

THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STRUGGLE 1993-1997: AN "INSIDER" ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT *The development of Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum over the 1993–1997 period was highly contested. The authors were directly involved in the social studies development over this period, and this paper reflects on some of the major events in the development, from our "insiders" viewpoint. The paper argues that the contest was strongly influenced by two major "dominant voice groups with very different views on what a social studies curriculum should be like and by key elements of the political and economic reform agenda of the day. The paper traces the rise and fall in influence of each "dominant voice" group and also examines the way in which the reform agenda changed throughout the development. It argues that in the end the inclusive and liberal-democratic voice was dominant over the neo-liberal and educationally conservative one. It also suggests that a return to a more cooperative, negotiated style of curriculum development, rather than a pure "market-contract model" approach, was needed to bring the development to a satisfactory conclusion.*

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum historians and theorists have long recognised that curriculum is highly contested. Lee and Hill (1996, p. 19) note that "historical scholarship has upheld the view that political as well as economic and social considerations have underpinned the New Zealand curriculum since 1877". Layton (1972, 1988) and Goodson (1992) have demonstrated in cases of the sciences and geography in England, that subjects develop and grow, and decay through a multi-faceted process where the ideas and actions of a whole range of individuals and groups interact. Archer and Openshaw (1992, p. 49) argue that "curricula are the products of struggle in which various competing interests attempt to secure the dominance of their own particular ideologies and beliefs". McGee (1995, p. 29) comments that, "Curriculum changes result from a highly complex mix of ideological, political, social, philosophical, economic and other influences".

McCulloch (1992) has shown how processes similar to those outlined by Layton and Goodson operate in the New Zealand social sciences curriculum in a chapter on the New Zealand geography curriculum from 1944. Openshaw and Archer (1992) have documented the history of the struggles to establish social studies as a subject in the secondary school between 1942 and 1964. Judith McGee (1998) has similarly analysed the forces that competed in an attempt to shape the citizenship dimensions of New Zealand curriculum through social studies from 1900 to the 1990s. *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum* (SSNZC) (Ministry of Education, 1997) is the latest social studies curriculum statement to emerge from the process of contest, struggle, and debate that surrounds any new curriculum development. A complex mix of ideological, political, social, philosophical, and economic influences were involved and the struggle so intense that two drafts were written and rejected before the final document was published.

There has been considerable discussion of the merits of the final curriculum statement and the processes by which it was developed. However, only three authors have engaged in any in-depth analysis of the nature of the curriculum contest surrounding the development of the curriculum. Openshaw (1998, 1999 and 2000) has examined the submissions to *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum: Draft* (Ministry of Education, 1994) in considerable detail and has provided some very valuable insights into the nature of the struggle and contestation surrounding this phase of the development. Openshaw and Benson (1998) have also examined some aspects of the events surrounding the second draft and the final document. In addition, Mutch (1998, 1999) has analysed the development, emphasising swings from "left" to "right" and finally back to the "centre". The work of these writers has been very valuable. However, it has been analysis "from the outside", that is, by those not directly involved, and it leaves much unsaid; particularly an analysis of the later stages of the development. In this paper, as individuals directly involved in the development of SSNZC, we aim to extend and broaden the analysis and discussion of the intense struggles surrounding the development, by providing a view "from the inside".

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING THE SSNZC DEVELOPMENT

The forces involved in the development of SSNZC were complex and interrelated. However, within the length constraints of this paper, we concentrate on just two key dimensions of the struggle. Firstly, and following Goodson (1992), Lee and Hill (1996), McCulloch (1992), McGee (1995), McGee (1998), and Openshaw and Archer (1992), we focus on the "competing interests attempt(ing) to secure the dominance of their own particular ideologies and beliefs." (Archer & Openshaw, 1992, p. 49). We employ the imagery of a public dialogue where a number of competing voices strive to be heard and to have influence over the final outcome of the development. Secondly, and following Elley (1996), Philips, (2000), and Snook (1997), we focus on two elements of the political and economic reform agenda of the 1980s and 1990s that had important impacts on the development. One of these was the drive for efficiency gains, and the second was the desire to achieve a free market and avoid provider capture in public sector affairs.

Within the competing interests frame, we argue that there were two dominant voice groups influencing the development, each containing distinct contributing voices. We suggest that one of the dominant voice groups can be thought of as voices calling for an open, inclusive, negotiated, and liberal-democratic kind of social studies curriculum. The other dominant voice group contains voices favouring more sectarian (neo-liberal), closed (Eurocentric), and educationally conservative social studies.

The first of these two groups had within it a very wide range of contributing communities and voices. Some of these suggested that social studies needed to reflect a maturing post-colonial Aotearoa/New Zealand. Others emphasised the importance of consensus decision-making in a liberal democracy. A third voice called for social studies to be in tune with the cultural and postmodern turn of the disciplines that underpin the social science dimension of the curriculum. Yet others asked for an evolutionary education-centred curriculum development process within the tradition of cooperation that produced the 1977 Form 1 - 4 social studies syllabus guidelines, and the senior history, geography and economic syllabi of the late 1980s.

