation so there was not as much need for the government to convince the public that it should happen nor consult on *how* it should happen.

As for GMS, Major made it clear through resulting legislation that he anticipated the day “when all publically funded schools will be run as free, self-governing schools,” trusting “head teachers, teachers, and governing bodies to run their schools and in trusting parents to make the right choices for their children.”¹⁰¹ This did not come to pass, despite several legislative acts aimed at making GMS status more attractive to parents and schools (discussed further below).

This review of Conservative education policy discourse from 1979 to 1997 reveals several dominant neoliberal conceptual concepts, the most notable of which are *parent choice, meritocracy, negative rights, standards and standardized curricula and testing, core skills and curriculum, evolution, spontaneous order, knowledge-economy/workers, decentralization/devolution, personal responsibility, educational consumership, managerialism, public-private partnerships, and accountability*. This was coupled with a strong anti-collectivist discourse related to the power of LEAs to set curriculum and standards that may have conflicted with the individual wishes of parents and which had evolved to run counter to the moral and traditional underpinnings of British society. In other words, education reform in England centred on the right of schools to exercise local control over certain aspects of schooling—such as budget allocation and school character¹⁰²—while at the same time encouraging greater parental responsibility in the areas of school governance and school choice. This emphasis on local control and negative parental rights was balanced with arguments for greater central government control over the curricular content and its evaluation, as well as the introduction of general accountability measures that were meant to increase standards and foster greater knowledge about the character and quality of schools so that parents could make informed choices. The next two sections of this study examine specific legislation

¹⁰¹ John Major, quoted in *The Times*, Aug, 8, 1995, quoted in Geoff Whitty and Sally Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control: Making Sense of Recent Education Reform in England and Wales,” *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997), 223.

¹⁰² In England, the “character” of a school refers to its defining elements, such as comprehensive, grammar, City Technology College, special, boarding, all boys, etc.

and policy undertaken to enact these neoliberal education reforms in England and are organized around the division of local/parental control and central control of education.

Choice and Diversity: Local Control and Parental Responsibility

Legislation related to local control of schools and parental choice can be divided into four broad (albeit overlapping) topics: (1) school governance, (2) Local Management of Schools, (3) diversification of schools, and (4) school choice and access.

(1) School Governance

Each school in England is overseen by a board of governors, or “governing body” as it is most often referred to in English legislation. The 1980 Education Act legislated the appointment of LEA school governors by the LEA itself. One or two parents of students enrolled in a school (depending on school size) were elected as governors by the other parents, while one or two teachers (elected by their peers) and the head teacher (if she chose to sit as a governor) completed the governing body. In the case of voluntary or foundation/trust schools (i.e., those run by churches, charities, or trusts), one-fifth of the governors were required to be “foundation governors” appointed by the church or trust.¹⁰³

This structure changed significantly under the 1986 Education Act (no. 2). The 1986 Act limited the number of LEA appointments to equal those of elected parent governors (as determined by size of the school); despite higher numbers of LEA-appointed and parent-elected governments in larger schools, it limited the number of teacher governors to two plus the head teacher (if she chose); matched or exceeded by one the number of foundation governors (depending on the character of the school); and introduced *co-opted* governors.¹⁰⁴ Governing bodies should build connections with the local business community, particularly through the appointment of co-opted governors, who, when possible, should be members of that community.¹⁰⁵ In so doing, the

¹⁰³ Education Act, 1980, c.20, s.2, accessed July 13, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/crossheading/school-government/enacted>.

¹⁰⁴ Education Act (no. 2) 1986, s. 3, accessed July 13, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/part/II/enacted>.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, s. 3(6).

government removed power of LEAs and aided schools to fill school governing bodies with a “majority of allegedly self-serving local politicians” by balancing these appointments with parents and members of the local business community.¹⁰⁶ This effectively moved schools closer to local business interests, which arguably would encourage schools to tailor their programs to meet the needs of the local economy as well as England’s growing knowledge economy.

When GMS schools were introduced in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), however, parent and teacher governor numbers remained relatively low (five parents and one, but no more than two, teachers plus head teacher), while no limitation was placed on foundation (for previously voluntary schools) or first (previously county schools) governors.¹⁰⁷ However, it was parents who would ultimately decide if a school would opt-out of an LEA. The 1988 ERA stated that if twenty percent of parents of registered students supported the governing body’s decision to hold a ballot on seeking GMS status, a general vote of all parents must be held. The school then had a duty to distribute information regarding the consequences of GMS and the new structure of its governing body.¹⁰⁸ A fifty percent parental voter turnout was required, with a simple majority of those voting required for the school to proceed with a GMS application to the Education Secretary.¹⁰⁹ To facilitate this process, the schools could apply to the Education Secretary for funds to cover the cost of the voting process.¹¹⁰

Finally, the 1986 Education Act required governing bodies to issue an annual report to all parents of children enrolled in its school that included a financial report, a list of governors and whether they were elected or appointed (and by whom), and which “steps have been taken by the governing body to develop or strengthen the school's links with the community.”¹¹¹ In addition, an annual meeting of parents had to be called to

¹⁰⁶ Liz Gordon and Geoff Witty, “Giving the ‘Hidden Hand’ a Helping Hand? The Rhetoric and Reality of Neoliberal Education Reform in England and New Zealand,” *Comparative Education* 33, no. 3 (1997): 460.

¹⁰⁷ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s.41 (4), accessed July 13, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/partI/chapter/IV/crossheading/government-powers-and-conduct/enacted>.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, s. 61 (3-4).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, s. 62 (1).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 61 (12).

¹¹¹ Education Act (no. 2), 1986, c. 61, s. 2, accessed July 13, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/section/30/enacted>.

discuss this report, and if the parents attending met quorum, they could vote on simple resolutions “on any matters which may properly be discussed at the meeting,” and to which the head teachers and LEAs must respond in writing if the resolution concerned their area of governance.¹¹² This section of the act gave parents a legislated forum in which to air their thoughts and concerns, while the 1988 ERA allowed parents to take any grievances with LEAs one step further by opting out of the system altogether.

Greater responsibility placed on parents and community members reflected the concept of *share-ownership* so supported by the Conservative government, and was also underpinned by the anti-collectivist discourse aimed at “left-wing” LEAs. In addition, it also gave parents and community members devolved power in terms of deciding a school’s relationship with its LEA (where applicable) as well as its character (discussed further below), further reducing the powers of the LEAs.

(2) Local Management of Schools

The term *Local Management of Schools* (LMS) relates to specific changes made in the 1988 ERA regarding local schools’ control over their budgets. However, even before the ERA, the Conservative government took steps to give schools greater control over both their budgets and resources. For example, a 1981 pilot project in Soihull gave head teachers the financial autonomy to spend their budgets as they saw fit on such provisions as teacher salaries and physical structures as a way to increase financial efficiency. The project was deemed successful by the Conservatives and arguably become the model for LMS.¹¹³ In the 1986 Education (no. 2) Act, LEAs were instructed to “make available, in every year, a sum of money which the governing body are to be entitled to spend at their discretion” on materials such as books or equipment, subject to any “reasonable conditions” imposed by the authority.¹¹⁴ This control over school budget allocation expanded significantly with the 1988 ERA.

Chapter III of the ERA dealt exclusively with LEA and school financial reform, stating that LEAs must provide detailed schemes to the Education Secretary for approval

¹¹² Ibid., s. 31 (4b-d).

¹¹³ Walford, “The 1988 Education Reform Act,” 137.

¹¹⁴ Education Act (no. 2) 1986, s. 29(1b-c), accessed July 14, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/part/II/enacted>.

regarding the overall amount of money available to allocate to each of its schools in each financial year as well as the amount allocated to each school.¹¹⁵ The governing body of each LEA schools was then “to spend any sum made available to them in respect of the school’s budget share for any financial year as they think fit for the purposes of the school” and encouraged to delegate this power to the head teacher.¹¹⁶ The LEA could intervene in an LMS scheme if and only if a school’s head teacher and/or governing body demonstrated “gross incompetence or mismanagement,” or there was some “other emergency,” but the LEA would have to notify the Education Secretary immediately.¹¹⁷ While voluntary-aided and foundation/trust schools remained unaffected by these changes, the ramifications for LEA county and controlled schools were enormous and engaged with neoliberal concepts of *devolution*, *managerialism*, *efficiency*, and, ultimately *parental choice* and *accountability*.

To begin, LEAs lost significant power over important school practices such as hiring and determining salaries of teachers and staff, purchasing resources, and maintaining utilities. Instead, they assumed a role as facilitators of cross-school services, such as providing transportation and administering state examinations. In addition, head teachers could carry over any leftover funds to subsequent years.¹¹⁸ Liz Gordon and Geoff Whitty observed that devolving the budget and day-to-day operations of the school onto the governing bodies—who then passed much of those responsibilities on to the head teachers—gave rise to a “new breed of head teachers . . . with weakened links to the professional project [of teaching] but increased managerial skills. With self-management, there has sometimes been a much sharper sense that the school governors and senior management team are ‘management’ and teaching and other staff are ‘workers.’”¹¹⁹ As with the Soihull project, LMS was meant to allow schools to realize efficiencies of which LEAs, administering from a middle position in the hierarchy of English education

¹¹⁵ Education Reform Act, 1988, s. 33(2), accessed July 14, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/I/chapter/III/enacted>.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, s. 36(5a-b).

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, s. 37(3).

¹¹⁸ Walford, “The 1988 Education Reform Act,” 138.

¹¹⁹ Gordon and Whitty, “Giving the ‘Hidden Hand’ a Helping Hand,” 460.

structure, could not be aware and positioned each school as a business to be efficiently managed, as per the managerial model described in Chapter Four.¹²⁰

In addition, the 1988 ERA stated the LEAs would largely determine the amount of money allocated to each of its schools through a per-pupil funding formula that also took into account the ages of students.¹²¹ Ultimately, this meant that 85% of an LEA's yearly budget was earmarked for LMS, with 80% of a school's budget determined by the per-pupil funding formula.¹²² With legislated changes to the enrollment level (discussed further below), schools needed to compete for students in order to reach full enrolment and thus receive the highest amount of funding possible. LMS thus doubled as an *accountability* measure because of the incentive for schools to do well in order to earn a place as a leading choice for parents. As discussed above, the combination of these two legislative reforms to education in the 1988 Education Reform Act underpinned much of the argument for how *parental choice* would lead to higher *standards* and thus to *educational excellence*.

(3) Diversification of Schools

Diversifying the types of schools available from which parents could choose was always on the reform agenda for the Conservative government. Less than three months after the 1979 election, it repealed Labour Party legislation regarding “the comprehensive principle,”¹²³ which encouraged schools to organize as comprehensives as long as no suitable argument against it could be found.¹²⁴ In addition, the 1980 Education Act gave any ten or more local electorates the opportunity to submit objections to a change of school character and ultimately left the Education Secretary with the power to approve, approve with modifications, or deny any LEA's or governing body's proposal for a

¹²⁰ Walford, “The 1998 Education Reform Act,” 137. See Chapter Four, p. 183.

¹²¹ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 38 (c), accessed July 14, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/38/enacted>.

¹²² Whitty and Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control,” 222.

¹²³ Education Act, 1979, c. 49, s. 1, accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/49/section/1/enacted>.

¹²⁴ Education Act, 1976, c. 81, s. 1-2, accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/81/contents/enacted>.

change.¹²⁵ In effect, the Conservative government could halt the rapid conversion of tripartite schools to comprehensives that ironically began when Margaret Thatcher served as Education Secretary.

The 1986 Education Act (no. 2) took school conversion one step further by allowing a school's governing body to remove a controlled school from an LEA, subject to the Education Secretary's approval, following much the same process as the conversion of character legislated in the 1980 Education Act.¹²⁶ As discussed above, in the 1988 ERA this process was instigated by parental choice. By this time, the City Technology Centres had been announced and piloted and they were formally included in the ERA.¹²⁷ In addition, the ERA abolished the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), responsible for a population of 2.5 million, and replaced it with 13 LEAs formed from smaller "inner London councils" attached to specific boroughs that had already existed within the ILEA.¹²⁸ This would allow greater local control of schools—even if through an LEA (from which school parents were now free to opt out). Martin McLean succinctly wrote that the "intention [of the opt-out process] is to allow parents and teachers to mold the schools in ways that they prefer and to free themselves from the restraints of LEA policies."¹²⁹

By 1992, however, fewer than 300 schools had applied for and received GMS status, and those were concentrated in 12 of England and Wales's 117 LEAs.¹³⁰ The government was seeking ways to encourage more diversity among schools.¹³¹ One attempt at increasing this diversity was the introduction of the 1993 Education Act, which contained legislation that compelled governing bodies of LEA-controlled schools to

¹²⁵ Education Act, 1980, c. 20, s. 14 (3-4), accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/crossheading/establishment/discontinuance/and/alteration/of/schools/enacted>.

¹²⁶ Education Act (no. 2), 1986, c. 61, s. 54, accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/section/54/enacted>.

¹²⁷ See Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 105, accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/I/chapter/V/crossheading/city-colleges/enacted>.

¹²⁸ McLean, "Populist' Centralism," 236. See also Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 162-63, accessed July 16, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/III/crossheading/reorganisation-of-provision-of-education-in-inner-london/enacted>.

¹²⁹ McLean, "Populist' Centralism," 236.

¹³⁰ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 84.

¹³¹ The government even took the unprecedented step in 1992 of compelling LEAs to publish information on the Assisted Placement Scheme and the Independent schools in their catchment areas. See Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 8.

consider annually the question of whether or not to opt-out.¹³² It also eased some of the protocol restrictions on GMS schools applying for a change of character, making conversion a faster, more streamlined process.¹³³ As Whitty and Power explained, the 1993 Education Act “extended the right to opt out to virtually all schools, permitted schools to change their character by varying their enrollment schemes, [and] sought to encourage new types of specialist schools.”¹³⁴ Specialist schools were conceived of as similar to North American magnet schools. While still required to implement the National Curriculum, they could tailor their programs to specific interests groups, such as the arts, much in the same way the City Technology Colleges catered to students aged 14-18 who had a specific interest in new technology.

Finally, as discussed above, schools were encouraged to form partnerships with the local business community and to enter into *public-private partnerships* with industry. The clearest example of this was, of course, the CTCs.¹³⁵

(4) School Choice and Access

The final area where the Conservative government sought to give greater control at the local level was through fostering school choice and making access to a variety of schools easier. This aspect of local control is inextricably bound to diversifying school choice, LMS, and school governance, as described above, as many elements of those reforms supported legislation and policy on choice and access. However, the government introduced other policy reforms designed to increase both school choice and access for school-aged children, the first of which was the 1980 Education Act’s Assisted Places Scheme (APS),¹³⁶ which was further expanded in the 1997 Education Act to include places for students ages 5-11.¹³⁷ The APS allowed students “who might not be otherwise

¹³² Education Act, 1993, c. 35, s. 24, accessed July 17, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/35/section/24/enacted>.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, s. 272-73, accessed July 17, 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/35/part/VI/crossheading/proposals-for-alteration-etc-of-schools-eligible-for-grantmaintained-status/enacted>.

¹³⁴ Whitty and Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control,” 221.

¹³⁵ Walford, “The 1988 Education Reform Act,” 130.

¹³⁶ Education Act, 1980, c. 20, s. 17, accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/17/enacted>.

¹³⁷ Education Act, 1997, c.44, s. 1, accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/44/section/1/enacted>.

able to do so to benefit from education at Independent Schools.”¹³⁸ That is, it paid for children who showed particular academic promise to leave the state-funded system and attend Independent schools. As discussed below, this scheme drew public criticism for its implication that state-run schools could not compete with independent “public” schools, although the Conservative government framed the decision as giving greater choice to able students.¹³⁹

The 1980 Education Act also began the process of dismantling catchment areas and allowing parents to choose a school regardless of their geographical location within—or even outside of—an LEA. Parents could enrol their children in any LEA school as long as doing so did not constitute an inefficient use of the school’s resources or the student was not a proper “fit” for a school.¹⁴⁰ In addition, LEAs would be reimbursed by a student’s catchment LEA if an LEA accepted a student from outside her area.¹⁴¹ Parents were also given the right to appeal LEA decisions regarding the placement of their students in a particular school¹⁴² and the LEAs were required to publish their admission criteria and the number of students intended and actually admitted each academic year.¹⁴³ This made the admission process more transparent and deterred schools from setting arbitrary admission policies.

The 1980 Education Act made school choice and access a greater part of England’s public education system. However, school administrators could still argue that they could only enrol a limited number of students based on the money allocated to them from the LEAs. This would change with the introduction of the per-student funding

¹³⁸ Education Act, 1980, c. 20, s. 17 (1), accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/17/enacted>.

¹³⁹ Conservative Party (UK), “Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities,” *1979 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1979/1979-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 6 (1-3), accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/6/enacted>. For example, grammar schools still had academic testing and admission criteria that students had to meet. Also, schools could argue that they had reached the enrolment limit that their resources allowed.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, s. 31, accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/31/enacted>.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, s. 7(1-2), accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/contents/enacted>.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, s. 8(1-4), accessed July 18, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/8/enacted>.

formula in 1988, as described above. In addition, the 1988 ERA stipulated that all schools would enroll students based on the enrolment statistics from 1979.¹⁴⁴ This widely expanded the number of spaces available in each school, allowing (1) for “good” schools to accept more students and (2) for competition to ensue among schools in order to attract “good” students, thereby raising standards throughout the system in a quasi-market approach to education.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, others have even gone so far as to suggest that the way in which the Conservative government paired parental choice with this particular per-pupil funding formula created the voucher system advocated for by some of the right-wing think tanks and Conservative education advisors that was rejected by the government in the early 1980s.¹⁴⁶ In any case, this pairing of choice and funding did create a “quasi-market” for education.

Parental choice was also facilitated through access to information meant to provide parents with the knowledge needed to make responsible choices, for example the publication of school financial records described above. Other information, such as that found in school league tables, is discussed in further detail below as it relates to issues of greater central control. However, it is worth noting that the Conservative government remained focused on providing parents with what it felt was the information necessary to make informed decisions. McLean has linked this approach to educational decision making back to the public’s historical rejection of government control of education as part of “a popular yearning for greater individual opportunity and a loss of faith in the capacity of government institutions to provide reasonable services.”¹⁴⁷ Such reasoning is supported by the ways in which the government marginalized the role of LEAs in favour of supporting the local management of schools as individual businesses meant to interact with the community and to develop educationally diverse choices in the name of competition and the right of parents to control their own children’s education.

All of this is not to say that the Conservative government actually relinquished control of education. Indeed, as the next section of this chapter demonstrates, a

¹⁴⁴ Education Reform Act, 1980, c. 40, s. 27 (3), accessed July 19, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/I/chapter/II/enacted>.

¹⁴⁵ Whitty and Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control,” 223.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ McLean, “Populist’ Centralism,” 238.

significant amount of contradiction existed between the discourse of local control and the central government's desire to raise educational standards through legislating accountability measures for schools, establishing a national curriculum and national assessment system, and improving teacher training. Much of this change was facilitated through the creation or alteration of previously existing Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organizations (QUANGOs). This discussion begins, however, with some general commentary on the powers of the Education Secretary to undermine the local control of schools.

Central Control

(1) Powers of the Education Secretary

In 1993, Janet McKenzie observed that “British governments have actually increased their claims to knowledge and authority over the education system whilst promoting a theoretical and superficial movement towards consumer sovereignty.”¹⁴⁸ Whether or not the Thatcher and Major governments intended their education reforms as only “theoretical and superficial” is a point of debate lying outside of this study, although the previous section of this chapter suggests that they were quite serious about giving greater control to parents and local schools and demonstrated that significant changes in the structure of schooling were made. However, it is clear that, in doing so, the Conservative government seized more power over education than ever before in the history of English education. The decentralized education system as it was implemented by the Conservative government centred on policy “output” (in this case, raising standards and greater parental choice) and so focused on the evaluation of specified outcomes rather than the day-to-day planning and implementation.¹⁴⁹ This meant that, ultimately, the government needed to retain some control over the decentralization process lest policy not be implemented as planned and/or the desired policy outcomes not achieved. This resulted, as Gordon and Whitty stated, in “the neoliberal vision being

¹⁴⁸ Janet McKenzie, “Education as a Private Problem or a Public Issue? The Process of Excluding ‘Education’ from the ‘Public Sphere,’” paper presented at the International Conference on the Public Sphere, Manchester, January 8-10, 1993, quoted in Gordon and Whitty, “Giving the ‘Hidden Hand’ a Helping Hand,” 455.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

portrayed in government rhetoric, at the same time as dealing with the realities of a system which, by its very nature, requires rigorous and systematic regulation.”¹⁵⁰

One of the ways in which the Conservative government facilitated local control while retaining the central control needed to shape the state education system was by giving the Education Secretary the power to approve, override, or shape many of the decisions made by a local school or LEA (including opting out of an LEA). For example, the 1986 Education Act (no. 2) gave the Education Secretary the right to determine what might disqualify a school governor,¹⁵¹ and to oversee the meetings and proceedings of staff selection panels.¹⁵² The 1988 ERA alone gave the Education Secretary four hundred and fifteen new powers.¹⁵³ These included the powers to approve GMS status, approve it “with such modifications as he thinks desirable,” or deny such status altogether;¹⁵⁴ to set aside the regulation that only schools with more than 300 students could apply for GMS;¹⁵⁵ and to vary the number of students any state school could enrol (regardless of the 1979 enrolment statistics).¹⁵⁶

In addition to these powers that could override local control, larger reforms that were carried out by QUANGOs, such as the development of the National Curriculum and assessment procedures, were actually under the purview of the Education Secretary. His task was to “establish a complete National Curriculum as soon as is reasonably practicable” and “revise that Curriculum whenever he considers it necessary or expedient to do so.”¹⁵⁷ The ERA also stated that the Education Secretary “may by order specify in relation to each of the foundation subjects—(a) such attainment targets; (b) such programmes of study; and (c) such assessment arrangements; as he considers appropriate for that subject.”¹⁵⁸ As discussed further below, QUANGOs were created to do or oversee

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Education Act (no. 2), 1986, c. 61, s. 8 (6), accessed July 20, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/part/II/enacted>.

¹⁵² Ibid., s. 36 (2).

¹⁵³ Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 47.

¹⁵⁴ Education Act, 1988, c.40, s. 40, accessed July 20, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/I/chapter/IV/crossheading/procedure-for-acquisition-of-grantmaintained-status/enacted>.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., s. 52 (7).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., s. 27 (4-7).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 4 (1), accessed July 20, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/4/enacted>.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., s. 4 (2).

most of this work, but the final decision was his. The Education Secretary's power was so great that even some Conservative government members objected, pointing out that, after the 1988 ERA, he held more power relative to his position than either the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Defence Secretary.¹⁵⁹

Much of the government's central powers, then, lay in its ability to simply overrule the decisions of local schools, LEAs, and QUANGOs and to make secondary legislation that did not have to be subject to debate in the House of Commons. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter Six in relation to the National Curriculum and its assessment, the government very much relied on such secondary legislation and the powers given to the Education Secretary to have the "final say" in its education reforms.

(2) Accountability Structures

Another way in which the government was able to centralize control over its "locally managed" system was to include accountability measures in its legislation. Many of these measures took the form of providing or making more accessible information regarding such aspects of schooling as admissions and appeals procedures (discussed above); creating and publishing documents on how governors were elected, how schools were run, and the school's relationship to the LEA;¹⁶⁰ and school financial budgets.¹⁶¹ Thus, while the government gave schools much more control over their day-to-day operations, it also compelled schools to become far more transparent regarding these operations. This *transparency* translated into a far greater level of school *accountability* in so much as parents would ultimately use this information to decide if schools were suitable for their children. This approach was clearly stated in the 1992 Education (Schools) Act, in which the Education Secretary was given the power to disclose information about schools

¹⁵⁹ Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 59.

¹⁶⁰ Education Act (no, 2), 1986, c. 61, s. 1 accessed July 22, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/section/1/enacted>.

¹⁶¹ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 42, accessed July 22, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/42/enacted>. Another section of the ERA allowed the Education Secretary to compel LEAs and schools to submit information on curriculum, syllabi, and students' educational achievement. See s. 22, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/22/enacted>.

with a view to making available information which is likely to—

- (a) assist parents in choosing schools for their children;
- (b) increase public awareness of the quality of the education provided by the schools concerned and of the educational standards achieved in those schools;
- or
- (c) assist in assessing the degree of efficiency with which the financial resources of those schools are managed.¹⁶²

In addition to having schools report day-to-day operations and policies, the government also continued to employ Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) to assess school performance. The HMI, however, was also to undergo significant neoliberal reform. During the Thatcher administration, the HMI carried out its work much as it had over the last few decades. Though still responsible for school inspections, it had expanded its work to include research, reports, and support for development and implementation of school and teacher training improvement policies. In fact, the HMI focused so much on these expanded areas that some members of Parliament were concerned that it did not spend the necessary time focusing on inspections.¹⁶³ George Smith attributed this focus on research to the relationship between the DES and HMI, whereby the HMI provided a good deal of educational research to the DES as the DES had no program for internal research.¹⁶⁴ In essence, in the early 1980s, the HMI had three "principle functions": (1) reporting on the use to which public funding was put, (2) providing research and information to the government, and (3) providing research and information to schools and LEAs.¹⁶⁵

One of the ways in which HMI gathered the data needed to provide information to the government and schools was through school inspections. Historically, and as was still the case during the Thatcher administrations, HMI inspections were not meant as a form of accountability, but rather as gathering information about how state-funded schools were functioning in order to formulate information and advice (which might then be

¹⁶² Education (Schools) Act, 1992, c. 38, s.3, accessed July 22, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/38/crossheading/information-about-schools/enacted>.

¹⁶³ Lawton, "Education Reform in England and Wales," 81.

¹⁶⁴ George Smith, "Research and Inspection: HMI and OFSTED, 1981-1996—A Commentary," *Oxford Educational Review* 26, nos. 3&4 (2000): 336.

¹⁶⁵ John Lee, "HMI and OFSTED: Evolution or Revolution in School Inspection," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 45, no. 1 (1945): 40.

turned into policy) for the government.¹⁶⁶ As the Thatcher administration wore on, it also began filing reports on LEA activities, such as the annual report on LEA expenditure.¹⁶⁷ School inspections were carried out as the HMI deemed necessary to collect information. As Power and Whitty wrote of school inspections, “The [HMI] worked firstly to support and improve schools and teachers in their work and only secondly to assess that work.”¹⁶⁸ The inspectors themselves were most often highly experienced teachers who were well-regarded by the educational institutions they inspected.¹⁶⁹ Schools were inspected by teams of HMI personnel, and, although the HMI increasingly focused throughout the 1980s on the need to create a common set of inspection procedures, criteria, and evaluation standards in order to better compare schools, none actually existed.¹⁷⁰ In addition, the HMI inspected only about 100 schools per year.¹⁷¹

By 1992, and under John Major’s newly elected government, the HMI had come under scrutiny for its failure to provide systematic, detailed, and frequent inspections of state-funded schools.¹⁷² As discussed above, Major’s government continued to emphasize the need to raise educational standards and to increase parental choice through a further entrenchment of the GMS model. To that end, the government introduced policy in the 1992 Education (Schools) Act that legislated that every type of school that received public funding would be inspected on a regular basis and a report published and made publically available on “(a) the quality of the education provided by the school; (b) the educational standards achieved in the school; (c) whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently; and (d) the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school.”¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ Eric Bolton, “HMI: The Thatcher Years,” *Oxford Review of Education* 24, no. 1 (1998): 46.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Whitty and Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control,” 463. Schools in LEAs were also sometimes inspected by individuals or teams hired by the LEA, but these inspections were not considered as reliable or “prestigious.” See Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 81.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Smith, “Research and Inspection,” 339-40.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 81.

¹⁷³ Education (Schools) Act, 1992, c. 38, s. 1-4, accessed July 22, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/38/contents/enacted>.

Secondary legislation created to carry out the Education (Schools) Act resulted in dramatic changes to the HMI and created a national system of public inspection designed to promote greater *accountability*, thus promoting *educational excellence*. One of the first changes made through secondary legislation was to reduce HMI to a small core and place it within the jurisdiction of a newly created QUANGO called the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). The name change in itself is significant, as it implies a break with the older inspectorate system's inspection for improving the "health" of the system and instead places the emphasis on inspection for the purpose of raising educational standards. Indeed, Smith writes of how, in the mid-1990s under director Chris Woodhead, OFSTED became in part a "campaigning organization, rather than a traditional non-governmental department" for raising educational standards, with Woodhead serving as,

the principal spokesman for this campaign, launching reports, appearing in the media, raising issues in a way that was unprecedented for a civil servant, [but that] would have been exactly in line with the chief executive of a pressure group for improvements in educational standards.¹⁷⁴

The Major government also determined that schools should be inspected every four years, raising the number of inspections performed from approximately 100 per year before the creation of OFSTED to approximately 3000 per year.¹⁷⁵ In order to facilitate this, the government allowed LEAs to contract inspection teams from private companies in a tendering process so as to bring down the enormous cost of instituting such frequent inspections.¹⁷⁶ In this way, the government managed to *privatize* a substantial element of public education while at the same time creating an educational *market*.

OFSTED was also concerned with making its results measurable and comparable. To that end, it developed a training program for its inspectors as well as the *Handbook for the Inspection of Schools* (first published 1992), which contained procedures and criteria for inspecting teaching and student learning quality as well as for inspecting individual schools and the teaching of subjects within schools.¹⁷⁷ In Denis Lawton's words, the handbook provided "not merely the advice and instruction on how to inspect"

¹⁷⁴ Smith, "Research and Inspection," 343.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 31.

¹⁷⁶ Lawton, "Education Reform in England and Wales," 81.

¹⁷⁷ Lee, "HMI and OFSTED," 49.

but also a “view of what a good lesson, a good teacher, and a good school are.”¹⁷⁸ In addition, schools had to submit standardized Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicators reports, which included information on specific school and pupil performance indicators and information about its LEA (where relevant) and local area.¹⁷⁹ The result of this was a much more standardized, systematic, and bureaucratic process that would provide information that parents could compare.

Inspection reports would also become the basis of punitive action on the part of the government. In the 1993 Education Act, a section entitled “special measures” gave inspectors, the Chief Inspector, and the Education Secretary the power to order that “special measures” be undertaken by a school to address concerns raised in inspection reports. The schools and LEA (when applicable) then had a duty to formulate a plan to address these measures, which was then submitted to the DES and its implementation monitored, with more frequent inspections carried out if deemed necessary.¹⁸⁰ The Education Secretary was also given the power to establish an “education association” that could take over the operations of a school from its governing body if he deemed such an arrangement appropriate,¹⁸¹ taking the concept of *managerialism* to an even higher level.

The result of OFSTED’s more rigorous system of inspection was that it moved from the more “interpretive,” information gathering-driven process that existed under HMI to one focused on ensuring “quality control and assurance” through OFSTED’s ability to reliably “collect, collate, and analyze inspection data”¹⁸² and recommend action against a school or LEA if deemed necessary.

One final accountability measure that also merits mentioning here is the publication of performance and league tables. Both tables focused on secondary education. Performance tables included information on the number of pupils in particular age groups, the number and level of grades achieved in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), enrollment in vocational courses, the number and scores

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Smith, “Research and Inspection,” 341.

¹⁸⁰ Education Act, 1993, c. 35, s. 210-12, accessed July 24, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/35/part/V/chapter/I/crossheading/special-measures/enacted>.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., s. 218.

¹⁸² Lee, “HMI and OFSTED,” 47.

of students taking A level courses, pass rates, and truancy and special needs percentages.¹⁸³ League tables focussed on the results of school leaving exams such as the GCSE, making the GCSE a very *high-stakes test* for individual schools.¹⁸⁴

As noted above, schools were first required to publish results on school leaving exams in the early 1980s. However, beginning in 1992, the DES began to compile and publish performance tables for each state-funded school. These results were published in England's daily newspapers as league tables.¹⁸⁵ H. G. Morrison and P. C. Cowen supply a clear example of how some media would compile league tables in such a way as to support the government's discourse on using school data to facilitate parental choice:

While many British newspapers compile league tables by simply ignoring all performance data with the notable exception of the 'five or more grades A*-C' indicator, few have embraced the league table concept with a fervour to match that of *The Sunday Times State Schools Book*, published annually, claims to provide a definitive national ranking for 500 state schools. Its introduction contains the words: 'Information is power. And this book gives you power to help you decide which school is best for your child and, I hope, the confidence not to settle for second best.'¹⁸⁶

In addition to facilitating parental choice, school performance tables were used by OFSTED as part of the Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicators data and by school administrators to help inform the "overall strategic management" of schools.¹⁸⁷

Performance tables and the resulting league tables, then, were another step in the quasi-marketization of state education in England. Along with more transparent reporting of day-to-day school operations, release of financial statements, and systemized inspections and reports of those inspections, they were held up by the Conservative government as they were introduced during its 1979-1997 rule as measures designed to continually improve parental access to information and so their ability to choose an

¹⁸³ H. G. Morrison and P. C. Cowen, "The State Schools Book: A Critique of League Tables," *British Education Research Journal* 22, no. 2 (1996): 241-42.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁸⁵ Anne West and Hazel Pennell, "Publishing School Examinations: Incentives and Consequences," *Educational Studies* 26, no. 4 (2000): 425.

¹⁸⁶ Morrison and Cowen, "The State Schools Book," 243. A*-C indicates a range of grades one might receive on the GCSE. West and Pennell also provide a list of data used to compose league tables by *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, and *The Daily Telegraph*. See "Publishing School Examinations," 426-27.

¹⁸⁷ West and Pennell, "Publishing School Examinations," 425. The role these tables play in strategic management is further discussed below as part of the review of reactions to Conservative education reform.

appropriate school. As the above discussion details, they were also meant to hold schools accountable for raising and maintaining a higher standard of education through the act of ‘naming and shaming,’ and by invoking competition between schools for students. And because parents were viewed as *educational consumers*, who brought funding with them with each student they enrolled, maintaining a high degree of success (as measured through the standards set by the government) was vital to ensure the school could function effectively. Although not a true open market, this system of *accountability* and *transparency*, coupled with the per-pupil funding formula, created a quasi-market that reflected the neoliberal education concepts of *self-interest*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, *centralization of standards*, *high-stakes testing*, *parental choice*, *managerialism*, *educational consumership*, and *accountability*.

(3) National Curriculum

As discussed above, amongst all discussions of raising education standards in England was the increasingly voiced belief in the need for a *national curriculum* that would enable all students to possess a *core* set of *skills* and knowledge. This would enable students to function in an English society with proud historic traditions, but which the Thatcher administration viewed (and supported) as undergoing a transformation into a *knowledge-economy* with an emphasis on technological development. To that end, the 1998 ERA enshrined the National Curriculum (NC) into law, stating that it would contain:

- (a) the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key stage (in this Chapter referred to as “attainment targets”);
- (b) the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to pupils of different abilities and maturities during each key stage (in this Chapter referred to as “programmes of study”); and
- (c) the arrangements for assessing pupils at or near the end of each key stage for the purpose of ascertaining what they have achieved in relation to the attainment targets for that stage.¹⁸⁸

In addition, as noted by the above discussion of league tables and the Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicators, evaluation of students’ performance as related

¹⁸⁸ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 2(2), accessed July 25, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/I/chapter/I/crossheading/principal-provisions/enacted>. As discussed above, Key Stages were set at to end at the ages of 7, 11, 14, and 16.

to NC attainment targets would help supply parents with more information regarding their children's academic success and selection of schools.

As stated in the ERA, the NC contained 10 subjects that must be taught to all students in state-funded schools. Three were core curriculum subjects (mathematics, science, and English) and seven were foundation subjects (history, geography, technology, modern languages, music, art, and physical education).¹⁸⁹ In addition, schools were still required to teach religion, although curricula development for that subject was left in the hands of local administrators so that it might be tailored to local needs and preferences.¹⁹⁰

The ERA also established the National Curriculum Council (NCC), whose responsibilities were:

- (a) to keep all aspects of the curriculum for maintained schools under review;
- (b) to advise the Secretary of State on such matters concerned with the curriculum for maintained schools as he may refer to it or as it may see fit;
- (c) to advise the Secretary of State on, and if so requested by him assist him to carry out, programmes of research and development for purposes connected with the curriculum for schools;
- (d) to publish and disseminate, and to assist in the publication and dissemination of, information relating to the curriculum for schools; and
- (e) to carry out such ancillary activities as the Secretary of State may direct.¹⁹¹

The Education Secretary's power over the curriculum is evident in this list of NCC duties. While the NCC would develop curriculum, it was the Secretary who had final power over its content. He would take their recommendations and, with his own desired modifications, submit them before parliament, where they would become legally binding *Statutory Orders*. In addition, it was the Education Secretary who appointed the members of the NCC.¹⁹²

Chapter Six presents a general discussion of the process and timeline of overall NC development followed by a more specific discussion of the Music National curriculum, so a detailed account is not given here. However, it is useful to note that the process of curriculum was fraught with ideological tensions in particular subjects, such as history and music, that arose between those tasked with writing the curriculum and the

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., s. 3(1-2).

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., s. 1(1).

¹⁹¹ Ibid., s. 14(3), accessed July 25, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/14/enacted>.

¹⁹² Ibid., s. 14(2).

NCC, bureaucrats, and elected officials—particularly the various Education Secretaries—who were tasked with finalizing them. As discussed in further detail in Chapter Six, these tensions centred around several key points: (1) the extent to which curricula should emphasize the acquisition of knowledge that could be assessed through traditional “paper and pencil” testing procedures or whether assessment should emphasize the ability to practically and critically apply knowledge and skills; (2) whether assessment should be primarily formative or summative and whether students should be assessed through external tests or by their own teachers; and (3) whether the curricula should reflect “traditional” English values, histories, and culture or promote cultural diversity and multiple ways of learning. Each of these conflicts was underpinned by tensions between progressive and neoliberal or neoconservative ideology described above.

Caroline Gipps provided a succinct overview of the first curriculum documents as describing “the matters, skills, and processes to be taught as Programmes of Study and the knowledge, skills, and understanding [framed] as Attainment Targets.”¹⁹³ For Key Stages (KS) 1-3, student performance was assessed against “attainment levels” ranging from 1 to 10, with 10 being the most advanced and each level assigned “a series of criteria or attainment which form the basic structure of a criterion-referenced assessment system.”¹⁹⁴ Students were expected to be at particular levels along the 1 to 10 spectrum (as determined by meeting specific Attainment Targets) by the end of each KS. For example, students might leave KS 1 at a level 2 or 3 and might reach levels 8-10 only if they continued study within a subject into KS 3. The General Certificate of Secondary Education was used to assess student attainment in KS 4. As discussed in Chapter Six, however, a decision was made by the government to have only End of Key Stage Statements (1992 music NC) and End of Key Stage Descriptions (1995 music NC) against which students would be assessed in music, rather than the 10 Levels of Attainment because “it was not felt possible (or desirable) to break progress down in

¹⁹³ Caroline Gipps, “The Structure for Assessment and Recording,” in *Assessing the National Curriculum*, eds. Phillip O’Hear and John White (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1993), 50.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

these subjects into specific statements of attainment.”¹⁹⁵ This had significant implications for the status of music as a mandatory subject within the NC and is discussed further in the next chapter.

Ultimately (and perhaps not surprisingly) the introduction of the NC was not without controversy. John Patten, who was appointed Education Secretary in 1992, commissioned Sir Ron Dearing (“an industrial trouble shooter with little knowledge of education”) to undertake a major review of the NC and its assessment procedures in 1993.¹⁹⁶ Dearing’s report upheld the decision to create and implement a NC, but called for reduced curricular attainment targets and assessment, asked that teachers be given more discretionary time, and that, once these changes were made, no further changes should be made to curriculum and assessment for five years.¹⁹⁷

This brief overview of the development of the NC and some of the structures and tensions involved in its development reflect the Conservative government’s desire to implement a NC that could be applied to all English students. Through its early and ongoing emphasis on the development and assessment of mathematics, science, and English, it reflected the neoliberal education concepts of *core curriculum*, while the entire process reflects the concepts of achieving *educational excellence* through *standardized curricula* that was highly *centralized*. The NC also served as the foundation against which national assessment could take place through the evaluation of attainment levels and a series of national tests. The results of which, as described above, could be used to facilitate the development of *educational consumers* through informed *parental choice*.

(4) National Assessment

As noted above, the NC was to include “the arrangements for assessing pupils at or near the end of each key stage for the purpose of ascertaining what they have achieved

¹⁹⁵ Ron Dearing, *The National Curriculum and Its Assessment* (London: School Curriculum and Assessment Authority): 13, 67, accessed Sept. 15, 2013, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/dearing/dearing1994.html>

¹⁹⁶ Martin Hughes, “The National Curriculum in England and Wales: A Lesson in External Imposed Reform?” *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997): 193.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

in relation to the attainment targets for that stage.”¹⁹⁸ To facilitate this process, the 1988 ERA legislated into existence the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), the duties of which were:

- (a) to keep all aspects of examinations and assessment under review;
- (b) to advise the Secretary of State on such matters concerned with examinations and assessment as he may refer to it or as it may see fit;
- (c) to advise the Secretary of State on, and if so requested by him assist him to carry out, programmes of research and development for purposes connected with examinations and assessment;
- (d) to publish and disseminate, and to assist in the publication and dissemination of, information relating to examinations and assessment;
- (e) to make arrangements with appropriate bodies for the moderation of assessments made in pursuance of assessment arrangements;
- (f) to advise the Secretary of State on the exercise of his powers under section 5(1) of this Act; and
- (g) to carry out such ancillary activities as the Secretary of State may direct.¹⁹⁹

As with the NCC, the advisory role of the SEAC to the Education Secretary was made clear in the legislation—England’s national assessment and examinations would ultimately be his responsibility. Also made clear in this legislation was the SEAC’s responsibility to publish and disseminate the results of any national assessments, which became the foundation of some of the performance and league tables discussed above. The SEAC, then, was the QUANGO responsible for examining the *accountability* of schools in relation to teaching the NC and ensuring student achievement, and for providing information about these activities to facilitate *parental choice*. Some of OFSTED responsibilities overlapped with this when it was created in 1992.

Processes and decisions regarding the development of assessment practices both generally and as specific to music education are discussed in Chapter Six. In summary, assessment for foundation subjects continued to develop through the early 1990s, with the exception of physical education, art, and music, for which no standard assessment was required. In addition, the 1993 Education Act merged the NCC with the SEAC to create

¹⁹⁸ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 2(2c), accessed July 26, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/2/enacted>.

¹⁹⁹ Education Reform Act, 1988, c. 40, s. 14(3), accessed July 27, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/14/enacted>.

the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, thereby bringing the two related branches of curriculum and assessment under one roof.²⁰⁰

As with the NC, tension arising from the rapid and significant changes to education assessment during the late 1980s and early 1990s came to a head in 1992 when teachers began protesting these changes by refusing to carry out national assessments because of disagreement over the nature and reliability of the external “pencil and paper” tests, publication of test results, and the overwhelming amount of work associated with assessing the National Curriculum.²⁰¹ This was the point at which the Dearing Review (discussed above) was commissioned. The government implemented many of Dearing’s conclusions, including that national tests should occur *only* in the core subjects and that reported results on student achievements in the core subjects should contain both external test results and teacher assessment. For all other subjects, teacher assessment would be the primary form of assessment, for which the government would develop “national criteria backed up by examples of the type of pupil work expected at different levels of achievement.”²⁰² Further modifications were made so that specific attainment targets did not have to match specific tests questions or assessment activities, allowing greater flexibility on the part of teachers to ‘fit’ the students’ abilities in a subject area with the attainment targets under assessment.²⁰³ This model of assessment remained in place until the Conservative government left office in 1997.

This review of national curriculum assessment development reflects the underlying neoliberal concept of *standardized testing of core curriculum* meant to identify, support, and facilitate *educational excellence* in schools through a centrally devised and controlled *accountability* policy. As noted above, the accountability placed on schools by this assessment structure in the quasi-market state school system created and overseen by the Conservatives during the 1980s and 1990s fostered a culture of

²⁰⁰ Education Act, 1993, c. 35, s. 244-248, accessed August 1, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/35/part/VI/crossheading/replacement-of-the-national-curriculum-council-and-the-school-examinations-and-assessment-council/enacted>.

²⁰¹ Lawton, “Education Reform in England and Wales,” 84.

²⁰² Ron Dearing, *The National Curriculum and its Assessment* (London: School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 1994): 56-57, accessed August 1, 2012, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/dearing/dearing1994.html>.

²⁰³ Daugherty, “National Curriculum Assessment,” 208.

parental choice and *managerialism* (by expecting the local administrators and teachers to evaluate and implement the measures they must take in order to raise *standards* as measured through national assessment). National, external testing of the *core curriculum* (i.e., English, science, and mathematics) also supported the idea of the education of *knowledge workers* possessing a set of *core skills* necessary for employment in the *knowledge economy*. Tension was evident between the Conservative discourse that teacher assessment is subjective and unreliable and the need for teachers to maintain their authority and position as independent, knowledgeable professionals. Lastly, it is notable that, from the outset, the arts and physical education were never expected to undergo the type of rigorous assessment to which all other core and foundation subjects were subjected.

(5) Teacher Training and Work

The final notable areas of state-funded education in which the Conservative central government asserted control were in the education and training of teachers and the nature of their work. As Chapter Six discusses the training, work, and organization of music teachers in England's schools system in more depth, discussion regarding teacher training and work in this chapter is limited to major policy and structural changes made in regard to teacher training as it relates to issues of central control.

As noted earlier in this chapter, two of the central discourses in the government's argument for education reform focused on raising low education standards to prepare students for work and the role of "left-wing" progressive educational approaches of many LEAs and schools. Implicit in this discourse was the failure of teachers in their "front-line" role in the educational process and, subsequently, the failure of teacher-training institutions to prepare them for teaching, particularly those associated with higher education.²⁰⁴ The 1980 Education Act, gave the Education Secretary increased power to set probationary periods and qualifications for teachers.²⁰⁵ The *1983 Conservative Party*

²⁰⁴ Len Barton et al., "Teacher Education and Teacher Professionalism in England: Some Emerging Issues," in "Teacher Education: Past, Present and Future," special issue, *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 15, no. 4 (1994): 533.

²⁰⁵ Education Act, 1980, c. 20, s. 27 (1a), accessed August 5, 2012, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/section/27/enacted>.

General Election Manifesto also stated that the party was “not satisfied with the selection or the training of our teachers.”²⁰⁶ To this end, the government established the Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) in 1984 using secondary legislation. CATE set broad common standards and requirements for all institutions involved in teacher training,²⁰⁷ but was disbanded under the 1994 Education Act and replaced by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA). The objectives of the TTA were:

- (a) to contribute to raising the standards of teaching;
 - (b) to promote teaching as a career;
 - (c) to improve the quality and efficiency of all routes into the teaching profession;
 - (d) to secure the involvement of schools in all courses and programmes for the initial training of school teachers; and
- generally to secure that teachers are well fitted and trained to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.²⁰⁸

As was the norm with education-related QUANGOs, the Education Secretary was responsible for appointing its members and chairman,²⁰⁹ the QUANGO reported directly to the Education Secretary,²¹⁰ and the Secretary had the power to assign “such additional functions as he considers they may appropriately discharge having regard to [the TTA’s] general objectives.”²¹¹

The TTA was also given the responsibility for funding teacher training institutions based on those institutions meeting accreditation standards set by the TTA, although the Education Secretary maintained the power to “give general directions” to the funding branch of the TTA.²¹² In addition, OFSTED inspectors also reported on how they believed particular teacher training courses affected new teachers’ classroom

²⁰⁶ Conservative Party (UK), “Schools: The Pursuit of Excellence,” in *1983 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed July 3, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1983/1983-conservative-manifesto.shtml>.

²⁰⁷ Barton et al., “Teacher Education,” 535. Barton et al. note that the requirements were viewed as a type of “National Curriculum” by some, but that the requirements set were broad enough to allow institutions some flexibility and creativity in their implementation.

²⁰⁸ Education Act, 1994, c. 30, s. 1(2), accessed August 5, 2012, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/30/part/I/enacted.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, s. 2.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 15 (1).

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, s. 16 (1).

²¹² *Ibid.*, s. 8 (2-3).

“performance” (i.e., quality of teaching as measured by OFSTED standards).²¹³ Taken together, the actions of the TTA and OFSTED served to “develop ever more rigorous forms of ‘quality control.’”²¹⁴

In addition, teacher training institutions, particularly those from the sphere of higher education, found themselves in a more competitive market as the Conservative government began in the early 1990s to deregulate the teacher training “market” by allowing prospective teachers to obtain their initial teacher qualifications outside of the university setting.²¹⁵ By 1994, teachers could complete their initial teacher training in several ways, including (1) the traditional combination of undergraduate degree plus one year post-graduate training, (2) shortened undergraduate education but more time spent in schools during graduate work, (3), undertaking “practical” training whereby teachers with no formal teacher education were given positions in schools and learned “on the job,” (4) spending the majority of their time in schools that were still partnered with higher education institutions, and (5) training directly with schools that had no association with higher education training activities.²¹⁶ In many cases, the increased time spent training directly in schools rather than at an institute of higher education meant that TTA funding was diverted away from higher education and directly to schools training teachers.²¹⁷ This created yet another example of how funding was used as an incentive to purportedly improve educational standards.

John Furlong has characterized much of the deregulation of teacher training as a backlash against the perceived higher education “liberal educational elite” responsible for training teachers (and thus passing on the progressive education ideals villainized by the Conservatives).²¹⁸ Others have labelled these actions as stemming from Conservative “anti-intellectualism” more concerned with teacher training based on a practical, apprenticeship model rather than one focused on reflection on and critical evaluation of

²¹³ John Furlong, “Ideology and Reform in Teacher Education: Some Reflections on Cochran Smith and Fries,” *Educational Researcher* 31, no. 6 (2002): 23.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

²¹⁵ Barton et al., “Teacher Education,” 530.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 529-530.

²¹⁷ Furlong, “Ideology and Reform in Teacher Education,” 23.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23

education and one's own work.²¹⁹ These criticisms are explored more in relation to the Chapter Six material on music teacher training, organization, and work, although it is worth noting here that much has been said about these actions as a way of “de-professionalizing” the work of teachers by placing them in the role of educational “service provider” rather than as “reflective practitioner.”²²⁰ The impact of the TTA and its funding model when coupled with a quasi-free market in teacher training, then, should not be overlooked: In the words of Pat Mahoney and Ian Hextall:

From recruitment, course accreditation, allocation of student numbers, funding criteria, through to course content, profiles, appraisal, continuous professional development, national professional qualification, and research there is no aspect of the occupational and professional lives of teachers which is not affected by the Agency.²²¹

Summary of Local and Central Control

This overview of the changes made to local and central control to England's state-funded education system has revealed the tensions between such neoliberal concepts as *evolution, spontaneous order, deregulation, decentralization/devolution* and *managerialism* (which focus on local control) and the concepts of *educational excellence, standards, standardized curriculum/testing, core curriculum, efficiency* and *accountability* that are generally the purview of central control. Changes designed to give more power at the local level in order to facilitate greater *parental choice* and to create a culture of *educational consumers* were undertaken only within the frame of strong central control and regulation in order to ensure that government priorities, such as raising “education standards” and producing citizens capable of functioning in the *knowledge economy*, were met. Needless to say, this process was not without both its champions and its critiques. The final section of this chapter gives a short overview of public and stakeholder reactions to the Thatcher and Major neoliberal education reforms.

²¹⁹ Keith Swanwick, “The ‘Reform’ of Teacher Education in England,” *Research Studies in Music Education* 2, no. 2 (1994): 2-3.

²²⁰ See, for example, Barton et al., “Teacher Education,” 534-35, 538; Furlong, “Ideology and Reform in Teacher Education,” 24; Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 129; and Jackie Sinclair, Mike Ironside, and Roger Seifert, “Classroom Struggle? Market Oriented Education Reforms and Their Impact on the Teacher Education Process,” *Work, Employment & Society* 10, no. 4 (1996): 646-50.

²²¹ Pat Mahoney and Ian Hextall, “Problems of Accountability: A Case Study of the Teacher Training Agency,” *Journal of Educational Policy* 12, no. 4 (1997): 270.

Reactions to and Commentary on England's Neoliberal Education Reforms

(1) Speed, Scope, and Approach to Reform

Much of what can be said of teachers' and administrators' reaction to the speed and scope of education reform from 1979-1997 is mentioned above and embodied in the findings of the Dearing Review and so is only summarized here. Teachers and administrators felt, particularly after the introduction of the National Curriculum and national assessment schemes, that the speed and scope of change were much too quick and broad, even if they were not necessarily opposed to some of the changes, such as the introduction of a National Curriculum. Underpinning and exacerbating these objections was the Conservative's government's top-down approach to reform that was accompanied by a perceived lack of consultation from teachers and administrators as well as a lack of *transparency* as to how policy decisions were reached. As summarized by Trowler, under Thatcher's and Major's Conservative regimes,

many of the interest groups formerly involved in the policy process (e.g. teachers and the LEAs) were progressively marginalized, the ground over which this battle [for education reform] was fought was defined almost completely by [Conservative] thinking and essentially involved the different factions within the [Conservative] administration."²²²

Trowler's statement is supported by both Clyde Chitty and Denis Lawton, who provided detailed accounts of how significant legislation and policy decisions, such as the move to GMS, the formulation and passage of the 1988 ERA, and the nature of national assessment, were the subject of internal party struggles rather than consultation and debate with educationalists and the public.²²³ Particularly notable here is role of successive Education Secretaries in unilaterally revising curricular documents and steering national assessment of the core subjects toward external, "paper and pencil tests."²²⁴ Setting the tone for all of these changes was the 1998 ERA, which Chitty writes,

²²² Trowler, *Education Policy*, 35.

²²³ See, for example, Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 25-43, and Lawton, *Education and Politics*, 77-79.

²²⁴ Graham's account of his time as chairman of the NCC gives a candid and revealing account of the nature of Education Secretary and DES interference in curriculum development under the appointment of

“was felt by many . . . had been prepared with too much secrecy and without the benefit of widespread consultation.”²²⁵ As discussed above, it is also notable that much of the education legislation passed by the Thatcher and Major administrations allowed the government to develop and enact many of its reforms through secondary legislation, thereby curtailing the consultation processes.

Lack of *transparency* and consultation was supported by the creation of QUANGOs such as the NCC, SEAC, and the TTA, which were heavily criticized by teachers, administrators, LEAs, and those in higher education for being undertaken with far too little consultation from educationalists. For example, in their study of the structure of the Teacher Training Authority, Mahoney and Hexall observed that “when responsibility for public services is shifted from elected government to unelected QUANGOs, issues of democratic accountability are raised which need to be opened up to public scrutiny.”²²⁶ They concluded that, while the TTA did incorporate consultation into the development of suggested policy, the consultation process itself focused on agendas already approved of by the TTA (i.e., the consultants had little opportunity to shape policy),²²⁷ and that the ways in which consultation affected the TTA’s policy recommendations and decisions were not transparent.²²⁸ They concluded that the TTA was a “symptomatic exemplar” of Conservative QUANGOs.²²⁹ Lack of *transparency* and consultation on the part of such QUANGOs were further compounded by the Education Secretary’s ability to overrule their policy suggestions and decisions and implement his own.

Finally, as Smith noted, during this era, the Conservative government was able to use powers given to it (and particularly to the Education Secretary) to focus the direction of educational research toward its own reform agendas. Thus, bodies such as the HMI, which previously had more autonomy in its choices of research subjects, found

three Secretaries: Kenneth Baker, John MacGregor, and Kenneth Clarke. See Duncan Graham with David Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All: The Making of the National Curriculum*. (London: Routledge, 1994).

²²⁵ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 47-48.

²²⁶ Mahoney and Hexall, “Problems of Accountability,” 269.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 279.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 269.

themselves either directed by the government to explore particular research agendas and/or be reformed (as in the case of the HMI and the creation of OFSTED or the amalgamation of the NCC and SEAC into the SCAA) into new QUANGOs. As Smith noted, “this resulted in a move away from long-drawn out commissions, research and professional debate prior to reform, to short intensive bursts of legislative change” and “meant that the opportunity for research, or indeed many other groups, to make any impact was limited.”²³⁰

In summary, concerns surrounding the scope and speed of change (issues validated by the Dearing Review) were further compounded by frustrations felt on the part of educationalists, administrators, and teachers in the processes of reform, particularly the lack of *transparency* and consultation regarding policy changes. The Conservative government was supported in these reform processes, however, through the structure set up through legislation that allowed many of its reforms to be conducted through secondary legislation and QUANGOs and overseen by the Education Secretary.

(2) Financial Restructuring, Parental Choice, and Educational Equality

Two main aspects of Conservative education financial reform were of particular concern to educationalists and parents. The first was the institution and subsequent expansion of the Assisted Places Scheme (APS) that allowed students to attend Independent Schools. Trowler noted that “in the eyes of critics, this scheme demonstrated the government’s view that maintained schools were not good enough to cater to bright pupils and its lack of determination to improve them.”²³¹ Indeed, the introduction of the APS is in keeping with the Conservative’s rejection of “progressive” education in favour of the type of traditional, conservative education favoured by the party as discussed above. This is also discussed further in the next section in relation to curriculum and assessment reform. A second, much larger concern, however, was the effect that the parental choice movement paired with the per-pupil funding formula had on schools and their ability to implement education reforms such as the NC and its assessment.

²³⁰ Smith, “Research and Inspection,” 336.

²³¹ Trowler, *Education Policy*, 6.

To begin, Local Management of Schools (LMS) and GMS status played a key role in the balance between parental choice and per-pupil funding. Power and Whitty observed that local school administrators enjoyed the greater autonomy and control of their budgets that came with the LMS and GMS managerial approaches to state-funded education. They also noted, however that research indicated that “it was questionable whether or not [LMS and GMS] had any real effect on student learning—rather, schools became more publically ‘glossified’ by beefing up public image rather than by actually improving student learning.”²³² Tied to this was the status of grammar schools (as the state-funded embodiment of Independent Schools) in English society. Indeed, some of the first schools to adopt GMS status were grammar (rather than comprehensive) schools, and statistics showed that GMS grammar schools catered to the more affluent in English society.²³³ This has led Witty and Power, among others, to speculate that parental choice is not as straight forward as Conservative government discourse would position it. A main assumption here was that parents from middle class backgrounds possessed the cultural capital to (1) value a particular form of education (in this case, that modelled after elite Independent Schools), (2) make and follow through with the choices and steps needed to enrol their children in these schools, and (3) ensure that their children possessed the necessary qualifications to gain admittance to these schools.²³⁴

Three main concerns have resulted from these practices. The first related to the government’s ability to foster an attitude toward accepting a diversity of schools from which to choose. Indeed, the GMS movement itself was not widely embraced by schools, with only about 200 schools converting to GMS by 1992.²³⁵ The City Technology Colleges (CTC) were also not widely supported (or funded) by the industries to which they were supposed to cater, resulting in the government needing to largely fund them and only fifteen CTCs established by 1993.²³⁶ Ultimately, evidence suggested that the

²³² Whitty and Power, “Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control,” 225-26.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 228-29.

²³⁴ *Ibid.* 226-27.

²³⁵ Conservative Party (UK), “Opportunity for All,” in *1992 Conservative Party General Election Manifesto*, accessed August 10, 2012, <http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1992/1992-conservative-manifesto.shtml>. As noted above, this was one of the motivations for the Major government’s easing of restrictions on obtaining GMS status and changing school character.

²³⁶ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 65-66.

middle-class parents' desire to have their children attend academically-elite schools tended to make schools approach education in a more uniform manner, rather than facilitating greater diversity as per the governments' designs. Somewhat ironically, this uniformity was influenced by parental preference to choose more traditional, elite schools.²³⁷

The second concern regarding parental choice was that schools that were perceived to be "the best" by parents became oversubscribed, and thus were actually able to implement selection procedures despite the government's intention that its "open enrollment policy" would ensure all students had a place in a school of their choice.²³⁸ Research suggests that this resulted in some "cream skimming" by schools wishing to produce desirable league tables, thereby keeping their popularity as a parental choice high and thus maintaining financial support.²³⁹ For example, some schools were found to exclude students with special education needs and/or to have parents complete extensive application forms and interviews that would allow schools to apply a process of "covert selection," possibly based on socio-economic status, language proficiency, and the ability to discourage all but the most determined parents due to the complexity of the application process.²⁴⁰ Such processes of discrimination ran counter to the Conservatives vision of open enrollment, but were a clear outcome of quasi-market school choice competition.

Finally, the publication of league tables as part of the information supplied to parents has been soundly criticized by educationalists for its failure to account for the contextual status of student learning. Chief among these concerns is students' socio-economic status, which is linked to attendance rates and examination results.²⁴¹ The "raw data" presented by league tables as well as the reputation of a school led to reduced enrolment in schools in lower socio-economic areas, resulting in less funding for those schools and, consequently, less resources available for administrators, teachers, and students in socio-economic areas arguably most in need of education. In some (or indeed

²³⁷ Whitty and Power, "Quasi-Markets and Curriculum Control," 229.

²³⁸ Anne West, Hazel Pennell, and Ann Edge, "Exploring the Impact of Reform on School-Enrollment Policies in England," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997): 173-74.

²³⁹ West and Pennell, "Publishing School Examinations," 438.

²⁴⁰ West, Pennell, and Edge, "Exploring the Impact of Reform on School-Enrollment," 176-77.

²⁴¹ West and Pennell, "Publishing School Examinations," 432.

many) cases, this produced a cycle whereby schools most in need of funding for students (and parents without the resources or cultural capital to make “competitive” educational choices on behalf of the children) received less funding and thus were less able to meet NC and assessment requirements—or for that matter, the needs of their students.²⁴²

(3) Curriculum and Assessment Reform

As with the general speed, scope, and approach to reform, many of the concerns regarding curriculum and assessment reform under the Conservative’s regime have been discussed above, in part because the latter reforms are so intimately tied to issues of speed, scope, and approach to reform, as is reflected in the Dearing Review. Some other reactions and concerns to note here, however, include the public debate regarding the neo-conservative content of the NC, particularly in areas such as history and music (described in the next chapter), which reflected the tension between (1) Conservative values of a curriculum focused on knowledge over application and on England’s past accomplishments and imperial status, (2) educationalists who were more concerned with the development of critical thinking processes and application of skills, and (3) a growing movement to include curricular content that reflected England’s increasing cultural diversity.²⁴³

Related to this argument, as explored above, was the positioning of certain “core” subjects as deserving of the most attention and resources, which was underscored by national external testing programs. Indeed, as explored in the next chapter, the lack of assessment procedures (and any true plans for developing them) for music certainly indicated that it was not a priority for Conservative education reformers as compared to subjects such as English, mathematics, and science—particularly as the government was concerned with evidence of ‘measurable results’ as embodied by such policy as league tables.

A final concern, raised by educationalists and underpinning the desirable Independent School model for education, was the fact that Independent Schools were not

²⁴² West, Pennell, and Edge, “Exploring the Impact of Reform on School-Enrollment,” 179-80.

²⁴³ This last concern is addressed in depth by Jagdish Gundara in “Values, National Curriculum and Diversity in British Society,” in *Assessing the National Curriculum*, eds. Phillip O’Hear and John White (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1993), 70-79.

required to teach the NC nor, subsequently, to undergo the prescribed national assessments. As with the APS, the general indication here was that Independent Schools were capable of providing a “quality” educational experience for students without government oversight, while state-run schools were not.²⁴⁴

(4) Re-structuring Teacher and Administrator Duties

Since the 1988 ERA, a wealth of material has been published regarding the reaction of educationalists (including teachers and administrators) and their institutions regarding state education reform and teacher training and workload under the Thatcher and Major Conservative governments. Some of this, such as negative reactions to increased workload brought on by the NC and its assessment, are described above. One of the most common themes in the literature on this subject, as alluded to above, is the de-professionalization of teachers. For example, Barton and others noted that removal of teacher training from universities through emphasizing more practical, apprentice-style training within schools developed a system of teaching “competencies,” but not the development of professional understanding and reflection. They added that “just as basic training in particular schools can limit the development of a wider perspective so can specifying particular competences encourage restricted rather than extended notions of professionalism and professionalism.”²⁴⁵

From a broader perspective, the perceived lack of consultation regarding not only teacher training but education reform in general and the resulting NC and assessment schemes was viewed by some as “encouraging restricted rather than extended notions of [teacher] professionalism.”²⁴⁶ In addition, and as Jackie Sinclair, Mike Ironside, and Roger Seifert noted, although some teachers and schools found it necessary to abandon methods of teaching that did not conform to the new NC and its assessment schemes, they were perhaps even more upset about the lack of consultation regarding these policy measures.²⁴⁷ They added that the requirement to ‘deliver’ the curriculum (and appropriate assessment results) as determined by policy and the LMS structure and underpinned by

²⁴⁴ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 50.

²⁴⁵ Barton et al., “Teacher Education,” 538.

²⁴⁶ Furlong, “Ideology and Reform in Teacher Education,” 24.

