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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the incongruity among education's multiplicity of conflicting actors, theories, and values that affect curriculum decision-making. This discussion is divided into three major concerns: sociopolitical, professional, and student. Sociopolitical concerns include the impact of peace, war, human sexuality, environment, work and leisure time, multicultural relations, and economic class relationships on education. Professional concerns involve the dilemmas of curriculum reform, teaching methods, organizational management, decision-making, educational governance, and school-community relations. Student concerns encompass core curriculum relevancy, human capital investment, career choices and counseling, and labor market entry prognostics. That educational policymakers consider the above concerns when making decisions comprises the conclusion of this treatise. (JAM)

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CONFLICTING CONCEPTS AND VALUES IN EDUCATION

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FIRST DRAFT

CONFLICTING CONCEPTS AND VALUES IN EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF ACTORS AND THEIR ARGUMENTS

by

Wim J. Nijhof

Curriculum decision-making is a highly political issue throughout the educational system. There have always been a variety of pressure groups proposing competing values concerning what should be taught, but nowadays we can also observe pressure groups telling us how to teach - the computer as the panacea for individualizing instruction. And, there are even groups who are ready to tell us at what level we must graduate: they advocate fixed norms for everybody at every level of schooling. Standardization and control are the keywords for "modern" education.

The standardization of what is to be taught will create a confrontation between conflicting values as is the case in the USA, where fundamentalists are even now trying to enforce teaching the creation of the earth by means of Genesis, as they attempt to ban the theory of Darwin: origin of the species.

Learning as an individual process based on instrinsic motivation and oriented to personal goals with no fixed purpose has been changed into a fixed concept. It is an instrumental concept of teaching in which flexibility and mobility as personal characteristics are more important than personal identity, and identification with problems having a high political load.

Klafki (1984), for instance, sums up a considerable number of

controversial issues which have arisen as a consequence of modern society - issues which remain unresolved. Even worse, we have ourselves created many more problems in this highly technological society. The application of scientific knowledge in technology has led to:

- questions of peace and war as a consequence of military technology;
- environmental questions as a consequence of nuclear and industrial technology. Tsjernobyl is only one example of possible world-wide disasters;
- the relationship between rich and poor: a long-standing unresolved problem, not only at the individual level but, nowadays, even at the level of states and continents: the northern countries versus the south;
- social inequality and the economic power of societal groups;
- work and unemployment and their meaning for social and individual identity;
- work and leisure time: are we really striving for a society of increased leisure time? Does schooling prepare individuals for freedom and free time as is the original meaning of "scholae." Will new technologies lead to more freedom and "enlightenment?"
- multi-cultural relations;
- sexuality and sexual relations are controlled by states, sometimes as a consequence of decreasing birth rates (as in Western Germany and The Netherlands). By means of technological products and economic decisions governments are trying either to stabilize, or to increase the "production of manpower," whereas other states are trying to discourage or prevent an increased birth rate, as in India. (Klafki, W., 1985, 21).

Klafki claims that everybody within the educational system, whatever his age, should be confronted with these key-problems of modern-day society. However, he cautions us not to allow consciousness of these types of problems to lead to monolithic opinions or to one-sided solutions. His plea for a general education for everbody is focussed on three important competences and instrumental skills on different values:

(a) the competence to make decisions on one's own future, or the right to

self-determination in terms of personal relationships and the interpretation of personal values, social stuctures, professional relationships, ethical and religious convictions.

(b) the competence to co-operate in decision-making: the democratic right of co-determination in societal and political issues and balances.

(c) the competemce to throw in one's lot (solidarity).The justification of self-determination and co-determination is restricted by means of identification with the group to which one belongs.

The above three competencies will automatically lead to certain skills: the skill to practice criticism; the skill to use arguments (Klafki does not specify what kind of arguments); and empathy, the skill to accept the perspectives of others.

Considerations of this kind will lead to very concrete actions and decisions in state-level curriculum formulation (national level), the local level, and at school level. The relationship between the concept of a general education and teaching practice is complicated by the fact that transformation takes different forms, and the whole process of operationalization is not as logical as we are sometimes led to believe by curriculum-theory (Pratt, 1980). There is more deliberation and bargaining (Schwab, 1979) and the results will be practical and electical. But is this really the necessary result of partners playing games in an arena? Let us examine the structure of participants in the process of political decision making on the curriculum.

