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Editorial

Elizabeth Rata

This issue of *Pacific-Asian Education* begins with a new section, 'Commentary and Debate'. Michael Young, Consulting Editor to the journal and a leading sociologist of education since the 1970s, has kindly agreed to open the section with a provocative piece that directly addresses the key issue in the sociology of education. This is, how is it that national education systems in democratic countries continue to reflect society's inequalities when the aim of universal education was to provide the means for greater equality? In the first half of the twentieth century, the answer was seen to lie in increasing participation in education, especially by expanding access to secondary schooling. The first two decades after World War Two saw the emphasis shift to university provision and to better resourcing for working class schools. By the 1970s, the 'more is better' approach was undermined by a profound disillusionment with education's political potential. Many sociologists of education turned their attention to ask about the role that schools were playing in reproducing inequality and to doubt whether education could contribute to greater equality. The problem was traced to the fundamental paradox of modern nations; democratic politics promotes equality but the capitalist economy creates inequality. Was there a way forward?

Since the 1970s several trends have emerged that have become orthodoxies in education. One is the focus on pedagogy, especially the child-centred approaches that go by various names: progressivism, and in recent years, constructivism. Another is what I refer to very generally as localisation (Rata, 2012). This is the idea that children are best educated *within* their localised groups (usually defined in ethnic, religious terms, or very broadly as 'cultures'). Localisation can be seen in the cultural-based approaches described in the articles in Volume 23, No. 2 of this journal; the articles that prompted Professor Young to ask "what does it mean to say that educational research is about social justice". Localisation approaches are committed to equality and cultural-based education is seen as the best way to achieve this aim. It has meant a shift away from the idea of universal knowledge; away from the idea that there is knowledge that should be available to all children no matter where they live and to what ethnic or religious group they belong. This is where Michael Young's challenge begins.

With reference to the articles in that issue, he asks us to think about the central role that knowledge has in education and the links between access to 'powerful knowledge' and social justice. In doing so, he gives a poignant account of his own role in casting doubts on the central place of knowledge with his research in the 1970s. Today he looks at those ideas differently, rejecting the idea that knowledge is always in some group's interests for a view of knowledge that regards it as capable of being objective

and universal. This is the knowledge that he argues all children should have access to if education is to serve the wider values of social justice. So while the ideal of equality and social justice still drives his commitment to education, he now holds very different ideas about how education can contribute to those ideals. In a direct challenge to the cultural approach to education he says, "One thing has changed for me, and that is that I have learned that while educational progress is achieved by applying the idea of equality to access to knowledge but not to knowledge itself, there are not different knowledges for different learners".

I encourage readers to respond to Professor Young's challenge and to engage with the ideas in the pages of this journal in the next issues. Such a debate will give life not only to the discipline but also to this journal. It is through constant engagement with the ideas of the discipline within which we are broadly based that we can argue for our scholarly integrity. Importantly, that engagement must draw on the discipline's research. The purpose of *Pacific-Asian Education* is to contribute to the aims of the Pacific Circle Consortium that are "dedicated to the improvement of teaching about peoples and nations within and around the Pacific Ocean, and in Asia". It is through the theoretically informed research that appears in the journal's pages that we provide the material with which to engage in the important debates about schooling that continue to justify sociological studies of education.

That research may be historical as the article by Daniel Couch demonstrates. In order to engage in critical debate, we need to have a solid understanding of the historical processes that have occurred in education. Daniel Couch explains how progressivism became such a dominant orthodoxy. Although his example is from New Zealand, the shift to progressivism occurred elsewhere as John Dewey's ideas became the norm. At a deeper level, the article shows how ideas become ideology; once policy puts into institutions a particular way of understanding the world, that understanding takes on a life of its own. It becomes a deep-seated belief, and beliefs move out of the realm of scholarship. They lose their provisional nature as 'the best idea at the time' to become fixed as 'the best idea'. It is the purpose of scholarly debate to ensure that ideas don't become fixed as beliefs but remain provisional truths, only as good as the next challenge.

Ernesto Rangel, Ángel Licona, Emely Max provide an excellent example of critical scholarship as they investigate policies that link higher education and employment in Mexico. Their concern about the problem of unemployed university-educated professionals is one shared by many sociologists of education outside Mexico who question the commitment by nation-states to free market policies and the effects on the lives of young graduates. Their article raises the issue of how education is linked to the wider society in an account of the relationship between higher education and employment in Mexico. They ask how that country can best develop policies to provide greater security to young university graduates. As the authors point out "ignorance is the weapon used to maintain inequality in income distribution and the resulting high levels of grinding poverty". Although their article addresses a very different topic from that of the other contributors to this issue, the key issue in the sociology of education–that of the relationship between education and a more just and equal society–remains

the underpinning theme, as it is for Shu-Hua Hu in the article that examines the effects of deliberative learning strategies on students' democratic behaviour in a Taiwanese junior high school civics class. The author is interested in a deliberative learning approach that will promote democratic practices and assist students in learning how to solve controversial issues in a democratic way. Undoubtedly, behaviour that promotes democratic practices by both teachers and students is part of the larger field of schooling for a more just society.

The article by Bronwyn Wood and Mark Sheehan is more directly related to Michael Young's research interests about knowledge but, like the others, is also part of the larger sociology of education theme about education's role in creating a fairer, more equal society. The authors' interest in the 'doing' rather than 'knowing' approach that is found in the New Zealand Curriculum and in the curricula of other countries that emphasise pedagogy rather than knowledge led them to ask how students acquire the 'powerful knowledge' that leads to success at school. They get to the nub of the issue about knowledge in education when they ask what do we actually mean by 'knowledge' in the vast 'knowledge economy' discourse that pervades educational policies. In returning our attention to what knowledge is taught in schools, Bronwyn Wood and Mark Sheehan also ask what happens to children who don't receive the type of knowledge that leads to success at school.

I hope that Professor Young's debate and the article in this and recent *Pacific-Asian Education* volumes will continue readers' commitment to the search for truth that is arguably the motive we all share in undertaking educational research and encourage readers to take up his challenge to carry the debate further in these pages.

References

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Can educational research be about social justice? Opening a debate.

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Dr Airini in her epilogue in the last issue quotes a researcher as saying "I know for me that I am in educational research because it is about social justice." It is hardly possible to think of a more important issue than social justice and in that broad sense I imagine all educational researchers would endorse the quote–I certainly do. However, the statement also raises a number of questions for me as someone who has spent most of his career involved in educational research of some kind as well as teaching.

In what sense is research 'about social justice'? Social justice is certainly a value that might informs one's approach to life, work and politics. However, it is not clear that it makes sense to say that is what research is 'about', anymore than to say that family counseling, market research or engineering are 'about social justice'. Would an engineer ever say engineering was about social justice, even if they endorsed it as part of their philosophy of life? I doubt it. What then does it mean to say that educational research is about social justice? Does it imply that all education is about social justice or is there something special about research? I would like to share these questions and my attempt to answer them with the readers of this journal, and hope that this will stimulate a debate. I take the quote from Dr Airini's article not to concentrate specifically on either the quote or her article but because it raises clearly issues not often discussed about why we do educational research, what it can do and what we want it to do. Also, these issues relate to my own biography in ways that other readers may or may not share.

There are a number of unfortunate consequences (as well as benefits) of educational researchers attempting to model their work on the natural sciences. The one I want to mention is that they rarely refer to their biographies and motivations. It is as if this is not relevant and any way it might undermine any claims to objectivity for their findings. I think that the authoritative claims that educational research can make are very important; however, this neglect of biography does not help. We need to know where people come from and why. I am always reminded of the insight on this issue of the great German sociologist, Max Weber. He distinguished between **value relevance**—the idea that inevitably we draw on our values and our priorities in selecting the research we undertake—and **value freedom**—our commitment *in our methods and our analysis* to free ourselves from what we want to be true and to try and be as objective as we can. Weber's distinction is the best way I know of describing the dilemmas of educational research and it applies as much to large-scale statistical studies as to ethnographies. My interpretation of how Weber would have responded to the statement that 'educational

research is about social justice' is he would have seen social justice as value involved in the choice of one's research questions as *value relevant*, but not as expression of *value freedom*; in other words, it would give way to a commitment to truth in one's methods and analysis. Despite the clarity of his distinction, it is a distinction that is much clearer in principle than in practice; it can be at best a guide. Research is a practical activity and moral and political issues can arise at every stage.

I came to educational research as a student of sociology and sociology of education. Underlying my choice of sociology were political reasons that were no doubt similar to those about social justice given by the researcher quoted by Dr Airini. In the UK at the time, the most striking feature of education was the extent to which it was not distributed according to ability or merit but according to social class. I was lucky; my father had a good enough income to send me to a good school and then to University. How was it, I found myself asking, in a school system that claimed to offer equal opportunities, that so few working class pupils did not (and still do not) go to University or even finish their schooling? Unequivocally, this was not social justice, and I was highly committed to doing something about it.

'Doing something about it' meant two very different but not unrelated steps for me. One was to join a political party committed to social justice (in my case in the UK, the Labour Party) and to help to get a majority of Labour Members of Parliament into Parliament where they could pass laws and support educational policies based on social justice. The second step was a result of realising that converting my somewhat romantic political ideas about equality into practical educational policies was going to be extremely complex and difficult.

At the time, I knew little about the society I had grown up in and even less about what a more socially just education system might look like. Was social justice about treating everyone equally, or treating everyone according to his or her needs, and if the latter how did we find out what those needs were? Should the criteria of social justice apply to the curriculum, to the pedagogy of teachers, to the organisation of schools or to the forms of assessment we use or all of these and what, in each case, did this mean? It was these kinds of questions that led me—then a chemistry teacher—to register to study sociology, initially part time and later for a Masters degree and to teach and research in the sociology of education at university.

Despite becoming considerably more knowledgeable about the extent of educational inequality in England, and the various theories explaining its persistence, I had very little idea what that might mean for beginning educational research. Insofar as I was at all clear about the very broad issue of social justice, I think I saw it as primarily about treating everyone equally. That seemed to me to be one of the things that the democracy we claimed to be was about and ought to be moving towards. However, I was faced with three issues in the society and the education system in England at the time that challenged this view of democracy, and in many senses, little has changed nearly half a century later. The first issue was the extent of inequality. On any criteria you could name— salary, kind of house, educational opportunities, diet— people in England were not (and are not) equal; the question was why and what could be done about it? The second issue was hierarchy. There were parents and children, teachers and pupils,

managers and workers, employers and employees and so on. All these relationships were hierarchical; some had power and rights over others. Were all these examples of the power of some over others to be struggled over, and, hopefully, overcome? Or were some, like, perhaps, the power of parents over children, acceptable hierarchies and others not? These are not easy questions, particularly for anyone involved in education, when the most basic relation of all, that between teachers and pupils, is a hierarchical one. It is almost impossible to conceive of formal education without hierarchies.

The third issue was differences between judgments of value or cultural priorities: knowledge, ways of life, music, books, beliefs and so on. We are surrounded by these judgments or preferences, some debated, some taken for granted. Was it just or right that some judgments are valued differently from (and often ranked higher than) others and is that always a form of discrimination or prejudice? Working in education brought all these differences together because education is based on all kinds of assumptions about what is worthwhile and what is not, which are sometimes, but not always, questioned. This distinction between what is and is not worthwhile is crystallised in the curriculum where decisions are made about what knowledge to include and exclude. With these questions in mind and given that this was a time when so much was being questioned, the curriculum became the focus of my research.

At the time (writing my masters dissertation), I was not at all clear where a focus on the curriculum might lead. However, despite many changes in how I have come to think about curriculum issues since, I have no regrets about taking it as my starting point. There are many disagreements about what a curriculum means but one issue seems common to all: the curriculum is about what we want *all students* to learn as a result of going to school. It represents the aims or purposes of a school system and defines what we mean by equal access or equal opportunities. Perhaps more controversially, it follows that it is the curriculum where we should start when we are thinking about education whether as a teacher, a researcher or a policy maker. It is not the learner, important though he or she is, but from an educator's point of view, it is where we want the learners to get to that must be our starting point, if we are serious about equality and establishing a more socially just education system. It is what, for example, the United Nations' goal of **Education for All** should mean.

Children come to school with varying degrees of enthusiasm, motivation and potential to gain what a school can offer but hardly any idea about what they will learn; even most adult students have only very vague ideas about what they expect to learn in starting a course; like pupils, they trust the teacher. In every case, it is the teacher's task and responsibility to build on this potential. The reality that pupils or students do not all come to school with the same abilities or level of motivation does not mean they do not have the same potential; it is just that the potential of all students may not be realised at the same pace. The curriculum is important because it is through the curriculum that what a school offers is realised for students.

When I was first became involved in educational research and started to think about the high proportion of pupils who fail in or drop out from school in England, I got one thing right and made one mistake, which took me a long time to admit. Most researchers at the time were documenting the social class basis of educational failure;

the statistics showed this time and again. This led them to blame the parents, or at least the home backgrounds of those who failed and propose a range of what were known as compensatory education programmes that attempted to alleviate the conditions in the local communities, which were thought to lead to failure. The programmes were well intentioned but misguided and they invariably failed. The circumstances of the failing students were enmeshed in the whole society in ways that programmes in selected areas could not hope to alter. It was an understanding of the importance of the wider social context in which schools were located that led some of us to be critical of these programmes.

So where did the curriculum come in? One conclusion was that the failure of working class pupils was not the fault of their parents or their families but the consequence of an alien middle class curriculum being imposed on them; no wonder they failed! This was where I, and others, made a well-intentioned mistake. We wanted to respect the language and culture of the failing students, to treat them as equal future citizens in a democracy and we thought that treating them equally meant that the ideas that they came to school with were just as valid as those that underpinned the school curriculum. We, therefore, followed and were inspired by Paul Frieire (somewhat naively, he might have said) and argued that a curriculum that arose out of pupils' lives could be developed that would not be alien to them. The attempts to develop such curricula were no more successful than the earlier compensatory education programmes; the pupils found the new 'community-oriented' curricula equally alienating. What had gone wrong? Many years later, I came to realise that we had not understood the true meaning of a democratic curriculum or a curriculum based on equality. It was not about treating all knowledge equally but about making sure all pupils had equal access to the same curriculum. Also, we had forgotten the cardinal truth I referred to earlier: that teachers must begin with the purposes of schooling—what you want your pupils to know—not with the students, their interests and experience. A curriculum that is based on the experience of pupils may make disaffected pupils easier to manage and so make life easier for the teacher; however, this sense of classroom 'well being' will inevitably be short lived. Pupils on such programmes will have no future and sooner or later they will know it; pupils do not come to school to learn what they already know.

Both my examples—when I was right about not blaming parents or local circumstances and when I was wrong about supporting 'community-based curricula for life' as they became known—were expressions of the same politics, the same commitment to social justice and equality and both were wrong. What is the lesson from this stage of my story?

Give up research and join teachers in the struggle for social justice in the classroom? That may be right for some researchers (and in the 1970s I remember examples), but not all. The reality that research appears to offer no immediate practical solutions is not a reason for giving it up. Research is a space denied to teachers to ' think the unthinkable' and the 'not yet thought'; this can be an excuse for an ivory tower but it does not need to be. It is sometimes important to go back to the assumptions of one's research and begin again, initially 'in theory'. It took 20 years for Einstein's theories to be 'proved experimentally'; there is no reason why it should not be similar in educational research.

Sometimes theories are just wrong and have to be revised or scrapped; sometimes they are ahead of practice but may need re-formulating. Practice (like data) does not always drive theory.

