RE-READING THE HISTORY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLING AFTER 1945

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 1993.
I declare that this thesis is my account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis challenges traditional accounts of the history of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. Most existing explanations of mass secondary schooling have theoretical weaknesses. These weaknesses relate to the liberal democratic conceptual framework that views the development of state secondary schooling as the gradual realisation of the values of democracy, equality and progress. If education is to contribute to the building of democracy it is necessary to develop alternative explanations of secondary schooling and its relationship to patterns of social and economic inequality. This thesis seeks to contribute to the debate by providing a critical explanation of the relationship of state secondary schooling and capitalism in Western Australia in the period after 1945.

The thesis is not a detailed narrative account of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. Rather, the aim is to explain the social function of secondary schooling within the broader political, economic and social context of which it is a part. The thesis rests on two basic assumptions. The first is that there is no such thing as objective history. From Marx, the thesis takes a dialectic approach to history and a concern with the forces of production in understanding the social function of secondary schooling. The second assumption is that although secondary schooling is a site of social and economic reproduction, it is also a site capable of producing counter-hegemonic ideas and practices.

The interpretation of Western Australian secondary schooling presented here owes much to neo-Marxist state theories and poststructuralist thought. This thesis adopts the view that secondary schooling is an important hegemonic apparatus in producing consent to established social practices. A central argument is that schooling tends to reinforce the naturalness of the cultural form of bourgeois society. It imposes a myriad of regulatory mechanisms to produce students who desire a particular set of unequal social arrangements characteristic of capitalism. Specifically, the thesis seeks to explain how Western Australian state secondary schooling actively constructs social divisions of class, race and gender.
This thesis grew out of my experience of school life as a student for twelve years and a secondary school teacher for eleven years. In the mid 1970s, a spirit of optimism characterised my first five years of classroom teaching. Influenced by a Catholic working class background, the Vietnam War protests and the election of the reformist Whitlam Labor Government in 1972, I believed that education could be an important vehicle of social change. But, despite great enthusiasm and hard work nothing much seemed to change. Eventually, a period of disillusionment preoccupied my thinking about education. In retrospect, a sense of powerlessness to change unjust educational practices produced a sense of unease. At this moment, two significant experiences changed my thinking about education.

First, in 1981 the black revolutionary forces of Robert Mugabe overthrew the oppressive white minority government of Ian Smith in Zimbabwe. At the time, the opportunity to participate in the rebuilding of a socialist society was a chance in a lifetime. Two years teaching experience at Highfields Secondary School in Harare helped me to understand the political nature of education. In the black township of Highfields I learnt about colonisation, oppression, struggle, liberation and hope. My history students reinterpreted the British textbooks we were working with and confidently spoke about a 'new' Zimbabwean history. With great clarity they explained their country's situation and its relationship to broader historical and economic forces. Importantly, they understood how people actively made history and interpreted it.

In 1982 I returned to Western Australia and began teaching in an affluent private secondary school in Perth. The clientele was socially mobile and very clear about their social status in life. Academic success, discipline, order and privilege characterised the ethos of the school. My experience of educational and social elitism marked a second significant turning point.

In 1983 I enrolled in a Master of Education Program at Murdoch University. A dissertation on the Commonwealth Schools Commission Innovations Program in Western Australia (1973-1981) alerted me to the complexities of social reform. However, it soon became apparent that the conservative conceptual framework that I was working with lacked the explanatory power to expose the political nature of schooling.
In search of answers I began to read social reproduction theory. This work preoccupied my thinking between 1986 and 1988. I am grateful to Professor Paige Porter who pointed me in the direction of the social theorists writing on the state. Marxist writers like Gramsci, Althusser, Poulantzas and Jessop appealed to me. However, I felt the political economy perspective failed to adequately explain how people made sense of their world. I wanted to know something about how schooling constructed individual identities.


In 1989 and 1990, I read many histories of Australian education. I found the dominant liberal democratic histories of schooling lacked a theoretical framework with which to critically expose the nature of secondary schooling. At this point, a reading of the revisionist histories of Pavla Miller (1986) *Long division: state schooling in South Australia* and Roy Shuker (1987) *The one best system? a revisionist history of state schooling in New Zealand* inspired me to investigate the history of Western Australian secondary schooling using a similar critical perspective.

I spent the best part of 1991 examining the primary data contained in the archives of Battye Library and the Western Australian Education Department. In 1992, five months study leave from Edith Cowan University enabled me to write a draft. With moral support from Bob Petersen and John Smyth I pushed ahead and refined my ideas in the latter part of 1992.

In achieving the final version of this thesis I have many people to thank: Don Smart and John Watt, my supervisors for their assistance and support; Linda Barter, Marlene Peters, Alison Evans and Jenny Down who put such long hours into typing various stages of the thesis; the Dean of Education at Edith Cowan University, Professor Neil Tuckwell for his encouragement and support in obtaining generous study leave in 1992; the library staff at the Bunbury
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INTRODUCTION

Most histories of Western Australian education explain the evolution of compulsory state secondary schooling as a progressive step toward 'democraticisation',1 'fulfilment' and 'equality of opportunity'.2 Many of the developments in Western Australian secondary schooling after World War Two appear to support the liberal democratic interpretation. The huge increase in access and participation, the disappearance of the selective Perth High School in favour of comprehensive state secondary schools, the availability of a range of courses to cater for differences in student taste and ability, the loosening of university control of curricula and the introduction of school based assessment all support the democratisation thesis. So strong is the hegemony of the liberal reading of these developments that an alternative account of the history of Western Australian state secondary schooling is yet to be written. Common sense and the rhetoric of equality of opportunity reinforces the belief that everyone, irrespective of class, race and gender can 'make it'.

In Western Australia, the work of Mossenson (1972) best reflects the liberal democratic perspective. Mossenson's history State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960 described the evolution of Western Australia's 'free, compulsory and secular' education system. His account is very much a celebration of the role of the Director-Generals of Education and the significant part played by the Education Department. In Mossenson's view, the 'main instrument in the transformation to a mass secondary education system was the constitution by statute of the Education Department in October 1893'.3 Mossenson argued that the Education Department overcame a lack of funds and shortages of teachers and facilities to establish 'a centralised and efficient system of public education'.4 He claimed that the decade after the Second World War was a period of 'transition as well as one of fulfilment'. For him, the establishment of the comprehensive high school 'was the means whereby the Education Department transformed both the nature and scope of secondary education' to offer all children equality of opportunity.5

1 See M. Helm (1979), 'The democratisation of state secondary education' in W.D. Neal (ed.), Education in Western Australia, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.
2 See D. Mossenson (1972), State education in Western Australia, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, p.108.
3 Ibid., p.88.
4 Ibid., p.105.
5 Ibid., p.157.
As the title suggests, this thesis seeks to re-read the dominant liberal interpretation of the history of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. Rather than preparing a descriptive and chronological account, it deliberately draws on the explanatory power of social theory to re-interpret the nature of secondary schooling within the broader social context of capitalism. To this end, the thesis adopts an interdisciplinary approach to make sense of and interpret the experiences of Western Australian secondary school children after World War Two.

The thesis takes a thematic approach. Chapter one elaborates the historical methodology that shapes the production of this thesis. It examines how Marx's dialectic approach to history-writing and his sense of social totality combined to explain social phenomena. A major proposition is that Western Australian state secondary schooling can only be properly understood within the broader social and economic context that determines its operation.

Chapter two elaborates the theoretical framework that influences this history. It develops a critical understanding of the idea of the state and how it can illuminate the history of Western Australian state secondary schooling. The chapter begins with a brief summary and critique of traditional Marxist accounts of the state. In addressing the twin problems of functionalism and determinism the second section examines the neo-Marxist ideas of contradiction, contestation and transformation as a way of 'loosening-up' traditional Marxist explanations of the role of the state. The third section turns to poststructuralism and its emphasis upon the constitution of the subject to enhance our understanding of the hegemonic role of state secondary schooling. The final section examines the role of the state in constituting people not only as class subjects but racial and gendered subjects.

Chapter three examines the reasons behind the universalisation of state secondary education after the Second World War. It begins with a brief summary of the origins of inequality in the provision of secondary schooling in Western Australia before the war. A central argument is that the state faced the irreconcilable contradiction of satisfying the demands of a hierarchical economy and at the same time, satisfying the growing demands of subordinate groups in society for greater access and equality. As a consequence, the Western Australian secondary education system faced the political problem of producing a differentiated labour force, and living up to the democratic ideals
associated with the introduction of the comprehensive, co-educational high school.

Chapter four argues that state secondary schools developed various techniques of selection and differentiation to maintain existing social divisions in society. A key theme is that the ideology of intelligence and the principle of meritocracy were major instruments of individual differentiation in the secondary school system. This chapter shows how the new comprehensive secondary schools developed a variety of dividing practices to stream and stratify children. Of particular interest, is the hegemonic role of official educational reports in articulating and legitimising the science of individual difference. The chapter examines the role of state secondary schooling in reinforcing the ideology of innate difference and perpetuating the hierarchical structure of capitalist society.

Chapter five focuses on the regulatory role of state secondary schooling. A central argument is that secondary schooling is a powerful apparatus in shaping the values, knowledge and behaviour of young people. The aim is to show how Western Australian secondary schools set about producing the self-regulatory child who was conscious of his/her duties to society. The first section of the chapter examines the public panic over juvenile delinquency and the increasing pressure on schools to control the physical and moral well-being of Western Australia's youth. The second section argues that secondary schools played an increasingly important role in maintaining the hegemony of the dominant social order. In particular it focuses upon the the hegemonic role of the social studies curriculum in producing children with the habits and desires supportive of the bourgeois social order.

Chapter six examines the relationship of state secondary schooling to broader economic forces. It argues that schooling plays a major role in producing students with the attitudes, skills and behaviours characteristic of the workplace. The first section outlines the nature of the youth crisis created by the world wide recession affecting the Australian economy in the 1970s and 1980s. The second section examines the implications of changing economic conditions for the education system and how various Federal and State level educational reports sought to construct the hegemony of social efficiency. The final section explains the important ideological role of work education in maintaining bourgeois social relations.
Chapter seven sets out to expose the educational assumptions, policies and practices that produced racial inequalities in Western Australian secondary schools. The chapter argues that the everyday practices and routines of European schools helped to construct a set of racist beliefs about 'being Aboriginal'. The first section summarises European state policies toward the Aboriginal people. It examines the consequences of European colonisation on the Aboriginal population, the changing nature of state policies and the implication for Aboriginal education. The second section focuses on the social construction of the 'native' child in white schools. A major argument is that schooling defines Aboriginal children as intellectually and socially inferior to their white counterparts. The third section demonstrates that Aboriginal children did not fully accept these social constructs. Rather, the process of subjectification involved cultural conflict and resistance to schooling. The final section examines the sorts of educational experience Aborigines received in European state secondary schools and how they functioned to perpetuate existing racial inequalities.

Chapter eight argues that the Western Australian secondary education system played a key role in constructing and reinforcing female gender roles. The first section summarises the historical origin of the dominant ideology of the family and gender roles. The chapter then moves on to explain the changing nature of the discourses about girls' education. It examines the ideological role of major educational reports in constructing a particular view of women's traditional role as wife and mother. While the educational rhetoric shifted to a concern about ability and equality of opportunity, the underlying assumption was that girls should eventually return to the family to perform home duties. The final section illustrates how state secondary schooling constructed gender identities through the organisation of school knowledge.

The basic starting point of this thesis is that while the universalisation of state secondary schooling promised greater equality between all citizens, in reality it is a site for the reproduction of unequal class, gender and race relations. The other side of the coin, is that state secondary schooling is a site for intervention and change. My concern is to understand the educational processes involved in the historical construction of inequality in order to challenge the dominant 'taken for granted' assumptions informing current educational practices. Essential to this task is an understanding of the connection between personal lives and social structures. In short, how everyday educational practices and routines constitute social structure.
CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE OF HISTORICAL INQUIRY

INTRODUCTION
LINKING HISTORY AND SOCIAL THEORY
MARXIST HISTORICAL PRACTICE
MARXISM AND THE QUESTION OF THEORETICAL ADEQUACY
THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT
CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE OF HISTORICAL INQUIRY

What has, it seems to be recited afresh is the arduous nature of the engagement between thought and its objective materials: the "dialogue" out of which all knowledge is won.¹

For me, as against any empiricist or neo-positivist approach ... facts can only be rigorously - that is demonstrably - comprehended if they are explicitly analysed with the aid of a theoretical apparatus constantly employed throughout the text.²

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is based on the assumption that history-writing draws on different theoretical perspectives, ideas and methodologies that lead to competing interpretations and conclusions.³ In contrast to the narrative and institutional liberal histories of Western Australian state secondary schooling this thesis seeks to develop a closer working relationship with social theory to illuminate an alternative account of schooling.⁴ The purpose is to expose those taken-for-granted assumptions that provided the rationale for the extension of state secondary schooling to all Western Australian children after the Second World War. Significantly, history viewed as a "constituent moment in the struggles within ideology and culture" can help to explain how compulsory schooling came to benefit the rich over the poor, men over women and whites over blacks.⁵

Specifically, this thesis attempts to understand the hegemonic role of the state. According to the Italian Marxist theorist, Gramsci, hegemony refers to domination established through the organisation of consent. An important aspect of hegemony is that it mystifies and conceals existing power relations thus enabling the ideology of the dominant social groups to be construed as commonsense, natural and eternal.

In chapter one, the historical methodology that shapes the writing of this thesis is the focus of discussion. Four major themes provide the conceptual framework for this discussion. They are: the relationship between history and social theory, the nature of Marxist historical practice, the theoretical adequacy of Marxism, and finally, the nature of the economic, political and social context in which this history occurs. An analysis of these conceptual issues should provide a sense of the spirit, scope and direction of this thesis.

LINKING HISTORY AND SOCIAL THEORY

Following McLennan's call for a more co-operative project between theoretical and empirical modes of inquiry, the concern in this section is to explain how the process of history-writing occurs within the author's particular world view. A central argument is that social theory can make a significant contribution to historical interrogation by illuminating a range of alternative questions, problems or silences that are absent from traditional liberal democratic accounts of schooling.

Conservative historians believe that the task of history is to report the 'facts' as they 'happened'. Positivist history assumes that the 'material' will 'speak' for itself and reveal meaning in an objective way, independent of theoretical and ideological contamination. From this perspective, the historian's job is to act as an impartial spectator who faithfully records historical reality in an objective way.

In contrast to the conservative position, this thesis claims that histories of schooling are not objectively written, but socially constructed. Most often, it

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7 Ranke and the Prussian historical school of the nineteenth century stimulated the empirical and scientific approach to history.
8 H. Meyerhoff (1959), The philosophy of history in our times, Doubleday Anchor Books, New York, p.16.
is the narrative and untheorised approaches to institutional history that have the tendency to "fall prey to the imperatives of the dominant society".\(^9\) Liberal histories of schooling see the development of mass compulsory schooling and its associated bureaucratic structures as the most rational and efficient means for achieving equality of opportunity. As a result, much educational history becomes a celebration of an evolutionary progress toward democratisation and equality.