²⁴⁷ Sinclair, Ironside, and Seifert, “Classroom Struggle?” 648.

parental choice supported a changing role between teachers and head teachers/administrators, whereby “school managers must take action to ensure that teacher effort meets management-determined (rather than professionally agreed) objectives. . . . Managers must nevertheless ensure that teacher activity is geared towards securing high rating in the league tables and other performance indicators.”²⁴⁸ In this case, teachers would fill the role of “service provider” rather than reflective practitioner. This pressure also resulted in organizational changes where a few teachers were often given the responsibility for guiding how curriculum would be taught, which was then passed down to other teachers to implement, thereby further restricting the ability of some teachers to exercise professional judgement. This was further exacerbated in schools where funding shortages required teachers to teach subjects of which they had little knowledge.²⁴⁹

Conclusion

This chapter has situated the education reforms made by Margaret Thatcher’s and John Major’s Conservative majority governments from 1979-1997 within the neoliberal conception of education presented in Chapter Four. Chief among these changes was the development of a quasi-market in the state-funded education system that relied on the central development of and control over a national, curriculum and assessment schemes, while *devolving* greater control over day-to-day school operations to the local level in order to facilitate parental choice and a diversity of educational options. In doing so, the Conservative government implemented education reforms that conformed to the core concepts of *Market, Welfare, Constitution, and Property* through various adjacent and peripheral concepts. Those related to the Market core concept included *evolution, spontaneous order, self-interest, educational excellence, centralization of standards, knowledge economy/workers, core skills, core curriculum, deregulation, share-ownership, standardized curricula and testing, high-stakes testing, parental choice, private schools, decentralization/devolution managerialism, and public-private partnerships*. The core concept of Welfare was supported by concepts of *personal responsibility, self-reliance,*

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 651.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 652.

negative rights, efficiency, meritocracy, QUANGOs, and education vouchers (in the form of parental choice coupled with a per-student funding formula). The Constitution was evoked through the concepts of *freedom, balanced budgets, and restrained democratic rule*. Finally, the core concept of Property was supported through the concepts of *legal privilege, individual initiative, educational consumership, certification, knowledge as commodity, and accountability*.

As the above discussion demonstrates, a tension existed between the neoliberal discourse of greater local control, particularly in the form of LMS, GMS, and the choice of teachers to pursue different paths to initial training and qualification, and the increasing central control over education policy meant to facilitate parental choice and raise educational standards. This resulted in sweeping reforms that many perceived as too swift, while those involved in delivering education felt that their expertise was largely ignored throughout the reform consultation process. Educationalists felt that this was only part of a growing trend of teacher de-professionalization during the Conservative era. Evidence also suggested that the per-pupil funding model and methods through which information was prepared and distributed to parents to facilitate school choice may, in some cases, have undermined the government's goal of "open enrollment," facilitated the decline of schools serving students from lower socio-economic classes, and restricted educational diversity.

The previous two chapters have illustrated both how neoliberalism is generally conceived through education reforms in Western developed states and how those reforms were conceived of and implemented in England under Conservative rule from 1979-1997. The following chapter now turns to how England's conception of neoliberal education shaped and affected music education in state-funded schools, as well as how stakeholders associated with music education responded to and may have shaped those reforms.

Chapter Six: Neoliberal Education Reforms and Music Education in England (1979-1997)

Introduction

This chapter explores how changes in educational policy under the 1979-1997 Conservative neoliberal regime affected music education in England's state funded education system. It begins with an overview of historical events, policies, and attitudes related to English music education that influenced debate over and subsequent education reform during the 1980s and 1990s. As discussed in Chapter Five, these Conservative reforms began soon after the 1979 election of Margret Thatcher. However, the relative freedom that Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and schools retained in determining curriculum prior to 1988 meant that music education—at least in terms of content, if not always provision—was still subject to a variety of theoretical and philosophical influences until the 1998 Education Reform Act (ERA).

As discussed below, because music education in England went through a significant stage of theoretical and philosophical development in the late 1970s that continued through the 1980s, it is difficult to organize this historical overview strictly around the “before and after” Conservative election date of 1979, particularly as there were no National Curriculum documents for music until 1991. Instead, the more general discussion of historical attitudes toward and structures supporting music education in England is followed by a section that addresses specific, overarching changes to education policy that directly affected the structure and provision of music education in schools between 1979-1987, during the Conservatives' first two terms in office. The focuses then shifts onto how educational policy and practice related to music education in England from 1988 to 1997 were affected from the “top down” by the implementation of 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and the increasing emphasis on both central and local control and parental choice. Within this discussion, I examine the significance of the development of England's National Curriculum and its content and assessment practices,

provision for curriculum and assessment implementation, teacher training and work, and Local Management of Schools and Grant Maintained Schools and parental choice. Embedded in this discussion is an examination of how specific English educational structures and historical attitudes toward education and music education were negotiated and influenced the development and implementation of music education policy.

Music Education In England: 1870-1987

1870 to mid 1970s

The history of music education in England has been well-documented elsewhere.¹ The brief overview given here up until 1987 is meant not to reproduce these, but to draw on some of these histories as well as government and policy documents in order to give a brief overview of the political and educational structures and policies that helped inform and shape music education in England's state-funded school system from its establishment up to the legislation of the 1988 National Curriculum. In addition, I discuss the work of specific music education scholars, as well as educationalists in general, who influenced attitudes toward the purpose, structure, and content of music education prior to the development of the National Curriculum.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, the *Elementary Education Act of 1870* created the Local Educational Authorities (then termed "school boards") that made state education available to English students. The Act itself concerned the structural, economic, and administrative aspects of LEA creation.² While it stated that schools must be "open at all times to the inspection of Her Majesty's inspectors," such inspections concerned the administrative and financial operations of schools.³ The Act itself made no mention of curriculum or what, specifically, was to be taught in schools. However, in 1872, under a "payment by results" scheme, the government sought to encourage vocal music in

¹ See, for example, Gordon Cox, *A History of Music Education in England, 1872-1928* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1993); Stephanie Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education: Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Practice in British Secondary School Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); Gordon Cox, *Living Music in Schools 1923-1999: Studies in the History of Music Education in England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); and John Finney, *Music Education in England, 1950-2010: The Child-Centred Progressive Tradition* (Surry: Ashgate Publishing, 2011).

² Education Act of 1970, c. 75, accessed Nov. 28, 2012, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/acts/1870-elementary-education-act.html>.

³ Ibid. c. 75, s. I (3).

schools by allocating an extra shilling per student, which became conditional upon HMI determination of “satisfactory” teaching. This was further redefined circa 1880 as vocal music taught through developing musical reading abilities (i.e., “by note”) rather than aurally (i.e., “by rote”). Music advisors were introduced, beginning with John Hullah in 1874, to “monitor standards of musical teaching principally in the training colleges . . . as well as providing crucial advice on policy matters and documentation.”⁴ Although the payment by results scheme was withdrawn in 1901 (and with it, the financial incentive to include music in a school’s curriculum), the succession of Music Inspectors who followed Hullah helped shape the early conception of music education in schools as an activity that should be encouraged because of its potential to develop moral character, discipline, and abilities in other school subjects.⁵

While the various inspectors had different opinions as to the degree to which and how this might be accomplished, all agreed that it was important to develop a sense of musical appreciation in students through cultivating taste in “good” music, which primarily meant music in the Western art tradition as well as music that promoted national identity and pride, including accepted and beloved folksongs. As Gordon Cox wrote of Author Somervell (music inspector from 1901-1928), “everyone agreed that music education had to fight the pernicious effects of popular culture—in particular, this meant music-hall songs. Somervell’s position was that national songs were morally superior and that popular music vulgarized and exerted a harmful influence on character.”⁶ Somervell’s position, and that of the music inspectors that preceded him, were hardly surprising, given that few music inspectors had actual teaching experience, having been instead appointed due to their outstanding and well-recognized performance

⁴ Gordon Cox, “Britain: Towards ‘A Long Overdue Renaissance?’” in *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education: Cross Cultural Historical Studies of Music in Compulsory Schooling*, eds. Gordon Cox and Robin Stevens (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 14-15. Not surprisingly, it was Hullah that introduced the provision that satisfactory music teaching be based on teaching by note. Hullah introduced the fixed-doh method of sight singing to England in the 1840s, which he learned from G. L. B. Wilhem when visiting France to learn more about music education there. He also visited the continent in 1879 to learn more about elementary music education in various European countries. In this, we can see that one of the first significant policies in English music education was partially premised on a *traveller’s approach* to comparative education. See Chapter 2, pp. 25-28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 18-21 and Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 12-16.

⁶ Cox, “Britain: Towards ‘A Long Overdue Renaissance,’” 22.

or compositional skills in Western art music (or combination thereof).⁷ Also not surprising was Somervell's influence in the production of *The National Song Book*, a text that was widely used in schools from the mid-1910s onward.⁸

This attitude toward the purpose and value of music education included clear implications for how it should be taught. First, it implied that music education was of value to all students, not just those who were considered musically "talented."⁹ While all inspectors emphasized the need to develop listening skills, some, such as Somervell, advocated that teachers embrace an approach to teaching musical appreciation through developing children's ability to read and sight sing music with good tone as well as to aurally identify and the elements of music and critique how they were used in a musical composition.¹⁰ Somervell's suggestions were officially endorsed by the government.¹¹ The execution of them, however, required teachers who could do so, and evidence suggests that such teachers were in short supply during this era.¹² This was despite the fact that teacher training colleges at the time were required to include music training as part of their curriculum. However, most students entering the colleges had little training themselves, leaving one music inspector to conclude that it was "unrealistic to expect them to turn out cultivated and practical musicians."¹³ As shown throughout this chapter, the problem of teacher training and the lack of musical knowledge and experience in teacher candidates has been a constant challenge to the inclusion and provision of music education in English schools, especially when LEAs and schools were able to set their own curricula. This is true particularly at the elementary level, where, in various eras, including those under the 1979-1999 Conservative regime, generalist classroom teachers rather than music specialists were expected to teach elementary music.

The emphasis on listening to "quality" music also demanded that examples of such music be available. Technological advancements from the 1920s onward made this much easier for classroom teachers with little or no music training. The introduction of

⁷ Ibid., 17-18.

⁸ Ibid. 21.

⁹ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 12.

¹⁰ Ibid. 15.

¹¹ Ibid., 18.

¹² Ibid., 17.

¹³ Cox, "Britain: Towards 'A Long Overdue Renaissance,'" 23.

the gramophone and BBC radio broadcasts, beginning in 1924, were particularly significant. The gramophone allowed teachers to introduce musical examples and listening experiences to which students would otherwise not have access.¹⁴ The BBC broadcasts went even further to supporting the general teacher in her music lesson. The broadcasters would engage in such musical activities as having students echo a sung melody (developing aural skills), compose their own melodies in an accompanying workbook with the goal of performing them, and sing songs together.¹⁵ The broadcasts in the pre-WWI era reflected Somervell's approach to music education.¹⁶ They were popular in schools from their inception and remained so for decades, as can be evidenced by Arnold Bentley's 1965 observation that "most school broadcasts are intended to supplement and enrich work that is already being done in schools, but, because of the shortage of good music teachers, many schools use them as their principal means of music education."¹⁷

Overall, Stephanie Pitts characterizes music education from 1900-1930s as a time when music teaching and learning were largely linked to "the priorities of the adult culture."¹⁸ The emphasis was on developing singing skills and proper musical taste that reflected the moral and national imperatives of those who influenced public education in England, namely highly educated, upper class English society. In addition, Pitts writes that music appreciation as an approach to music education was an attractive philosophy because, "with passive, silent pupils demanded for almost all other subjects, it was considered radical to have children make a noise, and singing was adventurous enough for most teachers."¹⁹ Combined with a lack of musical training and technological developments supporting music education, "the perception of music as a completed object to be received and critically appraised" was a good "fit" for the educational times.²⁰ This however, would radically change (at least for some educators) in the post-

¹⁴ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 12.

¹⁵ Gordon Cox, "School Music Broadcasts and the BBC 1924-47," *History of Education* 25, no. 4 (1996), 363-64.

¹⁶ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 35.

¹⁷ Arnold Bentley, "Music Education in England," *Comparative Education Review* 9, no. 2 (1965): 190.

¹⁸ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

WWII era, first with the introduction of instrumental music, which was followed by a progressive approach to music education developed in the 1960s and onward that encouraged understanding music through musical creation.

In the post WWII-era, music education in secondary schools came to reflect English society's growing engagement in both consuming music (as made more available through recordings and radio) as well as increased involvement in amateur community music ensembles.²¹ The 1944 Butler Act raised the school leaving age and expanded the role and structure of secondary schools in such a way as to foster "streaming" of students into specific schools reflective of their perceived academic abilities.²² In music education, students were often streamed into high level performing ensembles. Pitts observed that this was in keeping with the concurrent testing movement in music psychology and tests such as those developed by Carl Seashore, which were meant to assess musical ability.²³ While the exact extent of performance ensembles, such as wind bands, choirs, and orchestras, was very much related to the interest and abilities of the music teachers in charge of secondary programs (who often taught the way that they themselves were trained),²⁴ Bentley noted that the elite ensembles tended to be undertaken as extra-curricular activities and often modelled after successful programs at the nation's elite private schools.²⁵ Thus, they were in keeping with the educational trend at the time of modelling grammar schools after elite private schools and separating students by abilities as determined by testing. Further, although music was usually a compulsory subject until age 13, by the end of the 1950s, only about 3% of students included the subject in their General Certificate of Education examinations, reflecting a general disinterest in classroom music, if not extra-curricular ensemble participation.²⁶ Music education within the school was classified by Bentley as implemented in "a varied pattern" where, "in some schools music is a lively, vital influence that makes its impact, in lessons and in numerous extracurricular activities, on the whole school community. At

²¹ Ibid., 40-41.

²² See Chapter Five, pp. 169-70.

²³ Ibid., 44.

²⁴ Ibid., 64.

²⁵ Bentley, "Music Education in England," 188.

²⁶ Ibid.

the other extreme, there are schools in which its influence is negligible.”²⁷ This is in spite of, or perhaps partly because of, the introduction of music advisors by the local education authorities (LEA) in the 1940s. These individuals were responsible for helping to coordinate resources, policy, and professional development in music education across an LEA. Some LEAs also hired itinerant music teachers²⁸ to give instrumental lessons among its schools and even established community music centres where students judged to have a high degree of musical talent could participate in extra study and music class.²⁹ It is fair to say, then, that the era between the 1940s and 1950s was one of growth in music education, particularly as it related to the development of instrumental music and performance ensembles. The result of much of this growth was that school music was largely divided into two domains: “class music,” which supported the more traditional “music appreciation” approach of earlier eras and for which students received academic credit, and “extra-curricular music,” which was voluntary and focused on the development of technical performing skills, usually in an ensemble setting. This division would remain in place up to and including the Conservative neoliberal reforms. In addition, the growth of school music was tied to the prevailing attitudes of educational administrators and to the abilities and interests of those teaching music. This observation is supported by a 1960 Department of Education booklet entitled *Music in the Schools*:

There can be few schools in this country where music plays no part, as a subject of the curriculum, as an extra-curricular activity for individuals or groups, or in corporate life. Great diversity exists, however, not only in methods of presenting and teaching music to children but also in the kind of emphasis different schools place upon its value as an educational medium. In one school music may have established itself as an academic subject, in another its functions may be regarded as mainly recreative; some endeavour to draw as many pupils as possible into active participation in singing and playing, others concentrate their efforts on developing a high degree of skill among the more talented. Far more often aims are complicated by the interplay of past traditions and present opportunities, by the shifting of interests that accompanies the arrival or departure of personalities in the kaleidoscopic world of school, and by sensitivity to influences derived from the larger social communities of which the school is a part. The result is a richly variegated pattern that is in keeping with our educational system as a whole, with

²⁷ Ibid., 189.

²⁸ British terminology refers to these teachers as “peripatetic” teachers.

²⁹ Bentley, “Music in Education in England,” 189.

its capacity for change and experiment controlled, both consciously and instinctively, by a respect for what seems of most value in the legacy of the past.³⁰

While many music educators in the 1940s and 1950s were focused on the development of instrumental music and an emphasis on raising performance standards, many arts educators began to explore ways in which children could be creative contributors in the arts, particularly through practical engagement with the physical elements of art, such as paint and clay. This child-centred approach emphasized that the “development of the child . . . should take priority over the traditional focus on the expectations of school and society.”³¹ The child was allowed and encouraged to explore her own creative interests, as they were relative to her, through artistic creation. These techniques, which are described in more detail by both Pitts and John Finney, were characterized by a belief that an education in the arts should not train future artists, but rather aid them in developing their own modes of creativity through an environment of creative freedom that was encouraged by the teacher. Finny explains:

The impersonal recreation of the past was now set against the idea of a more personable creation of the present. A discourse of creativity with talk of impulse, self-expression, feeling, and aesthetic qualities was developing and this had a special resonance within the arts. However, in providing of a new ‘pattern for culture’ calling for greater ‘self-regulation’, ‘self-discipline’, and ‘self-government’ on the part of the pupil, there would be inevitable tensions with established and dominant conceptions of the school, the child, and how learning would take place and for what purpose. In particular, there would be suspicions, circumspection, as well as strong resistance to the liberal cause of promoting subjectivity and the natural playfulness of children.³²

Pitts draws on several sources to show that this changing attitude toward art to “remedy wider social evils” were prominent in the public’s mind after the atrocities of WWII. The new approach would purportedly do this through developing sincerity, creativity, and an artistic sensibility that would balance out the logical-scientific mentality that proponents of this approach to arts education felt was the focus of schooling.³³ As such, this attitude toward the value of arts education and the pedagogical methods of self-directed discovery

³⁰ Ministry of Education Pamphlet No. 27, *Music in Schools* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1960), accessed Nov. 23, 2012, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/musicinschools/musicinschools.html#1>.

³¹ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 44-45.

³² John Finney, *Music Education in England*, 29.

³³ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 47.

and creation that went with it were the beginning of the progressive education movement outlined in Chapter Five.³⁴

Music educators, however, struggled with this more progressive approach to teaching music during the 1940s and 1950s. This was in large part in because many teachers lacked the skills necessary to guide students through compositional or performance activities. It also arose from a belief, so persistent among music teachers it undermined some of the debate over the purpose of music in the National Curriculum, that composition required years of study in theory and harmony before students could produce anything of worth.³⁵ Such beliefs were upheld by a Ministry of Education pamphlet where one Headmaster characterized the proper approach to music education as an intellectual, interpretive art rather than a creative one.³⁶ I would argue, too, that the prestige gained by secondary school music departments when successfully modelling their music programs after their private school counterparts also contributed to the reluctance of music educators to embrace a child-centred, progressive approach to music education. This would be further supported by the training of secondary school teachers which instilled in them a belief that musical achievement was a reflection of highly developed technical performance skill.

By the 1960s, however, educational attitudes were changing. As discussed in Chapter Five, this was the era of education that the Conservative regime would later characterize as lacking standards and educational excellence and that ultimately began the “downward slide” that was responsible for the perceived failure of the English education system in the 1980s. To summarize, the central argument was that the comprehensive schools system, introduced in the Labour Government in the 1960s and meant to eventually replace the tripartite system, did not allow children to succeed based on their innate abilities or to cater to individual preferences. In addition, the “free reign” that teachers and LEAs had over educational content meant a complete lack of standards across the educational system.³⁷ Finally, the progressive approach taken by teachers,

³⁴ See Chapter Five, pp. 169-70.

³⁵ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 44, 49, 121.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

³⁷ The Labour Government’s support of a more “variegated pattern” to curriculum and pedagogy can be clearly seen in the last sentence of the *Music in Schools* quote on page 233-34 above.

whereby students were encouraged to direct their own learning and the teacher was seen as facilitator in the learning experience rather than one who imparts the necessary knowledge that students needed to become productive members of society, had purportedly resulted in discipline problems and a very low level of knowledge and skill acquisition.

The progressive, child-centred changes in education that began in the 1960s, however, had been inspired, in part, by a report by the Central Advisory Council for Education (CACE) commissioned by the government that was subsequently entitled *Half Our Future* (1963). The report, which examined the approximately 50% of students who did not attend grammar schools, emphasized the need for greater resources and attention to be given to those students not considered among the academically elite. It concluded its introduction by urging that, “[these students] have had far more than their fair share of thoroughly unsatisfactory buildings and desperately unsettling changes of staff. Given the opportunities, we have no doubt that they will rise to the challenge which a rapidly developing economy offers no less to them than to their abler brothers and sisters.”³⁸ The report had contained specific recommendations for music, which was categorized as a practical subject or “activities away from desks and classrooms, involving some form of physical skill.”³⁹ Music, in particular, was identified as an area where teachers could make connections with the “social and recreative interests of young adults,” which, “if stimulatingly taught, will develop informal extensions in clubs and societies which will in turn feed back into the classroom.”⁴⁰ Further, by structuring musical activities in small groups, better relationships could be built between teachers and students and allow student confidence to be built through more consistent and individual feedback.⁴¹ Yet, the report noted, despite children’s interest in music outside of school, music was the subject most frequently dropped in boys and mixed gender schools. This was attributed to an “unduly narrow conception of the subject” in many schools as singing.⁴² Further, the

³⁸ Central Advisory Council for Education (England), *Half our Future* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1963), xiv.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 140.

issue of inadequate teacher training was again raised, with the report suggesting that teacher training institutions needed to focus more carefully on developing musical skills and teaching abilities. It also suggested that schools should encourage the cultivation of a secondary area of teaching, such as music, in all generalist teachers so that school music programs would not be so reliant on the presence of a music specialist.⁴³ This, it could be argued, was the beginning of the music consultant position within schools that would be encouraged in the 1980s under the Conservative regime (explained below), before the development of the National Curriculum.

Half our Future was one of the first government commissioned reports to indicate that beginning or building a course of musical study on students' interests was a suitable approach to music education. This, it stated, "does not imply handing over the initiative to the pupils and accepting the music of 'pop' culture, with all its commercial pressures, as the basis for a scheme of music teaching," but rather,

it involves the teacher in an analysis of what it is that makes the appeal of the best of that culture—the rhythmic vitality, the easily memorised tunes, the clever harmonisation and orchestration, the highly professional performances—and in the presentation of good light music which has these qualities but for various reasons is not likely to have come the pupils' way.⁴⁴

As discussed below, this inclusion of popular music and its relation to the life of students would later become a central idea around which debate about the nature and purpose of music in the National Curriculum would focus during its development after the 1988 Education Reform Act. *Half our Future* concluded its discussion of music by stating that it is "frequently the worst equipped and accommodated subject in the curriculum," a situation that was exacerbated by students' reluctance to pursue it to final examination levels.⁴⁵

Half our Future had profound implications for education in general and music education in particular. Perhaps the most important was its focus on changing public attitudes towards the tripartite system of education introduced by the Butler Act. It certainly listed this as one of its primary goals,⁴⁶ and it arguably underpinned much of the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 140-41.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 141.

⁴⁶ Ibid., xiii.

rationale behind moving to a comprehensive system of education, where all students were educated together, regardless of ability as determined by a measure such as the 11-plus test. It highlighted a more participatory form of learning, where student interest, particularly in the “practical” subjects such as the arts, could help guide curriculum content and learning methods in order to (a) making learning more enjoyable and (b) connect the world of the classroom to the students’ world outside of it. Above all *Half our Future* sought to decrease the alienation and stigma experienced by those students who were not accepted to grammar schools by making learning more relevant, enjoyable, and meaningful. In relation to music education, it stood in direct opposition of earlier approaches to the subject, which focused on more intellectual approaches to music education and/or those that focused on forms of Western art music that were generally alien (and alienating) to the students on whom *Half our Future* focused.

Another highly influential report of the 1960s was the CACE’s 1967 report *Children and their Primary Schools* (referred to as the Plowden Report). In it, the CACE examined such questions as “how closely associated are home and social circumstances and academic achievement”⁴⁷ and, “Is there any genuine conflict between education based on children as they are, and education thought of primarily as a preparation for the future? Has ‘finding out’ proved to be better than ‘being told’? Have methods been worked out through which discovery can be stimulated and guided, and children develop from it a coherent body of knowledge?”⁴⁸

Here, the emphasis is clearly on determining the value of a more child-centred, progressive education model in England’s primary schools, which reflected the growing debate over the nature and structure of schooling in this era. Ultimately, the Plowden Report concluded that “‘finding out’ has proven better for children than ‘being told,’” and that the work of primary students could be “robust, imaginative, sensitive and skilful.”⁴⁹ This also had implications for music education, it now being considered a creative activity, although “the planning of music as a creative subject lags behind work in

⁴⁷ Central Advisory Council for Education (England), *Children and Their Primary Schools*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1967), 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 460-61.

language and the visual arts and crafts.”⁵⁰ Overall, it recommended that children be given the chance to creatively explore sound both individually and in small group settings, while gradually developing musical literacy and sensitivity to the aural elements of music, all of which should be done in the context of music making and listening and not divorced from musical experience. Further, these investigations into music should be for all children. Children who wanted to (and could) develop a more specialized study of musical instruments should have their needs met through individual tuition using those resources and educational structures introduced by LEAs during the 1940s and 1950s.⁵¹

Between the developments in arts education beginning in the 1940s and the changing conception of the nature, purpose, and structure of public education in the 1960s, music education in England arrived at a point where (at least some philosophers and pedagogues) were willing to consider and create programs of music that were child-centred and that stressed the creative aspects of music making. Pitts has labelled the 1960s to mid-1970s as an area defined by “the use of noise to make music.”⁵² During the mid- 1970s to early 1980s, the work of several men, expressed in prominent books and journal articles, as well as in several large scale arts and music education related projects and reviews, further supported the child-centred approach to music education, setting it up as a prominent institutional practice by the time the 1988 Education Reform Act was passed.

Late 1970s-1987

One of the most prominent works affecting music education philosophy during this time was Christopher Small’s 1977 *Music, Education, Society*.⁵³ Small, an ethnomusicologist, studied the musical practices of non-Western cultures (African and Balinese cultures are represented in *Music, Education, Society*).⁵⁴ From his ethnographic work, he concluded that, for a large portion of the world, music—and by extension music education—did not focus on a final performable product that would be aesthetically

⁵⁰ Ibid., 253.

⁵¹ Ibid., 255-53.

⁵² Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 66.

⁵³ Christopher Small, *Music, Education, Society* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2000).

⁵⁴ Ibid., 39-57.

appraised and judged. Rather, music making focused on a shared communal experience or ritual that had social as well as musical benefits, and which, if judged at all for its aesthetic properties, was done so by the standards of the musical community in which it took place and not by the arbitrary standards of Western art music.⁵⁵

Small ultimately concluded that Western music education reflected Western notions of musicianship, mainly the cultivation of high technical performance skill and an aesthetic distancing between audience and composer or performer that arose from the contemplation of the elements of music. Surmising that it is probably true that English music education produced musicians with much better technical performance skills, he felt that it also largely neglected the processes of music making that are responsible for musicianship as it relates to independent musical thought and creativity, particularly in those forms of music that are most prevalent and popular in society. Indeed, Small noted the irony that, in order to reach and Outstanding or Advanced level on the General Certificate of Education in England, students often had to give up playing to focus on the theory and history elements of the exam. For Small, the separation of elements of music (e.g., into theory, history, and technical skills) did not reflect the more informal, participatory styles of learning that he had observed during his ethnographic work.⁵⁶ He cautioned that, “we should be aware of the price we pay for [this model of music education], especially in terms of musical communality, in terms of the ability of all to take an active part, not just as listener or even as one who realized the ideas of others, but in the creative process itself.”⁵⁷ Small’s comments also reflected the progressive critique of the alienation of “non-elite” students that was a wider debate in English first raised almost fifteen years before in *Half our Future*.

Small echoed some of the other findings in *Half our Future*, stating that the nature of schooling was such that the student could not enjoy it. This was largely because of the lack of student participation in the educative process. He saw the reform of music education as just the beginning of restructuring education in such a way that it would be a “joyful experience” for children, showing them that “learning is not a preparation for

⁵⁵ Ibid., 36-37.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 193-99.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 199.

life but a basic experience of life itself” that would give students the confidence to learn whatever they wished to learn.⁵⁸ Students, he concluded, should leave school knowing not how to reproduce the musical knowledge of others (no matter how well they could), but rather being able to ask their own questions about music and find their own solutions. This would be “fed by the work of creation and in turn feeding back into it,” through “compositional skills, notation (as and *if* needed), listening, performing, [and] study of the work of other musicians of many periods, styles, and cultures.”⁵⁹ To do this would likely mean lower performance standards and musical literacy (at least in the form of note reading) in exchange for “the all-round development of musical experience as the prerogative of all.”⁶⁰

Keith Swanwick’s 1979 *A Basis for Music Education*⁶¹ was another highly influential text during this period. Centred on his Composing (Literature) Audition (Skills) Performance [C(L)A(S)P]⁶² approach to music education, Swanwick sought to address the many ways in which music was currently taught in English schools by suggesting a set of “procedures which may be held steady, no matter in what particular situation we may find ourselves.”⁶³ Acknowledging that music played a significant social and psychological role in people’s lives, he believed that “people will find their individual paths into particular areas of music. It is our responsibility to keep the various roads clear and not insist that there is only one narrow avenue, perhaps the one we took ourselves.”⁶⁴ Like Small, Swanwick believed in a cultural relevancy approach to music, whereby the standards of a specific musical genre or tradition could not be used to measure the worth of another musical genre. It was creative and critical musical engagement that was most important, genre notwithstanding.

For Swanwick, the teacher’s role was to help students become directly involved with musical experiences through composition (i.e., “the act of making a musical object

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 211.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁶¹ Keith Swanwick, *A Basis for Music Education* (Windsor: NERF, 1979).

⁶² *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

by assembling sound materials in an expressive way”⁶⁵), audition (i.e., the act of listening critically to music from the perspective of the musician’s musical community, including a sensitive consideration of the music’s social implications), and performance (including sensitivity toward the context and future improvement of the performance).⁶⁶ The study of musical literature—including criticism of that literature—both past and present as well as the acquisition of skills (e.g., technical skill, reading and notating abilities, ear training, etc.) should occur in relation to the main activities of composition, audition, and performance.⁶⁷ Tim Cain, drawing on Swanwick’s model in a 1985 article on the teacher’s role in the classroom, explained that, from Swanwick’s perspective, “nothing could be more futile than setting twenty ‘Italian terms’ for homework.”⁶⁸ Teaching literature, Swanwick argued, was to be done only so that we can have a shared vocabulary to discuss music. Developing performance skill was something that should largely be left to the extra-curricular ensembles. That said, skills could and should be developed, but that development should focus on performance in an authentic context (e.g., no etudes or arpeggios) and should be driven by the “the pupil’s own desire to master a particular phrase or effect.”⁶⁹ Ultimately, Swanwick labelled his approach to music education as “aesthetic education,” because he hoped to enable students in authentic music making activities that were relevant and meaningful to them, thereby promoting “vital responses to life and living, a sense of delight in all objects and events that come before us meaningfully, with clarity and power.”⁷⁰

Having now given an overview of the major (and often conflicting) philosophical and pedagogical approaches to music education that prefaced the development of that curriculum, we turn now to examining some of the effects that the Conservatives’ neoliberal education reform policy had on music education from 1979-1988. This section begins, however, by first examining some key programs and reports that embodied the progressive approach to music education advocated by those such as Small and

⁶⁵ Ibid., 42

⁶⁶ Ibid., 42-43.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 47.

⁶⁸ Tim Cain, “The Teacher’s Role in the Secondary School Music Lesson,” *British Journal of Music Education* 2, no. 1 (1985): 12.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁰ Swanwick, *A Basis for Music Education*, 58.

Swanwick that occurred during 1979-1988. This is followed by a discussion of how neoliberal discourse on and vision for the purpose of education leading up to the formation of the National Curriculum likewise began to influence rationales for music education. As discussed later in the chapter, the tension between the two visions for music education underpinned much of the tension around the content and structure of the music section of the National Curriculum.

Following this section are brief summaries of the effects of Conservative education policy on music education from 1979 up to the passage of the ERA in 1988. These include the effects on music provision and funding, music teacher training and administrative structures, and assessment.

Music Education in England: 1979-1987

Arguments for the Purpose of Music Education in Society and Education: 1979-1987

The ideas of Small and Swanwick were well-represented in several large scale projects in and commissions on music education in England's schools in the late 1970s to mid-1980s. Perhaps the best known is the School's Council (SC) project *Music in the Secondary Schools in Britain* (1970-1980), led by John Paynter, who published a 1982 book entitled *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum: Trends and Developments in Class Music Teaching* reflecting upon the project.⁷¹ The project was one of the SC's last major undertakings—it was disbanded in 1984 “as the tendency to include teachers in the formulation of curriculum suggestions was increasingly replaced by a more centralised approach to educational control.”⁷² Overall, the project aimed (1) to help teachers develop their own curriculum that focused on their own knowledge, reflection, and student needs; (2) to share ideas; and (3) to develop and exchange musical resources. It did so in part by supporting pilot projects and regional centres for music education; but its primary objective, which it accomplished, was to create a network of communication between teachers so that (1) the myriad musical practices within English schools could be

⁷¹ John Paynter, *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum: Trends and Developments in Class Music Teaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Schools Council, 1982).

⁷² Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 112.

examined and discussed, and (2) music teaching resources and ideas could be gathered and shared among teachers and LEAs.⁷³ In doing so, it sought to address “some of the confusion of the previous decade” and establish a consensus as to the goals and methods of music education.⁷⁴ Ultimately, the project emphasized that music was for all students, not just those who were deemed talented. Students should also engage in and with music of all styles and eras without imposing traditional standards of what “good” music should be, advocating cultural relativity.⁷⁵ Like Small, Paynter asserted that students’ behaviour and engagement in schools (or at least in music classes) would improve if students were to participate in active, creative musical activities over which they had ownership, and he proposed and extended Swanwick’s C(L)A(S)P model for music education in his final recommendations.⁷⁶

Two major reviews of music and arts education in England also supported the types of ideas embodied by Small, Swanwick, and Paynter: (1) the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation’s *The Arts in Schools: Principles, Practice, and Provision*⁷⁷ and (2) a 1985 HMI report on school music entitled *Music from 5 to 16*.⁷⁸ The former began its review of music education in 1977, when members of the United Kingdom branch of the foundation shared concerns with the Education Officer of the Inner London Education Authority about the place of the arts in the increasing political discourse focused on core standards (namely, that the arts were not included in that discourse).⁷⁹ The resulting report, issued at a time when the development of a National Curriculum was still a point of much debate and conjecture, was addressed to “Members of Parliament and to education committees, education administrators, school governors, head teachers and employers—those with power of executive action. We also seek through our arguments

⁷³ Ibid., 109.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 100.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 110-11.

⁷⁷ Ken Robinson, ed., *The Arts in Schools: Principles, Practice, and Provision* (London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1989). This report was first published in 1982, but reissued in 1989 because the publishers felt it was made particularly relevant again after the 1988 ERA.

⁷⁸ Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, *Music from 5 to 16, HMI Series: Curriculum Matters 4* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1985).

⁷⁹ Robinson, *The Arts in Schools*, ix.

to influence teachers and parents so as to create a groundswell of informed public opinion.”⁸⁰ Its contents were actually debated in the House of Common in March, 1982.⁸¹

The report itself had much to say about the status and provision of the arts in education in the early 1980s, but one of its primary conclusions was that we learn the arts by doing them, not by being lectured about them⁸² and that we must accept cultural relativity when we appraise the arts because “the arts are dynamic modes of creation and communication. Their literatures are constantly being added to. There is as much to value in some contemporary work as in some of two or two thousand years ago.”⁸³ Building on ideas similar to Swanwick’s, the report advocated that creative judgement required understanding of the aesthetic elements of the genre in which it was created⁸⁴ and that, by engaging students through diverse artistic experiences, students would be able to better connect the world to their schooling because “schools should be a place of cultural exchange, not transmission.”⁸⁵ As in Paynter’s work, the report suggested that arts education had the power to develop a style of education that was becoming increasingly needed: one that valued the ideas of diversity and personal autonomy; that focused on the welfare and the well-being of individuals and the development of their capacity for autonomous choice so that they could, of their own free will and informed judgement, decide on what a worthwhile life for them would be.⁸⁶

The report itself was published as a book and used to facilitate the development of curriculum in many LEAs. It contained specific suggestions for the provision of music education and was also included in some of England’s teacher training courses.⁸⁷ What is most important here is the observation that the report, with its underpinning progressive approach to arts education, was an influential source for teacher training and curriculum development during the mid-1980s.

⁸⁰ Ibid., xii.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 21.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 27.

⁸⁷ Ibid., xvii.

The final major commission on music education before the 1988 ERA came as part of a series of HMI reports under the general title *Curriculum Matters*. They were published as part of the “Great Debate” on education leading up the ERA. Published in 1985, *Music from 5 to 16* clearly stated that “music education for the 5 to 16 year age group is not intended to cater only for the needs of the talented; all can derive considerable fulfilment and enjoyment from the study and practice of music—at whatever level or in whatever form best suits the particular needs of the individual,” and that music should be an “integral part of every child’s daily experience,” particularly at the elementary level.⁸⁸ The report stated that music should be considered a practical subject, and that one’s ability to perform and compose music increased one’s sensitivity toward it.⁸⁹ General aims of music education were listed as to:

- develop a sensitive response to sound in general and in particular to those organised patterns of sound called ‘music’;
- develop insight through music into areas of experience some of which cannot easily be verbalised;
- develop the capacity to express ideas and feelings symbolically through the medium of sound;
- develop the necessary skills and concepts whilst engaged in musical activity;
- develop social skills and awareness through making music together;
- offer pupils opportunities to experience the personal satisfaction and self-confidence derived from striving after the highest possible standards whilst engaged in musical activity
- develop an awareness of musical traditions and developments in a variety of cultures and societies⁹⁰

These aims emphasize the practical elements of music making. For example, skills and concepts were to be taught as necessary to engage in musical activity (a reflection of Swanwick’s C(L)A(S)P model). An emphasis on aesthetic response was also present, as was one on personal satisfaction and engagement, while still remaining sensitive to the music of other cultures and societies.

Music from 5 to 16 encouraged music educators to take a student-centred approach to education, building on young people’s seemingly innate love of music and

⁸⁸ Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, *Music from 5 to 16*, 1.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

music making. For example, HMI suggested that music up to age seven should support young children's natural curiosity to explore sound making devices (such as shakers, bells, and hollow boxes) and their pre-disposition to engage in singing songs such as nursery rhymes, imitate musical sounds, and create their own improvised melodies.⁹¹ Musical goals at this age included being able to “demonstrate a general awareness of sound and a familiarity with everyday sounds in the environment”; “show readiness to experiment with sound and to select and describe the sounds made by a variety of sound sources,” including basic vocal and instrumental improvisation; identify some basic elements of music, such as “pitch (high/low), dynamics (loud/soft), timbre (colour/texture) and duration (long/short); sing or play a repertoire of memorized songs; reproduce short melodies and rhythms by ear; and “invent a melody or a short composition using voices and/or instruments, possibly in response to a direct stimulus (for example a story, a poem, a mood, movement or activity derived from play).”⁹²

Subsequent music learning would build off of the musical goals for ages five to seven, becoming increasingly broad and sophisticated as the child progressed through school. For example, “demonstrate a general awareness of sound and a familiarity with everyday sounds in the environment” was expanded to “identify, collect and imitate sounds of various kinds; to classify and to describe them; to create new sounds and combinations of sounds” in the 8-11 age range.⁹³ By age 14, students should “show discernment about sound as a natural phenomenon and its function as an integral part of the environment” and “show an awareness of the range and nature of musical sounds that can be produced vocally, instrumentally and electronically.”⁹⁴ While students up to age 7 should “show readiness to experiment with sound and to select and describe the sounds made by a variety of sound sources,” by age 11, they should, “improvise and compose original music (employing voices and/or instruments) with or without recourse to a direct stimulus such as a picture, movement, a narrative, a poem, a lyric, a mood, a situation,

⁹¹ Ibid., 4-5.

⁹² Ibid., 3-4.

⁹³ Ibid., 6.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 9.

drama etc; make a permanent record of such compositions by means of tape recorder and/or the appropriate musical notation.”⁹⁵ By age 16, they should

demonstrate the ability to devise original statements in music (using voices, instruments and simple electronics) both for individual and group performance; work at such compositions using various systems (scalar, harmonic, aleatoric, ethnic, etc), forms (dance, song, variation, binary, ternary, rondo etc) and media (vocal, instrumental, voice(s) and instrument(s) combined, electronic, etc.).”⁹⁶

Throughout the process of achieving these goals, students were thought to become increasingly familiar with identifying and manipulating the elements of music through creating, performing, and listening to their own music.

The HMI report also encouraged exposure to a wide variety of music, including popular music, because “participation in them can lead to a greater awareness of musical similarities and differences between cultures and of the enrichment which can come from sharing them.”⁹⁷ Performance and creative collaboration in a variety of genres and configurations was stressed, with the teacher taking on a role of facilitator rather than as knowledge bearer. In addition, although the teacher was responsible for encouraging and leading the students to participate in a wide variety of music, children were encouraged to explore their own personal interests surrounding music most relevant to them. Children who showed “particular interest and aptitude” in music should, beginning in the 8-11 stage, be encouraged and supported with individual tuition and/or performance opportunities provided through the school or LEA, but that should not be the primary goal of music education.⁹⁸

Overall, this way of valuing music and the structure that music education should take found in *Music 5 to 16* paralleled the progressive movement in education supported by music educators who argued for the place of the arts to foster aesthetic sensitivity in students. This argument became increasingly relied upon in the 1980s as arts educators began to feel that a national curriculum that might be focused on factual knowledge and the economic self-interest of the student would foster “thinking without feeling, . . .

⁹⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

thinking led by economic ambition, thinking for profit,” and thinking which fostered self-interest.⁹⁹ The arts could be used to teach a more “holistic view of human experience.”¹⁰⁰

All of this discussion of what should or should not be included in music education would come to a head during the formulation of the National Curriculum for Music after the 1988 ERA. It is important to note, that, while the documents discussed above did have a large and somewhat unifying influence on music education in England, the system itself was still characterized by the autonomy of teachers and LEAs to set their own curriculum. And, as Pitts’ wrote, while there was growing acceptance surrounding the ideas of authentic, student-driven music making in the classroom where one did not have to be “the next Shakespeare” to compose a satisfying musical composition,¹⁰¹ there were still teachers who resisted such change because it conflicted with their own approaches to music education—approaches which reflected the more traditional norms of the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁰²

In addition to these arguments as to the value and purpose of music education, arguments began to arise that were given in clear response to the Conservative’s neoliberal reforms in Thatcher’s first two terms as well as the increasing rhetoric around the need for a National Curriculum. Indeed, even though the findings in *Music 5 to 16* supported a progressive approach to music education, the creation of that report can be traced back to the early 80s, when, after Prime Minister James Callaghan’s Ruskin College speech, discussion was fostered by the Department of Education regarding what should comprise a core curriculum for English students. *Music 5 to 16* was part of an ongoing set of 17 booklets published between 1984-1989 that explored the nature and relevance of most of subjects in the English curriculum within the context of the “Great Debate” brought about by the Ruskin remarks and further supported by the Conservatives education reforms in the 1980s.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ John Finney, *Music Education in England, 1950-2010*, 63.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Pitts, *A Century of Musical Change*, 121.

¹⁰² Ibid., 109.

¹⁰³ Derek Gillard, “Curriculum Matters (1984-9),” accessed Sept. 1, 2013, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/hmi-curricmatters/index.html>.

Perhaps the clearest example of a rationale for music education given to support neoliberal values is found in a 1987 *British Journal of Music Education* article. Elizabeth Oehrle stressed the need to create an “economic accountability” rationale for music education that would help combat the “phasing out” of arts in countries such as England and the United States as a result of the 1980s economic recession and the increasing neoliberal educational emphasis on education to support employment and the economy.¹⁰⁴ She suggested that music education be positioned as a subject that develops and supports critical, creative thinking—thinking she demonstrated was much in demand by those looking for new employees in some of America’s largest and most innovative companies at the time.¹⁰⁵ This type of thinking was also present in relation to the potential role the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative might play in supporting music education (and vice versa) discussed in more detail below. With these various attitudes toward the nature and value of music education in mind, we turn to a discussion of the ways in which the Thatcher government’s policy affected music education before the 1988 ERA.

Curriculum and Assessment: 1979-1987

As discussed in Chapter Five and above, prior to the Thatcher administration, schools were responsible for developing their own curriculum. As the Conservatives found out fairly early in their term, LEAs often had little idea of curricular content in their schools.¹⁰⁶ The Thatcher government encouraged LEAs to coordinate curricular elements throughout their jurisdictions, so, by the mid-1980s, some LEAs had created music guidelines containing general aims and objectives.¹⁰⁷ While not detailed curriculum documents, they did indicate a growing preoccupation with the standardization of knowledge and skills. That said, research on the actual day-to-day teaching of music in English schools consistently demonstrated a large variety of content, pedagogy, and underpinning philosophies, which reflected the historical “patchwork”

¹⁰⁴ Elizabeth Oehrle, “Music Education’s Economic Accountability,” *British Journal of Music Education* 4, no. 3 (1987): 223-27.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 224-27.

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 5, p. 176.

¹⁰⁷ Charles Plummeridge, “Curriculum Development in Music Education: The Limitation of Theory,” *Psychology of Music* 13, no. 1 (1984): 52.

approach to music education curriculum and provision.¹⁰⁸ This was further exacerbated by *who* was responsible for teaching the music, as discussed further below.

As also discussed in Chapters Five and above, standard assessment in education and, more specifically, in music education, existed only in the final years of state education. Sixteen year old students most likely bound for university studies could take the General Certificate of Education (GCE) at the Ordinary level (to be followed by the Advanced level at 18), while others could take the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). These certifications, which consisted of a series of exams in both required subjects and elective subjects (including music), reflected the influence of the tripartite school split.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, the music GCE focused on more theoretical aspects of music, such as theory, analysis, and historical facts, while the CSE was intended to be more practical in nature and to reflect the ways in which students participated and enjoyed music in their own lives.¹¹⁰ However, as Pitts explains in more detail, the CSE music exam became viewed as less challenging and lower status version of its GCE counterpart.¹¹¹ In 1984, work began on combining the two examination systems into a single streamlined certification called the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) that would hopefully result in 14-16 curriculum (later KS 4) that was less “narrow and under stimulating”—a particular concern given the low enrolment in music classes at this age.¹¹² The resulting music exam was first implemented in 1988 and had serious implications for how musical learning, engagement, and assessment were represented in the National Curriculum (discussed below).

The criteria for musical assessment in the GCSE essentially echoed the work of progressive music education thinkers such as Keith Swanwick and John Paynter.¹¹³ In fact, the three assessed areas of composing, appraising/listening, and performing reflected

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, Keith Swanwick, “Music in Schools: A Study of Context and Curriculum Practice,” *British Journal of Music Education* 6, no. 2 (1989): 155-71.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 5, p. 170.

¹¹⁰ Hamish, Preston, “A New Approach to Music Assessments,” *International Journal of Music Education* 6, no. 1 (1985): 28.

¹¹¹ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 136.

¹¹² Preston, “A New Approach to Music Assessments,” 27.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 28.

Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model for music education.¹¹⁴ In adapting this more progressive approach to music education, its creators hoped to consistently reflect the type of music education that was increasingly common in schools before students began preparatory work for examinations between the ages of 14-16.¹¹⁵ Consequently, "the GCSE contained within it a much broader view of 'what counts as music'" than the previous GCE and CSE exams."¹¹⁶ Although the exams were still carried out by regional, accredited examinations boards, the music exam also relied on internal assessment. As a result, teachers became much more involved in internal assessment as students were expected to create a folio that reflected their compositional and performance work and development over the course of ages 14-16. The process of musical engagement was also now assessed, and teachers were responsible for identifying the work that went into critically reflecting upon and redrafting compositions as part of the creation process. Overall, students were graded on a scale of five ranging from poor to excellent.¹¹⁷

The music criteria for the GCSE also encouraged student engagement though allowing them to select musical styles, genres, and forms in which they were interested for some of their composing and performing assessments. This, as Vic Gammon noted, "gave pupils a sense of ownership and identity with their music not so widely known before" and led to the inclusion of many popular music idioms in the examination process.¹¹⁸ Overall, the structure and nature of the GCSE proved effective in convincing more students to study music at the 14-16 level (later KS 4), for, although it remained the subject most commonly dropped after KS 1 and 2, enrolment in school music at KS 3 increased by 15% from 1988-1991.¹¹⁹

As Pitts wrote, "the music GCSE exam reflected that progressive music education ideas and approaches that had been regarded as revolutionary little more than a decade

¹¹⁴ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 141.

¹¹⁵ Preston, "A New Approach to Music Assessments," 28.

¹¹⁶ John Shepherd and Graham Vulliamy, "The Struggle for Culture: A Sociological Case Study of the Development of a National Music Curriculum," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 15, no. 1 (1994): 36. Shepherd and Vulliamy are more charitable toward the influence of some CSE exams in this respect than is Pitts.

¹¹⁷ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 142.

¹¹⁸ Vic Gammon, "Cultural Politics of the English National Curriculum for Music," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 31, no. 2 (1999): 131.

¹¹⁹ Piers Spencer, "GCSE Music: A Survey of Undergraduate Opinion," *British Journal of Music Education* 10, no. 2 (1993): 73.

earlier now had official status.”¹²⁰ Indeed, the music GCSE perhaps exemplifies best Thatcher’s statement, that, by 1988, the government had been too “content to continue the policies of our predecessors.”¹²¹ The form of the GCSE, the nature of its assessments, and the ways in which it implied music should be taught in order to undertake those assessments reflected a government endorsed and sanctioned approach to music education that would serve as a significant “rallying point” in the subsequent debates over the nature, purpose, form and assessment of music education in the National Curriculum.

Music Education Provision and Funding: 1979-1987

As many of the above HMI and Central Advisory Council for Education reports above indicated, provision and funding for music education was historically quite poor. This trend continued under the first and second Thatcher administrations as funding for education in general was decreased in response to nation-wide recession and inflation. One area most affected by a reduction in educational funding was the LEAs instrumental tuition programs. As described above, these programs supported the employment of itinerant music teachers and music learning centres where students interested in developing vocal or instrumental performance abilities could access instrumental tuition. In this, they represented a commitment to addressing the needs of both students identified as being exceptionally musically talented and those who could not afford instrumental tuition. Seeking to trim budgets in the early to mid-1980s, however, LEAs reduced funding to hire instrumental teachers,¹²² reflecting what one researcher characterized as “the vulnerability of the music service of local authorities at times of financial stringency.”¹²³ The reduction of these teachers and the service they offered, however, contradicted the Conservative’s support of identifying “gifted” individuals and giving them opportunities to ensure their success, which was the argument that underpinned the creation of their Assisted Places Scheme.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 142.

¹²¹ See Chapter five, fn. 54.

¹²² John Paynter, “Editorial,” *British Journal of Music Education* 2, no. 1 (1985): 3-4.

¹²³ Majorie Glynne-Jones, “The Education of Musically Exceptional Children in England,” *International Journal of Music Education*, no. 1 (1985): 47.

¹²⁴ See Chapter Five, 178.

Another change that came about because of cuts to educational expenditure was a switch from music specialist in the primary school to a music consultancy model. This, combined with decreased enrolment in schools, saved schools the expense of hiring a teacher specifically to teach music and allowed the responsibility for teaching music to be given to the general classroom teacher.¹²⁵ The consultancy structure, which required teacher release time for in-service training, is discussed below. It is relevant to discuss here, however, that funding was not always readily available for such training and release time and/or was dependent upon head teacher attitudes toward funding training to support music education, music education not being a compulsory subject at that time.¹²⁶ In addition, heading into 1988, it was not uncommon for funding shortages to have resulted in or sustained the inadequate provision of teaching space and teaching resources, such as instruments—including repair budgets for said instruments.¹²⁷

One area where funding for music education was available—if not always accessed—was the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). As described in Chapter 5, the TVEI was founded in 1982 through the Department of Employment rather than the DES and was aimed at helping students aged 14-16 gain practical skills in industry and commerce.¹²⁸ “In a period of cut-backs and falling rolls,” writes Lucy Green, “TVEI was a noticeable exception,” initially making approximately £275 million available for teacher in-service training, development and implementation of TVEI schemes, and resource acquisition.¹²⁹ This is hardly surprising given the Conservative’s neoliberal pre-occupation with connecting the world of education with new technology and the world of work, specifically local business communities. Yet, research in the early 1990s—fully 10 years after the initiative had begun—indicated that music teachers had not taken consistent advantage of the TVEI. John Winter speculated that this was due in part to the LEAs, who, as the primary point of contact with the TVEI, may have neither

¹²⁵ Sandy Allen, “Music Consultancy in Primary Education,” *British Journal of Music Education* 5, no. 3 (1988): 217.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 238-39.

¹²⁷ Swanwick, “Music In Schools,” 169-70.

¹²⁸ See Chapter 5, pp. 181-82.

¹²⁹ Lucy Green, “The Position of Music in the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI): a Critical Appraisal,” *British Journal of Music Education* 9, no. 2 (1992): 154.

informed nor involved music teachers in possible TVEI planning.¹³⁰ Others believed that more work simply needed to be done in determining how music education could be linked to technology and local industry, which would in turn promote greater LEA involvement. For example, the West Glamorgan County Council TVEI Unit distributed information, based on conference work, that discussed how music teachers, LEAs involved with TVEI, and industry could form more significant connections to music education. The result was (1) a list of identified desirable personal characteristics for employees fostered by music education (e.g., listening ability, confidence, imagination, ability to “get on” with others); (2) a list of potential music related jobs in which students could gain work experience as part of their education (e.g., music therapy, advertising, piano tuners, instrument repair, retail music shop); (3) a suggestion that teachers likewise spend some of their training working in music-related industries so as to better understand the employment possibilities for their students; and (4) a suggestion that students and teachers develop “enterprising activities,” such as making musical Christmas cards or instruments for young children, which would also allow them to essentially practice setting up a small business.¹³¹ This list of items positions the importance of musical training in the practical world of skill acquisition for employment and reflects the neoliberal concepts of *core skill*, *knowledge workers*, *public-private partnerships*, and *enterprise culture*. And, as pointed out above, since the TVEI was the most consistently accessible source of funding (at least from the point of official policy) during the 1980s and early 1990s, it largely supported a “re-jigging” of music education at the 14-16 level toward to world of work.

The lack of funding directed toward music education from the TVEI described above is not to say that some music programs did not benefit from TVEI: Both Winter and Green documented cases of schools using TVEI funds to purchase synthesizers, computers, and other new technologies for use in the music program, although Winter notes that funding allocations were usually within the £1000-2000 range.¹³² Large scale

¹³⁰ John Winter, “The Impact of TVEI on Music Education: Music, Schools, and TVEI—A Description of a Small-scale Research Project,” *British Journal of Music Education* 9, no. 2 (1992): 147-48.

¹³¹ West Glamorgan County Council TVEI Unit, “Music and the World of Work,” reprinted in *British Journal of Music Education*, 9, no. 2 (1992): 149-52.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 145-46 and Green, “The Position of Music in the TVEI,” 154-55.

reforms along the lines of those envisioned by the West Glamorgan Country Council's TVEI Unit, however, did not come to pass.

Music Teacher Training, Administrative Structures, and Workload: 1979-1987

As discussed above, prior to the 1980s, in most schools music was taught either by a music specialist or by a classroom teacher with particular knowledge of and interest in music. In schools that possessed neither, it was entirely possible that music was not offered as a curriculum subject.¹³³ Beginning in the 1980s, however, emphasis began to shift onto the consultancy model, which was supported by the DES's *Better Schools* White Paper statement that, "in addition to being prepared as a class teacher, each new primary school teacher should be equipped to take a particular responsibility within the school for one aspect of the curriculums—such as science, mathematics or music."¹³⁴ These teachers would then become "consultants" within the school who would advise other general teachers on music teaching. By the time the 1998 ERA was implemented, consultancy had become "the way forward for classroom music making in the primary school."¹³⁵ Not only did this save the school the expense of hiring specialist teachers, it reflected the progressive notion that the general classroom teacher knew students best and so was the ideal person to lead music education, rather than a specialist who would see the children less often and so be less familiar with them. It also allowed music to be integrated into the whole curriculum rather than as a discrete subject.¹³⁶ Thus, this approach reflected both a progressive approach to music education while still reflecting the neoliberal concepts of *efficiency*, *balanced budgets*, and, to some extent *devolution* and *managerialism*. That is, the school was reorganized in such a way that specific teachers became responsible for ensuring a quality music program across the school as delivered through multiples teachers. As discussed below, once the National Curriculum

¹³³ Anthony E. Kemp and Susan Wooton Freeman, "New Tasks for Music in Primary Schools and Teacher Training," *International Journal of Music Education* 11, no. 1 (1988): 21.

¹³⁴ Department of Education and Science, *Better Schools* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1985), 12, accessed Sept. 27, 2013, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/des/betterschools.html#cur>.

¹³⁵ Allen, "Music Consultancy in Primary Education," 217.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 217-18.

was implemented, this would facilitate accountability in curriculum delivery. The consultancy model, then, is a good example of how the Thatcher administration was able to implement some neoliberal reforms to education while facilitating the progressive approach to education established under its Labour predecessors, which Thatcher noted was an issue in her first two terms in office.¹³⁷

Teacher training institutions developed courses to facilitate the consultancy approach to music education. The first such course, offered in 1982 by the Reading University Music Education Centre, was entitled “Music Consultancy in the Primary Schools.” Both anecdotal and more formally undertaken research indicated that teachers who had completed the course were more confident teaching music and were able to “fundamentally” change their schools’ “musical climates.”¹³⁸ However, this training, and indeed any form of musical training for primary school teachers, remained recommended, but not required, by government policy.¹³⁹ As noted above, even within schools who had a designated music consultant, their effectiveness often hinged on head teacher attitude toward the value of music education within school and their decision to grant release time from regular classroom teaching in order to both train other teachers and engage in personal professional development.¹⁴⁰ Release time, as discussed above, was often limited due to financial restraints from shrinking budgets. These factors would become even more important under the LMS and GMS model as the National Curriculum and its assessment procedures were implemented after the ERA and so are also discussed below in further detail.

Compulsory teacher training (or lack thereof, as the case may be) was not just limited to in-service training. The Conservative government became more interested in increasing the *standards* of initial teacher training through focusing on its regulation. Before the mid-1990s, this was accomplished primarily through the Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education QUANGO. The council set out standards for teacher training by subject, yet, despite a 1983 recommendation from UK Council for Music Education and Training, students could still gain teacher certification with no specific

¹³⁷ See Chapter 5, fn. 52.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 21-22.

¹⁴⁰ Allen, “Music Consultancy in Primary Education,” 238-239.

training in music education. While not true of all primary teacher training programs, music was optional in some and, overall “generally inadequate provision” was made for the arts subjects across all initial teacher training.¹⁴¹

Finally, Andrew Macgill characterized the 1986-1987 school year as a particularly difficult one for music educators and their programs due to teachers’ disputes over payment schemes that resulted in no extra-curricular activities in many areas.¹⁴² Yet, Swanwick reported the impending reinstatement of extra-curricular musical activities led some music teachers to fear “that they would once again be drawn into an impossibly demanding set of responsibilities.”¹⁴³ The reason lay in the division between “school music” and the extra-curricular music. Extra-curricular activities were seen by many music educators as both the most rewarding part of their jobs and as an aspect of their jobs that was among the most physically and mentally demanding. The former garnered much needed support and recognition for their work and music programs from administrators and the community, while the latter was sometimes “perceived as draining away energy that is needed for class work.”¹⁴⁴ Somewhat ironically, then, continued support for school music was actually linked to its more visible extra-curricular aspects, which in turn could cause the required curriculum (whatever LEAs or schools might determine that should be) to suffer due to teacher workload to sustain the more “public face” of school music.

Summary of Conservative Reforms and Music Education in England from 1979-1987

Overall, there was potential for music education to be supported by Conservative educational policy leading up the 1998 ERA. Indeed (and somewhat ironically), the new format of the GCSE supported and to some extent enshrined the progressive approach to music education that had been building in popularity and momentum in since the 1970s. Falling as it did at the end of compulsory schooling and as part of the only pre-National

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 219. Allen’s statement regarding arts education provision is based on a 1987 report from the DES.

¹⁴² Andrew Macgill, “Composing in the School: Composing for the School,” *British Journal of Music Education* 5, no. 1(1988): 35.

¹⁴³ Swanwick, “Music in Schools,” 167.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Curriculum national assessment scheme (other than A-levels taken by those students who would later be categorized as post-16), it indicated the nature and value of music education that should guide study up to and including ages 14-16.

Other Conservative reforms and policy, such as encouraging the consultancy model, the TVEI, and teaching training initiatives such as CATE, also had the potential to support music education. However, music's non-compulsory status in the curriculum was reflected in many of these initiatives, particularly in teacher training (both initial and in-service) where music education courses were not required for generalist certification. In addition, Conservative budget cutbacks limited educational funding that might have supported in-service training. Overall, LEAs and head teachers, who guided and facilitated school and teacher access to resources that would support effective music consultancy and use of TVEI resources, had to actively choose to support (and be aware of support for, in the case of TVEI) music education because it was not a mandatory subject. There is clear indication that this did happen, but it did not happen consistently across state-funded English education. This reflects the history of English music education as being driven by keen music teachers working in supportive environments. In addition, the Conservative emphasis on supporting students identified as "gifted" but who could not afford private education was reflected in LEA supported "music service units" that facilitated student access to instrumental tuition and performing opportunities. These units, which also supported a progressive emphasis on making educational opportunities available to students based on interest rather than just ability and economic status, however, encountered financial difficulties sustaining their services—particularly that of the itinerant instrumental music teacher—during the 1980s due to Conservative budget cuts to education.

Conservative education reforms in relation to music education before the 1988 ERA have two dominant trends, then. First, policy had the potential to support the increased quality and provision of music education in schools (and in some cases did), but, because music was not mandatory, Conservative policies and initiatives were either not consistently and/or advantageous applied to music education. Second, general funding cuts to education caused head teachers and LEAs to claw back and/or reduce provision for music education.

Given these two trends, it is perhaps not surprising that the announcement that music would be listed as a mandatory “foundation” subject in the National Curriculum was greeted with “the delight of many.”¹⁴⁵ We turn now to a discussion of the debates and processes surrounding the development of music and its assessment in the NC before examining the provision and support for music education as a mandatory subject and the influence and effect of other Conservative neoliberal reforms to education on music in England’s state-funded schools.

Music Education Curricular Reform and Assessment: 1988-1997

Curriculum Creation Structural Process and Debates

Chapter Five described the ways in which the Thatcher and Major Conservative governments sought to position the National Curriculum and its related assessment as a way to raise educational standards primarily through *accountability* and *parental choice*, which positioned parents and students as *educational consumers*. The statutory obligations and creation of QUANGOs to support the development and assessment of the National Curriculum (NC) in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) found their roots in The Great Debate over education that began with the 1976 Ruskin Speech and which continued through the 1980s. Thus, these neoliberal, standards-based reforms came as no surprise to educators and the general public. Indeed, they were promised in the 1987 Conservative election platform.¹⁴⁶ That said, the creation of the NC continued to promote wide-scale debates over the nature and purpose of state-funded English education.

The music curriculum’s content and its purpose within education became some of the most publically and widely debated issues in curricular reform.¹⁴⁷ As discussed below, these debates reflected several ideological tensions that had pervaded the English system over the course of the twentieth century, but nonetheless caught many by surprise,

¹⁴⁵ John Manduelli, “Introduction,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), vii.

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter Five, pp. 184-85.

¹⁴⁷ See, for example Gammon, “Culture Politics of the English National Curriculum; Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture”; Finney, *Music Education in England*, 87-95; Stephen Ball, “Education, Majorism, and the ‘The Curriculum of the Dead,’” *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 1, no. 2 (1993): 200-202; and Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 154-163.

including successive Secretaries of Education, because of the subject's perceived lower status within the curriculum both as a foundational subject and one whose curriculum was developed at the end of the process.¹⁴⁸ In addition, the initial creation of the music statutory orders—or lack thereof in comparison with previously developed core and other foundation subjects—reflected neoliberal core concepts of *educational excellence*, *centralization of standards*, *core skills*, *core curriculum*, *standardized curriculum and testing*, *parental choice*, *QUANGOs*, *educational consumers*, *knowledge as commodity*, *accountability*, and *accreditation and certification*. Some of these concepts are associated with the NC Programmes of Study (i.e., what students should be taught), others with the development of set Attainment Targets and student assessment of those targets (i.e., what students should learn and be able to do), and some are connected with both curriculum and assessment. These connections are explored throughout these next three sections on curriculum creation structural processes and debates, curriculum content, and assessment policies both in relation to the NC in general and the music NC in particular.

A discussion of the music NC is most effective when placed within the general context of overall NC development, because the processes involved in music NC development both converged and diverged with NC work related to core curriculum (i.e., English, mathematics, and science). Curricular development was overseen and coordinated by the National Curriculum Committee (NCC), with each subject's suggested curriculum arising in the form of a report from a Working Group (WG) assigned to that subject area. Essentially, the Education Secretary, in consultation with members of the DES, appointed the members of each WG, who were usually a mix of those working within and outside of education. The WG then conducted research on current trends and best practices in the subject area and its possible value within education before submitting an interim report to the NCC suggesting possible Programmes of Studies and Attainment Targets for the four Key Stages.¹⁴⁹ The interim report was published and the NCC, government, and other “interested” parties sent suggestions to the WGs, which were then

¹⁴⁸ Indeed, Stephen Ball rather unflatteringly summarized past treatments of music education in England as having “always been a subject backwater in the school curriculum, a matter of little interest to most students and hardly a focus of political controversy.” See Ball, *Education, Majorism, and the ‘The Curriculum of the Dead,’*” 200.

¹⁴⁹ Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 30.

incorporated into a final report, published by the government, and circulated by the NCC in a consultation process that incorporated the opinions of the LEAs and educational-related groups specific to each particular subject. The NCC then made a final report containing the results of consultation and suggesting Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets that were once again (briefly) published for public review before their suggestions were submitted to Parliament and approved as the final Statutory Orders for the subject.¹⁵⁰ In practice, the process appeared widely consultative; however, as discussed through specific examples below, the authority held by the NCC to formulate the final suggested Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets as well as the authority of the Education Secretary to supersede both the WGs and the NCC undermined public consultation processes.