Forget about politics and social justice if you are doing educational research? No, certainly not. If you forget your original purposes you lose the reasons for doing research at all; at best you end up in research projects as a technician—collecting and analysing data—or you become a consultant or an evaluator—accepting other people's purposes—again, you can become more like a technician than a researcher. There are, of course, real technical fields, in medicine and electronics, for example, which rely on capable technicians, but education is not one, which is not to deny that it needs people who are technically competent. In educational research, ends and means are inseparable. The answer 'it works' may be adequate for an engineer, but is never adequate for an educational researcher. This leaves an uncertainty in all educational research where we seek greater certainty; on the other hand, it leaves the researcher with some autonomy even in research projects where he/she has had no say in defining the purposes.

I was led, painfully over a number of years, to re-think what I meant by curriculum, what I thought schools were for and what I thought they could and could not do. I was also led from all my reading in sociology to a deeper truth. However much we might want quick results, progressive educational change, like all intentional social change, is always slow; there are no revolutions, only coup d'états that then claim to be revolutions. A recent book describing the impressive achievements of the Finnish education system is a useful reminder. Firstly, their educational reforms took 30 years, the educational version of 'Rome was not built in a day,' or a week, a year or a decade. Secondly, they did not just reform what went on in schools; they reformed their system for teacher education, and more broadly their economy (30 plus years ago, Nokia was a logging company!).

Back to curriculum; what had I got wrong? I wrote about this in earlier articles in this journal so I will be brief. Schooling, indeed any formal education, will be alien to the learner; that is not only inevitable but also necessary; it is intrinsic to the process of really learning something. It will, of course, be felt to a varying extent by different learners, but it will be felt; that is why real learning can be just as hard as breaking stones. Real learning takes learners out of their everyday world and challenges it just as Galileo challenged the Vatican about the sun not going round the earth. They found the new truth too threatening and sent him to prison for heresy (they have since apologised, but it took them 300 years!) . Teachers are not like the Pope, but they do have authority over pupils as members of a potentially (as in Finland) highly respected profession. Furthermore, they can use this authority to support learners in what is initially the threatening experience of entering the alien culture of school subjects.

Since Galileo, successive generations have established a vast body of knowledge about the world, about living in it and about how it works, and not only in the sciences. This knowledge—I call it 'powerful knowledge'—is what we, as teachers, have a responsibility to give access to our students to. How we best do it is the fantastically exciting responsibility of educational researchers; sometimes, but not always, in collaboration with teachers. If you agree about the importance of the curriculum, and

that there is in every field of human endeavour, powerful knowledge and debates about that knowledge that students are entitled to have access to, that is where ***educational*** research must start; not with the learners, their parents, their cultures or their communities. This is not to dismiss the culture and experience of learners. Teachers need to know about where students come from and to respect their lives and values, but it is not where school leads them to. School at its best, leads them to knowledge and to the knowledge and debates about it that would be recognised in Melbourne, Beijing, Delhi or Washington as much as in Auckland or any other place. That, then, is my research priority: specifying as concretely as possible what this knowledge is and the forms it takes in different domains, and helping teachers work out how it is best sequenced, paced and selected for all pupils in different age groups in different subjects.

My politics have not changed, nor has my commitment to social justice or equality. One thing has changed for me, and that is that I have learned that while educational progress is achieved by applying the idea of equality to access to knowledge but not to knowledge itself, there are not different knowledges for different learners (except in the sense that national histories, cultures and literatures are different). Since Galileo, our knowledge about the world and ourselves has progressed on the assumption that there is no absolute truth—I leave that to the theologians and atheists—but that we can do better, by striving for the truth in the best ways we have. That is what research is— educational research or any other—striving for the truth, wherever it takes us. In that sense, educational research is about knowledge (or the search for truth); it is not about politics, or transformation or social justice, even though such purposes have informed all my research and will always do so.

So I seek to open a debate about the purposes of educational research and whether, and in what sense, it can be 'about social justice' with my account of how and why I came to engage with the curriculum as a topic for educational research. It might have been school leadership, school architecture, or pedagogy, or links between schools, employers and the community, about assessment or something else. Any serious research touches on all these topics and more. My focus on the curriculum takes me into epistemological issues and the philosophy/sociology boundary; other foci will lead to links with psychology or organisation theory; none can avoid, or should not avoid history. However, in this paper, I have also been concerned with questions about politics and research, the relations between research and practice, about how far research can be about values such as social justice (or gender or race equality to cite two other examples) however much we are committed to them.

The 'elephant in the room'—as Sherlock Holmes put it so graphically—is 'theory' or what questions are you going to ask and why? And I do not mean theory as some kind of free floating self-contained world, but the basis and assumptions underlying the sense we make of the world. The model of theory I take is from the French sociologist (and first sociologist of education) Emile Durkheim. He praised the pragmatists such as William James and Dewey for arguing that understanding what it is to be human does not (as for Kant) need to be metaphysical or transcendental; it needs to focus on people's everyday and practical lives in the societies they make and change historically. However, for Durkheim, the pragmatists forgot that what is real is not just individual

lives and their projects; it is their sociality that makes them human, and creates the possibility of thinking, morality, science and truth. It is not insignificant that it was these themes that he chose as the basis of one of his series of lectures to student teachers.

In trying to ask questions raised in Dr Airini's paper, I have presented a somewhat contradictory position. On the one hand, I have referred to how I got involved in education, and then educational research for political reasons; in that sense, for me, educational research has always been political. On the other hand, after initially seeing them as intertwined, I have tried to distance my research from politics in what I rather over ambitiously referred to as 'the search for truth.' In a future paper, I will write about the uncomfortable situations that this has led me to and the difficult compromises that I have faced. My case is that compromises of some kind are inescapable for all of us, and that if the search for truth is not a priority for those of us fortunate enough to have the privilege and space of working in a university, who is left who will 'search for truth'?

I hope you will respond and tell your stories about how you came to your research priorities; they will mean the debate has begun.

Dislodging knowledge? The New Zealand curriculum in the 21st Century.

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Abstract

In this paper, we examine the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) and the priority it places on student-centred pedagogies and competencies to equip students for a 'knowledge age'. Through an examination of four 'early adopter' schools profiled on the New Zealand Curriculum Online site, we demonstrate that the prevailing focus of implementing this curriculum has been upon student-centred pedagogies and competencies, the integration of traditional disciplines and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). We argue that this focus has the potential to sideline, or 'dislodge' the 'knowledge' component of the curriculum. Furthermore, such approaches blur the curriculum-pedagogy distinction, rely too heavily on over-socialised conceptions of knowledge and potentially produce a curriculum that lacks disciplinary coherence (Young, 2010). We raise concerns about the impact of such approaches upon students who traditionally have had less access to powerful knowledge.

Introduction

The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) has been positioned to meet the needs of a world characterised by "globalisation, cultural diversity and rapidly changing technologies . . . increased specialisation and flexibility in the workplace" (Maharey, 2007). This curriculum plays a pivotal role in New Zealand's aim to reorient itself from a pastoral economy to a knowledge-based economy by placing a high priority on student-centred pedagogies, flexible skills derived from generic core competencies, and inquiry-based learning. However, in a curriculum that is designed to contribute to building a 'knowledge economy,' neither the place of knowledge in the New Zealand curriculum is clearly defined nor is the question of 'what is knowledge?' in the context of the curriculum addressed (see also Young, 2009).

In this paper, we examine how a small group of secondary schools have begun to implement many of the 'new' ideas associated with the 'front end' of the revised New Zealand Curriculum. This 'front end' of the curriculum contrasts sharply with the outcomes focus of the 'back end' and includes the introduction of five key competencies, a vision statement, a set of principles and values that should underpin all school decision-making and a section on effective pedagogy. In this paper, we argue that the prevailing focus of implementing this curriculum upon these 'new' student-centred pedagogies and competencies has the potential to dislodge the curriculum "from a base in content

knowledge into procedural knowledge" (Yates & Collins, 2008, p. 93), thus separating two crucial aspects knowledge that we argue must be viewed together. While we do not seek to devalue these 'new' approaches, we suggest that such an overt focus on procedural learning holds the potential to obscure the importance of content knowledge and disciplinary coherence that is found within curriculum areas (Young, 2010).

It is important at the outset to state what we are *not* arguing. We do not argue that there should be a return to a prescriptive conservative curriculum delivered via transmission models. Nor do we favour approaches to knowledge that are elitist and exclusive (see, for example, Young & Muller's 2010 *Future 1* scenario). Rather, our concern is that the failure to be explicit about the place of knowledge in the New Zealand Curriculum has seen teachers valuing the 'how' (processes of learning/skills and competencies) over the 'what' (the content and knowledge) and failing to link processes of learning to disciplinary knowledge (Hipkins, 2010). The relatively short time since the launch of this new curriculum in 2007 means that we still lack evidence that shows what the implications of these shifts in focus are. However, we fear that a downplaying of knowledge in the New Zealand Curriculum could have serious implications for disadvantaged and marginalised students by failing to provide them with the conditions by which they can acquire the foundations for powerful, intellectual work (Yates & Collins, 2008).

We begin the paper by examining the socio-historical context in which 'knowledge economy' ideas were brought into New Zealand policies, and into the New Zealand Curriculum. We then investigate how these ideas were picked up and integrated into school programmes and pedagogies by four 'early adopter' schools that are profiled on the official New Zealand Curriculum Online website. We examine these schools' priority in curriculum implementation toward procedural learning skills, integrating curriculum areas and the integration of ICT.

The arrival of a 'knowledge economy' in New Zealand

Rapid technological change and intensifying globalisation processes during the 1990s began to highlight the key role that knowledge played in an information-rich and networked society (Castells, 2000). Proponents of a knowledge economy argued that instead of producing items and products, "the 'new' global economy requires ideas, innovation, creativity and critical thinking to ensure economic competitiveness" (Kennedy, 2008, p. 13). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) publication, *The Knowledge-based Economy* (1996), was instrumental in advancing these ideas in many nations (Bullen, Fahey, & Kenway, 2006). In New Zealand, this was marked in 1999 by the submission of the Information Technology Advisory Group's report, *The Knowledge Economy* (1999), to the New Zealand government. This report called for a transformation of New Zealand from "a pastoral economy into a knowledge-driven economy" (p. 1), based upon a belief that "[t]he foundation stones of the knowledge economy are human ingenuity and skill and a commitment to innovation through research and development" (p. i). Driven by a sense of urgency and a perceived need for radical change, the report concluded dramatically by stating that "if New Zealanders do not seize the opportunities provided by the

knowledge economy, we will survive only as an amusement park and holiday land for the citizens of more successful developed economies" (p. 2).

The urgent call for New Zealand to become a knowledge economy brought into question the nature and role of knowledge in a knowledge economy. Proponents of 'knowledge economy' ideas typically suggest that knowledge has been re-shaped in the face of rapid and abrupt social change. For example, Gilbert (2003, 2005, 2007) proposes that "we are in the midst of a social and intellectual revolution" [that requires a] "need to think in new ways" (Gilbert, 2005, p. 9). She suggests that ideas about knowledge and knowing need to be transformed from the 'Industrial Age' to the 'Knowledge Age'. In contrast to an Industrial ('Fordist') economy, which required workers to do their work with little innovation and creativity (such as on a factory floor), Gilbert argues that the pace of societal and technological change in a Post-Industrial economy demands a flexible, problem-solving, team approach to employment, requiring higher levels of skills and new understandings of knowledge. Gilbert's proposal of a 'knowledge age' requires a radical break with the past and the sharp juxtaposition of these two 'Ages,' as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparing the 'Industrial Age' and 'Knowledge Society' view of knowledge, learning, and minds

	In the 'Industrial Age'	In the 'Knowledge Age'
Knowledge	• is 'stuff', a product, a thing; • is passive; • is individually constructed; • can be isolated into disciplines; • can be stored.	• is a process, not a thing (or stuff); • does things – more like energy than matter; • happens in teams, not in individual experts; • can't be divided up into disciplines; • develops to be replaced, not stored.
Learning	• is about storing up knowledge; • is an individual activity; • happens in classrooms.	• involves generating new knowledge, • is primarily a group activity; • happens in real world, problem-based contexts.
Minds	• are containers, filing cabinets, or databases – places to store knowledge.	• are resources that can be connected to other resources for the purpose of generating new knowledge.

Source: adapted from Gilbert (2005; 2007)

If such ideas about 'new' knowledge were to be embraced by educators, at least three significant changes in educational systems would be required, and especially at the level of curriculum. First, if ideas, creativity and innovation are the drivers of globalisation and economic growth, then problem solving and critical thinking skills are likely to be far more important than learning that focused purely on the acquisition of knowledge – in other words, the need for 'learning how' rather than 'learning

what' (Kennedy, 2008). The OECD's Definition and Selection of Key Competencies (DeSeCo project, 2005) became a crucial part of this reconceptualisation. This report argues that in light of rapidly changing technology, diverse societies and globalisation, individuals need key competencies (defined as knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) to enable them to be adaptive, innovative, creative, self-directed and self-motivated (OECD, 2005). Such approaches emphasise "the ability 'to do' rather than 'to know'; to be flexible; to avoid boundaries; and to produce competent and self-regulating citizens" (Yates & Young, 2008, p. 6). The language of the '21st Century Learner' is also typically used to describe the perceived shifts in the type of learner required in the knowledge age, and close links are made with ICT to support new conceptions of both learners and learning.

Secondly, the claims toward rapid shifts in information technology (and associated knowledge) require more individualised and flexible pathways in education – rather than the so-called one size fits all approach of the Industrial Age. Such thinking has led to a renewed focus on "the developing child/learner/person as the key agenda" (Yates & Collins, 2008, p. 98). This has led to a plethora of teaching and learning initiatives that focus on constructivist, learner-centred and progressive pedagogies that are typified by student-driven inquiry and questioning, thinking skills and problem solving approaches rather than transmission teaching approaches.

Finally, proponents of the knowledge society argue that education can no longer be seen as static or complete within a set period. The concept of 'lifelong learning' is now "almost a mantra" (Kennedy, 2008, p. 17) in official government and curriculum documents around the world. Chisholm (2001) argues that this has the effect of placing the responsibility firmly on individuals to meet the needs of rapidly changing globalised economies' labour market by re-educating themselves in a process of "individualized and recurrent continuous learning and qualification pathways" (p. 65).

Many of these ideas are evident in the revised New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007). First, the shift from a content to a process-driven curriculum was touted as a key feature of this curriculum at its launch: "New Zealand children should eventually do better in their exams now there is more emphasis on teaching them how to learn, solve problems and innovate, says the Ministry of Education" (Trevett & McKenzie-Minifie, 2007). The introduction of five key competencies linking skills, attitudes and values, replacing a previous set of eight 'essential skills' (Ministry of Education, n.d.-a) also reinforces a focus on 'knowing how' rather than 'knowing what'. This new curriculum also encourages the integration of previously discrete subjects and the exploration of links between learning areas and states that "wherever possible, schools should aim to design their curriculum so that learning crosses apparent boundaries" (p. 38).

Second, individual and flexible pathways are promoted through student-driven, 'meaningful' learning. For example, the revised curriculum states that "there will be times when students can initiate activities themselves . . . [to] provide meaningful contexts for learning and self-assessment" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 38). The curriculum includes a section on designing school-based curriculum with new levels of flexibility for schools: "while every school curriculum must be clearly aligned with

the intent of this document, schools have considerable flexibility when determining the detail" (p. 37). And finally, lifelong learning has become an integral part of the whole vision and approach to learning through this curriculum (see for example, Ministry of Education, 2007, pp. 4, 6, 8, 12).

In this paper, we critique the assumptions underpinning these notions of rapid and radical change in society and suggest that applying these ways of thinking about knowledge to curricula has the potential to overlook the significance that knowledge continues to play in developing powerful ways of thinking. Informing our thinking in this area has been the work of a number of key authors, such as Moore, Muller, Young and Yates (Muller, 2000; Yates & Collins, 2008; Yates & Young, 2008; Young, 2008a, 2008b; Young & Muller, 2010). In the following section we review some of these authors' key ideas and in doing so, prepare a conceptual framework for our critique of the revised New Zealand Curriculum.