The simplistic interpretation of history as the recording of what happened in the past has not gone unchallenged. Stimulated by the revisionist histories of the 1960s, many historians are rethinking the nature of the relationship between the past and present. Historians' like Violas and Rasis explain the idea of presentism as:

\[\ldots\text{the impact of the historian's present, or more properly his/her interpretative structure for ordering and understanding the present, i.e. ideology on his/her interpretation of the past.}\] \(^{10}\)

Harris, the Australian Marxist educational philosopher, believes that the historian's ordering of data about the world involves "selective noticing or filtration". For him, history reflects the authors "mental sets" or those 'ideas, preconceptions, prejudices, experiences and defence mechanisms that determine our perceptions of particular situations and events'.\(^{11}\) Harris explains the social construction of knowledge in the following way:

Knowing the world, or coming to know the world, is not a matter of learning or coming into possession of a set of facts or truths about the world, which are there in the world, and which the world yields up to those who are able to see them; it is rather, a matter of coming to perceive the world in particular ways, from particular perspectives, and from particular viewpoints, which are largely determined by and arise out of one's interactions in and with a particular historical and social context.\(^{12}\)

Thompson the British Marxist historian makes the point that each generation, sex or class will inevitably pose questions from a different normative position. For Thompson, this reflects the complexity not only of

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\(^{10}\) P.C. Violas and S. Rasis (1983), p.28.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., p.2.
history, but of human beings and the production of self-knowledge.\textsuperscript{13} Another British historian, Stedman-Jones summarised the dynamic nature of historical inquiries in the following passage:

For history, like any other 'social science', is an entirely intellectual operation which takes place in the present and in the head. The fact that the 'past' in some sense 'happened' is not of primary significance since the past is in no sense synonymous with history. Firstly, the historian investigates or reconstructs not the past, but the residues of the past which have survived into the present (literary sources, price data, inscriptions, field systems, archaeological sites etc). The proper evaluation and use of these residues in order to make historical statements are technical skills of the historian. Secondly, and more important, the work of the historian is an active intellectual exercise which designates which of these residues possess historical significance, and what significance they possess. The historian, in other words, constructs historical problems on the basis of an argued case for their relevance to historical analysis, and then, through the critical use of extant residues (or even a search for new ones), attempts to provide a solution to them. The criteria by which the construction of a problem will be judged of historical significance will ultimately be dependant upon some explicit or implicit theory of social causation. In this sense, there is no distinction in principle between history and any of the other 'social sciences'. The distinction is not that between theory and non-theory, but between the adequacy or inadequacy of the theory brought to bear.\textsuperscript{14}

Following this line of argument, historical inquiries are, in the words of Carr, "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, and unending dialogue between the present and the past".\textsuperscript{15} In adopting the view that history is a dialectic relationship between theory and evidence, this thesis maintains that historical evidence cannot disclose its own meaning, but must be "interrogated by minds trained in a discipline of attentive disbelief".\textsuperscript{16}

The view of historical inquiry developed so far has three significant implications for this thesis. First, historians' should be explicit about the assumptions that shape their encounter with historical evidence.

\textsuperscript{13} E.P. Thompson (1978), p.41.
\textsuperscript{14} G. Stedman-Jones (1976), p.296.
Unfortunately, many conservative historians show a reluctance to engage in the task of theoretical elaboration. Dewey made the point that:

... historians have not developed the habit of stating to themselves and the public the systematic conceptual structures which they employ in organizing their data ... Too often the conceptual framework is left as an implicit presupposition.\(^{17}\)

Second, failure to elaborate that body of knowledge which informs a particular historical inquiry results in stifled debate and limited social critique. As Violas and Rasis argue, historians must engage in a "dialogue concerning their own presents and the way these presents have affected their diverse historical explanations".\(^{18}\)

Third, history viewed not only as "a moment of being but also a moment of becoming" emphasises the significant role of human agency in actively 'making histories'.\(^{19}\) In recognising that conceptions of the past do influence and organise contemporary memories and ideologies, history-writing itself becomes a 'historical event' with enormous political implications.\(^{20}\) Chesneaux, the French historian typifies this revitalised approach to history. In attacking the apolitical objectivism and intellectualism of many professional historians he argues that history is useful only if it 'nourishes' current social struggles and practices.\(^{21}\) Bessant, the Australian educational historian expresses similar sentiments in his critique of Australian educational historiography. Like Chesneaux, Bessant urges his colleagues to emerge from their 'cocoons' and 'research pockets' to examine the broader social functions of schooling.\(^{22}\) For Chesneaux, this meant actively siding with the oppressed.\(^{23}\)

In summary, this section makes three major points. First, social theory influences the process of history-writing because all historians make different epistemological assumptions about their social world. The real issue is the degree to which historians are willing and able to acknowledge such assumptions. Second, historical investigations that acknowledge their

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\(^{19}\) E.P. Thompson (1978), p.47.


\(^{21}\) J. Chesneaux (1976), *Past and Futures or what is history for?* Thames and Hudson, London, p.27.

\(^{22}\) B. Bessant (1991), 'Progress and revision in the history of education', *Discourse*, vol.12, no.1, p.83.

theoretical assumptions are more likely to encourage scholarly dialogue and enhance the "illusive search for the truth". Finally, history-writing is an ideological activity informed by the author's 'present'. In short, history is an essential moment in the construction of current educational discourse and practice.

**MARXIST HISTORICAL PRACTICE**

The previous section sought to establish a case for the theoretical nature of the history enterprise. The purpose in this section is to understand the nature and contribution of Marx's historical methodology. Central to understanding Marx's approach to history is the idea of dialectic or the interplay between theory and evidence. What follows is an attempt to elaborate the nature of dialectic thinking, the place of 'facts' in the process of historical inquiry, and Marx's idea of historical abstraction.

At the core of Marx's historical methodology was the idea of dialectic or a mode of analysis and thinking that Thompson called 'historical logic'. Thompson elaborates in the following passage:

By "historical logic" I mean a logical method of enquiry appropriate to historical materials, designed as far as possible to test hypotheses as to structure, causation, etc., and to eliminate self-confirming procedures ("instances", "illustrations"). The disciplined historical discourse of the proof consists in a dialogue between concept and evidence, a dialogue conducted by successive hypotheses, on the one hand, and empirical research on the other. The interrogator is historical logic; the interrogative a hypothesis (for example, as to the way in which different phenomena acted upon each other); the respondent is the evidence, with its determinate properties. ... and it is to say that it is this logic which constitutes the disciplines ultimate court of appeal: not, please note, "the evidence", by itself, but the evidence interrogated thus.25

According to Johnston, Marx highlighted two domains of method - 'the method of inquiry' and 'the method of presentation'. Marx himself explains:

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Of course the method of presentation must differ from the method of inquiry. The latter has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection. If it is done successfully, if the life of the subject matter is now reflected back in the ideas, then it may appear as if we have before us an a priori construction.26

For Marx, all inquiry began with 'research' or 'appropriating the material'. This meant that historical investigations began in the 'concrete' or 'real' world where evidence was verifiable in an empirical way. According to Lichtheim, Marx's ideas and hypotheses could be either confirmed or refuted by historical experience.27 Marx himself emphasised this point:

The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way.28

In Marx's methodology the research evidence became the 'fodder' for further processing. For him, evidence was a necessary, but not sufficient condition for useful inquiry. In contrast to the empiricism of traditional historians, Marx believed that historical inquiry required two further steps. First, the process of *historical analysis* produced the categories that allowed differences to be identified, movement and change to be demonstrated, and historical abstraction to occur. Second, and having 'appropriated the material' and 'analysed its different forms', Marx sought to 'track down their inner connections'. Johnston described the process of *structural analysis* as an attempt to unearth the rules and tendencies of motion or the hidden nature of social laws.29 For Marx, this meant going beyond the everyday aspects of life (manifestations) to fathom their real, internal motion (cause). Thus, Marx made a distinction between scientific knowledge (reality) and ideology (appearance). In his view, the task of science was to expose the real relations within a given society rather than

26 Quoted in R. Johnston (1982), 'Reading for the best Marx: history-writing and historical abstraction' in CCCS (eds.), p.156.
simply describing the apparent and unreal manifestations of social relations.\footnote{D. McQuarie (1978), pp.14-17.}

For Marx, the process of historical abstraction played a significant role in unearthing the hidden movement of social relations. According to Johnston, Marx was particularly critical of historical abstraction that 'externalised' or reflected everyday experience of bourgeois society in an uncritical way ('chaotic'), represented the political and religious ideologies of the time ('sacred'), or generalised in such a way that only differences within capitalist society were recognised ('simple').\footnote{R. Johnston (1982), pp.166-174.}

Given Marx's criticism of bourgeois abstraction, what did he see as good historical thinking? Again, Johnston in his reading of Marx, identified four premises that together made for adequate historical abstraction in Marx's methodology. First, the \textit{rationalist} premise assumed that systematic abstraction is the way people grasp reality. This means that thought is distinctive but not independent of social reality. Second, the \textit{materialist} premise acknowledged that thought is distinctive while at the same time expressive of particular social relations. According to Hall, this meant that political and ideological structures (like sexism and racism) existed in particular material conditions.\footnote{S. Hall (1980), 'Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance' in UNESCO, \textit{Sociological theories: race and colonialism}, UNESCO, Paris, p.322.} In other words, thought by itself (idealism) is an insufficient condition for discovering knowledge. Third, the \textit{historical} premise emphasised the historical specificity of social relations. According to Johnston, the task of historical investigation is to "render back into history relations which bourgeois thinking had naturalised".\footnote{R. Johnston (1982), p.182.} For Marx, the purpose of history was to demonstrate that existing social relations benefited the rich over the poor and this situation was changeable. Fourth, the \textit{structural} premise acknowledged that social relations are a product of different social formations. In other words, history should not be limited by simplistic reductions that fail to take account of different 'forms' and changing historical contexts.\footnote{Ibid., p.183.}

The Chilean sociologist, Dos Santos, illustrated the place of historical abstraction in Marx's analysis of social class:
The starting point of Marx's analysis is the study of a determinate mode of production. At any given moment social classes appear as 'personifications', the volitional, personal, active content of certain relations that are described abstractly. This does not mean that at a more concrete level it will be impossible to describe the classes of society as social groups that can be studied sociologically (i.e. empirically). However, this empirical study of classes has a definite theoretical sense only when it is located within the framework of an abstract analysis. That is, it is only possible to arrive at an explanatory level of analysis when the empirical descriptive level is inserted into an abstract theoretical picture. This gives a more precise form to the problem of levels of abstraction, by clearly defining the theoretical starting point of analysis.35

From Dos Santos' explanation, clearly Marx's theoretical abstractions expressed particular historical conditions. As a result, Johnston believed that the gap between theory and history vanished because he was doing history all the time, only in more or less abstract ways.36 In this sense, Johnston argued that it may be better to speak not of 'history' and 'theory' but of historical categories and accounts that operate at different levels of abstraction.37

At the heart of Marx's analysis was a concern for the social situation and daily experience of working class people. For him, history was neither abstract or removed from people's life experience. Rather, as Dos Santos pointed out, Marx's analysis operated at different levels of abstraction. He believed that Marx's historical analysis began in the concrete social situation of people and moved to the abstract level of the mode of production.38 While Marx acknowledged that each level of abstraction had a degree of autonomy, they were also interdependent. This form of analysis implies a dynamic flow between the abstract level of the mode of production and the concrete world.

At this point it may be appropriate to briefly consider four levels of abstraction that Dos Santos identified in Marx's work. The first level of abstraction, the mode of production, concerns itself with the characteristics of the economic forces of capitalism. Fundamental to the capitalist mode of

37 Ibid., p.166.
production is the existence of two classes: the capitalist class and the working class. Typically, a small number of people own the means of production (capitalist class) while the majority of people are forced to sell their labour for wages (working class). Insofar as labour is characterised by exchange value rather than use value, it is increasingly exploited by the capitalist class for greater profit (surplus value). In this way, the desire of capitalists for increased profit (accumulation) becomes the driving force of capitalist society.39

The second level of abstraction focuses on social structure. In the words of Dos Santos, it attempts "to relate to an historically and geographically situated universe of discourse ... of a determinate social formation and its relations with other social formations".40 At this lower level of abstraction, analysis is primarily concerned with historically specific social conditions. Here, the focus is on describing the relations of production in its specific form. In Australia's case, the emergence of a strong trade union movement and large service sector created a distinctive social structure. Today, the relations of production in Australia are complicated by the fragmentation of social classes along the lines of race, ethnicity, gender and age. As a result, there is a far more complex and differentiated class structure than is supposed at the first level of abstraction. This sort of analysis has important implications for understanding the history of mass secondary schooling. Significantly, it allows us to draw attention to different 'historical trajectories' rather than deriving global and deterministic interpretations of compulsory schooling.41 As a result, it is possible to see secondary schooling not only as a site of reproduction but importantly, the product, determinant and object of particular class struggles.42 Viewed in this way, schooling can produce contradictions, behaviours and outcomes that may not necessarily be a mechanistic reflection of the relations of production.

At the third level of analysis the focus shifts to everyday life. According to Dos Santos, "the tragic, grotesque or comical aspects of human existence emerge ... it becomes life".43 At this level it is possible to understand how a

42 E.O. Wright (1978), Class, crisis and the state, Verso, London, p.27.
person's social situation determines the sorts of experience and life options that are available to them. For example, how might the educational experiences of a working class, non-English speaking girl differ to those of someone from an Anglo-Saxon, middle-class background? The aim at this level is to understand how people make sense of and interpret their world. In this context, Gramsci's idea of hegemony is useful in explaining how the dominant groups in society can perpetuate their position by rendering reality as 'natural'. Gramsci's hegemony theory is the focus of discussion in chapter two. For now, it is sufficient to appreciate that Marx's major object was to challenge common sense perceptions of social reality.

Finally, Marx's work attempted to explain how economic crisis' crystallise societal contradictions. Habermas and Offe are two writers who developed Marx's original contribution to an understanding of the ideas of 'crisis' and 'contradiction'. Habermas' work highlighted how the state's contradictory functions - accumulation and legitimation - produced "unsettling and publicising effects". For him, a crisis in the economic sphere reflects itself in socio-cultural institutions such as schools. Similarly, Offe argued that the state's 'regulatory resources' - fiscal policy, administrative rationality and mass loyalty - have difficulty in legitimising the inequalities produced in the economic system. In Offe's view this results in the politicisation of social institutions and the continual search for legitimacy.

In summary, a spirit of critique and dialectic thinking characterises a Marxist approach to history. Marxist history contains a sense of social totality, an emphasis on the interdependence of the whole, a concern for the 'lived experience' of those people subjected to various forms of domination and subordination, and knowledge that is capable of informing practice. Ultimately, the aim of Marxian analysis is to expose existing power relations to cause a fundamental transformation of society.

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MARXISM AND THE QUESTION OF THEORETICAL ADEQUACY

Keeping in mind Connell's observation that "the business of theory is to help us think clearly, and see what is difficult to see", the task in this section is to outline a theoretical perspective with which to re-read the dominant liberal democratic histories of Western Australian state secondary schooling.

A central argument in this chapter is that the Marxist tradition offers a powerful, coherent and valuable framework for analysing the function of secondary schooling in Western Australian society. Three major themes inform this discussion: the general characteristics of Marxism, the limitations of Marxian analysis, and finally, how poststructuralism can enhance the materiality of Marxism.

Marxist histories of schooling are often criticised because of their philosophical pre-supposition. Largely under the influence of Soviet Marxism, historical materialism argues that history is an economically predetermined process. As a result, social explanation assumes that individuals and social institutions are the product of historical forces founded in material conditions (economic base). Such a view of society comes from Marx's Preface to the Critique of Political Economy (1859), where he explained how the forces of production determine class positions and social relationships:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that

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determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or - this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms - with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the whole immense superstructure.49

From Marx's perspective, society consists of the economic 'base' and a predetermined 'superstructure' of other social institutions and practices such as education, ideas, beliefs and values. As an explanatory model of society, the base and superstructure relationship is criticised, both inside and outside of Marxist circles, for its mechanistic analysis of schooling.50 This sort of criticism affected French structuralist writers like Althusser, who viewed schools as repressive and ideological state apparatuses that reproduced the productive forces and social relations of capitalism. According to Althusser, schools produce children with the required 'know-how' to be useful workers and citizens.51 Similarly, Bowles and Gintis, in their seminal book *Schooling in capitalist America* (1976) developed the idea of the 'correspondence principle' to explain how schools mirrored the structured patterns of values, norms and skills that characterise the workplace.52 In Australia, Branson and Miller (1979) replicated a similar study to show how secondary schools reproduced inequalities that were fundamental to capitalist production.53

Driven by the logic of a causal connection between the base and superstructure many Marxist interpretations of schooling suffer from the limitations of economic determinism and predetermined ontological interests.54 Despite the twin problems of economism and functionalism associated with Marxism this thesis argues that Marxist theory and practice can make a significant contribution to the process of historical interrogation. In the remainder of this section I want to briefly address the limitations of

economism and functionalism. A more detailed discussion will follow in chapter two. For now several key points need to be made.