Professionalization of Reform and Stability Factors

"The notion that efforts to change the American social system (including schools) have in recent years been undertaken by persons whose profession is to do just that. (...) Professional reformers tend to measure their success by the number of changes they get started, for instance introducing sex education, the introduction of Man a Course of Study (Bruner) a curriculum on science education forced by academics and their political friends, reading programmes, programmes for excellence. (McNeil, 1981, 297). Professional reformers are building a new controversial force into educational policy-

making by pursuing their visions of equal opportunity and a more just society while being convinced of their expertise and its prerogatives, assisted by an educational research establishment with its built-in incentive to discover failure, which justifies even more research supplied by federal and foundation funding and stimulated by the civil rights discovery of new classes (Boyd, In: McNeil, 1981, 297).

The whole issue appears to be a conspiracy. In The Netherlands educational reform is also tied to professional reformers although they are encapsulated by institutions - the denominational structure and their organizations - and the tradition of compromise and bargaining (Lijphart, 1968). The debate on comprehensive education in The Netherlands since the sixties highlights this complex and puzzling process of pacification. The real effect will be that changes will be minimal and superficial or, perhaps, only verbal.

Stability in the educational system plays a very heavy role. School boards, school administrators and teachers are more interested in maintaining the social values of the current curriculum and the structure of the schools. Recent findings indicate that Dutch primary teachers are only happy when they teach in the way they always have taught, and they prefer direct classroom teaching. They do not believe in the importance of new subjects like computer literacy and English (introduced in 1985 as a consequence of a new law on primary education) as a second language. (Didactief, june 1986). [If necessary they are prepared to follow in-service training (sic.)]

This example shows that non-decision-making is a constraint on curriculum innovation. However, it appears more like conflict avoidance (an unwillingness to introduce curriculum changes which conflict with community values, and are therefore likely to arouse controversy and opposition): the threat of controversy (a technique used by a minority to control the majority) and loose coupling (the recognition that goals set by reformers (the ideal curriculum) will not be faithfully followed by school boards (the formal curriculum) and by teachers in the classroom (the perceived and operational curriculum) (McNeil, 1981, 299). Teachers are political brokers par excellence. They control their own teaching, concepts being taught, timing and scheduling the kinds of evaluation to be made, and so on. However, there are degrees of teacher responsibility and freedom for action.

The following are other powerful groups which influence curriculum reform:

- the principal, as middleman between school board, parents and teaching staff;
- superintendents, formulating the curriculum demands of state and/or federal governments to render them acceptable to local populations;
- students, enjoy considerable informal influence over what is taught. Often they can "vote with their feet" by refusing to enroll in courses. Underground newspapers and absenteeism are other instances of student power;
- local school boards, serving as an advisory body, or sounding board, because of the lack of technical competencies they need to decide upon specific curriculum programmes;
- local communities, regional and state agencies, testing agencies;
- educational publishing houses, the most powerful agency in disseminating text-books and other curriculum material. Bittlinger (19..) points out that in Bavaria (BRD) about 80% of primary and secondary school teachers use text-books as the prime source for teaching. Teachers remain extremely faithful to text-books.
- the federal government, there is the growing influence of national governments in determining the goals and content of education, even in those subjects where values are so prominent - social studies, moral education, and sex education. There is a strong conservative movement in most Western countries directed at a common core with fixed standards for the age groups between 4 and 16 (Nijhof, 1985; Skilbeck, 1985; Gorter and Jozefzoon, 1985, Leune, 1986, WF , 1986).
- Pressure groups

As with many political decisions, curriculum-decisions are usually a result of compromise, bargaining and other forms of accommodation. This might be an acceptable statement from the viewpoint of policy oriented research. It is certainly a descriptive statement, but it does not make clear how this bargaining will lead to decisions about value systems. Is it possible to compromise between competing values? How can we explain the fact that, in

spite of compromise, national governments are striving for standardization and control: for a comprehensive, or common education for everybody, which leaves little room for individual differences. In short, national governments are striving to restrict the local autonomy of schools. Is the result to be a dominant concept of schooling dictated by the ever changing minorities?