Placing knowledge back on centre stage

Bringing Knowledge Back In is the title of Michael Young's (2008a) book in which he asserts the need to reconsider what counts as worthwhile knowledge in educational settings. Reflecting upon his work in the 1970s as part of the 'new sociology of education,' Young reflects on how he and others overlooked the structural differences of knowledge. He proposes that they ignored the differentiated nature of knowledge and how some forms of knowledge are indeed more 'powerful' than other's because they provide people with greater opportunities in society. The absence of an explicit theory of knowledge meant that sociologists of education were led away from identifying the social basis of the knowledge structures themselves (Young, 2008b). Thus, giving students more *access* to knowledge, which was seen as a primary response to issues of inequality in education in the 1970s, overlooked the *kinds of knowledge* that continue to serve some people (generally cultural elites) better than others in society. Essentially, Young argues that the kind of knowledge required to achieve academic success draws on knowledge that is accessed through disciplines. A theory of knowledge, Young argues, is a theory of access to this powerful knowledge that is the right of all, not just an elite few.

Young (2010) raises concern that the current 'student-led' orthodoxy in curricula development to create a more 'motivational' curriculum has led to a focus on learner-centred pedagogies. He argues that curriculum and pedagogy need to be seen as conceptually different, defining curriculum as the knowledge a country agrees is important for all students to have access to, and pedagogy as the activities a teacher undertakes to motivate students to engage with curriculum (Young, 2010). A curriculum which defines *how* to teach it (constructivist and learner-centred approaches) blurs the role of the teacher and curriculum developer, placing too high a value on students' everyday or prior knowledge.

Furthermore, Young and Muller (2010) argue that contemporary curricula often overlook or deny "the irreducible differentiatedness of knowledge" (p. 15). They argue that knowledge is structured by knowledge fields that "differ in their internal coherence, their principles of cohesion, and their procedures for producing new

knowledge" (Young & Muller, 2010, p. 15). This internal coherence is lost once subjects are merged and integrated without paying attention to their disciplinary origins with implications for both learners and teachers. Disciplinary knowledge thus requires more than acquiring basic skills or bits of received information – "it also involves developing identity and affiliation, critical epistemic stance, and dispositions as learners participate in the discourse and actions of a collective social field" (Kelly, Allan, & Green, 2008, p. ix). In the absence of these disciplinary and knowledge-based content boundaries, the basis for choosing topics or themes will lack coherence and will "be largely arbitrary or based on the (limited) experience of individual teachers and not on the specialist subject knowledge of teachers and researchers developed over time" (Young, 2010, p. 28).

Young (2010) suggests that subjects, through their link to disciplines, continue to have a significant role in curriculum. First, they provide a way of knowing that the knowledge provided is the most reliable available in particular field. Second, subjects provide bridges for students to move from 'everyday' concepts to theoretical concepts associated with different subject areas. Alexander (1997, 2003) suggests that the realms of knowledge that make up a domain or discipline cannot be acquired purely from everyday experiences, but instead, systematic instruction is required to develop expertise. Third, subject areas provide an identity for both teachers and students, as they become part of wider community of specialists that gives "authority" in this subject as it is part of a tradition that has been tested over time (p. 27).

Method

In order to gain a glimpse of how the revised New Zealand Curriculum has been implemented in recent years, we turned to an open-access website that was set up to support the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum – [http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/]. This site purports to offer "information, resources, news, advice and guidance, inspiring school stories, practical ideas, research reports, how to get support and much, much more" (Ministry of Education, n.d.-b [homepage]). We then examined one particular part of this site, *Curriculum Stories*, where "schools and researchers share stories, resources, and information to assist with [reshaping curricula]". Sixty-eight *School Stories* that profile the experience of specific schools through videos, websites and written information were included on this site in August 2011 (see http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories/School-stories). The majority of these stories are from primary schools. Our interest was particularly in secondary schools, in this research, where traditional subject disciplines are more likely to be upheld, and therefore some of the 'new' ideas less likely to be adopted. Of the small number of secondary schools profiled, only a few contained adequate detail for us to examine them in some depth. Through this process of purposive selection (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008), we ended up with four case study schools (see Table 2).

Table 2: Case study schools profiled on New Zealand Curriculum Online School Stories

NZ Curriculum Story No.	Referred to in research as	Date profiled online	Nature of school	Decile
Story 3	School 1	19 Dec 2007	State co-ed Yrs 9-13	10
Story 4	School 2	19 Dec 2007	State co-ed Yrs 7-13	9
Story 7	School 3	2 July 2008	State co-ed Yrs 9-13	9
Story 9	School 4	25 August 2008	State Girls' Yrs 7-13	5

Source: http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories/School-stories (accessed August 2011)

The date that these schools were profiled on the New Zealand Curriculum Online site is indicative of these schools as 'early adopters' of the New Zealand Curriculum (released on November 7, 2007). As early adopters, these schools could be regarded as 'leading the way' for others by their profiling on this widely used curriculum site. They represent a range of school deciles[1] and locations. We have not named the schools, but refer to their school story by number to describe and analyse trends that we see emerging within this curriculum implementation process (see Table 2).

Embracing change

A notable feature of all these four early adopter secondary schools was their openness to embrace the 'new' approaches to pedagogy and curriculum presented in the 'front end' of the curriculum. Representatives from each school articulated a strong mandate for change which was frequently conveyed as a break from the past and 'whole new way' of doing education. In two of these early adopter schools (Schools 1 and 3), change was identified as a necessary response by the school to perceived changes in the nature of students attending the school. For example, the presence of many new immigrants alongside more 'techno-savvy' students amongst the school population at School 1, led the school to develop "new understandings . . . about the nature of the learner that [School 1] should seek to create, and the 'brave new world' that these learners would be part of" (Story 1). The principal of School 3 noted a similar imperative for change.

> *Students have changed hugely over the last 20 years but schools have changed hardly at all to meet students' needs. We believe we have to change our approach so that students can work collaboratively with the teachers, sharing planning and interests, so that both the teachers and students are actively engaged in their learning.*

A willingness to embrace change was also characteristic of Schools 2 and 4. Both of these schools had undergone a merger with a local intermediate (middle) school to

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1   A school's decile is an equitable economic distribution system calculated by New Zealand's Ministry of Education indicating the extent to which a school draws its students from a low socio-economic community. Decile 1 represents the lowest 10% of New Zealand socio-economic communities and Decile 10, the highest 10%.

produce a larger school encompassing students from Years 7-13 (approximately ages 11-18). This merger "spearheaded a period of change" for School 2, and both schools saw their mergers as an opportunity to make fundamental changes in their schools and their teaching philosophies, in order to "create an inclusive and integrated whole school environment" (School 4).

All four schools were also characterised by how they had sought out new teaching and learning ideas *before* the arrival of the revised New Zealand Curriculum in 2007. For example, staff members of Schools 1, 2 and 4 had taken trips to Australia (between 2004 and 2007) to examine innovative schools working with new ICT (such as the Navigator or NavCon Schools in Victoria, Australia that focus on learning technologies and student-directed learning). School 1 also mentioned the influence of the 'New Basics' and 'Productive pedagogies of Queensland,' and staff attendance at the 'Breakthrough International Conference on Thinking' in Auckland. Others mentioned key players that had informed their changes such as Kath Murdoch (inquiry learning), Jennie Wilson (School 4), Jane Gilbert, Guy Claxton, and David Hargreaves (School 3). The openness to embrace change in these four schools had resulted in a number of shifts in pedagogical approaches and practice in the course of curriculum integration, which will be elaborated on in the following section.

Pedagogical approaches and curriculum implementation in schools

An analysis across all four schools revealed a strikingly similar priority toward embracing new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), implementing student-centred procedural learning skills, and curriculum subject integration.

ICT focus

A focus on enhancing the use of ICT was a feature across all four schools. New ICTs were seen as one of the reasons change was needed as "we are now preparing students for a future world they do not yet know" (School 1). Three of the four schools (Schools 1, 2, 4) had been involved in an ICT Professional Development programme that had contributed to their desire to 'do' schooling differently. School 1, in particular, described the marked difference that they felt was required by shifts from the 'industrial age' to the 'technological age':

> *We are now well into the technological age. Information technology, particularly the Internet but also texting and pixting, means that knowledge can no longer be held by just a few. Students do not need to learn lots of facts because they can find them easily just in time to use them. This is called 'just-in-time' rather than 'just-in-case' learning. For this to be effective, information needs to be available anywhere and anytime. However, with so much information now available, students need new 'determining' skills to decide whether the information is accurate, whether the information is important, and what further questions the information raises.*

These ideas underpinned a drive toward new ICT in the classroom in order to access this 'anytime' information across all these schools as well as a philosophy that promoted the learning of flexible, creative skills, processes and applications to respond to an uncertain future: "They need to use what they have already learned to construct new understandings and then relate those understandings to future situations" (School 1).

Procedural learning skills

All schools had heightened their focus on integrating procedural learning skills into their programmes. In particular, they mentioned the key competencies and an elevated focus on student-led inquiry processes in their schools. This was especially obvious at the junior end of the schools (Years 9 and 10, and also 7 and 8 for Schools 2 and 4). For example, School 2 had integrated inquiry learning into most curriculum areas "to encourage and enhance cognitive skills." Similarly, School 4 had focused on the introduction of inquiry learning at Year 7 and 8, so that processes were well established for later years at school. School 1 saw inquiry learning and the key competencies as a key way to build the skills of "a lifelong learner – students who know how to learn and how they learn best." They had developed their own competencies (referred to as learning behaviours), to develop their own shared school processes and language as a way to help define what they were striving to achieve. Similarly, School 3 had worked on promoting learning through an integrated model with a strong emphasis on "connection" through student-centred and inquiry approaches to learning. The impression we gained in analysing these four schools was that student-led inquiry processes and a focus on key competencies had become the primary focus of teaching and learning. We found no evidence of how this focus enabled students to also gain conceptual and contextual knowledge within subject areas. In contrast, subject areas were frequently viewed as obstructive to such learning.

Subject integration

Subject integration was another feature of curriculum implementation across these four schools to varying degrees. Schools 1 and 2 had a 'light' touch to integration and had encouraged teachers from different subject areas (such as English and social studies) to develop common themes across their teaching. For example, a student at School 1 describes how she studied a movie in English and a topic in social studies that were both about Africa. Schools 3 and 4 had taken this further with a specific programme to integrate subject areas. For example, School 3 integrated English, social studies, sciences and maths for their Year 9 students. The four teachers of these subject areas collaborated on all planning, student progress and assessment, and the way the lessons were constructed to open pathways across the subjects. The process of integrating subject areas, however, had not been easy. One teacher at School 3 reflected, "we may not be integrating our four subjects all the time, but we're integrating our knowledge of the students" (Teacher at School 3).

School 4 had also made significant changes in order to integrate curriculum areas. The principal of this school states:

> *We want to debunk the myth about what curriculum actually is. Why should we stay with subjects as they've been called? Why should a girl come in here at year 7 and end up at year 11 doing the same things year after year? And why is it that we consider that girl should be at a particular level and why can't we operate as a university?*

In order to provide more personalised learning across subject areas, they had collated together achievement objectives into key understandings. These key understandings were turned into key questions, and "the class in turn chooses to focus their content for learning around one key question."

Across all the schools, there was no discussion about how knowledge or subject content was affected by the wholesale adoption of a more process-driven curriculum. When schools did mention subjects or knowledge, they talked about subject integration. In many of these discussions, traditional disciplines were seen as a barrier or impediment to these new approaches and the "real world/21st century thinking" that they required, as described in the quote from School 1:

> *Schools were once predominantly about knowledge – they were designed to select those students who were the 'wisest' so that they could be further educated and become the leaders of society. Those who were not 'wise' left the education system and became workers on the land or in industry, as it was predominantly an industrial age. The 'wise' were selected by a system (usually written examinations that only 50% of any cohort was allowed to pass) that asked them to show they had absorbed the knowledge of their teachers. In this education system, teachers knew the facts and taught them to their students, who tried to absorb them and recall them later. The longer you were at school, the more knowledge you were supposed to learn.*

Instead of teachers holding knowledge, this quotation rests on an understanding that students now have access to information and therefore implying teachers are no longer required – or, at least, not in the same way as they were. This appears to undermine the value of knowledge held by teachers and within schools and elevates the knowledge in the hands of students. For example, School 1 had a philosophy that teachers "need to be facilitators in a classroom, assisting students to evaluate and apply knowledge, and showing them how to work together to solve problems and create solutions."

Discussion

Our analysis of these four early adopter schools reveals that their prevailing focus of curriculum implementation has been upon integrating subject areas and introducing enhanced student-centred, inquiry/competency-led pedagogies, as well as an explicit intention toward introducing ICT. These findings are also supported by a New Zealand Council for Educational Research Milestone (NZCER) report (Hipkins, Cowie, Boyd, & McGee, 2008) released approximately at the same time these school

stories were profiled. The report found that schools had initially focused on the 'front end' of the document (in particular, key competencies and school values). This report also notes that "the further development of integrated and inquiry learning approaches has been a key way in which many schools and teachers see that they are able to enact the reviewed curriculum" (p. 4).

In many ways, these findings are not very surprising. All of these aspects of curriculum reform had been promoted in the revised New Zealand Curriculum. These changes were also enabled by a curriculum that encouraged school-based flexibility "when determining the detail" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 37) of curriculum integration. We have argued that such changes were also supported by a socio-historical context of policy reform underpinned by shifts in thinking about knowledge and education in a 'knowledge age'.

However, perhaps the more surprising aspect of our analysis is in what we failed to find. First, we note with concern the absence of discussion about how the prevailing focus on student-directed pedagogies and subject integration impacted on conceptual and contextual knowledge that underpins disciplinary knowledge within subjects. Second, we wish to draw attention to the lack of consideration about how a disciplinary understanding of knowledge shapes the way that processes, key competencies, and thinking skills are taught (Hipkins, 2010). We will discuss each of these in turn.

It was apparent that schools had made considerable (and indeed quite radical) changes to how they approached teaching and learning in the 21st century, as they embraced the ideas of learner-centred pedagogies, key competencies and subject integration supported by the new curriculum. However, the lack of discussion about how these changes may impact on the knowledge base of subject areas was notable. In fact, in the only discussion we found on knowledge (School 1), this was viewed as an impediment to the 'new' ways of thinking about knowledge in the face of 'new' times of information accessibility. Moreover, the student-directed learning focus places a value on overly-socialised conceptions of knowledge that potentially erodes the content and concept-based intellectual development of students that can be found within subjects and disciplines (Young, 2010). This brings the role of the specialist teacher into question; as such ideas about knowledge accessibility leave little room for expertise.

These changes are especially significant for secondary schools which are staffed by teachers who are, by and large, subject specialists. The degree to which they were willing to dislodge the foundations of the subjects that they were specialists in was not only surprising, but also concerning to us. Blurring the curriculum-pedagogy distinction (Young, 2010) opens the potential for a very superficial and over-socialised encounter with knowledge in secondary schools.

Our second concern relates to the failure to be explicit about the role that knowledge has in shaping *how* processes, key competencies and thinking skills are taught (Hipkins, 2010). In other words, discussion about curriculum change to address the 'front end' of the curriculum rarely considered the 'back end' of the curriculum. The lack of articulation about how a focus on learner-centred pedagogies, inquiry-learning and competencies needs to be informed by disciplinary knowledge was a concern noted early on in the curriculum implementation process (Hipkins, et al., 2008). The false

separation of curriculum process (the *how* of learning) from curriculum knowledge (the *what* of learning) also allows for the potential for knowledge to be placed in a peripheral role (boring and difficult) alongside the more "engaging" focus on skills (Counsell, 2000). By failing to integrate such changes within subject knowledge, schools could produce a very narrow interpretation of social and thinking skills (Hipkins, 2010; Hipkins, et al., 2008).