The second group was more tightly focused. Many of its contributing communities and voices were clustered around a neo-liberal economic and political reform agenda. This emphasised school-based management, competition, cost-cutting, and a market approach in education on the one hand, and tighter specification and greater control from the centre with more accountability and surveillance on the other. Another voice within this group was based around an educationally conservative position following recent trends in Europe and North America. There, strong conservative education movements have argued that social studies as a subject is not a suitable vehicle for social science education. History and geography for all students at all levels, they implied, was a better option.

The radical changes derived from public choice theory and managerialism were also very influential. A number of writers have shown just how far-reaching such influences were in the curriculum field (Elley, 1996; Philips, 2000; Snook, 1997). Here we focus on two aspects of these changes. Firstly, Philips notes that the economic reform programme initiated by the Labour government in 1984 led to an increasing focus on a market-based approach to social policy, including education.

Social expenditure was considered too high, so efficiency gains were sought through various measures such as restructuring government agencies, devolution of functions (e.g. through contracting services) formerly carried out centrally, a more contestable policy environment and increased accountability for meeting defined outcomes (Philips, 2000, p.143).

All of these elements were evident in the social studies curriculum development of 1993 – 1997 and can be discerned in the structure of the development, the nature of the process followed and in aspects of the content and style of the curriculum itself.

Secondly, Philips also observes that various commentators suggest that the reforms reflected neo-liberalism and New Right ideas by fostering a “distrust of educational professionals because of the purported fear of capture by vested interests” (Philips, 2000, p. 143). This fear of “provider capture” was also very clear during the development of SSNZC. Not only did it marginalise the views and ideas of the social studies education community through much of the development, it also served to allow other groups to promote views and ideas thought to better represent the directions for the social science learning area consistent with neo-liberalism.

THE STORY OF SSNZC 1993-1997: AN “INSIDER” REFLECTION.

This section of the paper examines some of the main events in the social studies curriculum development struggle within this framework. We describe and reflect on these events as individuals participating in the contest. Both authors were directly involved at various points through the development, as writers, consultants and researchers. In addition, we were both office-holders in social studies professional associations throughout the development. We acknowledge that our involvement in the process means we will inevitably bring something of the perspective of the roles we fulfilled during that time. However, we believe that thoughtful participant reflection, within an educational research framework, can make a valuable contribution to the literature and this is our aim.

Pre-1993 Influences on the 1993-1997 Curriculum Development Process

Educational structures and practices for curriculum development prior to 1989 were very different from those operating during the 1993-1997 period. However, ideas and attitudes associated with earlier structures and practices were still important influences during the development of SSNZC and need to be considered in understanding the nature of the 1993-97 development.

Social studies as a subject had experienced a number of changes since it was introduced into the New Zealand school curriculum following the Thomas Report of 1944. For example the "New Social Studies" movement of the 1960s and 70s was the basis of a Form 1 - 4 Social Studies development between 1973 and 1977. In the resulting *Social Studies Syllabus Guidelines: Forms 1-4* (New Zealand Department of Education, 1977) there was a strong emphasis upon concepts drawn from the social science along with social science skills, values, and social action. The *Faces* project (New Zealand Department of Education, 1986) attempted to introduce similar changes in primary school social studies. In the late 1980s a second round of curriculum review and redevelopment occurred at the junior secondary level culminating in the publication of *Social Studies, Forms 3 and 4: A Handbook for Teachers* (Ministry of Education, 1991). These developments, which often emphasised inclusive, pluralistic and post-colonial ideas, were important in shaping the thinking of those involved in the development of the 1997 social studies curriculum (Barr, Hunter & Keown, 1999).

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s a broad coalition of organisations and individuals worked cooperatively on these developments. The Department of Education's Curriculum Development Division (CDD), individual curriculum development officers, local subject inspectors and advisers, teacher union curriculum committees, and university social science discipline "experts", all worked closely with social studies teachers groups, schools and teachers in these developments. In addition during the 1980s efforts were made to include Māori and Pacific Islands communities in discussions and developments. The Taha Māori social studies resources of the Te Kiti Raukura project and the Whakamua Ki Conference were examples. There were also efforts made to develop a broader gender focus and to include some economics initiatives such as the Micro Society Programme sponsored by the Enterprise New Zealand Trust.

The period immediately preceding the 1993-97 development was also characterised by the consensus-oriented and richly consultative curriculum review of 1984-88. In this development, open dialogue about the future curriculum for New Zealand schools was very inclusive and a wide range of community groups and individuals joined the educational community in dialogue and decision-making. This grass roots process made a significant contribution to the shape and structure of the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework (NZCF)* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993).