From Ideal to Experimental Curriculum

In educational and curriculum theory the process of planning and constructing text-books and other aids to teaching always begin with some (implicit) notions of educating children for the future. Such notions are usually based on personal experience and confrontations with problems in family life and society. A systematic reconstruction of this process invariably leads to a kind of modelling with a highly rational character. It is not surprising to learn that many people in the education profession began as teachers. The practice of teaching seems to be a rich environment and common ground for most professionals to enter into systematic reflection on concepts of schooling, value systems, individual differences, equality and equity, the relation between goals and means, between personal goals and the demands of society. Famous examples are Comenius, Herbart, Dewey, Klafki.

If we try to conceptualize the framework of most of these thinkers in curriculum theory, we should use a very condensed version of a model by John Goodlad et al (1979).

Figure 1

Goodlad tries to show the complex relationships between levels of decision-making pertaining to different curriculum products, and the different kinds of foundations and types of arguments needed for translating concepts of schooling, values and beliefs, as well as the demands of society. The model is based on a concept of deliberation at every level and presumes a correspondence between the kind of decisions and their operationalization in terms of products. It is not necessarily based on assumptions of hierarchy, but nor is this excluded. By taking goals and aims as a starting point for disussion to see the consequences for the instructional level I suggest a top down

(logical deductive) process, although the reverse is, of course, also possible. Considering the arrangement of a learner environment, or to agree upon a teaching-learning unit, can lead to reflections on implicit criteria, values and beliefs (Taba, 1962). There are, however, different development strategies for curricula, using the concept of technological curriculum-development or curriculum-design as a kind of top down strategy (from goals to means to results). In this sense the model can be interpreted as a heuristic device for legitimating and constructing different products at different levels with causal relationships (Curvo, 1980).

The ideological curriculum emerges from idealistic processes which are not necessarily ideological. This level of decision-making refers to those persons or agencies removed in time and place from the individual learner: boards of education, state departments of education, committees, foundations (see Boyer, 1983; Nation at Risk, 1983; WRR, 1986, SLO 1985). It takes the form of a proposal, a design, and requires a process of deliberation to transform it into a formal curriculum.

The formal curriculum is an official product and has been sanctioned at the institutional level. Deliberations are oriented within the framework of the ideological curriculum to obtaining and providing guidance to teachers and students. This is a written document of curriculum guides, state or local syllabi, units of study, etc.

The perceived curricula are those of the mind (teacher thinking processes). "What has officially been approved for instruction and learning is not necessarily what very interested persons and groups perceive in their minds to be the curriculum" (Goodlad et al, 1979, 61).

Thinking about a curriculum (perceiving) and its actual practice in the classroom are two quite different things. The operational curriculum is a curriculum at work, hour after hour, day after day in school and classroom. Implementation research is focused on the curriculum as factual, empirical, and as a process of actions and interactions. It is the teaching staff in charge of day to day decisions at the instructional level in relation to the perceived formal curriculum regarding the group of children and their (instructional) needs. The experimental curricula is the curriculum experienced by the students. It is very difficult to describe such a curriculum systematically because ideographic factors, questions of the validity of data gathering, will

play a very important role, as is the case with the operational curriculum. For our purposes, however, it is important to show that there is a clear relationship between the different levels of curriculum decision-making and the different curriculum-products. This relationship will be the framework for further discussion.

Sources for (societal) Deliberations

Curriculum planners must decide what value-concepts are to be taught in schools, and they must decide upon the vehicles to be used to help students learn how to deal with value questions (Beauchamp, 1980[4], 91). Here, we face a controversial issue. Are they the right persons to decide about value concepts? Is it correct that they should decide about values? Or should this be the responsibility of parents, teachers, local authorities, political parties, parliament, or agencies such as R & D centres, the former Schools Council, or the Ministry of Education. Curriculum planners generally use procedures and techniques to obtain judgements from the relevant respondents on building a curriculum. There is a strong relationship between curriculum design and curriculum-engineering (development), for it is most unlikely that curriculum-planners will assist in the development of curricula based on value systems or value-orientations of which they disapprove. This would be a conflict situation.

Questions of what knowledge and skills are of most value, and which of them should be included in the curriculum is a value question. A curriculum planner cannot handle value-free or neutral material. He operates within a certain political context (democratic), in a community (with local values, beliefs and attitudes, demands), in a school setting with a specific pedagogical orientation.