The notable absence in all these school stories to references of content and knowledge (and disciplinary thinking) is of concern although not untypical of recent international developments. Yates and Collins (2008) reflecting upon the Australian curriculum reforms also note "how rarely 'knowledge' came into the frame of their talk about curriculum" (p. 89). The uncritical acceptance of the ideas of 'change-makers' (such as Gilbert, Murdoch, Wilson, Claxton and Hargreaves) who are profiled on the New Zealand Curriculum site and frequently mentioned by teachers at the four schools and, has clearly informed and reinforced these shifts in thinking. This is hardly surprising as the Ministry of Education New Zealand Curriculum Online site carries little critique of these thinkers and/or the assumptions upon which these ideas rest. Typically, these ideas are presented as an unchallenged orthodoxy.

Our aim in drawing attention to the absence of knowledge in the picture of these curriculum school stories is to caution that such approaches "may fail to offer the conditions by which students may acquire the foundations for powerful, intellectual work" (Yates & Collins, 2008, p. 90). Furthermore, we are aware that approaches that favour 'doing' rather than 'knowing' may actually serve to increase educational inequalities between those schools that retain 'powerful knowledge' and those which rarely include such knowledge in their curriculum options. This potentially reduces the potency of knowledge and reinforces inequality by fostering powerful knowledge among the elite schools and shutting out students from non-elite schools who do not generally have access to this knowledge.

Whilst we do not have evidence in this paper that indicates whether these approaches are, indeed, resulting in greater inequalities between those that always had access to knowledge and those that did not, we are sobered by Young and Muller's (2010) suggestions that the progressive pedagogies of the 'new' approaches "may render the contours of knowledge and learning invisible to the very learners that the pedagogy was designed to favour – namely the learners, invariably but not always those from low income homes, who fall behind their peers" (Young & Muller, 2010, p. 18-19). This leaves open the need for further research in this area to consider in greater detail the implications of curriculum reform in a 'knowledge age'.

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The effects of deliberative learning on Taiwanese middle school students' democratic behaviour

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Abstract

This article discusses the implications of a study that examined the effects of deliberative learning strategies on students' democratic behaviour in a Taiwanese junior high school civics class. The results indicated that the deliberative learning approach was effective in developing students' democratic behaviour through the specific instruction employed. This suggests that deliberative learning may provide teachers with an innovative teaching strategy that promotes democratic practices and assists students in learning how to solve controversial issues in a democratic way.

Keywords: Deliberative Learning, Civic Education, Democratic Behaviour

Introduction

Contemporary political theory that uses the concept of deliberative democracy has high expectations of the deliberative or rational communication act (Reich, 2007). The theory of deliberative communication has influenced those education researchers who regard deliberative learning as an important part of civic education for democracy (Buie & Wright, 2010; Englund, 2006; Ruitenberg, 2009). Recent research on the effects of a deliberative learning model has highlighted the efforts of many countries (for example the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden) to integrate the spirit of deliberative democracy into classrooms (Enslin, Pendlebury, & Tjiattas, 2001; Peterson, 2009; Zaleski, 2007). The aim is to promote students' ability to practise democracy (Reich, 2007) and to encourage their willingness to participate in public affairs by implementing deliberative learning strategies (Michaels, O'Connor, & Resnick, 2008; Murphy, 2004).

In 2004, the National Youth Commission (NYC) in Taiwan held the 'Youth National Affairs Conference' to provide opportunities for young people to experience high-quality democracy in action. Since then, the NYC has continued promoting and cultivating the development of deliberative democracy on campuses and advocates the importance of deliberative democracy in civics education in schools. The NYC expects teachers to develop teaching materials and to make deliberative learning a new strategy of democracy education in order to deepen Taiwanese's understanding of democracy.

Citizens are not born with the ability to behave in democratic ways; it must be

fostered by the power of education (Warren, 1992). However, in Taiwan the pressure of entrance examinations means that junior high school teachers are unwilling to use new methods that differ greatly from traditional instructions. Therefore, students are denied opportunities to learn and practise democratic behaviour. According to Chang (2005), this will disadvantage future civil society if Taiwan doesn't cultivate the democratic behaviour of its citizens through education. Roth (2006) has suggested that the civic education curriculum should include various deliberative learning skills to promote civic awareness and democratic skills through the practice of democratic values. Communicating using reason and mutual respect, forming consensus and resolving issues are seen as essential to democratic education (Lanir, 1991). Using deliberative learning will establish classroom environments that promote democratic discussion and decision-making by consensus. Such education reform would help students to develop their democratic behaviour and their ability to participate in democratic politics. It would also help create a school culture of deliberative democracy.

Given the importance of democratic behaviour and the lack of research into deliberative learning in Taiwanese schools, the study discussed in this article examined a deliberative learning model used in a junior high school civics class in Taiwan. The aim was to understand the democratic behaviour of participating students and the problems that were encountered when this form of social interaction was used.

Deliberative learning

The main theoretical argument for integrating deliberative democracy into school instruction is attributed to the political theories developed by John Rawls and Jurgen Harbermas (Cooke, 2002; Enslin et al., 2001; Fitzpatrick, 2009; Mouffe, 2000; Saward, 2002). Rawls's public reason theory advocates that democracy must be built according to the public interest and involve citizens with knowledge of public reason and the understanding that their rights are equal. Within a context of tolerance and neutrality, rational citizens should be able to discuss public affairs in a deliberative way. Similarly, Habermas's communication theory argues that citizens can use rational debate to participate in making deliberative decisions related to themselves. They are able to assess the various options for action and come to a consensus acceptable to the public at large. Both Rawls and Habermas stressed that the legitimacy of the choice must be generated by the conditions of freedom, equality, and reason (Elster, 1998).

In summary, deliberation democracy is concerned with resolving controversial public issues through rational debate and objective analysis (McDevitt & Kiousis, 2006; Stitzlein, 2010). The approach stresses that citizens can equally and independently express their ideas in rational discussion to produce benefits that go beyond the individual and shape the common good (Chambers, 1996). The deliberative learning approach developed in education provides practice in deliberative democracy. It is the deliberate process of rational dialogue with all participants having the opportunity to participate equally. After understanding the necessary information and following collective discussion, individuals express their respective positions, ones that have been reached through rational discussion. Different ideas are criticised in order to seek consensus in decision-making in ways that resolve problems and conflict (Elster,

1998). Students gain experience by participating in discussions about public matters related to their class or school. This practice of participating in deliberative democracy is designed to empower their democratic behaviour (Moller, 2006).

Implementation of deliberative learning model

The deliberative learning model provides students with the opportunity to participate in discussing public issues. It instructs them in skills of analysis and in taking an objective point of view. It provides a context based on principles of equality. Students are encouraged to accommodate, even appreciate, the diverse views of others. Through the process of continuous self-reflection and assessment, students are asked to select and propose a solution to the problem under discussion. This provides experience in solving public problems in a democratic way. It is designed to foster future citizens in democratic behaviour, which includes skills in independent thinking, tolerance, and communication (Chang, 2005; Lanir, 1991).

The three stages of deliberative learning are as follows (NYC, 2007).

1. *Basic courses stage:* To introduce the concept of deliberative democracy students are organised into small groups in order to establish agreed upon rules of discussion.
2. *Formal discussion stage:* In groups, students discuss and determine the problems using deliberative thinking and demonstrate the results of the discussion. The groups compile a list of the options, strategies, and finalised choices decided upon in coming to decision. The students then re-group and each new group analyses and evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of the strategies suggested as ways to solve the problem. Other groups ask questions and add to the information that contributes to the discussion. Finally, everyone is given the opportunity to fully express their views in writing before a consensus is agreed upon.
3. *Review stage:* Students share their experience. Teachers comment on the consensus reached by the students and mention ideas that students may have ignored.

Over the last few years, several studies report that deliberative dialogue can enhance students' skills, knowledge, and commitment to civic participation (Carcasson, 2010; Deuchar, 2009; Lopez & Zúñiga, 2010; Moller, 2006). The approach prepares students to become engaged citizens through the development of democratic behaviour. The Study Circles Resource Center in the U.S.A. is an organisation for promoting deliberative democracy and dialogue mode for resolving public issues and working together for solving problems at school or community by deliberative learning ways (Study Circles Resource Center, 2003). The claim is that deliberative learning can help young people by providing ways to talk and listen, to expand the understanding of issues in ways that go beyond their point of view, to promote critical thinking, to establish good communicational relationship between participants, and to encourage

participation in solving problems (Murphy, 2004). Buie and Wright (2010) found that students who are provided with deliberative learning opportunities enjoy expressing their personal opinions, and improve their ability to verify and criticise different viewpoints. In addition, their political motivation is enhanced. Other writers argue that through the process of discussing issues, students will realise the different viewpoints that exist between each other and will tend to appreciate different viewpoint equally (Hess & Gatti, 2010). According to Reich (2007) and Rossi (1995), the process creates thoughtful citizens.

An open and supportive classroom atmosphere helps promote deliberative learning and improve students' ability to engage in democratic discussion (Hess & Gatti, 2010; Liu, 2000). Therefore, deliberative learning emphasises that dialogue in the classroom should be mutually inclusive. Teachers should move away from a top-down authoritative style of teaching and let students discuss the issues in an open, supportive and respectful classroom atmosphere. Roth (2008) argues that students who are educated in democratic skills to solve controversial issues and given opportunities to participate when solving conflicts through a deliberative learning will learn how to contribute to the common good.

Deliberative learning study

The study of the effects of deliberative learning on students' ***independent thinking ability***, ***communication ability***, and ***toleration ability*** was based on the objectives identified in the literature and discussed above. The subjects were from one public junior high school in middle Taiwan. There were 60 eighth graders in two classes. One class served as the experimental group (N = 31) and the other served as a control group (N = 29). The two classes were randomly assigned to either a control group that was receiving traditional lecture-discussion instruction or to an experimental group receiving a twelve-week instruction in civics education according to the deliberative learning approach.

The students' democratic behaviours were examined using a Democratic Behaviour Ability Survey developed in a prior study, which used a 'Scale of Democratic Behaviour Ability' that was administered to all subjects both in the pretest and, twelve weeks later, in the post-test. The democratic behaviour ability survey consisted of 31 questionnaire items with three scales, including independent thinking ability, communication ability, and toleration ability (consisting of, respectively, 10, 11, and 10 items). The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability for each of the three scales was as follows: independent thinking ability, alpha = 0.62; communication ability, alpha = 0.70; toleration ability, alpha = 0.82. The scales were designed with a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree; 4 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 2 = disagree; 1 = strongly disagree) to determine students' agreement with each statement. The data of the scale was used to evaluate the effect of deliberative learning on the independent thinking ability, communication ability, and toleration ability of junior high school students. Higher scores represent greater agreement with each statement. T-tests and one-way ANCOVA were used to analyse the data. In addition, qualitative data was collected from those students who participated in the experimental group's 'Questionnaire of

Learning Feedback'. The data provided in-depth descriptions of students' perceptions of deliberative learning experiences. This enabled us to better understand the process of a new method of learning effects, and to explore possible explanations for the findings in the quantitative data.

Results and discussion

Table 1 presents the means and SDs of the scores obtained from the democratic behaviour ability survey.

Table 1: Means and SDs of democratic behaviour scores of students from two groups before and after the experiment

Scale	Experimental group (N = 31)		Control group (N = 29)	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Independent thinking ability	M 35.35 SD 3.47	M 37.13 SD 4.10	M 36.52 SD 3.87	M 36.38 SD 3.96
Communication ability	M 37.65 SD 3.43	M 40.74 SD 2.24	M 38.55 SD 4.03	M 39.55 SD 3.76
Toleration ability	M 40.19 SD 3.63	M 41.74 SD 3.40	M 39.55 SD 3.25	M 39.24 SD 3.39
Total	M 113.19 SD 8.13	M 119.61 SD 7.12	M 114.62 SD 7.19	M 115.17 SD 7.91

These findings indicate that there was a significant difference in the democratic behaviour of junior high school students as a result of the inclusion of the deliberative learning approach [$F = 14.91$, $p = .000$]. With regard to the three dimensions of democratic behaviour, students in the experimental group significantly outperformed students in the control group in their toleration ability [$F = 10.19$, $p = .002$] and communication ability [$F = 4.36$, $p = .041$]. However, no significantly difference was found in the students' independent thinking ability [$F = 30.5$, $p = .32$]. This result may be related to junior high school students tending to seek peer-recognition, being easy to follow the groups' viewpoint, and ignoring their own opinions; therefore, they are underperforming on thinking independently.

A questionnaire completed by students from the experimental group showed that 74 percent were positive about the new method generally with 71 percent saying that deliberative learning gave them a chance to think carefully about the given issue. The students who were positive stated that deliberative learning helped "to analyse a problem from diverse perspectives", "to appreciate a variety of different viewpoints " and "to discuss and think about problem in a prolonged manner."

The students wrote that:

> *Listening to the viewpoints of other classmates made me understand issues more.* ST25

> *We would have more solutions if all team members were able to exchange their viewpoints.* ST 7

Sixteen students (51.5%) agreed that the approach helped to improve their ability to think independently, 11 (35.5%) students were uncertain, while 3 (9.8%) disagreed and 1 student (3.2%) strongly disagreed. Additional reasons given in support of deliberative learning included agreement that deliberative learning improved their ability to think independently, to analysis issues objectively, to develop pluralistic thinking and to be self-reflective about their viewpoint. Indicative statements were:

> *When others' viewpoint are different from mine, I will think about whether they are right or not and will ask questions to confirm my thoughts.* ST 24

Those who gave reasons to support the view that deliberative learning was not helpful in improving their ability to think independently agreed with the statements "influence by friends" and "cannot think rationally". They mentioned that:

> *Most of proposals I chose are made by my good friend.* ST 19

> *It is hard for me to agree with viewpoint made by persons I dislike.* ST 30

This suggests that some students will make decisions according to their peers or are swayed by their dislike of the person who puts forward an idea. It points to the obvious influence of peer pressure amongst students in this age range, one that may or may not be open to effective teaching strategies.

A majority of students (71 percent) (N = 21) said they have learned skills about how to listen to others and to express their own views confidently. They commented that:

> *I was afraid to speak before when my viewpoint was different from others before. But now I will express my viewpoint confidently.* ST 28

> *We should be quiet and listen when someone is speaking and raise a hand when wanting to speak.* ST 10

Most students (83 percent) (N = 26) realised the importance both of respect for others and tolerance towards different opinions, agreeing with the statements that:

> *I used to discuss my ideas loudly. But I have corrected this habit because it is not respectful of others.* ST 2

> *Although my viewpoint is important I have learned not to laugh at other's viewpoint because each opinion has merit.* ST 7

Interestingly, students in the experimental group emphasised how the practice of discussion in an inclusive space was alien to them, but said that they gradually realised the importance of respect for others, not just in order to reach agreement but also to show empathy towards the perspective of others. Empathetic understanding was seen to be the basis for accepting and appreciating different opinions.

Twenty-three students (74.2 percent of the experimental group) wanted to continue learning in this way. They agreed with such reasons as: "able to draw on collective wisdom and put forward feasible decisions" and "opinions are concerned about" and "group is able to produce a consensus". They mentioned that:

> *In a small group we have more opportunities to share viewpoints that we hidden in our hearts before. We would be more willing to obey decisions that made in this way.* ST 6

The benefits of the deliberative learning approach for the experimental group were the emphasis on dialogue with each other, equality, and rational communication. They considered that they would be receptive to more views and to the group consensus that followed discussion. They also considered that this approach was more successful in dealing with problems than an enforcement type of approach where students are simply told what to do. However, there was recognition that the approach requires sufficient time because the panel discussions and arguments cannot be rushed.