First, as Johnston argued in his reading of Marx, determinism runs "against every principle of Marx's 'best' practice". Drawing on the non-reductionist reading of Marx's work offered by Gramsci (1971) and developed by Mouffe (1979), Hall (1980,1985) and Johnston (1982), this thesis argues that it is possible to develop an analysis of schooling that can address the problems of economism, 'a priorism', reductionism, functionalism and a lack of historical specificity. As Levine argued, Marxist history can offer a "subtle, sensitive and accurate method of social analysis".

Second, Marx's use of the abstract idea of the capitalist mode of production is a theoretical construct composed of many elements or parts, each being distinct and importantly, subject to empirical scrutiny. Liston, a critic of Marxist determinism, maintained that any reasonable and useful form of social inquiry must be thoroughly empirical:

   Regardless of how fact, theories and values are conjoined, evidential examinations provide a central source of control over the arbitrariness of belief.

It was Marx himself who argued that the elements (economic, intellectual, political and cultural) of society did not exist in an 'ideal' or abstract form but were in reality a reflection of concrete phenomena. In the words of Marx:

   In a general analysis of this kind, it is nearly always assumed that the actual conditions correspond to their concept, or, what is the same, that actual conditions are represented only to the extent that they are typical of their own general type.

Within Marxist thought there is a growing tendency toward a non-reductionist and empirical analysis of the relationship between the economic and political and ideological levels of society. Hall developed the idea of 'articulation' or "the relation of linkage and effectivity between different levels or elements of a social formation" as a way forward. He

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believed that the idea of articulation offered an opportunity to rethink the complex unity of a social formation without falling back on a simplistic reductionist logic on the one hand, or a form of sociological pluralism on the other. Hall explained the basic tenet of this revised Marxist position in the following passage:

... we cannot ... deduce a priori the relations and mechanisms of the political and ideological structures exclusively from the level of the economic. The economic level is the necessary but not sufficient condition for explaining the operations at other levels of the society (the premise of non-reductionism). We cannot assume an express relation of 'necessary correspondence' between them (the premise of historical specificity). ... This is an important, indeed critical qualification. It requires us to demonstrate - rather than to assume, a priori - what the nature and degree of 'correspondence' is, in any specific historical case. Thus, through this opening, some of the criticism ... for example the requirement to be historically specific - begin to be met, within the framework of this seminal revision.

Third, poststructuralism has made significant advances in 'loosening-up' and 'filling-in' some of the gaps in rigid Marxist accounts of schooling. Of relevance to this thesis is the contribution of those radical theorists who critically examine the role of the state. Moving beyond instrumental and structuralist accounts of the state, chapter two shall explain how the ideas of hegemony, contradiction, contestation and human agency can offer some powerful insights into the processes of schooling. In countering the blindness of structuralism to the multiple and often contradictory subjectivities produced in specific historical circumstances, this thesis draws on Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of the discursive constitution of hegemony and Foucault's insight into power/knowledge relations and its implications for understanding social institutions such as schooling. A central proposition is that these theoretical advances can help us to interrogate the hegemonic role of Western Australian state secondary schooling. In short, this thesis attempts to understand how state secondary schooling perpetuates the triple oppressions of class, race and gender.

60 Ibid., pp.329-330.
61 For this insight I am indebted to talks with Bill Green. Also the work of J. Kenway (1987), High status private schooling and the processes of an educational hegemony, Unpublished PhD, Murdoch University, Western Australia.
The revised version of Marxian analysis outlined here and developed in chapter two sees secondary schooling as a site of contestation, resistance and transformation. Schooling is not merely a site of social reproduction, but also a site of social production. Although this thesis takes as a major problematic the question of social reproduction, it does not posit a view that secondary schooling mechanistically reproduces unequal class, gender and race relations. Rather, the approach adopted is one that emphasises the relative autonomy of the cultural level and the significant role of human agency. Giddens' idea of the 'duality of structure' or the dialectic analysis of structure and subject informs this perspective. The strength of Giddens' approach is that it allows us to understand individuals in a non-reductionist way.

McLennan made the point that while history has a determinable shape or structure, it must always be incomplete because the relations it seeks to analyse are between human beings who are themselves causal agents who materially change history. Larrain argued that the idea of determination is multi-dimensional. For him, determination involved both conditioning or the imposition of certain constraints situated in a specific historical context and production whereby social consciousness and institutions produce social practice. As a consequence, individuals carry out their daily routines within a structured totality that is both enabling and at the same time constraining.

In this sense there is no unitary ideology belonging to a dominant class and passed 'downward'. Rather, state schooling contains ideas and practices that are the expression of a multiplicity of social groups and classes. Drawing on this sort of analysis it is possible to move beyond a monolithic view of the state toward a perspective that is dynamic, flexible, historical and importantly, sees people as knowing subjects rather than unknowing objects.

This thesis argues that the flexible and less monolithic modifications to traditional Marxian analysis outlined here, can offer a more coherent critique of secondary schooling than either the conservative liberal or mechanistic Marxist accounts have so far provided. The eclectic approach

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adopted in this thesis can also meet the criteria of theoretical adequacy outlined by Miller. She argued that an adequate theory depends upon: 1) the degree to which a hypothesis can account for the data by a unified, coherent, and logically consistent theoretical scheme; 2) the degree to which a theory can illuminate new knowledge that leads to social action; and 3) the capacity to sympathetically reconstruct the life experiences of different social groups such as classes, sexes and ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{66} In the final analysis, according to Apple, the test of a theory's fruitfulness is in its "applicability to the interrogation of concrete situations".\textsuperscript{67}

**THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT**

The aim of this section is to locate the thesis in its broader social, economic and political context. Drawing on Marx's historical methodology, this means understanding Western Australian secondary schooling in the context of the capitalist economic system of which it is a part. The purpose in this section is threefold: first, to explain the origins and characteristics of Western Australian capitalism; second, to outline the historical development of Western Australian society; and finally, to locate Western Australian society in the context of the global capitalist economic order.

**ESTABLISHING CAPITALISM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

As noted, from the classical Marxist perspective, capitalist societies consist of two classes. The majority of people have to sell their labour power for wages and a minority of the population who own the means of production and are capable of buying labour power to generate profit. Central to the relationship between the classes is the profit motive that drives the capitalist class to exploit the proletariat to create surplus value. This means that the workers produce above the 'real' value of their labour or that quantity of labour power that goes into reproducing their lives. Under capitalism, accumulation of capital (wealth) derives from the continual effort of the capitalist class to increase the exploitation of the workers and produce greater surplus value. Although the orthodox Marxian perspective is


simplistic, it does provide an important conceptual framework in comprehending the nature of Western Australian society.\textsuperscript{68}

In general terms, Catley identified seven features of capitalist societies: 1) free labour for wages; 2) surplus value; 3) a small number of people who own the means of production; 4) the profit motive; 5) reinvestment of profit in further means of production; 6) different classes of people within production; and 7) inequality of access to the material and cultural products of society.\textsuperscript{69}

The Swan River Colony, established in June 1829, was the first British colony founded exclusively for private settlement where the settlers obtained land grants according to the value of assets and the number of paid labourers they brought with them. According to Statham, the first twenty-one years of \textit{private enterprise} settlement set the pattern for future development.\textsuperscript{70} Stannage believed that the initial group of middle class investors established the colony's moral, social, spiritual and legal characteristics for future generations. Benefiting from generous land grants and property acquisition this group of new arrivals quickly accumulated power and status in the Swan River Colony. Along with their new found prestige came a deeply entrenched conservative attitude to social relations and politics. For example, on the 10th July 1847 one of the propertied class wrote in the \textit{Perth Gazette}:

\begin{quote}
It was ordained from the beginning of the world that there should be different denominations and classes of people, in order that each nation should preserve its own internal peace. It was ordained from the beginning that there should be masters and servants.\textsuperscript{71}
\end{quote}

Early in Western Australia's history a small capitalist class of property owners consisting of senior officials, settlers and investors established for themselves an affluent, 'respectable' and comfortable lifestyle.\textsuperscript{72} Others

\textsuperscript{70} P. Statham (1981), 'Swan River Colony 1829-1850' in C.T. Stannage (ed.), \textit{A new history of Western Australia}, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, p.181.
\textsuperscript{71} C.T. Stannage (1979), \textit{The people of Perth: a social history of Western Australia's capital city}, Perth City Council, Perth, p.7.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p.14.
were not so fortunate. Of the 1500 initial settlers who came to the Swan River Colony, the majority were labourers and servants. As the supply of cheap labour became an increasing problem for the landowners, merchants and storekeepers, so the era of convictism arrived in the colony. Between 1850-1884, 10,000 male convicts and 2,000 serving girls arrived in the Swan River Colony to boost the reservoir of cheap labour. The gentry believed that the labouring classes' tendency to drunkenness and moral promiscuity posed a direct threat to their way of life. In the interests of social order and economic efficiency the ruling class used the legal system to protect their interests. According to Stannage, the ruling elite used the full force of law and order to control the labouring class and Aboriginal resistance.

The state played a crucial role in establishing capitalism in Western Australia. The state through government enterprise, regulation, protection and intervention was a dominant factor in promoting the establishment of a capitalist economy. In McMichael's view, Australian class formation articulated both imperial and colonial state policies. For McMichael, the major turning point in the development of Australian capitalism was the shift in imperial policy from penal settlement toward promoting free settlement, foreign commercial policy and colonisation. Herein, lay the origins of 'settler capitalism' characterised by merchant, trading and landed capital accumulation.

Two factors were central to the process of developing Australian capitalism: the establishment of an unequal social division of labour and capital accumulation itself. One of the primary objects of imperial and colonial state policies was the creation of a colonial labour force based on free settlers, convict labour and Aborigines. In this situation, McMichael described the role of the state in the following way:

The social function of the state, then is the mediation of social, or class, antagonisms in the interest of maintenance of the extant social structure ... The reproduction of class, or property relations is actively executed by State institutions

73 Ibid., p.17.
74 Ibid., p.81.
75 Ibid., p.79.
76 Ibid., p.27.
buttressed by a balance of military-coercive and legal force particular to the society.\textsuperscript{79}

The development of Australian capitalism depended on large-scale state capital outlays. Butlin, the economic historian, showed how a formal satellite relationship between Britain and Australia guaranteed a supply of British capital and migrants.\textsuperscript{80} After the Second World War, Australia's imperial dependence gradually shifted to Australian manufacturing capital and the United States.\textsuperscript{81}

It is important to note that British imperial and colonial state policies dramatically affected the way of life of the Aboriginal people. The coercive colonial state asserted control and sovereignty over all land occupied by the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia. From the beginning, European settlers exploited, oppressed and forcefully appropriated Aboriginal land. Green described the situation in 1851:

By 1851 Aborigines of Western Australia had come completely under British law. They could be convicted for crimes against whites or Aborigines. They could not light fires on their tribal lands in summer time. They were forbidden to carry arms or appear naked in the streets of town, and could be excluded altogether if they persisted in such behaviour. Even their rights to marriage were inhibited by laws forbidding the removal of any girls at school or in the employment of settlers. They could be punished by flogging, sentenced to the road gang, imprisoned for crimes they did not understand, and held for a period of time beyond their comprehension.\textsuperscript{82}

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

Convictism was a dominant social force in Western Australia society until 1890.\textsuperscript{83} In the period 1890 to 1900 the discovery of large deposits of gold in the Yilgarn district dramatically affected the character of the colony. The

\textsuperscript{79} P. McMichael (1979), p.42.
\textsuperscript{82} N. Green (1981), p.94.
influx of thousands of gold diggers from the eastern states and overseas transformed the wool and timber producing colony into one dominated by capital investment and mining.84

Between 1900 and the outbreak of the First World War the Western Australian economy experienced a period of slower economic growth.85 The development of agriculture was responsible for initiating and sustaining economic growth into the twentieth century even though gold comprised 61 per cent of total exports in 1913.86 Mineral and agricultural products then as now, provided the major source of export earnings. Western Australia, like the rest of Australia, has a relatively undeveloped manufacturing sector devoted mainly to the production of clothing and fabrics, metal works, food and drink, stone, clay and glass. As a result, Western Australia's economy is heavily reliant upon imported manufactured products.87

In the thirty years after 1913 Western Australian society experienced two world wars, an international depression and a major drought. Snooks claimed that gross domestic product per capita head of the population showed no real increase in this period.88 He argued that the structural changes that occurred in the Western Australian economy between 1913 and 1946 were an impediment to growth. Snooks believed that the State government's unbalanced development policies and immigration growth contributed to the State's relatively poor economic performance.89 The State government was a 'driving force' in the expansion of the agricultural sector. State subsidised land, railway construction, rural finance and immigration policies provided the necessary social overhead capital for the development of the farming sector.90 Overall, the period to 1945 was one of fluctuating fortunes as the 1914 drought, the First World War and the 1930s depression dramatically affected the wheat and wool industries. According to Snooks, these setbacks highlighted the State's preoccupation with the agricultural sector and heightened the contrast between the industrial and rural nature of Western Australia compared with the eastern states.91

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84 Ibid., p.218.
85 Ibid., p.227.
86 Ibid., p.228.
87 Ibid., p.233.
89 Ibid., p.240.
90 Ibid., p.251.
91 Ibid., p.239.
After the Second World War, Western Australia witnessed the beginning of an era of economic prosperity and conservative dominance. The growth of the primary sector stimulated an initial surge of economic prosperity up to 1950-51. Wheat and wool contributed substantially to Western Australia's exports and total personal income. During the 1960s the great mining boom in the North of Western Australia stimulated a second period of economic growth. In the post-war period the Western Australian economy experienced an unprecedented expansion of production. In the period 1965 to 1976 individual personal income increased by 16.2 per cent per annum. Western Australia's economic boom hinged directly on the development of the world capitalist market characterised by high rates of economic growth, minimal business cycle oscillations, low unemployment, expanding international trade, new commodities, full employment, expansion of the public sector and price stability.

Despite Western Australia's vulnerability to fluctuating export prices, improved living standards created an optimistic mood. The population growth figures reflected a picture of growth and confidence in Western Australia's economy. Net migration to Western Australia averaged 23,583 persons per year in the period 1966 to 71. According to Collins, the migrant intake provided an easily directed and mobile reserve army of workers in the building and construction industries. In particular, non-British immigrants relocated to the outback areas of the State to perform manual jobs that Australian workers found undesirable. Immigrant labour provided an important industrial reserve army of labour power that employers exploited during the boom years. Against this background, Western Australian society underwent fundamental social and economic changes that had direct implications for both class relationships and the state. Most noticeable was the expansion of the middle class to satisfy the demand for professional and specialised occupations.

Unfortunately, the growth and benefits associated with the expansion of the middle class did not extend to women or migrants. Compared to Australian

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95 See J. Collins (1979), 'The political economy of post-war immigration' in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.).
96 S. Encel (1978), 'Capitalism, the middle classes and the welfare state' in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.), p.133.
male workers, women and immigrants found themselves under-represented at administrative, executive and managerial levels. Women performed clerical work and immigrant males worked as labourers.\textsuperscript{97} The picture of growth failed to tell anything about the inequalities and fragmentation that existed in the labour force. The dominant liberal ideology of 'growth', 'individualism' and 'progress' tended to obscure such matters.