Although the NC was legislated into existence with the 1998 ERA, the mathematics and science Working Groups (WG) were established in mid-1987.¹⁵¹ The English WG was formed in April of 1988,¹⁵² with technology, history, geography, modern languages, physical education, art, and music WGs convening after that.¹⁵³ Notably, physical education, art, and music were the last WGs convened and only as separate WGs after debate over whether these subjects should fall under the purview of a single WG.¹⁵⁴ In this respect, although music was a mandatory subject in the NC as dictated by the ERA, it was perceived as a “lower order” subject early in the curriculum writing process both because of its foundational status and because of the timing of its creation and the initial debate over whether it warranted a WG separate from physical education and art.¹⁵⁵ It was, both literally and in discourse, positioned as a non-core subject, reflecting its historical non-mandatory status in the English education system.

David Graham, who was appointed the head of the NCC by Education Secretary Kenneth Baker upon its 1988 formation, provided a detailed account of how the WGs and

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Duncan Graham with David Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All: The Making of the National Curriculum* (London: Routledge, 1993), 30-31.

¹⁵² Ibid., 46.

¹⁵³ Martin Hughes, “The National Curriculum in England and Wales: A Lesson in Externally Imposed Reform?” *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997): 188.

¹⁵⁴ Graham with David Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All*, 75.

¹⁵⁵ The phrase “lower order” comes from Finny in *Music Education in England*, 88.

their chairs were selected and the various struggles and ideological conflicts through which many of the WGs progressed both internally and with members of the DES, including the various Education Secretaries that held that post during NC development.¹⁵⁶ While a full review of his memoir would be too detailed for this general overview of the development of the NC, it is useful to highlight a few important ideas and issues he raised, which have also been echoed in other sources. The first such point is the nature of the NCC and WG member selection process. Although some subject areas, such as music, solicited proposals from “invited” individuals associated with the subject area, for the most part, members of both the NCC and the WGs were “handpicked” (albeit often with HMI guidance) by the Education Secretary and those working closely with him.¹⁵⁷ Although not always the case (as discussed in relation to the music curriculum) this potentially allowed the government to “seed” the NCC and WGs with individuals who reflected their own vision of the nature and purpose of education.¹⁵⁸

Graham also emphasized the role the relationship of the WGs, the NCC, the DES, and the Education Secretary played in curriculum development. The Education Secretary maintained that the NCC should not influence the content of WG reports.¹⁵⁹ Although the NCC eventually had more contact with some of the later WGs, Graham concluded that lack of NCC contact with WGs resulted in missed opportunities to make cross-curricular connections and to help WGs function more efficiently by communicating with each other about past problems and solutions experienced during the report writing process.¹⁶⁰

Another significant factor in the development of the NC was the role of the Education Secretary. The WGs themselves were comprised of individuals with conflicting ideological beliefs (to the point that sometimes members resigned), and the Education Secretaries, of which there were three over the course of NC development. They also had their own views on what was most important to include in NC statutory orders and the political authority—as enshrined in the ERA—to see that it was included.

¹⁵⁶ Graham with David Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All*, 75. Unfortunately, Graham had left the position prior to the establishment of the music WG and so had only rudimentary observations to make on the experience of working with and within that particular WG.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ball, “Education, Majorism, and “The Curriculum of the Dead,” 200.

¹⁵⁹ Graham with David Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All*, 46, 49.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 49. 101

Kenneth Baker exercised his right to alter or expunge material from WG reports with which he did not agree or which did not fit his idea of a “good education” in a particular subject.¹⁶¹ He advocated for a broad, though prescriptive and detailed, curriculum based on traditional British grammar school subjects (with the exception of technology).¹⁶² In addition, John McGregor and Kenneth Clarke, who were successively appointed Education Secretary after Baker and who oversaw the completion of the NC, preferred the acquisition of factual knowledge and material that emphasized Britain’s “own history and heritage,” and they suggested or enacted changes to WG recommendations that reflected their beliefs.¹⁶³ For example, Clarke determined that “modern history” (i.e., events within 20 years of present) could not be taught as “history.”¹⁶⁴ Before this, McGregor insisted the history WG include more “essential historical knowledge” in the Attainment Targets despite the history WG’s arguments for Attainment Targets based on interpretation and critical thinking rather than facts. McGregor felt so strongly about the more “factual” approach to history that he convened his own investigation into the subject and made changes to the curriculum “in any way he chose.”¹⁶⁵

This emphasis on knowledge was also tied to difficulties in assessing the NC, discussed further below. What is important to note here is the central control that the government, particularly the Education Secretaries, had over the development of curriculum even though it was largely framed as the responsibility of the NCC and the WGs. The Education Secretaries’ respective agendas for education emphasized both the neoliberal preoccupation with easily measured and comparable outcomes, hence their emphasis on assessing knowledge and products of learning over the more vaguely measurable application of critical thinking and the process of learning. Their agendas also reflected the neoconservative preoccupation with re-establishing England as a historically

¹⁶¹ Hughes, “The National Curriculum in England and Wales,” 187.

¹⁶² Denis Lawton, “Education Reforms in England and Wales,” in *Secondary Education at the Crossroads: International Perspectives Relevant to the Asia-Pacific Region*, ed. Phillip Hughes (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006): 83.

¹⁶³ Graham with Tytler, *A Lesson For Us All*, 63.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 64-66.

mighty nation and traditional English upper-class values in the face of growing multiculturalism.¹⁶⁶

Another problem that consistently arose during the formulation of the NC was the high level of detail, or “prescriptiveness,” associated with subject attainment goals. For example, the mathematics WG originally had 354 Attainment Targets, which was eventually “whittled down” to 14 and, through subsequent curricular revision, to 5 by 1993.¹⁶⁷ In 1990, there were a combined 227 Attainment Targets for the core KS 1 mathematics, science, and English *alone*.¹⁶⁸ By the time the music, art, and physical education WGs were convened, concerns about how Attainment Targets were going to be efficiently assessed given demands in the core curriculum areas prompted the Education Secretary to decide that Attainment Targets for these subjects should be less detailed (discussed further below).¹⁶⁹

By 1992, all curriculum documents had been completed and released and state-funded schools were implementing them. Key Stages were associated with school Year (KS 1 = years 1-2, KS 2 = years 3-6, KS 3 = years 7-10, KS 4 = 10-11) and corresponded to ages 5-7 (KS 1), 7-11 (KS 2), 11-14 (KS 3), and 14-16 (KS 4). And, while there was a general consensus that teachers had accepted the *idea* of a NC¹⁷⁰ and that the NC helped LEAs and schools focus more on curricular planning,¹⁷¹ teachers reported mixed results on how much the NC changed their day to day teaching. For example, Martin Hughes observed that the NC closely matched the existing classroom practices of English teachers, while history teachers had to change their pedagogical techniques altogether to account for the NCs knowledge content rather than interpretive approach to the subject.¹⁷² It was clear, however, that a majority of teachers and administrators rejected the NC in its original *form* due to the amount of work it took to ensure that students met Attainment Targets for so many subjects and the amount of time it took to carry out attainment

¹⁶⁶ See Chapter Five, pp. 100-101.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁶⁸ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 58.

¹⁶⁹ Graham with Tytler, *A Lesson for Us All*, 76.

¹⁷⁰ Phillip O’Hear and John White, “Introduction” in *Assessing the National Curriculum*, eds. Phillip O’Hear and John White (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1993), 1.

¹⁷¹ Lawton, “Education Reforms in England and Wales,” 79.

¹⁷² Hughes, “The National Curriculum in England and Wales,” 189.

assessment. Parents, unions, and administrators also objected to the detailed and time-consuming assessment process.¹⁷³ As discussed below, it was this line of thinking that would ultimately affect the status and inclusion of music in Key Stage 4.

With this outline of the general structure of and debates over the nature the National curriculum in mind, we turn now to a more specific discussion of the development of the Music National curriculum and the ways in which it reflected these structural processes and ideological debates. The Music Working Group (MWG) was convened on July 4, 1990. Prior to this, the Education Secretary had invited “a number of people interested and experienced” in music education to submit a proposal related to potential Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets.¹⁷⁴ Angela Rumbolt, Minister of State for Education at the time, was primarily responsible for choosing the members of the MWG from this invited group.¹⁷⁵ Members of the working group were varied and included Chair John Manduell (principal of the Royal Northern College of Music), Vice Chair and Music Inspector John Stevens, George Pratt (Professor of Music at Huddersfield Polytechnic), and popular music composer Mike Batt.¹⁷⁶ Together, they represented a fairly broad and well-respect group of individuals. Vic Gammon described them as “some of the great and good in British music education,” who were “an intelligent group of people [with] no obvious radicals or subversives, but with a good understanding of the changes which had taken place in music education [over the last few decades].”¹⁷⁷

Coming as they did at the end of the curriculum development process, several key decisions regarding the nature and structure of the music curriculum had already been made as other subjects were written and implemented and problems and concerns arose. First, the MWG did not have to develop a Programme of Study or Attainment Targets for KS 4. The foundation subjects of art, music, physical education, history, and geography

¹⁷³ Ibid., 193.

¹⁷⁴ John Stephens, “The National Curriculum for Music,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and Johan Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), 1.

¹⁷⁵ Manduell, “Introduction,” vii.

¹⁷⁶ Gammon, “Cultural Politics of the English National Curriculum for Music,” 132. Other members were Kevin Adams, Michael Brewer, Philip Jones, Gillian Moore, Linda Read, Julian Smith, and Christine Wood.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

had earlier been dropped from the list of required subjects in Key Stage 4 in order to facilitate greater choice of subjects and a focus on particular subjects of interest in this final KS,¹⁷⁸ although others have argued that this decision was also made, in part, because teachers felt it would be impossible address the curricular requirements of teaching all ten mandatory subjects until the end of KS 4. The remaining KS 4 subjects, then, were English, mathematics, and science (the core subjects) and technology and modern language (fundamental subjects). The decision to exclude music as a mandatory subject in KS 4 was supported by an NCC consultation report, released in December 1991, which concluded that Kenneth Clarke's decision facilitated "greater flexibility at Key Stage 4" with the caveat that both Clarke and the NCC believed nevertheless that "schools should offer art and music" because a "broad and balanced education through to age 16 requires some form of aesthetic experience during the final key stage."¹⁷⁹ Subsequent non-statutory Programmes of Study, alternative option courses, and Attainment Targets for art and music in KS 4 were produced by the NCC in early 1992.¹⁸⁰

In addition to the elimination of music as a mandatory subject at KS 4, and as discussed below in relation to assessment practices associated with the NC, the MWG was also informed that assessment procedures related to Attainment Targets would be far less complex and rigorous.

The MWG's Interim Report was published in February 1991 after the MWG had visited schools and consulted with teachers, musicians, and academics.¹⁸¹ It generally supported the practical, progressive approach to music education outlined in the HMI's report *Music 5 to 16* and it positioned music as an active, rather than passive, subject.¹⁸² It suggested that the Attainment Targets for music be comprised of Composing, Performance, Listening, and Knowing, reflecting Swanwick's progressive C(L)A(S)P model of music education and coinciding with the GCSE methods of instruction and

¹⁷⁸ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 54.

¹⁷⁹ National Curriculum Council, *National Curriculum Council Consultation Report: Art and Music in Key Stage 4* (York: National Curriculum Council, 1991), i.

¹⁸⁰ See National Curriculum Council, *Additional Advice to the Secretary of Education for Education and Science: Art and Music Non-Statutory Material for Key Stage 4; Alternative Optional Courses in Art and Music at Key Stage 4; Non-Statutory Statements of Attainment in Art, Music, and Physical Education*. (York: National Curriculum Council, 1992).

¹⁸¹ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 153-54.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 154, 157-58.

assessment practices.¹⁸³ Specifically, “Knowing” did not denote the acquisition of musical “facts,” but should only be undertaken in the context of enabling listening, performing, and composing.¹⁸⁴ It also contained a copy of a letter from the Education Secretary Kenneth Clarke that expressed concern over the number of Attainment Targets and the practical, progressive approach to music education taken by the MWG, which he believed would prevent students from developing “their knowledge and understanding of the repertoire, history and traditions of music.”¹⁸⁵ In his reflection on his time as Chair of the NCC, Graham wrote that music, along with art, subsequently became,

the ultimate expressions of the government’s determination to stress knowledge over understanding. . . . Music allowed Clarke to reveal the pure streak that had existed in the beginning: knowledge was more important than skills. We live in an age where facts need more frequent updating than skills.¹⁸⁶

Music as a school subject also became the ultimate expression of neoconservative belief that subjects in the National curriculum should be used to advance a traditional notion of “Englishness” as well as the traditional (Conservative) approach to English education. John Shepherd and Graham Vulliamy perhaps summarized the latter issue best when they stated that, “the reaction of Kenneth Clarke was, if anything, the reaction of a radical conservative against a curriculum whose politics were as much *liberal* as anything else.”¹⁸⁷ The former issue was perhaps best exemplified by men such as Roger Scruton and Anthony O’Hear, who founded the Music Curriculum Association to apply public pressure on the WG to create a curriculum more focused on Western art music.¹⁸⁸ In the subsequent final public debate over the music curriculum, they would lead the traditionalist side through publishing their ideas in national newspapers, with their arguments relying on both the intellectual superiority of Western art music and the need

¹⁸³ Gammon, “Cultural Politics of the English Curriculum,” 132 and Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 30-32, 34-35.

¹⁸⁴ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 158.

¹⁸⁵ Kenneth Clarke, cited in Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 30.

¹⁸⁶ Graham with Tytler, *The Making of the National Curriculum*, 81. Ironically, this attitude was somewhat counter to Thatcher’s original vision of an education systems that would support the development of vocational skills.

¹⁸⁷ Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 36.

¹⁸⁸ Gammon, “Cultural Politics of the English National Curriculum for Music,” 133.

to avoid liberal, child-centred approaches to education that supported a lack of standards by viewing music through the lens of cultural relativism.¹⁸⁹

The MWG interim report and its included letter from Kenneth Clarke prompted over 700 responses for the MWG, many of them from parents, music teachers, and professional musicians. It submitted its final report at the end of June, 1991.¹⁹⁰ As per establish procedure, the NCC released its final report in response to the MWG's work in January of 1992, at which point music education in England quickly became a topic of national debate. Essentially, the NCC's response, which was crafted without the input of music educators, suggested that music education should focus more on "knowing and understanding" music through rote memorization of musical facts and history and that it should emphasize the accomplishments of Western art composers rather than focus on world music or musics appealing to students' interests.¹⁹¹ "Knowing" was highlighted over "doing."¹⁹² This stood in sharp opposition to the nature and content of the GCSE assessments that were introduced for music only four years earlier. The NCC report deleted references to non-Western and popular musics, instead increasing the requirements to study certain Western "classical" composers while also reducing the Attainment Targets from four to two—this despite the fact that the NCC found that those involved in the practices and study of music education overwhelmingly supported the MWG's final report.¹⁹³ Ultimately, both Kenneth Clarke and the NCC openly rejected the MWG's report in favour of an approach that stressed the acquisition of historical fact and knowledge over learning through practical music making (much as had occurred with the development of the history curriculum) and which emphasised "Western classical heritage," although the NCC did acknowledge that other musical cultures may be introduced as well.¹⁹⁴

As noted above, the resulting public furor over the NCC's report is well documented elsewhere and continued to follow the ideological divide between traditional

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 135-36 and Ball, "Education, Majorism, and the 'The Curriculum of the Dead,'" 200-202.

¹⁹⁰ Stephens, "The National Curriculum for Music," 1-2.

¹⁹¹ Gammon, "Cultural Politics of the English National Curriculum for Music," 138, 132, and Shepherd and Vulliamy, "The Struggle for Culture," 32.

¹⁹² Finney, *Music Education in England*, 90.

¹⁹³ Shepherd and Vulliamy, "The Struggle for Culture," 32.

¹⁹⁴ Ball, "Education, Majorism, and the 'The Curriculum of the Dead,'" 201-202.

and progressive approaches to English education as well as concerns over whether or not the English state-funded education system should represent traditional or current societal values and culture. The final outcome was a compromise between the progressive vision of the MWG and the desire of the Educational Secretaries to stipulate a clear, standardized Programme of Study and Attainment Targets for KS 1-3 in music education. Shepherd and Vulliamy suggested that the impact of those wishing to reintroduce conservative values by assigning Western art music a position of primacy in a traditional curriculum was ultimately frustrated by such earlier reforms as the GCSE, which valued students' abilities to create and express themselves through diverse and meaningful musical genres and which were already embedded in official policy.¹⁹⁵ They also noted the role of overwhelming support for the MWG's report on the part of "practically the whole of the English music education establishment."¹⁹⁶ While this last remark is somewhat hyperbolic in nature, it reflects a general consensus from music educationalists that upheld the progressive approach in music education that had become well established by the mid-1980s and was reflected in the sources, projects, and reports from the 1970s and 1980s described above. Indeed, Keith Swanwick wrote an open letter to Kenneth Clarke which prompted Clarke to compromise by naming two Attainment Targets that were more inclusive of the MWG's suggestions and which stressed a more participatory approach to music education: (1) Performing and Composing and (2) Listening and Appraising. Factual knowledge, such as that associated with music history and theory, could occur and be acquired in relation to active musical engagement, much like Swanwick had envisioned in his C(L)A(S)P model.¹⁹⁷ Swanwick's suggestion was incorporated into the final statutory orders.¹⁹⁸

Ultimately, and as seen in the next section, although elements of the MWG's vision for music education were overridden by both the NCC and the Education Secretaries, at its core the music National Curriculum reflected a commitment to active

¹⁹⁵ Shepherd and Vulliamy, "The Struggle for Culture," 36. Pitts also points out the "dual onslaught" from educators and academics likely "made the Government take a less provocative position on the curriculum." *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 163.

¹⁹⁶ Shepherd and Vulliamy, "The Struggle for Culture," 36.

¹⁹⁷ Gammon, "Cultural Politics of the English National Curriculum," 140-41.

¹⁹⁸ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 165.

music making in the progressive tradition. As such, it represented one of the few victories of teachers and academics in terms of maintaining the oft-villainized progressive education approach that the Conservatives wished to expunge largely through the creation of the National Curriculum and its accompanying assessment practices (certainly history had not fared so well). With that in mind, we turn now to a discussion of the content of the 1992 curriculum and its post-Dearing report 1995 revision.

Music National Curriculum Content, Debate, and Post-Dearing Revision

The government decided that the music NC was to be implemented in the first year of each of KS 1-3, beginning in 1992. This meant that students in Years 1, 3, and 7 were taught under the NC in 1992, while those in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6 remained under whatever music curricula had previously existed in each school or LEA. As each year passed, the next Year in each KS began instruction using the NC, finishing with Year 6 in 1995. Statutory assessment was to begin for KS 1 in 1993, for KS 3 in 1995, and KS 2 in 1996, once the curriculum had been fully implemented for at least one year in each Year of a KS.¹⁹⁹ As others have pointed out, this led to the inevitable but temporary problem of some students entering the music NC in the later years of study unprepared for its demands, for which teachers had to compensate in their lesson planning.²⁰⁰ This would have in itself impeded the complete implementation of the music NC until 2000, when Year 1 students introduced to the NC in 1992 entered Year 9.

Despite the public debate around the nature and content of the music NC, the 1992 music NC opened with no discussion of the value or purpose of music as a school subject. Its first pages reproduced the official legislation that created the music NC as *Statutory Orders*, which reinforced the obligation to implement the curriculum in schools. The opening pages also provided clarification of terms such as “Attainment Targets,” (AT) and “Programmes of Study,” (PoS) and when the curriculum would be introduced in each Year.²⁰¹ This was followed by statements that accommodation and provisions

¹⁹⁹ Department of Education and Science, “The Education Reform Act 1988: Nations Curriculum: Section 4 Order Music,” *DES Circular No. 3/92* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, April 2, 1992), 2.

²⁰⁰ Stephens, “The National Curriculum for Music”, 6.

²⁰¹ Department of Education and Science, *Music in the National Curriculum (England)* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1992), v.

should be made for students with physical or mental disabilities and a caution that “teaching activities or learning opportunities” should not treat the various requirements in the document separately.²⁰² Next was a page with a few short statements that indicated that students should be given opportunities to “undertake a balanced programme of activities” based on their previous work and achievement; to work as a class, group, or individually, and to create and record music using “information technology.”²⁰³ The last information provided before laying out the ATs and PoS for each KS was an indication that “pupils should perform and listen to music in a variety of genres and styles, from different periods and cultures” and that “repertoire chosen should be broad and designed to extend pupils’ musical experience and knowledge.”²⁰⁴ Musical works should include (as listed in order):

- the Europeans “classical” tradition, from its earliest roots to the present day
- folk and popular music;
- music of the countries and regions of the British Isles;
- a variety of cultures, Western and non-Western.²⁰⁵

The four page introduction to the ATs and PoS concluded with a statement that performance repertoire “should be progressively more demanding and chosen in light of pupils’ needs, backgrounds and stages of musical development.”²⁰⁶

These opening pages, brief as the content in them may be, reflect a number of tensions that arose in the development of the music NC. They also reflect the general and historical neoliberal and neoconservative conflicts with the more progressive approach to music education taken by the MWG and other educationalists from the 1970s onward. Perhaps the most obvious was the implied hierarchy of musical genres—beginning with the “classical tradition” and ending with “non-Western” cultures, which reflected the tension between the Education Secretaries’ desire to include the former and the desire of the MWG and others to take a cultural relativity approach to the musics included in school lessons. Others, such as Shepherd and Vulliamy, have pointed out that the

²⁰² Ibid., 1.

²⁰³ Ibid., 3.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

examples of activities in the 1992 NC that teachers and students might undertake include only a few references to non-Western, non-“classical” musical cultures,²⁰⁷ whereas Western composers and works are cited in example activities over forty times. Further, the majority of examples referencing instruments rarely refer to anything other than traditional orchestral instruments.²⁰⁸ The Non-Statutory Guidance issued alongside the NC to support its implementation (which is discussed further below) continued this trend, with Shepherd and Vulliamy noting that that document, despite containing pictures of culturally diverse children, provided no examples of “musical languages of non-Western music.”²⁰⁹ The clear emphasis on examples of Western music, then, subverted—or at the very least supported a musical hierarchy within—the curricular statements that “pupils should perform and listen to music in a variety of genres and styles, from different periods and cultures” and that “repertoire chosen should be broad and designed to extend pupils’ musical experience and knowledge.”²¹⁰

The importance of *centralization of standards* and *standardized curriculum and testing* are seen through the opening discussion of the relation of ATs and PoS as well as in reference to the implementation and assessment schedules. This is countered somewhat with statements regarding the obligation to deliver a balanced program that adjusts to the needs, abilities, and past achievements and experiences of the child. Music, as a subject, is not given any particular value within this discussion. Rather, it is implied that the subject should be taught because it is mandated by law. In this, the curriculum document opens with an emphasis on *legal responsibility*. In addition, the neoliberal emphasis on developing *knowledge workers* that support a *knowledge economy* is found in the emphasis on incorporating information technology in the music curriculum.

Finally, the emphasis on avoiding “teaching activities or learning opportunities,” in such a way as to treat the elements in the attainment targets in terms of separate knowledge and skills indicates an attempt to support the arguments of the MWG (among others, including the C(L)A(S)P model) that knowledge “about” music should not be separated from the actual process of musical engagement. Many, including the members

²⁰⁷ Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 33-34.

²⁰⁸ See DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 4-9.

²⁰⁹ Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 34.

²¹⁰ DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 3.

of the MWG itself, however, felt that the physical layout of the document supported treating performing, composing, listening, and appraising as “discrete” areas of musical study with little overlap.²¹¹ The document laid out the requirements for each KS separately, beginning with KS 1. The “Performing and Composing” AT was listed first in each KS and a three-columned chart appeared below each AT for each KS.²¹² The first column listed End of Key Stage Statements (EKSS) related to Attainment Target and bore the heading “By the end of key stage X, pupils should be able to:” The second column began with “Pupils should,” and then listed the PoS that would support successful acquisition of the EKSS knowledge or skill. The third column, beginning with “Pupils could,” listed non-statutory examples of activities student might perform under the Program of Study. For example, reading the first KS 1 Performing and Composing AT from left to right would generate the following sentences:

By the end of key stage 1, pupils should be able to perform simple rhythmic and melodic patterns by ear and from symbols [EKSS]. Pupils should (i) memorise and internalise short musical patterns and simple songs and imitate and recall simple rhythms and melodies [and] (ii) read simple signs and symbols and perform from them [PoS]. Pupils could sing a familiar song, staying silent during a phrase within it, echo short rhythm patterns clapped by the teacher, [and] perform a simple rhythmic pattern from symbols [Examples].²¹³

Another example, taken from the KS 2 “Listening and Appraising” AT, would read:

By the end of key stage 2, students should be able to (b) understand the primary features of the history of music and appreciate a variety of musical traditions [EKSS]. Students should (iii) listen to a range of instrumental and vocal music from early, Classical, and later periods; (iv) listen to the work of influential composers and learn something of their social and historical context and importance to the development of musical traditions; [and] (v) talk about music heard in class, including their own compositions and performances [PoS]. Students could listen to examples of medieval dances, a chamber work such as the ‘Trout’ quintet by Schubert, a suite for orchestra such as Holst’s ‘The Planets’, a cantata such as ‘Carmina Burana’ by Off; listen to pieces of music by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Vaughan Williams and Shostakovich and discuss their effects and characteristics; explain the initial musical ideas behind an original composition, and how they were developed; explore the way in which musical ideas and themes change and develop within a work heard in the

²¹¹ Stephens, “The National Curriculum for Music,” 7.

²¹² An example of the KS 1 curriculum is given in Appendix C.

²¹³ DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 4.

classroom; [and] discuss the reflection of mood in music in passages from Handel's 'Messiah' or Debussy's 'La Cathedrale Engloutie.'²¹⁴

The MWG argued that the physical layout of the document into EKSS, supporting PoS, and examples of PoS activities made each EKSS appear as a discrete field of knowledge or skill, rather than knowledge or skills that actually underpinned multiple aspects of music making and musical engagement. For them, the clearest indication of this was the fact that the elements of music (i.e., pitch, duration, pace, timber, texture, dynamics, and structure²¹⁵) were associated with the Listening and Appraising AT *only*, “tempting readers to overlook that they are the analytical basis of Performing and Composing, too.”²¹⁶ In addition, the second example raises the question of, “whose music history?” the answer to which appears to be that of the Western “classical” tradition. The entire example itself implies more knowledge of recallable information than application of knowledge, and both examples reflect the neoliberal educational approach to clearly identifying testable knowledge and activities as set by specific curricular standards.

The curriculum itself was laid out over five double pages and contained a total of 22 EKSS and 58 PoS across the two ATs. Broken down by AT, there were 14 EKSS and 42 PoS for “Performing and Composing” and 8 EKSS and 16 PoS for “Listening and Appraising. Each KS varied by only one EKSS for each AT, but PoS increased from 12 to 17 between KS 1-3 for the “Performing and Composing” AT while only increasing from 5 to 6 PoS for the “Listening and Appraising” AT.²¹⁷ While not officially stated in the curriculum order, the allocation of EKSS and PoS across the two ATs reflected the MWG’s desire to enact a 2:1 emphasis on the “Performing and Composing” to “Listening and Appraising” ATs, which was further encouraged in the Non-Statutory Guidance for music.²¹⁸ Although the physical layout of the document may have encouraged the separation of knowledge from action, then, the document itself emphasised the practical nature of music making over the theoretical through its actual content.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 7.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 5, 7, 9

²¹⁶ Stephens, “The National Curriculum in Music,” 7.

²¹⁷ DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 4-9.

²¹⁸ National Curriculum Council, *Music Non-Statutory Guidance* (London: National Curriculum Council, 1992), B1.

In addition to emphasizing practical music making—one of the original intentions of the MWG—the curriculum document encouraged “continuity and progression” of musical learning by organizing the EKSS around eight strands of musical learning. For the “Performing and Composing” AT, these were:

- Playing and singing by ear (by ear, from signs and notation);
- Controlling sounds made by the voice and a range of musical instruments;
- Performing with others;
- Composing, arranging, and improvising; and
- Refining, recording and communicating musical ideas²¹⁹

Strands from the “Listening and Appraising” AT were:

- Listening and identifying musical structures
- The history of music: its composers and traditions
- Appraising music: appreciation of live and recorded music.²²⁰

These strands were not explained in the curriculum orders themselves, but rather in the Non-Statutory guidance issues alongside it. This latter publication clearly laid out how various EKSS supported the various strands. For example, the “playing and singing by ear” strand was supported in by the KS 1 EKSS “perform simple rhythmic and melodic patterns by ear and from symbols.” This developed into “perform from notations interpreting signs, symbols and simple musical instructions,” in a KS 2 EKSS then “perform in a range of styles interpreting signs, symbols, and musical instructions,” in a KS 3 EKSS.²²¹

Overall, the music NC emphasized development of musical abilities and knowledge. Despite the emphasis on technology found in its opening pages and in some of the non-statutory examples, no direct connections were made between musical study and the world of work. Instead, the 1992 NC laid out the sequential development of musical skills and knowledge in such a way that teachers—who still had the authority to plan *how* the EKSS and Pos would be assessed and executed—were able to introduce a variety of musical cultures, including those that reflected their communities and student interests, even if the NC itself still tacitly encouraged a dominant focus on the Western “classical tradition.” As discussed below under “Assessment,” however, while the NC

²¹⁹ Ibid., B2.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid., B3. See also DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 4, 6, and 8.

was intended to promote “continuity and progression” through expanding and developing musical knowledge and skills, the lack of any specific assessment criteria undermined Conservative attempts to produce a truly rigorous curriculum. For example, the KS 3 EKSS stating that students should be able to “show knowledge and understanding of individual musical works and critically assess particular performances,” is not necessarily a progression from the KS 1 EKSS statement that students should, “talk in simple but appropriate terms about sounds and music that they have heard, listened to, performed or composed.”²²² Critical assessment of performances can certainly occur in “simple but appropriate terms” and students in KS 1 could still make critical judgements about music as they “talked” about what they heard.

In her analysis of the 1992 music NC, Pitts concluded that “it was a minimalist curriculum document,”²²³ a statement supported by the brevity of the requirements themselves (only four pages covering nine years of study) and the vagueness of the EKSS and PoS, which were meant to allow teachers the flexibility to tailor the curriculum to students’ needs. The 1995 revised music NC followed these same general principles, particularly the assessment practices, which were highlighted by Sir Ron Dearing in his review of the curriculum as appropriate to the subject despite any other revisions that might take place to assessment in other curriculum areas.²²⁴ In fact, the EKSS were reworked into broad End of Key Stage Descriptions (EKSD) that were placed at the end of the NC document, thus addressing the MWG’s concern that the physical layout of the NC supported a segmented approach to musical learning.²²⁵ John Stephens, a member of the MWG, commented that the new EKSD’s further supported the holistic approach to music that the MWG originally envisioned.²²⁶ Rather than a list of six or eight EKSS per KS, the EKSS were re-written as two EKSD per KS (one for each of the ATs, which remained unchanged) that combined elements from the previous EKSS with the same

²²² DES, *Music in the National Curriculum*, 5, 9.

²²³ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 153.

²²⁴ Ron Dearing, *The National Curriculum and Its Assessment* (London: School Curriculum and Assessment Authority): 13, 67, accessed Sept. 15, 2013, <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/dearing/dearing1994.html>.

²²⁵ Stephens, “The National Curriculum for Music,” 7.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

intention of proving continuity and progression through the KS. For example, the KS 1 EKSD for the “Performing and Composing” was:

Pupils sing a variety of songs and play simple pieces and accompaniments with confidence and awareness of pulse. They explore, select and order sounds, making compositions that have a simple structure and make expressive use of some of the musical elements including dynamics and timbre.²²⁷

By KS 3, the same EKSD had expanded to:

Pupils perform an individual part with confidence and control, and interpret the mood or effect of the music. They show awareness of other performers and fit their own part within the whole. They develop musical ideas within structures, sing different textures, including harmony, and exploit the musical elements and a variety of resources. They compose music for specific purposes and use notations(s) and, where appropriate, information technology, to explore, develop and revise musical ideas.²²⁸

The 1995 curriculum also included a new “extension” of KS expectations by including “Exceptional Performance” EKSD for students in KS 3. As with the EKSS in the 1992 curriculum, however, the EKSD, while descriptive, lacked clearly stated assessment goals.

As for the PoS in the 1995 curriculum, the general content of them remained similar to the 1992 music NC, but they were reordered to reflect the “intertwined” relationship of performing, composing, and analysis (i.e., “listening and appraising”) that underpinned the MWGs original curricular conception. Each KS was divided into three main sections with six overarching PoS that loosely reflected the curricular “strands” from the 1992 NC. The first section addressed musical learning and experiences common to both ATs and included the instruction that students should to recognize the elements of music in all musical activities.²²⁹ The second and third sections addressed “Performing and Composing” and “Listening and Appraising,” respectively, through stating specific opportunities with which students should be provided and specific elements they should be taught. As with the 1992 curriculum, the PoS were meant to foster continuity and progression. So, for example, in KS 1, students might be aware of the concepts of “high”

²²⁷ Department for Education, *Music in the National Curriculum* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1995), 9. The Department of Education and Science changed its name to the Department of Education in 1992, then to the Department of Education and Employment when it merged with the Department of Employment in 1995, reflecting the neoliberal view of the importance of education as a precursor to high employment level.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid., 2, 4, 6.

and “low” in relation to pitch, which should expand to knowledge and recognition of “various scale and modes” by KS 3.²³⁰ Under the “Performing and Composing” AT, in KS 1 they should have opportunities to “communicate musical ideas to others” by being taught to “use of sounds to create musical effects” and “record their compositions using symbols, where appropriate.” They should have the same opportunity in KS 3 by being taught to “use sounds and conventions to achieve a variety of styles and/or an intended effect,” and “refine and complete compositions using notations(s) including conventional staff notation and recording equipment, where appropriate.”²³¹ In another example, the “Listening and Appraising” AT stated that students should have the opportunity to “respond to, and evaluate, live performance and recorded music, including their own and others’ compositions” by being taught to “respond to musical elements, and the changing character and mood of a piece of music by means of dance or other suitable forms of expression” in KS 1 and to “identify how and why musical styles and traditions change over time and from place to place, recognising the contribution of composers and performers” in KS 3.²³²

The revised curriculum, then, was a more concise and streamlined document with clearer connections made among PoS at all three KS and a greater emphasis on teaching through a holistic approach to music as an interconnected process of performing, composing, and analyzing, much as was originally intended by the MWG and as envisioned by music educators such as Swanwick in the 1970s and 1980s. Else wise, it retained the same characteristics as the 1992 document, with its emphasis on different types of music making, information technology, accommodation of students with special needs and of students’ backgrounds and experiences, and a balanced program. It also had no clear rationale for or description of the value of music as a school subject.²³³ It shared the 1992 NC’s predilection for supplying examples of PoS centred on a Western “classical” musical practices, although its layout did not include a section specifically for examples, and thus this emphasis was greatly reduced.

²³⁰ Ibid., 2, 6.

²³¹ Ibid., 3, 7.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid., v-1.

Overall, even though the music curriculum allowed a large amount of teacher autonomy in terms of planning lessons, the types of musics selected, and the actual structure and content of the lesson, the new curriculum documents introduced a previously not encountered level of policy prescription in relation to planning and delivering music lessons. The curriculum, with its emphasis on its statutory nature, effectively set the stage for the regulation and inspection of music as a curricular subject with the broader NC and so reflected the neoliberal concepts of *centralized standards*, *standardized curriculum* as sanctioned through *legal responsibility*, yet in such a way that it reflected (or at least allowed teachers to teach in such a way as to reflect) the general philosophical and pedagogical underpinnings of much of the MWG's ideas in its interim and final report, particular in its revised 1995 state. To quote Vic Gammon, "whatever bodged-up compromises and missed opportunities went into the making of the final form of the National Curriculum, looked at from a perspective of documentary history the reformers, have, if not exactly won, then at least wielded the dominant influence."²³⁴

As discussed further below, in some cases, adherence to curriculum delivery (or lack thereof) also became a factor in competition in the educational *market*. We turn now to a discussion of the role of assessment in the NC in general and the music NC in particular.

Music Education Curriculum Assessment, Reporting, and Accountability Measures: 1988-1997

Development of National Curriculum Assessment Procedures

The Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT) was formed by the Conservative government in July 1987 and given the job of envisioning how a national curriculum might be assessed. The TGAT recommended that subjects adopt "Standard Assessment Tasks" (SATs) to be completed by students, which would then be used to place students along a scale of 10 Levels of Attainment that spanned KS 1-4.²³⁵ Assessment would be largely done by classroom teachers and LEAs and was viewed as

²³⁴ Vic Gammon, "What is Wrong with School Music?—A Response to Malcolm Ross," *British Journal of Music Education* 13, no. 2 (1996): 106.

²³⁵ See Chapter Five, pp. 211-12.

being driven by a focus on improving teaching by better understanding students' abilities and needs through mainly formative assessment.²³⁶ Ultimately, however, much of the TGAT's report was rejected (in part by Thatcher herself). A letter from Thatcher's private secretary to Education Secretary Baker (who initially supported the report's findings) after reading the proposal nicely identifies neoliberal concerns with the TGAT's report:

The Prime Minister notes that the philosophy underlying the Report is that tests are only a part of assessment, and that the major purpose of assessment is diagnostic and formative, rather than summative. As a result, the method of assessment places a heavy responsibility on teachers' judgements and general impressions. She is also concerned to note the major role envisaged for the LEAs in the implementation of the system.²³⁷

Given the Conservative's desire to reduce the power and influence of LEAs while increasing the *transparency*, amount, and comparison of curriculum content and planning carried out by teachers and administrators, Thatcher's objections are hardly surprising. They reflected the government's distrust of (then) current educational practices and teachers' emphasis on progressive education. Thatcher also expressed concern over the cost of implementing the report's suggestions as well as the likely five year timeline, when cost efficiency and more immediate implementation of national assessment were desired.²³⁸ These concerns related to the *efficiency* of the assessment system suggested by the TGAT, but also to the government's desire to transform the education system more rapidly, of which greater assessment data placed in the hands of parents and schools was a vital aspect.

Despite Thatcher's objections, when the newly ERA-created School Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC) began its work on developing national assessment practices in 1988, it relied on the TGAT report's emphasis on SATs to guide assessment procedures. As such, national assessment and testing developed to cover a variety of activities that might be assessed by teachers, rather than an emphasis on external, "paper and pencil" tests, with SATs transformed into the "Attainment Targets" as curriculum

²³⁶ Clyde Chitty, *The Education System Transformed: A Guide to School Reforms* (Manchester: Baseline Books, 1992): 56.

²³⁷ Paul Gray, letter to Kenneth Baker, January 1st, 1988, reproduced by Chitty in *The Education System Transformed*, 58.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

continued to be written and revised throughout the early and mid-1990s.²³⁹ As with the NC, testing and assessment were first developed for the core subjects of mathematics, science, and English, and during these early phases of assessment development, more money and resources were made available to the agencies and teachers who were chosen to develop national assessment strategies for these subjects.²⁴⁰ Early development focused on KS 1 and only KS 1 and 3 had been implemented (with KS 2 and 4 still in development) by 1993 when the Dearing Review was commissioned to explore how to streamline the NC and its assessment procedures.²⁴¹ Early piloting of the KS 1 assessments using teacher evaluated Attainment Targets in the subjects of English, mathematics, and science (the first assessments to be introduced under the 1988 ERA legislation) revealed a great deal of teacher and administrator dissatisfaction over the sheer amount of assessment (and time involved)—and this was before ATs had been introduced for the seven foundation subjects.²⁴² Even the SEAC, who had overseen the development of the assessment strategies by the agencies who had been tendered the work (thus invoking the concept of *public-private partnerships* in order to support *efficiency* and *reduced public expenditure*), admitted that they were too time consuming to carry out.²⁴³

A change from the Thatcher administration to the Major administration also compounded the difficulties of developing national assessment. Lawton recounted that Education Secretary Kenneth Clarke, appointed in 1990, “simply did not approve of the complex nature of the assessment materials. He referred to them on one occasion as ‘elaborate nonsense.’”²⁴⁴ And while teachers, particularly KS 1 teachers, felt that external, “pencil and paper” tests, were not the most appropriate way to assess students (particularly when those results were made public), they did desire more streamlined assessment strategies. Lawton correctly pointed to the tension between the Major

²³⁹ Richard Daugherty, *National Curriculum Assessment: A Review of Policy 1987-1994* (London: Falmer, 1995), 37.

²⁴⁰ Richard Daugherty, “National Curriculum Assessment: The Experience of England and Wales,” *Educational Administration Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1997): 203-204.

²⁴¹ Daugherty, *National Curriculum Assessment*, 38.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 40-42.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁴⁴ Denis Lawton, *Education and Politics in the 1990s: Conflict or Consensus?* (London: Falmer Press, 1992): 78.

government's attitude toward assessment and that of the teachers as the latter wanting "to use assessment for the benefit of the pupils" and the former seeing National Curriculum assessment "as part of market choice."²⁴⁵ To this end, Brian Griffiths, head of the right-wing Conservative Centre of Policy Studies think tank, was appointed the new chair of the SEAC in 1991. By 1992 (also the same year the music NC was released), the SEAC had reduced the number of ATs that *must* be assessed in English and mathematics to a total of five, with teachers required to assess two more drawn from a limited list in mathematics and science, while national tests for KS 1 reading and spelling were added under DES pressure in 1992.²⁴⁶ In 1991, as the SEAC and tendered agencies were developing the ATs for KS 3, Kenneth Clarke decided that the AT assessment format was too unwieldy. Instead, he directed that work begin on a series of standardized examinations in English, mathematics, and science that would be administered to KS 3 students and which would purportedly assess almost all of the curricular Attainment Targets.²⁴⁷ Assessment for KS 2 progressed in the same manner, with the evaluation of practical skills left to teachers based on performance in class work.²⁴⁸ The government did eventually agree to halt the publication of KS 1 assessment results, but it would not give up external testing in the core curriculum areas for that KS.²⁴⁹

To this end, music, art, and physical education were designed with fewer Attainment Targets and no statutory external assessment in KS 1-3 (discussed above). In addition, except for the core subjects of mathematics, English, and science and the foundation subjects of technology and modern language, all other subjects were dropped from the list of those requiring national assessment and reporting in Key Stage 4.²⁵⁰ These remaining subjects would be evaluated through the GCSE, with students allowed to choose evaluation in other foundational subjects, such as music, as part of their program of study only if they desired to do so.²⁵¹

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 79.

²⁴⁶ Daugherty, *National Curriculum Assessment*, 44.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 53-54. Those not assessed related to critical thinking skills, such as "scientific investigation," "using and applying mathematics," and the more performance-based "speaking and listening."

²⁴⁸ Lawton, *Education and Politics in the 1990s*, 60.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Chitty, *The Education System Transformed*, 54.

²⁵¹ Daugherty, *National Curriculum Assessment*, 140.

The development of national assessment practices reflects the neoliberal preoccupation with *standardized testing*, particular within the *core curriculum* related to literacy, mathematics and science. As discussed below, the decision to drop national testing in all but these core subject areas placed pressure on schools to ensure high student test scores in those subjects in order to appeal to *educational consumers* (i.e., parents and students) looking to gain *certification* in the quasi-market generated by Local School Management and the Conservative's new funding structures, thus amounting to a form of *high stakes testing*.²⁵² As also discussed below, these pressures had specific effects on school provision for music NC implementation.

In relation to assessment of the music NC, the MWG initially felt that more specificity was needed in terms of identifying levels of achievement within music. As a result, their interim report contained 10 Levels of Achievement for their four originally suggested ATs of Composing, Performing, Listening, and Knowing, reflecting their feeling that, even though assessment through the ten levels would be “non-statutory,” assessment practices in the music curriculum should reflect the structure of the core subjects.²⁵³ This was, arguably, an attempt to underscore the value and relevance music education, even though it was a foundation subject rather than a core subject. At any rate, as discussed above, the 10 Levels of Attainment were left out of both the 1992 and the 1995 music National Curriculum and the ATs were, after much debate, combined into two ATs of “Performing and Composing” and “Listening and Appraising.” Comments from members of the MWG after the further revision of the ATs in the 1995 curriculum indicated that, ultimately, the more broad EKSDs—as opposed to their initial suggestion of 10 Levels of Attainments for each of their four original ATs—better reflected their vision for music education in the NC. For example, George Pratt applauded the way in which the ATs and EKSD emphasized musical process as well as product because, “the quality and sophistication of decision-making will develop with age and experience and be one of the principal ways in which progression will be measured in pupils working

²⁵² See Chapter Five, p. 200.

²⁵³ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 157.

within the music curriculum.”²⁵⁴ This, in turn, encouraged an emphasis on formative, teacher-based feedback over summative feedback, the former of which was associated with the everyday activities guided by the PoS and the latter of which was associated more with end of KS reporting.²⁵⁵ Ultimately, though, no clear standardized assessment and reporting procedures were ever developed for the music curriculum as they were for other core and most foundation subject in the NC. This, in turn, left the development of assessment schemes in the hands of schools and their teachers, including developing methods of reporting student achievement to parents and others schools should students transfer schools or when they moved from primary to secondary schools.²⁵⁶ We turn now to the broader implications of this for the implementation of the music NC.

Assessment and Reporting

Ruth Thomas described how the simpler 1995 EKSD were actually quite complex and, rather than consisting of only one description for each of the two ATs, actually consist of a series of ATs that identify the “teaching to be done” by the classroom teacher. When viewed this way, teaching and assessment of music in the NC required a “high level of subject specialist knowledge.”²⁵⁷ Her ultimate critique of the music curriculum, however, was that it “offers no mechanism whereby quality may be judged against standard criteria, or development assessed against clearly defined programmes of skill progression.”²⁵⁸ By providing such minimal and, as discussed above, similar PoS and EKSD for KS 1-3 and eliminating the suggested Level of Attainments by which other subject assessments were guided, teachers had little guidance neither for how musical skills or abilities should progress from grade to grade, nor for the final level of skills students should achieve when evaluating them against the EKSD. Indeed, even after embracing the more holistic format of the EKSD, some members of the MWG still

²⁵⁴ George Pratt, “Performing, Composing, Listening and Appraising,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), 19.

²⁵⁵ Keith Adams et al., “Progression and Assessment,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), 64.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

²⁵⁷ Ruth Thomas, “The Music National Curriculum: Overcoming a Compromise,” *British Journal of Music Education* 14, no. 3 (1997): 221-22.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 223.

suggested that using the Levels of Attainment included in their original report (and still included in the Welsh non-statutory curriculum guidance) might be one place to which teachers could look in developing a form and basis for summative assessment.²⁵⁹

As Thomas noted, the lack of *specific* descriptions of skill progression and assessment criteria conflicted with the “market economy” concept that underpinned the English NC.²⁶⁰ This is because it relied on development of assessment and reporting schemes at the local, school level and the ability of classroom teachers to effectively assess the subject—as objected to by Thatcher above.²⁶¹ This was viewed as particularly problematic because the general vagueness of the PoS and EKSD did not allow generalist teachers to identify specific areas of musical knowledge they would need to address in order to effectively teach music, and, as discussed below, this had implications for teacher training as well. Specifically, it was difficult for teachers to identify their own challenges related to teaching music as outlined by the NC and so difficult to know what sort of additional training they would require to implement the curriculum.²⁶² Non-statutory guidance for developing music assessment was fairly limited at the central level of government, occurring primarily in the form of a one page of statement in the 1992 publication *Music: Non-Statutory Guidance*, published by the National Curriculum Council. Noting that, as the music NC itself allowed for flexible lesson planning, assessment should “be sufficiently flexible for teachers to choose an approach which suits the needs of their pupils.”²⁶³ It also stated that “record keeping should be kept to a minimum and should be sufficient to track curriculum progress and support the annual report to parents.”²⁶⁴ In lieu of the 10 Attainment Level system of assessment, teachers were to develop “descriptive judgements” based on the EKSS. This would require teachers to:

²⁵⁹ Adams et al., “Progression and Assessment,” 66-67.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 222-23.

²⁶¹ See footnote 237.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 223-34. Keith Swanwick echoes and further expands on Thomas’ ideas when he discusses the problem as assessment in Key Stage 3. He tartly summarized the problem as “a fudge, where musical understanding—the actual *quality* of what is learned—remains undefined and the End of Key Stage Descriptions make a premature entry disguised as day to day assessment criteria.” See “Assessing Musical Quality in the National Curriculum,” *British Journal of Music Education* 14, no. 3 (1997): 208.

²⁶³ NCC, *Music: Non-Statutory Guidance*, E1.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

- Decide on the evidence required for assessment (e.g., performance, composition, discussion)
- Create or refine, if necessary, criteria for specific judgement of student progress in relation to EKSS
- Ensure consistency of judgement amongst teachers at the school and develop a “shared vocabulary” in relation to criteria and assessment
- Ensure that assessment was “manageable and useful”
- Incorporate student self-assessment
- Share curriculum content and student progress within the NC with parents
- Ensure that the same approach to teacher-based assessment and reporting was used in music, art, and physical education.²⁶⁵

Development of assessment practices at KS 1 and 2 were particularly problematic, where, as discussed further below, schools did not always employ music specialists or teachers with the ability to develop assessment plans based on the general guidelines listed in the non-statutory guidance. In 1996, non-statutory materials, in the form of two School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) publications entitled *Exemplification of Standards* and *Optional Tests and Tasks*, were released to help teachers assess students throughout KS 3.²⁶⁶ Even here, however, phrases such as “working towards,” “achieving,” “working beyond,” and “excellent performance” in relation to students’ mastery of the elements found in the EKSD descriptions were characterized by Swanwick as “fairly meaningless terms” that did not define specific assessment goals and which lacked a clear description of a “progressive, differentiated sequence” of learning and skill development.²⁶⁷ Pitts more frankly categorized them as “a belated and inadequate compensation for effective teacher training and assessment moderation.”²⁶⁸ KS 4 perhaps fared the best in terms of clear assessment practices, having retained its assessment through the GCSE exam as it had since 1988.

This is not to say that resources did not exist to help schools and teachers develop assessment and reporting plans for music in KS 1-3. These resources, however, were not developed at the national level. They are discussed further below in relation to support for

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Swanwick, “Assessing Musical Quality in the National Curriculum,” 206. Recall from Chapter Five that the National Curriculum Council and School Examination and Assessment Council were combined under the 1993 Education Act. See Chapter Five, pp. 213-214.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 208.

²⁶⁸ Stephanie Pitts, “The Implications of Historical Research for Contemporary Music Education Practice in England,” *Arts Education Policy Review*, 100, no 2 (1998): 30.

music curriculum implementation. What is most notable here is that assessment procedures for music, unlike those of the core and some of the foundation subjects, were not standardized in such a way to ensure systematic, comparable assessment, and so represent a notable deviation from the Conservative emphasis on standardized assessment as a way of facilitating *educational excellence* and *parental choice* (for those parents who desired their child's enrolment in music programs). Indeed, with the exception of KS 4, they represent the types of locally developed assessment practices that the Conservative government originally envisioned eradicating in order to raise educational standards through the policy elements and structures put into place under the 1988 ERA. With this decision and the policies related to it, then, came an implication that music, although a required subject, was not an integral part of raising overall educational standards in English education.

Curriculum Policy Statements and Development Plans

Although not treated in a similar manner as some of the other, discursively implied more “important,” subjects in respect to assessment, there were policies regarding curricular accountability under which music was treated as “equal” to such NC subject areas. Schools were required to create curriculum policy statements for each NC subject as it was introduced.²⁶⁹ Policy statements for subjects were meant to be included in a school handbook and accessible to current and prospective parents and school governors, school staff and visitors, and OFSTED inspectors.²⁷⁰ Members of the MWG suggested that a “coherent policy for the music curriculum” should account for many potential “components” that could contribute to a music program.²⁷¹ This included considering musical aims and objectives, available resources and their care, plans for curriculum development and delivery, assessment practices, and equitable treatment of students.²⁷² In some cases, LEAs provided guidance on developing policy statements, in

²⁶⁹ Gillian Stunell, “The Policy Context of Music in English Primary Schools: How Politics Didn’t Help Music,” *Research Studies in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (2006): 4.

²⁷⁰ John Stephens et al., “Planning for Music in the Classroom,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), 23-27.

²⁷¹ Stephens, “The National Curriculum for Music,” 6.

²⁷² Stephens et al., “Planning for the Music Classroom,” 23.

which case schools were advised to consider how school statements aligned with any related LEA Policy statements and possible links to other schools.²⁷³

Curriculum policy statements were brief and broad and usually developed by teachers responsible for music instruction in a school before being approved by head teachers and governors. The MWG provided an example of a possible music curriculum policy statement in 1995:

We aim to make music enjoyable for all pupils in the school. They sing, play instruments and listen to music, and will have opportunities to make their own musical compositions. There are regular weekly music lessons and many informal opportunities, both in and out of school, for music-making.

Music is used in the daily assembly and in dance and movement lessons. The school has a good range of percussion instruments which the pupils learn to play and accompany their songs and to make up their own pieces. They are encouraged to listen attentively and use musical words to talk about the music they listen to and make up and perform themselves.

Music making is an important part of the social and community life of our school.²⁷⁴

In addition to developing subject curriculum policies, schools were also responsible for creating Development Plans (sometimes called Action Plans) that were meant to assess school resources; consider changes that might be made to improve curricular delivery and meet the needs of parents, students, and the community; create a fiscal and temporal plan for such changes, and set the standards by which they would be assessed.²⁷⁵ While development plans did not have to be made for each particular subject in the NC, teachers responsible for teaching music, music consultants, and head music teachers were encouraged to contribute to the development plan by taking stock of resources needed to ensure effective implementation of the music curriculum as guided by the school's music curriculum policy statement, which was a natural extension of part of the OFSTED

²⁷³ See, for example, Birmingham City Council Education Department, *Implementing Music in the National Curriculum: A Handbook for the Music Co-ordinator*, 2nd ed. (Harborne: Birmingham Curriculum Support Service, 1992), 11-13. This document also asks music curriculum policy writers to consider the "school's involvement in music within the community."

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

²⁷⁵ Neil Dempster, Chresten Kruchov, and Grace Distant, "School Development Planning: And International Perspective," in *Development Planning for School Improvement*, eds., David H. Hargreaves and David Hopkins (London: Cassell, 1994), 29.

inspection process described below.²⁷⁶ Examples of resources that might be considered for development included funding for teacher professional development, acquisition of physical resources such as IT equipment and instruments (and their maintenance), expansion of physical space for teaching music, and employing/recruiting itinerant teachers and other educational opportunities such as musical workshops.²⁷⁷ Teachers could engage in “cost-benefit analysis” to create short-, mid- and long-term goals for development and these could be incorporated into the overall school Development Plan.²⁷⁸

In terms of *accountability*, the act of creating music curriculum policies and Development Plans required teachers and administrators to actively consider the role of music in the school and how it might be provisioned and implemented both as a subject and within the broader school community. These documents were a reflection of the tension between central and local control prevalent in the Conservatives’ neoliberal education reforms in that they reflected Conservative discourse and legislation that gave schools more control over many policy and budgeting decisions, yet required greater *transparency* and accountability in relation to the decisions made by schools.²⁷⁹ In this, schools were held accountable to decisions made about music NC provision and implementation through these two policy documents both in the public sphere—as they were available to parents and the wider school community—and through the official process of school inspections that were systematized and greatly increased under Prime Minister Major’s time in office.

Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) Inspections

In 1998, Eric Bolton stated that, during the Thatcher and Major Conservative era, Regular and frequent inspections of institutions reporting to school governors and parents were seen as crucial to regulating the implementation of the National Curriculum in schools, and to providing governors and parents with the inspection-based information about standards and performance needed to enable them to make judgements about their children’s schools and to call them to account.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Stephens et al., “Planning for the Music in the Classroom,” 25.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Birmingham City Council Education Department, *Implementing Music in the National Curriculum*, 7-10.

²⁷⁹ See Chapter Five, pp. 203-04.

²⁸⁰ Eric Bolton, “HMI—The Thatcher Years,” *Oxford Review of Education* 24, no. 1 (1998): 52.

Chapter Five discusses the creation of OFSTED and its gradual shift from providing support for teachers in its early conception as the HMI to a system of inspection that was standardized and meant to report on the work and achievement of administrators, teachers and students as a form of public “quality control and assurance.”²⁸¹ Inspection of school music was no exception to this process.

OFSTED inspections of music NC implementation and student achievement began in the 1992-1993 school year—the very first year of the music NC was implemented (Years 1, 3, and 7).²⁸² Inspection findings for the 1993-94 school year, when the music NC guided Years 1-4 and 7-8 were also published,²⁸³ as were 1995 findings.²⁸⁴ Further yearly summaries of inspection findings related to music discussed here were published by OFSTED for primary schools beginning in the 1998-1999 and for secondary schools beginning in the 1999-2000 school year.²⁸⁵ Although these latter two sources of inspection reports were published after the Conservatives were voted out of office in 1997, their content reflects the resources available, implementation practices undertaken, and student results achieved leading up to these reports, including the time before and around the 1997 election as their findings were compared against those of past inspections.

The Major government’s decision that every school should be inspected every four years ensured that music programs and their implementation of the NC would receive direct attention from OFSTED inspectors.²⁸⁶ This led to a considerable number of schools, teachers, and lessons inspected by OFSTED each year. For example, in the

²⁸¹ See Chapter Five, pp. 204-207.

²⁸² Janet Mills, “Music in the National Curriculum: The First Year,” *British Journal of Music Education* 11, no. 3 (1994): 191.

²⁸³ Office for Standards in Education, *Music: A Review of Inspection Findings 1993/94* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1994).

²⁸⁴ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 197.

²⁸⁵ See Office for Standards in Education, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music” in *Annual Report 1998/99: Ofsted Subject Reports – Primary*, accessed October 10, 2013, <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/annual-report-199899-ofsted-subject-reports-primary> and Office for Standards in Education, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music” in *Annual Report 1999-2000: Ofsted Subject Reports – Secondary*, accessed October 10, 2013, <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/annual-report-19992000-ofsted-subject-reports-secondary>.

²⁸⁶ See Chapter Five, p. 206.

1993-94 music inspection findings were based on inspections of 79 primary and 735 secondary schools, with 495 primary and 669 secondary lessons reviewed.²⁸⁷

OFSTED inspections included an analysis of school subject curriculum policies and Development Plans as they related to music,²⁸⁸ as well as coverage of the music NC, perceived teacher attitude toward implementing the NC, available resources, student achievement, pupil enjoyment, continuity among KS, and overall improvement from previous inspections.²⁸⁹ Inspections were carried out through a combination of HMI observation of lessons, “supplementary evidence” (e.g., recordings of students’ work, written lesson plans, subject curriculum policies, records of teachers’ professional development, documentation of school resources including budgets); and interviews, both formal and informal, with teachers, music co-ordinators, and administrators.²⁹⁰

Inspection findings revealed and documented some common trends among English music programs under the music NC from 1992-1997 and beyond. Both primary and secondary teachers struggled with curricular implementation, albeit for different reasons. OFSTED inspections revealed that many KS 1 and 2 teachers lacked confidence in their ability to implement the music NC because they felt they had insufficient musical knowledge and did not have access to enough in-service training to address their knowledge deficiencies.²⁹¹ KS 3 and 4 teachers, who were usually specialists, often struggled under the intense workload of implementing the music NC while continuing to offer and/or coordinate a full range of extra-curricular music activities.²⁹² Given teacher perceptions and workload, it was somewhat surprising that, by only the second year of music NC implementation, OFSTED found the following levels of “satisfactory” student

²⁸⁷ OFSTED, *Music: A Review of Inspection Findings*, 1.

²⁸⁸ Stunell, “The Policy Context of Music in English Primary Schools,” 4-5.

²⁸⁹ Mills, “Music in the National Curriculum,” 191-93; OFSTED, *A Review of Inspection Findings*, 3-4; OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music;” and OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music.”

²⁹⁰ OFSTED, *A Review of Inspection Findings*, 22-32.

²⁹¹ OFSTED, “Music: A Review of Inspection Findings,” 4 and OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music.”

²⁹² OFSTED, “Music: A Review of Inspection Findings,” 4, 19.

achievement in relation to their abilities during class lessons at the KS 1-3: KS 1—86%; KS 2—78%; KS 3—75%.²⁹³

Developing and understanding assessment procedures remained an ongoing issue throughout the 1990s at both the elementary and secondary levels;²⁹⁴ while lack of reporting among KS led to a consistent decline in level of achievement in Year 7 when students entered KS 3 and Year 7 teachers often created lesson plans that accepted standards of work or performance that were not even acceptable in early years.²⁹⁵ Other issues found by OFSTED included inconsistent access to resources, including a range of quality musical instruments, music technology, and, in some cases, itinerant instrumental music teachers²⁹⁶ and ensuring adequate time was allotted to allow full coverage of the music NC, particularly at the secondary level.²⁹⁷ Despite these issues, OFSTED found that music teaching across KS 1-3 improved throughout the 1990s, so that, by 1999 primary schools musical standards had improved in most schools in comparison to their previous inspection, with many schools having “worked hard to raise standards in all aspects of music.”²⁹⁸ In the secondary schools, however, only 40% of inspected schools experienced improvement in musical standards, while 60% showed improvement in teaching.²⁹⁹

As indicated by Bolton’s quote above and the material in Chapter Five, OFSTED inspections provided a major mechanism by which schools and teachers were held accountable for successful implementation of the NC and the subsequent raising of educational *standards*. The systematic inspection process provided a foil for local school *accountability*, particularly as inspection findings were made public. OFSTED, and if circumstances were deemed dire enough, the Education Secretary recommended or ordered measures for improvement based on Conservative education policy and

²⁹³ Ibid., 6, 8. Stunell refers to this as a “paradox that has never been explained.” See “The Policy Context of Music in the English Primary Schools,” 12.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 15 and OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music.”

²⁹⁵ Mills, “Music in the National Curriculum,” 192; OFSTED, “Music: A Review of Inspection Findings,” 4; and OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music.”

²⁹⁶ OFSTED, “Music: A Review of Inspection Findings,” 4-5, 19-20; Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 197; OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music.”

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music.”

²⁹⁹ OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-20000 – Secondary – Music.”

legislation. That music was included in the inspection process ensured that its ongoing provision and implementation had to be considered and addressed by school administrators and LEAs. With this in mind, we turn to a consideration of the resources available to support curriculum implementation and student achievement within the music NC.

Provision of Music Curriculum Implementation: 1988-1997

Government and Nongovernment Learning and Assessment Resources

(1) Central Government Learning and Assessment Resources

Pitts characterized the 1995 music National Curriculum as “providing reassurance for those teachers with confidence in their own practice, but failing to give guidance where it might be necessary” as it offered “neither practical nor philosophical support to teachers.”³⁰⁰ The scant learning and assessment resources provided by the centralized English government to support music curriculum implementation have been discussed above as they appeared in non-statutory guidance and materials to aide in KS assessment development.³⁰¹

(2) LEA Level Learning and Assessment Resources

LEAs played a more direct role in developing learning and assessment resources for music NC implementation. For example, many LEAs published documents providing much more detail than the central non-statutory guidance documents regarding how teachers and schools might create curriculum policy and development plans, develop schemes of work for lessons, and how and what to assess and report in relation to student achievement and progression. Within these document, sometimes referred to as Handbooks, were such items as sample lesson and assessment plans, lists of suggested resources, guidelines for OFSTED inspections of music, LEA music curriculum policy

³⁰⁰ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 172-73.

³⁰¹ These were the 1992 Music: Non-statutory Guidance and 1995 *Exemplification of Standards and Optional Tests and Tasks* documents. See fn. 218, 263, and 266.

statements, and information relating to professional development opportunities offered by the LEA.³⁰²

LEAs could provide more than just written policy and forms of support, however. As discussed above, the LEA's Music Support Services had a long history of providing access to itinerant instrumental tuition, instrument "banks," visiting specialists, individual music lessons, and opportunities to play in and perform with larger ensemble that drew members from across the LEA. They could also, as implied by the creation of LEA music Handbooks, coordinate music policy and practices across the LEA in order to ensure continuity among both KS and schools. Provision of instrumental tuition was consistently identified as particularly important for successful implementation of the music NC because, students "who achieve the highest levels of attainment in music have a proficiency as an instrumental performer, with the ability to demonstrate skills in composition by the deployment and use of instruments."³⁰³ Instrumental tuition, however, was not obligatory under the music NC. As discussed below, reduction in funding to LEAs because of reduced government spending, the introduction of Local School Management, and a per-pupil funding formula greatly reduced the ability of many LEAs to provide instrumental services or, in some cases, even retain their Music Support Service. This resulted in a "two-tier track of music education provision" due to the loss of the resources that were largely available because of the greater economies of scale that existed at the LEA as opposed to local school level.³⁰⁴ Their inability to fund such projects led LEAs and individual schools to fill this gap by exploring other opportunities with external musical organizations, *public-private partnerships*, and individual visiting artists.

³⁰² See, for example, Birmingham City Council Education Department, *Implementing Music in the National Curriculum* and Birmingham City Council Education Department, *All You Ever Wanted to Know about Music in the National Curriculum and were Afraid to Ask* (Harborne: Birmingham, 1994).

³⁰³ John Stephens, Gillian Moore, and Julian Smith, "Support for the Music Curriculum," in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1995), 49. See also Patricia Gane, "Instrumental Teaching in the National Curriculum: A Possible Partnership?" *British Journal of Music Education* 13, no. 1 (1996): 49, and Susan Hallam and Vanessa Price, *Research into Instrumental Services* (Norwich: Department for Education and Employment, 2000), 2.

³⁰⁴ Gane, "Instrument Teaching and the National Curriculum," 49.

(3) Trusts, Private Public-Private Partnerships, Community Music Groups, and Visiting Artists

As reflected in the neoliberal concept of *efficiency* and *privatization* that supported *public-private partnerships*, music educators, when having enough funds to do so, found themselves able to draw on organizations, businesses, and individuals from outside of the school to support music learning and provision. In some cases, LEAs, no longer able to financially support those activities associated with their Music Support Services, handed over these responsibilities to various agencies or trusts.³⁰⁵ Schools could then choose to “purchase” services from these trusts through the budgeting framework supported by LMS,³⁰⁶ or, as discussed below, look for alternative methods of funding with which to acquire services offered by either LEAs or specific agencies or trusts.