Conclusion

Deliberative learning is different from previous methods of teaching used in junior high school classes in Taiwan. It relies more on interaction between teachers and students and emphasises active participation in the dialogue with the teacher and with one another. Students are taught to apply their knowledge to ask more questions and to think critically in the knowledge process. Through peer discussions, students can consider difficult situations and learn to connect new ideas and prior knowledge to promote their learning (Buie & Wright, 2010). Stimulated in this way, students become active learners rather than passive recipients and learn to take the initiative in acquiring knowledge.

The study, although small and involving students from one class, suggests that the deliberative learning techniques used were effective in developing students' democratic behaviour (Murphy, 2004). The findings support the literature that indicates that the approach not only strengthens citizenship education but also allows for greater depth and scope in students' civic interactions (Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002; Reich, 2007).

Students develop the ability to be self-reflective not from the imposition of pressure from the teachers, but through the teacher's continuous guidance as they experience real events and through taking part in the self-reflective strategies encouraged by deliberative learning learn to think about their behaviour in new ways. The teacher role is important in this process. Teachers explain how deliberative communication works and ensure that the final decision about a particular issue is the result of deep thought and dialogue

and not a view imposed by those with the greatest authority. Through this practice, students can be motivated to learn and to understand how learning and decision-making occurs. Knowing how deliberative communication works is as important as taking part in the practice. The deliberative learning environment builds relations of mutual trust and respect. The emphasis on points of view arrived at through rational discussion and opinions expressed in a public forum and developed through exchange with fellow students teaches the type of communication required for democracy. According to Weithman (2005), these strategies will enhance democratic behaviour.

Finding enough time for dialogic discussion was the main problem encountered in the deliberative learning study. However, using tools such as the Internet can solve this. Students can broaden their public participation by using multiple technologies for discussing. A class web site, blog, and MSN online discussion are all valid forums for interactive discussion. These not only address the problem of the lack of time for effective in-depth discussion but also suit the contemporary culture of the students. However, it is important that teachers are fully involved in the process to ensure that deliberative learning strategies are used at all stages.

In summary, the study addresses the need to cultivate students' ability to behave in democratic ways. We found that schools can help students develop the ability to be good citizens by participating actively in public affairs (Levinson & Brantmeier, 2006). Deliberative learning positively and significantly affects student democratic behaviour according to the study. It suggests a way forward for Taiwanese teachers as they integrate the deliberative learning approach into Taiwan's junior high school civic education programmes.

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Graduate population and the labor market in Mexico: a complex relationship

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Abstract

The problem of unemployed university-educated professionals in Mexico is embedded in the relationship between higher education institutions and the productive sector. The absence of effective public policies that link the two sectors is a consequence of the government's reliance of market-led forces. This lack of linkage affects a great number of users of the higher education system and limits their eventual contribution to the economic well-being of the country. The provision of a quality education is a core strategy in providing greater productivity and economic certainty to society, however, it requires an interventionist government with policies that link higher education and employment in effective ways.

Introduction

Human resource development represents an important part of any country's integral development policy. This article examines the relationship between higher education institutions and the productive structure in Mexico. The complexity of this relationship is manifested primarily in the absence of effective public policies that link higher education with the productive sector.

There is a pronounced tendency in the Mexican economy to direct public and scientific consensus towards increasing the State's commitment to free market policies (Rangel & Ivanova, 2008; Huerta, 2008; Escobar, 2010). However, controlling inflation, increasing international reserves, opening the economy through free trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and promoting public savings contrasts sharply with the impoverishment of the people, low purchasing power that restricts domestic markets, low salaries, underemployment, and an informal economy that lowers tax revenues because of tax evasion.

The Mexican economy has become increasingly more vulnerable to international factors beyond its control. Accordingly,

> *The evolution of the markets of developed countries and the principal trading blocs (North America, Europe and Asia) will more greatly affect our country in the future than it does at present. Without a doubt, the central characteristic of the economy in the future will be its greater world interdependence.*
> (The National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning [ANUIES], 2000, p. 20)

Added to this uncertainty is the lack of a precise and well enunciated public policy[1], which is particularly true in the case of industrial development and the national educational system. This absence is clearly witnessed in the Mexican institutions of higher learning and the imbalance between educational opportunities and job openings in the public and private sectors. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine the relation between higher education and the productive structure particularly in regard to the significant differences between job supply and demand of qualified professionals. It argues for the need to establish a public policy oriented towards developing human resources that link the growing numbers of educated professionals with increased employment opportunities.

ANUIES considers it necessary for Mexico to have a clear and long-term industrial development policy for 2020 as

> *. . . a result of an agreement to promote economic growth between the State and the different economic and political actors. This clear policy will provide certainty to productive investments that are slowly displacing speculative short term investments. Institutions of higher learning will have an enormous responsibility in sustaining industrial policy, particular in the area of educating and training highly qualified human resources and developing research that generates and applies knowledge in different scientific and technological fields. The processes of human resource formation and carrying out research in areas that have productive applications are closely linked to businesses under a new paradigm that promotes both the educational establishment and the productive unit.* (ANUIES, 2000, p. 27)

Therefore,

> *For education, in general, and higher learning, in specific, to fulfill the new roles the knowledge-based society demands of them (students), they need to become the investment priority of the nation. Society and governments have to significantly increase investment in this strategic sector for the development of all societal sectors. A new pact between the government, society and institutions of higher learning must define a State policy that will make the viable structural transformations required by a long-term vision.* (ANUIES, 2000, p. 9)

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1   "State policies meet the following four conditions: 1). They have long-term goals that transcend six-year development plans, 2). Their design is the result of a consensus between the different levels of government, social groups and political forces of the country, 3). They oblige governments to consider this vision in their development plans and programs and, 4). Society is committed to promote these goals in different spheres of action " (ANUIES, 2000, p. 20).

Higher education in Mexico is undergoing a restructuring process that seeks to meet its objectives of efficiency and quality so that the collective work of professors and researchers more significantly relate to the professional development of students. An integral part of this restructuring consists in more effectively linking institutions of higher learning with both the public and private sectors. Unfortunately, this effort may be adversely affected by the insipient economic conditions of the domestic market. In that market, the private sector does not generate sufficient revenue to sufficiently fund education, particularly higher education. Neither has the growth of foreign markets for Mexico's exports been able to meet the growing needs for jobs and the increased wages needed to reactivate Mexico's economy. On the other hand,

> *Financial restrictions…affect the support institutions of higher learning receive from the society and the State, which makes realizing long-term transformation processes and developing programs and projects difficult. Higher education institutions year after year live with the constant threat of not having sufficient funds, while private citizens resent reducing spending in the areas that affect them.*
> (ANUIES, 2000, p. 201)

An industrial policy at a national level that is characterized by regional development that permits greater linkage between higher education and the private sector would promote the growth of the internal market and increase financial support for higher education. This would require a social consensus that supports a policy of human resource development that is much greater than at present (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología [CONACYT], 2003). The development of human resources involves a complex relationship between higher education institutions, the productive sector, and the government. This relationship is so complex that we cannot speak of a job market in terms of supply and demand. Job market imbalances make it necessary to consider the intervention of the government through public policies oriented towards the development of the country and society as a whole rather than rely on the market supply and demand approach.

For the purposes of this paper, we argue that the labor market and higher education are complementary and require government policies that link the two sectors in effective ways. On the side of the labor market is a labor force based on the economically active and educated population. On the demand side we base our analysis on the requirements of the country's productive structure.

Labor market

Supply

As can be seen in Table 1, the economically active population of Mexico increased significantly between 2000 and 2008. These are people who are educated and available for work. Because the working age population has grown, we can infer a growing university educated population that is demanding jobs.

Table 1: Economically Active Population (EAP) as a percentage of total population

	EAP Mexico
2000	40.7
2001	40.0
2002	40.5
2003	40.4
2004	41.7
2005	40.7
2006	41.6
2007	42.0
2008	42.7

Source: International Labor Organization (ILO), 2011

Such an inference is confirmed in Table 2, which shows the growth of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6), according to the International Labor Organization (ILO). This means that more people are obtaining university-level educations and demanding jobs to fit their education level. As a result, this educated population has been increasingly pressing the productive sector to create more jobs.

Table 2: Percentage of EAP by educational level

	EAP by Educational Level*							
	X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2000	8.31	17.34	20.55	29.01	0.00	9.73	14.99	0.07
2001	8.18	36.81	0.00	23.82	15.73	1.95	13.50	0.01
2002	8.17	15.98	20.25	23.81	0.00	0.00	31.78	0.00
2003	7.48	15.67	20.04	24.64	0.00	0.00	32.17	0.00
2004	7.05	0.00	33.82	25.43	16.44	0.00	16.43	1.05
2005	6.54	0.00	32.66	25.70	18.81	0.00	15.17	1.09
2006	6.11	0.00	31.81	26.06	19.44	0.00	15.34	1.27
2007	5.63	0.00	30.36	26.95	14.51	5.30	16.06	1.19
2008	5.47	0.00	29.63	27.65	14.94	5.08	16.07	1.18

Source: International Labor Organisation (2011).
* X - No Schooling
   0 - Pre-primary education
   1 - Primary education or first stage of basic education
   2 - Lower secondary or second stage of basic education
   3 - Upper socondary education
   4 - Post-secondary non-tertiary education
   5 - First stage of tertiary education (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification)
   6 - Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification)

We can see in Table 3 that unemployment is rising for all educational levels. However, for levels 5 and 6 we observe that the growing unemployment is unexpectedly low through 2007 and again in 2008. This may be due to the 2007-2008 financial crisis, which drove employers to the hire a better educated workforce, but who were earning lower wages.

Table 3: Percentage of unemployment by educational level

	Unemployment by educational level						
	X	1	2	3	4	5	6
2000	3.95	24.95	30.28	14.81	7.74	17.77	0.51
2001	2.91	26.05	28.08	15.93	6.70	19.81	0.48
2002	2.78	25.07	29.49	14.03	6.77	21.10	0.75
2003	2.60	22.38	31.20	15.50	5.92	21.89	0.52
2004	2.38	22.46	29.18	15.46	6.50	23.44	0.56
2005	2.32	22.34	29.35	17.68	6.63	21.34	0.31
2006	2.91	22.08	29.53	18.88	5.91	19.99	0.62
2007	1.80	20.31	30.42	18.64	5.90	22.50	0.42
2008	2.29	21.40	30.10	21.13	4.09	20.09	0.88

Source: International Labor Organization (2011).

From the information provided, we can observe that the supply of graduates from institutions of higher education has been steadily increasing, so the job market has a substantially better educated labor force. One can say that these graduates have better tools to cope with the increasingly competitive conditions they face upon graduation but increased competitiveness does not increase the actual pool of jobs required, nor do lower wages paid to professionals benefit the economy more widely.

Demand

For the purposes of this study, labor demand is considered in terms of its function in developing the productive sector. For this reason, we consider it important to look at the constitution of the economy according to the productive sectors. As we can see in Table 4, the employed economically active population (EAP) focuses primarily on wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods. Manufacturing is the second most important and agriculture, hunting and forestry are third in terms of providing employment. The problem is that these economic activities do not employ the specialized professionals graduating from universities. Most of these industries do not require highly specialized labor. This tends to increase unemployment (Table 6).

Table 4: Percentage of EAP occupied by productive sector

	EAP occupied by productive sector*																
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
2000	17.5	0.4	0.4	19.3	0.5	6.5	21.8	4.7	4.4	0.8	3.0	4.5	4.8	2.7	3.4	4.5	0.0
2004	15.7	0.4	0.4	17.3	0.6	6.5	23.7	5.5	4.4	0.7	3.5	4.2	5.1	2.9	3.6	4.3	0.0
2005	14.5	0.4	0.5	16.9	0.5	7.8	22.9	6.0	4.5	0.8	4.5	4.7	5.3	2.8	3.3	4.2	0.0
2006	13.9	0.4	0.4	16.8	0.4	8.2	22.7	6.0	4.7	0.9	4.6	4.8	5.3	2.8	3.2	4.2	0.0
2007	13.1	0.3	0.4	16.6	0.5	8.4	22.9	6.2	4.5	0.9	4.8	4.8	5.4	2.8	3.2	4.3	0.0
2008	12.8	0.3	0.4	16.5	0.5	8.3	22.7	6.5	4.6	0.9	5.0	5.0	5.3	2.9	3.3	4.2	0.0

Source: International Labor Organization, 2011.

Table 5: Percentage of EAP occupied by educational level

	EAP occupied by educational level						
	X	1	2	3	4	5	6
2000	8.42	20.43	28.98	-0.38	9.78	14.92	0.06
2001	8.32	-0.67	23.71	15.73	1.83	13.33	0.00
2002	8.32	20.12	23.65	-0.40	-0.19	32.09	-0.02
2003	7.63	19.97	24.45	-0.46	-0.18	32.47	-0.02
2004	7.22	34.24	25.29	16.47	-0.24	15.95	1.07
2005	6.69	33.04	25.57	18.85	-0.24	14.87	1.11
2006	6.21	32.13	25.95	19.46	-0.19	15.09	1.30
2007	5.76	30.72	26.83	14.36	5.27	15.78	1.21
2008	5.59	29.93	27.56	14.71	5.12	15.85	1.19

Source: International Labor Organization (2011).

Table 6: Percentage of unemployment in EAP in Mexico

	EAP unemployed
2000	1.09
2004	1.72
2006	6.32
2007	7.02
2008	7.26

SOURCE: International Labor Organization (2011).

Higher education and employment policies in Mexico

Higher education policies

National Development Plan 1989-1994

The 1989-1994 National Development Plan (PND) includes the following educational goals: Improve the quality of education, reduce illiteracy, decrease drop-out numbers and increase graduation rates. (Departamento de Programación y Presupuesto, 1989, p. 102). The primary educational goals of the PND were to meet basic-level education needs and promote scientific and technological research in institutions of higher learning. The PDN proposed meeting these goals, in part, by decentralizing local educational systems while preserving links with the national educational system.

Table 7 provides information about how public education policy proposes to improve secondary and higher education, technical training and job training programs. This information provides evidence of Mexico's educational policy goals and shows the need to link education with the private sector.

Table 7: Educational policies: Secondary, higher, technological and job training

Educational Level	Strategy	Goal	Impact
Higher Education	Extend coverage	Satisfy national demand	Sociopolitical
Technological education	Linkage with the private sector	Increase educational competitiveness	Socioscientific
Job training	Greater integration between school and private enterprise	Promote on the job training	Social, productive and labor

Source: Poder Ejecutivo Federal (1988, p. 102)

The government's interest focused primarily on the link between education and the private sector, job training, and to some degree, technical training. This explains the goal of increased integration between schools and businesses to promote job training as well as to mitigate substandard educational levels. However, the actual relation between higher education and the private sector cannot be observed, probably because the PDN is an indicative plan only. Furthermore, the relationship between the government and private interests had undergone much greater public scrutiny. There are increasing demands to know more about how public resources were being used. In addition, there is limited agreement between the government and the private sector about how to meet common economic development objectives that take into account the necessary linkage between them.