The use of procedures and techniques - as in a technical orientation of curriculum development - tend to hide the values or at least to render them implicit. But such procedures can be used to hide personal values. "A teacher who has a high regard for rote and memory learning judges the pupils on evidence of their rote and memory performances. A teacher who places a high premium on the more heuristic techniques in learning judges the pupils on evidence of their ability to make observations, to collect information, to use resources, to reach rational generalizations, and so forth (Beauchamp, 1980[4],

95). We can thus see that there is an intrinsic relationship between values and processes of learning, between content and values, between interaction patterns (school climate) and values. The selection of content, of pedagogy, of classroom-structure, a grouping students, of time, the kind of testing, the allocation of students to different forms of education, depend on cultural values based on democratic ideals (improved citizenship), the equality of man, equal opportunity or equal access for all.

Smith, Stanley and Shores (1957) have identified three elements in which the core of the American value system lies:

- the democratic tradition;
- belief in maximum development of the individual;
- the institutions established to perpetuate those values.

The educational system is one of those institutions. So the question is what should the school system do in order to educate students according to the values of society? It is an important question because some values are acquired through the processes of general enculturation. The significant question in most Western countries is: what can the schools do that is not already being done by other institutions? Let us now examine the different conflicting conceptions of curricula to see if we can find the answer.

Conflicting Conceptions of Curriculum

Values are often proposed as a beginning point in curriculum decision making. When this is the case, the values become the criteria for selection of curricular aims (Beauchamp, 1980[4] 95; Curvo, 1980, Nijhof, 1979, 1983). Goodlad, however, has stated (on the basis of extensive research in schools on curriculum deliberations) that although it is possible to formulate a set of values or assumptions about the good person in the good society as a beginning point in curriculum development, this happens in only a few, rather sharply circumscribed situations. Even when such are stated in the form of a philosophy (...), they usually serve rhetorical rather than curricular ends. (...) Over the years, it has become increasingly clear (to me) that identification of a level of values in the conceptual system is simply too neat and rational. (...)

One is never done with values (Goodlad et al, 1979, 346).

Clearly, Goodlad does not deny the existence and necessity of values, but he discusses the function of values as the leading principle for discussion at all levels in the area of curricula, and not only as a starting point of the curriculum process. Many publications give an overview of the so-called conflicting conceptions of curriculum which some writers term "design." (McNeil, 1981; Nijhof, 1979; Eisner & Vallance, 1973; Theory into Practice, Winter 1986, vol. XXV, no. 1).

In the early seventies many authors tried to find a map, or description, of the different conceptions in the curriculum literature as a guide to curriculum discourse and research. It does not describe a hierarchy of values or a sequence of prescriptive steps, it opens a wide variety of research questions, and it could help curriculum designers to make clear the kind of deliberation processes in development teams. (Vallance, 1986; Groenendaal, Wilmink and Nijhof, 1978).

A curriculum concept describes the rationale or principle as the main source for building a curriculum. Traditionally, we have three main sources: <u>society</u> (past, present and future, references to economics, work, local or national interests, parent group expectations and values, (references to a good life, the nature of man, point of view, philosophy); The <u>learner</u>: references to the nature of the child or adult, his needs and interests, individual differences. <u>Knowledge</u>: references based on information about man's accumulation of organized knowledge in terms of subject matter (mathematics, civics, foreign languages, science, or in terms of structure, concepts, generalizations, important concepts, learning techniques, ways of knowing. The references have two characteristics: the "should" references, "empirical" references, or a combination of both.

Several curriculum theorists have built curriculum conceptions on the basis of these sources by means of analysis of curriculum documents reconstructed by others as typical concepts or designs. If we take them for granted as the final possible choice then the construction is condemned to the waste paper basket. Combinations are possible, but some exclude each other. Let us take the 'classification' of Eisner & Vallance (1973) as the most classical example: they describe five conflicting conceptions:

a. curriculum making as a technological problem
b. curriculum as a means of developing cognitive processes in children
c. curriculum as a means of reaching full self-actualisation
d. curriculum as a means for initiating social reform (the social reconstructionist concept)
e. the curriculum as a vehicle for the transmission of civilization's intellectual heritage (the academic-rationalist view)

Vallance's critical reflection on the development of the classification indicates that four of the conceptions refer explicitly to the ultimate purposes of schooling (the cognitive processes approach; self-actualisation, the social reconstructionist view, and the academic rationalist view).