State mediation played a central role in changing the character of Western Australian society. According to Roe, the changing demands of the middle class, reflected in such issues as the provision of education, dictated the scope and substance of social policy in Australia. The middle class asserted a growing influence over the tax structure to support bourgeois interests. As a consequence, the interventionist state worked to the advantage of the growing middle class.\textsuperscript{98}

Claus Offe, a West German social theorist, argued that the post-war interventionist state faced an insoluble contradiction. According to him, capitalism could not coexist with, neither could it exist without the welfare state.\textsuperscript{99} On the one hand, the state provides the necessary conditions (infrastructure) to encourage economic growth and on the other hand, it takes direct value from production (taxation) for unproductive use (welfare).\textsuperscript{100} During the 1960s economic growth allowed the state to sustain the necessary levels of taxation for increased expenditure on services such as education. However, with the onset of the 1975 economic crisis the state had to cut expenditure on the social wage to ensure capital accumulation.

The political, economic and social crisis arrived in the early 1970s when Australia experienced the effects of the world-wide recession. As a result of the crisis the Trilateral Commission report \textit{The Crisis of Democracy}, identified six areas of concern: inflation, the democratic surge of the 1960s, the threat to authority, the challenge to social form including education,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{97} R.N. Gosh (1981), p.288.
  \item \textsuperscript{98} J. Roe (1979), 'Social policy and the permanent poor' in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.), pp.146-149.
  \item \textsuperscript{100} C. Offe (1976), 'Crisis of crisis management: elements of a political crisis theory', \textit{International Journal of Politics}, Fall, p.61.'
\end{itemize}
young people's unwillingness to enter the working class, and economic nationalism.\textsuperscript{101}

Two interacting tendencies created Australia's economic crisis. At the international level, the movement of capital and fluctuations in trade significantly damaged Australia's foreign account. Domestically, protected industries remained internationally uncompetitive. According to Catley and McFarlane, three factors compounded Australia's economic crisis: a sharp drop in capital inflow, a drop in the share of gross domestic product accruing to profit, and the manufacturing sectors' declining rate of profit.\textsuperscript{102} Western Australia's economy was particularly vulnerable to the recession because of its reliance on the export of iron ore.

The Australian unemployment figures that stood at 493,516 in 1977 reflected the human dimension of the economic recession. The jobless rate was highest amongst youth. In 1979, teenage unemployment was 23 per cent.\textsuperscript{103} Windschuttle identified two factors that contributed to the high unemployment rate. First, employers in the manufacturing sector introduced job destroying technology and relocated production overseas to take advantage of cheap labour rates offered by the newly industrialised Third World countries. Second, the state supported capital by reducing social services, redistributing income in favour of the wealthy, restoring the confidence of transnational corporation's in Australia, and finally, making such measures politically acceptable.\textsuperscript{104}

THE IDEA OF THE 'CLIENT STATE'

Crough and Wheelwright's idea of the 'client state' helps to illuminate the nature of the present crisis confronting Australia. They connected Australian society to its historical and present-day location in the world capitalist economy.\textsuperscript{105} Central to their thesis was the proposition that transnational corporations had effectively taken national control and

\textsuperscript{101} Quoted in B. Catley and B. McFarlane (1980) in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.), p.284.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., pp.291-292.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., pp.247-255.
sovereignty away from 'peripheral' and 'semi-peripheral' centres like Australia. Crough and Wheelwright argued that:

... international capital is out of control by virtually any national government. The transnational corporation (TNC) has internationalised the means of production, and hence centralised economic power on a world scale, when the world is not yet ready for a parallel internationalisation of political power. Transnationals are internationalising the world economy in their own way, for their own purposes. As a consequence, the power of the nation state to control its own economic destiny has been gravely weakened and no international political institutions have yet been created which can step into the breach. In short, the contradictions of capitalism are now being expressed in the international economy, and there is no world government to soften them internationally, unlike the situation when capitalism was more subject to national control.106

Often, the 'centres' of world capitalism, such as New York, Tokyo and London, make major economic decisions that do not always benefit the host countries. In short, the 'centres' of world capitalism exploit their share of the world's wealth at the expense of the majority of the world's population that live in peripheral centres. Wallerstein explained:

The core-periphery distinction, widely observed in recent writings, differentiates those zones in which are concentrated high-profit, high technology, big-wage, diversified production (the core countries) from those in which are concentrated low-profit, low-technology, low-wage, less diversified production (the peripheral countries). But there has always been a series of countries which fall in between in a very concrete way, and play a different role. The productive activities of these semi-peripheral countries are more evenly divided. In part they act as a peripheral zone for core countries and in part act as a core country for some peripheral areas.107

Crough and Wheelwright expressed concern about the way Australia's internal structures connect to and "reinforce the pattern of external linkages".108 This means that peripheral societies, like Australia, have an external dominant flow rather than internal exchanges. Amin explained:

106 Ibid., p.15.
107 Quoted in Ibid., pp.16-17.
108 Ibid., p.17.
The underdeveloped economy is made up of sectors, of firms that are juxtaposed and not highly integrated among themselves, but are each of them strongly integrated into entities, of which the centres of gravity lie in the centres of the capitalist world. What we have here is not a nation, in the economic sense of the word, with an integrated internal market.\textsuperscript{109}

Unfortunately for Australia, the alliance of local and international capital causes a major orientation of Australian industry to the world economy rather than the development of the domestic economy. Crough and Wheelwright believe the mining industry was typical of the Australian economy with its very high level of foreign ownership and control, large inflows and outflows of capital, export-orientation, and heavy reliance on imported equipment.\textsuperscript{110}

As a consequence, Australia finds it increasingly difficult to control its resources and destiny. According to Crough and Wheelwright, large transnational corporations make economic decisions based on global capital accumulation.\textsuperscript{111} As a result, the Australian economy is being reshaped to integrate more fully with the international division of labour that is developing around the Pacific Basin. Crough and Wheelwright identified four levels in the emerging international division of labour:

The first involves the United States of America and Japan, which act as the providers of capital and technology; the second, Australia, Canada and New Zealand as suppliers of foodstuffs, raw materials and energy; third, the cheap-labour countries of Asia and Latin America which will follow export-oriented industrialization strategies; and fourthly, the socialist countries of the Asian region, particularly China. It is clear that with the evolution of such a strategy, Australia will be deindustrialized, since its role in the emerging new international economic order is not as a producer of a wide range of industrial products.\textsuperscript{112}

In Australia, the state plays a key role in the process of economic restructuring. According to Crough and Wheelwright, the state guaranteed that the profits of transnational corporations took priority over national interests and values.\textsuperscript{113} For them, the logical outcome of the move toward

\textsuperscript{109} Quoted in Ibid., p.17.  
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., pp.18-19.  
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p.20.  
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p.21.  
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., pp.35-36.
transnational integration was "disintegration, dependence and polarization". As a result, Australia is in a real danger of developing a dual economy. In the words of Crough and Wheelwright:

One part of the resource-rich sector catering for export, into which large-scale investments will be pumped, but which involves only a relatively small part of the population; the other part, the city economies, servicing mainly the home market and in which most people live. This latter part could be deprived of the resources which enable them to live and function effectively. This is the meaning of the term marginalisation: a large part of the population becomes irrelevant to the production process and consumption.

In summary, the idea of the 'client state' helps to explain how a small group of transnational corporations motivated solely by profit produced Australia's current economic crisis. Further, it illustrates the pivotal role that the state plays in restructuring the Australian economy in the interest of the global capitalist economic order. As a result, the Australian economy is experiencing the harmful effects of 'de-industrialization', 'de-regulation', 'de-nationalization' and 'marginalization'. This thesis seeks to understand Western Australian state secondary schooling in the context of the fundamental economic and political forces described here.

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114 Ibid., p.36.
115 Ibid., p.40.
CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING THE STATE

INTRODUCTION
SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND SCHOOLING
THE STATE, CONTRADICTION AND SCHOOLING
THE PRODUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY
STATE THEORIES, GENDER AND RACE
CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING THE STATE

The State ... must represent, that is to say, promote and defend, the ruling class and its mode of exploitation or supremacy. At the same time, the State must mediate the exploitation or domination of the ruling class over other classes and strata.1

Every State is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes.2

INTRODUCTION

Expressions such as 'state schooling', 'state department', 'state intervention', 'state bureaucracy', 'state provision' and so on, permeate most histories of schooling. Surprisingly, Australian educational historians have shown a reluctance to explore a theoretical understanding of the idea of the state. However, as academic barriers begin to crumble, historians are slowly beginning to draw on the explanatory power of social theory to illuminate the history of schooling.

As a way into the topic, Rueschemeyer and Evans' definition of the state offers a useful starting point. They defined the state as follows:

We consider the state to be a set of organisations invested with the authority to make binding decisions for people and organisations juridically located in a particular territory and to implement these decisions using, if necessary, force. We have not chosen this definition because we see the state as a simple bureaucracy. On the contrary, precisely because we see the state as simultaneously expressing several contradictory tendencies, we adopt a definition that does not prejudice the way in which these tendencies will be resolved in a given historical situation.3

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Australian historiography tends to characterise the state as a benefactor that provides social goods such as education to benefit all citizens. As a consequence, social commentators usually describe the Australian state as either 'paternal', 'Benthamite', or 'utilitarian'. In the liberal tradition Hancock's history *Australia* (1961) argued that the Australian state meant 'collective power at the service of individual rights'. Hancock captured the spirit of Australian liberalism when he described the state as "a vast public utility whose duty it is to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number". Liberal histories tend to interpret the universalisation of secondary schooling as an egalitarian move to open up opportunities for the disadvantaged. Underlying Australian educational policy is the assumption that increased levels of state intervention in the provision of education can create a more enlightened and equitable society.

In contrast to the liberal interpretations of schooling, revisionist histories argue that compulsory schooling is a mechanism of social control. American revisionists such as Katz (1968) and Tyack (1974) argued that the ruling class established compulsory schooling to control a potentially disruptive working-class culture. At this time, Althusser's influential paper *Ideological State Apparatuses* (1971) stimulated theories of education emphasising cultural and economic reproduction. Social reproduction theories explain how schooling reproduces existing economic and social inequalities characteristic of capitalist societies. Althusser's analysis stripped schools of their political innocence and connected them to the broader social and cultural characteristics of capitalist society. His views on the state and social reproduction significantly advanced our understanding of education, social change and social continuity. Althusser's work inspired writers like

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6 Ibid., p.116.

7 For example, D. Mossenson (1972), *State education in Western Australia, 1829-1960*, UWA Press, Perth.

Dale (1982), Carnoy and Levin (1985), and Shapiro (1990) to challenge the 'common good' perspective of the state.9

This chapter begins with a critique of orthodox Marxist views of the state and goes on to consider the neo-Marxist emphasis upon the idea of contradiction. While the idea of contradiction provides some valuable insights into the role of the state, it fails to adequately theorise the production of subjectivity. To counter this limitation, chapter two draws on poststructuralism and its emphasis on the constitution of the subject to enhance traditional Marxist state theories. A central theme is that individuals carry out their daily routines within a structured totality that is both enabling and constraining. Importantly, the emphasis on subjectivity opens the way to theorise about gender and race. The final section of the chapter explains how individuals are not only class subjects but also gendered and racial subjects.

SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND SCHOOLING

The 'common good' perspective of the state has come under increasing criticism from a range of radical writers who are concerned about the role of the state schooling in cultural and economic reproduction. Carnoy reflected this point of view:

It is argued that through the schools and other superstructural institutions the capitalist class reproduces the forces of production (labour, the division of labour, and the division of knowledge) and the relations of production - the latter predominantly by the maintenance and development of a 'legitimate' ideology and set of behaviour patterns (culture).10

Orthodox Marxists believe that the social formation (mode of production) determines individuals and social institutions. Within the Marxist tradition there are three variations of this theme: instrumentalism, state derivation theory and structuralism. Instrumentalism seeks to establish that the state

is a puppet acting in the interest of the ruling class. This school of thought originated in Marx and Engels often quoted statement that "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". As a consequence, instrumentalists such as Miliband claimed that schools perform a class confirming role by inculcating an alien culture and language on working class children. According to Miliband, schools became "highly functional to the prevailing social and political order".

**State derivation theory** argues that the state stands above the 'fray' to protect the general interest of total social capital. Altvater, a major influence on this West German perspective, argued that the state functioned to protect the collective capitalist interest. He explained the role of the state in the following passage:

> Therefore, capital cannot itself produce through the actions of the many individual capitals the inherent social nature of its existence; it requires at its base a special institution which is not subject to its limitations as capital, one whose transactions are not determined by the necessity of producing surplus value, one which is in this sense a special institution 'alongside' and outside bourgeois society' and one which at the same time provides, on the undisputed basis of capital itself, the imminent necessities that capital neglects.

Broady, in a review of the West German debate, argued that the state performs an inherently contradictory role in meeting the needs of the general capitalist interest:

> For example, state educational expenditures lead to a decrease in the amount of society's surplus value available for productive investments; but on the other hand, these expenditures are necessary for, among other things, the reproduction of the labour force. Therefore, here exists a conflict: the separate capitals have interest in keeping public educational expenditure low while at the same time the

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collective capital requires an adequately qualified labour force.\textsuperscript{14}

The West German debate clarifies the role of the state in several important ways. It emphasises the distinction between particular and general capitalist interest, shows the limits of the capitalist state form of social organisation, illustrates the need for a separate and relatively autonomous state, and finally, explains how the state represents the collective capitalist interest over competing individual capitalist interest.\textsuperscript{15} Nonetheless, the 'Prokla approach' has a number of shortcomings. Most problematic is the attempt to link the state to the general interest of capital. Such a view neglects the contradictions within and between capital factions, the workplace and schools. According to Mosley and Broady, the effort to link state educational policy with the general requirements of capital neglects the relative autonomy of state action.\textsuperscript{16}

\textit{Structuralism} argues that state apparatuses function to satisfy the interest of capitalist social relations. French structuralist writers such as Althusser (1971) and Poulantzas (1978) are dominant figures in this tradition. Althusser, in an essay entitled \textit{Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses} (1971), described the orthodox Marxist view of the coercive state in the following passage:

\begin{quote}

Marxist classics have always held that (1) the State is the repressive State apparatus, (2) State power and State apparatus must be distinguished, (3) the objective of the class struggle concerns State power, and in consequence the use of the State apparatuses by the classes ... holding State power as a function of their class objectives, and (4) the proletariat must seize State power in order to destroy the existing bourgeois State apparatus and, in a first phase, replace it with quite different, proletarian, State apparatus, then in later phases set in motion a radical process, that of the destruction of the State (the end of State power, the end of every State apparatus).\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

For Althusser, the Marxist emphasis upon the repressive state was inadequate. For him, ideological state apparatuses, like the Church, the

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\textsuperscript{17} L. Althusser (1971), p.135.
\end{flushright}
family, schools and trade unions, were major instruments of social reproduction. Althusser explained:

... no class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses.\(^1\)

Althusser elaborated his view on the ideological role of schools in the following extract:

It takes children from every class at infant-school age, and then for years, the years in which the child is most "vulnerable", squeezed between the family State apparatus and the educational State apparatus, it drums into them, whether it uses new or old methods, a certain amount of "know-how" wrapped in the ruling ideology (French, arithmetic, natural history, the sciences, literature) or simply the ruling ideology in its pure state (ethics, civic instruction, philosophy).\(^2\)

Althusser put forward two central theses on ideology. First, he held that "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence".\(^3\) This view of ideology suggests that schools disguise their ideological function through "a falsified representation of the world".\(^4\) The second important feature of Althusser's view of ideology concerns the material existence of ideology and its relation to subjectivity. For Althusser, ideology referred to:

... material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject.\(^5\)

Important for Althusser, ideologies and their material practices and rituals constituted the subject:

... the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects.\(^6\)

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\(^{18}\) Ibid., p.139.  
\(^{19}\) Ibid., p.147.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid., p.153.  
\(^{21}\) Ibid., p.154.  
\(^{22}\) Ibid., p.158.  
\(^{23}\) Ibid., p.160.
For Althusser, ideologies were not ideas imposed by the ruling class but lived rituals and practices that structured our consciousness, ways of thinking and behaviour. In this sense, the threat of state repression is an insufficient condition to explain people's domination. Rather, domination exists in individual beliefs and practices. Althusser's views significantly advanced our understanding of the ideological role state apparatuses. Unfortunately, many sociologists of education used Althusser's ideas to develop a functionalist and ahistorical link between schools and the reproduction of the relations of production. It is often assumed that individuals were bearers of an all encompassing, uncontested, and deterministic ideology. This often lead to the politically impotent conclusion that state apparatuses interpellated or constituted the subject in a manner that was always functional to the existing social (class) order.