National Development Plan 1995-2000

> *The investment in human capital . . . is fundamental, not only to promote social well-being, but to guarantee greater productivity, economic growth and the even more important objectives of social justice and equality. Expanding the abilities and opportunities of the people imposes upon us a national crusade to increase the coverage and quality of educational services, health and housing, in order to advance integral social development.*
> (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, p. 84)

The National Development Plan 1995-2000 emphasized investment in developing human capital to promote economic development, generate economic growth and better distribute wealth. It also showed an interest in integrating private sector activities with government programs that were part of social policy and with a possible relation between educational and employment policies. The objective of the plan was to:

> *. . . significantly reduce the illiteracy rate so that by the year 2000 it will not brake national development or adversely affect the progress of families or communities, while insisting that education should serve community development and productive employment. To achieve this objective, programs to develop human resources for the workplace will be redesigned and employ a flexible structure that will permit persons to choose the best possible educational option to promote the incorporation into and greater mobility within the job market.*
> (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, p. 87)

The intention was to facilitate alternating between in-class study and real-world work experience that would make education a permanent lifelong activity. Flexible and modular systems would promote the adaptation of new technologies and their constant actualization. In this way, attempts were made to coordinate the public and private sectors and "establish job certification of competences norms for both empirically acquired and formally learned, to promote the systematic linkage within the private sector" (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, p. 87). The plan proposed developing people for the workplace according to the guidelines enunciated in the chapter on economic development. The goal was "increasing productivity and expanding more highly remunerated opportunities" (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, p. 87).

However, again we find that attention is focused on education for the workplace in which we find the relation between school and the private sector in terms of employment to develop the economy. It is recognized in the National Development Plan 1995-2000, as a more dynamic and better distributed territorially national higher education system, with a greater linkage between research centers and national needs (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, pp. 87, 90).

The 'Alternancia´s' plans: 2001-2006 and 2007-2012

Political competition and the possibility of different political parties being voted into and out of power brought hope to many, especially when the opposition presidential candidate, Vicente Fox, won the 2000 election. However, this period laid bare the clear need for a congruent and implementable public policy that did not leave the question of employment exclusively to the free market. The need for a well-articulated policy to optimize educational resources that involve linkage between universities and the private sector became a matter of great importance.

Instead of developing such a coordinated policy, both plans offered approaches designed by the universities that were unable to strengthen strategic cooperation ties with the private sector. Hence, although the official discourse about the importance of education for the country's development, there was the absence of a genuine linkage with the private sector, except for upper secondary education.

An example of this can be seen in the National Development Plan for the presidential term 2001-2006, the Government of the United Mexican States (Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Presidencia de la República, 2001). Guidelines with six objectives in the area of social and human development were developed. These were to improve levels of education and welfare; increase equity and equality of opportunities; promote education for the development of personal skills and individual and collective initiative; strengthen social cohesion and capital; achieve social and human development in harmony with nature and expand the capacity of governmental response to promote public confidence in institutions. One point that stands out and is very relevant for this paper is the strategy to "Diversify and establish more flexible educational opportunities for students graduating from secondary and higher education to better adapt individual learner needs to actual job requirements" (Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Presidencia de la República, 2001, p. 87).

The National Development Plan 2007-2012, the *Presidencia de la República de México* (2007) was similar to previous plans. It emphasized strengthening the link between the upper secondary education system and the productive apparatus as provided by the strategy enunciated in point 13.3, which particularly emphasized the importance to labor skills. The strategy states:

> *All forms of upper secondary education must offer an effective path to the labor market. This type of education should encourage the willingness and ability of students to seek employment opportunities or to employ themselves. The goal of this type of education is to ensure that all graduates can document they have certified job skills as part of the accreditation process.*

It also recognized the need to "strengthen this strategy . . . through scholarships for graduate internships, where participation in the productive sector is more direct. This will ultimately help graduates join the workforce if they wish, continue their studies, or combine both."

On the other hand, the plan requires flexible mechanisms from both educational

institutions and those requiring qualified labor that will establish programs to combine study and work. This is intended to expand coverage, promote equity and improve the quality and relevance of higher education through the creation of higher education. The scheme is also intended to take advantage of installed capacity; diversify and strengthen programs' educational modalities; create more flexible curricula; expand tutorial support systems and strengthen scholarship programs targeted at disadvantaged groups; consolidate the profile and performance of scholars and spread the practice of assessment and accreditation to improve the quality of higher education programs; creating and strengthening institutional bodies. The mechanisms will articulate the educational, vocational and overall development of students; satisfy the labor demand and the imperatives of regional and national development in a more coherent way and improve the integration, coordination and management of the national higher education system.

These are ambitious and exemplary goals. However, we agree with Huerta (2008), when he states that, "there are no production conditions for the job seekers . . . economic policy does not provide the education, labor and health to all" (p. 85). Even if the National Development Plan enunciates the country's best intentions to change the educational system there still remains one major issue to address: the creation of well-paying jobs not only for graduates from high school, but also for those graduates of institutions of higher education.

Employment policies

National Development Plan 1989-1994

An interesting aspect of the National Development Plan 1989-1994 is its recognition that the country "requires coordination between political and social policies" (Departamento de Programación y Presupuesto, 1989, p. 98). However, this coordination is not a priority. The economic conditions of the country demand it pays attention first "to providing economic stability, attracting job-creating investments, increasing productivity and stimulating worker participation in the process of economic change" (Departamento de Programación y Presupuesto, 1989, p. 98). Furthermore, this document states, "increased production obtained in this way does not generally benefit large and unprotected social groups" (Departamento de Programación y Presupuesto, 1989, p. 99). Neither do these groups benefit from the job creation and education that would flow from increased economic production.

In order to improve levels of well-being across society at large, salaries and purchasing power need to be increased, as well as protecting social assistance programs. *Table 8* shows the political lines of action required.

Table 8: Employment policies

Line	Strategy	Goal	Impact
Increase employment and real salary	Economic growth, productivity. Gradually decrease transference of profits by multinational companies to their countries of origin.	Obtain equitable social improvements	Increase the real standard of living (socioeconomic)
Improve and expand educational opportunities; education and productivity	More education means better wages	Increase real salaries	Better trained work force (Socioeconomic)
Consolidation of fiscal policies	Improved distribution of earnings to alleviate backwardness due to low salaries; selected subsidies	Finance activities related to social programs	Fiscal reform (Sociopolitical)
Labor policy	Social security	Satisfy worker demands	Government follows up to insure labor laws are enforced. (sociopolitical)
Support the organized participation of workers, farmers, businesses and government	Participation	Sign agreements	Sociopolitical

Source: Based on the National Development Plan 1989-1994 (Departamento de Programación y Presupuesto, 1989, p. 99)

These lines of political action show that education is thought of as an instrument that permits people to obtain better wages. The orientation of educational policy can be explained in this sense. Providing training policies after basic education is a growing demand and is related to two basic aspects: socio-political concerns on the one hand and meeting private sector needs on the other. This combined interest represents an important characteristic of higher education policy in Mexico.

National Development Plan 1995-2000

The National Development Plan 1995-2000 showed a continued preoccupation that "improving life conditions of the Mexican people will only be possible with a growing economy that successfully generates productive employment and promotes a recovery

of real salaries" (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995, p. 151). However, the goal of this plan, like the other plans discussed is limited by the lack of linkage between job training and the job market. Technological education and training are within the educational process than the real-world workplace and given the lack of coordination between the public and private sectors there is no formal framework to recognize abilities and knowledge acquired during professional or occupational practice. In addition, training systems tend to be very rigid and do not adapt quickly to new requirements. (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995)

Despite the obstacles, the Plan proposes a significant quantitative and qualitative increase in training according to the following strategies: systematically link the business sector and the educational community to offer educational services for technicians; provide continuous training in the workplace; include the private sector in establishing work competency norms to respond to the actual and foreseeable world labor conditions and to progressive degrees of complexity within work roles. These norms need to be integrated into the Normalized System of Labor Competencies, whose structure will facilitate the mobility of workers between industries and regions (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 1995). Again this plan, like the others, shows how closely employment policies are related to education. It focuses on high school technical studies and tends, as do the other plans, to overlook the natural relation between technical education and the private sector; yet it is this relationship that creates employment. However, higher education has historically had insufficient links with the private sector despite the fact that employers are interested in well-trained human resources because of the implicit advantage of having a better educated and informed workforce for their businesses.

Mexico's goals include a national higher education system that is more dynamic, geographically better distributed, more balanced and diverse insofar as its career options are concerned. Most importantly, these goals include a national higher education system that provides an excellent quality education that is focused on science and technology and satisfying social demands. There is great interest in investing in human capital in order to achieve economic growth, the generation of employment and a better distribution of wealth. The country is concerned with lowering the illiteracy rate with an education that promotes community development and productive employment. It plans to do so by redesigning training programs by means of a flexible structure that permits alternating study and work through dynamic and modular learning systems that permit the constant and permanent use of new technologies.

In pursuing these goals, it is not only necessary to educate workers, but to also prepare businessmen, business leaders, administrators of cooperatives and, importantly, women's groups that promote self-employment. A program to instruct trainers is necessary to begin this educational cycle. Instructors need to understand the role new technologies have as a fundamental part of continuing education programs, which is imposed by the technological and globalization processes. These changes include improving the quality and application of general standardized examinations covering labor skills, considering international norms and insuring their acceptance by the private sector and other involved agencies.

The presidential term employment period 2007-2012

Under the government of Felipe Calderon, the 2007-2012 National Development Plan makes extensive reference to the issue of employment, unlike the National Development Plan 2001-2006, which emphasized alternating parties and democracy. From the beginning of his presidential term, President Calderon referred to himself as the president of employment. In the National Development Plan of his term, his strategy was linked to the competitiveness of the country, and particularly to the aspect of production, but not explicitly connected to developing the human resources needed for production. So that again the relationship between higher education and the labor market is conspicuous by its absence. An industrial policy or something similar is needed to join these two major areas of public policy; those of employment generation particularly for young university graduates and of education more generally.

In a context of low growth and a not very competitive market coupled with a trade deficit that has focused on imports, companies do not have secure profitability levels to stimulate investment and job creation. Mexico cannot slow the growth of the informal economy if it continues its current economic policy characterised by these low profitability levels.

> *Most workers are underemployed and are unemployed people with higher educational levels, and this phenomenon is exacerbated by the financial crisis. More than a third of the unemployed have a higher education or high school, which means that this population is increasingly finding it difficult to find a job that is compatible with their educational level (and specialty) and must pursue lower income, poorer quality, occupations where they do not apply the knowledge gained in their course of studies.* (Escobar, 2010, p. 84).

To exacerbate the problem, a new phenomenon consisting of young people who neither study nor work (*ni-ni*, in Spanish) has emerged among graduates of institutions of higher education. It includes a large percentage of graduates who are waiting on the sidelines hoping for better employment opportunities. In the view of many, this phenomenon has resulted in an increase in crime and has become a major social problem. Social deterioration is manifested by youth crime in a segment of the population without employment experience but with consumer needs that cannot be provided for by formal employment. In short, the situation shows a lack of effective public policy with regard to the relationship between higher education and employment.

Conclusion

This article has provided an account of the relationship between higher education and employment in Mexico. It shows that there is still not enough progress towards linking higher education institutions and employment-generating business in public policy, which we believe can provide the direction the Mexican people want. We argue that it is necessary to find points of convergence between both spheres of action.

Such integration will provide security to countless young university graduates wishing to join the labor market.

The failure to link higher education and the productive sector highlights the need to work in a more coordinated and concerted manner so that education can provide the development the people deserve. Ignorance is the weapon used to maintain inequality in income distribution and the resulting high levels of grinding poverty. In turn, this prevents further opportunities to generate real competitive economic activity. The absence of a clear policy oriented to the complex relationship between higher education and employment, contributes to the unnecessary waste of country´s resources. The combined involvement of education and the private sectors, under the government's leadership and with effective policies that institute the education-employment relationship, is required in order to solve this seemingly intractable problem.

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Progressive education in New Zealand from 1937 to 1944: Seven years from idea to orthodoxy

Daniel Couch

Abstract

1937 marked a pivotal point in New Zealand's educational history. An international organisation known as the New Education Fellowship held a conference in New Zealand. Fourteen internationally renowned lecturers spoke on topics concerning the reorganisation of education in democratic societies. The New Education Fellowship delegates lectured from a pedagogical understanding that had been developed by the likes of Dewey and Nunn, and was referred to as both progressive education and new education. By the closing lecture of the conference, the idea of a new education pedagogy had been introduced and legitimised to mainstream New Zealand educators and public on a previously unprecedented scale. Through the development of a thorough understanding of this conference, a historiographical survey follows the influence this idea exerted over the following seven years as it made its way from an idea to a pedagogical orthodoxy by 1944.

Introduction

> *It is impossible to understand fully any period of education without knowing intimately the period that preceded it.* (Beeby, 1992, p. 283)

This article follows the influences of a progressive understanding of education, which was launched into the mainstream of New Zealand education in 1937. Progressive ideas had been circling amongst several notable individuals involved in education since the beginning of the twentieth century, and key texts by Percy Nunn and John Dewey had been included in academic programmes during the 1920s. However, a conference on education in 1937 generated significant interest in progressive education ideals on an unprecedented scale (Beeby, 1992). The article explores how new education ideas became the orthodoxy in New Zealand education, particularly within educational policy, between 1937 and 1944. In so doing, it is underpinned by a belief that the ideas presented in the 1937 New Education Fellowship (NEF) Conference provided the international legitimising influence which embedded progressive education in New Zealand by 1944. The article demonstrates, through the examination of historical events, the certainty with which progressive education became the orthodox pedagogy in New Zealand between 1937, where its influence was introduced into mainstream education, and 1944, where its ideas were so successfully entrenched within policy and practice that they began to be criticised. Further, it is established that the cultural context of

the period was critical in enabling the ideology held within progressive education to become commonly accepted.

To suggest, however, that progressive ideology did not exist within New Zealand prior to the 1937 NEF Conference would be a gross misstatement. Several educators had been involved in the introduction of progressive tendencies into the education system prior to the 1937 conference. Hogben, Director of the Department of Education from 1899 to 1915, introduced manual and technical instruction into the primary syllabus in 1902. He reinvented the examination system with the belief that only in a liberated atmosphere would teaching truly thrive. In 1904, he shifted the roles of school inspectors by creating a Proficiency Examination that was to be administered at the end of primary school. This removed the need for annual inspections, a role that fell to the teachers (Dakin, 1973).

Strong, Director of the Department of Education during the late 1920s and early 1930s, carried forward strong tenets of progressive education by making efforts to ensure that teachers and schools met the needs of the 'whole child'. His contribution of a volume celebrating fifty years of national education in New Zealand went to great lengths in stipulating the requirements for schools' physical environments in an effort to ensure appropriate lighting, ventilation, and space for students across the country. His clear passion builds as he describes

> *[The] dual desk of varying sizes and, wherever possible, the single*
> *desk, where the pupil can work in comfort and move without disturbing*
> *his companions, the easily moved table and chair, the mats where the*
> *"primers" can lie and read or write or build castles in the air. What is*
> *the meaning of it all? One word gives the answer: Freedom.*
> (Strong, 1928, p. 146)

Strong made great strides in 1928 and 1929 towards refurbishing or developing schools across the country, and produced a new curriculum. It was commonly referred to as the Red Book, and "incorporated much of the spirit of Progressivism" (Middleton & May, 1997, p. 47) as it afforded teachers "new freedom…to organize their teaching in any way that most appeals to them" (Strong, 1929, as quoted in Beeby, 1992, p. 127). Progressive tendencies were being employed by several teachers within New Zealand prior to the 1937 NEF Conference, such as teachers using ability groups within their classes (Middleton & May, 1997). Educational policy, however, took longer to transform. While Strong's Red Book had been a considerable shift in the progressive direction, this article will demonstrate that the 1937 NEF Conference introduced progressive pedagogy and understanding to a previously unprecedented audience, paving the way for progressive pedagogy and policy over the following seven years.