The first conception is oriented to the development of cognitive skills (reasoning, analysis, criticism, problem solving, judgement). The academic view is the opposite of this, assigned mastery of the knowledge accrued through intellectual tradition and the transmission of culture. The socialist reconstructionist view has two dimensions: the innovative-aggressive dimension, and the conservative dimension. The first asks the student to learn through the curriculum to criticize and improve society. The conservative dimension seeks to maintain existing social patterns and structures. The self-actualization perspective sees the purpose of schooling to be the full development of each child's full potential, with the curriculum being responsible for fostering the child's identity (Vallance, 1986, 25).

The original form of the technological concept is concerned not with purpose but with means. It claims to be neutral on the question of values and seeks instructional systems of curriculum development technologies that can be applied to any content and adapted to any purpose. It claims to encompass the other four conceptions and offers resources to all of them.

Do these concepts adequately describe curriculum discourse today? I do not believe they do. The model is not perfect and contains many imbalances. There is no clear-cut criterion, and the concepts have no discrete character. By application we need a strong relationship to substance, concepts, subject matter, and so on. Moreover, in the last two decades there have been many changes in public dialogue on education. Technological developments are pressing the public debate about the function of schooling, so is the

development in Europe of migration from Mediterranean countries which, in turn, has led to a debate about social integration. Likewise, economic recession nas led to new questions about the hours spent at work, questions about the mismatch between the education system and the labour market, and also as a consequence of new technologies.

Political discourse is dominated by thought about the new basics, basic skills, essential skills. The relationship between general and vocational education has been challenged again in Europe (Lueth, 1986) at all levels of the education system, but especially in secondary and higher education.

"The computer revolution has made technological orientation stronger both as an educational means and as a new basic skill end in itself (Vallance, 1986, 26). It narrows the gap somewhat between the technological and the other four conceptions by tying the mastery of a particular technology to the explicit goals of schooling. The technological perspective is now even harder for non-technologists to ignore." (Vallance, 1986, 26). Text-processing skills, the use of graphics, a knowledge of programming languages, as well as the use of other data-techniques, will be common within five years - also in NIAS. Computer literacy will be a necessary end in the coming years in order to communicate, and in order to unite with other goals of education. Let me give you a good example from history:

> "(...) Since the renaissance, rhetoric had been the dominant school subject. It declined (...) because it was essentially oriented to the demands of an oral culture. (...) With the invention and spread of print, written expression became much more important, and many of the demands formerly made upon speakers to remember verbatim, to organize thoughts on the spur of the moment, were no longer essential." (Walker, 1986, 64).

The content of schooling interacts with the forms of expression dominant in the culture (Ong, in: Walker, 1986, 64). This will mean that the technological concept is changing into, or integrating with, the cognitive processes model in terms of a cognitive information processing model. The new technologies will lead to new ends and means in education (Papert, 1980).

In contrast the academic rationalistic model continues and seems likely

to endure. The schools' commitment to teaching traditions of the Western cultural heritage remains strong. This view has been supported by numerous studies on how schooling strengthens liberal education in the k-12 curriculum, as will be shown in the following paragraph.

The Common Core Debate

The common core debate is in essence a conflict between competing values and concepts of education. Whereas social activism was a leading principal topic of discussion about schooling in the 1960s, the 1980s have seen the appearance of social conservatism which stresses the "new right," and the growing strength of the fundamentalists' social agenda. This conservatism is based on different feelings and values, and finds some support among educational researchers using declining test results as evidence. The debate on quality in education -mostly rhetorical - is intended to encourage many people to re-think the function of schooling. In most Western countries this re-thinking has led to a revival of liberal education approaches (Nifhof, 1985), and it seems to be a world-wide issue. The critics claim that schools offer a 'smorgasboard,' a cafeteria of choices, with the removal of quality from the educational system. There are three major reasons for the debasement of school curriculum (in the USA):

a). excessive attention to the legitimate needs of those in the bottom band of the achievement distribution which has caused the neglect of the college bound and has lowered the instructional center of gravity;

b). a preoccupation with process, technique, procedural accountability, finance, and governance, with a consequent inattention to what content should be taught;

c.) a lack of emphasis on the usefulness and relevance of our common cultural heritage and (...) other common concepts (...) Kirst, 1983, 286).