All of these developments fostered an open, inclusive, negotiated, and liberal-democratic kind of curriculum development process. Thus, there was a strong expectation that a similar process would be used in developing curriculum statements for the individual learning areas in the years following the publication of the *NZCF*. However, this was not to be, and the shape and direction of curriculum development in New Zealand was radically different by the time the social studies development began.

The two key aspects of the reforms discussed earlier, the drive for efficiency and application of "market" principles to educational development, were quickly

set in place in 1989 and 1990. The Department of Education, including the CDD was dismantled. The CDD, and particularly the individual officers with responsibility for specific subjects, had been key leaders in the cooperative approach that produced the curriculum initiatives of the 1970s and 1980s. This service and all its expertise, leadership and extensive networks disappeared. In its place a much slimmer and much cheaper contract system for curriculum development was introduced (Chalmers & Keown, 1999). The "alliance" between the central government agency responsible for curriculum and subject teaching communities was broken through a contract system. The new Ministry of Education adopted a much more distant approach by separating policy development and implementation, and having less involvement with subject teaching communities, reflecting the desire to avoid "provider capture."

Situated From the Centre: Inclusive Voices December 1993 – August 1995

In spite of all this, the national social studies development began optimistically, in the spirit of the curriculum development approaches used prior to 1989. The Secretary for Education's emphasis on an inclusive, consultative, and participatory process of curriculum development as stated in the foreword to several issues of *New Zealand Education Gazette* (1 February 1991, 1 April 1993 and 16 April 1993) appeared to support this. The Ministry of Education advertised contract positions for the social studies development in July and October, 1993. The mid-December *Gazette* provided information about contracted curriculum development phases for the social studies curriculum and invited submissions from professional associations and key sector groups. Ideas from these submissions and guidelines from the social science section of the NZCF informed policy decisions made by the Minister of Education's Policy Advisory Group (PAG). The resulting policy specifications defined the curriculum parameters for the successful contractors and the team of teachers and educators sub-contracted to write content and consult with stakeholders and reference groups. It was planned that a draft social studies curriculum be published at the end of 1994, and feedback be sought from the educational community.

The first phase of the curriculum was developed predominantly from the centre. The key participants at this point were the contracted writing team and the PAG. The selection of contract development leaders from North and South Island colleges of education, and the formation of a diverse writing team reflected social studies teaching expertise across the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

The writing team met for five intensive writing weeks from February to August 1994, and worked within the PAG policy specifications based on the inclusive principles and the social sciences *Tikanga-a-iwi* statement in the NZCF, (*Education Gazette*, 17 December, 1993). These reflected the economic, social, and cultural contexts of New Zealand in the early 1990s, and emphasised gendered, bicultural and multicultural understanding as necessary in a new syllabus. The writing team also used the NZCF in defining the five learning strands and developing achievement objectives. They also reviewed existing social studies documentation, the Year 11 - 13 history and geography syllabi, and the Year 9 - 13 economics syllabus.

The nature of the new and "efficient" contract system of curriculum development soon began to create difficulties for the writing team because of the urgency of the development and the pressure of meeting Ministry contractual outputs. In addition, each of the writers voluntarily accepted the responsibility of

chairing a reference group for consultative feedback. These groups were set up in the spirit of wide consultation typical of pre-1989 curriculum development and in keeping with the inclusive process and "community and teacher ownership" espoused by the Secretary for Education.

Decisions taken in developing the social studies in the NZCF Draft, were strongly influenced by the Ministry of Education's stated commitment to gender inclusion and the bicultural heritage of Māori and Pakeha. The 1993 *Gazette* statements, for example, focused on the celebration of women's suffrage, and inclusive gender policies in education. The commemoration of 150 years of the Treaty of Waitangi (1990), and the establishment of the Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Act (1985), also informed both the NZCF principles and related social studies resource developments.

In addition, some writers, particularly those involved in preservice teacher education, brought research interests and knowledge to further inform or justify decisions made inside the writing process. It seemed to some of them (personal communication) that there was a struggle to establish the rationale, aims and content of social studies. No position paper had preceded curriculum statement writing. The lack of such a carefully constructed position paper meant that the coordinating developers and many of the writers became involved in investigating social studies theory and practice. Working within a tight contractual time-frame, knowledge of post-colonial, feminist, and post-modern theories and discourses were brought to the developing curriculum. For example, an emerging focus on Māori and Pakeha cultures and bicultural heritage was influenced by the contemporary writings of scholars like Ranginui Walker (1990), Angela Ballara (1986), and Claudia Orange (1987). Socio-cultural understandings were supported by the scholarship of Spoonley (1991, 1993), Rosaldo (1989), and Banks (1988), and gendered understandings influenced by Laufiso (1988), Spender (1989), and Alton-Lee, Densem, and Nuthall (1990). Ideas about barriers to learning were supported by the research of Simon (1984), Irwin (1989), and Alton Lee and Nuthall (1990). Approaches to teaching and learning in the social studies were influenced by American social studies writers, such as those published in *Handbook of research on social studies teaching and learning* (Shaver, 1991). Thus the approach the writing team took was fully consistent with trends in society, and in current social studies curriculum writing, research and development.