One outcome of both the Conservative emphasis on schools building local connections to the community and the increased economic restraints felt by both educational institutions *and* community music groups was the development of a “cottage industry” of support provided by local orchestras and other professional musicians. For example, in the early 1990s onward, orchestral musicians had the opportunity to undertake training that would allow them to visit schools and work with children effectively.³⁰⁷ Overall, such visits were often welcomed in the schools, both for the relief and profession development they offered generalist teachers responsible for teaching music and for the variety of experiences to which they could expose students.³⁰⁸ In addition, there were often available free of charge or partially subsidized as a stipulation of public funding for the organization.³⁰⁹

Another area of support was the business community itself. Teachers were encouraged to take advantage of the fact that, “many businesses see it as increasingly important for them to support the community in which they operate in order to be, and be

³⁰⁵ Stephens, Moore, and Smith, “Support for the Music Curriculum,” 49.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁰⁷ Helen Stowasser, “Some Personal Observations of Music Education in Australia, North American, and Great Britain,” *International Journal of Music Education* 22, no. 1 (1993): 21-22.

³⁰⁸ Stephens, Moore, and Smith, “Support for the Music Curriculum,” 52-54. See also Gary Beauchamp, “INITIAL TRAINING + INSET = Confident Teachers. A Formula for Success?” *British Journal of Music Education* 14, no. 1(1997): 78. INSET is the English acronym for in-service training.

³⁰⁹ Stephens, Moore, and Smith, “Support for the Music Curriculum,” 55.

seen to be, good citizens. Support given to music education by business will often be considered by them within the context of their overall community program.”³¹⁰ To this end, teachers could look to the business community in hope of support in the form of such things as instrument and equipment donations, access to facilities and transportation, “secondment of staff,” or even something as little as advertising space in a business window.³¹¹ In some cases, the impetus for support from business was less altruistic. For example, the UK Silver Burdett branch would provide free inservice training for teachers who were interested in employing their method books in their schools.³¹²

The resources to support music learning and provision in this section reflect the extent to which music teachers and schools were largely responsible for arranging their own provisions for music NC implementation. In 1995 the MWG (by then renamed the Music Forum), responding to the publication of the revised 1995 music curriculum, published suggestions on such resources available to teachers. This included advice on how teachers should solicit donations from “sponsors, trusts, and the business world,” in addition to pointing out other opportunities for which teacher could apply, including receiving proceeds from the National Lottery.³¹³ As seen in the example given below, the wealth of resources available to teachers through these external organizations made for opportunities to plan rich and varied musical experiences under the requirements of the music NC (when the funding for such resources were available), but also demanded a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of music teachers, consultants, and heads who were already sometimes struggling under teacher workload. In addition, these provisions and the provision related to private music guide publications discussed below, reflect the ways in which music in the NC was supported through either specific partnerships with the *private* sphere or in which it was viewed as a potential market for education-related business endeavours.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 57.

³¹¹ Ibid., 57-50.

³¹² Andrew Peggie, “A Report of a National Conference for Head Teachers, Education Officers, Governors, Parents, Teachers and Head of Music Services Organized Jointly by Music for Youth and the Music Education Council,” *British Journal of Music Education* 11, no. 2 (1994): 187.

³¹³ Stephens, Moore and Smith, “Support for the Music Curriculum”, 57, 59-61.

(4) School Level Learning and Assessment Resources

Within the classroom, KS 1 and 2 music teachers drew from a variety of resources to support music learning, including radio and television programs, visiting teachers (including consultants and teachers responsible for music and those external organizations described above), and “published music schemes” such as the Silver Burdett music learning series.³¹⁴ Not surprisingly, teachers with less or no training and confidence in their music teaching abilities felt most comfortable with using television or radio-based resources and less comfortable with published schemes. Gary Beauchamp’s work, like the OFSTED inspections, also revealed that some English schools did not possess any musical resources with which to support teachers’ work.³¹⁵ Authors and publishers also sought to capitalize on the introduction of the NC by creating books to guide teachers through and provide activities and assessments for work under the NC.³¹⁶

Time was also a valuable resource allocated at the local level. OFSTED initially recommended that five percent of school time be dedicated to music in order to achieve full curriculum implementation,³¹⁷ yet this did not appear to be enough time to cover the entire breadth of the curriculum, particularly in KS 3. Gammon, for example, calculated that teachers in KS 3 would have approximately 20 minutes a week to address Programmes of Study such as “relate music to its social, historical, and cultural context” and “identify how and why musical styles and traditions change over time and from place to place.”³¹⁸ Even in the 1998 school year, there were still some schools where music was “virtually missing” from some students timetables because of poor head teacher supervision of teachers’ subject allocation time.³¹⁹ As with aspects of resource provision, this was not necessarily the norm; however policy structures did not exist to avoid such events, nor to ensure consistent allocation of time as a teaching resource

³¹⁴ Gary Beauchamp, “INITIAL TRAINING + INSET,” 78.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 80.

³¹⁶ See for example, Barry Barker, *Practical Guides: Music. Teaching Within the National Curriculum* (Warwickshire: Scholastic, 1992) and d’Reen Struthers, *What Primary Teachers Should Know about Music for the National Curriculum* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Educational, 1994).

³¹⁷ Christine Wood, “Materials for the Classroom at Key Stages 1, 2, and 3,” in *Teaching Music in the National Curriculum*, eds. George Pratt and John Stephens (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers), 78.

³¹⁸ Gammon, “What is Wrong with School Music?” 107.

³¹⁹ OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music.”

across the English education system. As discussed above, the provision and acquisition of physical resources, such as teaching space and instruments, were also affected by local policy decisions.

In addition to these in-classroom resources, a plethora of scholarly work and research on music in the NC was published throughout the 1990s regarding issues in and various frameworks for teaching elements of the music NC.³²⁰ Indeed, while not all teachers may have had access to or interest in reading it, the *British Journal of Music Education* was founded in 1984 partially in response to changes made to education by the Thatcher government and the need to consider the role and value of music education within her vision of society.³²¹

Because the variety of resources available to support music NC implementation was incredibly varied and often specific to their availability within a school's location (and given, of course, that they could be financed), I have provided an example of how these resources from the central, regional or private, and local levels might work together. The example is drawn from a 1993 report from a head teacher of a primary school with only 160 students. Stating first that she was "lucky" to have five out of six teachers comfortable with teaching music, one of which held the music consultant position, and so did not have to hire a music specialist, she shared that,

We have supplemented our music provision with multi-cultural workshops, composition work with professional musicians, and concerts by staff of the LEA's Support Services and other visitors. . . . [The LEA's] Music Support Services offer is now extended to include peripatetic teachers to lead whole-class music lessons and singing workshops on a 'pay-as-you-use' basis. Children also have access to recorder lessons, a guitar group, and handbell/handchime ringing, run by members of staff as voluntary extra-curricular activities. . . . [The local school Music Association] provides opportunities for children to perform in massed choirs and orchestras, take part in instrumental workshops and music/drama workshops, or perform their own school's music item in the local theatre. . . all

³²⁰ A quick survey of this study's bibliography is enough to establish this fact; however, for some specific examples, one could look to sources such as Hamish Preston, "Listening, Appraising and Composing: Case Studies in Music," *British Journal of Music Education* 11, no. 1 (1994): 11, 15-55; Patricia Flynn and George Pratt, "Developing an Understanding of Appraising Music with Practising Primary Teachers," *British Journal of Music Education*, 12, no. 2 (1995): 127-158; and Thomas, "The Music National Curriculum."

³²¹ Paynter, "Editorial," 3-5.

that is required of schools is to make the necessary domestic arrangements to transport groups of children to various venues, and ensure staff cover.³²²

Here then, we see the full potential of a rich and varied music program as provided through multiple forms and levels of instruction and multiple teachers under the NC in a school that still had access to LEA Music Support Services and a relatively good amount of funding. We turn now to how funding was provided to support music NC implementation and assessment after the 1988 ERA.

Sources of Available Funding

Funding for music NC implementation came from several sources during the Conservative Regime. The government itself created a Grants for Education Support and Training scheme to which LEAs could apply for funding to purchase books, equipment (including that which supported the integration of information technology), fund teacher and support staff training, and support administrative arrangements and assessment development. GMS schools could apply for similar funding through a Special Purposes (Development) Grant.³²³ However, as discussed below, this funding was dedicated to implementing the NC in general; head teachers would ultimately make the decision whether grants awarded by the government would be specifically earmarked for implementation of the music NC. LEAs could also direct additional development funds to larger, organized groups of schools within the LEA, which could then be used for the initial development of resources to implement the music NC.³²⁴

As discussed above, in order to make up for a gradual reduction in funding, schools formed direct and indirect sponsorship links with the business community.³²⁵ In relation to the music NC, Ruth Thomas has tracked this issue to the Education Secretary's response to the 1991 MWG's interim report, wherein the MWG chairman emphasized the importance of funding and provision for instrumental music to support the central curricular goals of performance and composition. In response, the Education Secretary

³²² Majorie Glynne-Jones, "A Report from the Third Biennial Conference of the UK Council for Music Education and Training: Managing New Forms of Provision of Music Support Services," *British Journal of Music Education* 10, no. 3 (1993): 264.

³²³ Department of Education and Science, "The Education Reform Act 1988," 3.

³²⁴ Glynne-Jones, "A Report from the Third Biennial Conference," 265.

³²⁵ Liz Gordon and Geoff Whitty, "Giving the 'Hidden Hand' a Helping Hand? The Rhetoric and Reality of Neoliberal Reform in England and New Zealand," *Comparative Education* 33, no. 3 (1997): 460.

stated that the MWG had to be “realistic” about the amount of funding that could be provided and that, anyway, it was not within their job description to recommend the resources needed to carry out the curriculum. This, Thomas pointed out, was somewhat akin to deciding “not to teach reading as a part of the English curriculum because books are expensive.”³²⁶ In its final report to the NCC, the MWG acknowledged that the immediate funding needed to support curricular implementation would be problematic by suggesting that spending be prioritized, with in-service training and provision for classroom instruments located at or near the top of the list.³²⁷

By the time the music NC was implemented in 1992, head teachers were already feeling the pressure from the Conservative government emphasis to raise standards in the core subject areas of English, mathematics and science. Given that certain subjects, such as music, did not have to undergo the same assessment scrutiny as these subjects, and that assessment of these core subjects were also made public through national assessment regimes, it is not surprising that many head teachers, in a bid to keep student enrollment high and thus money in the budget, would focus their monetary resources on supporting the core curriculum. Under the Local Schools Management model, with its per pupil funding formula, this was well within the purview of head teachers and schools governors. Indeed, the general theme that emerges in relation to educational funding was an extension of the indirect market control. As summarized by one head teacher who wished to work with other schools in her LEA to reach an agreed upon policy for charging students for instrumental lessons, reaching such decisions was difficult because “each school and its governors are quite rightly determined to do what is best for their own school.”³²⁸

As discussed above, head and music teachers increasingly turned to external sources of funding to support music education. The same head teacher mentioned in the previous paragraph, and who was actually quite supportive of music education, stated in 1993 that “a large proportion of the of the money [for overall music provision] comes from capitation, but it is becoming increasingly necessary to apply for grants, seek

³²⁶ Thomas, “The Music National Curriculum,” 218.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 219.

³²⁸ Glynne-Jones, “A Report for the Third Biennial Conference,” 265.

sponsorship, ‘demand’ voluntary parental contributions, or run our own fund-raising activities for specific projects.”³²⁹ For, while the 1998 ERA established that learning inside of regular school hours had to be free of charge, schools could charge a fee for extra-curricular activities and learning, such as music lessons, and that “voluntary contributions from parents and others” could be made in support of *any* school activity.³³⁰

As noted above, a shortfall in funding for music education led both to the gradual decline of instrumental music lessons for students and other LEA music services and an increase in *public-private partnership*. In essence, much of music education was “subsidized” not by tax payer dollars, but by private industry, reflecting the neoliberal concepts of *reduced social expenditure*, *evolution* and *spontaneous order* (in that business interests had the potential to shape lesson content), *user fees* and *fundraising*. Looking back on music education from her 1998 perspective, Pitts asserted that “the way forward for music education seems continually restricted by school budgets.”³³¹ Funding for music education—or rather the ability of teachers and administrators to secure funding for music education—as well as the pressures exerted on schools to perform well on published, standardized tests of core curriculum and thus divert resources to those ends contributed, once again, uneven support for implementation and provision of the music NC.

Teacher Training, Administrative Structures, and Workload

As discussed in Chapter Five, as the Conservative regime progressed through the 1990s and the Teacher Training Authority was created and began its work, emphasis shifted away from more theoretical initial teacher training to practical training in the workplace.³³² This resulted in a reduction in study topics such as educational psychology, sociology, and psychology. Instead, music teachers in training took a single, broader course in educational issues and focused on choral, instrumental, technology, *or* composition while spending 66% of their educational hours in a practical teaching

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Keith Swanwick, “Music Education and The Education Reform Act,” *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1768 (1990): 307.

³³¹ Pitts, “The Implications of Historical Research for Contemporary Music Education,” 30.

³³² See Chapter Five, pp. 215-18.

situation.³³³ One outcome was that teachers spent less time learning theoretical material and more time in practicum situations, learning through an “apprenticeship” model with local teachers rather than through previous models of teacher education built more on the acquisition of theory and the development of reflective practitioners.³³⁴ Given the challenges that teachers experienced in implementing and teaching the music NC as revealed through the above discussion of OFSTED inspections above, it could be reasonably argued that such a model was not always appropriate for training music teachers, particularly when that training was carried out by generalist teachers who felt uncomfortable teaching music. What is important to note here, then, is that these training practices underpinned and reproduced the traditionally inconsistent levels experience and knowledge general teachers brought to bear on music teaching in England.

Consistent in-service training for teachers working with the music NC also remained elusive. As discussed above, by the early 1990s, it was well-established that music education up to the end of KS 2 was taught by the general classroom teacher, although some schools still retained specialists and others had no teacher responsible for teaching music. In addition to the responsibility of doing their own general teaching, these consultants often had responsibility for ongoing in-service school-based training of other teachers, which was undertaken in part by visiting a generalist’s classroom and teaching a demonstration lesson. Alternately, they could create a series of lessons for the generalist to implement.³³⁵ As noted above, it was entirely possible that the teacher responsible for music would not be a music specialist.³³⁶ Indeed, in their final report, the MWG noted that only a small number of teachers at KS 1 and 2 had music teaching qualifications and encouraged an increase in initial and in-service teaching training in addition to increasing the number of music specialists and consultants working in schools. The latter two were seen as particularly important in boosting the confidence of teachers who had few musical qualifications yet were responsible for the day-to-day

³³³ Stowwaser, “Some Personal Observations,” 22.

³³⁴ Keith Swanwick and John Paynter, “Teacher Education and Music Education: An Editorial View,” *British Journal of Music Education* 10, no. 1 (1993): 6.

³³⁵ H. Eugene Karjala, “Thinking Globally: Teaching in England,” *Music Educators Journal* 81, no. 6 (1995): 32.

³³⁶ Beauchamp, “INITIAL TRAINING + INSET,” 74.

implementation of the music curriculum.³³⁷ In addition, research published in 1993 indicated that, even at KS 3, it was not uncommon for music teachers, presumably specialists, to still be uncomfortable with the types of activities and assessments that were undertaken to prepare these students for the GCSE, particularly in the areas of performance and composition.³³⁸ And while teacher confidence appeared to increase over the course of the 1990s, this issue still warranted comment by OFSTED in its 1998-1999 primary and 1999-2000 secondary inspection reports, particularly in relation to assessment in the latter.³³⁹ In addition, secondary specialists sometimes had difficulty implementing the NC because of, as discussed above, their workload necessary to sustain a commitment to and co-ordination of the many extra-curricular activities that might be offered at the secondary level. Indeed, these extra-curricular activities were viewed in at least some schools as important “public relation exercises.”³⁴⁰ In fact, as demonstrated by the above discussions, the NC, its assessment practices, and funding prompted quite a bit additional administrative work for teachers, music consultants, and/or head music teachers in terms of creating local school policy, soliciting funding, and coordinating the various elements of a schools’ music program, including extra-curricular activities and visiting teachers.

Part of the larger issue with teacher training was the scope of the material to be covered as well as the general unfamiliarity with which many teachers had with it. One implication of a broad definition of “music” in the National curriculum was that music teachers would need to expand their knowledge from the types of traditional training in Western music approaches that was typically the focus of their education.³⁴¹ As Beauchamp noted, “Perhaps more than any other subject, music makes demands on teachers to deliver knowledge and understanding which they themselves may lack.”³⁴² This was particularly true as both composition and increased emphasis on student

³³⁷ Thomas, “The Music National Curriculum,” 220.

³³⁸ Spencer. “GCSE Music,” 74.

³³⁹ OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1998-99 – Music” and OFSTED, “Ofsted subject reports – 1999-2000 - Secondary – Music.”

³⁴⁰ Dorothy Lawson, Charles Plummeridge, and Keith Swanwick, “Music and the National Curriculum in Primary Schools,” *British Journal of Music Education* 11, no. 1 (1994): 5.

³⁴¹ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 184.

³⁴² Beauchamp, “INITIAL TRAINING + INSET,” 69.

selected and preferred genres began to filter down into the curriculum in support of work to be done at the GCSE level. As discussed above in relation to funding, this was unfortunate because, “subjugated by the 'greater' needs of the school as a whole,” teachers had conceived of and experienced training in foundations subjects, “as a luxury regulated by the perceived needs of the school by the school management team, rather than a personal prerogative of individual teachers.”³⁴³ Based on the above discussion, it would seem that, even after the Conservatives left office, consistent and effective teacher in-service training and confidence still remained a cause of great concern in relation to the music NC and its assessment procedures. This is not to say that there were not some excellent institutions with programs for training music teachers or that effective in-service training opportunities did not exist, only that many teachers—particular generalists—remained underserved in this respect.

Effects of Local Management of Schools and Grant-Maintained Schools

As described in Chapter Five, both LMS and GMS had similar effects on planning and budgeting at the local school level. Among other things, head teachers and governors became responsible for (1) managing the majority of the schools budget; (2) hiring, evaluating, and much of the training of teachers; and (3) ensuring the National Curriculum was taught, including foundations subjects such as music, and that student achievement was assessed and reported. These three duties had particular and sometimes contradictory effects on the implementation of the music NC and its assessment, much of which has been outlined above. In summary, with dwindling LEA support (and in the case of GMS, voluntary removal from the LEA) and overall funding, head teachers and governors had to make decisions regarding the extent to which they wanted to focus on provision and resources for music in relation to other subjects, while still being held to account for music curriculum delivery through its curriculum subject policies, development plans, OFSTED inspections, and, by implication, to students and parents as *educational consumers*. This inevitably led to questions such as whether or not school administrators should “be having to make either-or decisions about allocating resources

³⁴³ Ibid., 71.

to music or science,³⁴⁴ including the amount of time spent on each subject. At any rate, it seems clear that much of the support provision and music implementation relied heavily on administrator attitudes and their desire to remain competitive in the quasi-market in the post-1988 ERA era. This once again provided an opportunity for unequal music curriculum implementation across the English system.

As noted above, one solution to decreased access to funding was to increase partnerships with external agencies, organizations and business, thus supporting *reduced social expenditure* through *public-private partnerships*. Another was solution was to attract support for the school through extra-curricular programs and performances. These “exercises in public relations,” discussed above in relation to teacher workload, were also viewed, although with discomfort by some heads teachers as occurring “within the context of an increasingly competitive educational service,”³⁴⁵ and thus were an additional outcome of LMS and the per-pupil funding formula. Finally, schools were able to set their own *user fees* and rely on *fundraising* to support music programs. This, particularly in relation to access to instruments and instrumental tuition and performance experiences, created an inequity within the system related to individual socio-economic status should schools not be able to find other ways of funding these services or simply make them a priority.³⁴⁶

Conclusion

The development, implementation of, and provision for music as set out by the English National Curriculum during the Thatcher and Major Conservative neoliberal reforms to education in England reflected the historical tension between central government and local school and teacher autonomy. It also reflected the tensions between traditionalist and progressive approaches to education that had characterized English education since the 1960s. Although it was the Conservative’s original intention to create a knowledge-based *standardized music curriculum* and *assessment* practices, pressures from those responsible for implementing and assessing the English NC and from those

³⁴⁴ Peggie, “A Report of a National Conference,” 183.

³⁴⁵ Lawson, Plummeridge and Swanwick, “Music in the National Curriculum in Primary Schools,” 5.

³⁴⁶ Pitts, *A Century of Change in Music Education*, 214-15.

directly involved and invested in the field of music education, as well as government's decision to ultimately focus on standardized assessment of "core" subjects, led to a curriculum that was more reflective of the GCSE's progressive ideals. In this, the music NC represents a fairly significant achievement of educationalists over what was quite powerful central and QUANGO control. After all, even though the Education Secretaries had the power—and even went so far as to publish intentional—changes to the music NC, ultimately the music NC largely reflected the progressive ideals that underscored by the research of HMI and other education commission, the original reports of the MWG, and the GCSE—ideals which were themselves based on the earlier work of music educationalists such as Keith Swanwick and John Paynter.

Music as a subject in the NC was discursively positioned as both a "Cinderella" subject³⁴⁷ and as a subject in which schools and teachers were expected to develop specific levels of student achievement, thus reflecting the neoliberal concepts of *educational excellence*. This was accomplished through a combination of positing music as a "foundation subject," developing its curriculum and assessment practices last among the NC subjects, and relaxing (or, as phrased in the NC documents, making more "flexible") the rigorous and external assessment practices associated with *core* subjects, while at the same time holding schools and teachers *accountable* for ensuring curriculum delivery and a certain *standard* of student achievement (or *educational excellence*) through local music curriculum subject policies, contributions to school Development Plans, and, ultimately, OFSTED inspections.

The tension between central and local control is perhaps most evident in the effects of LMS and GMS on implementation and provision of music under the NC. Through *decentralizing* or *devolving* much of the formerly held LEA responsibilities onto head teachers and governors—now serving largely as school managers and reflecting the concept of *managerialism*—while requiring them to ensure effective curriculum delivery in a quasi-education market, head teachers were often placed in the position of having to prioritize one subject over another when reduced funding and clawed-back LEA services made it difficult to provision fully all subjects in the NC. "Delivery" of the music

³⁴⁷ Gordon Cox, "Music in the National Curriculum: Some Historical Perspectives," *The Curriculum Journal* 4, no. 3 (1993): 358.

curriculum and students' achievement within it, then, was enmeshed in the larger quasi-educational market created by LMS, GMS, and a per-pupil funding formula. The “flexibility” built into the music NC and its assessment practices that—a flexibility that contradicted the neoliberal concepts of *standardized curriculum* and *assessment*—allowed great variation in PoS content and assessment. LMS and GMS further supported variation in that they gave head teachers and governors the power to make far-reaching decisions regarding music curriculum subject allocation time, teacher training, and provision for music education.

Variation in the content of, access to, and provision for music education was also promoted through the need for schools to form *public-private* partnerships in order to *reduce educational expenditure* and *balance-budgets*. Shepherd and Vulliamy pointed out how this ironically also served to undermine neoconservative ideals of a system of music education focused on Western “classical music” and traditional English folk songs and heritage. In many cases, the external organizations, trusts, and businesses that were employed to fill the gap left by declining LEA Music Support Services operated in such a way as to reflect students' musical interests, thus the neoliberal “market ideology underpinning [Conservative] reforms was running precisely in the opposite direction” when it came to the music NC.³⁴⁸ For example, *private-partners* offered instrumental tuition on keyboards, guitars, and drum kits knowing that those services would be in more demand than the traditional orchestral instrument. Thus, neoconservative ideals were disrupted in some aspects of music NC implementation because of market *evolution* and *spontaneous order*. Finally, in addition to funding structures shaping learning opportunities and curricular content under the music NC due to the influence of private companies and trusts, disparity was created in music provision due to the institution of *user fees* and the ability of some communities to *fund raise* where others could not.

Chapter Five's overview of the English national state-funded education system opened with the assertion that it was initially conceived of as “a national system, locally administered.”³⁴⁹ Comparing this 1830s ideal to Conservative reforms and the place of music education within them during the 1980s and 1990s, we see that this still holds true.

³⁴⁸ Shepherd and Vulliamy, “The Struggle for Culture,” 37.

³⁴⁹ See Chapter Five, fn. 9.

Overall, the story of the music NC in the English curriculum is one of tension between central power and the local power and responsibility held by head teachers and governors to ensure its effective delivery. Tension also existed among those responsible for teaching and those responsible for the regulation of educational. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that, although OFSTED inspections reported gradual but consistent improvement in curriculum implementation, teaching, and student achievement throughout the Conservative era, music education in England's educational system remained not only incredibly diverse in its content and methods of delivery, but also in term of its provision, status, and access to English students.

Having reviewed the structure of education and neoliberal education reforms affecting music education in England, we turn now to a similar undertaking for the province of Ontario, Canada.

Chapter Seven: Neoliberal Reforms to Ontario's Public Education System (1995-2003)

Introduction

As with Chapter Five, this chapter describes significant neoliberal education reform in a specific state: Ontario, Canada. The material presented in this chapter covers a wide range of education reform and reaction to the reform of Ontario's public education system during the Mike Harris Progressive Conservative regime. A chronological timeline of important events related to neoliberal education reform in Ontario can be found in Appendix D. In addition, a chronological list of relevant legislation passed by the Harris government with content summary is included in Appendix E.¹

As with the English system of education, certain aspects of schooling in Ontario have been left out. I have not addressed music education in Kindergarten as the curriculum and assessment practices developed under the Harris regime were centred on Grades 1-12. The study is also limited to English language school boards as insufficient historical data exist to draw inferences about the history of music education in French school boards and the effect of Ontario's education reforms on them. Nor has any differentiation been made between public and Catholic schools boards as music education has historically been included in both; however, more historical data exist reflecting the experiences of the public boards than the separate boards.² Ontario's magnet schools, which are schools devoted to study in a particular subject area, such as the arts, have been omitted because they are relatively few. Finally, I have not specifically addressed the historical problem of where Grades 7, 8, and 9 fall along the elementary-secondary spectrum as, prior to the development of the Harris government's curriculum, they were

¹ All Bills and their contents referenced in this section are available through the Legislative Assembly of Ontario Archives website, accessed September 12-24, 2010, http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_all.do?locale=en.

² Publically funded Catholic schools, sometimes referred to as "separate schools," are a constitutionally guaranteed right in Canada.

categorized as either belonging to elementary, secondary, or “transition years” education. Indeed, they are still problematic in terms of age grouping, with “primary” education usually referring to Grades 1-3, “junior” to Grades 4-6, “intermediate” to Grades 7-10 and “senior” referring to Grades 11-13/OAC (when Grade 13 still existed in Ontario). Instead, and unless otherwise noted, I treat Grades 7 and 8 as the end of elementary education and Grade 9 as the beginning as secondary education as that is how those grades were categorized under the Harris curriculum.

As with Chapter Five, this chapter begins with an overview of the development of public education in Ontario, Canada in order to situate the Harris era reforms as a continuation of or divergence from past established structures, values, and traditions

Background: Education in Ontario Prior to the 1995 Election

Education in Ontario: Early Years to the 1960s

Paul Axelrod wrote that, “the debates around state-regulated schooling point to an ongoing theme in the history of Canadian education: the tensions between centralized, bureaucratic authority and local, community-based control.”³ Certainly the history of Ontario’s public education reflects these tensions. Public education in Ontario began even before Canada existed as a country. In fact, it began even before Ontario existed as “Ontario,” but was still the English colony known as *Upper Canada*.⁴ As such, clear connections can be made between early public education in Ontario and that in England. As in England, early education in Ontario was tied to the church. In addition, influential United Empire Loyalists settling in Canada during and after the American War of Independence brought their own influence. These factors combined, as Axelrod noted, “the principals of conservatism, social hierarchy, monarchism, and anti-Americanism” with the support of church control over education to inform the values of early education in Ontario.⁵ Early legislation in the province, such as the 1807 District School Act and

³ Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 38-39.

⁴ I have consolidated the terms *Upper Canada*, *Canada West*, and *Ontario* into simply *Ontario* to avoid confusion.

⁵ Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling*, 7.

1816 Common School Act, created the structures to provide some funding for public education (while stipulating that all teachers had to be British citizens). However, as in England, early education in Ontario was provided through a combination of less-than-well funded public schools and privately funded schools. There were also schools run entirely by Christian churches and schools that were privately run but received some funding from the government.⁶ The latter would evolve to reflect the dual nature of Ontario's educational funding model up to the Harris era reforms, where some money was given to schools boards from the province while school boards were also permitted to raise additional funds by taxing local citizens. Thus, until the Harris era, school boards retained a good deal of local control over their budgets and funding allowances. In addition, a few "grammar" schools existed for those middle-class students who wished to extend the education given at the "common" schools.⁷ As in England, secondary education in the early to mid-years of Ontario's public education supported well-to-do, upwardly-mobile middle class citizens. Early education in Ontario also reflected English merit pay for teachers based on trustee examination of their qualifications and student progress.⁸

In 1844, Egerton Ryerson was appointed Ontario's first superintendent of education and he is generally credited with creating Ontario's first true, universal system of elementary education—a system that began with a great deal of centralized control. This was partly due to an 1846 report written by Ryerson after he travelled to Europe that reviewed and recommended how various educational systems he observed there might be implemented in Ontario. Shortly after—and influenced by—his report, the 1846 Common Schools Act was passed.⁹ Under the act, Ryerson became responsible for allocating money to the twenty District Councils (which would later become school boards) under which schools were grouped. Students were assigned to schools based on catchment areas. The act also standardized the selection and use of school textbooks in Ontario's

⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Michael F. Murphy, "The Common School Amendment Acts of the 1830s, and the Reshaping of Schooling in London, Ontario," *Historical Studies in Education* 8, no. 2 (1996): 154.

⁹ Encyclopaedia BritannicaOnline. s.v. "Egerton Ryerson," accessed July, 10, 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/514552/Egerton-Ryerson>.

schools in the hope of eliminating teacher-selected American texts deemed unsuitable for Canadian children, replacing them with books of British origin and making textbooks available through a central provincial repository. The 1846 Act also led to a prescribed curriculum of study and a system of teacher training, inspection, and examination.¹⁰ Ryerson also established the Toronto Normal School—a training institute for teachers—in 1847.¹¹

The 1871 Common School Act made education compulsory for elementary-aged students while at the same time it introduced two types of secondary schools: collegiate institutes (for university-bound male students) and secondary schools for those boys and girls who were work-place bound.¹² In his research on public education in Ontario at this time, however, Axelrod found that parents objected to this hierarchical division so that, by the 1880s, most secondary schools offered the same core, academically-oriented curriculum in “English, history, modern languages, science, and mathematics” to both boys and girls who wished to attend.¹³ Most secondary schools from the outset, then, were oriented more toward providing an education much like that of the English grammar schools in England, but to all students in Ontario who wished to attend.

Ryerson—a Methodist minister—was superintendent of Ontario’s schools for almost 30 years. His vision for the value and purpose of education guided the province’s educational structure and content. These ideas are discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight as they directly relate to Ryerson’s strong support for the inclusion of music education in Ontario’s public schools. To summarize here, however, Ryerson’s vision was built on the democratic and Christian moral and social values that he envisioned for a public school system designed for a largely immigrant, agrarian society where living conditions were often challenging. In addition, Ryerson strongly believed that free and accessible public education was necessary to avoid the types of “unguided individualism”

¹⁰ Claude W. Doucet, “Egerton Ryerson, 1803-1882,” *Ryerson University: Archives and Special Collections*, accessed July 10, 2013, <http://library.ryerson.ca/asc/archives/ryerson-history/ryerson-bio>.

¹¹ Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling*, 40. Teachers were not required to obtain certification from the normal school, however.

¹² *Ibid.*, 61.

¹³ *Ibid.* It should be noted that girls were not technically barred from attending these school, just discouraged.

that could tear apart the fragile social fabric that was early Canadian society (particularly as it was positioned next to American manifest destiny and rugged individualism).¹⁴ In order to accomplish these educational goals, he believed that the province needed to maintain strong central control over and inspection of educational curriculum, teaching resources, and implementation. From the very beginning of compulsory, public education in Ontario, then, some distinct trends emerge that would guide structure and policy until the 1960s and, in some cases, beyond: (1) free and open education for the purpose of civilizing and democratizing the largely rural citizenry; (2) an emphasis on membership in the Empire, citizenship as a Canadian, and Christian values; (3) the role of community and success through social cooperation and the privileging of society over the individual; and (4) central control over educational resources such as textbooks, curriculum, teacher training (sometimes voluntary) and performance, inspection of curriculum delivery in schools, and, to a lesser extent, funding. It is interesting to note how deeply embedded the concept of the *collective* was in Ontario public education from its very beginnings as this runs quite contrary to the *individualism* espoused by neoliberal reform. Indeed, as we will see in the discussion of the Harris reforms below, this particular societal value underpinned some of the few reforms that the Harris government was not able to pass or sustain while in government because of intense public anger.¹⁵ It also made it impossible for the types of quasi-educational markets introduced in England to be more than theoretically discussed in Ontario (and even then only with the greatest of care). This attitude of collective society over the individual also helped to support and establish a truly *public* system of education, whereby the quality of education in Ontario's public education was truly high enough that parents did not need to send their children to private schools in order to ensure a quality education and access to elite post-secondary education, as was often the case in England. Thus, expensive private schools, while existing in small numbers in Ontario, have never been a popular alternative to state-provided education for the Ontario public as they have been for the children of the wealthy or 'upwardly-mobile' in England.

¹⁴ Ibid., 25.

¹⁵ Tax breaks for parents who wished to send their children to private school, for example.

The structure of central control over education changed little prior to the 1960s, but educational philosophy did. One notable exception to this was the elimination of inspection of “non-core” subjects (such as music), which is discussed in further detail in Chapter Eight. Influenced by some of the progressive ideas flowing northward from the United States of America, in 1938, the Department of Education¹⁶ published the *Programmes of Studies for Grades I to VI of Public and Separate Schools*, popularly referred to by teachers and administrators as The Little Grey Book while it was in use. In a trend that would remain intact up to and including the Harris regime, The Little Grey Book outlined which subjects and topics elementary teachers should teach without directly instructing them on how curricula should be taught.¹⁷ Of education in general, The Little Grey Book intoned that education should “meet the needs of the child, not those of the adolescent or the adult. . . . The child’s own immediate needs and capacities, then, must determine the character of the experience provided by the elementary school.”¹⁸ Overall, The Little Grey Book supported teacher choice to select teaching approaches and supporting resources based on student interests and to make learning experiential. Curriculum was to be considered activity and experience, not “knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored.”¹⁹ It also gave most of the responsibility of assessment to the teacher, who knew her students best, rather than to external examiners (which had been the case up to that point), noting that students have different abilities, so activities and learning should be tailored to the individual student.²⁰ This new approach was a far cry from previous education policy, which treated children as adults in training.

Another progressive teaching technique was introduced in a 1942 revision of The Little Grey Book aimed at Grades 7 and 8. Teachers were encouraged to teach through

¹⁶ The Ministry in charge of education in Ontario has had several names over its lifetime. Among them are the Department of Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Education and Training. After this point, I have simplified the name as the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) as that was its name under the Harris regime. Specific resource and policy citations may list any of these names depending on the MET’s name at a given date.

¹⁷ R. D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario’s Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 70.

¹⁸ Ontario Department of Education. *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate School Boards* (Toronto: Department of Education, 1938), 6.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid. 9-10.

“enterprises,” which “provide the children experience in social living—experience in selecting worth-while things to do; in arriving at plans of procedure through discussion and mutual consent; in finding the necessary information; in developing the required skills; and in carrying plans through to a successful conclusion.”²¹ At the same time, the 1942 Book re-introduced and re-emphasized a focus on citizenship, community, and cultivation of individual talents and strengths in order to find satisfaction and success as a member of society. Progressive, experiential education with an emphasis on democratic community building and—later—support for Canada as a multicultural nation would continue to dominate government discourse of elementary education until the mid-1990s.

Education in Ontario 1960s-1990s

The most notable change in the structure and content of education in Ontario after the Common Schools Act of 1846 was the expansion of secondary schools to address the needs of all Ontario’s children, which began in the 1960s. At this time, Ontario experienced an economic boom brought about by post-War European construction and agricultural demands. At the same time, it experienced a “baby” boom. This meant a rapid growth in the building of new schools at a time when money was, if not “no object,” at least quite plentiful. In 1961, supported by a federal incentive to increase vocational education, Conservative Premier John Robarts announced a reorganization of education that was one of the first steps to changing the regimented curriculum of the academic secondary school model into a “universal” mode of education meant to address the educational needs and interests of all of Ontario’s children past elementary education—the academically elite and vocationally oriented alike.²² The “Robarts Plan” had three streams: Arts and Science; Business and Commerce; and Science, Technology, and Trades. These streams existed in four and five year versions, allowing students in the five year stream the option to carry on to university after year four or, along with those in the more vocationally-oriented four year stream, join the work force after four years of

²¹ Ontario Department of Education, *Programme of Studies for Grades VII and VIII of the Public and Separate School Boards* (Toronto: The United Press, 1942), 14.

²² Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 48. In this way, the reorganization and reprioritization of Ontario’s high schools reflected many of the concerns addressed in England’s *Half Our Future* document, but without the same depth of class stratification concerns. See Chapter Six, pp. 237-38.

secondary study. Although there were certain challenges presented if a student failed one or two subjects within a particular year of study (thus usually requiring a repeat of the entire year), overall, the new curricular format was meant to “appeal more to the interests and needs of the average student”²³ and would become the basis of the basic (work place bound), general (college bound), and advanced (university bound) secondary school streaming system which emerged in the mid-1980s. Most schools included all three streams, thus, students on different vocational path were not physically separated as they were in the English tripartite system. Indeed, some class, such as music, could and would have included students from all three streams.

This emphasis on structuring education around the needs and interests of the secondary student was further expanded after the 1968 Provincial Committee on Aims and Objective’s Hall-Dennis Report (properly titled *Living and Learning*) was released. Among other things, the Hall-Dennis report recommended changing to a credit based-secondary curriculum, where students would accumulate a certain number of credits in order to graduate either from Grade 12 or the university-required Grade 13.²⁴ While not without its growing pains, this model became the basis for all secondary school education afterward. Subsequent changes to the credit system made it less permissive by introducing a core set of courses (heavily focused on English, mathematics, and sciences) that students must take, including one credit in either music or visual art at the Grade 9 level—the first instance of a mandatory arts credit at the secondary level. Indeed, as discussed further in Chapter Eight, the mandatory arts credit presented an unprecedented opportunity for the inclusion of music as a subject taught within the school day rather than as an extra-curricular activity. This breakdown of the rigid academic secondary school curriculum “trickled down” to the elementary level, so that, by the early 1970s, the policy needed to “dethrone the privileged place of the core academic subjects” on the “presuppositions and practices of the traditional Ontario school system” was in place.²⁵

²³ Ibid., 47.

²⁴ Ibid., 79-80, 94-95.

²⁵ Ibid., 82.

To facilitate this change, the Ontario government gradually gave more power to the school boards to both finance education and write their own curricula, for the first time significantly shifting the balance of central-local power since the 1846 Common Schools Act. A main result of finance and structure reform was the large scale amalgamation of Ontario's thousands of school boards (some of which governed approximately 30 students) in order to fund education. This rationale was similar to the rationale used by the Harris government when it further amalgamated school boards in 1995. Legislation in the mid-1960s reduced the number of boards from about 3500 to 320.²⁶ This allowed the government to fund, through cost saving and income tax, the majority of educational costs, while the boards were still allowed to set their own property tax rates to support the remainder of education.²⁷ R. D. Gidney summarizes:

Given their new financial and human resources, large school boards were expected to operate with a high degree of independence, taking over [the Ministry of Education's] routine supervisory roles such as inspecting and then recommending new teachers for certification, or supervising the operation of the schools. The boards were also expected to provide leadership in program planning and educational innovation; they could now take on such tasks effectively [*sic*], while those close to the scene would be more responsive to local conditions than departmental officials located in faraway Toronto.²⁸

Over the course of the 1960s and early 1970s, province-wide evaluations were abandoned and control of the curriculum was dramatically reduced, with the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) providing general "guidelines" rather than specific curriculum documents and no longer having direct contact with the school boards.²⁹ The "guidelines" nomenclature remained standard up to and including the Harris curriculum reforms when, even though the documents themselves were labelled "curriculum," the content was consistently referred to by the less assertive term "guidelines."

In many ways, the story of Ontario's education system between 1975 and 1995 reflects that of England during the period between the mid-1970s and the curriculum debates of the 1980s. While England elected a Conservative Government fairly soon after

²⁶ Ibid., 48-49.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 51.

²⁹ Ibid.

the debates around the quality of education arose, in Ontario the provincial government would go through a more tumultuous time, with the Progressive Conservative party voted out of power after 42 years in office in 1985, followed by a Liberal government from 1985-1990, then an NDP government from 1990-1995 before the Progressive Conservative government would take power again in 1995. As in England, Ontario experienced economic recession and inflation during the 1980s, although it did not experience the intense, policy-shaping labour unrest that was a feature of recession and inflation in 1980s England (in education and welfare programs, at least, that would happen just prior to and during the Harris reforms in the mid-to-late 1990s). Ontarians did, however, experience a growing discontent over the “permissiveness” of a public education system that some argued did not give students basic job or literacy skills or teach work ethic. At the same time, parents expressed confusion over the new secondary school credit system, which allowed students to graduate without taking any senior level courses as long as they had obtained the required number of credits.³⁰ Whatever the reason, Gidney noted that, “almost as soon as the ministry’s [early-1970s] curriculum and pedagogical innovations had been put in place, they began to provoke controversy” and they were being “dismantled” by the early 1980s.³¹ Even teachers were dissatisfied with the lack of external standards by which students were measured (facilitated, in part, by a multitude of curricula designed by many school boards), the unrestricted choices secondary students were allowed (which also irked Universities, Colleges, and employers, who felt that students did not acquire the knowledge and skill necessary to prepare them for post-secondary study or work), and any sort of specific guidance on what courses should contain, the level of challenge they should present, and how they should be evaluated.³² In other words, the “experiment” in local curricular control had not been well accepted by the government, the public, or many educational administrators and teachers who were historically used to much more curricular guidance and uniformity.

³⁰ Ibid., 87.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 88.

These concerns were partly addressed in the 1974-75 school year, when MET assigned mandatory “core” courses that all high schools students must take. These included four credits in English and two in Canadian studies. This was expanded in 1976 to students in Grades 9 and 10 acquiring two English, two mathematics, two Canadian history or geography, and one science credits.³³ In 1984, the Government released *Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior* (OSIS), which governed the secondary school credit requirements until the Ontario Curriculum was introduced into high schools at the Grade 9 level in 1999. OSIS required 30 credits for graduation, with a core of sixteen compulsory courses that focused on English (five credits, at least 1 credit per grade), mathematics (2 credits, one at the senior level) and science (3 credits, one at the senior level). Students were also required to obtain one credit each in French or English as a second language, Canadian geography, Canadian history, physical education, business or technological studies, and the arts.³⁴ It also established the basic, applied, and academic educational streams referred to above. Through 1974 to the release of the *OSIS* policy, the government gradually took back some of its central control in the area of secondary educational certification.

At the elementary level, the province issued *The Formative Years* in 1975, which laid out “a common framework of goals and aims for education in Ontario” and, “in a general way, the learning opportunities that the programs in the schools should make available” for the primary and junior grades in an attempt to begin re-establishing some sort of general oversight in curricular planning and development.³⁵ *The Formative Years*, however, made it clear that these were broad guidelines and that much of the curricular planning should still take place at the board and classroom level, as that was the best way to ensure a proper “fit” between students’ lives and their educational undertakings.³⁶ As discussed further in Chapter Eight, *The Formative Years* also led the way for a developing trend on emphasizing the importance of a “core curriculum” centred on

³³ Ibid., 94-95.

³⁴ “Copies from Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Secondary Divisions,” from *Navigating High School—Then and Now*, accessed July 16, 2013, <http://www.myblueprint.ca/cs-time-capsule/>.

³⁵ Ministry of Education, *The Formative Years* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer, 1975), 2.

³⁶ Ibid., 2-3.

literacy, mathematics and, later, science and technology. Elementary curriculum guidelines would remain governed by *The Formative Years* until 1995.

By the mid-1990s, Ontario was in the grip of an economic recession and the electorate was frustrated with a New Democratic Party (NDP) government that it perceived as overly bureaucratic and unable to cope with a ballooning deficit and the need to create more jobs in the province.³⁷ Ontarians, and Ontario's political parties, were aware of growing talk of the "knowledge economy," and the educational reforms that had already been made in other important economic jurisdictions, such as England and the United States, that were meant to "improve" education and bring it up to date with the technological and economic times. Many were also still frustrated by the relative permissiveness and lack of consistency in curricular content and assessment. Real change in local control over curriculum and attitudes toward progressive, child-centred education came in the wake of a province-wide report on the state of education in Ontario commissioned by the governing NDP in 1993 and published in January 1995, shortly before the NDP was defeated in the provincial election and replaced by Harris's Progressive Conservatives (PC).³⁸

Entitled *For the Love of Learning: Report of the Royal Commission on Learning*, the report supported the trend that had steadily increased through the 1980s of re-introducing curricular guidelines and emphasizing student development in the "core subject areas" such as Language Arts, mathematics, and science (discussed further in Chapter Eight). Many of the ideas embedded in the Harris reforms were drawn from *For the Love of Learning*. These included: removing Ontario Academic Credits (i.e., "grade 13") from the secondary curriculum; providing more detailed curricular guidelines for "core" subjects from Grades 1-12; creating province-wide standardized report cards; implementing province-wide *standardized testing* in the areas of literacy and mathematics as well as a *high-stakes* literacy test that students were required to pass in order to graduate from high-school; legislating various procedures to regulate teacher

³⁷ See Chapter Three, pp. 106-107.

³⁸ Suzanne Majhanovich, "Change in Public Education: Globalization in Action? The Case of Ontario, Canada," *Planning and Changing*, Special Issue: Perspective on International and Global Education 33, no. 1&2 (2002): 62.

certification; the creation of several “arms length” organizations (i.e., *QUANGOs*) to regulate teachers and testing in the province and to advise the government on how to proceed with reform; and implementing various procedures to give more “day-to-day” powers to administrators and parents.³⁹ This last item included respecting the NDP’s creation of “school councils,” which consisted of parents, members of the community, and school administrators who were meant to advise school board trustees and principals, thus embodying the concept of *share-ownership*.⁴⁰ These policy changes are discussed in further detail below; however, they are mentioned here to demonstrate that, even before the Harris government took office, those responsible at the provincial level for Ontario’s public education had begun to recognize the need to restructure the education system in order to “bring it in line” with a growing world-wide shift toward neoliberal policies that would make Ontario appear more economically attractive in the global, *knowledge economy*. This was accomplished, in part, by returning to a system with greater central control.

In response to *For the Love of Learning*, the NDP government released *The Common Curriculum* in 1995, which stated what students should learn by the end of Grades 3, 6, and 9. As Stephen A. Anderson and Sonia Ben Jaafar summarize, the introduction of the NDP’s *Common Curriculum* “brought the concepts of outcomes-based learning and curriculum integration in Ontario curriculum policy; all students were expected to attain a common set of pre-specified learning outcomes.”⁴¹ It was the final curriculum document published before the Harris government’s *Ontario Curriculum* and was meant to support some of the neoliberal changes proposed in *For the Love of Learning*. It also satisfied the public’s (and to some extent teachers’ and administrators’) desire for greater consistency across curriculum in Ontario. The *Common Curriculum*

³⁹ Stephen A. Anderson and Sonia Ben Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” Working Paper for Sub-Project 2 of *The Evolution of Teaching Personelle in Canada*, a SSRCH Major Collaborative Research Initiative Project (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 2003): 12, accessed September 10, 2010, fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~icec/policytrends.pdf.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴¹ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 8. It is interesting to note that concomitant to the release of *The Common Curriculum*, the NDP government released documents entitled *Provincial Standards Language, 1-9* and *Provincial Standards Mathematics 1-9*.

makes active reference to the *knowledge economy*; the first section of the introduction is entitled “education in a changing world” with subsections on “employability skills,” “skills for lifelong learning,” and “global perspectives.”⁴² “It is generally agreed,” it stated,

that in order to live and work with success in a fast-changing world, our students need to develop; (1) creative thinking skills that will enable them to apply knowledge and information in a variety of situations and to solve problems involving a wide range of factors and issues; (2) the motivation and the ability to continue to learn and develop new skills throughout life; (3) values and social skills that will allow them to participate fully in a society whose composition, structure and needs are constantly changing.⁴³

The document claimed that it was “based on a commitment to *excellence* and *equity* and a recognition of the need for *partnership* and *accountability*”⁴⁴—all adjacent or peripheral concepts that support neoliberal education, with the exception of *equality* replaced by the historical Ontarian focus on *equity*. It moved from an implication that students *should* have certain experiences and opportunities to directly stating “the observable and/or measurable knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to have developed at certain key stages of their schooling.”⁴⁵ It contained a set of ten “essential outcomes” that closely resemble the key learning areas, strategies, and goals discussed in Chapter Four.⁴⁶ Some examples include the ability to “communicate effectively,” “solve problems and make responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking,” “use technology effectively” and “apply the skills needed to work and get along with other people.”⁴⁷ The exception that lay outside of the typical list of “key learning areas” was the eighth outcome, “apply aesthetic judgement in everyday life,” which can be seen as in keeping with the historical emphasis on the aesthetic properties of visual art and music education in past elementary curriculum guidelines.

⁴² Ministry of Education, *The Common Curriculum* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1995), 6-7.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8. (original emphasis)

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 9. Indeed, although there is no hard evidence to support it, quotes such as this seem to imply that the *Common Curriculum* was influenced by pre-Dearing English National Curriculum.

⁴⁶ See Chapter Four, pp. 138-40.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Education, *The Common Curriculum*, 26-27.

Moving into the Harris era, then, public education in Ontario had moved from a strong system of central control where school boards had little control over curriculum content and resources and student accreditation, through a period of weaker central control where school boards and schools were largely responsible for developing curriculum, selecting resources, and assessing/accrediting students, to a place somewhat in between the two spectrums. Teachers and school boards had always been responsible for designing lesson content, and assessment practices had been “local” territory since the 1960s. Educational funding models had also changed very little since school board amalgamation in the 1960s, with the province providing educational “grants” to the school boards to distribute to schools while still allowing boards to tax local citizens in order to further support education and local educational initiatives. The system itself, then, reflected a fine “dance” between central and local control.

Harris Government Education Discourse

Pre-1995 Election

As stated in Chapter Three, by the mid-1990s, Ontario was in the grip of an economic recession and the electorate was frustrated with an NDP government that it perceived as overly bureaucratic and unable to cope with a ballooning deficit and the need to create more jobs in the province.⁴⁸ Harris saw education as a major part of improving Ontario’s economy and the fiscal state. It was a target for decreased government spending and bureaucracy (*reduced social expenditures and balanced budgets*), a platform to increase *efficient* production of *human capital*, a vehicle for promoting *self-reliance* through the creation of employable *knowledge workers* (and thus decreasing demand on the welfare system, which was also to undergo substantial reform), and a key component in helping the world see that Ontario was “open for business” in the *knowledge economy*. As R.D. Gidney states, “in education, above all, the Tories were determined ‘to do better for less.’”⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See Chapter 3, pp. 106-07.

⁴⁹ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 244.

The importance of education reform was clear from the very beginning of the Progressive Conservative (PC) campaign. The foundation of its platform and the blueprint for its execution was *The Common Sense Revolution (CSR)* document released the year before the 1995 election.⁵⁰ Education is mentioned extensively throughout the document and a substantial section of its twenty-one pages is devoted to it. Here, statements such as “[it’s time] to ask ourselves how we can spend more money on education than ever before, but our children aren’t able to get the kind of education they need to secure a good and prosperous future” are underpinned by the neoliberal concepts of *efficiency, human capital* and *self-reliance*.⁵¹ And while the *CSR* promised full funding for “education spending in the classroom,”⁵² it also declared that “too much money is now being spent on consultants, bureaucracy and administrators,” and promised that PC education reforms would promote an agenda of fiscal responsibility.⁵³ The *CSR* went on to state that, “international comparisons have shown us all too clearly where Canada stands against its global competitors,” and included a chart, entitled “Ranking of Educational Quality,” listing 16 countries (a list that did not include England or The United States), with Canada placed at the bottom.⁵⁴ “Education reform,” it concluded, “is essential if Ontario’s next generation is to find high-paying, productive jobs in increasingly competitive world markets.”⁵⁵ It further stated that the PCs believed “Ontario’s education system is in need of system-wide reform, based on the principles of providing opportunity to students, excellence in curriculum and teachers, and accountability to parents and taxpayers.”⁵⁶ In addition, although not related to public education, but certainly to a conception of neoliberal education, the *CSR* contained a section stating that it would “replace welfare with a work, education and training social policy that rewards individuals’ initiative and demands responsible behaviour from

⁵⁰ See Chapter 3, pp. 107-109.

⁵¹ Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, *The Common Sense Revolution*, 4th printing (Toronto: 1994), 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 11-12. The construction of this graph is somewhat dubious. It appears that countries that ranked below Canada—such as The United States and England—were intentionally left off the graph.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 8

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

recipients of public assistance, even as it expands opportunities to achieve self-reliance” (i.e., *workfare* and *learnfare*).⁵⁷

The neoliberal concepts of building economic competition through *self-reliance*, *meritocracy*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, and *accountability* are all present in these statements, as are the concepts of *reduced social expenditure* and a ‘*fiscal constitution*.’ The *CSR* was also clear in its suggested methods for reforming education, all of which would be implemented by the PC government in fairly short order. They included, but were not limited to: focusing more funding on classroom spending by eliminating duplication amongst the school boards and MET, in part through reducing the number of school boards in the province through forced amalgamation; altering the responsibilities of and reducing school trustees in order to significantly lower their salaries; allowing school boards to opt out of Junior Kindergarten programs (they would eventually cut JK altogether); decreasing teacher prep-time; raising university and college tuition fees; and, as already mentioned, eliminating the fifth year of secondary school.⁵⁸

To enact these changes, Harris appointed John Snobelen as his Minister of Education and Training. Snobelen’s appointment was controversial from the beginning, as he was a highly successful businessman, but a secondary school dropout.⁵⁹ Perhaps more than any other individual in the cabinet, he represented Harris’ *managerial* “caucus of shopkeepers” approach to government discussed in Chapter Three, which was to appoint Ministers to areas where they have little experience so that they could govern “objectively.”⁶⁰ As shown in the next section, Snobelen approached his role as Minister of Education and Training with business-like aplomb.

“Creating a Crisis”: The Necessity of Education Reform

As discussed in Chapter Three, much of the momentum behind enacting neoliberal reform lies in using discourse to convince the public that radical change is both

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁸ PC Party of Ontario, *CSR*, 11-12.

⁵⁹ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 257.

⁶⁰ See Chapter Four, p. 110.

necessary and commonsensical.⁶¹ The PC government had begun this process with its discussion of education in the *CSR*; however, public education was to be the target of a particularly overt attempt to manipulate the public to accept types of rapid, and significant educational reforms the government planned to implement.

On July 6, 1995, (less than a month after the election) John Snobelen, in a now infamous speech that was never supposed to be heard by the general public, told a group of high-ranking Ministry of Education and Training civil servants that the government needed to “create a crisis” in education in order to convince the public of the need for public education reform.⁶² What is rarely discussed, however, and that is almost more interesting when viewing Snobelen’s speech through the lens of neoliberalism, is the context in which this comment was made. Snobelen preceded his “crisis” comment by proposing two theories of change management: “shortening down the survival period,” and “bankrupting the organization.”⁶³ Snobelen suggested the latter was the method most suitable for garnering support for and enacting education reform in Ontario, as it consisted of “bankrupting” the reputation of the organization. Using the analogy of a caterpillar’s transformation into a butterfly, he declared that,

the only time a caterpillar wants to be a butterfly is when the survival of the caterpillar is threatened, which is why transformational qualities of change are only available during bankruptcy. Only when survival is threatened will the caterpillar go: “Okay, let’s try to fly.” Otherwise, the caterpillar ain’t buying this. You know, they’ll nod nicely and stuff, and do that kind of thing, but unless you threaten the survival of the organization, and in doing that something about the identity of the individual, . . . then change is not real change, core change, transformational change.⁶⁴

He extended his caterpillar analogy to the role of the government in responding to public reaction: “so convincing and prodding caterpillars is part of [enacting transformational change] and occasionally just plain running over them works.”⁶⁵ It is within this context

⁶¹ See Chapter Three, pp. 86-87.

⁶² Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 236. One of the audience members taped Minister Snobelen’s speech and later released it to the media, much to the outrage of the general public and education professionals.

⁶³ John Snobelen, “The Caterpillar Speech,” in *Alien Invasion: How the Tories Mismanaged Ontario*, ed. Ruth Cohen (Toronto: Insomniac Press, 2001), 140.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 141-42.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 141.

that he stated that he “like[d] to think of [framing the coming reforms] as creating a useful crisis,” because “the word bankrupt might conjure up other images.”⁶⁶

These statements are reproduced here because they metaphorically invoke Friedman’s idea that neoliberals must launch an “intellectual assault” on the public in order to create a psychological change that creates an “alteration in the character of the people,” thus leading them to embrace a new way of thinking about the role of government and the purpose of its institutions.⁶⁷ Snobelen’s speech also embodies the centralized power the PC party would gather to itself in order to reform education, and the heavy discursive approach used to justify the necessity of changing an education system that was in some way “broken” and needed to be completely transformed to strengthen the economy and make Ontario competitive in a global economic world.⁶⁸ This theme appears again and again in official Government of Ontario press releases (e.g. “Ontario must keep pace with other jurisdictions to ensure improved student achievement. . . . Each day we delay reform further limits our young people’s horizons”);⁶⁹ statements to the press (e.g., “education finance is badly broken”);⁷⁰ and MET’s Business Plans (e.g., “the government is clear about the need for a different education and training system—a system characterized by *excellence* and *accountability*, and geared to job creation and prosperity”).⁷¹ As Ranu Banu noted in 2004, the Harris government’s “rationalization techniques not only further promoted, strengthened and consolidated the foundation of neoliberal principals *but also* worked towards appealing to the general approval of the public.”⁷² The PC’s governments plan relied on convincing the public that the system was in fact “broken” in order to make radical changes to public

⁶⁶ Snobelen, “The Caterpillar Speech,” 148.

⁶⁷ Turner, *Neo-Liberal Ideology*, 69. See also Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 21. See also Chapter 3, pp. 85-86.

⁶⁸ Ranu Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s Public Education System,” *GeoForum* 35 (2004): 632.

⁶⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, “Ontario Must Keep Pace on Education Reform” news release (April 21, 1997), 1.

⁷⁰ John Ibbitson, “New Tax System Coming: Taxes and Responsibilities to be Rearranged Among Ontario Governments,” *Kingston Whig Standard* (April 26, 1996): 2.

⁷¹ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan: Ministry of Education and Training 1996-1997* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1996), 1. (Emphasis added).

⁷² Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s Public Education System,” 632. (Original emphasis.)

education, including giving itself enormous central control over elements of public education that had never before been part of the Ministry of Education and Training's portfolio.

“Just Plain Running Over Them”: Centralizing Power to Enact Education Reform and Decentralize Responsibility

Another theme discussed previously in relation to neoliberal education reform is the tension between centralization and decentralization (or local control) enacted by governments as they seek to reform education.⁷³ Snobelen's comment that at times caterpillars must be transformed by “just plain running over them” invokes this tension in Ontario's education reforms. Indeed, like much of the other legislation reforming Ontario's social services, education reform relied on the PC government seizing control of the reform process by centralizing many aspects of the service in order to assure the public that it was fixing a broken system and improving education “quality.” In fact, the titles of much of the legislation passed by the PC government that gave them these powers deliberately invoked this discourse: Bill 160 *Education Quality Improvement Act*; Bill 74 *Educational Accountability Act*; Bill 80 *Stability and Excellence in Education Act*; Bill 110 *Quality in the Classroom Act*; and Bill 53 *The Right Choices for Equity in Education Act*. The government even proudly proclaimed in its first Education and Training Business Plan that it would “strengthen its leadership role in providing strategic direction for reform of the province's education and training sectors. We will build a new, streamlined education and training system with a renewed focus on quality and accountability.”⁷⁴

There are five main areas where the PC government gathered to itself more centralized power over education: (1) educational funding; (2) teacher and administrator collective bargaining; (3) accountability measurements; (4) Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organizations; and (5) the development of standardized curriculum, report cards, and tests. The first of these items—educational funding—is discussed only briefly

⁷³ See Chapter Four, pp. 159-60.

⁷⁴ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan: 1996-1997*, 3.

here as it is presented in more detail below in regard to cost-efficiency measures taken by the government. All of these items, however, demonstrate the extent to which the government centralized power in order to introduce those measures which it believed would support *educational excellence* and promote an *efficiently* run school system that would *reduce social expenditure* while creating *human capital* for the *knowledge economy*.

(1) Education Funding

As discussed above, prior to the fall of 1997, the responsibility for funding education was shared between the province, which supplied educational grants, and the school boards, which taxed their constituents to raise funds for education in the amount they deemed necessary. The somewhat misleadingly named Bill 160, *Education Quality and Improvement Act* restructured school financing in Ontario, giving the provincial government complete control over educational funding. As discussed below, this allowed the government to determine—quite specifically—how much money should be spent on the various components of public education, though the responsibility to balance their reduced budgets was devolved onto the school boards, which were required by law to submit balanced budgets detailing how government money would be spent.

(2) Teaching and Administrator Collective Bargaining

Prior to the election of the PC party to office, teachers and teacher unions were assured of certain collective bargaining rights when it came time to negotiate teaching contracts with the school boards. However, through a series of legislation, many of these bargaining rights were removed from the unions and placed within the jurisdiction of the government. In other words, the government now controlled and allocated certain elements of education that teachers previously were able to negotiate as part of their contracts. These included teaching and preparation time, class size, and time spent on co-curricular activities that were previously voluntary.⁷⁵ This was done under the auspice of improving education and trimming educational costs. For example, the government stated

⁷⁵ Majhanovich, “Change in Public Education,” 58.

that that increasing teaching time would allow students would spend more time in the classroom, and that decreasing preparation time would allow school boards to trim a considerable amount of money from their budgets.⁷⁶ Ontario's teachers were so upset with these changes—and with the new funding formula and its resulting lack of funds—that all public school unions staged a labour protest from October 28 to November 7, 1997. The protest, involving approximately 126,000 teachers, was the largest of its kind ever in North America. It was also tacitly supported by the school boards.⁷⁷ As a result, the PC party reviewed past legislation and concluded that teacher's actions were “technically” illegal.⁷⁸ In September 1998, while dealing with several other strikes, lock-outs, and work-to-rule campaigns from teachers in school boards whose contracts had expired, the government passed Bill 62 *Back to School Act*, appointing an arbitrator, legislating teachers back to work, and making board lock outs and work-to-rule measures illegal.⁷⁹

This control over teacher collective bargaining and right to protest or strike, or to limit professional duties as a form of labour protest, is typical of the neoliberal belief that unions drive up the natural cost of goods. While the PC government framed these actions against teachers and teacher unions as taken to provide better educational services and to ensure that students were not deprived of time in the classroom due to educational protests, there is no denying that elements of these actions were underpinned by fiscal concerns and led to cost savings, particularly through teacher layoffs resulting from increased instructional time and the reduction of prep-time for teachers.⁸⁰ In addition, with the removal of so many items from teachers' collective bargaining *and* legislation making strikes, lock outs and work-to-rule illegal, teachers were hardly in a place to bargain for higher wages, better benefits, or very little else for that matter.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Ministry of Education and Training, *Ministry of Education and Training Business Plan: 1998-1999* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1998): 4.

⁷⁷ Majhanovich, “Change in Public Education,” 57.

⁷⁸ Randall White, *Ontario Since 1985* (Toronto: Eastend Books, 1998), 281.

⁷⁹ See Bill 62, *Back to Schools Act*, 2nd sess., 36th Parliament (assented to Sept. 28, 1988), *Province of Ontario*, 1998.

⁸⁰ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 20.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

(3) Accountability Measures

Another area where the PC government centralized control over education was through introducing or intensifying the neoliberal education concept of *accountability*. School board finances and teacher performance stand as two of the clearest examples of this attempt at centralization. Bill 160 required school boards to publish annual “financial report cards.” These cards, which broke down educational expenditures, were standard across the province, allowing both the government and the public to easily compare school performance.⁸² Bill 74 gave the Ministry the right to investigate school board practices and take over the board’s operations from the trustees if it was found to violate government accountability practices.⁸³ In fact, to protest the funding formula and level of funding for public education, the Ottawa, Toronto, and Hamilton District School Boards (representing 20% of Ontario’s students) intentionally broke the law and submitted deficit budgets to the Ministry of Education and Training in June 2002. Reflecting the concept of *managerialism*, the Ministry appointed an independent auditor from outside of the educational field to review and (eventually) take control of each board’s finances when they refused to act on the auditor’s suggestions and balance their budgets.

Bills 80 and 110 mandated a variety of legislation regarding and promoting secondary legislation on teacher performance, including a qualifying teaching exam; teacher recertification every 5 years; mandatory participation in professional development courses; detailed timelines and procedures—using government certified standards and evaluation forms—for teacher evaluation by school administrators, parents and students; and steps to be taken to discipline teachers. As discussed above, these teacher-related *accountability* measures had been in the purview of either the teachers’ unions (in the case of discipline) or the school boards since the 1960s.⁸⁴ Again, the government framed these actions as designed to “ensure that all teachers have the skills and knowledge to

⁸² Bill 160, *Education Quality Improvement Act*, 1st sess., 36th Parliament, 1997 (assented to Dec. 8, 1997), *Province of Ontario*, 1997, s. 231.