Goodlad (1983, 313) exposes many problems which are more or less analogous to the Dutch situation. The general conclusion in most countries is that there is little consciousness among school authorities regarding the need to provide a curriculum balanced between the goals of schooling and the

domains of knowledge, there is little agreement about the central elements of subject matter and ways of knowing; there is too much accommodating of individual differences by means of tracking, creating more inequities between and within schools curricular and pedagogical practices, some of which are clearly associated with low income and minority status. A lot of arguments are really true, but some are used in a very suspicious way, like declining test-scores and the content of education (Stedman and Smith, (1983) and Franklin (1984)).

Most proposals however stress quantity instead of quality by means of rationalisation of school time, more testing and evaluation, longer school days, more homework, more course work, longer school years, the addition of new subjects and upgrading of texts. Quantity is made an important criterion of quality.

In the following table I will show some time-tables of experts and groups showing their concept of schooling (secondary education, high school), and compare the Dutch situation with that of the USA.

The general procedure followed in both countries is that a group of scholars make a proposal for the governement. The USA's national commission on Excellence in Education published the famous report Nation at Risk, the Imperative for Educational Reform, after almost two years of meetings, hearings, symposia and the reading of more than 40 research studies (1983). The Reagan administration heartily welcomed the report. In The Netherlands the scientific council of the government (WRR) accepted the task of working out a plan for a proposal for "basisvorming" (general education) for secondary education (age 12-15) for everybody. The council read more than 30 state-of-the-art papers on several specialized fields in education. After two years of work the council produced a proposal which found enthusiastic support from the Dutch government. National discussions followed the presentation of both reports, but the general trend - the conservative mood - seems to be sustained by the majority.

Both plans were accompanied by other reports from scholars, organizations and research foundations, although they didn't have the same impact as the "national solutions." Nevertheless, it is interesting to see the difference between some of these plans because they refer to different options of schooling.

Proposals for a common(core) curriculum (in % of the time table)

	Goodlad	Boyer	Nation at Risk	Leune	WRR	SLO
I. LANGUAGE (mother tongue)	9	17	***	15	11	11
FOREIGN LANGUAGE(S)	9	14	***	20	15	20
II Science(Ph,B,Chem.)	9	14	***	15	9	10
Mathematics	9	14	***		11	11
III Social studies (History,geography)	15	17	***	15	9	10
Civics		7				
IV ARTS (dance, music, etc)	15	4	**	15	9	9
V Computer literacy		4		8	1	3
Vocational orientation	15		**			6
Health Education		4				4
Home economics					2	
Technics(industrial arts)				8	5	9
VI Physical Education	10	-	-		10	9
VII Spiritual life				5		

The relative weight of time in percentages related to subject matter proposals is presented in table 1. Goodlad (1983) presents his plan after a thoroughly planned and executed research on more than 1000 high schools. Boyer (1983) has reported from the Carnegy foundation with the same objective and based on empirical research. The Dutch proposals originate from the WRR, the foundation for curriculum development in the Netherlands (SLO) and Leune (Erasmus University, Rotterdam), a sociologist on educational policy making. The Nation at Risk (NAR) is the most global report presenting recommendations. The WWR-report, however, is more detailed and has the character of a prescription: a very detailed time-table with circumscribed goals for the diverse subject matter and recommendations for graduation (examination standards). The different character of both reports can be attributed to the decentralized-centralized policy-making principles of the two countries. The NAR-proposal allows scope at state and local levels. The WWR-report makes little allowance for local schools to make their own adaptations. Where NAR accentuates the categories I, II, III (the dominant cognitive subject matter), the WRR-report strives for 14 disciplines spread over all categories for everybody at a minimum level (standard). Moreover, there may be some kind of graduation at a higher level for those students who are intellectually capable of achieving more. High school as a comprehensive form of schooling in the USA has been accepted since 1827 (Massachussetts Law), and since about 1890 the number of high schools in the USA has been substantial (n= 2.526 public high schools) (Commager Steele, 1983, 532). In The Netherlands the report must be seen as a vehicle to re-organize the categorical secondary education system into a comprehensive one, after the echec of the debate on restructuring secondary education since 1975, by prescribing a common core for every school. There are no precise prescriptions for this kind of structure, but clearly the introduction of subjects (disciplines) for everybody, to be followed for 3 school-years, places heavy pressure on teachers and students compared to the 7 disciplines (in <u>four years</u>) on which tests will be given.