Openshaw has suggested that the writers adopted a model of biculturalism "then being advanced by radical land activists with the support of some social anthropologists" (2000, p.69). However, the information reported above suggests that the writers did not promote any deliberate model of biculturalism. Rather, the cultural backgrounds and experiences, subject expertise, research, and curriculum statements shaped the approach adopted. Openshaw has also commented (2000, p. 69) that the draft writers found liberal feminism to be a more viable approach to the development, as it did not threaten the existing socio-economic structure. However, the writing team felt they were expanding the boundaries and approached feminism as an inclusive concept, not an exclusive one. In doing this, they sought to allow diverse perceptions and opinions to be heard, and to show respect for diversity.

Openshaw has further argued that the central aim of the draft was the creation of citizens and workers who would accept dominant economic and social trends as natural, rather than attempt a critique of them (2000, p. 68). This may have been the aim of the Ministry of Education, but the writing team did not operate to such an agenda. For example, the interpretation and unpacking of the

resources and economic activities learning strand in the context of human social behaviour, proved discomfoting for writers. Successive PAG critiques of the writing process supported traditional economics syllabus understandings, seemingly dependent upon stakeholder group feedback from groups such as The Enterprise New Zealand Trust. The writing team reluctantly accepted PAG instruction that ideas and concepts such as *spirituality* and *well-being* be removed from resources and economic activities achievement objectives. Inside the process, the writing team argued against promoting an economic literacy that would emphasise economic goals to the detriment of the promotion of national harmony, as argued by Openshaw (1999, p. 93). Writers also felt uncomfortable about strengthening ideas of citizenship manifested in American social studies as suggested by the PAG, because these offered narrow and often exclusive understandings.

Built into the development was an ambitious consultation programme that sat alongside the writer reference groups. Through four of the five writing weeks, the team reviewed consultative feedback, and the PAG's responses to this, and then made changes to draft material where appropriate. Approximately 120 stakeholder groups were involved in the consultation, including the New Zealand Law Society, Enterprise New Zealand Trust, The Chamber of Commerce, New Zealand Police, Ethnic Affairs Service, New Zealand Chinese Association, teacher unions and university academics in the social sciences.

Feedback exposed a variety of issues. There were difficulties in unpacking the strand knowledge statements into achievement objectives over eight levels of learning. Another challenging aspect involved the articulation of the social studies skills. The team was adamant that skills be developed and reinforced in conjunction with knowledge, attitudes, and perspectives. The Ministry's curriculum facilitator and the PAG were initially unconvinced, preferring a hierarchical approach to listing discrete skills and/or building skills into achievement objectives. The team's compromise position of signalling generic categories of skills through all levels of the curriculum was clumsy, but enabled the process to move on.

Conflicts such as these meant that by the fourth writing week, tensions between the writing team and curriculum facilitator in relation to the role and agenda of the PAG, and the review and use of consultation materials were at a crisis point. Writers requested a meeting with the PAG to seek clarification of the use of terminology such as "pakeha" and "Aotearoa", and to seek PAG views on why there seemed to be differential reaction to particular stakeholder feedback. Writers were also pressured to suggest contexts and settings and to write activity suggestions to exemplify achievement objectives prior to the completion of the statement, all within a very short time-frame. The co-coordinating writers, skilled in mediation, eased tensions and enabled the group to work through issues without the PAG.

Thus, there were significant struggles inside the writing process between the writing team and the PAG and Ministry facilitator. As the examples above show, at times the PAG made suggestions in support of the "inclusive, liberal-democratic" position, but at other times they seemed to act, consciously or unconsciously, in a way more consistent with the voice of the "neo-liberal and educationally conservative" group. The contracted writers felt obligated to represent the social studies community of teachers and learners. The PAG and the Ministry facilitator, on the other hand, often seemed to be asking for closer attention to the needs of the reform agenda. Hursh (2001) notes that neo-liberal

reforms result in governmental organisations that “seek to govern without specifying exactly what must be done, but by presenting the requirements as rational and non-controversial and providing a limited range in which they must be implemented” (2001, p. 354). The draft writers were lulled into a false sense of belief that the team could exercise freedom and choice, but constantly ran up against PAG interventions that appeared to be attempting to restrict or redirect the development.

Nevertheless the writing team completed the sub-contracted process in August 1994, and the coordinating writers finalised the text of *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum Draft* and handed it on to the Ministry. After such an intense process, there was difficulty in letting go, and a realisation that the editing and final shaping of the draft was now in the hands of the Ministry.