⁸³ Bill 74, *Education Accountability Act*, 1st sess., 37th Parliament, 2000 (assented to June 2, 2001), *Province of Ontario*, 2001, s. 230.3-230.5.

⁸⁴ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 48.

help students achieve higher standards.”⁸⁵ In addition, Bill 160 removed principals and vice-principals from the teachers’ unions.⁸⁶ While they maintained the right to teach, principals and vice-principals were essentially placed in conflict with other teachers when it came time to negotiate new contracts. Perhaps more significant, however, is the fact that removing principals and vice-principals from the unions changed the conception of these individuals from “teacher-administrators” to “administrator-managers,” thereby invoking an element of *managerialism* and further *accountability* within the teacher-principal relationship.⁸⁷ These accountability measures were centrally imposed by the provincial government, but, like many aspects of education reform, some were *devolved* onto various QUANGOs.

(4) Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organizations

The PC government relied on several “arms length” organizations to help develop and implement its reform agenda. The three most significant were created through legislation: The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), the Education, Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO, both created June 1996), and the Education Improvement Commission (EIC, created April 1997). As Ranu Basu states, since these agencies were created and had many of their board members appointed by the government, they “provided the opportunity for monitoring, shaping and controlling institutional behaviour according to neoliberal interests.”⁸⁸ The OCT, for example, was primarily created as a regulatory body for teachers under Bill 31. In the beginning, it was responsible for developing certification requirements for Ontario’s teachers’ colleges, registering Ontario’s teachers, developing standards of teaching and ethical practices for the province, and enforcing discipline.⁸⁹ However, when the government decided that it

⁸⁵ Ministry of Education and Training, *Ministry of Education and Training Business Plan: 2001-2002* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2001), 6.

⁸⁶ Bill 160, *Education Quality Improvement Act*, s 277.1.

⁸⁷ Suzanne Majhanovich, “Education Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?—The Case of Ontario, Canada,” in *International Handbook on Globalisation, Education and Policy Research: Global Pedagogies and Policies*, ed. Joseph Zajda (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer Press, 2005), 602.

⁸⁸ Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s Public School System,” 25.

⁸⁹ See Bill 31, *The Ontario College of Teachers Act*, 1st sess., 36th Parliament, 1996 (assented to June 27, 1996), *Province of Ontario*, 1996.

wanted to impose teacher testing, recertification, and professional development, Bills 80 and 110 mandated that the OCT fund, develop, and implement the policy for these reforms. In fact, Bill 31, which created the OCT and its governing and financial structures, states that the Minister of Education has the power to order the OCT to “do anything that is necessary or advisable to carry out the intention of this Act.”⁹⁰ In addition, through a series of legislation, the governing board of the OCT eventually came to have almost half of its members appointed by the government and half elected by the teachers who were its constituents. Appointed members were usually from the business and private sectors.⁹¹ Not only is this a clear manifestation of *managerialism*, but it further allowed the government to impose its will on what was, in theory, an arms-length organization. The EQAO, created under Bill 30, governs the administration and development of Ontario’s standardized tests, and was similarly governed. Its role in centralizing education control is discussed in more detail below in relation to the development of educational standards and testing.

The Education Improvement Commission (EIC) was created through Bill 104 *Fewer School Boards Act*. It was largely responsible for advising the government on how to proceed with school board amalgamation and then supervise the process.⁹² However, it is interesting to note that this commission was not created until after the decision to amalgamate: the PC party relied on *For the Love of Learning* (1995) and the work of the NDP commissioned Sweeny Task Force to support that important decision.⁹³ Instead, it was created at the same time that Bill 104 mandated that all school boards in Ontario undergo amalgamation. As such, its mandates were fairly narrow because it was already assumed that reducing school boards would decrease financial spending primarily through decreased bureaucratic duplication. To that end, the EIC was given “far-reaching power to monitor and approve such things as budgets, administrative appointments and

⁹⁰ Bill 31, *The Ontario Teachers College Act*, s. 12.

⁹¹ Majhanovich, “Education Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?” 608.

⁹² Bill 104, *Fewer School Boards Act*, sess. 1, 36th Parliament, 1997 (assented to April 24, 1997), *Province of Ontario* 1997, s. 334-47.

⁹³ The task force was commissioned by the NDP government in 1995, but continued its work under the PC government.

the initial operations of the new board.”⁹⁴ It was also asked to offer advice on more specific matters such as instructional costs and teacher preparation time, which it did, ultimately suggesting that class sizes be capped so that teacher unions could not use this as a collective bargaining chip. Other suggestions it made that supported the PC neoliberal agenda were reduced teacher preparation time and administrative release time, and extending the school year.⁹⁵ In fact, many of the Committee’s recommendations found their way into Bill 160 (as discussed in further detail below).

The fifth and final item which exemplifies the PC’s centralizing procedures is discussed below in its own section. As with the restructuring of the province’s education funding, the standardization of Ontario’s curriculum, report cards, and testing are significant and complex, and thus deserve to be set apart in this discussion.

Standardized Curriculum, Report Cards, and Testing Program

The PC government’s desire to radically restructure the Ontario curriculum and implement a standard report card and rigorous testing were evident from the time of the *CSR*, as discussed above. The first substantial changes that would be made to the curriculum were announced by Minister John Snobelen in November of 1995, when he informed the public that the fifth year of secondary school would be eliminated, bringing it into alignment with Canada’s other nine provinces and saving an estimated \$350 million annually.⁹⁶ This single decision alone necessitated radical curriculum reforms as it meant that material learned over the course of students’ time in elementary and secondary school would have to be rewritten so that they could learn the same amount in less time. This was in addition to new material that the government would introduce in an effort to raise educational *standards*. In fact, it appears that the government had intended to begin curricular reform at the secondary level, but with the release of its preliminary draft of secondary curriculum documents in the spring of 1996, it decided, in response to

⁹⁴ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 247.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁹⁶ Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s Public Education System,” 628.

public and educator outcry, to delay developing the secondary documents until the elementary ones were complete, thus pushing back the timeline of secondary school curricular reform on several occasions.⁹⁷ However, when curricular reform was complete, the result was a three-pronged approach to educational standards and accountability: (1) a series of highly specific, outcome oriented curriculum documents for each subject and courses ranging from Grades 1-12; (2) a province wide standardized report card with accompanying indicators and exemplars for measuring students' performances; and (3) a regime of standardized tests measuring literacy and mathematical ability that were administered to students in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 10.

The curriculum documents themselves expanded the original intention of the 1995 *Common Curriculum* to introduce outcomes-based learning into Ontario's public education system. However, the content of the curriculum documents were not law like English *Statutory Orders* were law. In Ontario under the Harris regime, impetus for schools to implement provincially created curriculum came from the 1990 *Education Act*. This Act gave the Minister of Education the authority to "prescribe the courses of study that shall be taught and the courses of study that may be taught in the primary, junior, intermediate and senior divisions" as well as to "issue curriculum guidelines and require that courses of study be developed therefrom."⁹⁸ This meant that curriculum in Ontario was a process of secondary legislation.

The goal of the PC's curriculum reform was to introduce a "province-wide curriculum, so that all students will have access to programs of consistent quality and relevance" by "finaliz[ing] provincial standards."⁹⁹ Not coincidentally, however, this reform would also "reduce cost and wasteful duplication," because school boards would no longer have to spend money generating their own curriculum standards and guidelines.¹⁰⁰ From the beginning, the government stressed the development of a *standardized curriculum* in order to facilitate a "solid foundation in the key areas of language and mathematics," as well as "other important subject areas, such as science and

⁹⁷ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 238-40.

⁹⁸ Revised Statutes of Ontario. *Education Act*, 1990, *Province of Ontario*, s. 8.2-8.3.

⁹⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan 1996-1997*, 4.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

technology, to maintain the quality of relevance of learning in Ontario.”¹⁰¹ Notably, rhetoric suggesting the importance of other curricular areas that typically fall outside of the skills or knowledge areas considered “core” or “key,” such as geography and the arts, was missing in the PC discourse, except surrounding a few days when the curriculum documents for these subject areas were published.¹⁰²

The process of and timeline for elementary and secondary music curriculum development is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight, so a detailed account is not necessary here. However, it is useful to note that the curriculum writing process for each subject was tendered out to the private sector. The director who was awarded the tender was given a set budget and asked to remunerate writers as he saw fit, and also to oversee the process and ensure all “deliverables” were submitted on time, subject to monetary fine.¹⁰³ This aspect of the curriculum design is notably neoliberal in its implications of *managerialism*, *devolution* of responsibility, and *partnership* with the *private sector*. The resulting curriculum guidelines were released over a range of time, beginning with the elementary language and mathematics guidelines in June of 1997 and ending with the Grade 11 and 12 guidelines in 2000. As discussed in relation to the elementary music curriculum in Chapter Eight, they are highly prescriptive, outcome-oriented, and present a formidable amount of material for both students to learn and teachers to “get through” in a school year.

Once the documents were written, several actions were taken to ensure that teachers understood the exact level of performance a student was expected to achieve. As Suzanne Majhanovich notes, the elements of this process were managerial in nature, and “often by-passed education and curriculum experts and involved members of parliament and representatives from the community, and other teams [who were not associated with the field of education].”¹⁰⁴ They included “course profile” descriptions of appropriate activities that might be undertaken to achieve curricular performance objectives; the

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Stephanie Horsley, “The Politics of Accountability: Implications for Centralized Music Education Policy Development and Implementation,” *Arts Education Policy Review* 110, no. 4 (2009), 9.

¹⁰³ Majhanovich, “Change in Public Education,” 58-59.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 59.

creation of four-level, four-point rubrics that described what student success “looked like” in the designated areas of Knowledge and Understanding, Thinking, Communication, and Application (note the similarity to elements of the *core skills* described in Chapter Four); and sets of exemplars collected from teachers around the province that represented student achievement at particular assessment levels.¹⁰⁵ In addition, in September of 1998, after the elementary curriculum and some of its supporting documents had been released, the province introduced and mandated the use of its standard report card. This is discussed further in Chapter Eight in relation to elementary music assessment, but, to summarize, teachers were required to use a Ministry issued computerized program to link their grades and comments (based on each grade and subject) on the report card to the standards set by the curriculum and its supporting documents.¹⁰⁶ This report card, it was argued, would “let parents, teachers, and the students themselves know how well they are learning.”¹⁰⁷ The obvious final words missing from the previous sentence are “in relation to others.” The standard report card was really a measurement tool to facilitate both competition among schools and boards and to keep track of the success of Ontario’s students.

The standardized curriculum and report card represented a neoliberal interpretation of equity, which is really an emphasis on equality (i.e., removing barriers so that students can have access to choices that will enable all of them to reach the high academic standards set by the government). As Anderson and Jaafar stated in regard to the PC government, “[previous governments] references to equity goals linked to gender, racial and cultural differences, were replaced by the idea that equity could be achieved by holding teachers accountable for the achievement of all students to the same high academic standards.”¹⁰⁸ Further, for students, it signalled that “the PC ideology is that there are core learning expectations that all students are expected to achieve according to

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 59.

¹⁰⁶ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 28.

¹⁰⁷ Ministry of Education and Training, *Ministry of Education and Training Business Plan: 1999-2000* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1999): 4.

¹⁰⁸ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 28.

the same standards.”¹⁰⁹ Thus, responsibility for learning was firmly passed on to both the teachers *and* the students: the provincial government, through its substantial reforms, would provide the opportunity to succeed.

Perhaps no other accountability test is more representative of the idea that all students in the province were supposed to achieve a specific level of educational excellence than the Grade 10 Literacy test. Pre-tested in the fall of 2001 and then implemented province-wide in the Fall of 2002, this *high-stakes* test was designed to ensure (and assure) that all students achieved an acceptable level of literacy before leaving secondary school. In fact, students could not graduate until they had passed it, which is why it was administered in Grade 10, giving students who failed time to re-write before graduation.¹¹⁰

The Literacy Test, however, was just one of a string of standardized tests implemented by the PC government. To assist in the development and administration of these tests, the government legislated the creation of the Education, Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in June of 1996 through Bill 30. The Bill mandated the following responsibilities to the EQAO:

1. To evaluate the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education.
2. To develop tests and require or undertake the administering and marking of tests of pupils in elementary and secondary schools.
3. To develop systems for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education.
4. To research and collect information on assessing academic achievement.
5. To evaluate the public accountability of boards and to collect information on strategies for improving that accountability.
6. To report to the public and to the Minister of Education and Training on the results of tests and generally on the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education and on the public accountability of boards.
7. To make recommendations, in its reports to the public and to the Minister of Education and Training, on any matter related to the quality or effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education or to the public accountability of boards.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 41.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 27.

¹¹¹ Bill 30, *Education Quality and Accountability Office Act*, 1st sess., 36th Parliament, 1996 (assented to June 27, 1996), *Province of Ontario* 1996, s. 3.

Bill 30 also stated that, “the Minister of Education and Training may issue written directives and establish policies on matters relating to the objects of the Office.”¹¹² In addition, its entire board of directors was appointed by the government,¹¹³ and the EQAO could not make any regulations in response to its mandate without first consulting with the Minister of Education and Training.¹¹⁴

The legislation creating and governing the EQAO is notable for several reasons. First, it extended and centralized the government’s power over public education through the establishment of a powerful and influential QUANGO. Much in the same manner as Bill 31 and the creation of the OCT, Bill 30 created an organization that had significant control over monitoring and determining what constituted “quality,” “accountability” and—by association—“excellence” in the public education process. The government retained significant control over these organizations through its appointments to the board of directors and by ensuring that the EQAO would have to regularly report to, have its suggestions approved by, and take directives from the government.

The second reason Bill 30 is notable is that its discourse actually construes *quality* and *accountability* as educational testing and reporting. Further, the activities of the EQAO implied that the only elements of education which needed to be measured in order to ascertain and improve *educational excellence* were literacy and mathematics.

The first responsibility mandated to the EQAO was “to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school education.” The second and fourth responsibilities spoke to the need to develop and administer tests to students, while the remaining responsibilities indicated the necessity of developing accurate *accountability* and reporting procedures to government and public, which would lead to more *effective* improvement planning. On the surface, this appears to be a fairly broad mandate that could encompass many aspects of education. However, further inspection of Bill 30 reveals that the responsibilities given to the EQAO dealt mostly with educational assessment in the form of standardized tests, the reporting of test results, and research

¹¹² Ibid., s. 6.

¹¹³ Ibid., s. 11.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., s. 27., no. 2.

undertaken to improve both the tests themselves, as well as test scores and reporting measures.¹¹⁵ The EQAO itself sees its mandate as “enhancing the quality and accountability of the education system in Ontario and to work with the education community” as “achieved through student assessments that produce objective, reliable information, through the public release of this information, and through the profiling of the value and use of EQAO data across the province.”¹¹⁶ In other words, a primary goal of the EQAO was to administer tests and report results in a manner that facilitated a comparison between school boards and schools, indicate where educational “improvement” was needed (in the form of higher test scores demonstrating improved student learning), and then assist schools and boards in achieving this improvement.

To that end, any research or suggestions for improving educational “achievement” that have been carried out by the EQAO have been done in order to facilitate increased student learning in its tested areas. For example, during the Harris regime, the EQAO carried out studies on gender and achievement in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing; issues of validity in assessing mathematics, reading, and writing; comparing teacher education in countries that undergo the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study; and learning and assessment of mathematics for Francophone students.¹¹⁷

In addition, the EQAO developed “The Educational Quality Indicators Framework,” which reported on “on a range of environmental factors at the school, board and provincial levels which may have an impact on student achievement.”¹¹⁸ However, this statement was followed by a comment revealing that “achievement” really means scores achieved on the EQAO’s tests: “Understanding and evaluating the quality of education requires not just numerical values or quantitative result measures *such as achievement*, but a more comprehensive picture of the unique and complex characters of

¹¹⁵ Ibid., s. 4.

¹¹⁶ Education Quality and Accountability Office, “Mandate,” accessed Sept 27, 2010, <http://www.eqao.com/AboutEQAO/Mandate.aspx?Lang=E>.

¹¹⁷ Copies of all of these studies are available under “Past Research Projects” at <http://www.eqao.com/Research/research.aspx?status=logout&Lang=E>.

¹¹⁸ Education Quality and Accountability Office, “Completing the Picture: The Educational Quality Indicators Framework,” accessed Sept 27, 2012, http://www.eqao.com/EQI/EQI_Framework.aspx?Lang=E.

schools, boards and the province [which affects achievement].”¹¹⁹ A final example of the EQAO’s conception of educational excellence as achievement on standardized tests can be found in its “Improvement Planning” division. This particular division is responsible for helping school boards develop their provincially mandated “improvement plans.” It is notable that when beginning the process of “effective improvement planning,” the first information the EQAO advises school planners to gather and examine is “school board and school results from EQAO assessments.”¹²⁰ To be fair, the process laid out by the EQAO can be applied to all subject areas and it discusses a variety of school improvements based on various indicators, however, its emphasis on improving student “achievement” by improving test scores is a dominant discourse in its publications.

Both Bill 30 and the actual activities of the EQAO created a discourse that *educational excellence* was largely measurable by results on *standardized tests*. Indeed, at times it appears that these results actually constituted achievement and excellence in Ontario’s state-funded elementary and secondary school system. However, the underpinning idea of this discourse was that certain areas of study were more valuable than others because the EQAO only tested students in particular areas. Beginning in 1997, the EQAO administered tests to samples of Grade 3 students in reading and writing. Samples of Grade 3 and 6 students were also tested in mathematics.¹²¹ This testing was expanded to all students in these grades in the province the following year. All Grade 6 students began to be tested in reading and writing in the 1998-1999 school year.¹²² This was followed by the province-wide testing in mathematics for Grade 9 in 2000-2001, and the Grade 10 Literacy test in the fall of 2002, completing the testing regime established by the EQAO.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. (Emphasis added)

¹²⁰ Education Quality and Accountability Office, *EQAO Guide to School and Board Improvement Planning: A Handbook for School and Board Leaders* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2005), 6, accessed Oct. 1, 2012, www.eqao.com/pdf_e/05/05P011e.pdf.

¹²¹ Education Quality and Accountability Office, *Education Quality and Accountability Office Provincial Report of Achievement: English Language Schools 1996-1997* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1997), accessed Oct. 1, 2010, http://www.eqao.com/pdf_e/98_97/97P001e.pdf.

¹²² Education Quality and Accountability Office, *Highlights for Parents: Ontario Provincial Report on Achievement, English-Language Schools* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1998), accessed Oct. 1, 2010, http://www.eqao.com/pdf_e/98_97/98P003e.pdf.

It is interesting to note that the EQAO's testing regime focused on the "basic" areas of literacy and mathematics that are comprise part of the neoliberal education concept of *core curriculum* (the others being science and often technology). In addition, the reports issued by the EQAO summarizing the testing results are often titled in such a way as to indicate that achievement in these subject areas constitutes comprehensive educational achievement. Examples of such reports are the yearly *Provincial Report on Achievement* and *Highlights of Provincial Achievement Results*, which only discuss test results, albeit sometimes in comparison to international and national testing in these areas, in addition to comparisons at the provincial level.¹²³ So, while the government discourse often framed "achievement" as obtaining high test scores, the work of the EQAO itself went one step further to frame "achievement" as obtaining high test scores in writing, reading, mathematics and literacy. In addition, educational institutions supporting neoliberal education values and reforms, such as Canada's Fraser Institute, publically ranked Ontario's elementary and secondary schools based on the results of these tests.¹²⁴

Unlike in some countries, such as The United States, however, there was no monetary penalty imposed on schools that did not achieve a certain designated level of test scores or improvement on previous scores. Nor were there rewards for high "achievement." Parents were also relatively restricted with respect to which public schools they could send their children despite a school board's test scores, as geographical boundaries—not test scores—determined which school a child attended. However, schools and boards in Ontario were required to submit yearly improvement plans, and these plans were monitored by the government with the expectation that schools would continue to improve on EQAO tests, although clear sanctions for low test scores or failure to improve were, surprisingly (given the extent of government control over other areas of education), never developed (with the exception of passing the

¹²³ All EQAO reports on results from their standardized tests, including tests from the grade 3, 6, and 9 pilot years, are available at <http://www.eqao.com/results/results.aspx?grade=3&year=2001&Lang=E&submit=View+Results>.

¹²⁴ For current examples, see "Report Card on Ontario's Schools," accessed Sept. 9, 2013, <http://ontario.compareschoolrankings.org/ChooseReport.aspx>.

Literacy Test, without which students could not graduate from secondary school).¹²⁵ This implied then, that Ontario did not really seek to raise educational *standards* through competition, as was the case in England. Nonetheless, there is evidence that schools and school boards did care deeply about test results, particularly since school and board results were published for comparison across the province and available to the general public.¹²⁶ *Accountability* in Ontario, then, had more to do with “naming and shaming” than the creation of quasi-education markets. The result was a system more focused on *equity* than the type of *equality* that was underpinned by the concept of *meritocracy* in England. Thus, even as it went through intense neoliberal education reforms, Ontario’s systems of state-funded education remained connected to its *collectivist* roots.

In summary, the creation of the EQAO and its testing regimes were clearly underpinned by many of the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education reform. As a QUANGO, the EQAO represented both centralized control and (to some extent) a decentralization of responsibility from the government to another organization. Its primary responsibilities as developer and administrator of standardized tests and as facilitator of accountability and school improvement invoke the concepts of *educational excellence*, *standardization*, *accountability*, and *high-stakes testing*. Finally, its emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics, and literacy invokes the conceptions of *core curriculum* and the *knowledge workers* who are constructed through that curriculum. In this regard, the EQAO was the organization meant, through increasingly improved test scores, to demonstrate to Ontario’s population—and the economic world—that Ontario’s education reforms were working, particularly those associated with the new standardized curriculum and its supporting materials. Whether or not it was successful in this endeavour will be discussed in Chapter Eight in relation to education resource allocation and the development and implementation of the Ontario elementary and secondary curricula.

The PC government’s reform of curriculum, testing, and reporting procedures was one of the two areas that had the greatest effect on public education reform in Ontario

¹²⁵ Anderson and Jafaar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education 1990-2003,” 42.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 42-43.

during its time in office. The second was comprised of the reforms undertaken to “trim the bureaucratic fat” and “wasteful” spending in the public school system.

Legislating and Implementing Efficiency and Cost-Saving Measures

Chapter Three outlined how the PC government promised to create 750,000 jobs, cut taxes by 30% over three years, reduce government spending by 20%, all while balancing the provincial budget.¹²⁷ Public education was seen as an area ripe to help fulfill these promises. As discussed above, the PC government believed that Ontario’s public education system was wasteful: too much money was being spent on the “non-classroom” aspects of education.¹²⁸ “Non-classroom,” as discussed below, would eventually be defined, but in the early days, it appeared to focus solely on the issue of duplication occurring among school boards.¹²⁹ Thus, reducing duplication as a cost-savings/efficiency measure was also a justification for centralizing control over education, as it would remove aspects of education that, in the past, each board had to address. For this reason, the creation of standardized curricula, course profiles, exemplars, and report cards can be seen as cost-savings measures. Other cost-savings and efficiency measures have already been discussed above, those mainly being the restrictions placed on teacher bargaining rights and the decrease of teacher preparation time. The government also negotiated changes in its contributions to the teachers’ pension plan in 1998, allowing many teachers to retire from the system so that 18,000 new teachers (with much lower salaries) could enter the system.¹³⁰ In addition, more minor cost-savings measures were implemented with Bill 34 *Education and Amendment Act* (1996), which allowed school boards to enter into cost-savings agreements with other school boards and parts of the public sector (i.e., *public-private partnerships*) in areas

¹²⁷ See Chapter Three, pp. 108-109.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan 1996-1997*, 6.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan 1998-1999*, 4.

such as shared transportation, use of facilities, shared support staff or educational programs, and investments.¹³¹

There were, however, two significant pieces of legislation designed to specifically deal with financial efficiency, in particular the “waste” of resources related to educational bureaucracies and duplication. In addition, the PC government began its time in office by cutting funding to education in order to encourage financial efficiency and responsibility, firmly believing that, if school boards had less money, they would find ways to become more efficient without compromising the quality of education. The following is an overview of main actions taken by the government to either encourage or force education reform, fiscal responsibility, and bureaucratic reduction.

(1) Reduction in transfer payments to the school boards

Reduction of transfer payments from the provincial government to the school boards occurred soon after the PCs took office. It began with an immediate cut of approximately \$32 million in October 1995.¹³² This was followed by an announcement that operating grants from the 1996 September to December financial quarter would be reduced by \$400 million, in effect removing approximately \$1 billion (or 22.7% of funding) from the public education system over the course of the financial year.¹³³ Finally, plans were made to cut another \$469 million shortly after the mass protests over Bill 160 in the fall of 1997.¹³⁴ In total, almost \$1.8 billion dollars were removed from education funding by the PC government from the time of its election in 1995 until November of 2002.¹³⁵ However, the PC government returned much of this funding to the system during its final year in office, when its own commissioned report on the funding formula arising from Bill 160 found that some aspects of education were underfunded. This is discussed further below.

¹³¹ Bill 34, *Education Amendment Act*, 1st sess., 36th Parliament, 1996 (assented to June 27, 1996), *Province of Ontario* 1996, s. 7.

¹³² Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s public Education System,” 627.

¹³³ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 241-242.

¹³⁴ “Walking Out for Democracy,” *NEA Today* 16, no. 5 (1998): 11.

¹³⁵ Majhanovich, “Education Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?” 610.

(2) Bill 104 Fewer School Boards Act

Bill 104 *Fewer School Boards Act* forced all public school boards in Ontario to undergo amalgamation into larger “District School Boards” and was passed on April 24, 1997. School board amalgamation was a topic of discussion from the time it was recommended in *For the Love of Learning*, and the PCs clearly stated in the CSR that this was one of the education reforms that they would undertake. In an interesting discursive turn, the explanatory note preceding the formal substance of Bill 104 did not indicate that it was a Bill enacted to reduce school boards. Rather, it stated that the Bill establishes “four new types of school boards: English-language public district school boards; English-language separate district school boards; French-language public district school boards; and French-language separate district school boards”: It was this new organization structure that allowed the boards to be reduced.¹³⁶ The Bill itself, however, stated that its purpose was to “provide for the establishment of district school boards,” and “permit the transition to a new system of educational governance in Ontario under which there will be fewer school boards and under which district school boards will govern schools.”¹³⁷

While it is commonly believed that the act specified the number of new school boards and cut the number of school trustees from approximately 1900 to 700, capping their salaries at a modest \$5000,¹³⁸ this is not true. Rather, Bill 104 gave power to the PC government to determine how boards were amalgamated, the names and boundaries of the new boards, the number of trustees per board, the trustee election procedures, and their trustee remuneration.¹³⁹ Thus, it is an excellent example of the ways in which the PC government was able to make far reaching decisions through the use of secondary legislation. The subsequent decisions made by the government resulted in a reduction in Ontario’s school boards from 129 to 72,¹⁴⁰ as well as the changes mentioned above to

¹³⁶ Bill 104, *Fewer School Boards Act*, explanatory note. Previous to this, boards were either public or separate, with the francophone educational needs addressed from within this structure. Now the francophone population would have its own public and separate school boards.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, s.1.

¹³⁸ *Gidney, From Hope to Harris*, 247.

¹³⁹ Bill 104, *Fewer School Boards Act*, s.7.

¹⁴⁰ Majhanovich, “Change in Public Education,” 57.

trustee governance, which, the government stated, “reduced bureaucratic administration and waste.”¹⁴¹ The government touted that these administrative changes to the school board were likely to save close to \$400 million dollars alone.¹⁴² Finally, as discussed above, Bill 104 created the Education Improvement Commission that was to oversee and report on the amalgamation process.

(3) Bill 160 Educational Quality and Improvement Act: Creating a New Funding Formula

As drastic a cost-saving device as Bill 104 appeared to be, it was, as Gidney stated, “only a modest first step” in restructuring public education finance in Ontario.¹⁴³ A major element of the Harris education reforms was the creation of a new funding formula to replace a formula that was widely considered advantageous to students who lived in affluent and urban areas and who attended public rather than Catholic schools. As discussed above, the previous formula relied on both grants from the province and taxes collected by school boards’ local municipalities. While the public boards were able to draw taxes from both residential and commercial sectors, the Catholic boards were limited to residential sectors only. In addition, urban areas had a larger, more affluent tax base from which to draw their educational levies.¹⁴⁴ And while some provincial funding was based on a standard per pupil allocation, this was complicated by a complex system of some 35 “foundation” grants meant to address local concerns such as transportation and English Second Language classes. When the various forms of school board income were averaged out, the differences among some board spending per pupil was in the thousands of dollars.¹⁴⁵

The restructuring of Ontario’s public education funding formula affected many areas of the public sector and essentially trod upon the jurisdictional rights of the province’s municipalities. It is an excellent example of the neoliberal tendency to centralize power in the name of granting greater freedom to municipalities and other local

¹⁴¹ Ministry of Education and Training, *Business Plan 1997-1998*,” 3.

¹⁴² PC Party of Ontario, *CSR*, 11.

¹⁴³ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 247.

¹⁴⁴ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Education, 1990-2003,” 19.

¹⁴⁵ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 249.

institutions and stakeholders, and to promote “equality” in education. The PC government’s main argument for centralizing control of education funding was that it would create a fairer system because large disparities in educational funding would cease to exist among boards.¹⁴⁶ However, this would mean removing the right of the municipalities and school boards to levy taxes to support various administrative decisions made at the local level in order to sustain and improve public education and other social services. Thus, some of the rhetoric of education funding reform took place under the guise of municipal financial reform and property tax reform.¹⁴⁷ However, throughout announcements that the government would take control of educational funding, the government always maintained that school boards and administrators would be in control of their budgets, particularly as it would be up to them to find ways to do “more for less” outside of what happened in the actual the classroom.¹⁴⁸

Over the third week of January 1997, the PC government laid out the substantial reforms it planned to carry out on almost all of Ontario’s public services. The first announcement of what was later dubbed “MegaWeek” came from Minister John Snobelen, who stated that the government would take complete control of public elementary and secondary educational funding from the municipalities.¹⁴⁹ In exchange, it would “download” other provincial services onto the municipalities, including some elements of health care and welfare, thus making the exchange “revenue neutral” for both levels of government.¹⁵⁰ In retrospect, it was obvious that changes to the structure of educational funding had to be announced first as it was the impetus for the restructuring and downloading of services onto the municipalities and their tax bases, in effect making education funding restructuring the touchstone for many other changes in the social service sector. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (and the electorate in general) were so upset at the proposed municipal financial reforms that the province ultimately agreed to fund only half of public education, allowing the municipalities to

¹⁴⁶ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Education, 1990-2003,” 19.

¹⁴⁷ Randal White, *Ontario Since 1985* (Toronto: Eastend Books, 1998), 274.

¹⁴⁸ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 244.

¹⁴⁹ Kate Bezanson and Fraser Valentine, “Act in Haste . . . The Style, Scope and Speed of Change in Ontario,” *Speaking Out Project: Periodic Report #2* (Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998), 9

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

collect the other half from their own tax bases in exchange for less downloading of other social services.¹⁵¹ However, the money collected had to be gathered at a rate calculated by the provincial government and then transferred to the provincial government for it to distribute evenly amongst all of the school boards.¹⁵² Thus the municipalities in reality lost control over taxation for educational purposes and became, in effect, tax collection agencies for the province.

These changes to the funding formula were legislated on December 1, 1997, when Bill 160 was passed. Additional details were provided during the spring of 1998, and the formula was dubbed the “student-focused funding model.” It allocated a basic universal amount of \$3,367 for each elementary student (slightly more for secondary students). However, this “Foundation Grant,” as it was known, was supplemented by nine other grants, designated “Special Purpose Grants.” These were quite similar to grants given out by the previous NDP government and were meant to address more specific local concerns such as special education, language development, transportation, and school renewal and expansion.¹⁵³ School boards were not permitted to use “Special Purpose Grants” on activities other than those for which they were allocated.

The PCs were keen to support their *CSR* statement that education spending in the classroom would not decrease. Throughout the process of cutting back transfer payments to the boards and reforming the funding model, they maintained that they were only asking the school boards to trim the “bureaucratic fat” and reduce duplication among schools and boards and simple overspending on the non-educational aspects of the system.¹⁵⁴ By March of 1998, educational funding had been categorized into two distinct areas: “Classroom spending” (e.g., teachers, learning materials, library and guidance services, and classroom computers), and “non-classroom spending” (e.g., teacher prep time, consultants, administrators, school maintenance and upkeep, including custodians).¹⁵⁵ The resulting funding formula was highly structured. While it allowed

¹⁵¹ White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 279.

¹⁵² Basu, “The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario’s Public Education System,” 627.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 629 and also Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Education, 1990-2003,” 20.

¹⁵⁴ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 250.

¹⁵⁵ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Education, 1990-2003,” 20.

administrators to choose the elements within specific areas on which Special Purposes Grants could be spent, its overall nature was far less flexible than the previous funding model when it came to budgeting, both within the structure of the budget itself and in terms of raising additional money outside of government funding.

Bill 160 also mandated various accountability measures designed to track the efficiency of school spending under the new funding formula. As discussed above, these included requiring every school board to complete and submit a “Financial Report Card” that would then be reconfigured into an annual report comparing each board’s spending in each of the grant categories; limiting the amount central school board offices could spend on their own costs; and giving the government the authority to remove a board’s trustees and assign financial responsibilities to a Ministry official should the board fail to balance its budget (as happened to the Ottawa, Toronto, and Hamilton-Wentworth District School Boards, described above).¹⁵⁶

(4) Other cost savings measures in Bill 160

Bill 160 also contained a number of other cost saving measures, as discussed above and reiterated here so that the full scope of the Bill might be appreciated. These included legislating limits on class size; limiting the amount of teacher preparation time; removing principals and vice-principals from the teachers’ unions; and limiting teacher professional development days (professional development would become the teachers’ own responsibility under Bill 80).

Reactions to and Commentary on Ontario’s Neoliberal Education Reforms

As can clearly be seen from the material in this chapter, the neoliberal reforms undertaken by the Ontario Harris PC government from 1995-2003 were sweeping, radical (particularly in relation to funding and accountability), and swift in nature. They were also not without support or criticism on the part of the general public, parents, the

¹⁵⁶ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 250 and Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Education, 1990-2003,” 20.

education sector, and those asked by the government to review certain aspects of its reform. Reaction to and commentary on key aspects of reform are summarized below.

(1) Speed, Scope, and Approach to Reform

If there is one area where the public, parents, and education sectors tended to agree in regard to the PC education reforms, it is that the reforms happened too quickly for the system to adjust to the scope of the changes and that the process of reform was not adequately transparent. A report issued by the Caledon Institute of Policy found that in general the public was upset at the rate of change to all social services throughout the province.¹⁵⁷ Parents of students were particularly upset about the rate of change to the public education system, even if many believed that the ideas behind education reforms were reasonable and sound.¹⁵⁸ Indeed, research carried out by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 2003 indicated that at any given time between 1998 and 2002, approximately 60% of the general public felt that the PC government's centralization of power over public education was entirely appropriate or could even be centralized further.¹⁵⁹ However, the public felt alienated from the process of reform (discussed further below), further underpinning their objections to the speed of reform.

Those directly responsible for implementing education reform at the local level—and the public service sector in general—were severely frustrated not only by the scope of the change in Ontario, but also by the speed and approach to change. As Lindsey Kerr wrote, “resistance and defiance toward the restructuring of public services is evidenced by unprecedented unrest in Ontario throughout the PC government's term in office,”¹⁶⁰ the main example of this being the 1997 teachers labour protest. Indeed, the Caledon Institute found that “education serves as an example of the problems with the speed, scope and style of policy change implemented by the Conservative government.”¹⁶¹ It is

¹⁵⁷ Bezanson and Valentine, “Act in Haste,” 10.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ D.W. Livingstone, D. Hart and L. E. Davie, *Public Attitudes Towards Education in Ontario 2002: The 14th OSIE/UT Survey*, Orbit Magazine Monograph (Toronto: Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, 2003): 19-20.

¹⁶⁰ Lindsey Kerr, *Between Caring & Counting: Teachers Take on Education Reform* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 19.

¹⁶¹ Bezanson and Valentine, “Act in Haste,” 10.

not surprising that those responsible for “delivering” education were upset about the rate of change: between June of 1995 and September of 1998 (a mere 2.25 years), the entire funding formula had been restructured, school boards had been eliminated and reformed, teachers’ collective bargaining rights had been greatly reduced, new elementary curriculum and province-wide standard report cards had been introduced, development of new secondary curricula was under way, province-wide standardized tests were implemented, a managerial approach to education had been instituted, and close to a billion dollars had been removed from education funding. Many school boards found the rate of change almost impossible to keep up with. Larger urban school boards, such as the Toronto District School Board, could not restructure and implement all of the new government directives quickly enough after amalgamation, because the “significant upheaval caused by the immense task of ‘harmonization’ of staff, policies and procedures, and finances immobilised local governance at a crucial time during educational restructuring.”¹⁶² Even the government could not keep up with its own change in some areas. An example of this (discussed further in Chapter Eight) was the fact that curricula were developed so fast that some of the textbooks, which were contracted out by the government in the same manner as curriculum development, were not ready at the time that teachers were supposed to begin using the new curriculum.¹⁶³ The general feeling among teachers was that the new curriculum documents were created too fast and with not enough transparency and consultation, although the content itself was not always objectionable. This approach allowed the government to “roll out” its new curriculum as quickly as possible, thereby fulfilling a campaign promise.¹⁶⁴ Further commentary about the speed and process of curriculum development is presented in Chapter Eight, as this relates to the discursive positioning and purpose of music as a subject within the broader Ontario education system.

In fact, a general feeling amongst the public and the education sector alike was that the government implemented change with little to no public consultation and a lack

¹⁶² Kerr, *Between Caring & Counting*, 60.

¹⁶³ Majhanovich, “Change in Public Education,” 59.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

of transparency. Part of this complaint stemmed from the PC government's use of omnibus Bills: Bills that were hundreds of pages long containing many details and several Acts. Parliamentary tradition dictates that such Bills deal only with "housekeeping" details (e.g., minor details to be "cleaned up" before parliament ends a session); Omnibus Bills containing several Acts are usually disallowed by the Speaker of the Legislature and broken into smaller, more manageable components.¹⁶⁵ Bill 26, as discussed above, however, laid the groundwork to restructure education reform when it was passed in 1996 and was an Omnibus Bill of over 2000 pages affecting 44 statutes and creating three Acts.¹⁶⁶ As Kate Bezanson and Fraser Valentine observed, "the requirement to deal with issues individually is a vital restraint on the powers of government by requiring it to submit each specific initiative to debate."¹⁶⁷ However, since the Speaker had the power to rule on issues such as what constituted an acceptable Omnibus Bill, and the Speaker was appointed by the sitting government, the PC government was able to pass the Bill.

Another way in which the PC government limited discussion about and transparency in regard to its policy making was to, as Basu states, implement policies through a "stealth" approach, using "hidden and closed processes of budgeting, minimum public consultation, and . . . arcane and technical language . . . to rationalize predetermined decisions."¹⁶⁸ He cites Bill 160, at over 300 pages and full of technical language, as an example of such an approach.¹⁶⁹ Bezanson and Valentine give concrete evidence of this approach, summarizing how the government limited debate of Bills 26, 104, 136, and 160 by changing the rules governing the amount of time for debate of Bills in the Ontario Legislature and reducing the amount of time that members of parliament could speak.¹⁷⁰ Further, they showed how time for public consultation on these very

¹⁶⁵ Bezanson and Valentine, "Act in Haste," 3.

¹⁶⁶ White colourfully refers to the Bill as "mind-numbingly complicated" in *Ontario Since 1985*, 269.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁶⁸ Basu, "The Rationalization of Neoliberalism in Ontario's Public Education System," 632.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Bezanson and Valentine, "Act in Haste," 4.

substantial and important Bills was limited to an average of less than seven days per Bill.¹⁷¹

A synthesis of the above discussion reveals one last method through which the government was able to implement change relatively freely without public consultation or debate. Many of the Acts discussed here contained open-ended clauses that allowed the PC government to set the terms of education reform through secondary legislation. Examples mentioned above include legislation in Bills 30 and 31 allowing the government to ask the OCT and EQAO to perform any duties it feels might arise and are related to those QUANGOs' areas of expertise, the power conferred upon the government to redraw school board boundaries and set trustee salaries by Bill 104, and the power of the government to define "classroom" and "non-classroom" spending as established in Bill 160. This legislation allowed the government to make decisions regarding education reform with little to no consultation with educational experts or the public. Even the selection of mandatory curriculum subjects and the curriculum guidelines themselves were formed this way, although the power to do so came from pre-Conservative legislation.

In short, the scope, speed, and approach to the PC's reforms have often been referred to as "draconian" in nature, and prompted one particular judge who ruled against a challenge to the right of the government to amalgamate various communities into the City of Toronto to state that, regrettably, Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms "does not guarantee the individual the right to live free from government imperiousness."¹⁷²

(2) Financial Reform

When discussing critiques of Ontario's education reform, it is necessary to remember that these reforms took place in the context of an election promise made by the PCS in the *CSR* to cut income taxes by 30% over three years while eliminating the NDP deficit and balancing the budget. As Randall White states, to do this it "had to cut a lot of

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Stephen Borins, cited by Neil Freeman in White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 279.

government spending—and a lot of public services.”¹⁷³ The PCs had also promised that any funding cuts made to social services shared with the municipalities in order to reduce taxes would not result in the municipalities or school boards raising taxes to cover decreases in provincial funding. Education, of course, was a service in which such a situation could and did occur. This happened during the 1996-1997 school year *after* Snobelen announced the \$400 million cuts to education funding, but *before* Bill 160 was passed.¹⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, the municipalities themselves were deeply unhappy about the amount of restructuring to and downloading of social services that allowed the province to take over funding education and to keep PC election promises, because this, as White writes, “inevitably bumped into problems of local government finance and property tax reform.”¹⁷⁵ Indeed, it was this displeasure, discussed above, expressed by the municipalities that eventually caused the PC government to compromise on its initial plan to fully fund education and, instead, to set education tax rates and have the municipalities collect half of the funds for education on its behalf. The effects of the social service restructuring needed for the province to take control of educational funding were far reaching and had a dramatic effect on their level of quality. By September of 1998, “more than a few officials (and taxpayers) were still angry about just how municipal downloading and property tax reform were working out.”¹⁷⁶

The public itself was concerned about the reduced amount of funding spent on education, despite the PC government’s assurances that classroom spending would be protected. The OISE survey found that, in 1996, only 47% of the public felt that more government spending for elementary and secondary education was necessary. By 1998, however, well into the restructuring process, this number had risen to 61%, and, by 2002, 70% of the public surveyed felt that more government money needed to be spent on Ontario’s public school system.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 262.

¹⁷⁴ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 243.

¹⁷⁵ White, *Ontario Since 1985*, 273.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 289.

¹⁷⁷ Livingstone, Hart and Davie, “Public Attitudes Towards Education in Ontario 2002,” 13.

One of the more influential education-related organizations formed in response to concerns over funding was People for Education, an independent parent-led organization that collected and published data intended to monitor “the publicly funded education system through participatory research and policy analysis.”¹⁷⁸ People for Education has collected data annually on public school conditions affected by changes to Ontario’s funding since 1997, and Statistics Canada and the Auditor General have used its data.¹⁷⁹ The work of organizations such as People in Education gave the general public access to information about the effects of reduced educational funding and the new formula on both “non-classroom” *and* “classroom” spending. Their reports indicate that school fees and fundraising by schools and parents had dramatically increased over the Harris government’s time in office. This is discussed further in Chapter Eight as it was particularly relevant to provision and support for music education. Another important outcome of decreased education funding that particularly impacted music education and that is also discussed further in the next chapter was the decision of the DSBs to eliminate music co-ordinators or expand their roles to encompass all of the arts.

By 2002, the PC government was willing to admit that there were some problems with public education funding, so it commissioned the Education Equality Task Force, led by Mordechai Rozanski, to review its funding formula. Its report, released in December 2002, like so much of the PC’s actual legislation, was somewhat misleadingly titled, *Investing in Public Education: Advancing the Goals of Continuous Improvement in Student Learning and Achievement* (Rozanski Report). The Rozanski Report recommended a major injection of cash back into the education system, beginning with bringing the benchmark values in the funding formula up to present values from their current values assessed in the early 1990s.¹⁸⁰ It contained thirty-three specific recommendations for the government, and, as Anderson and Jaafar note, “all stakeholders

¹⁷⁸ People for Education, “Vision and Mission,” accessed Oct 30, 2010, <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/about-us/what-we-do/vision-and-mission/>.

¹⁷⁹ People for Education, “P4E Reports by Topic,” accessed Oct 30, 2010, <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/research/p4e-reports-by-topic/>.

¹⁸⁰ Anderson and Jaafar, “Policy Trends in Ontario,” 36.

welcomed the recommendations and demanded the government rapidly act on them.”¹⁸¹ The Rozanski Report recommended that these changes begin in 2003. While the PC government did respond in December 2002 and in March and April 2003 with announcements of almost 1.8 billion dollars to be injected into the system over three years in such areas as learning resources, special education, school renewal, small and rural schools with special needs, and reasonable increases to salaries,¹⁸² by October of 2003, they were no longer in office to see the proposed changes to educational funding through.

In summary, the PC’s changes to educational funding promoted great disruption amongst most of Ontario’s social services, both at the provincial and municipal level, and led to tension among province, municipalities, and school boards. Ultimately, as the Rozanski report found, the changes led to inequities in school funding—something that the government stated would be solved by the student-focused funding model. Finally, both the Rozanski report and reports from educational stakeholder groups, such as People for Education, demonstrated that the PC government did not adequately calculate the amount of money that would be needed for both “classroom” and “non-classroom” spending.

(3) Curriculum Reform and Standardized Testing

Reports on public and parent satisfaction with the PC’s curriculum and testing reforms are scarce in comparison to those showing general satisfaction with the scope, speed, and approach to changes to the public school system in general and its funding. Most of the data collected in this area are in the form of anecdotal evidence regarding teacher and administrator reaction to these reforms and how they were undertaken. Perhaps curriculum change and testing implementation were not such a “hot topic” for the public because, as argued above, the changes followed a general trend in Western education to standardize curriculum across broad regions and to implement tests that could be used as both accountability measures and to demonstrate student “achievement”

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid. 37.

to the public and the globalized economic world. In addition, they were really the culmination of a slow return to central control over this area of the curriculum that had begun in the 1970s. The PC government certainly stressed the need for these standardization measures in its election rhetoric and continued to emphasize it throughout its curricular reform. In addition, the first province-wide round of standardized tests undertaken in 1997 by students in Grade 3 and the sample group of students in Grade 9 mathematics appeared to indicate that educational standards and “achievement” needed to be raised: In grade 3, only 46% of student scored at the desirable levels of 3 or 4 in the reading test, 52% in writing, and 46% in mathematics. Grade 9 scores were a dismal 30%. With the publication of these scores, there is little wonder that there was no public outcry at the implementation of new curriculum and tests designed to raise test scores, particularly after government discourse that had already sought to establish a need for improvement in these academic areas.

Teacher and administrator feedback on the new curriculum and testing regime, however, was more mixed. Initially, many school boards were accepting of the new, more specific, outcome-oriented curricula, particularly as past political regimes had begun the process of moving Ontario’s curriculum in this direction¹⁸³ and, as discussed above, the work of some school boards on their own curricular documents certainly referenced the more structured curriculum first introduced in *The Little Grey Book*. In addition, although the curriculum guidelines were very explicit about the multitude of things teachers were supposed to teach and the supporting exemplars limited the flexibility of teachers’ evaluation of students, the documents did not dictate to teachers *how* they should teach the material and so did not transgress on a well-established educational tradition. In this respect, curriculum delivery was one of the few areas where administrators’ and teachers’ professional abilities to make decisions regarding what happened in the classroom were not questioned, limited, or controlled by the PC government.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 240.

¹⁸⁴ Anderson and Jafaar, “Policy Trends in Ontario Education,” 41-42.

On the other hand, teachers struggled with the immense amount of material in the curriculum and the difficulty it posed for students. Kerr found that,

especially in cumulative subjects, the effect on students of the level of difficulty of the new curriculum and an unrealistic timeframe to cover the course leaves teachers with the dilemma of meeting their responsibility of delivering the curriculum on time or addressing student needs and filling the knowledge gaps.¹⁸⁵

The secondary mathematics curriculum proved particularly challenging to implement, leaving students struggling to pass other subjects while still mastering its content.¹⁸⁶ In addition, some teachers found that the new standardized report card, with its stock comments, was an ineffective tool for communicating students' progress to parents.¹⁸⁷

However, the most common educator complaint about the new curriculum and testing regime was that teachers had to alter the educational process to teach to the EQAOs tests, even at the expense of delivering the required curricular content. Majhanovich posited that teachers began to ask, "Is only the strictly measurable worth learning?"¹⁸⁸ Likewise, Kerr discusses how "the negative profiling of schools through publication of EQAO tests" was used as a "threat" to some schools with low scores, motivating them to concentrate more time and resources on raising test scores, thus encouraging educators to "teach to the test."¹⁸⁹

(4) Re-Structuring Teacher and Administrator Duties

Much of what can be said of teachers' and administrators' reaction to government re-structuring of their duties is mentioned above and embodied in their landmark province-wide labour protest in the autumn of 1997, and so is only summarized here. The governments' regulation of class size, teaching time, extra-curricular duties, evaluation procedures, detailed curriculum, the teaching practice in general, as well as the removal

¹⁸⁵ Kerr, *Between Caring & Counting*, 54.

¹⁸⁶ Anderson and Jafaar, "Policy Trends in Ontario Education," 41-42.

¹⁸⁷ Kerr, *Between Caring & Counting*, 57-58. Previously, teachers had been able to formulate their own comments on student report cards. The PCs standardized report card required teachers to choose pre-loaded and -written comments from a list.

¹⁸⁸ Majhanovich, "Change in Public Education," 60.

¹⁸⁹ Kerr, *Between Caring and Counting*, 92.

of principals from the teachers' unions, left teachers and administrators feeling antagonized, over-regulated, disempowered, and angry.

Conclusion

After reviewing the historical structures and values of Ontario's public education system, this chapter has situated the education reforms made by Ontario's Progressive Conservative majority government from 1995-2003 within its own history and the conception of neoliberal education presented in Chapter Four. It has shown how, despite the lack of emphasis on privatization and quasi-marketization that could not be supported due to an historical emphasis on *collectivism*, the government implemented education reforms that conformed to the core concepts of *Market*, *Welfare*, *Constitution*, and *Property* through various adjacent and peripheral concepts. Those related to the core concept of *Market* included: *individualism*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, *centralization of standards*, *knowledge economy*, *core skills*, *core curriculum*, *standardized curricula and testing*, *high-stakes testing*, *decentralization/devolution*, and *managerialism*. The core concept of *Welfare* is supported through the neoliberal concepts of *minimal state*, *equality of opportunity*, *freedom*, *personal responsibility*, *self-reliance*, *negative rights*, *efficiency*, *reduced social expenditure*, *QUANGOs*, and *knowledge workers*. *Constitution* is supported by the concepts of *legal responsibility*, 'rules of just conduct,' and peripheral emphasis on *balanced budgets*. Finally, the core concept of *Property* is supported by the adjacent and peripheral concepts of *legal privilege*, *negative justice* (conformity to universal rules), *educational consumers*, *knowledge as commodity*, *accountability*, *accreditation and certification*, *user fees*, *donations*, and *fundraising*.

As the above discussion demonstrates, the PC reforms to education from 1995-2003 were swift, far-reaching in scope, and accomplished in a manner that alienated both the municipalities and those responsible for providing public education. In addition, they left much of the public feeling that change had happened too fast and with too little consultation. Almost all of the PC reforms were contested in some way by the public, parents or education providers, the main exception to this being the general public's apparent lack of concern over the new curriculum. Restructuring of educational funding

and the student-focused funding model were pressing concerns to all except the government, while education providers demonstrated particular concern regarding increasing government control over various elements of schooling, a disempowering of teachers, the impact of the EQAO testing regime, and the depth and breadth of the new curriculum documents.

Having illustrated how *neoliberal education* conceived of and enacted in Ontario under the Progressive Conservative government during 1995-2003, we now to an examination of how that government's reforms affected the development, implementation and provision of music education in Ontario's elementary and secondary schools.

Chapter Eight: Neoliberal Education Reforms and Music Education in Ontario (1995-2003)

Introduction

As with Chapter Six, which discussed music education in relation to neoliberal education reform in England, this chapter outlines how changes in educational policy in Ontario affected music education during neoliberal reform. Like Chapter Six, it begins with a brief overview of the history and context of music education in Ontario's public school system. Historically, music education in Ontario has received far less public and scholarly attention and discussion in comparison to music education in England, both from its inception and during neoliberal reforms—a consideration to which I return in the concluding chapter of this study. That said, there are a few well-written sources from which much of this overview was drawn, chief among them J. Paul Green and Nancy Vogan's *Music Education in Canada*¹ and several accounts of the development of music education in Canada in the publication *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*² and its companion ebook, *From Sea to Sea: Perspectives on Music Education in Canada*.³ Unlike the English government, however, the Government of Ontario has published a great deal of curricular policy about the value, purpose, and form that music education should have and take in Ontario's public schools, so those documents also guide much of this historical overview.

¹ J. Paul Green and Nancy Vogan, *Music Education in Canada: A Historical Account* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

² Carol Beynon and Kari Veblen, eds, *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*, Waterloo: Waterloo University Press, 2012.

³ Kari Veblen, Carol Beynon, Stephanie Horsley, Uresha DeAlwiss and André Heywood, eds., *From Sea to Sea: Perspectives on Music Education in Canada* (London, ON, Western University, 2007). <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/musiceducationebooks/1/>.

Following this, I discuss relevant “top down” policy reforms to curriculum guidelines and their structure and implementation as well as how assessment, educational finance, and teacher training impacted the development, implementation, and provision of music education during the Progressive Conservative’s regime. Also considered are the effects of public opinion on and local teacher and administrator attitudes toward music education as they may have affected the development and implementation of music education. In short, an effort is made here to reflect the structure of Chapter Six before continuing to a more systematic comparison of neoliberal education reform and music education in England and Ontario in the final chapter of this study.

Music Education in Ontario: 1871-1995

Music Education in Ontario: 1871 to 1975

As noted in Chapter Seven, Egerton Ryerson, as the first superintendent of education in Ontario, was responsible for creating Ontario’s first true, universal system of elementary education.⁴ Ryerson supported the inclusion of music education in Canada’s schools; music education was not an educational priority before this, although there is clear evidence that it was taught in some schools and school boards prior to confederation in 1867.⁵ Even before schooling was made compulsory for Ontarian children in 1871, Ryerson endorsed the inclusion of vocal music in the curriculum in 1846 because he believed it had the potential to civilize and promote desirable social values and tastes.⁶ Later, Ryerson’s vision for music education in Ontario was inspired by the multiple European countries he visited during his 1870s research “travels,” especially England and Prussia. As a Methodist minister, he was particularly impressed with how music education was used to support religious and cultural values in the latter country.⁷ Thus, vocal music as it was introduced into the schools in Ryerson’s day was meant to support the types of democratic and general Christian moral and social values that he envisioned for a public school system designed for a largely immigrant, agrarian society where living

⁴ As in Chapter Seven, I have consolidated the terms *Upper Canada*, *Canada West*, and *Ontario* into simply *Ontario* to avoid confusion.

⁵ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 47-48.

⁶ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 50.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 49.

conditions were often challenging. As such, he also thought music education could provide some relief from the drudgery of school and everyday life. As Green and Vogan noted, “As a Methodist, Ryerson possessed a natural desire to make vocal music part of the day-to-day experience of school; as an educator, he perceived public school to be a vehicle for promoting middle-class values; as a nationalist, he recognized the potential of music to foster loyalty and patriotism in Canadian life.”⁸

Music education, then, could help refine, democratize, and civilize Canadians. One of the earliest courses of study for music in Ontario’s schools stated that music “should be directed toward developing in the pupil a taste for good music, and providing him with a means of worthy enjoyment both in school and in later life.”⁹ Music was considered so important in Ontario’s early education system that it was a compulsory subject, although the required subject matter mainly involved learning to sing—by rote—“The National Anthem; patriotic songs; folk songs; hymns suitable for the opening and closing exercises of the school; songs appropriate to the time of year; and other songs selected by the teacher, suitable to the age and attainments of the pupils.”¹⁰ A more advanced course in music, which was optional, would teach student basic note reading, theory, and critical appreciation.¹¹

Perhaps one of Ryerson’s most enduring legacies in music education, however, was his decision that music at the elementary level could be taught by the general classroom teacher, educated in the normal schools, rather than by a music specialist.¹² As discussed later in this chapter, the specialist vs. generalist teaching of music education had profound effects on the quality of music education implementation throughout Ontario’s history. This is especially important given that the Normal Schools (or teachers’ colleges, as they were renamed after World War Two) had a long history of neglecting to provide “sufficient time to provide the basic music background upon which teaching methods could be developed.”¹³ To make up for this, prominent music educators who were

⁸ Ibid. See also Chapter 7, pp. 312-14.

⁹ Department of Education, *Courses of Study: Public and Separate Schools 1926* (Toronto: The United Press, 1926), 27.

¹⁰ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 27.

¹¹ Ibid., 27-28.

¹² Ibid., 51

¹³ Ibid., 277.

associated with the Normal Schools began developing summer courses as of the mid-1930s to improve teacher training in music education for those who voluntarily wished to enrol.¹⁴ This voluntary “professional development” would be reintroduced much later as a way of training music teachers using the 1998 elementary curriculum and is discussed further below, as is its relationship to other, “non-voluntary” teacher training during the Harris regime. It is also interesting to note that, throughout this earlier history of music education in Ontario, the government, “flirted simultaneously” with having both specialist and generalist teachers responsible for music instruction, but never made a formal policy regarding who would teach the subject.¹⁵ Consequently, the quality of music programs in Ontario’s schools, particularly at the elementary level, has been subject to the abilities of the teacher assigned to teach music, regardless of any demands made of curricular policy.

As in England, lack of proper training and local attitudes toward the relevance of vocal music education in the curriculum meant that not all schools taught music—particularly in rural areas, which often had one-room school houses and very limited financial and physical resources—although Ryerson did exert his influence through the inspectorate to increase music instruction during the 1870s.¹⁶ Later, school boards would adopt their own music supervisors who would work toward procuring resources and training generalist teachers to effectively teach music. For example, the first music supervisor in Toronto was Alexander T. Cringan, appointed in 1886, who later became Inspector of the Teaching of Music for Ontario schools in 1919.¹⁷ Inspectors would not only help train generalist teachers working in their district in the art of teaching music, but they would also train the musicians who were hired on a part time or itinerant basis to teach music and who subsequently needed teacher training. Indeed, it was this second group of students that helped inspire the aforementioned development of summer courses

¹⁴ Ibid., 277-78.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 52.

¹⁷ Nancy Vogan, “Canada: Diverse Developments Across the Decades,” in *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education: Cross-Cultural Historical Studies of Music Education in Compulsory Schooling*, eds., Gordon Cox and Robin Stevens (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 113.

for training music teachers.¹⁸ The inspectors were also routinely asked to create Ministry of Education and Training (MET) approved lists of textbook, song books, and repertoire from which teachers in Ontario could choose.¹⁹ These “approved” materials remained the norm in the province of Ontario well into 1960s, when, as discussed in Chapter Seven, a gradual transferring of the responsibility of curriculum development to the local level resulted in lists of “suggested” rather than “approved” resource materials presented by the government. While the difference may seem nominal, it is important to note that, historically, the purchase or acquisition of “approved” resources was usually funded by government grants, while the purchase of “suggested” materials or materials not on any list was made at the expense of the school board, school, or teacher.

By 1893 provincial inspectors no longer had to report on the status of music in the schools.²⁰ Here was the beginning of an important deviation between the English and Ontarian systems of education: Whereas in England, the effective teaching of and provision for *all* school subjects had been subject to inspection, Ontario decided in the rather early days of its education system to only report on “core” subjects, such as reading and arithmetic. This trend has continued up until the present day and, as argued later in this study, was a primary mechanism by which teachers lacking time and training could circumvent curricular policy and content.

As in England, music programs were expanded through the development of new technologies after World War One. In this case, gramophone recordings complete with teacher guides were made available to teachers, as were educational broadcasts. While the first broadcasts were borrowed from the United States, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (the BBC’s Canadian equivalent) was producing Canadian-oriented programs by 1943.²¹ As in England, these new technologies made it easier for the generalist to implement the music curriculum without overt knowledge of music and music education pedagogy.

¹⁸ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 277.

¹⁹ Vogan, “Canada: Diverse Developments Across the Decades,” 113. As in Chapter Seven, I have simplified Department of Education, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Education and Training to the latter term.

²⁰ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 62.

²¹ Vogan, “Canada: Diverse Developments Across the Decades,” 115.

Music education in Ontario, much like in England, continued to be valued for its ability to develop middle-class artistic refinement, moral character, and loyalty to Queen and country well into the 1960s, which coincided with the broader education goals and values of Ontario's early public education system.²² However, a much more comprehensive rationale of why music should be taught was given beginning with the publication of the 1938 Little Grey Book and the introduction of elements from progressive, child-centred education.²³ Music was important for several reasons, including its relationship to emotive expression; the conception that children are innately musical and enjoy music making; and for its potential to stimulate a child spiritually and mentally, focus concentration, provide opportunities for praise, and engage the student in creative work.²⁴ Surprisingly, however, while the list of what students should learn was far more detailed than in previous curricula, it focused on many of the same items, such as singing simple songs of a patriotic and moral nature, learning to read music, learning to distinguish and comment on "good" music, and learning basic theory.²⁵ The progressive influence is seen, however, in *how* music should be taught. For example, students should not be made to read certain books about music, but rather encouraged to select books about music that interest them from the library. Students should not have formal lessons in reading music, but should rather first focus on learning songs by rote with reading introduced slowly and only as it related to songs that had already captured their imagination. Students were also encouraged to learn about music bodily and to create their own compositions—learning areas not covered in earlier curricula. The Little Grey Book also encouraged interdisciplinary learning and experiences that would show children how music was used in everyday life.²⁶

²² Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada.*, 67. See also Carol Beynon, "Looking Back on Choral Music Education in Canada: A Narrative Perspective," in *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*, eds. Carol Beynon and Kari Veblen (Waterloo: Waterloo University Press, 2012), 94. Beynon writes of this era that, "the education system continued to emphasize *God Save the Queen*, which, at that time, was more patriotic than *O Canada*. The colonized aspired to emulate the colonizers and were encouraged to do so by the colonizers."

²³ See Chapter Seven, p. 316.

²⁴ Ontario Department of Education. *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate School Boards* (Toronto: Department of Education, 1938), 105-107.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 108-12.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 105-108.

In addition, music had a special place in the revised 1942 Book, which re-introduced a focus on citizenship, community, and cultivation of individual talents and strengths in order to find satisfaction and success in society.²⁷ Music “fit” this emphasis nicely because, “no other phase of school life demands so inexorably the subordination of the self to the group, and requires so insistently the utmost co-operative effort.”²⁸ These themes of citizenship, a progressive approach to education, and the ability of music to naturally engage students and create better, more fulfilled citizens through greater aesthetic sensitivity would remain in the Ontario elementary music curriculum until the development of *The Common Curriculum* in 1995. They also reflect the elevation of the *collective* over the *individual* that underpinned educational philosophy in Ontario up to the Harris era. It should be noted, however (as will be discussed more in relation to secondary music education below), that “aesthetic sensitivity” in the music education curricular policy of the Ontario Government from the time of the Little Grey book until 1995 focused strongly on the development of an aesthetic sense through engagement in reflective, critical performance. Indeed, as will be seen below, music education in Ontario, particularly at the secondary level, historically has been associated with music *performance* and not with creation, as is emphasized in the English curriculum.

Overall, the tone captured in the Little Grey Book is one of gentle instruction for a teacher who may not have the keenest of musical knowledge—a tone repeated in most of the curricular music guides for the elementary level up until 1995’s *Common Curriculum*. For example, the book provides several suggestions for how teachers unable to teach or play music could address their deficiencies in order to not “ruin” a child’s musicality through bad teaching. Suggestions included drawing on MET resources and/or hiring itinerant music teachers.²⁹ This tone is not noticeable in the senior level curricular documents, where music teachers necessarily were music specialists due to the advanced level of instruction. This implies that MET, at least until 1995, was aware of and wished

²⁷ See Chapter Seven, pp. 316-17.

²⁸ Ontario Department of Education, *Programme of Studies for Grades VII and VIII of the Public and Separate School Boards* (Toronto: The United Press, 1942), 94.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

to address some of the challenges that many generalist elementary teachers faced when (attempting to) implement the music curriculum.³⁰

Music sporadically expanded upward into secondary schools prior to World War Two, but, as high schools at this time primarily existed to educate the (rather small percentage of) social and academic elites who would later enter university, it was neither a required subject nor one deemed useful for the practical training of those bound for university.³¹ Music education in Ontario would have to wait for the prosperity brought about in the wake of World War Two and the changing attitudes toward a more progressive and inclusive system that reached their full influence in the 1960s—similar to England—before it would truly “arrive” as a subject in Ontario’s secondary schools.