Poulantzas, another French structuralist, offered a more complex perspective on the state. In his view, the state acted as a cohesive force that "concentrates, condenses, materializes and incarnates politico-ideological relations in a form specific to the given mode of production". Schools, according to Poulantzas, played an important role in elaborating, inculcating and reproducing the dominant ideology.

For Poulantzas, the state's principal role was one of organisation. He thought it must represent and organise the dominant classes' interest. However, he did not believe that the state represented ruling class interests in a mechanical way. Rather it reflected the 'material condensation' of a relationship of forces among classes:

... the state and its policy, forms and structures therefore express the interests of the dominant class not in mechanical fashion, but through a relationship of forces that make the state a condensed expression of the ongoing class struggle.

Bowles and Gintis' seminal book *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) perhaps most clearly expressed early social reproduction theory. The authors' historical analysis of the relationship between changing forms of economic production and the education system exposed the discrepancy between the rhetoric and reality of educational reform. Bowles and Gintis argued that inequality was a consequence of the capitalist system of

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25 Ibid., p.28.
26 Ibid., p.130.
According to them, the 'correspondence principle' explained how schools integrate young people into the economic system. To capture the economic importance of education, Bowles and Gintis believed that it was necessary to relate the social structure of schools to the forms of consciousness, inter-personal behaviour and personality it fostered and reinforced in students. They argued that schooling reproduced the social relationships of the workplace by producing the technical and cognitive skills required in the workplace, legitimising economic inequality, rewarding desirable personal characteristics, and reinforcing a sense of stratified consciousness.

The critics of structuralism argue that it is wrong to claim that the economic base determines state apparatuses, whether in 'the last instance' or not. The argument is that traditional Marxist writers are too static and deterministic in their understanding of the role of schooling. Some writers claim that it is impossible for orthodox Marxists to appreciate how schools can operate in a manner that is not conducive to the requirements of the capitalist class.

THE STATE, CONTRADICTION AND SCHOOLING

The aim in this section is to move beyond the orthodox Marxist attempt to construct an ideal type of capitalist state that rigidly emphasises the primacy of the private capitalist sector. Rather, the focus is on the recent contribution of those neo-Marxist writers who emphasise the ideas of contradiction, contestation and legitimation. A central proposition is that while socio-economic relations limit state structures and activities, the state is also shaped by social and political processes. This means that while schools function within the limitations set by the economic structure they are also a product, determinant and object of class struggle. This more dynamic interpretation acknowledges that schools can produce contradictions, struggles and outcomes that may not necessarily be a mechanistic reflection.

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28 Ibid., p.9
29 Ibid., pp129-130
31 See T. Skocpol (1985), 'Bringing the state back in: strategies of analysis in current research' in D. Reuschemeyer and T. Skocpol (eds.),
of the relations of production. The remainder of this section aims to develop a flexible and relatively autonomous perspective of the state through an understanding of the idea of *contradiction*.

The idea of *contradiction* provides an important theoretical advance in correcting the rigid Marxist base and superstructure explanation of schooling. Significantly, it allows us to understand the dual role of the state. On the one hand, the state is responsible for the reproduction of the social relations of capitalist society. On the other hand, the state must satisfy the liberal democratic ideal of equality of opportunity. Therborn summarised the contradictory role of the state:

The State ... must represent, that is to say, promote and defend, the ruling class and its mode of exploitation or supremacy. At the same time, the State must mediate the exploitation or domination of the ruling class over other classes and strata. The State, in other words, is both an expression of class exploitation and domination and something more than a simple expression.

Offe and Ronge's analysis of the state identified four key motives of the capitalist state. First, the state cannot organise production on its own terms because property is privately owned (exclusion). Second, political power depends indirectly on the well-being of the capital market (maintenance). Third, it is in the interest of the state to promote those conditions conducive to accumulation (self-interest). Finally, the electoral process disguises the state's dependence on the accumulation process (legitimation). In this context, state educational policies are wrought with contradiction, inconsistencies and tension. In the end, according to Offe, the state acts to protect the interest of the state apparatus (crisis management).

Carnoy and Levin, two American writers, described the perpetual tension between the imperatives of capitalism and democracy. For them, schools were sites of wider social conflict with both dynamics attempting to

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influence the control, purpose and operation of schools. Carnoy himself summarised the role of the education system:

Public education is thus part of the State effort to support the mediation of contradictions within the base. Education attempts to support direct mediation (the formation of skills to increase the supply of skilled workers, reserve army of unemployed, particularly professional cadres). Such mediation contributes to the accumulation of capital, helping capitalist development to be more successful than it might otherwise be. Education is also part of the State attempt to reproduce the class division of labour (inequality) and to reproduce the relations of production (capitalist/managers as controllers of the investment and its deployment, workers as powerless wage labour) by socialising youth into wage labour and into accepting their lot as dictated by the schooling meritocracy (some succeeding in the struggle for social mobility, most not), a lot which the school claims is fairly, and equitably determined, and by inculcating youth with a profound belief in the perfection and justice of bourgeois democracy. Finally, education is repressive and part of the repressive state apparatus, although this is not its main function.

Carnoy and Levin identified three major types of contradiction in education. First, the contradiction produced by the demand of capital for profitability and the demand of subordinate groups for equal opportunity and the expansion of democratic rights. Second, the contradiction intrinsic to the education process itself. For example, developing workers with appropriate cognitive and vocational skills for existing jobs; inculcating appropriate behaviours', habits and values; socialising and certificating children according to class, race and gender; and promoting an ideology that portrays capitalism as the embodiment of individual liberty and democracy versus producing citizens who know and care about democratic rights and equal opportunity. Carnoy and Levin believed that schools fulfilled their democratic function by espousing the principles of participation, equity, social mobility, cultural development and bureaucratic independence. Third, the contradiction that emerges from the reproductive process itself. By corresponding to the relations of production and the division of labour based on class, gender and race, schools bring into the education process the

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key elements of social conflict such as student and teacher alienation and resistance.  

Bowles and Gintis in their reassessment of the early 'correspondence principle' acknowledged that contradictions did occur within the state, and between the state and the economic base. In particular, they highlighted the state's contradictory role in attempting to promote both the democratic rights vested in persons, and reproducing unequal property rights characteristic of capitalism. For them, society was an 'ensemble of structurally articulated sites of social practice'. Each site was defined as "a cohesive area of social life characterised by a specified set of characteristic social relations or structures". For example, they argued that the liberal democratic state was vested with universal suffrage and civil liberties; capitalist production was characterised by private property; and the patriarchal family was based on gender and age relations. The central contradiction in schools was that they were responsible for promoting the rights vested in persons and at the same time, reproducing the capitalist mode of production characterised by property rights.

While schools do play a significant role in reproducing a hierarchical work force for the economic order, they must also integrate students into the democratic ideology of equality and democracy. Schools, according to Shapiro, contain at the same time the economic and political moments of bourgeois ideology. On the one hand, schools immerse students in the dominant class world view (hegemony) by reproducing a respect for the socio-technical division of labour, the necessary 'know-how' and ultimately the rules of the economic order established by class domination. On the other hand, schools are responsible for representing the social demands of democracy for upward mobility, increased equality of opportunity and the extension of human rights. According to Bowles and Gintis, it was the increased deployment of the liberal discourse of democracy and human rights that offered the greatest potential for change.

42 Ibid., p.229.
It is the gap between the myth of democratic schooling and the reality of inequality that creates a crisis of legitimacy. As a result, the education system must continually find ways to retain public confidence. The massive expansion of state secondary schooling after 1945 and the plethora of educational reforms aimed at creating an efficient and rational school system can be seen as a response to the crisis of legitimation. Popkewitz was one writer who offered an explanation of the schools legitimation function:

Schools must continually search for ways that maintain public faith in institutional processes and in the stability and consensus of the enterprise. It is for this reason that the enactments of reform become important to the conduct of schooling. The rituals re-establish the legitimacy and normalcy of existing arrangements. A belief is conveyed that the school is responding to social beliefs and mandate. The acts of reform enable people to "see" schools as responding to social demands for equitable treatment and rational, orderly processes. The rituals, however, seldom penetrate the systems of meaning and value that underlie institutional life. ... the act of organising reform, it was argued, was to direct attention to surface qualities, thus to deflect attention from the underlying social values, assumptions and implications of institutional life.45

Significantly, the idea of contradiction opens the way for a less monolithic view of the state. It enables us to move beyond the oppressive logic associated with the base/superstructure and structure/agency models of Marxist state theories. Instead, schooling can be viewed as a site of cultural production involving the active process of the dialectic between human agents and social structure. Willis explained this more lively perspective:

In my view there has to be some kind of dialectical relation - not between free subjects (knowing and centred) and determining structure (external and objective) - but between subjects formed in struggle and resistance to structures in domination and structures formed in and reproduced by struggle and resistance against domination. The key link and common ground between the two terms, 'subjects' and 'structure' is struggle.46

In Australia, Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett's book *Making the Difference* (1982) demonstrated how schools were sites not only of reproduction but also production. Connell himself, was critical of much social reproduction theory because it bracketed history and suppressed the agency of people in creating history. Working on the 'ground floor' Connell et al. used the ideas of 'collective practice' - the way people live in their daily lives; 'situation' - the milieu in which people live, for example schools; and 'structure' - the broader social, political and economic context, to breathe life back into the writing of history. Their work illustrated the reciprocity and dynamic interrelationship between each level and how people developed 'strategies' for making choices and taking action.

In conclusion the idea of contradiction emphasises how schools are a part of a much wider social conflict arising out of the system of capitalist production and its inherent inequalities of income and power. This section explains how neo-Marxist state theories shifted the debate away from an all-encompassing, monolithic view of the state toward a perspective that was dynamic, flexible, historical and saw people as human agents who actively constructed their social world. Despite these important theoretical advances, theories of schooling that emphasise the connection of state, economy and schooling fail to adequately theorise the idea of subjectivity. The task ahead is to show how state apparatuses produce and organise subjectivity. This means understanding how ideology works through individuals to secure their consent to the dominant practices and ideology of society. The rest of this chapter attempts to address this shortcoming by theorising the construction of everyday life, routines and meaning (social production).

**THE PRODUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY**

One of the major deficiencies that characterises the theories of the state considered so far, is the failure to elaborate an understanding of how the state constitutes 'the subject'. As a result, individual consciousness is of secondary importance to systemic considerations. In attempting to break with the problematic of economism much of the discussion to this point focuses on state theories that emphasise the idea of contradiction. As a way

forward, this section draws on Gramsci's non-reductionist analysis of hegemony theory. His thinking offered some important new directions for thinking about the role of the state. Building on Gramsci's important theoretical advance, this section provides a balance to the economist position by emphasising how state apparatuses create and recreate forms of consciousness, meaning and practice that operate in the day-to-day experience of the individual. In searching for a theoretical perspective that can better illuminate the relationship between the state and individual conscious and unconscious thoughts and desires, it is necessary to adopt the poststructuralist ideas of discourse, subjectivity and power. The aim in this section is to understand how secondary schooling historically produces and organises subjectivity.

This section draws on four major theoretical strands of thought to illuminate the role of the state. First, Gramsci's hegemony theory and its contribution to understanding the ideological role of schools. Second, discourse theory and its insight into subjectivity and power. Third, Foucault's idea of power/knowledge and its implications for understanding state institutions. Finally, Giddens' and Giroux's attempts to develop a dialectic understanding of how people are both active and constrained agents within their social world.

**GRAMSCI, HEGEMONY AND THE INTEGRAL STATE**

Gramsci was one of the first Marxist writers to break with the instrumentalist logic of the base/superstructure model of the state.\(^{49}\) Gramsci's writing focused upon the superstructure rather than the economic base. Hegemony was the idea he used to explain the reproduction of the dominant class world view. Boggs explained:

> By hegemony Gramsci meant the permeation throughout civil society - including a whole range of structures and activities like trade unions, schools, the churches and family - of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, morality, that is in one way or another supportive of the established order and the class interests that dominate it. Hegemony in this sense might be defined as an 'organising principle', or world view (or combination of such world views), that is diffused by agencies of ideological control and socialisation into every area of daily life. To the extent that this prevailing

consciousness is internalised by the broad masses, it becomes part of 'commonsense', as all ruling elites seek to perpetuate their power, wealth and status, they necessarily attempt to popularise their own philosophy, culture, morality, etc, and render them unchallengeable, part of the natural order of things.50

Williams, in his article *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory* (1976) highlighted the important contribution of Gramsci's hegemony theory in displacing the structuralist/culturalist opposition. In his view, Gramsci went beyond the idea that consciousness was a mere reflection of the economic base. It is worth noting at length Williams' view on the significance of Gramsci's hegemony theory:

It is Gramsci's great contribution to have emphasized hegemony, and also to have understood it at a depth which is, I think, rare. For hegemony supposes the existence of something which is truly total, which is not merely secondary or superstructural, like the weak sense of ideology, but which is lived at such a depth which saturates the society to such an extent, and which, as Gramsci put it, even constitutes the limit of commonsense for most people under its sway, that it corresponds to the reality of social experience very much more clearly than any notions derived from the formula of base and superstructure. For if ideology were merely some abstract imposed notion, if our social and political and cultural ideas and assumptions and habits were merely the result of specific manipulation, of a kind of overt training which might be simply ended or withdrawn, then the society would be very much easier to move and to change than in practice it has ever been or is. This notion of hegemony as deeply saturating the consciousness of a society seems to be fundamental. And hegemony has the advantage over general notions of totality, that it at the same time emphasizes the facts of domination.51

Gramsci rejected instrumental accounts of the state that viewed ideology as the simple expression of the ideas of the ruling class. For Gramsci, ideology was "the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle".52 According to Mouffe, in her reading of Gramsci, it was the anti-reductionist conception of ideology that provides the condition of 'intelligibility' of Gramsci's hegemony theory.53 In this sense, Gramsci's

51 R. Williams (1977), 'Base and superstructure in marxist cultural theory' in R. Dale; G. Esland; and M. MacDonald (eds.), p.204.
view of ideology provides a significant departure from the structuralist reading of the relationship between subject and structure. His emphasis upon the active side of culture allows for both negative and positive moments in ideology. As noted, ideology can serve either to naturalise everyday life in a 'common sense' way or provide the impetus for social change.\textsuperscript{54} Mouffe interpreted this more dynamic view of ideology to mean that consciousness was not "originally given" but "produced by ideology through a socially determined ideological field, so that subjectivity is always the product of social practice".\textsuperscript{55}

For Gramsci, the 'integral state' referred to "the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the consent of those over whom it rules".\textsuperscript{56} In Gramsci's view, hegemonic apparatus (schools) elaborate and spread the dominant ideology. Mouffe, defined hegemonic apparatus as the "ensemble of 'private' bodies through which the political and social hegemony of a social group is exercised".\textsuperscript{57} Herein, lay Gramsci's major contribution to an understanding of the state. For him, the state equalled political activity and civil society. In other words, the state includes the material relations of society and the complex of ideological and cultural relations. According to Mouffe, Gramsci departed from the early Marxist tradition by arguing that politics existed in "all fields of human experience".\textsuperscript{58}

For Gramsci, hegemony went beyond control of the state to include the totality of civil society. Gramsci used the military metaphor of trench-warfare to illustrate this point:

The superstructures of civil society are like the trench-systems of modern warfare. In war it would sometimes happen that a fierce artillery attack seemed to have destroyed the enemy's entire defensive system, whereas in fact it had only destroyed the outer perimeter; and at the moment of their advance and attack the assailants would find themselves confronted by a line of defense which was still effective. The same thing happens in politics, during the great economic crisis. A crises cannot give the attacking forces the ability to organize with lightning speed