New Education Foundation

In his forward to Modern Trends in Education, Campbell (1938) can perhaps be forgiven for mistakenly stating that the NEF was founded in 1915, as the movements that led to the establishment of the NEF in 1921 were indeed set in motion by the

establishment of the Theosophical Fraternity in Education in 1915. Beatrice Ensor, considered the "main animating spirit behind the NEF" (Brehony, 2006, p. 735), had joined the Theosophical Society in 1908, and the Theosophical Fraternity in Education called upon the international connections established by the Theosophical Society to rapidly develop sections in Britain, France, India, the USA, Australia and New Zealand (Brehony, 2006). That these connections were established was attributable in no small part to the first World War. "The War of 1914-1918 led to a growing sense of world unity that found expression in a wide variety of international associations including those concerned with education" (Boyd & Rawson, 1965, p. 57).

Driven by her passion for Theosophy and education, Ensor began a publication entitled *Education for the New Era*, later shortened to *New Era*, with the specific aim of connecting Theosophist teachers. Brehony (2006) illustrates that this publication was "internationalist in outlook and it was intended to assist in the establishment of an international fellowship of teachers" that would meet annually (p. 737). The first such meeting was held in Calais in 1921, attended primarily by teachers. At the close of the meeting the New Education Fellowship was established (Abbiss, 1998; Boyd & Rawson; 1965, Brehony; 2006), with a pedagogical belief influenced by the relatively fresh psychology of child development from individuals like Ferriere and Piaget (both of whom were on the NEF governing body [Abbiss, 1998]), and the writings of Dewey, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Tolstoy, Montessori and Freud (Abbiss, 1998; Boyd & Rawson, 1965). Beatrice Ensor was to retain a central role in the fellowship for years to come.

Hegemony

As progressive education's journey is traced from idea to orthodoxy in New Zealand by 1944, it is important to establish a common understanding of the key elements of a hegemony.

> *The concept of hegemony is normally understood as emphasising consent in contrast to reliance on the use of force. It describes the way in which dominant social groups achieve rulership or leadership on the basis of attaining social cohesion and consensus . . . In its simplistic form hegemony concerns the construction of consent and the exercise of leadership by the dominant group over subordinate groups; in its more complex form, this deals with issues such as the elaboration of political projects, the articulation of interests, the construction of social alliances, the development of historical blocs, the deployment of state strategies and the initiating of passive revolutions.*
> (Joseph, 2002, p. 1)

Joseph (2002) is also quick to point out that there is another aspect that is involved in the development of a hegemony, or orthodoxy: the context within which an idea is developing must be conducive to the further development of that idea. "For a group to become hegemonic it must have behind it the economic, political and cultural conditions which allow it to put itself forward as leading" (Joseph, 2002, p. 125).

The introduction of an idea

> *Dear Mr Cunningham, In reply to your letter of the 7th September, I have much pleasure in saying that when the idea of holding a Conference of the New Education Fellowship in New Zealand was first discussed I had no hesitation in recommending the Government with which I am associated to give the plan its full support. Much as I appreciated the advantages that would accrue from such a dissemination and exchange of ideas, I must say that the enthusiasm manifested by teachers and the general public far exceeded our anticipations. In all the four centres interest was maintained to the very last. The Conference, I may say, came at a most opportune time, for we had but recently taken our education system under critical review. By no means the least effect of such discussions, so representatively attended and so fully reported, has been the creation of a deep public interest that makes reform possible and subsequent progress assured. New Zealand, I feel, is much indebted to the Australian Council for Educational Research and to the lecturers generally for the privilege thus enjoyed. Yours sincerely, P. Fraser. Minister of Education.* (Personal communication from Fraser to Cunningham, E. 4/10/26, 27th October 1937)

The letter to Cunningham, director of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) from the New Zealand Minister of Education, Fraser, shortly after the 1937 New Education Fellowship Conference was filled with high praise for the Conference. Whilst Cunningham had written to Fraser asking after the success of the Conference, Fraser's sentiments were not contrived, but rather sincere and, as time would prove, true. Cunningham's participation in the South African NEF Conference in 1934 had inspired him to pursue hosting the next NEF Conference in Australia. After successfully securing Australia's position as the destination for the next NEF Conference, scheduled for 1937, he extended an invitation to the director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER), Clarence Beeby.

What began as an invitation to New Zealanders for an Australian Conference quickly changed shape. Beeby looked into the feasibility of having a few of the lecturers visit New Zealand to give a lecture on their way to the Australian Conference. This idea had transformed by 1936, when a committee was formed to organise the New Zealand session of the Australian NEF Conference. After obtaining financial backing from most national educational groups, Fraser was approached. As he alluded to in his letter, he did not hesitate to commit the government's financial backing, initially £250, and later doubling it to £500 as the scale of the New Zealand session of the Australian NEF Conference grew.

There appears to be no distinctive event that indicated the change from the Conference being understood as a session of the Australian Conference to being perceived as an independent NEF Conference in its own right. Perhaps it was when a final number of fourteen lecturers were secured to tour New Zealand. Perhaps it was when the number of registrations skyrocketed from a disheartening three to well over five thousand in

the space of a few short months after schools were closed in order to enable teaching staff to attend (Beeby, 1992). Whatever the case, as the first lecturers set foot in New Zealand, the newspapers, organisers and attentive audiences were united in considering the Conference very much a New Zealand affair.

The fourteen delegates gave their lectures on a large number of topics, and were as varied in their personal backgrounds as the subjects upon which they lectured. However, five distinctive themes emerged throughout their discussions. These were: the importance of the individual, criticism of examinations, and discussion around educational administration, school inspectors, and physical activity in schools (Beeby, 1992).

The importance of the individual

The central theme upon which all else hinged, however, was the importance of the individual child. This concept was not new, and had found its validation through the explosion of interest in psychology in the 1920s (Abbiss, 1998; Beeby, 1992, Jenkins, 2000). Its ramifications for education, however, were still being explored. Meadon (1938), a delegate and Director of Education in Lancashire, illustrated that man's ideas of a liberal education were flavoured through "the social outlook of their day. The great difference between those early days and the present day is due to the great increase in the mass of observed and established facts . . . the general public now expects to have its share of knowledge" (p. 59). Echoing the understanding of this development, and referring to the transition into an age of industrialization, and the developments in the machinery thereof, Rugg (1938), a delegate and Professor of Education at Columbia University, made the assertion that "[t]he implications of this for thinking men are clear; they cannot deal with the problem of the new day with the ideas and attitudes of the old one" (p. 34).

This theoretical understanding was being applied by many of the conference speakers. In light of the wave of psychological forays into the development of the child (Jenkins, 2000), and the ramifications that this inevitably held for educators, Isaacs, a delegate and Head of Department of Child Development for London University, was able to speak from a place of particular authority on such 'modern' developments. Her lectures drew large crowds excited to hear the latest theoretical frameworks for the educating of young children.

> *Typical infant school practice in England starts from the view that it is the child's own activity which fosters his intellectual and his social and emotional growth; and his activity is directed towards the solving of problems which are real problems to him, arising in the natural effort of his mind to understand the life around him, the behaviour of things and people, and to communicate his won feelings and impressions, and understand those of others.* (Isaacs, 1938c, p. 143)

Isaacs reiterated her belief in the importance of the individual, and therefore the importance of educating the whole individual repeatedly during her lectures.

The aim of modern education is to create people who are not only self-disciplined and free in spirit, gifted in work and in enjoyment, worthy and desirable as persons, but also responsible and generous in social life, able to give and to take freely from others, sensitive to social needs, willing to serve social ends and to lose themselves in social purposes greater than themselves. (Isaacs, 1938a, p. 83)

With her extensive experience with young primary school-aged children, she demonstrated the manner in which the accepted understanding of early education was transitioning from a period of education that prepared the students for later scholastic achievement towards "meeting the characteristic mental and physical needs of these years of development" (Isaacs, 1938c, p. 146).

Criticisms of examinations

"Under examination, the examination system in all its phases has come out a rank failure" (Boyd, 1938, p. 245). In 1937, criticisms of examinations were nothing new. In fact, New Zealand had just taken the revolutionary step of abolishing the dreaded Proficiency Examination by which a student earned the privileged access to education beyond primary, with strong criticisms dating back to the late 1800s (Campbell, 1941).

> *Some of the first researches I know of were made in the United States about the year 1910 and were concerned with the reliability of marking . . . In England similar investigations into the reliability of examinations were carried out . . . investigators paid special attention to the examination used to select children for secondary education, and found its reliability to be very low. In 1927 the New Education Fellowship appointed an International Commission on Examinations which reported at the next world conference in 1929, and again at the Nice conference in 1932 . . . As it was clear that much more research was needed, the Fellowship turned to the Carnegie Corporation and asked for funds for this purpose. Part of the projected research so interested the Carnegie people that they undertook it themselves, and the International Examinations Enquiry was begun.*
> (Zilliacus, 1938, pp. 249-50)

Zilliacus (1938), chairman of the NEF and Headmaster of an experimental school in Finland, maintained that examinations created an internal tension within teachers, dissatisfaction with the system of examinations on the one hand, wanting their students to meet the mark on the other. The values placed on examinations by society had become a "dominating and standardizing influence on the whole education system" (Zilliacus, 1938, p. 249).

Hart, a speaker and Professor of Education from the University of California, made it very clear what he believed about a system of examinations and inspection without needing to step up to a lectern, his interview with *The Dominion* providing the general public with sufficiently provocative reading.

As I see it, the trinity of evils in New Zealand schools is the segregation of boys and girls, examinations and the system of inspectors . . . This system is, in my opinion, a menace to achievement, and the child, the teacher and the inspector alike are caught in a mechanism of machinery which is obsolete and is defeating the purpose for which is was intended. (Trinity of Evils, 1937).

Isaacs believed that examinations should be replaced with the use of cumulative records, or "records of development" (Isaacs, 1938b, p. 253). The trouble, as Isaacs saw it, was how to map the 'human' elements of the individual. "The assessment of intellectual ability is a relatively simple problem . . . The more difficult problem arises with the more significant aspects of development – emotional attitudes, social relations and personality" (1938b, p. 253). Through the process of trial and error, a system to meet this problem was being developed by the University of London Institute of Education. The reports were initially exceedingly factual and comprehensive. "As a result of experience it was found possible to reduce their length and to lay greater emphasis on the dynamic as contrasted with the descriptive function of record" (Isaacs, 1938b, p. 254).

By the time Isaacs was addressing crowds in New Zealand, the system had been refined from a comprehensive and detailed description of the student in these key areas to one in which rather than "merely describing each pupil's abilities, interests and personality, more attention was given to the interpretation of these facts in terms of the pupil's own special needs and the ways in which they could be met" (Isaacs, 1938b, p. 254). These record forms monitored not only the children's academic merits, but also the children themselves – their home life, physical condition and medical information. The advocacy of such information being included within a cumulative school report was fresh in New Zealand, and embodied the NEF's holistic understanding of the child.

Administration, inspectors, and physical activity

The final three main themes to become evident during the 1937 NEF Conference were indicative of the lecturers' progressive understandings. Several of the delegates were concerned over the trend towards centralisation of educational administration. In a time when democracy was increasingly coming under very real threats, lecturers such as Hart believed that education was critical in not only maintaining democracy, but should imitate democratic governance in its administration (Hart, 1938). However, the delegates were not unanimous on this front, and it was a concern that Beeby later identified as a necessary evil in order to drive consistent reform (Beeby, 1992).

The delegates shared a scathing disgust at the grading system for teachers that were in place at that time. This was a system by which every teacher throughout the country was ranked according to an assessment by a handful of school inspectors. As a result, they also brought the role of school inspectors into question. Again, Hart led the charge, stating that inspection of schools should be strictly limited to the physical buildings themselves. Any other form of inspector, he mused, shouldn't be "permitted within gun-shot of a school" (Hart, 1938, p. 443). The principle of activity was the fifth dominant

theme to come out of the Conference. This entailed not only the lecturers' desire to see an increased emphasis on physical education, but also advocated for the incorporation of activity into classroom lessons. This, Isaacs stated, was critical in order to guide the learning experience as lessons could only be verbalised once they had been understood through "his hands and his imagination" (Isaacs, 1938a, p. 87).

The Conference had been an immense success. Writing to the Director of the Department of Education, Lambourne, Beeby and his fellow official secretary for the NEF Conference acknowledged his role in the developments.

> *The National Committee of the New Education Fellowship Conference at its meeting last week asked us to convey to you and your officers their appreciation of the great assistance you have given in connection with the Conference. If it had not been for your initial far-sighted act in arranging for the schools to close the Conference could have been nothing but a failure. In making clear by this other means that the Conference had your backing, you gave it a standing it could not otherwise have had…We trust that you feel that the Conference has justified itself. All accounts are not yet in, but we are already quite certain that we shall not have to call upon the Government or other guarantors for a penny.*
> (Letter by Hunter & Beeby, 2nd August 1937, E. 4/10/26)

Behind closed doors

Immediately following the close of the Conference, a meeting behind closed doors between government officials and Conference delegates was instrumental in informing the educational reforms that were to come. Not only did it provide the government an opportunity to clarify points that were directly related to its perspective on reform, but it also set the wheels in motion for Beeby to take over as Director of the Department of Education. Understanding that the opportunity to transform the educational excitement into tangible aspects of educational administration and practice was at hand, Fraser had asked Lambourne to compile a list of forty questions.

These questions were designed to illicit specific and critical advice on the development and reshaping of the New Zealand education system. They covered nine topics, which were clearly of interest for Fraser. The record of the meeting shows that while Lambourne, Beeby, Dyer and Deavoll (both Dyer and Deavoll were involved with the Wellington Board of Education) were present, they were there only so as to afford them first-hand experience of a discussion that would otherwise have to be passed on in note form (Verbatim report of proceedings, 1937, E. 4/10/26). The purpose behind the meeting was made explicitly clear in the Minister's welcome.

> *[Fraser] felt that the question of re-organisation of education in New Zealand was not a question for the Government alone. It was a question for everyone interested in education in the Dominion so that there could be the greatest measure of agreement and co-operation . . . He had*

> *requested the Director of Education to draft out a number of questions*
> *to put to the delegates and ask them, out of their long experience, for*
> *an expression of opinion. They were meeting in a private capacity and*
> *he wanted them to express their own opinion.*
> (Verbatim report of proceedings, E. 4/10/26, 1937, p. 1)

This mini-conference was extremely formative in validating much of the reforms that Fraser and Lambourne were hoping to achieve, and had indeed already begun to set in motion before the NEF Conference. They were also immeasurably influential for educational reform for another reason.

> *[When] Fraser asked the group who he could appoint to implement*
> *change and reform, the advice was less ambiguous…Malherbe*
> *responded… 'the only way I saw any of these suggestions being*
> *implemented was for the Minister to appoint Dr Beeby as Director of*
> *Education'.* (Alcorn, 1999, p. 90)

Beeby writes that the Conference did not dramatically alter his understanding of education, but "rather it confirmed the ideas I had already gained" (1992, p. 107). As teachers had been applying progressive practices within their classes, often by "trial and error" (Middleton & May, 1997, p. 47), the legitimising influence of internationally recognised educators and pedagogues on such a large scale was critical. The effect that this confirmation had upon New Zealand educators was to be of considerable importance in creating the atmosphere in which education reforms could take place.

There were several other tangible outcomes from the 1937 NEF Conference, one of which was the development of NEF committees in the four main centers in New Zealand. These were under the general influence of a central NEF body of representatives based in Wellington, and its members were encouraged to take 'pedagogical risks' within their classes and schools. For the first time in the Dominion's short history, these experiments were being explicitly encouraged by central educational administration. By 1939 some NEF branches had even had New Zealand's chief Inspector of Schools tour their projects, and report findings to the Department of Education. This was a new mindset for teachers, one that many embraced.