Music education in the post-war era benefitted from several coinciding social and economic developments. Among them was a (1) growing concern over American influence as discussed in the federal Massey Report, (2) increased economic prosperity, (3) an expanding population and school system, and (4) an increased focus on a more progressive approach to schooling. To begin, the 1949 Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (known as the Massey Report after its chairman, Vincent Massey) supported the notion that Canadian identity was in danger of being subsumed by a growing American media influence (a recurring theme in the history of Ontario’s public schools). The report itself laid the ground work for the 1957 establishment of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Canadian Music Center (CMC) in 1959, the latter of which generated the Adaskin Project in 1961.³² The Adaskin project focused on the lack of representation of Canadian music being performed in the country’s school programs and sought to address this lack by making more resources available, including the sponsorship of a “composer in the classroom” program.³³ Projects such as

³⁰ The exception to instruction in secondary level curriculum occurs when new technologies are introduced in the classroom. For example, a 1983 Senior Music curriculum document contains more detailed instructions on how using recording equipment to make “musique concrete” and create a sound track for a film. See Ministry of Education, *Music: Senior Division* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1983), 9-15.

³¹ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 68. See also Department of Education, *Courses of Study and Examinations of the High Schools, Collegiate Institutes and Continuation Schools* (Toronto: The United Press, 1932), 9.

³² Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 309-11.

³³ *Ibid.*, 311-13.

the Adaskin project aligned with broader political goals during this era to develop a strong Canadian identity and, indeed, secondary school curriculum guides from the mid-1950s on contain approved or suggested repertoire lists with Canadian content and suggestions of Canadian composers who might be of interest to study.³⁴

As part of the Robarts Plan restructuring in response to economic and population boom and a growing desire to educate all Ontario citizens at the secondary level discussed in Chapter Seven,³⁵ the government of Ontario closed the educational branch responsible for music in 1965, meaning that there was no longer a designated policy branch at the provincial level to aid in the development and implementation of the curriculum, oversee and monitor teacher training and curriculum implementation, and generally advocate for the place of music education in Ontario's public schools.³⁶ Yet, despite the closure of the MET's music branch, several factors combined to have a positive impact on the support for and availability of music education in Ontario's public schools in the 1950s and 1960s. For example, the Robarts Plan allowed students in an academic stream in secondary school to choose music as an elective.³⁷ And the changes in secondary school curriculum and choices resulting from the Hall-Dennis report meant that more students than ever could choose multiple courses in music as it suited their interests, particularly in the early days of the secondary school credit system when required subjects were not in existence. Indeed, music could be seen as one of the courses most likely to introduce a topic of interest and engagement in the secondary school experience.³⁸ In addition, projects such as the Adaskin Project helped support and provide resources for an increased focus on Canadian culture within schools, while large ensembles supported social *collectivism*.

³⁴ Perhaps the clearest of these is the 1972 Intermediate Music curriculum guide, which marked Canadian repertoire with a maple leaf symbol. See Ministry of Education, *Music: Intermediate Division* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1972).

³⁵ See Chapter Seven, pp. 317-18.

³⁶ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 324-25.

³⁷ Lee Willingham and Jane Cutler, "Music Education in Ontario: Snapshots on a Long and Winding Road," in *From Sea to Sea: Perspective on Music Education in Canada*, eds. Kari Veblen et al. (London, ON, Western University, 2007), 3, accessed June 4, 2013, <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/musiceducationebooks/1/>. Prior to this, most secondary music programs existed as extra-curricular activities.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

The growth of secondary school music during the 1950s and 1960s was also tied to the expansion of secondary school provision to all children, as the baby boomers moved through Ontario's education system and the money to build new facilities and fund expensive programs was abundant. As mentioned above, the secondary music program tended to focus on performance. This was due in large part to the traditions on which the programs were based. Community music making, particularly in band and orchestra, had long been valued in Canada, both for its support in community-building, and before that, because of its association with the military culture prevalent from Canada's colonial roots.³⁹ Green and Vogan write that, "instrumental music was so well established by the late 1950s that, as schools were constructed in new suburban areas, almost automatically music rooms were included in the building plans."⁴⁰ This explosion of instrumental music in the secondary school, which required specialist teachers owing to the advanced level of instruction and performance, caused a shortage in qualified music teachers. As a result, many teachers hired were World War Two military musicians and veterans who were then certified through the Music Branch of the MET before it was disbanded, while others were teachers hired from England based largely on their ability to work with large ensembles.⁴¹ In addition, several of the men responsible for introducing music education into secondary schools or who developed the initial teacher training programs for secondary music teachers had strong performance backgrounds, upon which they modelled their own music programs and pedagogy.⁴² As a result, band programs (which reflect the musical background of ex-service men) became particularly popular. This popularity was entrenched through the development of various community competitions

³⁹ Elizabeth Gould, "Re-Membering Bands in North America: Gendered Paradoxes and Potentialities," in *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*, eds. Carol Beynon and Kari Veblen (Waterloo: Waterloo University Press, 2012), 109.

⁴⁰ Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 360.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 360-361.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 356-359. For example, Walter Arnold, Dean of the Toronto School of Music from 1952-1968 modelled the "school music" degree program after The Juilliard School and The Eastman School of Music in the United States. His successors, also graduates of American universities, subsequently introduced the method book and traditional band ensemble techniques that still dominate many intermediate and secondary school music courses.

and festivals in the 1950s and 1960s and by community performances, the latter of which were supported by curricular guidelines.⁴³

Provincial curriculum guidelines governing secondary music reflect this entrenchment in a performance approach to music education. For example, a 1963 guideline noted that,

the performance of music is, above everything else, the most important activity that can be carried on in the name of music in any curriculum. It is a fine thing to know many things *about* music, but the true love of the art, which is the prime consideration in any course, is best fostered by singing in a chorus or playing in an instrumental ensemble of some kind. It is therefore suggested that all music students in all grades be required to belong to a performing group in the classes in music that are not already singing or playing classes.⁴⁴

And although music curriculum in the 1970s would be strongly influenced by the aesthetic education movement, the emphasis on performance would still take precedence.

By the middle of the 1970s then, music education enjoyed, from both a policy and economic perspective, a fair amount of stability in Ontario's curriculum. It was a required subject in elementary school and was enjoying much popularity at the secondary level, where students were allowed a greater choice in subject selection. Changing attitudes toward education in the next 20 years, however, would change the status and availability of music education as it approached Ontario's neoliberal reforms to education in the mid-1990s.

Music Education in Ontario: 1975-1995

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the mid-1970s marked the beginning of a gradual reclaiming of provincial control over curriculum guidelines at both the elementary and secondary levels in order to promote more curricular consistency across Ontario.⁴⁵ As such, *The Formative Years*, issued in 1975, focused on "a common framework of goals and aims for education in Ontario" at the elementary level.⁴⁶ These guidelines were very broad, however, and the document continued to encourage teachers to develop their own curricular content and lessons based on their knowledge of local students and their

⁴³ See, for example, Ontario Department of Education, *Courses of Study: Grades 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 Music* (Toronto: Department of Education, 1963), 2-5.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁵ See Chapter Seven, pp. 321.

⁴⁶ Ministry of Education, *The Formative Years* (Toronto: Ministry of Education), 2.

needs.⁴⁷ The policy set out by *The Formative Years* is also noteworthy as it is the first in this era to reassert (albeit tacitly) the idea of a “core” curriculum for students focused on literacy and mathematics.

The guidelines for Language Arts and Mathematics in *The Formative Years* were divided into separate sections for the primary and junior levels, while all the remaining subjects were combined into one set of guidelines for both the primary and junior levels. Most of the subjects in this secondary grouping had only one primary aim, while there were several relating to language arts and mathematics. For music, the primary aim was to “develop sensitivity to sound and acquire a base for growth in music.”⁴⁸ Underpinning the aim were seven “learning opportunities” that the curriculum should provide, which included “enjoy singing and become familiar with a wide variety of songs;” “produce and experiment with sounds through a variety of means in order to become increasingly sensitive to rhythm, pitch, dynamics, timbre, form, melody, and harmony;” and “listen to music of various periods of style.”⁴⁹ An overall arts-related aim stated that students should have the opportunity to “increase sensitivity of perception through the use of all the senses and develop the capacity to express this sensitivity through a variety of creative media.”⁵⁰ A twenty four page supporting document, *Music in Action*, was released in 1978, which contained example lessons for the teacher and was aimed at generalist teachers, as had much of the elementary level supporting material for music education had historically been. *Music in Action* also continued to emphasize aesthetic development through performance: “The songs and the accompanying activities in this document are intended to reinforce music concepts in the child’s mind and to enhance the beauty of the songs themselves.”⁵¹

The Formative Years’ emphasis on Language Arts and Mathematics was nothing new when compared to the organization of the Little Grey Book and the amount of space given to each of these subjects in its various versions. It was the first time, however, that the two subjects were so obviously elevated over all other curriculum subjects. That said,

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2-3.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 17.

⁵¹ Ministry of Education, *Music In Action* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1978), 2.

The Formative Years still reflected the ideas of progressive, student-centred education, particularly in the way that it limited curricular planning to very basic, highly flexible guidelines so that the school boards could still plan diverse curricula.

One result of the province downloading curricular guideline development onto the boards during this era was that schools and school boards were free to plan music curriculum as it more directly reflected the knowledge and expertise of their teachers and music supervisors. As established above, the training of music teachers—particularly at the elementary level—had never been a priority for teachers’ colleges and largely came about through a combination of (1) motivated individuals who held positions of power when a Music Branch still existed within MET and (2) individual teachers who were interested in and took the initiative to enrol in voluntary training opportunities. Facilitating between these two groups were the Music Supervisors, Superintendents, or Co-ordinators⁵² who existed at the school board level to help oversee curriculum implementation and resource development and distribution, aid teachers that needed greater pedagogical knowledge, and ensure that provincial curriculum was taught. When the province decided that boards would be responsible for developing their own curricula, some boards retreated to creating the types of curricular guidelines that reflected the approach taken by the Little Grey Book; that is, more prescriptive guidelines that were developed by “local curriculum superintendents, principals, or subject consultants” and teachers.⁵³ Others developed no curriculum documents for music.

The resulting curricula varied widely between boards. Patricia Martin Shand and Lee R. Bartel’s survey and review of the content of music curriculum documents created by Ontario School Boards between 1980 and 1991 contains the work of 25 school boards covering 102 curriculum documents that were created.⁵⁴ The curricula, which mostly focus on Grades 1-9, show a diverse approach to music education including the methods, resources, and underpinning philosophy and all, in theory, conforming to the guidelines

⁵² The terms are used interchangeably, with each board using the term it prefers. The term *co-ordinator* is used from here on for simplicity’s sake.

⁵³ R. D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario’s Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 92.

⁵⁴ Patricia Martin Shand and Lee R. Bartel, *A Guide to Music Curriculum Documents Published by Ontario Boards of Education* (Toronto: Canadian Music Educators’ Resource Centre, 1998).

set out in *The Formative Years*, which remained the official elementary curriculum guideline until 1995.

As discussed in Chapter Seven and reiterated previously in this chapter, the mid-1970s marked the beginning of a gradual reclaiming of provincial central control over secondary education accreditation in the name of creating some sort of standardization in the secondary school diploma accreditation process.⁵⁵ The pre-Harris culmination of this process at the secondary level was the 1984 *Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior* (OSIS) policy document. OSIS required secondary students to graduate with an arts credit in either music, visual art, *or* drama, where previously students could choose from visual art *or* music. OSIS marked the first (but not the last) occasion where “music” was subsumed into the wider field of the “arts” in curricular policy. Further, the addition of “drama” (where previous emphasis on artistic subjects in schools had focused on a choice between visual art and music) placed the arts in even more direct competition with each other by formally expanding offerings to meet the arts credit requirement. And, because OSIS raised the number of credits required to graduate to 30 with 16 mandatory credits, students had fewer elective subject credits available to them. In short, the more required courses the Ministry assigned and the more courses offered to fulfill the arts credit requirement, the fewer opportunities secondary students had to choose courses in music.

The trend of re-introducing curricular guidelines and emphasizing student development in the “core subject areas” such as Language Arts, maths, and science—whether through the assignment of compulsory credits or through the more subtle discursive positioning and regulation of such subjects—steadily increased through the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in the early 1990s as the events that promoted the investigation of and reaction to the Royal Commission on Learning report *For the Love of Learning*, discussed in the previous chapter, unfolded.⁵⁶ It is not surprising, then, that during the early 1990s and up to and including the development of the NDP’s 1995 *Common Curriculum*, more utilitarian purposes for music education began to seep into the government’s policy documents. For example, the 1990 curriculum guideline for secondary school music states that, while “young people study music chiefly because

⁵⁵ See Chapter Seven, pp. 320-21.

⁵⁶ See Chapter Seven, pp. 322-23.

they enjoy [music],” one aim of music education is to help students “become aware of careers for which a background in music is a necessity or an advantage,” particularly if they take a special interest in the subject.⁵⁷ The document also reflected Ontario’s (and Canada’s) growing concern over promoting equity amongst students of difference races and genders, accepting the increasingly multicultural nature of Canadian culture, and the need for students to learn new technologies, as did *The Common Curriculum*.⁵⁸

The NDP’s *Common Curriculum* entrenched in elementary curriculum the idea that the arts could be viewed as a single domain—an idea that had been implied in *The Formative Years* and supported by the OSIS the “arts” credit requirement. While it had a fairly extensive list of outcomes that students should achieve in the arts, it grouped student performance in all arts (music, drama, and visual arts foremost among them) together. The outcomes were not listed by grade, but by what students should be able to achieve by the ends of Grades 3, 6, and 9. Each of the four main learning outcomes in the arts was supported by several “objectives” that students should reach. They included:

1. Understanding Form in the Arts (seven supporting objectives including identifying and critiquing of the work of others and oneself; knowing how art is created; seeing connections between the arts and life and connections between arts);
2. Exploring Meaning in the Arts (four supporting objectives including communicating responses to art; understanding of the social context of artistic creation; identifying how arts differ in style in various locations and social settings; identifying messages and how they are conveyed, particularly in commercial art);
3. Understanding the Function of the Arts (nine supporting objectives including describing how arts affect people and themselves; articulating what students learn when encountering art; knowing where art can be experienced; knowing how art relates to and contributes to the community; identifying occupations in the arts and important Canadian artists, artistic collaborations; and assessing the quality of their own artistic process/progress); and
4. Experiencing the Creative Process in the Arts (nine supporting objectives including understanding the creative/compositional process both formal and

⁵⁷ Ministry of Education, *Music: Intermediate and Senior Divisions* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1990), 6, 9.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7, 10. See also Ministry of Education, *The Common Curriculum* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1995), 6-7, 11.

informally; being a good audience member in a specific situation; using technology in the arts; and incorporating one's experiences into one's art).⁵⁹

In addition and in the wake of the 1988 Multicultural Act, Arts education was seen as having an increasingly important role in fostering cultural understanding and equity in Canadian society, as it served as a cultural artifact that would allow students insight into other cultures and ways of thinking about the world.⁶⁰

With the entrenchment of the arts in *The Common Curriculum* as a mandatory elementary subject (as decided by the MET) and fairly clear objectives as to what should be taught at both the elementary and secondary level, it would be tempting to assume that music education was well-supported in Ontario's public schools as the province entered into *The Common Sense Revolution*. And, from a policy perspective, it was, but activities within schools and the growing perception among practicing music teachers of a need to advocate on behalf of retaining quality music education in Ontario's schools implies otherwise.

In 1994, Rodger Beatty, then President of the Canadian Music Educators' Association and an Ontarian music educator, wrote that, when he "entered the teaching profession almost seventeen years ago, political advocacy in music education was almost non-existent" and that political promotion of his music program would have been limited at that time to pointing out "the successes of students performance and [musical] achievement."⁶¹ From his perspective, the "economic challenges of the [early] nineties" created a "need to rationalize the importance of music in education in order to maintain and improve the music program in our schools."⁶² Indeed, earlier in 1994, another contributor to *Canadian Music Educator (CME)* noted that music programs were increasingly relying on fundraising, and failure to raise adequate funds sometimes meant the cancellation of music programs.⁶³ In 1992, George Bishop, an Ontarian member of the music industry who had helped found the Canadian Music Industry Education

⁵⁹ Ministry of Education, *The Common Curriculum*, 39-46.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶¹ Rodger Beatty, "The Final Word: The Politics of Music Education," *Canadian Music Educator* 35, no. 5 (1994), 48.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Hugh Kennedy, "Fundraising for School Music: How much is Too Much?" *Canadian Music Educator* 36, no. 2 (1994): 26. *CME* is the national journal of the Canadian Music Educators' Association.

Committee gathered together representatives from business and music education to found the Coalition for Music Education in Toronto because he foresaw that the time was fast approaching when it would be necessary to fight for the survival of music programs.⁶⁴ Indeed, a study published in a 1993 issue of *CME* indicated that, although music *should* be taught in all Ontario's elementary schools, only 86% of them offered music during instructional hours. Of those teaching music, almost 80% of those responsible for teaching music were specialists. Ontario, however, had the lowest percentage of teachers who were hired *specifically* to teach music.⁶⁵ In addition, only 74% of secondary schools taught music during instructional hours, with only 68% of boards specifically hiring music specialists solely to teach music at the secondary level, again the lowest anywhere in the country, except for Saskatchewan.⁶⁶ Nancy Vogan also noted that, as school boards were required to do some fiscal belt tightening in the early 1990s, some boards either eliminated their music co-ordinator positions or created "arts co-ordinators," which reflected the early 1990 trend of positioning music under the broader umbrella of the arts.⁶⁷ As discussed above, these music co-ordinators played an essential role in helping to develop music curriculum and resources and ensuring that teachers were trained and able to implement said curriculum.

Moving into the Harris government's *Common Sense Revolution* and Ontario's more intense, swiftly created and implemented neoliberal education in the second half of the 1990s, we can see that a trend toward the marginalization of music education in Ontario's education system had already begun. Indeed, members of Ontario's music education community had begun to see some of this "writing on the wall" for music education and had taken such steps as creating music education advocacy groups and strategies, and, in one nation-wide publication, actively showing how music education

⁶⁴ Stephanie Horsley, "An Historical and Critical Analysis of the Music Education Advocacy Efforts of the Canadian Music Educators Association, The Coalition for Music Education in Canada, and the National Symposium on Arts Education (Master's Thesis, The University of Western Ontario, 2005), 112.

⁶⁵ Patricia Shand and Lee Bartel, "The Administration of Music Programs in Canada," *Canadian Music Educator* 34, no. 5 (1993): 37.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Vogan, "Canada: Diverse Developments," 117.

could support the ten essential learning outcomes outlined in *The Common Curriculum*.⁶⁸ Music education in Ontario had always relied to some extent on the availability and knowledge of teachers assigned to teach music. Yet, it had also moved away from its position as a relatively well-funded subject that was legitimized by its potential to engage students and promote aesthetic, cultural, and national awareness (albeit mostly through performance). Instead, it became a subject that, while still officially endorsed by government policy and still reflecting an emphasis on supporting Canada as a multicultural society, no longer quite “fit” the values surrounding the educational debates and reforms of the early 1990s. This trend would only intensify during the neoliberal education reforms that followed during *The Common Sense Revolution*. We now turn to those reforms and a discussion of how they affected the development, implementation, and existence of music education in Ontario from 1995-2003.

Music Education in Ontario: 1995-2003

Curriculum Reform Discourse and Structural Processes

Chapter Seven described the ways in which the Harris government sought to “create a crisis” through political discourse in order to gain the political support necessary to transform Ontario’s education system.⁶⁹ It built off the concerns and recommendations expressed in *For the Love of Learning* and the discussion around the quality and purpose of education in an emerging *knowledge economy* that had surfaced earlier in the 1990s education and election rhetoric. Thus, the Harris government entered its mandate with strong support to reform Ontario’s curriculum and make education more economically *efficient*, particularly in relation to the production of *human capital*. As discussed in Chapter Seven, what counted as achieving *educational excellence* and higher *standards* was ultimately positioned as emphasizing literacy, mathematics and “core skills” for the knowledge economy as determined by a series of provincial and international standardized tests. It also included the development of a standard report card that would

⁶⁸ Hally Ruth Siddons, “Grade 7 and 8 Instrumental Music and *The Common Curriculum*,” *Canadian Music Educator* 36, no. 6 (1995): 23-25.

⁶⁹ See Chapter Seven, pp. 327-30.

make comparing each child's progress in a particular subject area relatively simple both within and across schools and district school boards.⁷⁰

Yet, at the elementary level, music remained a MET mandatory subject, implying that schools were obliged to teach the elementary curriculum and report children's progress in this subject. Indeed, music was included as a "reportable" subject under the broader category of "the arts" in the standard elementary report card when it was released for mandatory province-wide use in 1998.⁷¹ Extensive curriculum guidelines, exemplars, and course profiles for music were revised and written for the elementary and secondary levels. In policy, music was a required subject at the elementary level. Historically, it was supported by a long-standing position as an important subject in the development of the student as a whole as it related to the Ontarian *collectivist* educational discourse of facilitating cultural tolerance and civic engagement both the elementary and secondary levels. However, when placed within the greater context of the discourse and process of education reform, it becomes evident that music as a subject was not given the same political and provisional support as other subjects in the curriculum, particularly in the areas of curriculum development, teaching resources, and teacher training.

Unlike the release of all other previous provincial curricular guidelines, *The Ontario Curriculum (OC)* developed for Grades 1-8 was not released all at once. Previously, elementary curricular guidelines had been released as a single document encompassing all requirements or suggested guidelines for all mandatory and elective subjects. The Grades 1-8 *OC*, however, was released over the course of two years. The Language and Mathematics guidelines were released in 1997, followed by Science and Technology in early 1998, then French, Health and Physical Education, and The Arts in June of 1998. Social Studies was published last, in August 1998.⁷² The order of curriculum creation reflected the government's emphasis on its planned tested subjects. Indeed, the arts were not mentioned as part of curricular reform until a government press release announcing the publication of the arts curriculum guidelines, although

⁷⁰ See Chapter Seven, pp. 339-45.

⁷¹ Ministry of Education and Training, *Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1 to 8* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1998), 14.

⁷² Stephanie Horsley, "The Politics of Accountability: Implications for Centralized Music Education Policy Development and Implementation," *Arts Education Review* 110, no. 4 (2009): 9.

government press releases frequently stated the significance and quality of the revised Language and Mathematics curriculum.⁷³

The overall process of curriculum development of the Progressive Conservative's *Ontario Curriculum* itself is quite murky. The curriculum documents list no authors, instead stating that "The Ministry of Education and Training wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the many individuals, groups, and organizations that participated in the development and refinement of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts, 1998*."⁷⁴ Curriculum authors and consultants were asked to sign multiple confidentiality agreements.⁷⁵ Of the 84 documents returned by the Ministry of Education in response to this researcher's request for internal documents and timelines related to the development and implementation of the Ontario Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, only two mention the process of curriculum development. The first is a list of members of the Elementary Curriculum Advisory Group, which was composed of members from the Ontario Public and Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Associations, the Ontario Principal's Council, the Ontario Teachers' Federation, the Quality Education Network (QEN), and the Ministry of Education and Training.⁷⁶ QEN's inclusion on this list is particularly interesting, since the other groups are all directly linked to educational institutions, while QEN was a group of over 6000 "militant" parents and "disaffected teachers" that shared the Harris government's neoliberal views on how education should be reformed.⁷⁷ The second document merely mentions that work on the secondary school curriculum had "began quietly in December" of 1998 and was expected to be completed and delivered to teachers in August of 1999, with some concerns expressed over the short timeline for curriculum development.⁷⁸

While no further information is available from the government records concerning the development of the Grades 1-8 music section of the *OC*, some individuals involved in

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1998), back cover. A similar statement is made at the back of the Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12 Arts Curriculum.

⁷⁵ Laura Elizabeth Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario: "Common Sense" Policy Processes and Democratic Possibilities*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 95.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Education and Training, Minutes of Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, Mar. 9, 1999.

⁷⁷ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 171.

⁷⁸ Ministry of Education, Minutes of Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, Mar. 9, 1999.

the creation of the secondary curriculum have broken confidentiality and discussed the nature of the curriculum writing process and their experiences working to create it. Such resources are available in relation to the development of secondary curricula. It is, however, reasonable to assume the development of the elementary curriculum guidelines took place using a similar procedure, perhaps in an even more condensed and unaccountable fashion. The following pages recount the development of the secondary music guidelines for Grades 9-10 and 11-12. Examples of how curriculum guideline development was centrally controlled by the Harris government in such a way as to help shape educational policy according to the government's vision for neoliberal education, particularly the concepts of *educational excellence, standards, knowledge economy/workers* and *core skills*. The structure of curriculum creation also reflects other concepts of neoliberal education reform, such as *public-private partnerships, managerialism, accountability, and efficiency*. I also explore how the latter concepts were emphasized at the expense of transparency and curriculum writers' control over content for those subjects deemed most "important" or "political" by the government.

Before assembling teams of curriculum writers to create the guidelines, the government commissioned members from Ontario's Faculties of Education to create a series of Background Research Papers "designed to raise issues and ask questions about different subjects, with reference to the professional literature."⁷⁹ These papers were not meant to express the views of the government, but rather to explore current key issues, questions, and practices that should be considered by those creating Ontario's curriculum guidelines.⁸⁰ Music-related issues discussed in the arts background paper included a concern over an increasing marginalization of the arts due to expanding political and public emphasis on a core curriculum of science, mathematics, and languages. The authors of the paper also stressed the need to find a balance between justifying the arts for intrinsic and extrinsic purposes, between deeper engagement in the artistic process and the development of refined artistic products, between participating and observing, and between creating and consuming. A need for more curriculum continuity from Grades K-

⁷⁹ John Martin, Carol Beynon, Roger Clark, and Cornelia Hoogland, "The Arts: Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts and Secondary School Curriculum in Ontario," *Background Research Commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training* (Toronto: Queen's Printer Ontario, 1997), ii.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

12 was noted along with comments on how arts should and should not be integrated both among themselves and among the wider school curriculum. The impact of technology on the arts, the value of the arts beyond personal development, and the need to approach arts education more sensitively in school communities with Native students was also discussed.⁸¹ The authors also asserted that arts education needed to be brought up to date with available technology and an increasingly postmodern view of the world where study of “the Old Masters” was, if not irrelevant, at least extremely limited in a globalized, diverse society meant to foster equal, creative, democratic, free-thinking citizens.⁸² The authors recommended that teacher education institutions be remodeled to address life in postmodern society and cautioned that, “a teacher who has almost no knowledge, background, or understanding of the arts is unlikely to deliver an exemplary program.”⁸³ Proper teacher training was needed and the arts in schools could not be renewed until “the disciplinary knowledge of the arts is valued, appreciated, and understood by teachers, parent, students, and others.”⁸⁴ These comments reflect the growing concern of arts educators (discussed above) that their subject was no longer seen as an important or *core* aspect of education. It also relates to the historical inconsistency in music teacher training, knowledge, and pedagogical abilities.

The arts background paper, which was published in 1997, was meant to provoke discussion amongst those developing the arts curriculum guidelines. Yet, it appears that it did not actually play a significant role in that process. In her work with uncovering the process of the structure and experience of creating the secondary curriculum guidelines, Laura Pinto observed that research in general, and the background papers in particular, were rarely consulted in the writing process, if at all.⁸⁵ Indeed, in his account of working on the arts guidelines, Larry O’Farrell noted that he was aware that the processes officially began with the creation of the document, but nowhere else in his account does he mention this document, which was supposed to be a basis of curriculum consultation,

⁸¹ Ibid., 3-11.

⁸² Ibid. 12-13.

⁸³ Ibid., 13.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario*, 94.

discussion, and development.⁸⁶ While it may have been developed with the best of intentions, it appears that the tight timelines involved in the writing process that demanded a high level of efficiency in terms of meeting deadlines, coupled with the desire of government to represent a particular conception of education as a neoliberal one, rendered these thoughtful and thought-provoking research documents obsolete.

Rather than the background papers, three other major factors instead influenced the content of the curriculum guidelines. These were (1) the decision to contract out the writing processes rather than use ministry resources, (2) extremely short completion timelines, and (3) lack of transparency and communication amongst the various parties responsible for writing, reviewing, and approving the guidelines, which allowed the government to impose its vision for education onto the resulting documents where it deemed fit and with little interference.

The decision to contract the job of writing the documents outside of the Ministry of Education and Training marked a first in Ontario's public education system. The issue was one of capacity, but it also allowed the Ministry to exercise considerable control over the process and curriculum content while drawing on the neoliberal concepts of *managerialism* and *efficiency*. The process began with a tender for each subject or group of subjects (such as the arts) in the form of a Request for Proposals (RFP) posted on MERX, a bank owned, subscriber based tender-posting site where subscribers were required to pay a fee to view RFPs. The RFP itself required that potential curriculum writers possess considerable resources, such as \$1 million dollars in liability insurance, and evidence that they had monetary credit in the amount of 10% of contract remuneration.⁸⁷ The proposal was due only six weeks after the January 14, 1997 RFP posting and had to show a curriculum writing team comprised of a

- minimum of 50 per cent Ontario secondary school teachers
- minimum one college educator
- minimum of one university educator
- minimum of one workplace representative

⁸⁶ See Larry O'Farrell, "Writing Arts Curriculum in a Public Sector-Private Sector Partnership," Paper Presented at the *UNESCO Meeting of Experts Arts Education in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Uberaba, October, 16-19 2001).

⁸⁷ Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario*, 78. Pinto notes that some of the contracts had a speculated value of \$500,000.

- representation from northern/southern, separate/public, rural/urban [school boards]⁸⁸
- minimum one writer with ability to integrate technology
- minimum one bilingual writer
- minimum one member with experience in anti-discrimination education
- designated, experienced professional writer⁸⁹

The composition of writers, the short timeline for proposal submissions, and the resources necessary to complete the proposals raised several problematic issues, the first of which was the lack of educators, particularly at the secondary and university level, available during a busy time of year and the challenge of meeting the team composition criteria.⁹⁰ Another related issue was the exclusionary nature of the RFP prompted by the resources needed to write the proposal. Combined, the RFP produced no small amount of “scrambling” to find qualified individuals who were available both to create a proposal and to work on the curriculum guidelines. Pinto describes how successful bidders for subject areas ranged from Faculty of Education members who reached out to partner with private sector writing firms, to private sector firms who reached out to teachers, to a school board consortium, to various foundations and research institutions.⁹¹ Other individuals, such as Pinto herself, were approached by writing teams or bureaucrats to participate in the process either before or during the writing process. Motivations for securing a contract, then, likely differed depending on the type of group hired to write the curriculum. For example, the Arts curriculum team was organized by a university level arts educator, while other curriculum guidelines were written by for-profit organizations,⁹² a manifestation of *public-private partnerships*.

Larry O’Farrell, a Dramatic Arts professor from the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University, was largely responsible for orchestrating the successful bid to write the RFP for the secondary arts curriculum. He described how he “took the initiative” to contact a representative from Excalibur Learning Resources Centre (ELRC), a private sector organization with experience providing educational services to government at the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 79.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 79-80.

⁹⁰ O’Farrell, “Writing Arts Curriculum in a Public Sector-Private Sector Partnership,” 2.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

federal level, to write a proposal after meeting with representatives from various provincial arts groups and collecting roughly 150 resumés from qualified teachers willing to work on the project.⁹³ Part of O’Farrell’s motivation for action stemmed from “a collective fear that a generic (and possibly inappropriate) curriculum would be pulled from the files of [a large, multi-national corporation] and hailed as the new Ontario curriculum by a government that was in a considerable hurry to make a show of reform.”⁹⁴ With O’Farrell and CEO of ELRC Robin Quantick appointed as co-managers of the project, the contract for writing the secondary arts curriculum went to a consortium headed by Queen’s University and ELRC.

The contract began on May 1, 1998 and was due for completion by November 30, 1998, with an overview of all courses—the first “deliverable”—due on June 12, only six weeks after the project had begun.⁹⁵ O’Farrell writes that, from the very beginning of the project, arts educators involved in creating the curriculum guidelines saw themselves as “protectors of quality Arts education against a government that was likely to value science and technology more than artistic expression, to value preparation for employment more than preparation for life, and to value conformity more than individuality.”⁹⁶ Each subject within the arts was assigned to a set of six writers who worked together with a professional writer to generate content by specific deadlines and incorporate feedback from various stakeholder groups at the school, board, and post-secondary level, including parents—all on short and tight deadlines. A Ministry of Education and Training supervisor emphasized points of agreement between stakeholders that should be included in the guidelines.⁹⁷

O’Farrell noted that the Arts team was left to write the curriculum with “relatively little political interference” and thus he felt that the Arts curriculum writing team was able to construct a curriculum that “addressed the important elements of an education in the Arts” despite the challenges of meeting deadlines and negotiating the political

⁹³ O’Farrell, “Writing Arts Curriculum in a Public Sector-Private Sector Partnership,” 3.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

process.⁹⁸ The one exception encountered by the writing team was the Ministry demand that each art area create guidelines that conformed to the same three curricular “strands,” which served as organizers for each course. As discussed further below, these three strands became Creation, Analysis, and Theory. According to O’Farrell, this demand negatively affected some of the arts subjects, such as dance, which did not “fully recover from the removal of technique as a strand.”⁹⁹ Ultimately, however, the diversity of participants on the curriculum teams supported by “current thinking” in each subject brought in by the university level participants resulted in curriculum guidelines that O’Farrell felt reflected “the values of [Ontario’s] diverse [arts] community and presents a kind of snapshot portrait of an idealized Arts education program as articulated in our part of the world at the turn of the twenty-first century.”¹⁰⁰

Pinto observed that not all subject areas were as fortunate when it came to a relative lack of political interference, government oversight, and bureaucratic red tape. Indeed, her research revealed that it was those curriculum subjects positioned as most “important” by election and education reform discourse that received the most scrutiny and interference. Writers described feeling as if their subject was either “politicized” or “under the radar,” depending on previous discussion of the subject in the media or amongst parents. Some believed that their work received less review than the “hot” subjects such as English and Mathematics, while others writing within the more “important” subjects reported direct attention from the Premier’s Office itself.¹⁰¹ In addition, these writers reported that they were effectively silenced during the consultation process when, during feedback meetings with stakeholders, bureaucrats, and officials, they were often told not to speak. In one case, they were told to act like a “potted plant” and not “speak until spoken to” during consultation meetings.¹⁰² These writers were frequently given revisions to incorporate and then reported that, when changes were made to the curriculum from “higher up” the ladder of ministerial authority, they were

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁰¹ Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario*, 93-94.

¹⁰² Ibid., 94-95.

sometimes not consulted and did not know from where the source of the change came.¹⁰³ Other writers found themselves removed from the writing process or their writing teams “disbanded” and replaced by Ministry appointed *ad hoc* teams when they spoke against the ministry vision or feedback, ignored behaviour guidelines in the consultation processes, and/or failed to meet perceived curriculum guideline standards.¹⁰⁴

Such direct shaping of the curriculum writers’ work—writers who were presumably experts in their field and more than qualified to produce curricula, else they would not have been awarded the contract—left some writers in the more highly politicized subjects feeling de-professionalized and more like “hired guns” or “sellouts” than curriculum developers.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, O’Farrell himself, reflecting on the process of creating the Arts curriculum guidelines, asked the rhetorical question, “Did we sell out?”¹⁰⁶ As noted above, O’Farrell felt that the relative lack of political interference allowed the Arts writers to produce curriculum guidelines of which they were proud. However, other writers in more politicized subjects that experience much interference reported that they were initially glad that their participation in the curricular guidelines creation process was anonymous.¹⁰⁷

At first glance, it appears that the arts curriculum writers benefitted from the relative lack of government oversight and interference experienced by writers in those subjects more commonly associated with “core skills” and subjects that were either newly or about to become the focus of standardized testing in Ontario. Certainly, as will be discussed in the final chapter, interference in the writers’ music curriculum development was marginal compared to that experienced by their English counterparts and their experience far less antagonistic. Yet, closer examination implies not so much that the Ontario government trusted the Arts curriculum writers to create an appropriate curriculum, but that the government either did not have a clear vision for what the Arts curriculum should be in Ontario, and so were content to leave it to the curriculum writers, or that it simply did not place enough value on arts education’s role in their goal of

¹⁰³ Ibid. 97-100.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 115. Pinto herself was brought in as one such replacement.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 82-84.

¹⁰⁶ O’Farrell, “Writing Arts Curriculum in a Public Sector-Private Sector Partnership,” 7.

¹⁰⁷ Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario*, 83.

shaping students for economic participation in the *knowledge economy* (or the value placed on arts education by the general public) to bother interfering. Indeed, the main directive that the writers felt compromised their work—that all curricular goals within each arts subject be categorized using the same three strands—simply reflected the way in which all of the curricular documents were finally structured, and so conforms to the neoliberal concept of *standardization*.

The government's control over the process of curriculum writing came mainly through the concepts of *public-private partnerships*, *managerialism*, and *efficiency*. By tendering out the writing process, imposing strict, short timelines, and imposing a more business-oriented model on the hiring, writing submission, and revision processes, the government was able to impose a system of *accountability* with little transparency. That is, the government was able to impose strict rules and systems on the curriculum writing teams, including when writers and bureaucrats might speak about the content of the curriculum and to whom, while also using its control of structural procedures to limit consultation and transparency in the writing process (e.g., using its ability to veto or change writers' work without having to explain those changes or who made them). Lack of transparency and consultation, emphasis on a managerial approach, and strict deadlines and “deliverables” on the part of writers, who were both legally and literally silenced, allowed changes to be made to curriculum at the government's discretion and with little explanation. Yet, only those subjects that had proven to be “important” to neoliberal education reform—and which were clearly supported by the Harris government in their election and reform rhetoric—received substantial interference. This foreshadowed the implementation support the new music curriculum guidelines would receive from the government, particularly at the elementary level where it was most needed. First however, we turn our attention to the final content of the elementary and secondary music curriculum guidelines.

Elementary and Secondary Music Curriculum Content

As noted above, The 1998 *Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts (OCTA)*¹⁰⁸ contained the first curriculum guidelines released under the Harris regime. These were followed by the *OCTA* guidelines for Grades 9-10 in 1999¹⁰⁹ and Grades 11-12 in 2000.¹¹⁰ The *OCTA, 1-8* opened with the statement that, “students in schools across Ontario require consistent, challenging programs that will capture their interest and prepare them for a lifetime of learning. They require knowledge and skills that will help them compete in a global economy and allow them to lead lives of integrity and satisfaction, both as citizens and individuals.”¹¹¹ This was followed by a promise the *OC* would outline the “the knowledge, skills, and high standards of learning required to meet these goals.”¹¹² In reference to the arts, the Grades 1-8 *OCTA* invoked the concepts of *standards, excellence, standardization, and accountability* because the arts curriculum guidelines were “significantly more rigorous and demanding than previous curricula” and that “the required knowledge and skills for each grade set high standards and identify what parents and the public can expect students to learn about the arts in the schools of Ontario.”¹¹³ Parents were encouraged to take responsibility for their children’s learning and success in the arts by participating in such activities as joining school councils, attending parent conferences, and taking their children to arts-related activities (such as museums and concerts) outside of school.¹¹⁴ Likewise, children were reminded that there is a “direct relationship between achievement and hard work, and will be motivated to work as a result.”¹¹⁵ In these sections of the document, we see the emphasis on *individual accountability* and the role students and their parents must play in their own success as *consumers* of education.

¹⁰⁸ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1998).

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 10: The Arts* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1999).

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11 to 12: The Arts* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2000).

¹¹¹ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 2.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 2-3.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 3.

Teachers also had particular responsibilities, such as “developing appropriate instructional strategies” and meeting different student needs and learning styles through a variety of appropriately chosen instructional strategies¹¹⁶ as had traditionally been the case in Ontario education. Thus the Harris government kept in place the freedom of teachers to decide how the curriculum would be taught as dictated by the needs and interests of their students and the available and relevant resources. Teachers were to provide a “supportive learning environment”¹¹⁷ and “must project a positive attitude towards the arts in their instruction” while showing students “careers in various stages of the arts industry.”¹¹⁸ As with previous treatment of arts and music guidelines stretching back to the 1938 Little Grey Book, teachers were encouraged to use a “hands on,” interactive approach to arts education. The *OCTA* also stressed that “it is particularly important that young children be given opportunities to be creative in all the arts, so that they gain the skills and confidence to engage in a variety of artistic explorations.”¹¹⁹

Arts education itself was deemed “essential to students’ intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth,” particularly for its ability to develop creative and critical thinking as well as both verbal and non-verbal expression and communication abilities.¹²⁰ The arts could be “rich sources of pleasure” in the present and future and help students better understand their own culture and the culture of others. Several examples were also given as to how study of the arts could support learning in other areas. Two specific examples mentioned in relation to music were mathematics and technology—both areas of particular interest in neoliberal education.¹²¹ The Grades 1-8 *OCTA* also clearly stated that “all the knowledge and skills outlined in the expectations for the arts program are mandatory.”¹²²

The two secondary curriculum guideline documents do not mention the role individuals and parents must take in students’ learning, but they do stress the ability of the arts to help students gain insight into themselves and their own and others’ cultures,

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 6.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 3.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹²¹ Ibid., 5.

¹²² Ibid., 4.

to develop verbal and non-verbal communication (particularly the use of symbols), to engage in ongoing, enjoyable participation in artistic and cultural activities, and to develop self-confidence, risk-taking, and problem-solving skills.¹²³ Like the elementary curriculum guidelines, the documents stress that connections can (and should) be made between the various arts as well as to other subjects. For example, music could be connected to physics through sound waves.¹²⁴ In addition, the arts courses outlined for Grades 9-12 were intended to

prepare students for a wide range of challenging careers, not only for careers in the arts. . . . Students develop the ability to reason and think critically as well as creatively. They develop their communication and collaborative skills, as well as skills in using different forms of technology. . . . They also learn to approach issues and present ideas in new ways, to teach and persuade, to entertain, and to make designs with attention to aesthetic considerations.”¹²⁵

The end of each of the secondary curriculum guidelines contained a short section on ensuring that arts courses contained “career education.” Noting that, “cultural industries are among the largest sections of the economy,” and that “arts education can also provide students with a range of communication skills and knowledge that are valued in other kinds of employment,” teachers were encouraged to “help students to identify ways in which their involvement in the arts enhances their suitability for a wide range of occupations.”¹²⁶ One of the primary goals associated with the secondary arts curriculum and guidelines (and, to a lesser extent the elementary, guidelines), then, was to give students some of the *core skills* needed to participate in the *knowledge economy*. However, the documents still retained some of the older emphasis on gaining insight into one’s own and other cultures through studying the arts as well as enhancing students’ ability to express themselves aesthetically through a personally enjoyable medium, which usually meant through performance.

¹²³ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts* 3-4. The introduction of the *Grades 9 and 10* and *Grades 11 and 12* curriculum documents are virtually identical. See Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 3-4.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 4

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 57 and Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 10, 88.

The music sections of the Grades 1-8, 9-10, and 11-12 curriculum guidelines each start with a very short rationale for music education that further refines each document's earlier justifications for arts education. For example, the Grades 1-8 document reads:

The music curriculum is intended to help students develop understanding and appreciation of music, as well as practical skills, so that they will be able to find in music a lifelong source of enjoyment and personal satisfaction. It is well documented that the intellectual and emotional development of children is enhanced through the study of music. An interesting and challenging program in music not only develops artistic skills, but also enables students to sharpen their ability to reason and to think critically, and to explore their emotional responses to the music. It is therefore essential that a balanced music program be offered—one that includes both listening and music making and that may appeal to a wide variety of students. Children learn to love music when they have opportunities to experience it in the context of a rich and varied curriculum.¹²⁷

The Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12 curriculum guidelines begin with a short description of what students should hope to accomplish by studying music:

This program is intended to develop students' understanding and appreciation of music through practical skills and creative work. Through this program students will not only find in music a source of enjoyment and personal satisfaction, but also gain creative problem-solving skills, individual and cooperative work habits, knowledge of themselves and others, a sense of personal responsibility, and connections to their communities and future careers.¹²⁸

As with the justification for the arts, each explanation of the music curriculum guidelines indicates that the value of studying music lies no longer mainly in developing personal and cultural insight, aesthetic awareness, and an enjoyable leisure pursuit, but also in its ability to develop *core skills* needed to prosper as an economic individual in the *knowledge economy*. The emphasis, then, had shifted from a largely *collective* to an *individual* reason for engaging in music education.

As for the actual curriculum guidelines themselves, these were, as the government had promised, “significantly more rigorous and demanding than previous curricula.”¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 10.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts* 36. The Grade 11-12 document communicates the same ideas in slightly more words, emphasizing the importance of “investigation into possible careers in or related to music.” See Ministry of Education, *Grades 11-12 The Arts*, 56.

¹²⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 2. A list of the Overall and Specific expectation for Grade 2 music is found in Appendix F. This grade corresponds to the end of Key Stage 1 English *Statutory Orders* in Appendix C.

For example, students in Grades 1-3 were to learn basic musical knowledge and skills “through listening to music, manipulating some basic elements of music, and exploring repertoire from a variety of cultures,” in addition to learning how to care safely for instruments, how to behave as an audience members, and how to work with other students.¹³⁰ Grades 4-6 focused on learning to read traditional notation, identifying form, adding harmony to compositions, conducting, elementary theory (e.g., learning key signatures), and were introduced to the Baroque and Classical periods of music. Students were expected to continue developing their ability to work in groups and begin to critique their classmates’ musical ideas, performances, and compositions.¹³¹ In Grades 7 and 8, students focused on refining skills learned earlier, such as their conducting abilities, and ability to “read and perform works of greater rhythmic and tonal complexity.”¹³² They should also be able to listen to and identify music from the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras; “solve musical problems in groups and individually;” and logically explain their critiques of their own and their classmates “musical efforts.”¹³³

Some of the more challenging, and time consuming skills students should master by the end of Grades 7 and 8 included recognizing intervals “in aural and written form” (Grade 7) and being able to “create and perform two contrasting songs based on a scene from a story, poem, or play and connect them with dialogue” (Grade 7); “identify ways in which the music industry affects various aspects of society and the economy” (Grade 7);¹³⁴ and “conduct 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time . . . correctly using standard conducting patterns (e.g., indications of upbeats, downbeats, and entries) (Grade 8).¹³⁵ This in addition to being able to sing and play in tune, recognize various musical forms, aurally identify music from the main eras of the Western canon, and effectively communicate their thoughts and feelings about music they hear and create.¹³⁶ Arguably, specific expectations such as these can be mastered by Grade 7 and 8 students; however, as

¹³⁰ Ibid., 10.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 24-25.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 26

¹³⁶ Ibid., 26-27.

discussed in further detail below, time, teacher training, and teaching resources must all be in place to successfully implement such a rigorous curriculum.

The secondary curriculum was equally rigorous. Secondary courses, categorized only as “Music,” could be taken multiple times by students, as long as they specialized in different areas of musical study. For example, a student could take the Grade 9 music course twice if the first course focused on voice and the second on guitar. Thus, schools were able to focus their music programs (in theory) on student demand and teacher specialization.¹³⁷ Music was offered at Grades 9, 10, and 11 as an “open course,” that is, a course suitable for any academic ability, yet the Grade 11 course was the first course to need a prerequisite, which was *either* the Grade 9 or 10 course—a strange decision given that the Grade 10 music course built on concepts taught in Grade 9, yet did not require it as a prerequisite. Grades 11 and 12 also offered music at the “College/University” level for those students who wished to study music at a post-secondary level.¹³⁸

The Grades 9 and 10 “Open” music courses built off the specific expectations students were to meet by the end of the Grade 8 curriculum. That is, they focused on the ability to identify (aurally and in written form), define, and manipulate the elements of music, to read and understand standard notation, to understand and recognize musical style and form from various eras, and to perform with a musical instrument. In addition, students were expected to learn about current music technologies and their uses.¹³⁹ These overall expectations were emphasized in the Grade 11 and 12 “College/University” curriculum guidelines as well, with increased emphasis given to appreciation, performance skills, history of Western music, and career prospects.¹⁴⁰ Students who completed the Grade 12 College/University course could be expected to perform or possess such skills as aurally and visually identifying and notating major and minor seventh chords, imperfect cadences, and various chord progressions; performing with “high level of competence in technical skills;” performing from memory all scales and modes up to two or three octaves; composing and arranging in four parts and identifying

¹³⁷ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts*, 7.

¹³⁸ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 7.

¹³⁹ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts*, 36.

¹⁴⁰ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 58-60.

and describing form and influence of various musical styles and composers.¹⁴¹ It is interesting to note that, although there is some emphasis on listening to and engaging with music of other cultures, for the most part, both the elementary and secondary curriculum guidelines followed the fairly traditional, Western-centric, performance-centered approach to music education, despite discussion in the Arts Background Research paper that the “old masters” and emphasis on performance needed to be balanced with more current educational practices (see above).

The one true exception to this was the Grade 11 Open music course. As was perhaps appropriate for students who (assumedly) would not continue with post-secondary studies, it focused on the practical aspects of music making and management in society. For example, students needed to have a basic understanding of musical elements and some performance abilities, but they also were expected to be able to perform such tasks as “explain the use of technology in various aspects of production administration” and “demonstrate an understanding of the aspects of a music production project.”¹⁴² Students were expected to show knowledge of budgeting, human resources, and organizing a rehearsal schedule. The Grade 11 Open curriculum guidelines were also the most progressive in terms of relating the curriculum content to modern musical practices—they frequently refer to student engagement with music videos, popular music, and film. Students had to learn how to evaluate “production practices” in their own work and the work of other musical professionals.¹⁴³ The curriculum guidelines ended with two requirements for career preparation (as did the Grade 11 and 12 College/University courses): (1) “identify the usefulness, in various careers, of skills and knowledge that can be developed through the study of music; music production, and arts management” and (2) identify requirements in music and in fields related to music that particularly interest them, through an analysis of various career possibilities.”¹⁴⁴ If anything, the Grade 11 Open course embodied what might be done in English music education under the influence of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 67-72.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 62-65.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁴⁵ See Chapter Six, pp. 255-57.

Unlike the suggestion made in the background research paper for the arts,¹⁴⁶ the curriculum expectations were categorized quite differently in the elementary and secondary guidelines. Each contained two main sections: Overall expectations and specific expectations. Overall expectations described “in general terms the knowledge and skills that students are expected to achieve by the end of each grade [or course].”¹⁴⁷ The elementary document names each subject area as a specific *strand*. Each strand had specific expectations for each grade listed after the overall expectations. Each grade’s specific expectations section began with statement “By the end of Grade X, students will:” before listing the expectation. The number of specific expectations ranged from a minimum of 16 in Grade 3 and a maximum of 24 in Grade 7 and indicated the precise knowledge or skill on which the students should be assessed.¹⁴⁸

The specific expectations were organized into three “sub-categories”: Knowledge of Elements, Creative Work, and Critical Thinking. The Knowledge of Elements subheading focused on areas such as aurally recognizing and reporting the sources of sounds and the elements of music (e.g., identifying rhythms, tone colour, pitch and melodic contour, tempo, dynamics, harmony, key signatures, and form). In addition, in the later grades students should develop the ability to identify “orchestral instruments,” identify “Italian terms,” read and notate music using Western notation, and conduct in 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time.¹⁴⁹ Creative Work focused on developing the ability to perform both on instruments and with the voice, always noting that students should encounter and perform music from “a variety of cultures and historical periods.” Students should gradually learn to play and sing “expressively” and with greater refinement. Composition also fell into a sub-category of Creative Work, with students progressing from creating simple accompaniments to songs and poems, simple rhythmic patterns, and sound effects in Grade 1¹⁵⁰ to creating and notating full compositions, improvisations, and even a short musical “that consists of contrasting songs, dialogue, and drama” by the end of Grade

¹⁴⁶ Martin, Beynon, Clark and Hoogland, “The Arts: Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts and Secondary School Curriculum in Ontario,” 4.

¹⁴⁷ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts*, 7.

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 4.

¹⁴⁹ For example, Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 26.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

8.¹⁵¹ The Critical Thinking subcategory was perhaps the most problematic of the three subcategories. An ongoing expectation was that students would be able to explain, with increasing sophistication, why they liked a certain piece of music and how and why they responded to certain performances. Other expectations, however, seemed to be more knowledge-based. For example, there seemed to be little difference between the Grade 8 Critical Thinking expectation that students would “recognize and describe the difference between program music and absolute music” and the Knowledge of Elements expectation that students would “demonstrate understanding of the markings and Italian terms for dynamics, tempo, articulation, and phrasing in the music they play or sing.”¹⁵² Both require only rote memorization of a musical term.

At the secondary level, each art discussed was a discrete subject rather than as a strand. “Strands” in the secondary curriculum guidelines were the “subcategories” of the elementary guidelines. Rather than being organized as Knowledge of Elements, Creative Work, and Critical Thinking, they were organized as Theory, Creation, and Analysis with each strand having sub-strands. In the Grades 9-10 document, Theory had no sub-strands, Creation included the sub-strands *Performing* and *Composing and Arranging*, while Analysis contained *Listening* and *Self and Community*.¹⁵³ In the Grades 11-12 document, Theory included *Musical Literacy* and *Understanding of Technological Concepts*, Creation contained *Performing* and *Composing and Arranging*, and Analysis contained *Music Appreciation* and *Academic Development and Career Preparation*.¹⁵⁴ The Grade 11 Open course was unique, containing sub-strands such as *Understanding of Elements of Production and Management (Theory)*, *Planning and Presentation of a Music Production (Creation)* and *Evaluation of Music Productions (Analysis)*.¹⁵⁵

Overall, the curriculum guidelines for all of Grades 11-12 represented a significant collection of expected knowledge and skills that students should acquire. They also represented a significant change of direction from the emphasis on equity and diversity

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 26.

¹⁵² Ibid., 26-27.

¹⁵³ See Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-10: The Arts*, 38-41 for an example.

¹⁵⁴ See Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 68-72 for an example

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 61-66.

emphasized by the previous governments, particularly the NDP government.¹⁵⁶ As discussed in Chapter Four, neoliberal education relies on the elements of “common sense,” which, in part, supports presenting curriculum as value-neutral and objective and as consisting of assessable skills and knowledge. Laura Pinto noted that, overall, *The Ontario Curriculum* strove to conform to this neoliberal vision of education, particularly by “downplaying” “affective” and “value laden” curriculum expectations.¹⁵⁷ For the arts, and particularly music education, this represented a significant loss of an ideological purpose as past curriculum and policy rationales for music education stressed the arts’ unique potential to allow insight into the human condition, create strong communities, and support diversity and acceptance of multicultural Canadian culture. While those elements do remain present to a lesser degree, the emphasis had changed to how the arts could develop *core skills* for the *knowledge economy* as well as how engagement in the arts themselves could be not only seen as a personal and community action, but an economic one. In addition, the systematic, rigorous, and detailed music curriculum guidelines left no doubt that music was indeed a discipline that required a high degree of depth and breadth of measurable knowledge and skills, as was demanded by the political discourse surrounding the need to revise Ontario’s public education system.

With the new curriculum guidelines came a new way to assess Ontario’s students. We turn now to an overview of those assessment guidelines before discussing the ways in which assessment, resource allocation, testing structure, and government discourse supported or posed challenges to the implementation of the music curriculum guidelines.

Assessment, Reporting, and Accountability Measures

(1) Achievement Levels and Charts

Included in the *OCTA*, Grade 1-8 was a description of “areas of achievement in the arts” that was “meant to be used to assess each student’s achievement of the expectations” for each grade in each subject.¹⁵⁸ While teachers were still free to use more traditional assessment methods such as written and performance tests, the achievement

¹⁵⁶ Pinto, *Curriculum Reform in Ontario*, 142.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 141-43.

¹⁵⁸ Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts*, 8.

levels were meant to indicate how well a student met one or more specific expectations as outlined in the *OCTA*. A similar chart was included in the Grades 9-10 and 11-12 documents. The charts were divided into categories, with each category having several sub-categories. For each sub-category, students were scored on a level of 1 through 4, with Level 3 being the “standard” for the grade. The elementary achievement chart was divided into four categories: (1) Understanding of Concepts, (2) Critical Appreciation and Analysis, (3) Performance and Creative Work, and (4) Communication. Students were rated in each category’s sub-categories. As an example, the *OCTA*, Grades 1-8 described an overall Level 3 student as someone

who understands most of the concepts, and usually gives a complete or nearly complete explanation of them. The student analyzes and interprets art work with only occasional assistance from the teacher. He or she also provides a complete analysis and gives sufficient evidence to support his or her opinions. The student applies most of the required skills, concepts, and techniques in practical and creative work, and usually performs and creates work in complete ways. The student uses tools, equipment, materials, and instruments correctly with only occasional assistance, and usually shows awareness of safety procedures. The student usually communicates with clarity and precision and in complete ways, and usually uses appropriate symbols and terminology.¹⁵⁹

To achieve Level 4, students would accomplish these expectations all, or almost all, of the time with little to no teacher assistance. Students who accomplished the expectations sometimes or partially with frequent assistance were at Level 2, while those who rarely accomplished the expectations, showed limited understanding, and always required assistance were at Level 1.¹⁶⁰ Teachers were required to organize evaluations in the form of rubrics that reflected the categories and levels.¹⁶¹ Levels could vary across categories in both elementary and secondary assessments. For example, a student could achieve Level 3 in Understanding and Concepts and a Level 1 in Communication.

A similar chart was used at the secondary level, but with different categories containing more sub-categories: (1) Knowledge and Understanding (sub-categories were knowledge of facts and terms; understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories; understanding of relationships between concepts); (2) Thinking/Inquiry (sub-

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 9.

¹⁶¹ See Appendix G for an example of one such rubric.

categories were critical analysis, creative thinking, making connections); (3) Communication (sub-categories were communication and expression of ideas and information for different audiences and purposes, use of artistic language and symbols, communication is relevant to the subject); and (4) Application (sub-categories were application of knowledge and skills; transfer of knowledge and skills to new contexts; use of equipment, materials and technology; application of the creative process). For each of these category statements, the standard, expected Level 3 achievement was reached when the students “demonstrate considerable knowledge or understanding” of it or showed evidence of considerable “clarity” “accuracy,” and/or “effectiveness.” As with the elementary curriculum, Levels 4, 2, and 1 reflected varying degrees of mastery.¹⁶²

The new achievement charts reflected the neoliberal goal to improve educational excellence largely through creating common *centralized standards* and *testing*. By using the same measure of achievement for all students, their progress (in theory) could easily be compared. Indeed, even teacher effectiveness could be evaluated and compared based upon the average student achievement level, so the achievement levels provided a system of increased, measurable *accountability* for both students and teachers, while making student progress more transparent to adults.

However, for reasons discussed further below, the use of the achievement level evaluation and rubrics proved confusing and challenging for many educators. Especially confusing to teachers was the combination of this new method of assessing with the new provincial report card, which *did not* require teachers to report students’ Level achievement score, but rather to report alphabetical (i.e., A through F) or percentage grades. We accordingly now turn to a discussion of the elementary standard report card to discuss how it served as a concrete indicator to teachers implementing the *Ontario Curriculum* of the relevant status of music as a mandatory subject within the broader curriculum.

¹⁶² Ministry of Education, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11-12: The Arts*, 91-92.

(2) Elementary Standardized Report Card

The standard elementary report card went into use in all of Ontario's elementary schools in the fall of 1988—the same time the new curriculum was introduced in all elementary subjects. The *Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1-8* stated that the new report card,

provides clear, detailed, straightforward information to parents about how their child is achieving and progressing in school in relation to provincial curriculum expectations and standards. It is designed to involve students in assessing their own progress and setting goals, and to provide parents with the information they need to identify how they can support their child's learning at home.¹⁶³

Thus the card was meant to support the neoliberal concepts of *educational excellence*, *standards*, *standardized assessment*, *self-interest* and *self-reliance* (on the parts of the student and the parent), and *accountability*. Letter grades were used to indicate a child's achievement in Grades 1 to 6, while percentage marks were used in Grades 7 and 8.¹⁶⁴ Issued three times a year, the report card required teachers to report on children's progress in each subject and on their development of general learning skills. Nine categories of learning skills were provided that largely reflect the *core skills* supported by neoliberal reforms: Independent Work, Initiative, Homework Completion (Work Habits), Use of Information, Cooperation with Others; Conflict Resolution, Class Participation, Problem Solving, and Goal Setting to Improve Work. Students were assigned an Excellent, Good, Satisfactory, or Needs Improvement evaluation in each learning skill. An achievement of Level 4 in a subject area was represented by an A- to A+ grade or 80-100%. Each subsequent Level corresponded with one letter grade or 10% below the Level 4 achievements, with "R" or "below 50" indicating that students needed "remediation and parental involvement" because their work fell below Level 1.¹⁶⁵ In addition to noting the students' absences, the report card also had a box where teachers could make "anecdotal" comments about the students' learning.¹⁶⁶

The report card itself was divided into 7 subject areas listed in the following order: English, Second Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies,

¹⁶³ Ministry of Education and Training, *Guide the Provincial Report Card*, 2.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-7

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 7

Health and Physical Education, and The Arts, with room for two optional subjects at the end that could be of the school or school board's choosing. As the list is not in alphabetical order, the order itself implies a certain hierarchy, with Arts placed last, although music was listed first in the Arts box.¹⁶⁷ English, Second Language, and Mathematics were divided into strands so that students received grades in multiple aspects of those subjects. Instructions for how to complete the Arts box grade revealed that it was not expected that students would receive education in each of the arts strands throughout the school year: "If a particular strand is not part of the students' program during that reporting period, indicate this in the comments and leave the strand blank."¹⁶⁸ In principle, the directive that teachers and administrators were responsible for ensuring timetabling in such a way that all curricula were taught could allow students to study a particular arts subject more intensively during a particular time of year. However, owing to the rigour and content of the music curriculum, it seems unlikely that such an arrangement would allow teachers to implement, and students to learn, the knowledge and skills listed in the elementary music curriculum guidelines. Overall, music ranked low in the reporting and timetabling process.

(3) Exemplars

Another way in which the mandate to teach the music curriculum was subverted through policy development and structure was in the development timing by government of subject specific *exemplars* at both the elementary and secondary stages. Exemplars were companion documents meant to support the assessment of students' Levels 1-4 assessment of mastery of the *OC*'s specific expectations. The exemplars, which were produced through school board collaboration and team subject specialists after the release of the curriculum guidelines, provided field tested examples of student achievement at the various levels for the specific curricular expectations.¹⁶⁹ The arts exemplars included both written examples of students' work and video examples of students performing various tasks. The music portion of the arts exemplars contained rubrics that showed how various

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 14.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum Exemplars, Grade 9. Arts: Dance, Dramatic Arts, Music, Visual Arts* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2000), 3.

tasks would be evaluated. For example, the Grade 9 music exemplar contained a rubric that focused on the performance task of playing a 20 bar melody and includes Level scoring for Communication (ability to read notated pitches and play in tune); Thinking/Inquiry (ability to perform rhythms, maintain tempo, and defend artistic choices); Communication (ability to perform phrase markings, articulation, and dynamics); and Application (ability to play with proper posture, consistently good tone quality, and interpret the music). Examples of student work and teacher evaluation of that work demonstrating achievement at the various Levels were provided.

These detailed exemplars were meant to further ensure the *standardization* of curriculum content and assessment and encourage a level of *educational excellence*. Aside from the fact that the above exemplar demonstrates how categories within assessment areas could overlap (for example, why is musical interpretation listed under Application rather than Critical Thinking while responding to phrase markings is under Communication and not Application?), they sought to systematically categorize knowledge and skills into discrete, measurable (i.e., assessable) compartments. Indeed, the Grade 9 arts exemplar documents states in its introduction that it was developed to “promote greater consistency in the assessment of student work across the province” while providing feedback to students, parents, and teachers on their learning progress so that students could improve.¹⁷⁰

The documents themselves are not necessarily negative per se, although they clearly reflect a neoliberal educational agenda and serve as a good example of the rigorous, yet often vague, new assessment demands placed on Ontario’s teachers. However, as with the timing of the release of the curriculum documents and the content and placement of the Arts as a subject on the elementary report card, the development timing of the elementary and secondary exemplars again reaffirm the Harris government’s emphasis on literacy, mathematics, and technology as the prime subjects of use in educating students for the *knowledge economy*. The Grades 1-8 exemplars for writing and mathematics were released in 1999 and 2001, respectively. The first Arts exemplar for Grades 1-8 was not released until 2004, *after* the Harris government had

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 4.

been voted out of office, and only then for Grades 2, 5, and 7, while exemplars for the remaining grades were released in 2005. They were the last elementary exemplars to be developed alongside Health and Physical Education. At the secondary level, exemplars for most Grade 9 subjects, including the Arts, were released in 1999. Exemplars for Grades 10 and 12 were never released, but exemplars for Grade 11 English, Mathematics, Sciences, History, and Geography were released in 2003, while the Grade 11 Arts exemplar was released in 2005.¹⁷¹ As discussed below, the late release of these documents, particularly at the elementary level, made it even more challenging for teachers to effectively and fully implement the music curriculum, to understand the new ways in which students were evaluated, and to accurately report student progress.

Taken together, the relative lack of supervision and interference that the writers of the *OCTA* experienced, the development and timing of the elementary curriculum and exemplars for the arts, the positioning and possible timetabling of the Arts on the standardized elementary report card and reporting process, and the intense neoliberal education rhetoric that supported English, Mathematics, Science/Technology and core skills as key building blocks in the education of *knowledge workers* positioned music as a “second class” subject even before—and certainly immediately after—the curriculum documents were created. This was despite the fact that implementation and delivery of the elementary music curriculum were deemed mandatory by MET. In the *OCTA*, the arts in general, and music in particular, largely lost its former role as a subject that uniquely supported Canada’s goal to create a positive, multicultural society. This change reflected the move away from the collective to the individual that is prevalent in neoliberal discourse and presented a greater challenge in justifying the usefulness of the arts as a school subject where schools sought to create *economic man*. In return, the *OCTA* positioned the arts and music as a way to support an economically viable career in the arts and/or supportive of economic success in non-arts-related fields. Unfortunately, government discourse on the subject indicated the ability of other subjects to do this more effectively and efficiently. We see this particular government attitude reflected in the timeline of document production, the standardized report card, and, as discussed next, the

¹⁷¹ Once again, Physical Education had the longest wait, coming in 2000. Grade 11 French also came in late in 2006.

provision and support for music curriculum implementation when contrasted with provision and support for English, Mathematics, and Science/Technology implementation at the elementary and secondary levels.