\textsuperscript{54} See H. Giroux (1983), p.152.  
\textsuperscript{55} C. Mouffe (1971), p.186.  
\textsuperscript{56} A. Gramsci (1971), p.244.  
\textsuperscript{57} C. Mouffe (1979), p.187.  
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., p.201.
in time and space; still less can it endow them fighting spirit.\textsuperscript{59}

Essential to understanding Gramsci's hegemony theory is the idea of the 'national-popular' or the fundamental classes' world view. Gramsci believed that the modern state played a key role in organising society not only in the economic sphere but on a broad cultural and ideological front. For him, the state organised:

... not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity, posing all the questions around which the struggle rages not on a corporate but on a 'universal' plane, and thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups.\textsuperscript{60}

In this context, Gramsci sought to understand the political and organisational role of intellectuals in reproducing hegemony. He argued that:

... every social group coming into existence on the original terrains of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function, not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields.\textsuperscript{61}

Gramsci categorised intellectuals by their social function. For him, while "all men are intellectuals ... not all men have in society the function of intellectuals."\textsuperscript{62} As a consequence, Gramsci identified two kinds of intellectuals. First, the organic intellectuals are the thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental class. Their function is to elaborate ideologies and educate the fundamental class to which they belong. Second, the traditional intellectuals represent an "uninterrupted historical continuity" by building the hegemony of the dominant class.\textsuperscript{63} According to Gramsci, traditional intellectuals were the "deputies or functionaries" who performed "the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government thus organising spontaneous consent".\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., pp.181-182.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p.5.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., p.9.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., p.7.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., p.12.
Gramsci did not view cultural and ideological relations between the ruling and subordinate classes as the simple domination of the latter by the former. Rather, Gramsci focused on the struggle for hegemony. His concern was the dynamic process by which non-class ideological elements become attached to a hegemonic principle. Gramsci used the metaphor of 'war of position' to explain how bourgeois ideology was hegemonic insofar as it could absorb opposing class cultures and values. Mouffe explained the idea of the 'war of position' as:

... the process of ideological struggle by means of which the two fundamental classes try to appropriate the non-class ideological elements in order to integrate them within the ideological system which articulates itself around their respective hegemonic principles.\(^6^5\)

In conclusion, Gramsci's hegemony theory advanced our understanding of the state in a number of ways. First, he shifted the debate to the role of the superstructure in constructing consent. Second, his hegemony theory encompassed a 'complex relation of forces' that extended into civil society. Finally, Gramsci explained how the state was a principle site in constructing and articulating hegemony. Nonetheless, according to Smart, Gramsci remained ambiguous on the problem of economism, in particular the role of class and virtually silent on the "complex matter of the establishment of forms of hegemony".\(^6^6\) In short, Gramsci could not avoid the problem of class reductionism or explain the construction of hegemony at the level of the personal. The parts to follow attempt to address both of these shortcomings.

**THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY**

A central tenet of poststructuralist theory is the relation between language, subjectivity and the social organisation of power. In the poststructuralist literature, discourse refers to the power to create reality by naming and giving it meaning. Jessop defined discourse as "the ensemble of phenomena in and through which social production of meaning takes place".\(^6^7\) According to Green, discourse has a semantic unity and provides "the means to meaning, the 'mechanisms' in and by which the social production

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\(^6^5\) C. Mouffe (1979), p.198.


of meaning ('knowledge' and 'truth') takes place".\textsuperscript{68} For Henriques, the production of discourse and subjectivity are indissoluble.\textsuperscript{69} According to Yeatman, discourse selectively constituted what was counted as real and true and in so doing, determined the politics of inclusion and exclusion.\textsuperscript{70} The important thing to note about discourse, according to Henriques, was that it did not start out as a system of statements about the 'real' but reflected a historically specific set of material conditions.\textsuperscript{71} Henriques explained this point of view:

Discourse is the result of a practice of production which is at once material, discursive and complex always inscribed in relation to other practices of production of discourse.\textsuperscript{72}

Discourse theory illuminates how particular discursive fields, connected with social institutions like education, impose meaning on reality by defining its nature, purpose and practice.\textsuperscript{73} According to Weedon, discourses are ways of constituting knowledge, social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations. They address and constitute the individuals mind, body and emotions.\textsuperscript{74} In this way, every society constructs its own 'regime of truth' or as Foucault explained:

... its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.\textsuperscript{75}

Importantly, discourse theory contributes to an understanding of the heterogeneous character of the subject. Laclau and Mouffe argued that it was necessary to analyse the "plurality of diverse and frequently contradictory

\textsuperscript{68} B. Green (1986), 'Reading reproduction theory: on the ideology and education debate', \textit{Discourse}, vol.6, no.2, pp.8-9.
\textsuperscript{70} A. Yeatman (1990), \textit{Bureaucrats, technocrats, femocrats: essay on the contemporary Australian state}, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, p.155.
\textsuperscript{71} J. Henriques (1984), p.113.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p.106.
\textsuperscript{75} M. Foucault (1985), 'Truth, power and sexuality' in V. Beechy and J. Donald (eds.), p.93.
positions and to discard the idea of a perfectly unified and homogeneous agent". In so doing, Laclau and Mouffe seriously challenged the usefulness of class as the primary causal principle of various subject positions. What concerned Laclau and Mouffe was the Marxist tendency to privilege class relations and as a consequence, naturalise and bracket off other specific concerns such as feminism, racism, environmentalism and the peace movement.

In Laclau and Mouffe's view discourse or the "system of differential entities ... or moments" was the key to understanding the constitution of subjectivity. In their view, discourse constitutes all social relations. Important in Laclau and Mouffe's work, was the argument that subjectivity is the product of diverse subject positions. This means that subjectivity is articulated within all the discourses that the subject moves including class, religious, sexual, civil and moral discourses. In contrast to Gramsci's idea of a 'fundamental class', Laclau and Mouffe emphasised a 'totality of difference' to explain the constitution of the subject. Yeatman explained the multiplicity of discursive subject positions in the following way:

The individual's history is composed of the experience of a range of discourses, passing through the family and its discourses of authority, gender, morality, religion, politics; into school and its discourses of knowledge, science, authority; to work and adulthood.

The emphasis on the multiplication of interests means that subjectivity cuts across distinct and even contradictory discourses of identity. Yeatman made the point that discursive reality was never determined by any one discursive system because subjects were always positioned interdiscursively. According to Weedon, the discursive constitution of the subject was open to contestation because individuals were not the mere objects of language but the site of discursive struggle. As a consequence,

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76 See E. Laclau and C. Mouffe (1985), Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics, Verso, London, p.84; and E. Laclau and C. Mouffe (1982), 'Recasting marxism: hegemony and new political movements', Socialist Review, vol.12, no.66, pp.91-113
79 Ibid., p105.
80 Ibid., pp115-117.
81 Ibid., p.143.
83 Ibid., p.164.
individuals were open to redefinition. De Lauretis described the contested nature of identity formation in the following way:

Self and identity ... are always grasped and understood within particular discursive configurations. Consciousness, therefore, is never fixed, never attained once and for all, because discursive boundaries change with historical conditions.

In Australia, Connell was one writer who developed the idea that subjectivity was the result of 'what people do'. For him, subjectivity:

... is a construction, something made. What is 'made', specifically is the coherence, intelligibility, and liveability of one's social relationships through time.

For Connell, gender ideology reflected the things' people did within particular contexts. Connell saw gender as 'a moving relation' or an ongoing struggle. Understood in this way, language and social practice produce subjectivity, therefore, it is open to change. According to Weedon, subjectivity was inherently unstable and constantly in process. Moving beyond the idea of a 'core' principle in social relations, Connell claimed that patriarchy reflects:

A seething mass of internal differentiations, complexities and contradictions ... there is conflict, incoherence, contradiction within the processes that construct the gender categories themselves.

The emphasis upon the decentred and open character of the social agent has important implications for political action. For Laclau and Mouffe the major task of democratic social movements (feminist, ethnic and ecological) was to articulate and transform those social relationships characterised by domination and subordination. Thus, social change centres on the process of articulation/disarticulation or the discourse of difference. The implication is that the democratic struggle for justice extends to the whole of civil society including the state. Important, the poststructuralist emphasis

85 Quoted in A. Yeatman (1990), p.16.
87 Ibid., p.87.
88 Ibid., p.87.
89 Ibid., p.58.
on the multiplication of discursive positions opens the way for conceptualising other subjectivities beside that of class. The implication of this insight in understanding the social construction of gender and race is the focus of discussion in the section to follow.

So far, this section explains how different discourses construct a range of modes of subjectivity. This leads to the question of why particular discourses surrounding ideas like 'gender' and 'race' take on seemingly fixed, natural and unchangeable qualities. If discourses are ways of constituting knowledge, social practice, forms of subjectivity and power relations based in educational practice, it is important to discover why they have such seemingly immutable qualities. The answer, according to Weedon, is found in the authority of what is 'natural' and its appeal to God, science or common sense.91

Common sense tells us that something is obvious and natural. It plays a crucial role in helping people to understand and interpret their world. Often, common sense becomes fixed and widely accepted as true. Weedon made the point that common sense relied on the naive view that language was transparent and undistorted by ideology.92 Althusser explained the connection between language, ideology and common sense:

Like all obviousnesses, including those that make a word 'name a thing' or 'have a meaning' (therefore including the obviousness of the 'transparency' of language), the 'obviousness' that you and I are subjects - and that does not cause any problems - is an ideological effect, the elementary ideological effect. It is indeed a peculiarity of ideology that it imposes (without appearing to do so, since these are 'obviousnesses') obviousnesses as obviousnesses, which we have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out (aloud or in the 'still, small voice of conscience'): 'That's obvious! That's right! That's true!'

For Althusser, language 'interpellates' or 'hails' individuals as subjects:

I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and

92 Ibid., p.77.
which can be imagined along the lines of the most common place everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!'

In short, we are dealing with the process by which language reifies or masks reality. In the Althusserian sense, language is an ideological effect that constructs particular identities, images and assumptions in a common sense way. In the chapters to follow, a central argument is that state policies and practices construct particular 'truths' around ideas such as 'citizenship', 'intelligence', 'gender', and 'race'.

FOUCAULT, POWER/KNOWLEDGE AND SUBJECTIVITY

Foucault's work illuminated the connection between power/knowledge and subjectivity. His writing attempted to explain how social institutions construct individual identities. This part of the chapter argues that the materiality of Marxism requires a sense of what Foucault called 'genealogy' or "a form of history that can account for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects". According to Dreyfus and Rabinow, genealogy opposes traditional historical method. It has no fixed essences, no underlying laws, no metaphysical finalities. Meaning occurs in surface practices and not in doctrines of development or origins:

Subjects emerge on a field of battle and play their roles, there and there alone ... It is at it appears.

The important thing to note about genealogy, is that it accounts for the imaginary ordering of the symbolic. So the way we come to perceive ourselves is not 'preordained' or 'natural' but a social construct built around a norm that differentiates between people.

One of Foucault's major achievements was his ability to show how human beings were both objects and subjects constructed through certain forms of knowledge and relationships of power. Smart explained Foucault's idea in the following way:

It is by virtue of a dual analytic focus upon forms of knowledge and relations of power through which the

94 Ibid., pp.162-163.
human subject has been objectivized and upon techniques of the self and related discourses in terms of which human beings 'have learned to recognize themselves as subjects' respectively that Foucault's work has revealed the complex multiple processes from which the strategic constitution of forms of hegemony may emerge.\(^9\)

Central to understanding Foucault's idea of power is the proposition that knowledge and power are inseparable:

We should admit ... that power produces knowledge ... that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.\(^{10}\)

This thesis draws on Foucault's idea of regulation or as he calls it 'bio-power' to understand the hegemonic role of schooling.\(^{11}\) Foucault demonstrated how a new set of operations or procedures (technologies) joining knowledge, power and truth come together to constitute the subject. Foucault used the idea of 'disciplinary technology' to explain how individuals were 'subjected, used, transformed and improved'.\(^{12}\) Foucault described the process of subjectification in the following passage:

... the body is ... directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. ... this subjection is not only obtained by the instruments of violence or ideology; ... it may be calculated, organized, technically thought out; ... this knowledge and this mastery constitute what might be called the political technology of the body.\(^{13}\)

In contrast to Marxism, Foucault believed that power "runs through the whole social body".\(^{14}\) In other words, the state is superstructural to a whole series of existing power relationships that invest the body, sexuality, kinship, knowledge and technology. As a result, the state becomes "the codification of a whole number of power relations which render its

\(^{13}\) Ibid., pp.25-26.  
functioning possible".\textsuperscript{105} Seen in this way, life itself is political. Foucault elaborated the connection between the state and 'bio-power' in the following passage:

\begin{quote}
... from the idea that the state has its own nature and its own finality to the idea that man is the true object of the state's power, as far as he produces a surplus strength, as far as he is a living, working, speaking being, as far as he constitutes a society, and as far as he belongs to a population in an environment, we can see the increasing intervention of the state in the life of the individual. The importance of life for these problems of political power increases; a kind of animalization of man through the most sophisticated political techniques results. Both the development of the possibilities of the human and social sciences, and the simultaneous possibility of protecting life and of the holocaust make their historical appearance.\textsuperscript{106}
\end{quote}

This thesis seeks to explain how Western Australian state secondary schools construct, control, regulate, order and define children as 'docile bodies'. Foucault believed the answer lay in the very structure and routine of schooling. In his view, disciplinary technology operated through a combination of subtle mechanisms or 'micro-physics' of power such as 'hierarchical observation', 'normalizing judgements' and 'the examination'. According to Rabinow, the state produces an increasingly totalising web of control by increasing its specification of individuality.\textsuperscript{107} Through various disciplinary techniques the state becomes both a 'totalising' and 'individualising' institution.\textsuperscript{108}

Foucault argued that \textit{hierarchical observation} was a significant technique of coercion in the modern education system.\textsuperscript{109} Like the Panopticon in \textit{Discipline and Punish} (1977), schools were designed and organised to produce constant surveillance, policing and self-regulation. Foucault explained:

\begin{quote}
The disciplinary institutions secreted a machinery of control that functioned like a microscope of conduct; the fine, analytical divisions that they created formed around man an apparatus of observation, recording and training.\textsuperscript{110}
\end{quote}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\item\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p.92.
\item\textsuperscript{106} Quoted in H.L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow (1982), p.138.
\item\textsuperscript{107} P. Rabinow (1984), \textit{The Foucault reader}, Penguin, Ringwood, p.22.
\item\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p.14.
\item\textsuperscript{109} M. Foucault (1977), p.170.
\item\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p.173.
\end{thebibliography}
If surveillance is to be effective, it requires a standard or norm against which children are held to deviate. For Foucault, *normalizing judgements* operated to reduce the 'gaps' and 'correct' those individuals who failed 'to measure up to the rule'.\(^{111}\) In educational institutions, a detailed system of 'micro-penalities' of punishments and rewards operate to regulate pupils' ability to master a set body of knowledge; time (lateness, absenteeism interruption); activity (inattention, zeal); behaviour (politeness, disobedience); speech (idle chatter, insolence); body (incorrect attitudes, cleanliness); and sexuality (impurity, indecency).\(^{112}\)

Henriques, Hollway, Venn, and Walkerdine's book *Changing the Subject* (1984) explained how modern psychology produced many of the apparatuses of social regulation that affected people's daily lives. This collective work explained how behaviourist psychology was constitutive of the form of the modern individual. As a science of the body it attempted to regulate, clarify and administer the individual.\(^{113}\) Henriques et al. argued that technologies of control such as intelligence scores, taxonomies, personality inventories and administrative regulations identify children as individuals.\(^{114}\) Importantly, their work attempted to deconstruct or prise apart the meanings and assumptions that construct the individual. This meant going beyond the appeal of psychology to science and common sense to analyse how people were historically specific products rather than natural and unchangeable objects. The real question for Henriques was:

> Why a specific notion of the subject as the individual entity should have become part of the home truths of psychology; why child development theory has taken the form it has; why the monitoring of this development has become the core of 'scientific pedagogy' and teachers practice.\(^{115}\)

According to Walkerdine, the pedagogy of normalisation depends upon scientific practices that transpose habits to a medico-behavioural model such as that found in developmental psychology.\(^{116}\) Walkerdine explained how the scientific discourse of child study and mental measurement systematically classified, categorised and defined what was considered as normal. As a result, Walkerdine claimed that pedagogic practices were

\(^{111}\) Ibid., pp.177-184.  
\(^{112}\) Ibid., p.178.  
\(^{114}\) Ibid., p.4.  
\(^{115}\) Ibid., p.103.  
\(^{116}\) Ibid., p.166.
saturated with the notion of a normalised sequence of child development. She argued that techniques of individualisation worked to produce and legitimate different forms of school provision for different ages and groups of children.