Situated on the Margins: Dominant Voices July 1995 to September 1996

After the release of *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum Draft* in December 1994, the Ministry of Education contracted teams to deliver teacher professional development, and initiated a three-month period of public consultation and feedback. Opinions varied about the draft. Kelvin Smythe, a consultant and educational watchdog commented on the lack of convincing main aims (Smythe, 1995, p. 1). The Aotearoa New Zealand Federation of Social Studies Associations (ANZFSSA), the national professional body of social studies organisations, supported the main thrust of the draft. However, it made suggestions for further specification of achievement objectives, a greater focus on European settings and perspectives, more consideration of cultures in their own terms, and greater emphasis on research skills and skills coherence (Openshaw, 1999, p. 97).

At the ANZFSSA conference in July the Minister of Education, Dr Lockwood Smith, signalled to the social studies community that critics of curriculum reform could feed a public debate over the question of indoctrination in social studies (Openshaw, 1998, p. 32). Grant and Sachs (1997, p. 97) have commented that knowledges and discourses become sites of struggle between dominant and subordinate groups which is consistent with other literature reviewed earlier. The public discourses about the social studies curriculum following the publication of the draft focused most strongly on issues of culture and society. The dominant voices came from the political Right, exposing a coercive and parochial view of social studies education. The views of those who agreed with the approach to social studies taken in the draft were marginalised, and their voices silenced by dominant voices reaching the public audience.

The Education Forum mounted a particularly strong public attack on the draft, from the outside. Using the media, the Forum sensationally fired a public debate by attacking many aspects of both the draft and the NZCF. The Forum and its supporters demonised the curriculum developers and writers for bias towards indigenous peoples and culture, disregard for the western cultural and intellectual heritage, promotion of utopian theories, and radicalised notions of race and gender (Brooke, 1995; Education Forum, 1995; Lockstone, 1996). In a submission the Forum claimed that the draft was beyond rescue, and that the integrated approach of social studies should be abandoned, or at the very least, radically reworked.

The submission says that if the government insists on an integrated curriculum it should be constructed in a way that provides intellectual

rigour and coherence and a solid knowledge base (Education Forum Media Release, 28 August, 1995).

It is not surprising that the Forum contracted Dr Geoffrey Partington to prepare its submission. Partington was well known for his New Right stance in the context of British educational reform (1980s-1990s). In Britain the New Right had attempted to revalorise traditional forms of education, particularly those relating to culture. History was fiercely contested "because it provided a catalyst for debates over national identity, centred on the crucial question, namely what it means to be British" (Phillips, 1996, pp. 385-6). An Anglo-centric "we" in terms of national identity was envisaged with the New Right discourse of Partington and others.

Partington (1986) denounced the experts for their denial that "there are any grounds for pride or reverence in the study of the national past and for their systematic denigration of English, later British history" (Phillips, 1996, p. 389).

Partington's comments indicate his inclination to impose the primacy of the western canon on social studies in the New Zealand context.

Thus the professional social studies community was essentially silenced during this period by louder, stronger, and highly critical voices. The Ministry's curriculum division was unable, or unwilling, to make an effective public response to the denigration of the draft. It seemed that doubt and confusion about the social studies curriculum had been sown. This ultimately influenced the Minister of Education's decision to commission a re-draft and pursue a new direction and approach to the curriculum.

. . . complete redrafting of the social studies curriculum should be undertaken. The task should be undertaken by a small group of people who share the concerns expressed in this submission to rescue social studies from disintegration into social therapy . . . (Education Forum, 1995, p. 49).

As others have shown (Openshaw, 1998, 1999, 2000; Openshaw & Benson, 1998) the Forum's submission was but one of many. However, it was "the largest and as it turned out the most influential submission" (Openshaw & Benson, p. 1). In addition to the strong public support afforded to the Forum's views in the media, the Ministry itself seemed particularly concerned to defuse the criticisms of the Forum. For example, when the PAG met to consider the outcomes of the submissions on the draft three individuals were asked to address the meeting. The Forum and supporters of its view were very well represented in this group whereas the Federation of Social Studies, which had provided qualified support for the draft, and who represented the social studies teaching community, was not invited (Federation News, *New Zealand Journal of Social Studies*, 5(2) p. 3).

In December 1995 the new Minister of Education, Wyatt Creech, asked the Ministry to commission a redraft. However, the contract for the redraft was not advertised and very little detail about the process of the development of *Social Sciences in the New Zealand Curriculum: Revised Draft* (Ministry of Education, 1996) has been made public. A final meeting of the PAG to review the re-draft was held in April 1996. In May 1996 a media release from the Minister of Education informed the public of the revision and a new timeframe for the implementation

of SSNZC in February 1998. The revised draft itself was released in mid-1996. In the *Education Gazette* (15 July, 1996), teachers were advised that the release of a second draft was unprecedented in curriculum development.