Provision of Music Curriculum Implementation

Aside from the development of the assessment exemplars, the Harris government planned to support the implementation of its new curriculum at both the elementary and secondary levels in four main ways: (1) the development of secondary course profiles; (2) the development and/or acquisition of new, largely text-based materials to support specific subjects in the new *Ontario Curriculum*; (3) teacher training; and (4) allocation of additional funding (i.e. funding outside of its new funding model) to the District School Boards (DSB) to purchase textbooks and other physical resources needed to teach the content of the new curricula and to address unforeseen issues with curricular implementation. A fifth area, which the government envisioned as lying outside of specific assistance with curricular and assessment implementation, but which deeply affected it, was the government's new education funding model. A sixth and final area that affected the implementation of the music curriculum was the introduction of provincial standardized tests.

(1) Development of Course Profiles

The Harris government spent \$33 million dollars to create course profiles for each course at the secondary level, which were released shortly after each subject's curriculum guidelines.¹⁷² They were developed by individuals who were selected as "educational leaders" from various DSBs. The course profiles were meant to supply practical examples of how teachers might implement and sequence lessons and utilize particular teaching strategies to create lesson content, activities, and assessments at the secondary level. This, in theory, would enable students to meet the curricular learning expectations for each course. In addition, they contained lists of suggested (but not officially approved)

¹⁷² Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report of the Office of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2003), 127.

teaching resources.¹⁷³ Indeed, nothing in the profiles was officially approved. For example, the Grade 10 Music—Open course profile began with the statement that “this document reflects the views of the developers and not necessarily those of the Ministry. . . . Teachers are also encouraged to amend, revise, edit, cut, paste, and otherwise adapt this material for educational purposes.”¹⁷⁴ While paper copies of the course profiles were available, the government envisioned that profiles would be accessed electronically in association with a newly developed electronic curriculum planner that would purportedly making incorporating ideas from the profiles, and course planning to meet specific expectations in general, much easier.¹⁷⁵

Interestingly, although the official author of the profiles for the public schools was the Public District School Board Writing Team (or Catholic for the Catholic DSB-oriented documents, or sometimes a combination of the two names), the teacher-contributors for the profiles are named on the second page of each profile.¹⁷⁶ In addition, the profiles bear the slogan, “for teachers by teachers” on the front page of each profile.¹⁷⁷ There is an element of accountability and teacher-ownership over these policy documents—documents associated with the Ministry but whose content was not officially approved or reflective of their views—that is missing in the *OC*.

The profiles themselves were quite extensive in their systematic presentation of how a course might be taught. The Grade 10 Music—Open profile, for example, was 156 pages long and contained five suggested units: Performance, 60 hours; Perspectives in Music, 13 hours; Theory and Composition, 15 hours; Music and Technology, 12 hours; Listening and Analysis, 10 hours.¹⁷⁸ The traditional emphasis on performance in Ontario’s secondary schools was clear in the suggested division of instructional time. Each unit listed the specific expectations it would meet and provided an overview of activities teachers could undertake, the type of teaching and assessment strategies (and

¹⁷³ The significance of suggested vs. “approved” resources is discussed below.

¹⁷⁴ Public District School Board Writing Partnership, *Course Profile: Grade 10 Music Open* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2000), 2.

¹⁷⁵ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 127-28.

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, Public District School Board Writing Partnership, *Course Profile: Grade 10 Music Open*, 2.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, front cover.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

assessment rubrics) that might be used, suggested resources, required prior student knowledge, and planning notes.

The Theory and Composition unit, for example, had seven activities initially focusing on scales and intervals and culminating in students writing and performing their own composition. Necessary prior knowledge included ability to read and write key signatures, ability to transpose from concert pitch, and completion of the Grade 8 Music *OC*,¹⁷⁹ which, as discussed above, seems unlikely to have happened. Planning notes stressed that composed music should be performed and that students' ability to read and write standard notation be assessed before beginning the unit.¹⁸⁰ Instructional strategies included student-centered, teacher-directed, and collaborative learning, while assessments strategies included "rubrics, checklists, peer and self-assessment and evaluation, portfolio, formative assessment, and summative evaluation."¹⁸¹ Suggested rubrics, checklist, and self and peer-assessments were included as appendices, as was a possible resource list of theory textbooks, software programs, and student worksheets for various suggested activities.¹⁸²

Each activity contained a step-by-step description of exercises designed to teach the activity. For example, the final activity in the Theory in Listening Unit, entitled "My Masterpiece" guided the students in creating a composition in ABA form. It began with the statement that the teacher "guides students through an analysis of the structure of an existing technical or melodic piece using an ABA structure that has been performed in class or ensemble."¹⁸³ The teacher would then use a template to guide the students through writing an ABA form composition as a class before instructing students to write a composition individually, which will then be performed for the class.¹⁸⁴

The course profiles present an interesting resource for consideration. In theory, the local teachers could simply reproduce them as a ready-made course. On the other hand, much of the discourse of the Harris curriculum reform, particularly around curriculum

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., Unit 3, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., Unit 3, p. 2.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid., Unit 3, p. 15-34.

¹⁸³ Ibid., Unit 3, p. 13.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

delivery focused on the ability of local teachers to make pedagogical decisions on curricular implementation that was specific to students needs (see above and below discussions). Perhaps this was why the government did not officially sanction the documents even though they paid for their production and publication. They represent something of a conflict within government discourse on understanding and achieving educational standards and a long-standing tradition of pedagogical teacher autonomy.

At any rate, when compared with the other plans for curriculum implementation support discussed below, the course profiles represented the most equitable distribution of support across the range of curriculum subjects, including music. It is perhaps unfortunate, then, that only one-third of teachers found them adequately useful.¹⁸⁵ Funding and release-time shortages (discussed below) meant that providing teachers with the technology and time needed to understand and use the profiles in association with the electronic curriculum planner did not occur frequently enough to assist teachers in successfully using these implementation tools.¹⁸⁶ Setting aside any discussion of whether or not the profiles for secondary music programs were a contradiction in the Progressive Conservative government's vision for local teacher autonomy, at the very least these profiles represented some significant guidance for teachers trying to envision how to implement new curriculum. In addition, and as discussed below, had school administrators been more familiar with the profiles or had teachers been more knowledgeable about and comfortable with using the profiles and curriculum planner, they might have served as a tool to ensure that the level of music curriculum implementation remained consistent with the rigorous demands of the curriculum. If not, they could be used as a source of further discussion for challenges to implementation.

(2) Development and/or Acquisition of New Learning Materials for Specific Subjects

Like the development of the *OC* itself, the process of developing and acquiring learning materials that would support the *OC* was tendered out. A representative example of this process occurred under the project title, "Re-investment with a Focus on the

¹⁸⁵ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 128.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 123, 128.

Classroom,” a title that reflected the Harris government’s discourse on “cutting the fat” in non-classroom spending in order to focus on the students. The government formed a plan in March of 1997 to “enhance the learning opportunities for students in Grades 1-8.”¹⁸⁷ However, these “opportunities” were provided only for those elementary documents released by the end of April, 1988: Languages, Mathematics, and Science and Technology. The government sought to circumvent the capacity and cost issue it would face to develop learning materials by awarding large purchasing orders to publishers who could show that their text-based learning materials supported the existing curriculum documents.¹⁸⁸ The government would further “ensure financial *efficiency* and *effectiveness* through bulk purchasing and provincial licensing” of learning materials developed and submitted by *private sector* publishers.¹⁸⁹ Once MET approved materials for the District School Boards (DSBs) to purchase, a list of available resources was sent to the DSBs, who could then “choose from [and purchase] what best meets their local needs.”¹⁹⁰ Although the Harris government claimed this allowed the DSBs greater local control and choice, this model directly reflected the older model of central control over approved learning resources used in Ontario before responsibility for curriculum development was devolved onto school boards in the 1960s. It is another example, which occurs often in neoliberal education reform, of the tension between the ways in which governments acquire greater central control in order to “allow” local choice. As discussed further below in relation to the funding of curricular implementation, this level of control over the DSB acquisition of student-centred learning materials further reinforced the hierarchy of subjects that was established through government discourse and the development of the *OC* and its assessment materials.

The government followed a pattern of “implementation support” throughout the development and implementation of the *OC* that largely focused the creation and acquisition of materials to support Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Technology,

¹⁸⁷ Ontario. Ministry of Education and Training, “Re-investment Strategy with a Focus on the Classroom,” *Education Reform Project Charter* (March 30, 1998), 1.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 1. (Emphasis added).

¹⁹⁰ David J. Johnson to Chairs of District School Boards and of Minority Language Sections, Ministry of Education and Training memo (May 19, 1998), 1.

particularly at the elementary level where all curriculum subjects, including music, were considered mandatory. For example, e-mail correspondence on March 4, 1998 among Ministry of Education bureaucrats overseeing the “Re-investment with a Focus on the Classroom” strategy revealed a concern that,

there must be a recognized process to vet the list [of potentially approved learning materials] before/after the submissions have been evaluated so that only the options for Language Gr. 1-5 and Mathematics Gr. 6, 7, & 8 for English, Science for French so [*sic*] that no option for purchase is given to Boards for textbook purchase outside of these areas (e.g. no Arts book),

to which the reply was “Why was there a concern about boards purchasing resources from other subjects (e.g., Arts)? This has never been an option or our intent.”

As no specific learning resources were ever sought or approved of by the Ministry of Education to support the arts, specifically music, curriculum,¹⁹¹ a full review of the tenure process and how learning materials were approved and distributed is outside the scope of this study. However, it is relevant to note the sense of urgency and disorganization that surrounded the process of reviewing and acquiring these resources, as they speak to the general climate and pace of curricular implementation and the emphasis on supporting particular subjects at the expense of others that *did* affect the implementation of the music curriculum, particularly at the elementary level.

Like the call for curriculum writers, the call for printed learning materials to support the *OC* in Language and Mathematics had a very short deadline. The call was posted on MERX on April 29, 1998, and the deadline to submit possible text-based learning resources for consideration was two weeks later on May 15, 1998.¹⁹² This meant that materials to support the curriculum essentially already had to be written and ready to go into publication, which was further complicated by the fact that the materials had to meet stringent combination of criteria, such as containing “Canadian references and terminology that reflect Canadian culture,” being supportive of “violence prevention and conflict management” and supporting “diverse learning styles” while being reflective of

¹⁹¹ Approved materials are posted yearly on the Trillium List. See <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/trilliumlist/> and also Willingham and Cutler, “Music Education in Ontario,” 7.

¹⁹² *Call for Resources for Learning Materials to Support the New Ontario Curriculum in Languages and Mathematics, 1997 Grades 1 to 8 and The Kindergarten Program, 1998*, issued by the Ministry of Education and Training (April 28, 1998), cover page.

“current best practices.”¹⁹³ In addition, each submission made by a developer or publisher had to clearly indicate where the learning materials reflected the overall and specific expectations for each strand, and submitters had to pay \$3500 “per material, per grade, per program, per subject” for the MET to review its submissions.¹⁹⁴

The call for print resources and the review process met with a host of questions from publishers, in response to which the MET never truly clarified how sources were reviewed and selected. For example, MET’s reply to the question, “We are extremely concerned about your timeline. How will you review all of the resources within three weeks?” was “Sufficient reviewers have been hired and trained to complete the task” with a simple “yes” in response to the question, “have they all been trained to the task?”¹⁹⁵ Thus the Harris government appears to have applied many of the same structural practices that obscured their accountability in the learning materials selections process as they did in the development of *Ontario Curriculum*, which included an arguably unrealistic timeline. For example, once print materials had been approved (three weeks after their submission), school boards were given just under three weeks to select the books they wished to purchase.¹⁹⁶ Publishers whose books were chosen had to deliver the books by Sept. 4, 1998 or else face a significant fine. Nonetheless, some teachers found that they still did not have the books they needed to teach with at the beginning of the 1998 school year, which was the same time that all *OC* curriculum documents except the previously released Languages and Mathematics documents had to be implemented for the first time.

An indication of the speed at which these resources were selected and implemented is reflected in the fact that MET did not actually have a full-scale curriculum implementation plan in place until early 1999. This plan came about largely because of wide-ranging difficulties—including teacher resistance—that the government was encountering with curricular implementation (more on this below).¹⁹⁷ Because it was

¹⁹³ *Call for Learning Materials to Support the New Ontario Curriculum*, 3.

¹⁹⁴ Ministry of Education, “Call for Resources Publishers’ Questions—Part Two,” (n.d.), 4.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* The deadline was June 23 1998, which also overlapped with the final busy weeks of the end of the elementary school year.

¹⁹⁷ Curriculum Implementation Advisory Coalition, “Draft: Elementary and Secondary Policy and Curriculum implementation, Project Charter,” January 18, 1999.

implemented at a slightly later date and after the “growing pains” of elementary curriculum development and implementation, acquisition of text-based resources for the secondary curriculum followed a similar process, but with more time given for potential publishers to submit material for MET consideration and approval. It is worth noting, however, that although the subsequent Liberal government would expand the list of approved textbooks to other curriculum subjects, to this date, Ontario still does not have any MET approved student-centered learning materials to support the music curriculum at either the elementary or secondary level. Given that the *core curriculum* subjects were supported through such provision, both during initial implementation and later, several possible implications arise in respect to music education. The first was that time and resources were simply deemed too limited and valuable to dedicate to approving materials to support the music curriculum. Another was that such materials were simply not needed. A third implication was that no suitable resources existed from which music teachers across Ontario might teach their students—a direct contradiction of the idea of developing and delivering a standard curriculum with supporting resources espoused by the Harris government. This suggests that the systematic and effective implementation of the music curriculum was not a priority for the Harris government.

(3) Teacher Training

The Harris government used a variety of approaches to training teachers in the implementation of the *OC* and its assessment practices. In retrospect, however, both teachers and those who were enlisted to review the implementation process found that teachers were largely unprepared to implement the *OC* and its assessment models.¹⁹⁸

A main approach used by the MET to train teachers was the “Train-the-Teacher” program. As part of the implementation process, the government created six Provincial Districts to which each of the DSBs were assigned. In the Train-the-Teacher program, small teams from each Provincial District met at the MET in Toronto and were given instructional training in some areas of the new curriculum, told how the exemplars were to be used to guide assessment, and given various other resources to assist with curricular implementation and assessment. The teams returned to the DSBs, gave the same training

¹⁹⁸ See, for example, Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 126.

to small DSB “implementation” teams, who would then go back and train administrators and classroom teachers through a process of working with school-based “implementation teams.”¹⁹⁹ Thus, MET saved significant money by limiting the number of individuals for which it was directly responsible to train while it simultaneously *devolving* much of the responsibility for teacher training to the local level. By the time the information on curriculum implementation and assessment reached teachers (through multiple levels of interpretation) this style of training proved largely ineffective and mostly “informational” rather than practical.²⁰⁰ In addition, a 2003 audit on the creation and implementation of Ontario’s new curriculum and its assessment by the Provincial Auditor of Ontario concluded that, “teacher training . . . was not conducted early enough or, in some cases, at all.”²⁰¹ This meant, particularly at the elementary level, that not only did administrators and teachers begin the 1998 school year with little time to develop course work for most of the Ontario curriculum (and without textbooks, in some cases), but that many of them still did not fully understand how to implement and assess the *OC* either. This made the first few critical years of implementation very difficult and stressful for teachers *and* their students.²⁰²

In addition, the government had realized as early as 1998 that some of the precious time allocated for implementation training had to take the form of working with disgruntled teachers and DSBs in order to develop a more positive relationship that would promote the cooperation necessary for teachers to *want* to implement the curriculum and its testing procedures.²⁰³ It was not that teachers were opposed to the content of curriculum *per se* (in fact, many welcomed it). Rather, it was that the scope and speed of implementation, coupled with confusion over assessment that was never resolved through

¹⁹⁹ Curriculum Implementation Planning, “Updates,” (Nov. 16, 1999), 1.

²⁰⁰ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 126.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ Curriculum Implementation Advisory Coalition, “Confidential—October 6, 1998,” (Oct. 6, 1998), 2. Recall from Chapter Seven that Ontario teachers had staged the largest labour strike in North America in from October 28–November 7, 1997 and that many school boards and teachers were engaged in lock-outs and work-to-rule during the 1998 school year. Further research on the part of the government revealed that, by 1999, teacher and DSB implementation issues still included low morale, need for clarification as to *what* should be implemented, retirement and loss of expertise, lack of clarity in roles that were shifting, and lack of trust between educational stakeholders. See Curriculum Implementation Advisory Coalition, “Elementary and Secondary Policy and Curriculum implementation,” 1.

the Train-the-Teacher model, perception of inadequate resources, and ongoing government legislation designed to limit teachers' right to strike and negotiate elements within their teaching contract that made many administrators and teachers uncooperative.²⁰⁴

Another problem with teacher training in the new curriculum was that the government provided inadequate release time for teachers to engage in implementation training (only two days per teacher).²⁰⁵ This was partly a problem of their own making as Bill 160 had legislated less teacher preparation and release time and longer schools days.²⁰⁶ In the end, given the scarcity of training time, political climate, and low teacher morale, most implementation training provided by the ministry focused on core subjects, general assessment practices, and rebuilding trust amongst various educational stakeholders with little to no room left over for implementation training in the arts curriculum.

However, the government did not expect teacher training in regard to the *OC* and its implementation practices to end with those sessions that it mandated for teachers, stating clearly that they expected teachers to undergo additional training on their own.²⁰⁷ One example of training available to teachers was the series of Summer Institutes subsidized by the MET but tenured out to the Ontario Teachers Federation and beginning in the summer of 1999. The goal of the Summer Institute was to “expand teachers’ understanding of the new ministry curriculum policy and to provide them with strategies and materials to support successful implementation.”²⁰⁸ Three day courses offered “professional development” focused on elements of the *OC* at sixty-nine locations around Ontario. Teacher participation in these courses was entirely optional and courses were developed by individuals who applied to the Ontario Teachers Federation with a particular idea for a course. No specific quota was set for courses offered in a particular subject.²⁰⁹ Only one music-related course was offered in the summer of 1999 and its

²⁰⁴ See Chapter Seven, pp. 331-32.

²⁰⁵ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 126.

²⁰⁶ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 248.

²⁰⁷ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 126.

²⁰⁸ Gerry Connelly to Veronica Lacey, “Contract for Elementary/Secondary Summer Institutes,” Ministry of Education and Training memo (June 3, 1999), 1.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

focus was on how the generalist teacher could link music to other subject areas. In addition, one arts-related course was offered that focused on providing “practical and active experience to enhance the generalist [teacher]’s arts ‘comfort zone’” and had sections for educators at the primary, junior, and intermediate levels.²¹⁰ All the sessions except for one were over-subscribed, indicating an interest on the part of generalist educators for more music and arts-based training.²¹¹

In addition to this, the DSBs were expected to develop their own, locally-based strategies for helping teachers implement new curriculum. Music teachers, it seems, were in greater need of this than many subjects as music specialists within schools—particularly at elementary school—became more scarce as funding to schools grew tighter and pressures to raise scores on provincial tests grew (discussed further below). A 2004 report assembled by People for Education on the status of arts education in Ontario indicated that the number of elementary schools with music teachers declined 32% from 1997/98 to 2003/2004.²¹² Essentially, this would make music education training for generalist teachers necessary given the mandatory status of the elementary curriculum. With little release time—and that filled with mandatory training in “higher priority” areas—and few opportunities for training provided by the MET, DSBs might have been able to focus resources on working with generalist teachers teaching music. However, as the Harris regime progressed and an increasing financial “crunch” was felt by the DSBs, music co-ordinators and administrators were “discontinued” in a pattern that had begun earlier in the 1990s.²¹³ Sometimes, a position of “Head of Arts” or “Arts consultant” might be created, but, as Lee Willingham and Jane Cutler observed, while such persons might have been supportive of arts in general, they often lacked expertise in music

²¹⁰ Ontario Teachers Federation mailer to Ontario school principals, “Curriculum Summer Institutes,” (June 3, 1999), 9. The music course was offered in Sudbury while the Arts course was offered in Barrie and the Niagara region.

²¹¹ Ontario Teachers Federation, “Interim Report to the OTF Annual Board of Governors,” (August 24-26, 1999), 68.

²¹² People for Education, *The Arts in Ontario’s Public Schools*, 1, accessed August 20, 2013, <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/research/p4e-reports-by-topic/>.

²¹³ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 243.

education in particular.²¹⁴ In addition, such positions expanded their workload, giving them less time to focus specifically on music education.

Several independent organizations came forward to assist in training teachers who wished to acquire greater ability to implement the *OC*, such as the Ontario Music Educators' Association and Carl Orff Ontario, by offering workshops and their own, independently developed resources.²¹⁵ Ultimately, teacher training for music education under the *OC* became a largely self-motivated action as had typically been the case in Ontario. Self motivation in many cases was also hampered by lack of funding for in-service training for teachers.²¹⁶ In many ways, the presence of strong music programs in the elementary and secondary schools during the Harris years depended, as had also been the case in the 1940s development of music in the high schools, on the presence of motivated individuals with strong community connections who brought knowledge and pedagogy acquired through their own pursuits rather than through MET training (discussed further below).

One final decision about teacher training that perhaps most clearly reflects the extent to which the MET was committed to teacher training as only focused on “core” subjects came in the final year of its time in office. It announced that “paraprofessionals” working in “specialized” subject areas, such as music, could be hired to teach without professional teacher certification.²¹⁷ This is particularly telling given that one of the government’s major educational agendas was the regulation and certification of teachers through its creation of the Ontario College of Teachers, its development of a qualifying exam for teacher certification, and its regulation that teachers must take a certain number of professional development courses every five years.²¹⁸ Music teachers, it seems, did not need to be subject to such rigorous (and expensive) training. Ultimately, however, all of these regulations (except membership in the Ontario College of Teachers) were thrown out when the McGuinty Liberal government came to power in Ontario in 2003.

²¹⁴ Willingham and Cutler, “Music Education in Ontario,” 14-15.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Susan Majhanovich, “Educational Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?—The Case of Ontario, Canada,” in *International Handbook of Globalisation, Education and Policy Research*, ed. J. Zaida (Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 609.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 602. See also Chapter Seven, pp. 332.

(4) Allocation of Additional Funding to the District School Boards

Projects such as the “Re-investment with a Focus on the Classroom” were financed by additional monies outside of the funding model. Over the course of its time in office, the Harris government would announce several such initiatives, which were meant to offset the initial cost of bringing classroom resources up to date with the *OC* and other issues that were seen as significant problems arising out of the implementation process. They also served to further emphasize neoliberal discourse about and support for education as focused on literacy, mathematics, science, and technology. For example, the Re-Investing with a Focus on the Classroom project was announced as part of the 1998 Budget Speech. Minister of Finance Ernie Eves earmarked \$100 million in funding for “the purchase of textbooks and other learning materials so that all students will have access to the very latest information and knowledge.”²¹⁹ This would amount to \$150 for every elementary school student about to embark on learning as outlined by the new *Ontario Curriculum*. Twelve million dollars was also made available to update secondary school laboratories and equipment as well as to “double grants to school boards for math and science tutors, and expand standardized testing.”²²⁰ As the secondary curriculum was implemented, additional funding was made available to purchase government-approved resources.²²¹ As already mentioned, since the government controlled which resources could be purchased using these additional funds, the Harris government was largely able to control centrally which subjects were most supported during the implementation of the *OC* through the use of additional funding that lay outside of the government’s new funding model. This included allocating additional “outside the funding formula” monies to support the ongoing development of student literacy and mathematics as it became apparent that a large number of students were having difficulty scoring at a desirable level on provincial tests.²²² And, of course, press releases and announcements were made to draw the public eye to the way in which the Harris government was supporting education in Ontario. As learning resources to support the music curriculum were never

²¹⁹ Ernie Eves, *Ontario Budget Speech: Jobs for the Future, Today* (1998): 25.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ Ministry of Education, *2001-2002 Business Plan* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2001), 12.

²²² *Ibid.*, 7, 12 and also Ministry of Education, *2000-2001 Business Plan* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2000), 9.

approved, music teachers and administrators who supported music programs in their schools were denied opportunities to support implementation to which other, more highly regarded subjects (at least by MET standards) had access. In addition, the Harris government's public emphasis on its support for "education" continued to draw attention to the importance of certain subjects over music education.

Introduction of the New Funding Model

The additional allocation of funds for one-time resource acquisition associated with the initial implementation of the *OC* and its assessment or to support unforeseen problems in implementation (mostly related to literacy and mathematics) were only a small part of the funding budgeted for Ontario's reformed public education system. As described in Chapter Seven, the government also substantially reformed the structure of educational finance by taking over full funding of provincial education. Since it had repeatedly emphasized that it would add more money back into the classroom while trimming the "fat" in "non-classroom" spending, it created a basic, per-pupil foundation grant of approximately \$3400 per school year to pay for "the common needs of every classroom." Nine special purpose grants for "variable costs" or non-classroom spending such as special education, teacher prep time, department heads, transportation, and central administration were also created.²²³ Arts education did not receive its own special purpose grant, so funding for music education and music programs came from within the foundation grant and was shared among other areas of classroom expenses such as supply teachers, learning resources not paid for by the additional funding discussed above (e.g., all other textbooks, computers, instruments, and instrument repair), teacher professional development, and the services of non-teacher education professionals (e.g., psychologists, speech therapists, and educational aides).²²⁴

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the funding model itself was an example of several neoliberal education concepts, particularly when paired with certain *accountability* measures taken by the Harris government. These included the requirement that schools fill out a financial report card that detailed exactly how money was spent in each grant

²²³ See Chapter Seven 349-52 and also Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 250.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 250.

category (or by classroom and non-classroom spending), legislation that made it illegal for DSBs to go over budget, and the ability of the government to appoint a financial manager if DSBs did not *balance budgets*.²²⁵ It is also notable for the way in which it reflects the neoliberal concept of equality and *negative rights* by treating each *individual* in the same way. The funding model in and of itself might not have been problematic, however, if the government had ensured that it provided adequate funding to support its other education reforms.

The funding formula produced budget shortfalls immediately after it was implemented. For example, the estimated salary the government had used to calculate budget allocation was below the average teacher salary in the majority of school boards. The Toronto District School Board alone had a \$7 million a year shortfall in teacher salaries (which was part of the “classroom spending” foundation grant) beginning in 1998 and could not lay off teachers to make up the difference because of other education reform legislation limiting class size. Situations such as these led school boards to “cannibalize” other budget lines within their “classroom spending” budget allocations.²²⁶ In addition, a 1998 ruling on a legal challenge to the funding model and issue of DSB’s rights to levy their own taxes concluded that there was inadequate funding in the model for “classroom spending,” which hindered schools ability to pay for textbooks, computers, and classroom supplies. The presiding judge also criticized the model for not taking into account inflation.²²⁷ In short, while Progressive Conservative reform discourse had always said that schools would have to do “more for less” in the non-classroom spending areas, they also had to do much more for *much* less in the classroom spending areas of the budget, which were not supposed to be affected by reform. As discussed in Chapter Seven, in November of 2002, the Rozanski report suggested that the public system needed a \$1.8 billion injection of revenue to support classroom learning.²²⁸ And although the government, which would shortly be voted out of office, did infuse the system with the recommended amount, by then the funding model’s effects on music education were already deeply entrenched in the public system.

²²⁵ See Chapter Seven, pp. 333.

²²⁶ Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 271.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ Majhanovich, “Educational Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?” 610.

The reduction in non-classroom spending led to the above discussed reduction or elimination of music department heads and DSB curriculum specialists and resources, while part of the “cannibalization” of classroom spending budget lines to support teachers’ salaries included the elimination of support for in-service training to support the arts (discussed above),²²⁹ all of which would have at least partially addressed the music education gaps in the mandatory *OC* training. Less support for training for music teachers was not the only casualty of the budget crunch, however. Resources for music programs, and eventually the programs themselves, began to disappear. Clear indications of these concerns is evident in increased school fundraising, specifically for the arts, but also in reports from teachers and principals of dwindling music specialists and programs within the public system.

People for Education’s report on the status of Ontario’s public schools found that parents raised approximately \$48 million for elementary and secondary schools in 2002, much of which was used to purchase such “classroom” staples as textbooks, computers, and library books that were supposedly protected under the new funding formula. In addition, between 1997 and 2002, there was a 68% increase in elementary schools that reported fundraising for classroom materials, for a total of 52% of all elementary schools fundraising in 2002.²³⁰ Some schools found themselves so pressed for cash that they had to implement “user fees” for certain subjects, including music. The Caledon Institute’s report highlights this issue with a quote from a parent summarizing her experience with the increased private cost of public education during the Progressive Conservative’s time in office: “[The school year] costs us about \$1,500. That was totally unheard of when I was in school. . . . [Music] is still part of the curriculum, but if you want to participate it’s 20 bucks, which for one item is a lot of money.”²³¹ A 2004 People for Education report on the arts in Ontario’s public schools found the following:

- 60% of elementary schools had inadequate funds for their elementary music program
- Over one quarter of elementary teachers had no funding for school music

²²⁹ Willingham and Cutler, “Music Education in Ontario”, 7.

²³⁰ Majhanovich, “Education Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?” 602.

²³¹ Janet,” quoted in Bezanson and Valentine, “Act in Haste . . . The Style, Scope and Speed of Change in Ontario,” 10.

- Parents fundraised for arts education at over one-third of elementary schools
- Successful fundraising and parent volunteerism for the arts at both elementary and secondary levels was much more prevalent in large, affluent cities and amongst schools with higher socio-economic levels
- Almost one third of secondary schools raised money for instruments
- 42% of secondary schools charged a user fee for music classes (and increase of 11% in three years)
- Rural schools at both the elementary and secondary level had particular difficulty maintaining arts programs because of smaller students enrolment (thus less funding) and expenses associated with areas such as timetabling for fewer students and after school bussing.²³²

Overall and as of 2004 (the year after the Harris government departed office) the People for Education report concluded that “a decade of cuts of funding to both education and culture have proven devastating for arts programs in Ontario’s schools.”²³³

The resulting critique of the funding reforms was one that, ironically, addressed an imbalance of funding amongst schools and DSBs depending on their relative size and socio-economic level of parents, despite government claims that the new funding formula would help promote equal opportunity among all students. This, as Suzanne Majhanovich stated, gave rise to an “equity issue . . . since clearly the more affluent areas are better equipped for fund-raising, and the private companies seem to prefer to enter into partnerships with schools in upper middle class areas.”²³⁴ Several sources show this to be particularly true for music education.²³⁵

Another element of the Conservative education reforms aimed at reducing the economic burden of the school systems that affected music education was the elimination of the fifth year of secondary school. By condensing secondary education into four years while requiring that students take additional required credits, students found themselves with fewer opportunities to take elective credits, such as music.²³⁶ Nora Vince reported that, while the requirement that all students earn an arts credit in Grade 9 led to increased

²³² People for Education, *The Arts in Ontario’s Public Schools*, 5-6, 8-9. Willingham and Cutler also specifically speak to the problem of bussing expenses in rural areas as many secondary ensembles rehearse outside of regular school hours. See Willingham and Cutler, “Music in Ontario Schools,” 15.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 1.

²³⁴ Majhanovich, “Educational Decentralization: Rhetoric or Reality?,” 607.

²³⁵ In addition to the People for Education Report cited above, see Willingham and Cutler, “Music in Ontario Schools,” 7.

²³⁶ People for Education, *The Arts in Ontario’s Public Schools*, 8.

enrolment in Grade 9 music classes, there was an overall decline in the percentage of students who took senior level music courses after the implementation of the *OC*, with secondary enrolment at an almost ten year low in 2001.²³⁷ She concluded that “many students are taking their one mandatory Arts credit and then do not have time in their schedules to take further classes.”²³⁸ Statements gathered from secondary music teachers at the time support Vince’s conclusion.²³⁹

To combat decreased enrolment and availability of secondary courses, many schools implemented “repertoire” courses. These courses often focused strictly on rehearsal and performance and supported the long standing emphasis on performance that had dominated music education in Ontario’s secondary schools. Repertory courses were given an AMR course code.²⁴⁰ This meant that they fell outside the main curriculum categories (Applied, Academic, Open). Vince reported a 300% increase in the use of the repertory credit from 1992-2002, noting that “the credit is often obtained simply by attending rehearsals and performances” before or after school or during lunch.²⁴¹ She also speculated that many students took such courses to inflate averages for those applying to university, since it was often not linked to any academic work but to participation. This directly undermined government rhetoric on standardizing assessment practices and ensuring that assigned grades consistently reflected students’ performance across the province. Part of Vince’s research also revealed that secondary teachers admitted their senior level courses did not align with the curriculum, but rather were aimed at allowing older students with beginner level experience to take a music course at the senior secondary level in order to maintain enrolment.²⁴² This was actually tacitly supported by the lack of a music requirement for enrollment in the Grade 10 Open course described above. Roger Beatty found that some secondary teachers deliberately avoided assessing

²³⁷ Nora Vince, “Ontario—By the numbers: A Statistical Examination of Enrolment in Ontario Secondary School Music Classes,” in *From Sea to Sea: Perspective on Music Education in Canada*, eds. Kari Veblen et al. (London, ON, Western University, 2007), 3, accessed August 25, 2013, <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/musiceducationebooks/1/>, 3-4.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ See, for example, Rodger J. Beatty, “The Status of Music Education in Ontario Secondary Schools,” *The Recorder* 44, no. 1 (2001): 32.

²⁴⁰ Willingham and Cutler, “Music Education in Ontario,” 9. See also Beatty, “The Status of Music in Ontario Secondary Schools,” 32.

²⁴¹ Vince, “Ontario—By the Numbers,” 7.

²⁴² Ibid., 7-8.

students through the required assessment practices because using the Knowledge and Understanding, Theory and Inquiry, Communication, and Creation assessment strands was “like hammering a square peg in a round hole” and that “the students and parents had difficulty understanding student progress.”²⁴³ This was also contrary to government discourse on *standardizing* education and striving for *educational excellence* through the use of assessment.

Ultimately, budget crunches and political pressure to perform in “core” subject areas (discussed below) led administrators to focus what funding they had on subject areas other than music education and to overlook any deficiencies in the implementation of the music *OC* and its assessment practices. Indeed, it is perhaps the combination of the funding coupled with its accountability and reporting policies for more “important” subjects that ultimately proved most detrimental for music education in Ontario.

Standardized Testing and Assessment

The 2003 report of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario concluded that,

the results on the 2002 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) and the Grade 9 math test confirm that many students have not acquired sufficient literacy and math skills. The OSSLT is designed to test only basic literacy skills, not students’ comprehension of the secondary school curriculum. Yet 28% of first-time and 52% of previously eligible writers were unable to pass this basic skills test after 9 and 10 years of schooling respectively. Students taking mostly Applied courses performed particularly poorly on the OSSLT, with a failure rate of 68% among first time students.²⁴⁴

In addition, data from the first five years of language and mathematics provincial testing at the elementary level revealed that only about 50-55% of students were scoring at Level 3 or 4 by the 2001-2002 school year—up a range of only 4-15% from the first year of testing and with minimal improvement from 2000-2001 (see table 8.1).

Given the Harris government’s emphasis on the ability of the new *OC* to raise educational standards and the amount of funding (and funding announcements) it dedicated to ensuring excellence in the core subjects of literacy, math, science and technology, such numbers were not particularly well received. Test scores such as these

²⁴³ Beatty, “The Status of Music in Ontario Secondary Schools,” 33.

²⁴⁴ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 130.

Table 8.1 Education Quality and Accountability Office Results—Students Who Achieved at Levels 3 and 4 on Provincial Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Testing as a Percentage of Enrolment²⁴⁵

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-02
Grade 3					
Reading	46	45	49	49	50
Writing	49	52	52	52	55
Math	43	56	67	61	58
Grade 6					
Reading		48	50	55	55
Writing		48	48	52	53
Math		46	51	54	54

led to increased government emphasis on raising test scores as they were positioned as the primary way in which the government could hold schools accountable for increasing educational quality—indeed, it was one of the primary discourses through which they had defined *educational excellence* and *standards*.²⁴⁶ This only heightened the rhetoric, funding, and implementation resources around these core subjects, in the manner that was discussed above. The combination of emphasis on improving test scores resulted in diversion of time, funds, and attention away from music education, particularly at the elementary level, which was already marginalized by pre-election discourse and unsupported by in-service teacher training and resource development. One music teacher summed up the educational climate particularly well at the elementary level, where generalist teachers were increasingly asked to teach music: “Sadly, for non-music specialist teachers, they are overwhelmed with the many other (and mostly considered ‘more important’) teaching subjects in literacy and numeracy. It is very difficult to ask them to try to devote more time to learning more on a subject that for most is considered ‘less important.’”²⁴⁷

Conclusion

The 2003 report of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario criticized the government for not having a system in place to “measure and report on the extent to which students have learned the new curriculum in grades and subjects other than those that are tested by the

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 138.

²⁴⁶ See Chapter Seven, pp. 340-45.

²⁴⁷ Willingham and Cutler, “Music in Ontario’s Public Schools,” 14.

EQAO.”²⁴⁸ Further, the 2004 People for Education arts report implied that the practice of “setting targets for literacy and numeracy test-scores” in Ontario would result in a ‘two-tier curriculum’—with the arts, social sciences and physical education relegated to the bottom tier” as it had been in other countries.²⁴⁹ However, through this examination of the elements of the Harris government’s neoliberal reforms to education, the structure of curriculum design and learning resource allocation and distribution, and the structures and provision designed to support curriculum implementation, it becomes clear that music education in Ontario in the eyes of the Harris PC government was always considered a “second-class” subject.

That status that was conveyed to the public, administrators, and teachers through the discourse and structure of curriculum development, funding, and implementation support and provision. This despite its “mandatory” status at the elementary level, “rigorous” new curricula, or practical and philosophical justifications for it as a school subject as written in the curriculum guidelines. Relegated to the status of “non-core” subject, the design of the music curriculum was largely unsupervised in relation to more “important” subjects, and it received no specific funding or government-approved resources to support curricular implementation. Standard assessment resources designed to support lesson planning and assessment in music were developed after almost all other subjects, and it was listed almost last on the new provincial report card. Secondary school music teachers were able to “bend” the rules of curriculum design and assessment with no interference—in many cases undermining the discourse of a “rigorous” new curriculum and its demand that students achieve *educational excellence* through learning *standardized* knowledge and skills—and elementary music education was largely taken over by unqualified generalist teachers for whom little training was available except that which they sought out themselves. In the worst cases, elementary music was discontinued, with no repercussions despite the fact that the delivery of the elementary music curriculum was officially deemed mandatory by the government. These final two elements represent a fundamental departure from the strong discourse on *standardization* and *educational excellence* and, had the Harris government truly been serious about

²⁴⁸ Provincial Auditor of Ontario, *2003 Annual Report*, 123.

²⁴⁹ People for Education, *The Arts in Ontario’s Public Schools*, 2.

ensuring the quality delivery of its new *OC* in all areas, would never have happened. However, the same power that gave the Minister of Education (and through him, MET) the prerogative to set mandatory courses and their curriculum guidelines also tacitly gave him the power to ignore schools failure to implement, or even offer, them.

Having reviewed the history and structure of education and neoliberal education reforms affecting music education in England and Ontario, we turn now to this study's final chapter and compare the *convergences* and *divergences* surrounding these reforms and their effects on music education in these two educational systems.

Chapter Nine: Comparison and Conclusions

Introduction

This study has been guided by the following questions:

- (1) What is neoliberalism?
- (2) What is neoliberal education?
- (3) How was neoliberal education conceived of and enacted by the governments of England and Ontario, Canada? How did the economic, political, and social contexts of each state affect these conceptions and enactments?
- (4) How were music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affected by and reflective of the socio-political and economic ends and values of neoliberal education as they were conceived of and enacted by their respective governments?
- (5) How did the established values and traditions associated with music education programs in elementary and secondary state-funded education systems in England and Ontario, Canada affect the ways in which neoliberal education reform was undertaken and enacted in these programs?
- (6) How can a comparative approach to these questions help shape and broaden our understanding of neoliberal education reform and its effects on music education?

Question (1) was addressed in Chapter Three where the liberal roots of neoliberalism were discussed and contrasted with the Keynesian Welfare state that replaced it as the dominant economic model in the West after World War Two. Rachel S. Turner's conceptual map of neoliberalism was presented as a flexible framework for understanding how neoliberalism policy can *converge* and *diverge* across nations as it is adapted to fit pre-existing national structures, forms of governance, and social and cultural traditions. Turner asserted that neoliberalism rests on four core concepts: *The Market*, *Welfare*, *the Constitution*, and *Property*. Adjacent concepts, which support the core concepts, are usually present in most "varieties" of neoliberalism, while peripheral

concepts allow regions to enact different policies that are more responsive to state or local needs, but which still reflect the adjacent and core concepts of neoliberalism. In addition, it was noted that introduction of neoliberal reforms often relied on the discursive positioning of the *individual* against the *collective*, with the former framed as advantageous.

Table 9.1: Turner’s Map of Neoliberalism’s Conceptual Configuration as Modified to Exhibit the Core, Adjacent, and Peripheral Concepts of Neoliberal Education

Core Concepts	Adjacent Concepts	Peripheral Concepts
The Market	Evolution, spontaneous order, limited knowledge, entrepreneurship, individualism, self-interest, <i>educational excellence, standards, centralization of standards, knowledge economy/workers, core skills, core curriculum</i>	The enterprise culture, short-term profit motives, income-tax relief, privatisation, deregulation share-ownership, <i>standardized curricula and testing, high-stakes testing, parental choice, private schools, decentralization/devolution, managerialism, human capital</i>
Welfare	Minimal state, equality of opportunity, freedom, personal responsibility, self-reliance, negative rights, <i>efficiency, lifelong learning, meritocracy</i>	Reduced social expenditure, “workfare,” <i>QUANGOs, education vouchers, charter schools, knowledge workers, learnfare, re-skilling, public-private partnerships</i>
The Constitution	Freedom, private law, legal responsibility, abstract order, ‘rules of just conduct,’ evolution	Legal state, a ‘fiscal constitution,’ balanced budgets, restrained democratic rule
Property (related to Knowledge Economy rather than Post-Ford material accumulation: Ideas and skills rather than capital, though one does have the right to invest capital in education)	Ownership, possessive individualism, legal privilege, individual initiative, negative justice (conformity to universal rules), private associations, <i>educational consumer, knowledge as commodity, accountability</i>	<i>Educational investments, accreditation and certification, user fees donations and fundraising</i>

Having based the “definition” of neoliberalism on Turner’s work, this study addressed question (2) by expanding on Turner’s work to create a conceptual model of *neoliberal education* (table 9.1 above). Concepts were added to Turner’s model that

reflected policy decisions or discourse that were almost always present in neoliberal education and thus served as adjacent concepts to one of the four core concepts of neoliberalism. Peripheral concepts—or concepts that conform to the core and adjacent principals of neoliberal education, but which do not necessarily have to be present in every variety of neoliberal education—were also added. The presence and combination of adjacent and peripheral concepts present in each state’s conception of neoliberal education underpin points of policy *convergence* and *divergence*.

Following the presentation of a conceptual map of neoliberal education in Chapter Four, this study was able to address questions (3), (4), and (5) in Chapters Six through Eight. This was accomplished by reviewing the general history of education and music education in England and Ontario, respectively, including institutional, financial, and administrative structures; attitudes toward the role of education and music education in society; and past music education policy, level of its implementation, and provision supporting implementation. A review of education reforms in both countries was framed by the conceptual map of neoliberal education and revealed the ways in which the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education were enacted in each state in such a way as to be responsive to or attempt to alter public conceptions of the purpose of state-funded elementary and secondary education. Reforms to music education policy and factors that affected its implementation were then situated within these broader educational reforms with attention given to the ways in which the history and structures supporting music education in each state and past and current opinions on the value of music as a subject in a state’s education system affected policy development and implementation. A summary of major findings is embedded within the comparison of the two systems below.

Having answered the first five questions which guided this study, we now turn to addressing question (6). I begin answering this question by first comparing the neoliberal education reforms in England and Ontario and their resulting effects on music education policy and implementation, as well as the influence that established educational traditions and practices had on shaping policy and implementation. This comparison is guided by the elements of the modified Bray and Thomas cube presented in Chapter Two and as seen again below:

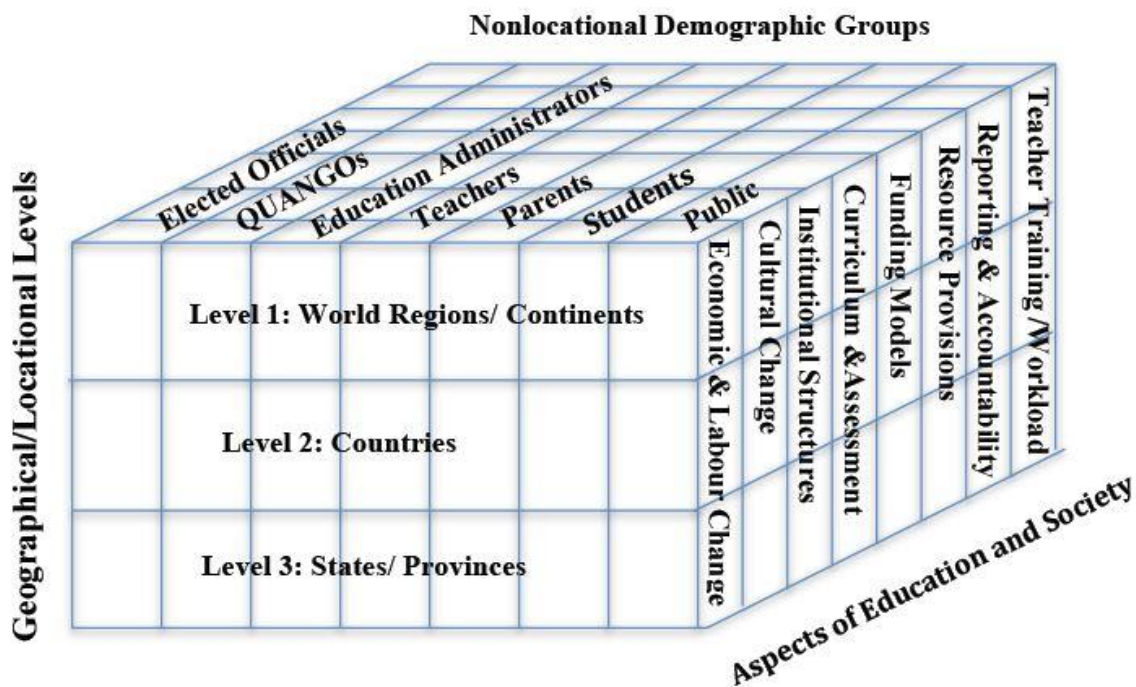


Figure 9.1. Bray and Thomas Cube Modified for Present Study.

Because the core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education are mutually reinforcing, the elements of education reform and resulting music education policy discussed in this comparison overlap somewhat. I finish addressing question (6) in the discussion of the benefits of this study.

Comparing Music Education in England and Ontario: Convergence and Divergence

Economic, Labour, and Cultural Change

Globally changing perspectives on the feasibility and utility of the Keynesian Welfare State underpinned much of the change in both England's and Ontario's systems of education. As described in Chapters Three and Four, these perspectives were shaped and supported through such world-wide organizations as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development at the global level and by economic downturns and labour unrest (the latter particularly in England) at the state level. The change from a Keynesian to a neoliberal approach to economics resulted in a re-evaluation of the purpose of schooling.

Consequently, a central focus of schooling in both states came to rest on Suzanne Harris' notion of "manipulated man," or, in neoliberal education concepts, the construction of students as *enterprising* individuals able to engage in the *knowledge economy*. In both states, then, state-funded schooling was reformed to produce *knowledge workers* as guided by learning from specific *standardized curriculum* and measured by *standardized tests*. These goals were further shaped and reinforced by the development of international testing schemes such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and the Programme for International Student Assessment. Education became largely conceived of as the production of *human capital* for the labour market, and *accountability* measures were put into place to ensure each system's *efficiency* in order to *reduce social expenditure* and create *balanced budgets*.

In the case of England, whose reforms began more than a decade before Ontario's, and near the beginning of this global economic transformation (i.e., in the mid-1970s), much of this reform was directly tied to reshaping the overall nature of work and labour in England through creating *enterprising* individuals responsive to the (then new) rise of information technology and the relocation of manual jobs to less developed, lower paying countries. The English government also wanted to reshape the public's perception of the well-educated individual from one whose knowledge was based on academic and theoretical knowledge to one whose knowledge was based on vocational and applied skills in technology and science (i.e., a *knowledge worker*). This, paired with the Conservatives' desire to reduce public expenditure on social services, was reflected in a strong discourse of *individualism*, *self-interest*, and *self-reliance*.

By the time Ontario's reforms occurred (i.e., in the early to mid-1990s), the *knowledge economy* and global shift of manual labour-related jobs to more developing countries was well established, as reflected in the developments of treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement. Ontario's focus, then, was on improving the education system as a whole so that Ontario would seem attractive to and be able to compete for potential transnational business (or, conversely, so that local business would remain). While *individualism* and *self-interest* were sometimes present, Progressive Conservative discourse on the whole focused much more on *balanced budgets*, *efficiency*, and the goal of achieving (and documenting) *educational excellence* through the

acquisition of *core skills* by *all* students. Thus, it followed a *fiscal constitution*. This would reduce the demand on state-funded social services and signal that Ontario was “open for business.” In this, it was never truly able to cast off the *collectivist* roots of the Ontarian state-funded education system since the Ontario system did not truly emphasize the concepts of *meritocracy* and *parental choice* in support of *educational excellence*. The quasi-market developed in England was simply not acceptable to Ontarians.

Another area that affected the ways in which policy was created and implemented in Ontario related to changing notions about the cultural makeup of society. While those in positions of power in Ontario have historically been upper-class Caucasian men, Canada itself (and most of its state-funded education) embraced a multicultural approach to society. This was reflected in the goals of provincially-developed music guidelines throughout its history of state-funded education. During the period of neoliberal educational reform in England discussed in this study, England was coming to terms with an increasingly ethnically diverse culture as a result of an influx of citizens emigrating from its various former colonies, challenging notions of what it meant to be “English.” In addition, the English government was also concerned about, and wished to reverse, the country’s decline as a political and economic international leader. Ontario’s status as a province meant that Ontario’s leaders had no such concerns; rather they wished mainly to ensure that Ontario could remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Finally, Ontario’s education system was initially created to accept children of all socio-economic classes—private schools for the upper socio-economic classes were, and remain, quite rare and not well-accepted as an educational alternative by the general public. This was quite the opposite of England’s education systems, where state-funded education was, historically, meant only for those who could not afford such schools, regardless of the general public aspiration to have their children attend them (and gain the status that went along with enrolment). While the Labour government that preceded the Thatcher government tried to readdress this by introducing comprehensive secondary schools, the relative ease with which parents accepted the Conservative’s approach to school choice indicates that—particularly in comparison to public rejection of a private education tax-relief scheme in Ontario—in education at least, the right of the *individual* over the *collective* remained an influential concept in England.

These, then, are the general economic, labour, and social changes and traditions that underpinned the reforms in each state. They resulted in a combination of neoliberal and neoconservative approaches to education and music education reform in England, while Ontario's reforms were much more focused solely on neoliberal aims. These aims were further mostly focused on ensuring *efficiency* and *balanced budgets* while raising *human capital* and the ability of students to engage in the *knowledge economy* rather than on developing an educational market or quasi-market for *consumers*, which was also a goal in English education. As seen in the discussion below, these changes were responsible for much of the convergence and divergence in educational and music education policy, implementation, and provision between the two states.

Elected Officials, Bureaucrats, QUANGNOs and Government-Related Institutional Structures

Both England and Ontario elected new governments in response to the perception that current governments were not adequately responding to the economic pressures exerted on the state. Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party displaced Callaghan's Labour Party following IMF imposed reforms, sharply rising inflation and unemployment, and an attempt to address rising employment wages that resulted in nation-wide strikes known as the "Winter of Discontent." In Ontario, the Harris Progressive Conservative Party replaced Bob Rae's New Democratic Party following rising inflation and unemployment and a social contract that had likewise alienated the previous governments' voting base. Both parties campaigned on the need for system-wide reform in order to better align the state's economy with changing economic times and, in the case of England, with its declining status on the world stage. As such, the public were expecting large scale reforms to occur and the reforms themselves were framed—quite literally—as simple and necessary common sense.

Both the English and Ontario governments enshrined many of the major reforms to education in law, thus ensuring that local education authorities (LEAs) and District School Boards (DSBs) as well as local schools had a *legal responsibility* to ensure that reforms were enacted. In respect to music curriculum and assessment, England's formation of its music curriculum and assessment policies as *Statutory Orders* is significant in that schools had a legal obligation to ensure their implementation and to

assess student achievement against its End of Key Stage Descriptions. This level of *accountability* was not present in Ontario, as ensuring the implementation of the music curriculum guidelines, as in all subject curricula, was ultimately the Minister of Education's responsibility. While his authority to assign mandatory curriculum subjects and degree requirements as well as issue curricular guidelines was supported by law, the curriculum guidelines were not actually enshrined in law, as happened in England with the aforementioned *Statutory Orders*. Schools in Ontario used the *Ontario Curriculum* as the basis for lesson planning and assessment because the Minister of Education instructed them to do so. This meant, however, that he could also "look the other" way when curriculum was implemented if he so desired.

In both states, the government met considerable resistance to reform when their implementation was perceived of as too swift, too drastic, without enough consultation or consideration of opinions solicited through consultation, or any combination thereof. In education, this happened fairly frequently, as both states structured reform processes so that major policy decision could be made by the Education Secretary (England) or Minister of Education (Ontario) through secondary legislation and thus with little to no public consultation (as was the case with the development of the *Ontario Curriculum*). As discussed in more detail below, however, because of the power held by elected officials and bureaucrats, concerns over changes could usually be ignored, addressed through the creation of new laws (such as Ontarian legislation that made it illegal for teachers to strike or English legislation that limited the power of unions), or—in some cases—avoided altogether by restricting information about decision making structures and/or limiting consultation. However, public dissatisfaction in both states culminated in a review of education reforms and suggestion for change. In England, these suggestions, largely from the 1994 Dearing Report, recommended increased teacher and local autonomy through lightening curricular and assessment demands. In Ontario, the Rozanski recommendations focused on the need to better provision education through a reinfusion of the monies that previously been removed from the system in the name of *efficiency* while Auditor General Reports found that teachers had not had the proper training to implement the new curriculum and assessment procedures.

Transparency in the consultative process was also obscured through the creation of various QUANGOs meant to support both the Conservative's and the Progressive Conservative's educational visions. As each QUANGO was usually under the purview of the Minister or Secretary of Education, he could direct their actions and approve their findings. Thus QUANGOs both supported neoliberal education reforms and helped to enact them. Through the development of new laws, the use of secondary legislation, the powers given to the Education Secretary or Minister of Education, and the creation and use of QUANGOs to facilitate reform and the outcomes of reform, both states exhibited a characteristic centralization of power that is often gathered in preparation for enacting neoliberal education reforms. In the case of England, this was done in the name of *decentralizing* control over daily decision to local schools in order to facilitate *parental choice* in their newly constructed roles as *educational consumers*. In Ontario, central control was not justified through this manner, rather, it was framed as a way to improve the educational "services" available to all parents and to "trim the fat" of educational expenditure by making the system more *efficient*, in part by making those who were responsible for spending government money more *accountable*. Again, the difference here can be framed as either an *individualist* or *collectivist* perspective.

Finally, and before moving on to the treatment of government-related institutional structures and QUANGOs, it is important to note that, although it had moved away from more prescriptive curriculum guidelines during the 1960s through early 1980s, Ontario had always had in place curricular guidelines for most school subjects, including music. *The Ontario Curriculum* was, in terms of a standard set of guidelines for schools, nothing new and came at the end of a period of gradual reclamation of central power over curriculum that had begun in the mid-1970s. In fact, it was a return to the more prescriptive documents of the pre-progressive education movement in Ontario, although it is fair to say that the guidelines under the Harris regime were far more detailed than in earlier times. And, although it had been abandoned in the 1950s, Ontario had also formerly employed state-wide testing as a way of granting educational certification. Although students were only required to pass the Grade 10 Literacy test in order to graduate under the Progress Conservative's neoliberal education reforms, the idea of standardized tests was not so far removed from Ontarian's consciousness. In England,

however, the school and LEA autonomy that was a hallmark of that system would have made the institution of a standardized curriculum a much more radical reform. Indeed, many of the English education reforms would have seemed alien to administrators and teachers used to enjoying far more autonomy (more on this below).

The government of England had a history of commissioning reports and supporting QUANGOs that regularly considered the role of music in schools and its provision in the wider context of state-funded education. Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) conducted research on and made suggestions about music curriculum content, assessment, and pedagogical approaches up until it was subsumed by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in 1992. It notable that, in its long existence before the Conservative's 1979 election, the HMI evolved as a body of Inspectorate more interested in solving education problems and undertaking educational research than as focussed on holding LEAs, schools, and teachers to account for their actions. Its 1985 paper *Music from 5 to 16* represented the culmination of a history of considering the value and role that music should play in English schools. Thus, commissioned reports and the HMI ensured that music as a subject was ever-present in the minds of politicians, educationalists, and, to a lesser extent, the public. This, in turn, was reflected in the inclusion of music as a foundation subject in the National Curriculum and the very public debates around its purpose in schools and its curricular content. It is not surprising, for example, that defense of the Music Working Group's original reports often cited ideas from both *Music from 5 to 16* and music as assessed by the General Certificate of Education, which was also influenced by HMI reports on the need to make learning more relative to students. Indeed, as discussed below, the structure of the curriculum formulation process itself as centred on the ideas of the Music Working Group allowed for informed debate on the nature and value of music, curricular content, and assessment procedures in England's education system. Of course, once HMI was greatly reduced and subsumed into OFSTED, its ability to undertake music education research was curtailed.

Ontario's Music Branch was never really focussed on the development of music education research. Usually run by one or two motivated and appointed individuals, it was more practically focused on curriculum development, teacher training, and identifying teaching materials. While it did generate state-endorsed statements as to the

value of music education, these statements were included only at the beginning of curricular documents and not as a reflection of a larger scale consideration of music education policy within the system of education. Thus, the Music Branch was never meant to be a body that promoted debate about and suggestions for reform of music as a subject in Ontario's schools. At any rate, it was eliminated in 1965 and no state-level body or position was ever created to replace it. Thus, music as a subject lost its direct connection to the Ministry of Education aside from its ongoing inclusion in curricular documents. As a subject, its role in the school system was only considered at the provincial level when curricular reform occurred, and the lack of policy generated by a QUANGO equivalent to HMI and the relative lack of influence of music educationalists from outside the policy making process (particularly compared to England) meant that there was little fodder for or opportunities to debate music's purpose and structure in Ontario's schools.

In addition, the Progressive Conservative's approach to curriculum development further minimized opportunities for debate about the nature and value of music and its curriculum content in schools. The tenure process through which writers were selected provided minimal opportunities for those who might have wanted to be considered for the job, while many of the actual writers found their voices literally silenced in consultative sessions. Opportunities for debate were further reduced due to the extraordinarily short timeline for curriculum guideline development. Changes to curricular content were suggested and insisted upon by bureaucrats overseeing the process in such a way that writers were required to include them, even though it was often unclear where such suggestion originated. The fact that Arts curriculum writers (including those writing the music curriculum) "enjoyed" relatively little interference from bureaucrats and administrators when developing their curricular guidelines was actually a double-edged sword. It allowed the writers to create a document which they felt truly reflected higher, more specific standards of musical skill and knowledge for Ontario students, but it also reflected the government's general disinterest in the subject—a disinterest, as discussed below, which was echoed in the provisions (or lack thereof) meant to support it. Short time lines and the small number of people who actually wrote the music guidelines (only 6, plus a professional writer) also potentially narrowed the educational vision for music in

the schools. Thus, it is not surprising that the guidelines, as discussed further below, reflected Ontario's historical support of performance-based music education primarily based on skill acquisition and knowledge of Western-centric musical practices.

In England, the Music Working Group (MWG) experienced much more QUANGO and government interference in formulating the suggested statutory orders for a music National Curriculum. As discussed below, this was in large part because debates about music education in England also encompassed broader educational debates about the nature and purpose of English education. Ideas within both the initial and final drafts were superseded by the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Education Secretary. However, the process of curriculum writing was more transparent and this in itself facilitated much more public debate because the public (including music educationalists) had access to MWG proposals and responses to their work from the NCC and the Education Secretary. Given that the music National Curriculum was made lawful through its creation as *Statutory Orders*, it is not surprising that opportunities for such debate occurred. Ontario's music curriculum, on the other hand, was an example of secondary legislation. This allowed the processes through which it was created to be obscured while also limiting public knowledge and debate. As discussed further below, it was through access to knowledge about the structures of curriculum formation and the content of suggestions for future music *Statutory Orders* that English music educationalists and interested members of the public were actually able to affect changes to the final versions of the music curriculum.

Education-Related Institutional Structures

Class structure in England was historically reflected in the division between Independent Schools and state-funded education. This was further reinforced by the modern, technical, and grammar tripartite division among secondary schools introduced in the mid-1940s. The introduction of the Comprehensive school by the Labour Party in the 1960s was an attempt to break down class divisions, but ultimately served as a rallying point for Conservative discourse around the need to develop *educational excellence* and allow students to thrive by essentially setting up a *meritocracy* based on a system of *negative rights* that would remove certain impediments to accessing "quality" education. Conservatives accomplished this by appealing to parents' desire to ensure that

they had control over the choice of their children's school, which would, in turn, promote upward mobility. As such, the Conservative government created laws to support Local Management of Schools (LMS) and Grant Maintained School (GMS), which they believed would help facilitate parental choice. More of this is said in the next section of this chapter. What is important to note here is that this dramatically reduced funding to the LEAs and thus affected their ability to co-ordinate and offer board-wide services, such as their Music Support Services.

The loss or reduction of LEA Music Support Services resulted in an increased level of *public-private partnerships* in English schools. Indeed, teachers were actively encouraged to develop these partnerships both as a way of more *efficiently* implementing curriculum and to make classroom connections with and incorporate the nature and needs of local business and communities, which is a reflection of *spontaneous order* and *evolution*. In some cases, these partnerships subverted the Conservative's desire to view music education as a subject through which "traditional" English values could be reasserted in education. At any rate, the result, which also depended on administrator support and teacher effort, was a complex structure to music education implementation that had the potential to offer a wide and diverse array of both classroom and extra-curricular activities to students, as long as it was supported by local administrative support and music teacher planning.

In Ontario, education-related institutional structures remained much the same except that the DSBs were amalgamated. This had little effect on music education in that state's system. The exception to this was the elimination of the DSB music co-ordinator or expansion of this role to include subjects other than music. If eliminated, classroom teachers lost access to current resources and training through that office. If expanded, the co-ordinators faced a significantly increased workload. Not only did they become responsible for more schools (due to DSB amalgamation), but they had to prepare and co-ordinate resources for a number of subject areas. In both states, then, resources at the middle level of educational governance declined; however, the English government's encouragement for schools and teachers to form *public-private partnerships*, both to operate more *efficiently* and to reflect the *evolution* and *spontaneous order* of society,

provided at least one alternative way with which to fill the gap left by the decline of mid-level administration.

District and Local Educational Administrators

England's schools were founded on the principle of "a national system, locally administered." From its very beginnings, the state played a small role in daily school life, and that role was mostly related to providing funding and undertaking inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) to ensure its proper use. Even as the state exerted more control over schooling through the legislation of school leaving ages, measures designed to stratify students within the tripartite system (such as the 11-plus exam), and the subsequent decision of the Labour government to encourage a comprehensive-based secondary school system, the government itself remained largely uninvolved in the daily aspects of schooling as well as in larger policy areas such as curriculum development, assessment and reporting, administrative structures, and teacher training. One major exception to this was the development of a nation-wide school-leaving exams at age 16 (the General Certificate of Secondary Education) and the subsequent A- and O-level exams administered to age 16-plus students. And even these tests existed in several forms, having been developed and administered by different accredited testing agencies and, with the exception of certain core subjects, allowing students to choose the subjects in which they would be assessed. In addition, and in the case of music, a large portion of the some subject assessment was based on coursework and thus relied on the professional judgement of local teachers and administrators.

Thus, until the Thatcher government was elected—and particularly until the 1988 Education Reform Act—LEAs, head teachers, and classroom teachers enjoyed a high level of institutional and professional autonomy. The reforms taken by the Thatcher and Major governments that created a standardized curriculum and assessment practices for Key Stages 1-3, then, represented a significant change to the locus of power in terms of what, specifically, was to be taught and assessed within schools and in terms of having to report and be *accountable* for the decisions that remained within their purview. Yet, as discussed below, curriculum and assessment practices were so vague that it allowed for a quite some amount of local autonomy in relation to the planning, content, and assessment of daily lessons, concepts, and skills, particularly in music.

In England, Local Management of Schools (LMS) and creation of Grant Maintained Schools (GMS) required that governors and head teachers assume a *managerial* role that further supported a neoliberal framing of local autonomy. Governors and head teachers became directly responsible for such areas budget allocations, teacher hiring and training, and developing assessment practices. Yet their decisions needed to conform to central policy guidelines and expectations, and they were now held *accountable* for those decisions both through centralized accountability procedures and in the eyes of parents through the government's careful discursive cultivation of parents as *educational consumers* who were *personally responsible* for ensuring they made wise school choices on behalf of their children. It is fair to say, then, that despite the move to LMS and GMS, the work of school administrators and teachers was highly regulated and measured through the use of the accountability structures discussed below. As mentioned above, this level of regulation would have been foreign in a system founded on institutional autonomy. The underlying issue would have been to what extent institutions and the decisions of administrators and teachers could truly be considered autonomous given the level of regulation and accountability imposed by the central government. In addition, and as discussed in the next section, the accountability placed on governors and head teachers through LMS and GMS required them to make some difficult decisions over the extent to which they could afford to support curricular implementation and assessment in addition to the rich and varied extra-curricular experiences and extended musical resources that had become part of the "second tier" of English music education.