Normalisation is dependent on what Foucault called 'the examination.' According to him, 'the examination' or "the ceremony of ... objectification" makes children visible. It identifies children through a routine of surveillance that "situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them." Here, the child's individuality is detailed in a system of records, documentation and case studies. According to Foucault, schools classify children 'to form categories, to determine averages, to fix norms.' In this situation, the state acts as a matrix of individualisation that forms, shapes and governs individuality through the exercise of various disciplinary techniques.

Corrigan and Sayer's book *The Great Arch* (1985) explained how the state constitutes and regulates cultural forms. They argued that the state regulates forms of social relationships and in the process organises political subjectification. For them, the state was not only external and objective ('a thing') but internal and subjective in the way it works through individuals:

> It (the state) works above all through the myriad ways it collectively and individually (mis) represents us and variously 'encourages', cajoles, and in the final analysis forces us to (mis) represent ourselves.

The principal task of the state is to organise 'consent' through 'moral regulation' and 'normalization'. As a result, the state must render as natural the cultural form of bourgeois hegemony. This process requires what Corrigan and Sayer called a 'double disruption' whereby the state constructs people as citizens with attachments and loyalties to a particular illusionary nation state and at the same, individualises people as voter,

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117 Ibid., p.155.
118 Ibid., p.184.
120 Ibid., p.189.
121 Ibid., p.190.
122 B. Smart (1986), p.162.
taxpayer, parent, student and so on. As a consequence, Corrigan and Sayer believed the state achieves a 'totalising' and 'individualising' effect.\textsuperscript{125}

Curtis' history \textit{Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871} (1988) illustrated the usefulness of the Foucaultian approach to the history of education. Curtis' historical analysis of the Canadian school system explained how educational practices, devices, techniques and instruments of educational governance or 'habituation' constructed popular culture and character habits conducive to the moral order of bourgeois hegemony. He argued that the function of schooling was:

The creation in the population of new habits, attitudes, orientations, desires; the channelling of popular energy, into particular regulatory forms supportive of a bourgeois social order - these were the objectives of education. Over time, these objectives have been absorbed into the texture of state schooling.\textsuperscript{126}

Curtis believed that the introduction of a system of rational school administration created a disciplined school population by embodying power relations within children. He argued that school administrators increasingly turned their attention to winning the 'heart' and 'character' rather than the flesh of the child. According to Curtis:

Rule colonises the self and is lived as a set of internal imperatives, desires, appetites, fears, tasks, habits, horizons ...\textsuperscript{127}

Curtis' analysis also demonstrated that subjectivity was an active process of struggle and resistance. Drawing on individual life stories, Curtis illustrated the sort of opposition that the introduction of compulsory schooling generated. Curtis argued that opposition to compulsory schooling was not only a matter of economics but a struggle over customs and conceptions of the 'process, occasion and content of education'.\textsuperscript{128}

In conclusion, this section argues that traditional Marxist state theories give insufficient consideration to the ideas of subjectivity and subjectification. A key argument is that structuralist theories of the state are blind to the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid., pp.4-5.
  \item \textsuperscript{126} B. Curtis (1988), \textit{Building the educational state: Canada West, 1836-1871}, The Falmer Press, Ontario, p.366.
  \item \textsuperscript{127} Ibid., p.378.
  \item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p.198.
\end{itemize}
multiplicity of subject positions, the idea of contradiction, the contested nature of schooling and the potential for transformation. In response to these shortcomings, the poststructuralist writers considered in this section emphasised the idea of 'decentring' or the dispersal of any central and unified subject. According to Hall there was:

... a move towards diversity, the heterogeneity of discourses and the effective dispersal of any unity or ensemble.\(^{129}\)

While this tendency is not without its problems, it does offer a more complex and powerful understanding of the state's hegemonic role.

**TOWARDS A DIALECTIC VIEW OF STRUCTURE AND AGENCY**

Although poststructuralism offers a more complex and non-reductive explanation of the constitution of the subject, it does suffer from a lack of clarity on the question of determinacy. Poststructuralism with its emphasis on causal pluralism and multiple discourse may very well run the risk of losing any notion of 'dominance'. Hall highlighted this potential problem when he suggested that it seemed unnecessary to throw out the conception of a social totality to the point of "no necessary class belongingness".\(^{130}\)

The purpose in this part of the chapter is to consider how the work of Giddens and Giroux can contribute to a dialectic understanding of the interplay between structure and agency. For them, individuals were not the product of predetermined structures or puppets acting outside subject thoughts, desires and actions. On the contrary, both writers highlighted how the subject was an active and yet constrained agent. This dialectic view stems from their common dislike of historical reductionism and the primacy given to the economic sphere that characterised traditional Marxist accounts of the constitution of the subject.

*Giddens and the duality of structure*

Central to Giddens' sociology was the idea of the ongoing dialectic of structure and practice. For him, social analysis began in neither the consciousness or activities of the subject, nor in the characteristics of the


\(^{130}\) S. Hall (1985), 'The rediscovery of ideology: return of the repressed in media studies' in V. Beech and J. Donald (eds.), p.50.
object, but in the duality of structure. The idea of 'duality of structure' refers to:

... the essential recursiveness of social life, as constituted in social practices: structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practice. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution.131

Giddens writing focused on human agents and how they carried out their daily routines within a structured totality that was both enabling and constraining:

... all human action is carried on by knowledgeable agents who both construct the social world through their actions, but yet whose action is also conditioned or constrained by the very world of their creation.132

In Giddens' view, social life consisted of regularised social practices. For him, life was the duree of day-to-day existence in the context of conventions ordered by the level of practical consciousness and that tacit knowledge that the actor was unable to formulate discursively.133 A major proposition in Giddens' work was that routine played a crucial role in the reproduction of social practices. According to him, routine involved a continual 'regrooving' of established attitudes and cognitive outlooks.134 As a consequence, routine became a means of naturalising and reifying current practices by making them appear to have fixed and immutable qualities.135

Giddens referred to the idea of text/author to clarify his views on social practice. He claimed that a text was not a 'fixed form' but the concrete medium and outcome of a process of production reflectively monitored by its author. For Giddens, this meant that the production of the text was at the same time the production of the author. In Giddens words "the subject or author ... helps to constitute him/herself through the text, through the very process of production of that text."136 The text/author analogy explains that every social practice is a production of something new with the potential to

132 Ibid., p.54.
135 Ibid., p.195.
136 Ibid., pp.43-44
either sustain or dislocate the 'grip' on the taken-for granted of day-to-day life.\textsuperscript{137}

Giddens, like Foucault, argued that the state played an increasingly intrusive and comprehensive role in the surveillance and policing of day-to-day life.\textsuperscript{138} Of particular interest to Giddens was the 'storage capacity' of the state. He claimed that the storage of authoritative resources was the basis of the surveillance activities of the state. This means that the state's surveillance function is more effective under capitalism because of its ability to accumulate information and supervise people in state institutions such as schools.

\textit{Giroux and cultural politics}

Turning to Giroux's work on ideology and culture we can find a continuation and development of Gramsci's early theorising on hegemony. Like Gramsci, Giroux was not only interested in how ideology worked on and through individuals to create consent but how ideology created the terrain for transformative action.\textsuperscript{139} In common with Giddens, Giroux's work focused on the interplay between structure and agency. In Giroux's words, meaning was "not reducible to the individual and has to be understood in its articulation with ideological and material forces as they circulate and constitute the wider society". Giroux elaborated this idea:

\begin{quote}
...human behaviour is rooted in a complex nexus of structured needs, common sense, and critical consciousness ... so as to produce multiple subjectivities and perceptions of the world and everyday life.\textsuperscript{140}
\end{quote}

The important thing to note about Giroux's work is that he drew attention to the cultural field where:

\begin{quote}
... knowledge, discourse, and power intersect so as to produce historically specific practices of moral and social regulation.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

For Giroux, power was a concrete set of practices that produced social forms through which experience and different subjectivities were constructed.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., p.240.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., p.175.
\textsuperscript{139} H. Giroux (1983), p.145.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., p.146.
According to Giroux, discourse was constitutive of, and a product of power as it functioned to produce and legitimate particular ideologies and practices. In a recent article with Simon, Giroux explained how the discourse of pedagogy attempted to deliberately influence the production of identities within a particular set of social relations. Giroux and Simon claimed that pedagogy was a practice through which people acquired certain 'moral character'. They explained how pedagogy organises:

... a view of how a teacher's work within an institutional context specifies a particular version of what knowledge is of most worth, in what direction we should desire, what it means to know something, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment ... It is in this sense that to propose a pedagogy is to construct a political vision.

Central to Giroux's writing is the idea of critical pedagogy or what he called 'cultural politics'. For Giroux, this meant understanding how cultural processes were produced and transformed within fields of discourse. The strength of Giroux's work was that he developed a form of analysis that was sensitive to the dialectic interconnections between structural forces and a theory of self-production. Giroux situated educational practice within three related fields of discourse: the discourse of production (structure); the discourse of text analysis; and the discourse of lived cultures.

At the macro level, Giroux was concerned with the discourse of production. At this level, the emphasis is on the structural forces of the wider society and how they constrain and impact upon the function of schools. For Giroux, the social forms constituted within schooling were always interconnected with the ideological and material structures of the wider society. Giroux claimed that it was impossible to analyse the process of schooling without understanding how state policy:

... embodies and promotes particular practices that legitimate and privilege some forms of knowledge over others or some groups over others.

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142 Ibid., p.23
144 Ibid., p.12.
146 Ibid., pp.36-37.
At the second level, Giroux believed it was necessary to supplement the discourse of production with an analysis of what he termed 'textual forms'. *Textual analysis* interrogates how the text or curriculum material socially constructs certain means of representation. For Giroux, the significance of textual analysis was that it illuminated the hidden curriculum and created the opportunity "to deconstruct meanings that are silently built into the structuring principles of the various systems of meaning that organise everyday life in schools". According to Giroux, this kind of analysis could provide valuable insight into how particular subjectivities and cultural representations worked within schools.

Finally, Giroux was eager to avoid any hint of structural determination by focusing on the *lived experience* of people. The discourse of lived experience examines how teachers and students give meaning to their lives through the "complex historical, cultural, and political forms that they both embody and produce". The focus is on how people account for who they are and present different readings of the world. It is a discourse, according to Giroux, that is attentive to the "histories, dreams, and experiences" that students bring to school.

In conclusion, Giroux like Giddens offered a conceptual framework for theorising how structural forces interconnect with and affect individual personality at the level of needs and desire. Giroux's work is helpful in explaining how state ideologies not only shape consciousness but reach into the depths of personality through the patterns and routines of everyday life. Importantly, Giroux illustrated how ideological imprints on the human psyche were historically specific experiences and representative of particular interests. This led Giroux to conclude that aspects of everyday life that have a semiotic expression were open to review and social transformation.

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147 Ibid., p.37.
148 Ibid., p.38.
149 Ibid., p.39.
151 Ibid., p.154.
STATE THEORIES, GENDER AND RACE

A major limitation of traditional Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of the state is their failure to account for different male/female and white/black life experiences. Much of the theorising on the state has not only been deterministic but sexist and racist. Unfortunately, both gender and race are theoretically non-existent or at best explained as a conjunct of class analysis. As a result, Marxist categories make it impossible to theorise oppressed groups like Aborigines and women. Aronowitz made the point that:

There is no theoretical space for ... the moral economy of different groups within the reductionist assumptions of class theory. Moral and normative structures that cannot be explained by means of the categories of political economy are either ignored or denounced as diversions from "real" struggles.152

A key argument in the previous section centred on how subjects are not only class subjects but more correctly a 'pluralism of subjects'.153 According to Outlaw, this means that race and gender are constitutive of the personal and social being of persons and not secondary inessential matters.154 The aim in this section is to explain how the state constitutes children through the articulation of multiple and often contradictory social relations. This means understanding how the state facilitates not only the development of capitalism but the construction of social relationships that enhance the power and domination of men over women and whites over blacks. The remainder of this section explains how liberal, radical and Marxist state theories have either explicitly or implicitly accounted for gender and race. It examines some of the weaknesses of each perspective and considers recent efforts to theorise the social production of gender and race.

GENDER

The aim in this part of the chapter is to examine how different theories of the state can illuminate gender. Drawing on Connell (1987) and Kenway's (1991) analysis of feminism and state theories, the parts to follow allude to

liberal, radical and Marxist feminist theories of the state and the relevance of their analysis to understanding the history of state secondary schooling.\(^{155}\)

**Liberal feminism and the state**

In the liberal tradition of John Stuart Mill and the idea of unfair discrimination, liberal feminists seek to use the state as a mechanism for achieving equality between citizens without radically transforming the present social and political system.\(^{156}\) John Stuart Mill reflected the liberal feminist position:

> That the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes - the legal subordination of one sex to the other - is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement, and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.\(^{157}\)

It is clear from Mill's perspective that the state can achieve for women an equal relationship with men for political, economic and social power. According to Kenway, liberalism demands sexual equality in the form of equal rights and equal opportunities for women in the public sphere. Specifically, Kenway identified anti-discrimination legislation, the placement of women in positions of power and influence in a range of state apparatus, attempts to seek a more balanced distribution of the sexes across the paid labour force and the educative role of discouraging sex stereotyping.\(^{158}\) The underlying assumption of liberal reform, is that rational policy reform will reduce prejudice against women and remove the reasons for the unequal relationship between men and women.\(^{159}\)

Feminist critics of the liberal view of the state argue that liberalism is 'theoretically rootless' and unable to account for either the sexual division

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\(^{159}\) Ibid., p.69; and pp.15-17.
of labour or the issue of power as a feature of the social structure. Of particular concern to feminist writers like Phillips, was the way in which liberalism insisted upon the differentiation between the public and private spheres. Phillips argued that liberalism by guarding the autonomy of the individual in the private sphere continued to reinforce and protect the existence of unequal social relationships in the family. According to Phillips, the idea of the liberal state exempts from political interference the arena in which women are most subordinate and controlled. This means that state policies may appear to be progressive and egalitarian in the public domain but remain unjust in the private sphere.

**Radical feminism and the patriarchal state**

In contrast to liberal feminism, radical feminism confronts head on the question of power and the sexual division of labour. Central to radical feminism is the view that the most basic division in society is that between men and women. For them, the fundamental oppression is women's oppression. Firestone reflected the radical feminist position:

> Nature produced the fundamental inequality - half the human race must bear and rear the children of all of them - which was later consolidated, institutionalized, in the interests of men ... Women were the slave class that maintained the species in order to free the other half for the business of the world ...

For radical feminists like Firestone, women's reproductive capacities were used by males to establish and maintain women's subordination in the family. Radical feminists view the state as a patriarchal state that serves to perpetuate masculine violence. According to Kenway, radical feminists preferred separate and different models of political analysis and practice outside the state. Nonetheless, Kenway claimed that radical feminism provided a major impetus for the establishment of rape crisis centres, women's refuges, the modification of laws on sexual violence and the creation of sexual harassment legislation.