So the reach of the WWR is far greater than the NAR-report. The NAR tries to repair derailments, so to speak, while the WRR-report tries to construct a comprehensive school in the Dutch situation based on a broad concept of schooling. The impact of new technologies and industrial arts

however is about as big as a raindrop. The integration of general and vocational education is in favour of a liberal education but at the cost of vocational education. But the same is true of the other proposals. Preparing youth to takes its place in society is based on general intellectual skills. Vocational skills, industrial arts, home economics and health education are considered to be minor skills. Will this remain true in the future?

Both reports accentuate a dominant academic-rationalist view. The SLO-proposal shows a great parallel to the WWR-report, but the content of science and social studies is organized according to the concept of cognitive processes: integrated science and integrated social studies. The WRR has negated this proposal because of the argument that there is no substantial example of integrated science and social studies and, additionally, most teachers have difficulties in teaching them.

Two authors are very consequent in choosing disciplines. Their argument is that schools must do what other institutions in society cannot do; teaching cognitive skills. Moreover, schools have to compensate for families' shortcomings and make training more efficient by means of institutional schooling.

The allocation of time for all subjects or disciplines is almost equal. Goodlad suggests spending about 18% of the time on (foreign) languages, 18% on science and mathematics, 15% on social studies and 15% on arts, the other 15% should be spent on the introduction of vocational subjects including computer literacy, and 10% of the the time on physical education. For Leune the categories II, III and IV are equal. Because of the essential function of language Leune will spend some 15% of time on the mother tongue and 20% on foreign languages (English, French and German). The WRR underlines this argument, but makes a selection: English as the "lingua franca", and German for economical reasons (trade). In the opinion of the chairman of the scientific council French is essential only for those people wishing to be a judge at the International Court of Justice in Strassbourg(sic!) (oral message, 2 April 1986, Congres over basisvorming, Ede).

Leune adds some 5% of the time to aspects of spiritual life as a consequence of our growing multi-cultural society. It is a means for a better and mutual understanding of different religious convictions between the

diverse groups with different denominations and ideologies.

Two proposals suggest time for individual differences: Goodlad offers the option of a variance of about 20% per discipline and an additional 9% for special interests. So the full- time for individuals' interests varies between 9 and 21% of the school time. The WRR-report offers 20% time for individual interests, but part of this has to be allocated for a third foreign language and for enrichment and/or a quicker improvement in other curriculum offerings.

The Boyer proposal is a so-called Carnegie Unit and is related to 2/3 of the curriculum. The proposal accentuates a core for that part of the school-time for everybody. All of the proposals are oriented towards an academic road for everybody, a very broad road, with fixed standards, and with no time allotted for individual differences.

The impact of new developments like technology - the integration of vocational and general education - will be at the cost of vocational education. The argument given is that preparing youth for a modern society demands highly cognitive trained/educated people. This means that the traditional disciplines have regained their former dominant position, while the developments of the sixties (integrated science, integrated social studies, the role of personal interests in learning) have lost ground. Preserving the old forms of knowledge dominates the challenge of the new cognitive information processes.

The Reverse? Ten Tips for the Rat Race

Opportunities on the labour-market, economic recession and technology appear to dictate the future of young people. In medieval times the young knight had to excel in horse-riding, be skilled in the use of a sword, recite poems, be trained in mathematics, rhetoric and so on. Nowadays young people receive advice in the following:

1. Take mathematics and/or economy as a major subject when you follow the medium line of general education. A queue of banks and assurance companies is waiting to offer you a job and/or a training.
2. If you are studying medium or higher level industrial economy, or if you have graduated, employers will compete to offer you a term of employment on trial.

3. If you are following a technical education (at a medium or higher level), specialize in electronics or civil engineering.
4. If you wish to go to university or to polytechnical institutes, study pharmacy, industrial economy, business administration, law or computer science. In any case, take computer science as a minor subject.
5. Take a course in computer science where and when you can, as quickly as possible, because within five years employees won't be worrying any more about automatization.
6. Don't seek a job in social welfare, teacher training, arts, medicine, education (including adult education), because relative unemployment is highest in these disciplines.
7. Don't take seriously such advice as given here. By the time you have graduated all shortages will have changed into a surplus, or the reverse. Be very secretive about your plans and work quietly. If other people have the same ideas, revise your own decision and take a new course of action.
8. Take a post-graduate study after your masters degree at a university in a foreign country. When applying for a function, your letter will get more attention.
9. Study, study, study as much as you can, the more the better, not because you really need the acquired knowledge, but to help you win the race. Be sure that employers make a selection very easy for them and as heavy as possible for you .
10. If other people have the same ideas as you, don't ignore this last advice: Study as hard as you can, and still more.