In Ontario, principals were removed from the teacher's union to ensure that they identified with their position as manager and administrator rather than as teacher; however, they enjoyed far less autonomy, in part because the mid-level of education administration (i.e., the District School Boards) was only amalgamated, not eliminated and the per-pupil funding formula was far more specific in terms of how monies could be allocated for educational spending than was the case in England. Aside from principals and teachers needing to renegotiate their relationships within a newer, larger DSB, the power and administrative structure between DSB and school did not change. Indeed, it was the DSB that was legally required to balance its budgets lest DSB officials be replaced by a manager selected by the province, not individual schools and principals. In

addition, and as discussed further below, the DSB was largely responsible for ensuring that teachers and administrators at the school level received proper training in the new curriculum and assessment procedures. The DSB, then, shared responsibility with the local schools in terms of *balancing budgets* and ensuring *educational excellence*, as was reflected in the larger role they retained in the educational administrative structure in comparison to the English LEAs.

Reporting and Accountability Structures

Reporting and accountability structures were directly supportive of the neoliberal education concepts of *efficiency*, *educational excellence*, *human capital*, *managerialism*, *reduced social expenditure*, *balanced budgets* and, of course, *accountability* in both England and Ontario. Schools, LEAs, and DSBs were subject to primary or secondary legislation which required them to submit detailed budgets accounting for educational spending as outlined by their respective funding formulas, and in both states legislation was in place to remove *managerial* authority from a school (in England) or DSB (in Ontario) if budgets were not balanced. In this way, both governments sought to “trim the fat” in educational spending. In England, this was largely done at the school level through LMS and GMS, while in Ontario the DSBs were the ones who were on the “front line” of budget reductions and balance requirements. They then handed these reductions down to the local schools, and how that money was spent was further restricted by Ontario’s funding formula. In Ontario, these reductions were meant solely to focus on economic *accountability* by creating a more *efficiently* run education system focused on the production of *human capital* in the form of *knowledge workers*. In England, such economic *accountability* was also extended into the realm of *parental choice* as budgetary information for each school was routinely made public.

While both systems required economic accountability, England required much more *subject* accountability. That is, accountability structures were in place to regularly assess the implementation of *all* of the core and foundation subjects—including music—as well as teacher’s abilities to teach those subject and students’ achievement in them. The English government was able to facilitate these changes in part because of the historical role of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, which, in the case of music, carried out inspection of school music and teaching practices as early as the 1870s and up to and

including Thatcher's first two terms in office. Inspection of music in Ontario, however, had been halted in 1893. The HMI's transformation into the more inspection and reporting focused Office for Standards and Educational Accountability (a neoliberal education designation if ever there was one) intensified these state-level accountability structures. In addition, each school was required to consider the role of music within the school, how the music curriculum would be implemented and student achievement assessed, and how it would obtain the resources with which it would accomplish this in its music curriculum subject policy statement. Music could also be considered within the school's wider development plan, particularly in preparation for OFSTED inspections.

This is not to say that all subjects were treated equally in terms of the ways in which English schools and teachers were held to account. The development of state-level tests and more specific assessment (and therefore reporting) procedures for the *core* subjects in the English National Curriculum, and the publication of results of those tests at Key Stages 2-4 as part of facilitated *parent choice*, certainly elevated core subjects over others within the reformed education system. The same was true in Ontario, where the Education, Quality, and Accountability Office (another evocative designation) focused only on assessment and publication of results from literacy and mathematics tests. When we compare accountability structures for ensuring the implementation of and provision for the music curriculum in Ontario with those in England, however, we see that such structures were practically non-existent in the former. Indeed, the very existence of the "repertoire" (e.g., AMR) credit in Ontario infers that music teachers were very much left to implement the music curriculum (or not) with no central oversight (although the course would have had to have been approved by the Minister of Education). In fact, *no* central accountability measures were in place to ensure that the music guidelines were implemented and to measure student achievement in relation to them. Instead, subject accountability was really more about skill acquisition as measured by EQAO tests. This occurred despite of the introduction of a standard report card that was purportedly meant to allow more comparison between students and schools. Because EQAO tests were usually aligned with curricular expectations for the grades in which they were administered (the exception being the Grade 10 Literacy Test), they also served as a *de facto* measurement of curricular implementation and learning.

In terms of reporting students' achievement in music to parents and the public at large, the ability of both systems was dubious. In England, standardized reporting procedures were not developed—a somewhat surprising decision given the emphasis that the Conservative government placed on *parental choice* as facilitated through the various *accountability* structures it put into place. In Ontario, music teachers utilized the *standardized* report card to indicate student achievement, but the actual information that could be communicated to parents through this platform—when music was even included on the card—was very limited, particularly when compared to “core” elementary subjects.

Overall, reporting and accountability procedures in Ontario and England were a significant area of *divergence* between the two systems. As discussed below, while it may not always be prudent to judge the “success” of music education by the ability of local administrators and teachers to implement state-level standardized music curriculum and to ensure that students reach a certain standard of achievement in relation to curricular mastery, certainly England's increased accountability structures (i.e., OFSTED inspections, development plans, and subject curriculum policies) placed pressure on school administrators to ensure that the music curriculum received a fair amount of provision and support, even if (as discussed below) they sometimes had to choose support of a *core curriculum* subject over music. In Ontario, the lack of any such accountability measures allowed teachers of music to ignore curriculum guidelines and, in the worst case scenario, allowed inclusion of music in Ontario's schools to be tacitly overlooked in order to support raising educational standards in provincially-tested subjects, which served as the true indicator of subject accountability.

Curriculum and Assessment

Curriculum content in both locations largely reflected current educational practices in both states. In England, and despite clear opposition from the Education Secretary and the National Curriculum Council, the music *Statutory Orders* reflected the progressive, practical, student-centred, culturally relative approach to music that had been supported and developed along the lines of Keith Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model, the work of such prominent men as Christopher Small and John Paynter, the HMI, and previous government reports such as *Half our Future*. The Music Working Group, then, had a rich body of philosophical arguments about and research on such approaches—

approaches that had been officially endorsed through the structure of the General Certificate of Secondary Education—upon which to build their recommendations. And although there were some compromises in the final *Statutory Orders*, particularly in the implied division of knowledge and practice in the 1992 curriculum, overall, the music curriculum represented a surprising “victory” of educationalist ideas and beliefs over the vision the Conservative government had asserted about the nature and structure of both music education and English education in general.

The music orders were developed at the end of the National Curriculum process, thus reflecting a certain hierarchical order within school subjects. Another result of this later development was that the government had had time to “rethink” the perceived enormity of curricular requirements and (particularly) its assessment practices in response to teacher protests. Thus, music Attainment Targets were fewer than in other subjects and the assessment process much vaguer due to the government’s decision to drop the 10 Attainment Levels in favour of End of Key Statements or (after 1995) End of Key Descriptions. While this did allow students’ musical experiences and products to be assessed more holistically, it also contradicted the government’s emphasis on *standardization* as a way of facilitating *parental choice* and *educational excellence*. This was compounded by two factors: (1) vague wording in the Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in relation to exactly what level of specific knowledge or skill students should attain and when and (b) the decision to have local schools develop their own assessment and reporting procedures.

In Ontario, the elementary music curriculum guidelines were also developed at the end of the curriculum revision process, though secondary guidelines were released simultaneously with all other curricular subjects. The music guidelines largely continued the Western-centric performance tradition established with the rise of secondary music education in the 1950s and 1960s. While music in Ontario’s schools had historically been justified for its ability to encourage community, acceptance, and sensitivity in a multicultural environment (while still assisting in the development of a “Canadian” identity), these goals were largely replaced with curricular rationales and requirements emphasising the development of both general *core skills* for employment in the *knowledge economy* and for connecting musical study directly with employment in

music-related fields. In this, music lost a unique philosophical underpinning in the discourse of Ontario's curriculum guidelines and gained one that was largely addressed by other curricular subjects. In addition, the curriculum guidelines were so rigorous and had so many expectations that it was arguably nearly impossible for teachers—especially for elementary and generalist teachers—to implement the entire curriculum.

In relation to assessment, music curriculum guidelines were much more specific than the English *Statutory Orders*. Every curricular “expectation” was essentially an element of an attainment target that detailed, fairly specifically, what students were to be able to know and do at the end of each grade. There was no equivalent to the English Programme of Studies. Models for assessment and reporting were also standardized at the state-level through the use of rubrics, exemplars, and a standardized report card. It is fair to say, however, that they were not always effectively employed because teachers (1) felt they did not “fit” music assessment (a fair point since the assessment categories were the same across all subjects); (2) they lacked training in how to use them; or (3) both.

When compared, the curriculum and assessment practices of England and Ontario really only *converge* in the respect that they were conceived of as a form of *standardized curriculum and testing*. In terms of content, the Ontario curriculum actually reflected many of the philosophical and pedagogical approaches to music education that English music teachers and educationalist had been trying to move away from since the 1970s, and the assessment and reporting practices related to the Ontario curriculum were far more detailed and centralized than in the English system. Assessment and curriculum practices in England contradicted much of the Conservative's neoliberal educational values, whereas curriculum and assessment in Ontario were a strong reflection of them. One must wonder whether this was a function of the lack of consultation and opportunities for public debate involved in the creation of the Ontarian policy documents. Indeed, one can imagine that if Kenneth Baker had not had to compromise on the issue of the music *Statutory Orders* due to intense public pressure and debate, his curriculum might have looked a lot like the Ontario curriculum guidelines. Of course, this is not to imply that one set of policies is “better” than the other, only that they both reflect approaches to music education that were wide-spread and dominant at the time of their formation. As noted above, Ontario itself was in a process of moving toward greater

centralization of *standards* and improved *accreditation* procedures for high schools that had begun in the 1970s, and so the final, highly detailed and standardized form of the curriculum guidelines and assessment would have been seen as an extension of the process. In addition, although Ontario's teachers now had a much clearer list of *what* they should teach and *when*, they still, like English teachers, had the autonomy to decide *how* teaching should occur.

Funding Models and Resource Provision

Much of the convergence around funding models and resource provision had been discussed above in relation to institutional structures and the role of educational administrators. That is, the decision to reduce overall funding for education through realizing educational *efficiencies* and the implementation of a per-pupil funding model greatly reduced the amount of funding available for teacher professional development in relation to new curriculum and assessment practices and for music resource provision in general. In Ontario, the base amount given to DSBs per student had to cover all "classroom spending," including paying teachers and purchasing learning materials, and so was not specifically earmarked for curriculum implementation, music or otherwise. In addition, no provision for music education was included in the system of grants designed to fund "non-classroom" spending. The allocation of government monies to music education, then, was entirely dependent upon DSB and local administrator good will and, perhaps, the extent to which teachers and parents took a "squeaky wheel" approach to secure funding. That said, since schools and DSBs were essentially held accountable by the state only in relation to their abilities to (1) *balance budgets* and (2) demonstrate *educational excellence* as measured by EQAO tests, it is hardly surprising that music education's funding, provision, implementation, and, in some cases, existence in schools, declined throughout the Progressive Conservative's time in office.

These issues were exacerbated in the English system by the introduction of a quasi-market system based on *parental choice*, while at the same time they were partially offset by the other *accountability* procedures described above. Governors and head teachers, however, still found themselves sometimes having to choose between provisioning more "visible" subjects that were discursively constructed as more "important" by the Conservative government (i.e., the *core curriculum*) and provisioning

music. This was all the more important because a poor showing on state-level assessments and OFSTED inspections in relation to these core subjects—or as shown by evaluation scores published in league tables—could mean fewer students in their classes, and thus less funding for education overall. In Ontario, this was never an issue as the Progressive Conservatives continued the tradition of assigning students to schools based on catchment areas. As discussed below, however, this still resulted in equity issues.

Both systems, then experienced significant problems with accessing government allocated funding. However, the ways in which they dealt with this were distinctly different and can be traced back to the development of institutional structures that supported music education (or lack thereof) in each state. In England, the LEA Music Support Services had already established a rich and varied infrastructure to support music both as a classroom subject and as an extra-curricular school- and community-based activity. Music teachers and administrators in England were accustomed to having access to and working with district-level resources such as itinerant music teachers and LEA sponsored music ensembles and performance opportunities. By the time of the ERA reforms, they had come to be regarded as an integral part of the music program and teachers, particularly generalist teachers, did not want to lose them. Thus, and in accordance with a neoliberal conception of education, schools and LEAs established the types of *public-private partnerships* describe above. In addition, the development of the music consultant position, when effectively supported by administration and in the hands of a knowledgeable and able teacher, had the potential to ensure that general teachers had local access to and resources for implementing and assessing the National Curriculum.

In Ontario, music teachers were historically much more isolated and the DSBs did not provide nearly as much support for non-classroom music making activities or extension of curricular learning (if at all). As already noted above, the provincial Music Branch had been disbanded in 1965 and music co-ordinator positions were gradually eliminated or expanded to include other subjects as the 1990s progressed. DSB curriculum policy documents and their supporting resources had become largely obsolete when the new curriculum guidelines were created under the Progressive Conservative regime. In their place were the Music curriculum profiles (not developed until after the Harris government left office) and the student exemplars that demonstrated how student work

should be assessed. In this, the government (or at least subsequent governments, in the case of the exemplars) did try to ensure that assessment of students' achievement was consistent across the province, which is representative of general neoliberal educational goals. This, however, was in stark contrast to the provision they allowed for teacher training and music guideline implementation—assessment procedures were all fine and well, but without first ensuring provisional support for music guideline implementation, assessment based on those guidelines was likely unable to occur. All of this is to say that music teachers and administrators were not attempting to sustain a network of provisional support, as were their English counterparts, but to establish one. While some local attempts to do this may have taken place, teachers tended to turn to the more isolated activities of *fundraising* and implementing *user fees*. This happened in England, too, although it appears that the English system was less reliant on such things, because music teachers were actively encouraged to expand provision support to the private sphere.

In both England and Ontario, the need to look outside of what could be provided by the educational system in order to support curricular implementation and assessment (and, in the case of England, non-classroom musical activities and structures) demonstrated a form of *spontaneous order* and market *evolution*. That is, the dependency on private, community, or parental interests and ability to support music in schools meant that, in many cases, music programs could not flourish—or sometimes even exist—without willing support of those outside the school. While this does reflect two adjacent *Market* concepts of neoliberal education, it should be noted that the decision of both states to include music as a mandatory curricular subject in elementary education (and the beginning of secondary education in England) meant that both governments seriously undermined their overall emphasis on educational equality. That is, they did not remove impediments (such as inconsistent funding and other resource provision) to all students' equal access to a mandatory curricular subject. This was in stark contrast to the ways in which the *core curriculum* was supported through additional funding and resource development, particularly in Ontario, and hence reflected the status of music in their overall conception of education.

Teachers, Teacher Training and Teacher Workload

Historically, music teacher training, or musical training for generalist teachers, was inconsistent and even, in some cases, non-existent in both states. In addition, neither developed official policies before the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s, respectively, on whether or not music teachers, particularly at the elementary level, should be music specialists or generalist teachers who were also able to teach music. Thus, it is no surprise that music education was inconsistently included and taught throughout both states' systems of education. A common denominator in "successful" music programs in both states up to their periods of neoliberal educational reforms was the passionate, knowledgeable, and driven music teacher who worked hard to ensure administrative and public support for the music program. Indeed, a music teacher who already enjoyed the support of school administrators in creating and sustaining a strong music program in the school could go quite far in terms of what could be offered and taught. In the early days of state-funded education in Ontario, this usually meant focusing on a performance-oriented curriculum as most music teachers, particularly at the secondary level, came from military and ensemble backgrounds, as did the men responsible for writing provincial music curriculum before the Music Branch was disbanded. In England, teacher autonomy reinforced by a lack of common curriculum guidelines resulted in a wider range of approaches to music education.

Regulation over teacher certification was increased in both England and Ontario during neoliberal education reforms. In neither location, however, was certification of elementary teachers contingent upon ability to teach music as a curricular subject; that is, it was entirely possible for teachers to obtain certification to teach in either educational system with little to no musical or music teaching experience. Teachers at the secondary level in both systems tended to be specialists due to the complexity of the subject matter at that level. That said, teachers' abilities to implement the music curriculum came under far more scrutiny in England owing to the frequency of OFSTED inspections and policy requirements that encouraged development plans for music education, of which teacher preparedness and ability were two aspects considered. In contrast, and as discussed above, Ontario developed no state-level policies to ensure that teachers were effectively implementing the curriculum.

In both states, music education in the primary schools increasingly became the responsibility of generalist teachers as specialist teachers were either laid off or reassigned to generalist roles in order to increase the system's *efficiency*. In England, however, central policy encouraged the development of a music consultant position that, when the consultant was given a reasonable amount of training and access to resources such as release time, could effectively co-ordinate music curriculum implementation and undertake some of the responsibility for ensuring the schools' generalist teachers had the required musical and pedagogical skills to confidently teach within the music National Curriculum. While this approach to ensuring music curriculum implementation was not "fool-proof" by any means and was particularly contingent upon decisions made by head teachers regarding funding and release time and the motivation of the consultant herself, it did present an organizational and administrative framework through which to train generalist teachers after they received their initial certification, as well as to co-ordinate the many teachers responsible for teaching music. In Ontario, no such role existed and, as noted above, generalist teachers who were required to teach music as guided by the Ontario Curriculum encountered no real test of their ability to do so. In this case, reduction of specialist music teachers at the elementary level was particularly harmful in that it usually eliminated the one person in the school who was qualified and specifically tasked with ensuring curriculum delivery. This issue was compounded by the elimination or expanded workload of the music co-ordinator at the DSB level. Finally, additional in-service training in music was not provided at the state-level in Ontario, except in a few very rare and geographical limited circumstances. For the most part, teachers were responsible for pursuing their own in-service training, which was a problem further compounded by their workload.

Teacher workload in Ontario was dramatically increased in the initial years of curricular implementation and assessment. Not only had secondary teachers had their preparation time reduced, but all teachers were struggling to implement new curriculum and assessment practices with little useful training. In both cases, but particularly at the elementary level, teachers were asked to begin implementing curriculum with very little time to review it and, in some cases, without having received the teaching materials with which they were supposed to work. Add to this pressure to raise test scores on EQAO

tested subjects, and it is no surprise that elementary teachers in particular found it difficult to make time to learn and implement curriculum for a subject that many of them did not feel qualified or able to teach in the first place. Similar workload and confidence/ability issues were present in England. In addition, secondary teachers, some of whom had to rely on the accomplishments of their extra-curricular ensembles to develop support for all school music, and sometimes the school itself, found that, ironically, the energy needed to support these activities detracted from their ability to implement and assess curriculum.

Despite these concerns in both states, OFSTED reports showed that teaching facility and comfort level increased in many English schools as the Conservative regime wore on. As discussed above, this was likely attributable to English accountability measures. In Ontario, no such improvement happened.

Parents, Students, and Voting Public

As already mentioned, Conservative neoliberal education reforms in England focused strongly around the conception of parents as *educational consumers*. This discourse was also present in Ontario; however, the concept was framed in distinctly different ways in these two systems. In Ontario, parents were seen as consumers within a service state, whereby they had the right to expect quality education no matter where their children were enrolled, which is unsurprising given that school enrolment was dictated by catchment area. This also reflects the Conservative government's preoccupation with economically competing as a state within the global *knowledge economy*. Although adopting the language of neoliberalism, the rights of *educational consumers* in Ontario were more focused on educational equity than educational equality (although as seen above, equal access to music education did *not* occur in Ontario). This is reflected in the lack of structures and discourse supporting *parental choice* in Ontario.

Conservative neoliberal education reform in England, however, was largely premised on the concept of *parental choice*. Indeed, almost all aspects of reform were related to the government's desire to improve *educational excellence* by facilitating informed *parental choice* within a system of *negative rights*. In this way, England's education system was far more focused on *equality of opportunity* than equity, particularly in its support of the education system as a *meritocracy*. Indeed, in Ontario, a

certificate from any secondary school was treated as equal to a certificate from any other secondary school, but in England, the creation of a quasi-market in education actively pitted schools against each other, prompting parents to seek *certification* (in the form of enrolment in and graduation) from certain schools over others. In certain locations, then, the music program would have served as a “selling” feature for students and parents particularly interested in musical learning and experiences. In others, it might have seemed like a drain on resources need to support learning in other subjects that had discursively been framed by the Conservative government as more “important.”

The English reforms also encouraged *share-ownership* through legislation that put more parents and business owners on school governing bodies. And though Ontario did form parental advisory groups, these bodies were *advisory* only, so members sitting on them would have had far less power than English parents or business owners sitting on a board of governors. Essentially, *parental choice* and *share-ownership* allowed parents and businesses to have far more impact on the nature of schooling in England than in Ontario. The *public-private partnerships* discussed above also reflect the influence of those who were traditionally outside the sphere of state-funded education in England. These, in turn, influenced provision for and learning within English schools. In Ontario, music teachers, who were historically isolated, retained much of their autonomy over music program decisions.

One last group should be considered when examining how music education policy, implementation, and provision were shaped in both states: the role of educationalists and the ways in which they were able to access institutional structures that governed the shaping of music education policy. Work published by men such as Keith Swanwick and Christopher Small, work done by the HMI, curriculum consultation structures, and forums such as the *British Journal of Music Education* reflected a strong tradition of philosophical and pedagogical reflection on the nature of value of music education in England and opportunities to express these ideas. Thus, it is not surprising that, when faced with *Statutory Orders* that generally conflicted with the prevailing educationalist attitudes toward music education in England, educationalists and teachers were able to mount an intense and well-defended argument against the Conservative’s vision for music education. In addition, the debate over the content of the music curriculum

reflected wider debates based on the tension between a progressive, multicultural approach to education and the Conservatives neoconservative emphasis on education reform and so was of interest to the general public as well.

In Ontario, forums for the expression of ideas related to the nature and values of music education were far more limited, including opportunities to consult on the development of the Ontario curriculum and its assessment practices. In addition, the music guidelines published by the Ministry of Education and Training reflected traditional and still prevailing notions of what music education should be in Ontario. If anything, most specialist music teachers and educationalists welcomed the guidelines, as their rigorous and detailed nature emphasized the complexity (and by implication value) of musical learning.

Summary

As was explained in this chapter, music education within the neoliberal education reforms to England's and Ontario's elementary and secondary state-funded systems of education *converged* and *diverged* in a variety of ways. Underpinning reforms in both states were *Market* adjacent concepts of *spontaneous order*, *evolution*, *educational excellence*, *standards*, *centralization of standards*, *knowledge workers*, *core skills*, *core curriculum* and the peripheral concepts of *standardized curriculum and testing*, *high-stakes testing*, *decentralization/devolution*, *managerialism*, and *human capital*. The core concept of *Welfare* was supported by the adjacent concepts of *equality of opportunity*, *personal responsibility*, *negative rights*, and *efficiency* and the peripheral concepts of *reduced social expenditure*, *QUANGOs*, and *knowledge workers* in both states. They also both reflected the core concept of the *Constitution* through adopting the adjacent concepts of *legal responsibility*, and "*rules of just conduct*," as well as the peripheral concepts of *balanced budgets*. Finally, both England and Ontario invoked the core concept of *Property* though the adjacent concepts of *negative justice*, *educational consumers*, *knowledge as commodity* and *accountability* and the peripheral concepts of *accreditation and certification*, *user-fees*, and *fundraising*.

However, by adopting additional adjacent and peripheral concepts of neoliberal education, England considerably diverged from Ontario's conception of neoliberal education in the core concepts of the *Market*, *Welfare*, and *Property*, and this had clear

and very different effects on the nature, implementation, and provision for music education in each country. The Thatcher government was pre-occupied with improving the English economic condition (and thus returning England to the world stage) through creating a *self-interested, entrepreneurial culture* that would pressure schools to raise their *standards* because parents were given a *choice* of where to enroll their children in school. As discussed above, the decision to introduce the peripheral *Market* concept of *school choice* and pair that with a per-pupil funding formula affected almost all other aspects of curricular reform. It also meant that the *Market* adjacent concepts of *individualism, self-interest* and *entrepreneurialism* and peripheral concepts of *share-ownership* were embedded in England's version of neoliberal education. Also added were the *Welfare* peripheral concept of *personal responsibility* and adjacent concepts of *public-private partnerships* in an almost *voucher schools* system. Meanwhile, the *Property* adjacent concept of *knowledge as commodity* and *accountability* became intensified, as did the peripheral concepts of *certification and accreditation*.

To put it rather broadly, England's adoption of additional *Market, Welfare, and Property* concepts made its system of education "more" neoliberal than that of Ontario's. Yet, this study has revealed that music education in England received more public attention and more support from the community in addition to being (overall) better provisioned and more fully implemented and accessible to English students. This is somewhat surprising as, aside from its ability to support certain *core skills*, such as team work and creativity, music as a subject lies far outside what is generally considered the *core curriculum* and *core skills* that support the development of *knowledge workers* in a *knowledge economy*. It was certainly discursively constructed as such in both states. How then, was this possible? The answer appears lie in (1) the tension between central and local control present in neoliberal education reforms and the desire of the Thatcher and Major Conservative governments to support *individualism, personal responsibility, and parental choice* through information supplied from increased *accountability* measures and (2) historical traditions around the structure and provision of music programs combined with neoliberal education support for *public-private partnerships*.

In the first instance, while the Conservative government clearly discursively framed certain subjects as *core curriculum* that supported *core skills*, it put policy in

place that ensured *all* National curriculum subjects, including music, were subject to *accountability* practices. Thus, education administrators at the local level were officially and publically responsible for ensuring that, despite less funding and provision and increased teacher workloads, the music curriculum was implemented and student achievement assessed in English schools in a way that never occurred in Ontario. This despite the fact that Ontario's music curriculum guidelines reflected a far more neoliberal (and even neoconservative) education approach involving *standardized curriculum* and its assessment when compared to their English counterparts. Ontario's *accountability* practices focused solely on *balanced budgets* and achievement in *core curriculum* subjects, thus, when faced with less funding and provision and increased teacher workloads, it is not surprising that the standard of music education in Ontario, despite rigorous new curriculum guidelines and specific assessment and reporting requirements, fell (overall) into decline.

In the second instance, teachers responsible for music in England had, in conjunction with their LEAs, developed a rich and varied "two-tiered" approach to music education that allowed music teachers, and elementary generalist teacher in particular, to teach music with the aid of a variety of local and regional resources. When faced with the decline of the music LEAs, administrators and teachers sought to fill this gap by engaging in the types of *public-private partnership* that were (1) already encouraged and exemplified though the creation of the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative and (2) further supported by the "cottage industry" that *evolved* to fill this perceived market niche. Thus, music education in England became entwined with community resources and needs, making it both an outcome of *spontaneous order* and more cost *efficient*. In contrast, teachers responsible for teaching music education in Ontario had worked and continued to work in increasing isolation due to the closure of the provincial Music Branch and the gradual 1990s withdrawal of DSB music consultants. Having never developed the same "two-tiered" system of music provision and network of support for music education as was developed in England, Ontarian administrators and teachers turned to the more isolated activities of *fundraising* and imposing *user fees* to supplement music education provision. While the approach of both states facilitated a certain amount of inequity in terms of ability to equally provision and implement (and thus give access to)

the music curriculum and non-classroom activities, the inclusion of *public-private partnerships* in England increased both community and business connections with the music program, which in turn helped secure more support and provision.

Benefits of the Study

One of the roles of comparative education is to “mediate the relationships among the foundations of education (e.g., history, philosophy, and sociology) and to challenge [us] to consider the interplay of philosophical, historical, and sociological factors as [we] analyze the educational approaches of other countries.”¹ This study has accomplished this by providing an account and comparison of the ways in which neoliberal education reform and resulting music education policy, implementation, and provision were enacted in and responsive to social, historical, and institutional influences in England under Margaret Thatcher’s and John Major’s Conservative governments (1979-1997) and in Ontario under Mike Harris’ Progressive Conservative government (1995-2003). In addition, by situating the locational levels of comparison at the global and state (i.e., country and province, respectively) and interpreting them through my conceptual map of neoliberal education, it demonstrated how “an international perspective can . . . provoke re-examination of some of our educational concepts (or slogans) like ‘standards,’ ‘discipline,’ indoctrination,’ ‘excellence,’ ‘leadership,’ ‘freedom of choice,’ ‘general culture,’ and so on.”²

As discussed in Chapter One, comparative approaches to music education are still rare in music education, as is policy research. Such research has become much more common in the broader field of education, where education researchers have examined how and to what extent global neoliberal education reform has impacted education reform in developed and developing countries and shaped a particular economic conception of education as the “common sense” outcome of changing global economics. This study presented two accounts of the ways in which history, ideology, and policy intersected in two states to affect education reform and music education policy,

¹ Patricia K. Kobow and Paul R. Fossum, *Comparative Education: Exploring Issues in and International Context*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall), 7.

² Nigel Grant, “Tasks for Comparative Education in the New Millennium,” in “Comparative Education for the Twenty-First Century,” special issue, *Comparative Education* 36, no. 3 (2000): 316.

implementation, and provision. In doing so, it also addressed Betty Hanley's concerns that too much "historical" research on music education does not address the social, cultural, political, and philosophical roots of music education, particularly in Canada.³ Although English educators already *do* have some such accounts,⁴ this is one of the first studies, if not the first, to situate music education policy formation, implementation, and provision specifically within a clearly defined *neoliberal education* conceptual framework. In doing so, this study aligns itself with an area of research that had been ongoing in the broader field of education for quite some time. In addition, as the conceptual framework for neoliberal music education utilized here was developed for this study, it can now serve as an analytical tool for future research on the effects of neoliberal policies in other locations. As discussed in Chapter One, this may be a particularly useful tool for music education policy researchers as *neoliberal education* has been rarely systematically defined, though often referred to and reified, in past research and philosophical writings.

In addition to providing an historical account of music education in two locations, one of which (Ontario) has very little systematic research on the development and outcomes of music education policy under neoliberal education reforms, the comparative element of this study has clarified how specific elements of neoliberal education and policy can converge and diverge across locations. In doing so, it helps those in each state better understand their varieties of *neoliberal education* and how the "history" music education within those states has affected and then been affected by neoliberal education reform. Indeed, as the review of music education research related to such reforms given in Chapter One reveals, such reforms have almost always been framed as harmful to music education. Yet, when comparing reforms in Ontario to those in England, we can see that certain elements of those reforms, such as increased *accountability*, can either positively or negatively affect the status and provision of music education in schools. In

³ Betty Hanley, "The 'Roots' of Canadian Music Education: Expanding our Understanding," in *Critical Perspective in Canadian Music Education*, ed. Carol Beynon and Kari Veblen (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press), 3.

⁴ Stephanie Pitts' *A Century of Music Education: Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Practice in British Secondary School Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) is a particularly good example of this which also covers the 1979-1997 Conservative reform era.

fact, the *private-public partnerships* encouraged by English reforms, while distinctly neoliberal in nature, also helped sustain some programs when other reform elements, such as *reduced public expenditure*, threatened previously established networks of provision and support. And while it seems that neoliberal education reforms do lead to inequities in music education provision and access, in both states it was clear that these inequities were also very much in place *before* neoliberal reforms. This is not to say that neoliberal education reform is “good” for music education, but that, by comparing varieties of neoliberal education reform, we reach a more sophisticated understanding of how those reforms differ from location to location, and thus avoid the pitfall of reification.

Finally, in addition to contributing to the small—but slowly growing—field of music education *policy* research, this study contributes to the even smaller field of music education *comparative* research. As shown in the last paragraph, such studies have the ability to both broaden and deepen our understanding of the ways in which music education is conceived of and enacted outside of our own systems of music education and, in doing so, allows us to better understand our own. Given the potential value of such research, it is hoped that more researchers will begin to undertake comparative work in music education. Chapter Two provides an overview of the history and methodological approaches to music education. In addition, it suggests the Bray and Thomas cube as a starting point for selecting units of analysis in comparative education research. As such, this study can be used as a source of information for music education researchers who wish to undertake comparative research in the future.

Study Limitations

This study was limited by the selection of countries and states/province as a unit of analysis. As Bray and Thomas noted, such a macro-level approach can result in “broad generalizations” that “obscure the features that distinguish one region, school, or pupil from another.”⁵ The inequities to provision and access to music education in both states have been noted above, but they have not been documented in any systematic matter, and,

⁵ Mark Bray and R. Murray Thomas, “Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analysis,” *Harvard Educational Review* 65, no. 3 (1995): 474.

undoubtedly, music education flourished in some Ontarian schools while it generally declined across the province. In addition, given the autonomy teachers historically possessed, and in large part retained, to make decisions in relation to curriculum implementation (or even whether or not to implement it, in the case of Ontario) it should be noted that there were almost certainly music programs in England that did not conform to the more progressive, student-centered, participatory approach that gained acceptance throughout the 1980s and that ultimately underpinned the music *Statutory Orders*. It is likewise almost certainly true that, in Ontario, Western-centric performance was not the focus of every music program. Not all LEAs in England would have discontinued their Music Support Services, just as not all schools in England would have formed *public-private partnerships* in order to facilitate music education provision, while some schools in Ontario likely did. A macro-level approach to comparative education, however, is meant to provide an “initial basis for understanding an interpretation” and to provide “general framework” for future micro-level research by identifying broader influences within systems of education, such as “economic considerations, political structures, cultural traditions and forms of educational organization and administration.”⁶ Thus, this study reflects both the strengths and weaknesses of a macro-level comparative analysis.

By employing the conceptual map of *neoliberal education* as a frame for analysis, and situating the study within a radical functionalist lens, this study has been limited in its conception and discussion of effective curricular implementation, teaching, and student achievement. That is, “effectiveness” was viewed largely through the lens of the accountability procedures put in place as part of each state’s neoliberal education reform. Taking this approach allowed for an analysis of how well each system supported its conception of and policies related to music education through funding and other provisions. However, what these states might view as “effective” curriculum implementation, teaching, and achievement are arbitrary. They are not the result or a reflection of “common sense,” but of policy which reflects “the exercise of political power and the languages that is used to legitimize it.”⁷ As such, neither state’s music

⁶ Ibid., 487.

⁷ John A. Codd, “The Construction and Deconstruction of Educational Policy Documents,” *Journal of Education Policy* 3, no.3 (1988): 235.

education policies should be viewed as “better” or “more appropriate” than the other approaches to these concepts, nor should they be accepted as the best policies for each state and its citizens.

Finally, this study was limited through the decision to end the period of analysis at the end of each political regime. Thus, it does not consider some of the long-term impacts of the events and outcomes described herein.

Study Implications

This study presented a broad, macro-level overview of the interaction and outcomes of neoliberal education policy review and music education in two states. It made clear that, even though neoliberal education reforms derived from globally adopted economic neoliberalism and thus have hegemonic tendencies, each system of education represents a “variety” of neoliberalism and neoliberal education that has developed in response to each state’s unique history, cultural attitudes, and economic and institutional structures. In doing so, it implies that future research in music education that is framed around the concept of *neoliberal education* and its reforms takes a more nuanced approach that considers the influence of location on the development of educational policy, structures, and implementation.

Even within the broad framework utilized in this study, it was clear that particular actors played significant roles in the health and status of local school music programs. In the public sphere, the actions and involvement of music educationalists in the debate over the nature and content of England’s music *Statutory Orders* underscore the importance of our engagement with the democratic process of government and policy making⁸ as well as the need for the public to insist upon open and transparent consultation processes in relation to education and music education policy making and reform. Contrary to past reifications of *neoliberal education*, democratic processes and civic engagement *can* make a difference in the nature and structure of music education policy and their outcomes. The English case also reveals how a subject that is historically considered a “frill” can become “important” within a state’s and public’s conception of education

⁸ Paul Woodford, *Democracy in Music Education: Liberalism, Ethics, and the Politics of Practice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 6-7.

when it is connected to and reflective of current cultural practices, concerns, and debates. This calls into question some music education practices, such as those in Ontario, that rely on historically Western-centric performance models that operate in isolation from the values and goals of the broader musical communities and societies in which they are situated.

The importance of local agency, in the form of administrative and teacher support and dedication to music in state-funded systems of education, was also implied in this study, thus reinforcing historical research finding the development and inconsistency of music education was partly—and continued to be—partly attributable to these individuals. Overall, we must not discount the role of agency when we consider the nature and effect of neoliberal education reforms.

Suggestions for Future Research

At the macro-level, additional research could be carried out that expands on the type of work conducted in this study. This would allow for further comparison of and insight into the “varieties” of neoliberal education in other states and how those varieties shaped music education policy, implementation, and provision while also being influenced by and responsive to socio-historical context within the state. Such further comparison can only increase our understanding of the nature and significance of our own and others’ experiences with music education under neoliberal regimes.

In order for us to effectively engage in debate about the structure and nature of music education policy, more research is needed that documents exactly how policy is made and enacted at central, mid-, and local levels and the ways in which its implementation is supported or thwarted. To this end, further micro-level research is needed that explores the agency of actors at the local level in response to reforms meant to *standardize* music education policy and its implementation within a system of education. Future research could also move from this study’s own radical functionalist lens into a more humanist or radical humanist lens in order to examine music education policy and provision in relation to particular demographics within an educational system. In doing so, research could be generated that documents specific cases of and reasons for

inequities in provision or access either in specific locations or among certain demographics.

Finally, research could be conducted that documents the ways in which music education policy is positioned as an outgrowth of the “common sense” approach to education that is present in central government rationales supporting neoliberal education reforms. Such research would expose “taken for granted” policy assumptions about the nature and value of music education and call into question whether arbitrarily conceived of music education policy and implementation schemes reflect or subvert the thoughts and practices of individuals, such as teachers and researchers, who are concurrently engaged in reflection on the nature, values, and structure of music education within a society.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Actions and Legislation Affecting Education Reform In England from 1979-1990

June 1970- March 1974	Margaret Thatcher serves as Education Secretary
June, 1976	Prime Minister James Callaghan's "Ruskin Speech"
May 3, 1979	National Election. Labour government is defeated. Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister at the head of a majority Conservative government.
May 1979	Mark Carlisle appointed Education Secretary
April 3, 1980	Education Act 1980 ascends.
1981	Department of Education and Science informs LEAs that they must have a curriculum policy
1982	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative announced
Sept. 1982	Sir Keith Joseph appointed Education Secretary
1985	<i>Better Schools</i> White Paper published
1986	City Technology Centres are announced
May 1986	Kenneth Baker appointed Education Secretary
Nov. 7, 1986	Education (no. 2) Act ascends.
May 1987	Margaret Thatcher tells the <i>Daily Mail</i> that there will be a "revolution in the running of the schools.
May 1987	Funding for Grant Maintained Schools announced (per capita basis)
July 1987	Task Group on Assessment and Testing created
Sept. 1987	First City Technology Centre opens
Nov. 1987	First National Curriculum consultation document released (Mathematics)
Dec. 24, 1987	Task Group on Assessment and Testing delivers its first report on a possible national curriculum scheme
June 1988	TGAT assessment proposals supported in the House of Commons

July 29, 1988	Education Reform Act 1988 ascends. National Curriculum Council and Schools Examinations Council created
1988	General Certificate in Secondary Education (developed in 1986) replaces Certificate of Secondary Education and General Certificate of Education
July 29, 1988	Education Reform Act ascends
July 1989	John MacGregor appointed Education Secretary
Sept. 1989	National Curriculum for mathematics and science introduced for 5 year olds
Nov. 28, 1990	John Major (Conservative) succeeds Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister
Nov. 1990	Kenneth Clark appointed Education Secretary
Jan. 1991	English, science, and mathematics become only national assessed subjects for students in years 14-16; modern languages and technology credits still required, but other foundation subjects become electives
July 1991	David Pascall, senior British Petroleum manager, is appointed of the National Curriculum Council; Brian Griffiths, chair of the Centre for Policy Studies is appointed head of the SEAC.
1991	National Assessment for Key Stage 3 begins
April 1992	John Patten appointed Education Secretary
1992	Education (Schools) Act 1992 ascends. Office for Standards in Education established.
1992	Music National Curriculum introduced in Years 1, 3, and 7
1993	Teachers begin boycotting national assessment orders to protest increased workload
Nov. 1993	Dearing Review Published
Oct. 1993	Education Act 1993 Ascends. National Curriculum Council and School Examinations Council merged into the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
1993	Education Act 1993 ascends. Procedure for applying for GMS and change of character streamlined
1994	Education Act 1994 Ascends. Teacher Training Agency created

- July 1995 Gillian Shephard appointed Education Secretary. Department for Education and Science renamed Department of Education and Employment
- 1995 Revised Music National Curriculum
- 1995 School Curriculum and Assessment Authority report suggests 62 recommendations for assessment reform based on Dearing Report
- 1995 First national assessment tests administered for Key Stage 2.
- May 1, 1997 General election. Conservative Party replaced by Labour Party.

Appendix B: Contents and Elements of Legislation Affecting Education
Reform in England, 1979-1997

Act	Date of Royal Assent	Comments and Elements of Legislation Affecting Education
Education Act 1980	April 3, 1980	<p>Required LEAs to accommodate parental choice of school as long as the necessary resources were available and the student was compatible with the character and/or selection process of the school.</p> <p>Required a formal LEA appeal process in case of students denied entry to a particular school.</p> <p>Made the admissions process more transparent through the publication of admission processes and yearly intended and actual admissions numbers.</p> <p>Gave power to the Education Secretary to approve, deny, or modify plans to close or change the character of LEA schools based on required proposals for change submitted both to the Secretary and to the public.</p> <p>Introduced the Assisted Places Scheme.</p> <p>Gave the Education Secretary the power to require teachers to possess certain qualifications, determine the length of school day, and restrict or prohibit LEA teachers due to misconduct.</p> <p>Required LEAs accepting students from outside of their catchment area to be reimbursed by the student's home authority.</p>
Education (Grants and Awards) Act 1984	April 12, 1984	<p>Allowed the Secretary of State to give grants to LEAs. Secretary of State must approve the LEAs budget and the LEA may not go over budget by more than .5 per cent.</p>
Education (Amendment) Act 1986	Feb. 17, 1986	<p>Raised the approved grant amount for which a LEA could go over budget to 1%.</p>

Education (No. 2) Act 1986	Nov. 7, 1986	<p>Required LEAs school's governing body and head teacher to agree on the school's constitution and allowed the Education Secretary to supersede the LEAs in regard to the governing body of a school's wishes to change its constitution or to alter a constitution as he saw fit.</p> <p>Encouraged the appointment of members of the business community as school governors. Gave the Secretary of Education the power to determine who is not qualified to be a school governor.</p> <p>Emphasized the role of the local governing body and head teacher in promoting and maintaining a clear standard for student behaviour and discipline procedures.</p> <p>Required LEAs to set an itemized financial agenda for maintaining the local schools and to give a lump sum for physical resources.</p> <p>Mandated a yearly governor's report to parents, including names of governors and who appointed them, as well as a yearly meeting to discuss said report and allowing parents to vote on resolutions that must be considered by the local governors, headmaster and LEA.</p> <p>Upheld LEA responsibility for appointment and dismissal of staff, although a headmaster must be recommended by local school panel. Gave the Education Secretary the right to set regulations regarding the LEA's appraisal of teacher performance. Gave the Education Secretary the right to provide grants for teacher training and others involved in education, provided the training meet his approval and conditions.</p> <p>Forbade political indoctrination and stated school must present a balance view on political topics, yet stated that sex education, "is given in such a manner as to encourage those pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life."</p> <p>Gave the Education Secretary the power to approve a controlled school's switch to an aided school (i.e., to opt-out of a LEA). No longer required the Education Secretary to make a yearly report to parliament.</p>
Education Reform Act	July 29, 1988	Mandated the development and implementation of a National Curriculum with "core" and "foundation" subjects.

1988		<p>Created the School Examinations and Assessment Council.</p> <p>Introduced “standard numbers” for enrollment which must be met. I</p> <p>Introduced a “per pupil” funding model.</p> <p>Introduced Grant Maintained schools and procedure for opting out of local education authority.</p> <p>Formalized City Technology Centres.</p>
Education Act 1992		<p>Created the Office for Standards in Education, which effectively replaced Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education</p>
Education Act 1993		<p>Created the Funding Agency for Schools.</p> <p>Reduced restrictions on schools wishing to opt out of LEAs and become Grant Maintained Schools.</p> <p>Merged the National Curriculum Council and School Examinations and Assessment Council into the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.</p> <p>Introduced punitive measures for schools failing OFSTED inspections.</p> <p>Reduced requirements for GMS status and compelled schools governors to raise the question of LEA opt-out annually.</p> <p>Allowed the Secretary of Education to appoint governors to GMS schools if schools failed to carry out their responsibilities.</p>
Education Act 1994		<p>Created the Teacher Training Agency and introduced a funding program for teacher education. Gave greater role to schools in training teachers.</p>
Education Act 1996		<p>Allowed schools to borrow money from the private sector for capital projects</p>

Appendix C: 1992 English National Curriculum Key Stage 1 Attainment Targets, Programmes of Study, and Examples¹

Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing (the development of the ability to perform and compose with understanding)

End of Stage Key Statements	Programme of Study	Examples
By the end of key stage 1, pupils should be able to:	Pupils should:	Pupils could:
a) Perform simple rhythmic and melodic patterns by ear and from symbols	i) memorise and internalise short musical patterns and simple song, and imitate and recall simple rhythms and melodies.	sing a familiar song, staying silent during a phrase within it; echo short rhythm patterns clapped by the teacher
	ii) read simple signs and symbols and perform from them	perform a simple rhythmic pattern
b) Sing in a group and play simple instruments, demonstrating some control of sounds made	iii) sing a variety of simple unison song with some control of breathing, dynamics, and pitch	sing traditional and modern folk songs; find the same note when singing with others; decide when to breathe to make sense of a phrase
	iv) develop the technical skills needed to control the sounds of a range of tuned and untuned instruments, through playing simple pieces and accompaniments	play an untuned instrument indicating the pulse; play a drone, single chords or simple ostinato; hold a violin/recorder properly
	v) practice and rehearse, responding to direction	practices and perform a percussion part, changing level of loudness as directed

¹ Source: Department of Education and Science, *Music in the National Curriculum*. (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1992): 4-5.

	vi) share their music-making, presenting their performances effectively to different audiences, for different purposes, and in a number of places with different acoustics	sing with clear diction; balance dynamics of vocal and instrumental parts; perform in the class to each other, in the hall for assembly, in the playground
	vii) take part in simple vocal and instrumental improvisations, compositions, and arrangements	make up simple percussion part to a song; play musical 'question and answer' games
c) investigate, choose and combine sounds to produce simple compositions	viii) explore and use a range of sound sources including their voices, bodies sounds from the environment and instruments, tuned and untuned	explore sounds made by classroom instruments and discover how many different quiet sounds each can make; explore the sounds the voice can make
	ix) create, select and organize sounds in response to different stimuli	tell a story in sound with different groups describing different episodes; create a piece in response to poetry, a picture, a story, a mood, or personal experience
d) record their own compositions and communicate them to others	x) communicate simple musical ideas	create a musical pattern to match a movement pattern and teach it to another child
	xi) use and understand simple signs and symbols for musical sounds when composing	write a simple graphic score for a piece they have composed
	xii) record their own composition	invent a repeated pattern and notate it, or use a cassette player to record it

Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising (The development of ability to listen and appraise music, including knowledge of musical history, our diverse musical heritage, and a variety of musical traditions)

End of Stage Key Statements	Programme of Study	Examples
<p>By the end of key stage 1, pupils should be able to:</p> <p>a) listen attentively and respond to short pieces of music from different times and cultures and in different styles, showing an awareness of difference and similarities</p>	<p>Pupils should:</p> <p>i) learn to listen with care and concentration to their own and others' music, and to make broad distinctions within the main musical elements of:</p> <p>pitch—high/low duration—pulse; rhythm; long/short pace—fast/slow timbre—quality of sound texture—one sound/several sounds dynamics—loud/quiet structure—pattern; phrasing; repetition/contrast silence</p> <p>ii) listen to, discover, make, compare and talk about everyday sounds of all kinds</p> <p>iii) respond to the musical elements, character and mood of a piece of music, by means of movement, dance, or other forms of expression</p>	<p>Pupils could:</p> <p>identify which instrument is being played from its sound only; consider the sounds they have made and what would be the effect if they were played aster/higher/quieter</p> <p>identify sounds heard outside the classroom and describe them using a musical vocabulary</p> <p>sway, jump, skip to music and stop for silence; move to the pulse of music or use colours and shapes to describe the mood of a piece of music</p>

<p>b) talk in simple but appropriate terms about sounds and music they have made, listened to, performed or composed.</p>	<p>iv) listen to and talk about a variety of live and recorded music exhibiting contrasts of style, including works by well-known composers and performers as well as their own and others' compositions and improvisations.</p>	<p>listen to the 'Surprise' Symphony by Haydn or 'The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra' by Britten, and tell or show others what it made them feel or think; discuss how music composed for different celebrations and festivals creates appropriate moods; listen to and talk about pieces of music by Tchaikovsky, Mozart and Stravinsky.</p>
	<p>v) discuss how sounds and rhythms are used in music to achieve particular effects, and learn to recognise some different characteristics in music from different times and places.</p>	<p>discuss how sounds are used to describe the different animals in Saint Saens "Carnival of Animals"; discover what music members of their family sang and listened to when they were younger, and discuss any common features; sing folk songs from different parts of the world and discuss their similarities and differences.</p>

Appendix D: Actions and Legislation Affecting Education Reform in Ontario from 1995-2003

- 1994 *The Common Sense Revolution* is published
- Feb. 1995 The NDP commissions the Sweeny Task Force to review and suggest a school board amalgamation structure. Report is due Dec. 31, 1995
- Spring, 1995 The NDP commissions the Education Quality and Accountability Office
- June 8, 1995 Ontario Provincial Election. NDP government defeated. Mike Harris is elected premier of the newly governing majority Progressive Conservative party
- June 1995 John Snobelen appointed Minister of Education. Snobelen encourages EQAO and Sweeny Task Force to continue their work
- July 6, 1995 Minister of Education John Snobelen states that the government must “create crisis” in education during his “Caterpillar Speech”
- Nov. 29, 1995 Bill 26 *Savings and Restructuring Act* passed
- Nov. 1995 Minister of Finance Ernie Eves announces that operating grants for public schools will be reduced by \$400 million for the period of Sept. to Dec. 1996 (an annual reduction of almost \$1 billion, or 22.7 percent)
- Oct. 1995 Premier’s office announces an immediate cut of \$32 million in operating grants to the public school boards
- Dec. 1995 Announcement that Junior Kindergarten would become optional
- Nov. 1995 Snobelen announces that the fifth year of high school will be eliminated beginning with students who enter high school in 1997. This is later changed to 1998 in July of 1996, and then again to 1999 in 1997.
- Jan. 1996 Snobelen announces a “tool kit” to help boards adjust to cuts in funding
- Jan. 26 1996 Bill 26 *Savings and Restructuring Act* passed
- Feb. 1996 Sweeny Task Force Report on school board amalgamation submitted. Suggests both large scale amalgamation and school finance reform
- April 1996 First Ministry of Education and Training Business Plan published (1996-1997). Plans continue to be released annually.

- June 27, 1996 Bill 30 *Education Quality and Accountability and Act* passed; Bill 31 *Ontario College of Teacher's Act* passed; Bill 34 *Education Amendment Act* passed (removal of Junior Kindergarten and school boards can enter into cost-savings agreements)
- Sept. 1996 School boards across Ontario announce massive teacher layoffs and raise local property taxes in order to offset the effects of budget reductions.
- Jan. 13-17/97 "MegaWeek" announcements, including Bill 104 Changes to the structure of education financing and board structure are announced first to "pave the way" for other announcements regarding the uploading and downloading of various social services to/from the municipalities in order to support complete provincial government financing of public education.
- Feb. 6, 1997 Bill 100 *School Class Sizes Act* passed
- Spring, 1997 First literacy and math assessments carried out on Grades 3 and 6
- Apr. 24, 1997 Bill 104 *Fewer School Boards Act* passed
- May 1997 New funding model is released
- June 1997 Provincial government announces it will only finance half of public education expenditures, but will set the limit on municipal education taxation and collect those taxes from the municipalities and redistribute amongst the school boards.
- June 1997 New for Elementary language and mathematics curriculum documents released
- Sept. 22, 1997 Bill 160 *The Education Quality Improvement Act* introduced
- Oct. 10, 1997 Bill 136 *Public Sector Transition Stability Act* passed. John Snobelen transferred out of Education and Training Ministry. David Johnston becomes the new Minister of Education and Training
- Oct. 28-
Nov. 7, 1997 All public school teachers stop teaching in labour protest
- Dec. 1, 1997 Bill 160 *Education Quality Improvement Act* passed
- "Early" 1998 Work begins on writing the new high school curriculum
- March 1998 New Elementary combined science and technology curriculum document released. Dollar amounts for foundation grants per student announced

- May 14, 1998 Bill 24 *Technology for the Classroom Tax Credits Act* passed
- 1998/99 Many school boards and unions declare work-to-rule, various board strikes and lockouts while teach contracts are re-negotiated and in response to rules and regulations set by the province regarding prep time and teaching time
- Sept. 1998 New Elementary curriculum in the Arts, Physical Education, etc., released
- Sept. 1998 Standard report card is implemented across Ontario
- Sept. 28, 1998 Bill 62 *Back to School Act* passed
- June 3, 1999 Provincial election. Progressive Conservative Party is re-elected; Janet Ecker appointed Minister of Education and Training
- Summer 1999 New Grade 9 curriculum documents released
- May 2000 Government announces development of a “teacher testing plan”
- June 24, 2000 Bill 74 *Education Accountability Act* passed
- June 29, 2001 Bill 80 *Stability and Excellence in Education Act* passed (teacher recertification)
- Fall 2001 Grade 10 Literacy Test piloted in some Ontario classrooms
- Dec. 12, 2001 Bill 110 *Quality in the Classroom Act* passed (teacher certification test and evaluation of teacher’s classroom teaching and lesson planning skills)
- March 23, Ernie Eves becomes Premier of Ontario after Mike Harris retires from the 2002 position
- Apr. 2002 Elizabeth Witmer appointed Minister of Education and Training
- June 2002 To protest the funding formula and level of funding for public education, the Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton District School Boards (representing 20% of Ontario’s students) intentionally break the law and submit deficit budgets to the Ministry of Education and Training. The Ministry appoints an independent auditor to review each board’s finances and then takes control of each board’s finances when they refuse to act on the auditor’s suggestions and balance their budgets. Board trustees lose all authority to make decisions.
- August 2002 Government commissions the Education Equality Task Force to review its education funding formula (The Rozanski Report)
- Fall 2002 Grade 10 Literacy Test fully implemented across Ontario

- Dec 2002 *Investing in Public Education: Advancing the Goal of Continuous Improvement in Student Learning and Achievement* (The Rozanski Report) released. Report suggests 1.8 million dollars be put back into the public education system
- June 26, 2003 Bill 53 *The Right Choices for Equity in Education Act* passed
- Oct 2, 2003 Ontario general election. Mike Harris's majority Progressive Conservative Government is replaced by Dalton McGuinty's majority Liberal Government.

Appendix E: Contents and Elements of Legislation Affecting Education Reform in Ontario, 1995-2003

Act	Date of Royal Assent	Contents and elements of Legislation affecting Education
<i>Bill 26 Savings And Restructuring Act</i>	Jan. 30, 1996	Though this bill did not directly address education, it did give the province the authority to amalgamate cities and towns in the province. It also restructured various other taxation and funding practices of provincial and municipal social services in order to create legal framework for other financial changes the PCs intended to implement, including those to education.
<i>Bill 30 Education Quality and Accountability Act</i>	June 27, 1996	Established the EQAO as a Crown Agency with directors appointed by the sitting government
<i>Bill 31 Ontario College of Teachers Act</i>	June 27, 1996	Established the Ontario College of Teachers as the professional regulatory body for public school teachers in Ontario with a combined elected and appointed governing body. OCT must meet annually with the Minister of Education and Training. The Minister has the power to order the OCT to “do anything that is necessary or advisable to carry out the intention of this Act.”
<i>Bill 34 Education Amendment Act</i>	June 27, 1996	Removed the requirement for school boards to offer Junior Kindergarten School boards permitted to enter into cost-savings agreements with other boards and areas of the public sector, such as health care and colleges
<i>Bill 104 Fewer School Boards Act</i>	April 24, 1997	Reduced school boards from 129 to 72, creating “District School Boards” Created distinct separate (i.e., Catholic) and French school boards Reduced school trustees from 1900 to 700. Capped trustee salary at \$500 Created the Education Improvement Committee, appointed by the government, to oversee the transition to the District School Board system Limited the ability of existing boards to incur further debt during 1997

Bill 100 <i>School Class Sizes Act</i>	Feb. 6, 1997	Limited class sizes for elementary and secondary schools
Bill 124 <i>Education Amendment Act</i>	Feb. 11, 1997	Allowed children who refuse to attend or are habitually absent from school to be found guilty of an offence upon review of the issues surrounding the absences
Bill 136 <i>Public Sector Transition Stability Act</i>	Oct. 10, 1997	Though not specifically addressing education, this Bill was introduced and passed to “ensure the expeditious resolution of disputes during collective bargaining.” It was meant to facilitate upcoming processes of amalgamation and restructuring of Ontario’s social services
Bill 160 <i>Education Quality Improvement Act</i>	Dec. 8, 1997	<p>Gave complete control of education revenue to the provincial government</p> <p>Required school boards to publish an annual “financial report card”</p> <p>Allowed Ministry to temporarily take over school finances if school boards ran a deficit or did not submit a balanced budget</p> <p>Legislated the same base amount of funding per pupil</p> <p>Led to definitions of “classroom” and “non-classroom” spending</p> <p>Removed principals and vice-principals from the teachers’ unions</p> <p>Legislated a mandatory average class size of twenty-five pupils in elementary and twenty-two in secondary classes</p> <p>Reduced number of teacher professional days</p> <p>Removed certain bargaining units from the unions (e.g. teacher prep time, length of school year)</p>
Bill 62 <i>Back to School Act</i>	Sept. 28, 1998	<p>Made teacher strikes and school board lock outs illegal</p> <p>Appointed mediators to resolve collective bargaining issues</p>
Bill 74 <i>Education Accountability Act</i>	June 23, 2001	<p>Gave the Ministry and principals the right to assign “instructional activities” (i.e., non paid teaching duties such as coaching and music extracurricular activities) to students</p> <p>Forbade boards to exceed an average class size of 24.5 elementary and 21 high school students</p>

		<p>Regulated minimum average teaching time for secondary teachers</p> <p>Gave the Ministry the right to investigate school board practices if it believed boards contradicted or <i>might</i> contradict accountability practices</p> <p>Gave the Ministry the right to take over running the board if the board was found to violate government accountability policies</p>
Bill 80 <i>Stability and Excellence in Education Act</i>	June 29, 2001	<p>Required teacher certification every 5 years</p> <p>Required teachers to participate in a set number certified professional development courses</p> <p>Gave the OCT responsibility for approving of PD course and monitoring teacher recertification and PDP plans</p>
Bill 110 <i>Quality in the Classroom Act</i>	Dec. 12, 2001	<p>Mandated that teachers could not receive OCT certification until they had passed a qualifying test.</p> <p>Required boards to review regularly teacher's learning/lesson plans, using Ministry forms</p> <p>Required boards to review teachers' performance quality every three years</p> <p>Allowed parent and pupil input of teacher performance to be taken into teacher reviews</p> <p>Allow the Minister to set guidelines for teacher performance</p> <p>Included steps to be taken in the case of an unsatisfactory performance appraisal</p>
Bill 53 <i>The Right Choices for Equity in Education Act</i>	June 26, 2003	<p>Provide income-tax credit for parents enrolling their children in private schools</p>

Appendix F: 1998 Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Music Curriculum Guidelines¹

Overall Expectations

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of music specified for this through listening to, performing, and creating music;
- recognize a variety of sound sources and use some in performing and creating music;
- use correctly the vocabulary and musical terminology associated with the specific expectations for this grade;
- identify and perform music from various cultures and historical periods;
- communicate their response to music in ways appropriate for this grade (e.g., through visual arts, drama, creative movement, language).

Specific Expectations

Knowledge of Elements

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- identify examples of beat in their environment and in music (e.g., ticking of clocks, steady pulse in rhymes or songs);
- identify rhythmic patterns (e.g., clap the pattern of syllables in nursery rhymes);
- distinguish between beat and rhythm in a variety of pieces of music;
- identify higher- and lower-pitched sounds in a familiar melody;
- reproduce specific pitches in call-and response activities (e.g., singing games);
- identify examples of dynamics in pieces of music and describe how the loudness and softness are achieved (e.g., loudness results when a drum is struck with more force);
- identify the tempo of various pieces of music;
- identify the four families of orchestral instruments (strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion).

¹ Source: Ministry of Education and Training: *The Ontario Curriculum: Grades 1-8, The Arts* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1998): 14-15.

Creative Work

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- sing music from a variety of cultures and historical periods (e.g., folk songs);
- create rhythmic and melodic patterns (e.g., ostinati), using a variety of sounds (e.g., vocal and instrumental sounds);
- create simple patterned movement to familiar music, using their knowledge of beat and rhythm;
- sing simple, familiar songs in tune in unison;
- sing expressively, showing an understanding of the text;
- accompany songs in an expressive way, using appropriate rhythm instruments, body percussion, or “found” instruments;
- create and perform musical compositions, applying their knowledge of the elements of music and patterns of sound;
- create short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources;
- produce a specific effect (e.g., create a soundscape as background for a story or poem), using various sound sources (e.g., the voice, the body, instruments).

Critical Thinking

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- express their response to music from a variety of cultures and historical periods (e.g., “Largo al factotum della città” from *The Barber of Seville* by Rossini, “Lunatic Menu” by Ippu Do);
- communicate their thoughts and feelings about the music they hear, using language and a variety of art forms and media (e.g., create a dance, dramatize a song);
- recognize that mood can be created through music (e.g., in a work such as *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns);
- explain, using basic musical terminology, their preference for specific songs or pieces of music;
- recognize and explain the effects of different musical choices (e.g., slow music that is loud can be dramatic or ceremonial whereas slow music that is soft can suggest thoughtfulness).

Appendix G: Ontario Achievement Chart for Grades 11 and 12 Arts Curriculum Guidelines¹

	50-59% (Level 1)	60-69% (Level 2)	70-79% (Level 3)	80-100% (Level 4)
Categories	The student:			
Knowledge/Understanding – knowledge of facts and terms – understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories – understanding of relationships between concepts	– demonstrates limited knowledge of facts and terms – demonstrates limited understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories – demonstrates limited understanding of relationships between concepts	– demonstrates some knowledge of facts and terms – demonstrates some understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories – demonstrates some understanding of relationships between concepts	– demonstrates considerable knowledge of facts and terms – demonstrates considerable understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories – demonstrates considerable understanding of relationships between concepts	– demonstrates thorough knowledge of facts and terms – demonstrates thorough and insightful understanding of concepts, elements, principles, and theories – demonstrates thorough and insightful understanding of relationships between concepts
Thinking/Inquiry – critical analysis (e.g., analysing aesthetic	– uses critical analysis with limited clarity and effectiveness	– uses critical analysis with moderate clarity and effectiveness	– uses critical analysis with considerable clarity and effectiveness	– uses critical analysis with a high degree of clarity and effectiveness

¹ Source: Ministry of Education and Training, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11 to 12: The Arts*. (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2000): 93-94.

<p>components)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – creative thinking skills(e.g., fluency, flexibility, divergent thinking) – making connections (e.g., between the arts and personal experiences, among the arts, and between the arts and the world outside the school) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses creative thinking skills with limited effectiveness – makes connections with limited effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses creative thinking skills with moderate effectiveness – makes connections with moderate effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses creative thinking skills with considerable effectiveness – makes connections with considerable effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses creative thinking skills with a high degree of effectiveness – makes connections with a high degree of effectiveness
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communication and expression of ideas and information for different audiences and purposes – use of artistic language and symbols – use of various forms of communication relevant to the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communicates and expresses ideas and information for different audiences and purposes with limited clarity – uses artistic language and symbols with limited accuracy and effectiveness – demonstrates limited command of the various forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communicates and expresses ideas and information for different audiences and purposes with moderate clarity – uses artistic language and symbols with some accuracy and effectiveness – demonstrates moderate command of the various forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communicates and expresses ideas and information for different audiences and purposes with considerable clarity – uses artistic language and symbols with considerable accuracy and effectiveness – demonstrates considerable command of the various forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –communicates and expresses ideas and information for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of clarity – uses artistic language and symbols with a high degree of accuracy and effectiveness – demonstrates extensive command of the various forms

<p>Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts – transfer of knowledge and skills to new contexts – use of equipment, materials, and technology – application of the creative process (e.g., striving for originality, exploring alternative approaches) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness – transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness – uses equipment, materials, and technology safely and correctly only with supervision – applies the creative process with limited effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with moderate effectiveness – transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with moderate effectiveness – uses equipment, materials, and technology safely and correctly with some supervision – applies the creative process with some effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness – transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness – uses equipment, materials, and technology safely and correctly – applies the creative process with considerable effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness – transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness – demonstrates and promotes the safe and correct use of equipment, materials, and technology – applies the creative process with a high degree of effectiveness, and with confidence
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Curriculum Vitae

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Horsley, Stephanie. "The Politics of Public Accountability: Implications for centralized Music Education policy Development and Implementation." *Arts Education Policy Review* 100, no. 4 (2009): 6-12.

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