It is important to note here that two key changes in the way the market model of curriculum development operated within the 1993-1997 social studies development occurred during 1996. Firstly, the "free market" approach to the letting of contracts within the development was abandoned. All contracts from this point on were by appointment, not by tender. Secondly, the PAG was disbanded and played no further part in the development. These two changes opened the way for a return to a more direct and cooperative relationship between the Ministry and the social studies community later in the curriculum development process.

The revised draft reflected changes proposed by key lobby groups, particularly the Education Forum, and presented a traditional Anglo-centric approach; prescribed content and repetition of the existing history, geography and economics content. Many in the social studies community, including the first draft writers, viewed the revision with dismay and concern. Tensions were building within the social studies community, particularly among advisors and facilitators contracted by the Ministry of Education to provide professional development. The switch to a social studies statement that was structurally and ideologically very different proved a catalyst for teachers to review the curriculum process more critically than previously. The Ministry sought feedback to the revised draft through public submissions from July to October 1996. The Ministry claimed there had been no conspiracy or secrecy surrounding the writing of this second draft and a policy manager of learning and evaluation commented that the document was stronger than the final draft in affirming a bicultural and multicultural society. "The document addresses issues of cultural difference in a dispassionate way. Its language is measured" (*Education Review*, July 24-30, 1996).

Thus debates towards the end of 1996 reflected the polarisation of the debate a year earlier over the first draft. The foreword of the Education Forum's submission on the revised draft, by Dr. Kenneth Minogue, attacked social studies "as not a subject . . . it is a compendium of clichés" (Education Forum, 1996, p. viii). The significant concessions made to the views of the Forum in the Revised Draft appeared to have done little to placate the voices of the Right!

Countering Dominant Voices: July to December, 1996

While the period following the release of the second draft had seen considerable public debate, most of it was led by the Forum and its supporters or was in response to the Forum's views. In the period following the release of the second draft the scope of the debate became wider, and a broader range of groups and individuals became involved. The voices of the supporters of the inclusive, liberal-democratic camp began to be heard.

In 1996 the New Zealand Qualifications Authority's development of social studies unit standards was hindered by the changes in curriculum statements, and a Māori version of social studies *Draft Tikanga-a-iwi*, was shaped around the revised draft. These initiatives provided a means for social studies teachers to further critique the ideological differences in statements and get involved in discussion through subject associations. A groundswell of dissent was discernable through public comments countering Ministry of Education and Forum statements over the revised draft. In July 1996, Kelvin Smythe criticised the

revised draft on the grounds that it would impede race relations and was incompatible with the Human Rights Act. (*New Zealand Education Review*, 24 - 30 July 1996).

The Ministry of Education rejected claims of racism (*Education Review*, July 24-30, 1996), and the Race Relations Office did not uphold the complaint. However, the Race Relations Conciliator, Rajen Prasad, suggested the revised draft needed to do more to promote race relations and to develop a "culture conscious" society. In *The Evening Post* (21 July, 1997) Atihana Johns, a preservice educator, expressed concern about the cultural omissions of the revision, and wrote of an ethnically cleansed curriculum, and lamented the loss of pakeha to define ethnicity, identity and cultural heritage (*Education Review*, September 1996). Philippa Hunter addressed social studies teachers at an Auckland Social Studies Association Seminar Day in October 1996, and commented on the mismatch and deceit of the revised draft. She noted that the draft's statements relating to bicultural, multicultural, gender and individual needs, had been placed in the front section of the document, but the ideas were absent from the new set of achievement objectives. Further, the language was bland and sanitised. For example the Treaty of Waitangi was reduced to "the story of an agreement".

The social studies community rallied to express its views and used editorial comment (Barr, 1996) and a media release in support of the ANZFSSA submission to counter dominant voices. The Federation's submission stated, "There is a clear and consistent view across the associations, that the *Revised Draft* is in most respects an unacceptable base document for social studies in New Zealand in its present form" (ANZFSSA, 1996, p. 5). It also noted that "the *Revised Draft* has not answered most of the submission points made by the Federation in 1995" and indeed suggested that "in a number of places changes go in the opposite direction from the features of the draft praised by the Federation's earlier submission". The Federation argued strongly for "the restatement of key terminology and emphases such as Tangata Whenua, Pakeha, Tangata Pasifika and culture and gender inclusion", and "the place of social action to be restored" (ANZFSSA, 1996, p. 17).