1939 was also the year that Beeby took the position of Assistant-Directorship of the Department of Education. This was in preparation for the long-serving Lambourne's retirement, which was due in 1940. One of his early duties was to amend an annual report to Parliament for Fraser. He noted that the task of writing the annual report to Parliament for 1938 had been, as was customary, written by the department's statistical clerk, "a reliable clerk who saw his sole duty as recording baldly the events of the past year; and he made a competent job of this, though it was scarcely enthralling reading" (Beeby, 1992, p. 123). The report had been returned with Fraser's comment scrawled across it to the effect of "This report has nothing to say, and I won't sign it. Send me a report that says something" (Beeby, 1992, p. 123). When Beeby reviewed the draft, he had one evening to rewrite the report. As such, he had no time to review papers or ask

advice, and so he wrote a Government objective on education as he felt Fraser would see it. Its word and sentiment epitomised the shifting tide of educational theory in post-Conference New Zealand.

> *The Government's objective, broadly expressed, is that every person, whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right, as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers. So far is this from being a mere pious platitude that the full acceptance of the principle will involve the reorientation of the education system.*
> (Department of Education annual report, Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives [AJHR], E1, 1939, p. 2-3)

This concept of equal opportunity, which had been embodied in the NEF Conference, was not simply new to national education in New Zealand, it was revolutionary. Whilst the ideal in modern society has perhaps lost its tarnish, just six years prior to this statement a committee for the Wellington Chamber of Commerce combated the recommendations of the Atmore Report to raise the school leaving age to fifteen years. It stated that for those with moderate mental ability, "further education along general lines would not fit them for the modest role nature intended them to play in life" (as quoted in Beeby, 1992, p. 126). However, the foundation upon which Beeby built his understanding of education during his years as Director was a belief that equality of opportunity within education was a critical component of democratic policy.

Reform marches on

The beginning of World War II had a substantial impact on New Zealand. Yet with Fraser at New Zealand's helm as Prime Minister by 1940, the national emphasis on education was maintained. Wartime living began to see government purse strings tightened. Education, as a result of the cultural context, was able to continue its reform.

> *To some it may appear that the Government should for the duration of the war go slowly with its educational policy. The nation is at war: money, materials, and human energy must be thrown without stint into the task of saving for the world those simple moral and political principles which give our education its meaning. The Government might . . . rest satisfied with the great progress made in education since 1935 . . . did it not feel, with all thinking people, a new sense of urgency in education arising from the world crisis . . . So I make no apologies for reporting that during 1940 there was no slackening in the educational effort that has been a characteristic of the Government's policy, although the exigencies of the war situation have sometimes made it necessary to divert the effort into slightly different channels.*
> (AJHR, 1940, E.1, p. 2)

Rolling revision of curriculum areas and content was introduced. This was done to avoid overloading teachers with un-trialed and potentially rushed changes that would, for Beeby, run the risk of alienating the teaching profession from the Department of Education. This was an outcome, which Beeby knew the county could ill-afford. "[I]t takes far longer to change the objectives of a body of teachers than it does to train them in new methods of achieving old objectives; if the gap is great, some never make the leap" (Beeby, 1992, p. 145).

Subject advisors in Physical Education had been introduced in late 1939 to assist with the development of new methods in education, and as a way to circumvent the inherently judgmental nature of the inspectorate. The role of inspectors had changed as well, meaning that they were able to spend more time with needy teachers, whilst also acting as subject advisors for the formal school subjects. They also spent time with teachers breaking new ground, a clear 'government blessing' for adventurous educators. As schools were taken over by New Zealand's internal defence force during wartime and used for hospitals or military purposes, Palmerston North education was particularly effected. Douglas Ball, chief inspector of Native Schools, had been taught by an ex-pupil of Dewey (Stephenson, 2009), and was asked to oversee schooling in the Palmerston North area as they adjusted to schools without walls. The outcome of these 'schools' was dramatic, as more time was spent in these schools on arts and crafts and physical education. The results led to the introduction of subject advisors in the Arts and Crafts, and an increased awareness at the role these subjects could play in a balanced education.

The two main education journals, NZEI's *National Education* and the Department of Education's *Education Gazette*, were instrumental lines of communication to the public and teaching body throughout this period of time. Douglas Ball regularly included writings concerning progressive education by the likes of Dewey and Nunn in the dedicated 'Native Schools' section of *Education Gazette*. Both publications were consistent and uniform in their progressive message, and provided a wide range of articles that encouraged progressive educators to continue to experiment with the new method. Their articles also carried a legitimising influence on the increasing inclusion of physical education and arts and crafts into the school day. Over time, however, concerns surrounding the unknown academic impact of the educational reforms began to mount. Beeby, the face of educational reform throughout the country, caught the brunt of the growing criticism as the press invented the term 'Beebyism' to mean anything about education that one didn't like and the new method began to be referred to by some as the 'play way' (Alcorn, 1999).

Whilst Beeby was happy to ignore the increasing groanings concerning the new system, Mason, who had taken Fraser's place as Minister of Education, and shared Beeby's conviction in the need for reforms, called a meeting to address the concerns head-on. The announcement of the Conference in the *Education Gazette* on September 1st 1943 couched the invitation to a national conference in terms that intimated a timely conference on the post-war reconstruction of education. Criticism of a perceived drop in standards was never discussed in the invitation. An in-depth publication entitled *Education Today and Tomorrow* was printed so that all attendees of the Conference

might have a uniform understanding of the national state of education in 1944. Whilst compiled and written by Beeby, he graciously allowed Mason to put his name to the publication.

1944 conference on education

While 1937 NEF Conference had been welcomed with a flurry of publicity, images of delegates arriving on various steamers, and had mirrored the optimistic buzz and excitement of the Dominion's teachers who were looking forward to a fresh new era, the 1944 Conference was competing for public attention, and newspaper space, against column after column detailing battles, victories, defeats, and the heartbreaking losses of the second world war. Wellington's *Evening Post* mutedly reported its opening on page seven. "A conference representative of all classes of education – the first of its kind ever held in New Zealand – opened in Christchurch this morning. More than 120 delegates were present" (Changing Course, 1944).

A main difference again from the 1937 NEF Conference was that, in 1944, the Conference was made up of delegates representing organisations directly or indirectly linked with education. These 120 stakeholders represented seventy different organisations, and in addition to the discussion around five main points on the agenda (which were pre-school education, youth services, adult education, religion in education, and rural education), provisions were made for two open forums in which to discuss primary and secondary education. The delegates representing the Department were under no pretense as to what these two sessions might hold. "[I]t was in these that the liveliest criticism was expected" (Beeby, 1992, p. 156).

The discussions, which took place around the five points on the agenda, were indeed important, and in themselves indicative of the progressive new education ideology. While these five main areas were of national importance in the development of what Beeby had identified as being on the fringes of education (Mason, 1945), the sessions around primary and secondary education, and the discussions that took place, are the discussions of most immediate concern. They were used as forums to address the mounting criticisms of progressive education.

Sinclair, representing the New Zealand Associated Chambers of Commerce, began the evening primary school forum by pointing to the progressive new education pedagogy as a reason for a perceived decline in standards, indicative of its role as the hegemonic pedagogy in New Zealand in 1944. Mr A. E. Campbell, director for NZCER, quickly moved to dispel any suggestion about a decline in standards, pointing out several facts. "[T]here is nobody in New Zealand who is in a position to make a definite and precise statement about what has happened to the formal standards of attainment over the last 10 or 20 years" (Campbell in Verbatim report of proceedings, E. 4/1/6b, 1944, D8 p. 1). Forsyth, representing NZEI, considerably quietened the criticisms further when he stated that he was sure that Mr. Sinclair was not taking advantage of the unfortunate fact that at least 60 percent of the country's best male teachers were fighting overseas (Verbatim report of proceedings, E. 4/1/6b, 1944).

The following evening was dedicated to the discussion of secondary education. Thomas representing Rotary, and also the chair of the committee that had published the

Thomas Report opened it with comments. Members of the Thomas Committee worked closely within schools in undertaking the collating of the report. Thomas passed on his observations during the evening forum.

> *First of all, we decided right at the beginning that there was no need*
> *[to do] any[thing] revolutionary; all we had to do was to keep abreast*
> *of the evolution which is taking place in the schools, so marked in*
> *many schools, where subjects had been introduced and the whole work*
> *of the schools was along the lines of modern tendencies in education in*
> *other parts of the world.*
> (Thomas in Verbatim report of proceedings, E. 4/1/6b, 1944, G1 p. 1)

His emphasis on modern pedagogy is clear. The 1944 Education Conference was successful in what it set out to do. Above all else, the 1944 Conference on Education marked the maturity of progressive education ideology in mainstream New Zealand education. Progressive education bore the brunt of criticism by press and employers. Progressive education was the system defended by educationalists. Progressive education was referred to, and spoken of, as the orthodox pedagogy throughout the country.

From idea to orthodoxy

In returning to key elements of Joseph's (2002) definition of hegemony it could well be stated that a "passive revolution" (p. 1) swept through New Zealand education from 1937 to 1944. New Zealand's progressive education revolution was set in motion by the Director of ACER, Cunningham, when he wrote his invitation to Beeby to attend the scheduled Australian NEF Conference. Beeby seized upon the opportunity, and with the Government's support, in the form of Fraser and Lambourne, ended up with a New Zealand based NEF Conference. The backing of the 1937 NEF Conference was, therefore, certainly political. State strategies were employed through allowing teachers, and others concerned directly with education, paid leave to attend the Conference. The manner in which key speakers held an audience with key members of State after the Conference was concluded, and the direct impact those conversations had on the direction of New Zealand education for the following decades directly resembles a political project.

By 1939, the policy statement on education paved the way for the rolling revisions that were to come, and cemented a Government's determination to see educational reform even through the Second World War. And the 1944 Education Conference developed social alliances that proved to further strengthen the ideas of progressive new education. In accordance with Joseph's (2002) definition of hegemony, it is clear to see that progressive new education had engaged in the defining processes that hegemonic movements take, and had emerged in 1944 as the orthodox pedagogy held by educationists from the governing bodies of education to the bulk of the teachers throughout the country.

However, a final indicator requires clarity: the context within which an idea is

developing must be conducive to the further development of that idea. "For a group to become hegemonic it must have behind it the economic, political and cultural conditions which allow it to put itself forward as leading" (Joseph, 2002, p. 125). It has been demonstrated how progressive education had secured economic and political backing. In fact, such was the uptake by the government that the NEF, internationally accustomed to challenging government education policies, fell into decline rather quickly in New Zealand, effectively disappearing by the 1950s (Abbiss, 1998). The third component, a cultural context conducive to the new method, must have also been in existence in order to identify this movement as culminating in an orthodox understanding.

On reflecting upon the cultural milieu in 1986, Beeby was surprised at the cultural context, which the 1937 NEF Conference had uncovered. "The conference revealed, both in the teaching profession and among the general public, a demand for change in the school system that was more intense than anyone had suspected" (Renwick, 1986, p. xxi). In discussing the Conference in an interview with Helen May in 1990, Beeby again stated, "We believed that the world could be altered by education. They [teachers] came from everywhere. There was real faith. They were queuing to get into a packed Town Hall to hear a lecture!" (Middleton & May, 1997, p. 25). Beeby's comments on the idealistic nature of the mid-1930s demonstrate a national belief in the importance of education, a belief that was becoming increasingly evident among the general public. "[A] number of people in their twenties were deserting promising careers in more lucrative professions…to take up primary teaching" (Beeby, 1992, p. 90). He even went so far as to offer an opinion on why this increasing sense of social responsibility was emerging.

> *I have no qualification to trace systemically the social and historical reason for this burgeoning belief that education, if we could only understand it properly, was the key to the country's future. Undoubtedly, the Great War, followed by the Depression, had shaken the trust of a whole generation in the political and economic structures on which our prosperity had rested, and some of us were willing to pin our hopes to less material faiths.* (Beeby, 1992, p. 90)

His suspicion is well worth considering. By the mid-1930s, New Zealand had found itself involved in generational difficulties of considerable scale for the previous three generations. The 1880s and 1890s saw the Long Depression, simply named after its devastating length. 1918 marked the end of four years of world war. The Great Depression found its way to New Zealand in the late 1920s to early 1930s. At the close of each of these catastrophes, as is typical for a nation after such events, New Zealand looked to the services they could provide for their young who had endured such hardships.

By the 1930s, the nation was ready for change. The effects of the generational tragedies, which the nation had endured, led the Dominion firmly down a path towards a humanising reform, with a heightened degree of awareness of a duty of care towards her youth. "[T]he war was to throw unexpected difficulties in the way of [Fraser's]

reforms, but, in the curious ways wars have, it aroused a deep sense of responsibility towards the young" (Beeby in Renwick, 1986, p. xxii). This carried through the years of the Second World War, which proceeded to introduce New Zealand's fourth generation to tragic circumstance. "Progressive educational ideals, including internationalist and anti-war sentiment, attracted political support with the election of Labour in 1935, and during the late 1930s the alliance between political and educational radicals…further encouraged the spread of internationalism in education" (Openshaw, 1987b, p. 196).

It is clear, then, that a culture receptive to the social emphasis of the progressive new education had come of age in New Zealand by the mid-1930s, which was to stay intact throughout the entire seven-year period under study in this article. This cultural conduciveness provided the soil within which progressive new education could take root, and be slowly nurtured through political and economic means. In so doing, it grew into orthodoxy.

Popular understanding of New Zealand education has long been dominated by the reification of progressive new education pedagogy. "Perhaps no country has so profoundly enshrined an egalitarian myth within its education system as has New Zealand. Peter Fraser's statement in 1939…has been translated into self-congratulatory official rhetoric" (Openshaw, 1987a, p. 2). This sentiment is echoed by McCulloch (1991).

> *The liberal paradigm of historiography, evoking an egalitarian, consensual image of humanitarian progress, was dominant in New Zealand until the 1980s...this liberal paradigm emphasised the gradual progress of the national education system under the paternal eye of the state towards the creation of an 'educated democracy'* . . . *Overall, it suggested that in the long term the growth of the education system has largely succeeded in achieving equality of opportunity in New Zealand.* (p. 76)

McCulloch (1991) goes on to illustrate that this belief was strengthened by the 'liberal-egalitarian' educational policies that emerged up until the 1980s, with particular reference to those written during the Fraser/Beeby period. The 1939 educational policy statement has even fallen victim to romanticised reinvention, whereby it has been said that Beeby penned the words on the back of a napkin whilst enjoying coffee with Fraser. Not only did their relationship exist in a strictly professional manner, ruling out the probability of them sharing coffee together, Beeby's own account of the incident demonstrates the true unfolding of events discussed above. The veneration with which that 1939 education policy statement has been held since its writing, however, demonstrates the power its sentiments hold in a democratic understanding of education. It has even become a permanent exhibit at the International Bureau of Education offices in Geneva (Rata, 2009). Its writing bears the direct influence of the 1937 NEF Conference ideology.

Conclusion

This article has identified the mainstreaming of progressive new education in New Zealand, and has traced those beginnings from a series of ideas presented at a conference in 1937 to the point at which they were understood as the orthodoxy in educational policy by 1944. The seven-year journey from idea to orthodoxy has irrevocably shaped the development of New Zealand's education system and, in so doing, the nation itself. Through the introduction of progressive new education, the on-going division between traditionalist and progressivist educator was begun. However, as is the nature of any idea, progressive new education has transformed over time. Through the development of a thorough understanding of its origins, one is afforded the understanding that there is work yet to be done towards clarifying major issues in education today. As Beeby (1992) illustrates,

> *One thing I am certain: New Zealand will be a sadly static country if, within a decade – or even within a century – any writer is justified in concluding a book on the objectives of education with the words THE END.* (p. 304).

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