(Intermagazine, June 1968, p. 36)

Two serious questions arise from this cynical advice:

1. Labour-market prognostics are fairly far removed from reality, most of them are inconclusive and invalid but they are still used because we have no other means of predicting the future. (Levin, 1984; Jallade, 1984).
2. Whas has happened to all those beautiful concepts and values expressed in terms of equity and equality? Coping behavior, competitiveness, being evasive, conformistic behavior instead of critical behavior will be the result.

Is it not the strength of Western democratic societies that we are striving for a better life for everyone, for democratic ideals, for citizenship, for solidarity and trust, namely taking care for the weakest within in our society?

Do we ever hear anything about all those skills and accomplishments, and about caring for the weak, enjoying the arts, writing poems, singing ballads, playing the clarinet, or enjoying a piano-concert of Mozart's work?

During a lifespan of about 75 years, people dedicate an average of 25 years to studying, 25 years to working and another 25 years to enjoying retirement. Most of our leisure time can be spent in resting and enjoying life in quite different forms. It seems to me that schooling has become the key-function for preparing people only for their future employment and, as a consequence, for orientating or guiding our lives to fit the technological world.

The mismatch between educational systems in Western countries and the needs of the labour-market, especially in the field of computer technology, has led many countries to re-think the system. It seems to me that equity and equality are no longer the leading principles they were during the sixties of this century: now it is quality and efficiency leading to excellence. However nobody knows the real meaning of the terms quality, excellence and giftedness. The split between specialization and generalization is likely to be very vague, because the concept of schooling is opportunistic: learn only those subjects which give you a good chance to find a job. It is not important which job it is. Be adaptable and mobile, accommodate to new situations and circumstances. Thus, learn and study everything you are able to, take many academic degrees, Ph.D., BA's, so that you will become over-schooled. The old adage - the survival of the fittest - has been born again!

At first glance we consider that a better schooling will give more opportunity for work. If your have more knowledge and master many skills, you can undertake a lot of business and jobs. This may be true at the individual level, but when everybody is doing the same, we come into the spiral model (Emmerij, 1981). This means, that every time a group of young people reach a higher level of goals and objectives, other groups are already striving to go further, so there will be always a new group lagging behind.

Automatization has led to some strange effects on jobs:

a. demands for jobs are growing ever higher;

b. polarisation at job level: the percentage of people with lower level (dirty work) and that of people with a high level job, are increasing, while the percentage of jobs in between is decreasing;

c. when confronting the requirements of a job with the qualification level of schooling we find too much over-schooling, especially among those people with a low or medium school-level. This has led to an inflation of certificates:

d. as a consequence of the automatization, we realize that the content of jobs are changing: upgrading, degrading, re-grading and polarisation. It is also changing for work: compositional change in the organisation (Spenner, 1985);

e. skills and attitudes are changing into general skills.

In a study on civil engineering and business administration carried out last year in The Netherlands, we found that these changes led to very general skills and attitudes like: problem solving behaviour, communication skills, accuracy, systems thinking, appreciation of quality, responsibility for equipment, appreciation of cost benefits, responsibility for colleagues, positive attitudes (Nijhof & Mulder, 1986). The new term for describing this is flexidentity. When polarisation has taken place, when unemployment is increasing, and when over-schooling leads to the exclusion of jobs, we must ask if schooling is worthwhile? Do we need a new concept of schooling?

The concept of personal success is nowadays a dominant cyclical orientation which arises in times of economic turmoil. It is based on utility, competition, rationality flexibility and mobility, is an opportunistic concept, based on adjustment and conformism.

If we take Klafki seriously, we need a concept of schooling based on self-determination, co-determination and solidarity. Namely we need a concept focusing not on the ultimate social benefits, nor on the particular intellectual skills, nor even on the technology required to teach it. We need a concept based on multiple qualifications: personal, professional and social. We need a co-operative-instrumental concept in order to solve the key problems of our times.

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