Reclaiming Voices: December 1996 to December 1997

As the pendulum of the social studies curriculum "contest" started to swing back towards the centre, a "natural left constituency" concerned with issues of social justice, responsibility, and democratic empowerment (Shapiro, 1995, p. 27) began to strengthen. An opportunity for the social studies community to "reclaim" the development arose in December 1996. Some criticisms during 1996 had focused on the lack of a researched position paper to support the development (*Education Forum*, 1996; Irwin, 1996). Subsequently, the Ministry of Education took up a suggestion from the social studies academic staff at The University of Waikato to prepare a researched position paper under contract. The paper was to be grounded in international and New Zealand social sciences theory and research to define the nature, purpose, and rationale of social studies in the New Zealand curriculum.

In January 1997, a Ministry of Education manager commented that, in hindsight, the team that won the writing contract for the first draft had not put enough emphasis on the *rationale* behind the curriculum (*Education Review*, January 23). The position paper presented a clear rationale and set of aims; a coherent structure for the curriculum, and reported on recent theoretical underpinnings from the social sciences. The researchers consulted widely with

academics in international and national settings. The social studies processes of inquiry, values exploration, and social decision-making were framed to solve ongoing problems with the function and placement of skills. Perspectives were built into the structure and presented currency, relevance, and opportunity for critical affiliation (Hill, 1994).

The position paper has not as yet received critical analysis in terms of its relation to the final document, *SSNZC* (1997). It was, however, influential in shaping the structure and content of *SSNZC*. It offered clear suggestions on how to combine the best features of the two drafts with key ideas from the social studies literature. It also provided a clear rebuttal of many of the sensational claims of the Education Forum. Associate Education Minister Donnelly told the 1997 ANZFSSA Conference that after reading the position paper he concluded, "the current position held by the Business Round Table . . . (The Forum's parent body) . . . is really reactionary, trying to turn back the tide of time" (Donnelly, 1998, p. 18).

The Ministry of Education attempted to tidy up the revised draft in April and May 1997. A group of teachers and social studies educators who had not taken a direct part in the development of the two drafts was assembled. By this stage the Ministry was working more closely with the social studies community and the Federation provided nominations for this group to the Ministry (Federation News, *NZ Journal of Social Studies*, October, 1996).

Initially the group met for one writing week in Wellington to review all material developed to that date, including the position paper, and to begin work on a final document. Some members of the group were then involved in a second week, and worked with contracted advisors and facilitators of teacher professional development at a hui (meeting) in Hamilton. The Ministry hoped these two weeks would provide the basis for a final document. However, two weeks was insufficient for such a complex task.

Meanwhile, a group of social studies educators, previously involved with the first draft's policy, writing and consultation, was approached to write a handbook to support the final statement. This group comprised five teacher educators, three of whom had been writers of the Waikato position paper and two who had been first draft writers. By July 1997, the handbook team found it was impossible to meet contractual requirements because flaws in the curriculum statement's structure, achievement objectives, and overall coherence, needed to be addressed. As a result, the handbook contract was put aside, and new contract variations negotiated, and the group was transformed into a writing team, with the task of completing the final curriculum statement using all the material now available.

As this work proceeded Ministry policy analysts sought to impose new requirements on the curriculum, including further specification of achievement objectives to support new Ministry assessment policies and auditing procedures. The writing team argued that social studies needed flexible and open objectives and that teacher professionalism could address assessment and audit issues. In the end, a compromise was reached, and it was agreed that indicators, (supporting statements indicating what students may come to know, understand, or be able to do), would be developed in conjunction with each achievement objective. These aimed to give content and learning outcomes greater clarity, while leaving the achievement objectives open-ended.

At this stage the Ministry was under considerable pressure to complete the project and there was minimal time to consult with the social studies community. However, a national social studies conference in September 1997 enabled the Ministry and writers to disseminate information and gain support for the final

statement. A feature of this conference was the strong support of the document by Associate Minister of Education Brian Donnelly (Donnelly, 1998). However, some within the Ministry were still nervous about committing to the final re-write. Editorial decisions by Ministry and Learning Media personnel continued to alter the wording and intent of achievement objectives and were challenged by the writers. As a result more time had to be taken by writers to further review and refine changes. There was considerable relief when the Minister finally "signed off" the document for publication in mid-September. Relief was, however, short lived, as the document was held up by further requests for a change to the wording of aspects of the resources and economic activities learning strand. It appeared that lobbyists for the neo-liberal agenda were still active in the background. Once again a crisis of confidence nearly upended the final curriculum, exemplifying the doubt, confusion and struggle that had permeated four years of development. Fortunately, suitable compromise wording was negotiated and the perspectives of economics and commercial groups were accommodated.

The publication and launch of *Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1997) in November 1997 was a culmination of a struggle by professional educators to reclaim their voice. The result vindicated the veracity of the social studies community in its efforts to challenge neo-liberal and educationally conservative voices. SSNZC was implemented in schools in 2000. Whilst the curriculum has been supported with limited professional development for teachers, the development of social studies remains dynamic, and full implementation of the curriculum will continue to be challenging for teachers and learners for some time yet.

CONCLUSION

In the introductory section of this paper we suggested that two key forces were important in the curriculum struggles surrounding the development of SSNZC. Firstly there was an intense struggle between two contrasting collections of interest groups each seeking to secure the dominance of their ideas as a new social studies curriculum statement was developed. Secondly, we suggested that elements of the neo-liberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s were also important. In particular, the drive for efficiency gains and to achieve a "free market" untainted by "provider capture," clearly effected the process.

Returning to the controversy over the curriculum content, Smith (1996) has noted that there tend to be two contrasting views on what school studies about society should be like. The first view is constructed around ideas such as the need to bolster the cultural traditions of Western society through the study of the established disciplines of history, geography and economics and a view that this should be done in a way that ensures academic excellence, objectivity and rigour. The positive contributions of western civilisation to the world, and the advantages of a capitalist-free enterprise market economy, need to be emphasised. Studies that critically examine western political and economics systems or reinforce cultural relativism, must be avoided. This description is similar to that of many in the group referred to in this paper as the neo-liberal and educationally conservative voice group.

Smith suggests that a second view is based around beliefs such as the importance of providing students with the knowledge and skills to understand the effects of rapid social change. This includes the increasing cultural diversity and

plurality of society. This approach also considers it important to encourage the development of critical evaluation skills and decision-making skills. There is also an emphasis on full participation in the democratic process and on undertaking social action, as opposed to being a disinterested onlooker or passive recipient of social policy. This is similar to the view of the group referred to in this paper as the inclusive, liberal-democratic voice group.

Throughout the development of the curriculum statement these two groups strove to gain the ascendancy for their view, as indeed they are democratically entitled to do. In the early stages of the development the inclusive, liberal-democracy view appeared to be in the ascendancy. Events prior to the start of the development and the content and style of final draft were in this vein. The relatively smooth progress of the early stages of the development meant that the inclusive, liberal-democratic group was almost totally unprepared for the strength of the campaign mounted by the neo-liberal and educationally conservative group. The submissions of the Education Forum and the writings and public pronouncements of its spokespersons were strongly in the mould of the first of Smith's views. These voices quickly gained the upper hand in the period following the release of the draft in late 1994, and remained ascendant until after the publication of the position paper in early 1997. However, the social studies associations, the national body (ANZFSSA), social studies educators and a variety of voices from the wider community such as those of Prasad, Johns and Donnelly (1998) rallied support for the inclusive, liberal-democratic view. In addition, the writing of the final document was, for the most part, entrusted to a small group of writers of the previous drafts and was affirmed by advisers and professional development contractors, as well as by the 1997 ANZFSSA conference. The inclusive, liberal-democratic voices were dominant once again.

The influences of the neo-liberal reforms in the "struggle" were subtle and not publicised. Two main examples have been explored in this paper. The first is in the way the contract model of curriculum development created difficulties throughout the development because of the way it altered the relationship between the teaching profession and the Ministry. We have shown some of the tensions and pressures that this model created for the writing teams involved in the first draft and in the production of the final document. Interestingly, the neo-liberal reforms also had the effect of paring back the educational bureaucracy to such an extent that the curriculum expertise and the financial resources of the Ministry were unable to maintain the momentum of the development through a long and difficult process. In the end the Ministry had to abandon the original "free market" model of curriculum development, and return to a more cooperative relationship with the social studies community to complete the development.

A second example of the influence of the neo-liberal reforms discussed is the struggle over the level of specificity of the strand achievement objectives. The strand achievement objectives in the first draft were, in the view of many, too general. The second draft strand objectives, on the other hand, were considered by most social studies teachers and educators to be far too narrow and restricting. From a neo-liberal reform perspective, though, these could be seen as ideal in providing tighter specification and greater control from the centre and more accountability and surveillance. However, the final outcome of this struggle, the "indicator compromise", meant the objectives remained relatively open. Again, inclusive, liberal-democratic voices prevailed.

Thus this paper takes a different perspective on the final outcome of the curriculum contest than that advanced by Openshaw. He sees the final document,

in some ways at least, as a weak compromise that leaves major issues for schools to address (Openshaw 2000, p. 81). Certainly, there have been compromises, and we agree with Mutch that the final document is more "centrist" than either of the two drafts. However, it has been argued that through the return to more "inclusive" terminology and structures, and the retention of open and flexible achievement objectives, SSNZC represents a final solution consistent with the wishes of most social studies professionals.

The case study we have reported raises serious questions about future curriculum development. The basic model of development in the 1990s was what Chalmers and Keown (1999) called a "thin agency and contractor" model; thin as in a slimmed-down cultural curriculum agency with fewer curriculum agents, with curriculum development being contracted. It seems timely to reappraise whether this is the most effective model for future developments, particularly in view of the problematic nature of recent social studies curriculum reform.

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