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While acknowledging radical feminism's contribution to the process of consciousness raising, Marxist feminists like Barrett, claimed that radical feminism failed to provide an adequate analysis of the oppression it denounced. As a result, it was politically ineffective in causing fundamental structural change. According to Barrett, radical feminism refused to take on board the range of differing structures and experiences of women in different societies, periods of history and social classes.\(^{165}\)

**Marxist feminism and the state**

Engels believed that women's oppression was the result of the development of class society, founded upon the family, private property and the state.\(^{166}\) Marxist feminist writers like Reed argue that any explanation of women's oppression must examine the birth of class society and its associated socio-economic organisation. For Reed, this meant that the 'downfall of women' and the emergence of sexism had its roots in the emergence of the private property system. She explained:

> As men took over most of the activities of social production, and with the rise of the family institution, women became relegated to the home to serve their husbands and families. The state apparatus came into existence to fortify and legalize the institutions of private property, male domination and the father-family, which later were sanctified by religion.\(^{167}\)

The object of Marxist feminism is to redress Marx's failure to analyse the role of the state in sustaining the subordination of women. The basic tenet in Marxist feminist literature is that gender is as important a source of power as class and that any attempt to subsume women's oppression under the general category of class relations is wrong. Marxist feminists are critical of Marx's sexist presupposition about women, work and the family and how they contribute to the major social division within the working class.\(^{168}\) Marxism, by identifying the class struggle as the primary motor of history pushes the question of the sexual division of labour to the periphery of the historical process.\(^{169}\) According to Barrett, the aim of Marxist feminism was to:

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\(^{167}\) E. Reed (1984), 'Women: caste, class or oppressed sex?' in A. Jagger and P. Rothenberg (eds.), p.137.


... identify the operation of gender relations as and where they may be distinct from, or connected with, the processes of production and reproduction understood by historical materialism.\textsuperscript{170}

Marxist feminism highlights the urgent need to 'revise' theories of the state to explain men's domination of women in the household and paid work force. McIntosh argued that the state maintained support for a specific form of household that was conducive to the interest of capital. She pointed out that the family household system of capitalism was dependent upon a male breadwinner and woman's unpaid work. The state plays an important part in establishing married women as a latent reserve army of labour by sustaining the household and women's financial dependence on their husbands.\textsuperscript{171} McIntosh believed that the state contributed to the process of semi-proletarianization of women by taking over traditional domestic roles such as child care and education and hence providing capital with a cheap source of labour.\textsuperscript{172} How state secondary schooling constructs the ideology of women's dependence is the focus of discussion in chapter eight.

Wolpe is one Marxist feminist writer who explains the role of schooling in the sexual division of labour. She argued that schools mediate between girls and their allocation to future roles.\textsuperscript{173} Wolpe claimed that girls followed a curriculum that excluded them from a whole range of subjects and institutionalised the dominant female gender roles of wives and mothers.\textsuperscript{174} Wolpe was interested in the way official state ideology articulated and transmitted a particular view about the form education should take for girls. Her analysis of British educational reports illustrated how boys' education focused on their future occupational role whereas girls' education perpetuated the role of motherhood.\textsuperscript{175} Porter's analysis of the Western Australian Education Departments official ideology of the family and male and female sex roles supported Wolpe's conclusion. Like Wolpe, Porter illustrated how the 'domestic economy' curriculum, including

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., p.280.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., pp.323-327.
cooking, needlework, the care of the sick, the care of children, household furnishing, and cleaning, portrayed a desired view of women as dependent wives and mothers. However, Wolpe and Porter did not see the reproduction of social relations occurring in a mechanistic manner. While girls could study subjects traditionally reserved for boys and compete for higher occupational status they were also prepared for their familial position that assumed an ascendancy over other aspects of their lives. For women, this means that the sexual division of labour within the family directly determines their allocation to job roles.

MacDonald's (Arnot) work explored the link between class and gender. She argued that you could not dissociate the ideological forms of masculinity and femininity from either material conditions or class structure. MacDonald's analysis is useful in showing how both class and gender are social constructs reinforced through the state. Essential to the hegemony of patriarchal relations of male dominance is the dual subordination of women in the world of work and the home. MacDonald wanted to know how girls and boys of different classes learnt gender differences related to intelligence, ability, interest and ambition. Why was it 'natural' that boys and girls studied different school subjects? Despite the ideology of free choice and pupil needs, MacDonald argued that the assumption of gender difference remained embedded in the education system.

Other Marxist feminist writers are cautious about portraying a causal connection between the economy and gender. By focusing on the idea of contradiction this group of writers argue that the needs of capitalism and patriarchy may not always be conducive to each other. Relevant in this context is Anyon's argument that gender formation never involves complete 'acceptance' or 'rejection' of appropriate sex-role behaviours and attitudes but is an active and ongoing response to social contradiction. For her, femininity involved continual accommodation and resistance to the low self-esteem that resulted from the dominant ideology of femininity,

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176 P. Porter (1983), 'The state, the family and education: ideology, reproduction and resistance in Western Australia, 1900-1929', *Australian Journal of Education*, vol.27, no.2, pp.121-136
178 M. MacDonald (1981), 'Schooling and the reproduction of class and gender relations' in R. Dale et al. (eds), p162.
179 Ibid., p.168.
submissiveness, dependency, domesticity and passivity. Anyon believed that women adapted femininity to their own ends, resisted it and warded off its degrading consequences. By acknowledging the centrality of conflict and contestation, writers like Anyon see the state as a site of wider societal struggle between more and less powerful groups. This approach offers a more realistic political agenda for women.

The emphasis on political action and social change is a theme pursued by Lather. Her work challenged the 'male-centredness' of Marxist theory by exploring the counter-hegemonic potential of women's studies. Drawing on Gramsci's idea of ideological struggle, she argued that women's studies can articulate and mobilise alternative world views that challenge dominant male-centred discourses. Like Gramsci, she saw hegemony as the terrain upon which groups struggled for power. For Lather, the process of education was at the heart of counter-hegemonic work:

The task of counter-hegemonic groups is the development of counter-institutions, ideologies, and cultures that provide an ethical alternative to the dominant hegemony, a lived experience of how the world can be different.

Despite the significant political advance of writers such as Lather, the pitfalls of economism and reductionism remain in Marxist feminist theories of the state. According to O'Brien the fixation on class structure in Marxist feminist analysis leads to a strategy of 'commatization' in which activities related to 'race comma, gender comma are simply added to class'.

**The state, subjectivity and gender**

Kenway observed that:

Even in the most recent literature, women are too often presented as the passive victims of the all-powerful structures and ideologies of capitalism and patriarchy whose interests are institutionalized through a totally oppressive state.

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The purpose in this part is to 'move beyond' the traditional liberal, radical and Marxist feminist explanations of women's oppression. The aim is to review the recent literature on the connection between the state, subjectivity and gender. A central argument is that gender, like 'race' is an ideological entity constructed and reconstructed in struggle. In the Gramscian sense, hegemony is never complete but always open to different and competing ideologies. In developing Gramsci's hegemony theory this part of the thesis attempts to understand how discursive formations signal through language particular kinds of consciousness, meaning and practice in everyday life. Relevant in this context is Corrigan's idea of 'structured imposition' whereby the state establishes patterns, routines, and regulative control (textuality) to accomplish particular gender identities. As already argued, this thesis is conscious of the theoretical limitations arising from the structure/subject dualism. In countering the tendency to focus on either structure or subject as the primary vehicle of social explanation, this chapter argues that Giddens' idea of duality of structure and Giroux's emphasis on the "complex nexus of structured needs, common sense and critical consciousness" offers a more satisfactory framework for analysing the social construction of subjectivity. The remainder of this part of the chapter alludes to some of the recent attempts to address these theoretical issues.

Barrett described two developments in her thinking that are relevant to this discussion. In the 1988 edition of Women's Oppression Today, Barrett acknowledged the failure of Marxist feminism to adequately analyse the theoretical and political role of race in perpetuating social divisions. She argued that Women's Oppression Today, like Marxist feminist literature in general, suffered from "a lack of tuning to questions of race, ethnicity and racism". The ideology of race will be discussed in the part to follow. Second, Barrett highlighted the failure of the determinist model of classical Marxism to theorise subjectivity in other than simple class terms. As a result, Barrett turned to the post-Marxist position that "loosens the class basis in favour of a more general appreciation of domination or power, which can take a variety of forms and agents." Barrett believed that Laclau and Mouffe's analysis of the decentred subject and Foucault's ideas

187 P. Corrigan (1987), 'In/forming schooling', in D. Livingstone and contributors, p.23.
191 Ibid., p.xviii.
on 'discourse', 'regimes of truth' and 'power/knowledge' were a 'fertile
ground' for feminism.192

O'Brien argued that the recent emphasis on hegemony theory and cultural
production offered feminism a more serious agenda than the fixation on
ideological structuralism. She claimed that Gramsci's theory of the modern
state offered a way forward because it attempted to escape the
base/superstructure relation in favour of a dialectic of social action and
social consciousness.193 Like Giroux, O'Brien believed that any useful
analysis of hegemony, power, ideology and the state must recognise that
cultural forms were not only produced in praxis but dialectically and
materially grounded. For her, this meant moving beyond the perceived
singularity of economic necessity to theorise the social construction of
gender relations.194

Feminists, like Hollway examine the discursive construction of sexuality
and gender differences. As already discussed in the previous section,
discourse makes available particular positions and meanings for subjects to
take up. Hollway identified three dominant discourses concerning sexuality.
First, the hegemonic male sexual drive discourse that refers to the language
of male desire. Second, the have/hold discourse that mirrors the Christian
ideals of monogamy, partnership and family life. Finally, the permissive
discourse that views sexuality as natural for men and women.195 Hollway
argues that each of these discourses was gender differentiated. As a result,
subject positions were not equally available to men and women because
positions were specified through the category 'man' or 'woman'. Hollway
believed that people took up a particular discourse because they gained
satisfaction and reward in growing up as either a 'proper man' or 'attractive
girl'.196 In taking up certain gender positions people not only receive
satisfaction but produce their own identity through routine day-to-day
practices. Similarly, Urwin drew on Lacan to show how language produced
subjectivity and sexual identity. Like Hollway, she claimed that as the child
entered the world of language she/he was spoken to and about. Through the

192 ibid., p.xxxiii.
194 Ibid., p.51.
195 W. Hollway (1984), 'Gender difference and the production of subjectivity' in J.Henriques et al.,
p.234.
196 Ibid., pp.238-240.
process of language acquisition individuals began to speak and symbolically order themselves as either masculine or feminine.\(^{197}\)

In this context, according to Franzway, Court and Connell, the state is a crucial site for the mobilisation, institutionalisation, negotiation and regulation of hegemony.\(^{198}\) Sassoon's collection of essays *Women and the state* (1987) showed the connection between the modern welfare state and women's everyday experiences as workers and mothers.\(^{199}\) Drawing on Gramsci's non-reductionist hegemony theory, Sassoon attempted to understand the multifaceted role of women and why they accepted certain ideas as 'natural'.\(^{200}\) Sassoon, shifted the focus of discussion to the important role of popular culture, ideology and common sense. Balbo shared this view in writing about the everyday choices, arrangements and life that women accepted as part of their 'servicing work'. She explained:

> Women 'service' when they mother, make love, counsel, assist; when they arrange homes, buy food and cook meals, wash clothes, wait for a delivery, mail out bills; when they take their children to school or go to the surgery with somebody who is sick. Food sold in shops needs to be transformed into meals; cars have to be driven to take people to their destinations; the house has to be cleaned, the TV set fixed when it is broken.\(^{201}\)

Central to Sassoon's collection of essays was the view that while the welfare state facilitated the improved position of women by integrating them into the formal labour market and introducing equal opportunity legislation, its institutions and practices reinforced the traditional model of work and domestic life. For this group of writers the welfare state reproduces a particular form of production that legitimises women's double role as mothers and workers.\(^{202}\)

In the Australian context, Deacon's book *Managing gender: the state, the new middle class and women workers 1830-1930* (1989) examined how the state promoted dependency as the 'natural' status of women.\(^{203}\) She argued

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197 C. Urwin (1984), 'Power relations and the emergence of language' in J. Henriques et al., p.282.
200 Ibid., p.20.
201 L. Balbo (1987), 'Crazy quilts: rethinking the welfare state debate from a woman's point of view' in A. Sassoon (ed.), p.52.
that the ideas and practices concerning gender were closely connected to the
construction of the modern interventionist state, class and family life. What
interested Deacon, was how a new class of professionals constructed the
language of science, technology and expertise as a dominant discourse of the
early 20th century. Deacon's book showed how the social efficiency
movement organised the application of science and expertise to social
problems. According to Deacon, state programs attempted to reform the
family and male/female relationships in line with both craft union and
upper class ideals. Central to this process was the new professional class who
applied the resources of the state to develop a consistent view of a desirable
gender order.

Yeatman's recent analysis of the Australian state provided further insight
into the complex relation between the state, administrative reform and
women's lives. Like Deacon, she argued that the 'state-oriented
intelligentsia' constructed a discourse of effectiveness and efficiency. In
the context of globalized economic restructuring, the 'managerial elite'
espouse the discourse of 'managerialist-economic rationalism'. At the
core of this management style, according to Yeatman, was an "unrestrained
economism which operates to delegitimise social, cultural and moral
claims". For her, the genre of policy texts was the use of managerialist
language to make the problem appear as self evident, thereby rendering
invisible the construction of the agenda and the politics that informed its
construction. In this context the administrative emphasis is on outcomes,
strict hierarchical division, management and rational systems that see
people as instruments. Yeatman elaborated her view in the following
extract:

The indisputable and apparently apolitical virtues of
managerialist agendas of the new social movements and
their advocates within public bureaucracies have been
subordinated to a process of the effective reinstatement of
hierarchical controls and administrative elite rule within
public bureaucracies. A newly rationalised administrative
elite has learnt a repertoire of symbolic gestures in the
direction of consumer consultation, social justice, and client

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204 Ibid., p.206.
207 Ibid., p.3.
208 Ibid., p.102.
209 Ibid., p.160.
210 Ibid., pp.6-7.
rights, but has been barred effectively from more serious conversion to these values by being rewarded or sanctioned for conformity to managerialist-economic rationalist administrative agendas.\textsuperscript{211}

In Yeatman's view, the demand for a more democratic and equitable administration was subject to techniques and modes of administration-rationality with tightly controlled criteria.\textsuperscript{212} Her broader concern was to understand the implications that followed from the professionalisation of feminist principles in state bureaucracies. She sought to understand the position of 'femocrats' - those women employed within state bureaucracies to advance women's interests - and the implication of achieving feminist principles within a class and patriarchal organisational setting.\textsuperscript{213}

The significant thing about class and patriarchal interests is that they are premised on the 'natural' view of women performing an important economic service for the nation by bearing and rearing children.\textsuperscript{214} As a result, the state's discursive practices produce dependency as the 'natural' status of women. For Deacon, the state was a crucial site designed to "coerce, instruct, encourage or subsidise women in this task".\textsuperscript{215} Deacon illustrated this point by explaining how the infant welfare movement contributed to the stereotype of women as incompetent, ignorant and capable of working only under supervision.\textsuperscript{216} In Deacon's words:

By stressing women's duties as mothers, this managerial approach strengthened the ideology of women’s place in the home; by stressing their need for supervision it built up an image of women as lacking in responsibility and resourcefulness. To the degree that these ideas were accepted by women, or imposed by restrictive practices, the efficiency movement discouraged labour force participation and ambition. To the degree that its ideas were accepted by others, the movement strengthened prejudices against women’s participation and encouraged policies of exclusion.\textsuperscript{217}

\textsuperscript{211} Ibid., p.3.
\textsuperscript{212} Ibid., p.174.
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid., p.81.
\textsuperscript{215} D. Deacon (1989), p.211.
\textsuperscript{216} Ibid., p.213.
\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., p.215.
With regard to education, the research of Wolpe (1978, 1981), Deem (1981) and Porter (1983) demonstrated that state ideologies and practices sustained the 'natural' view of women's place in the home. Deem believed that despite a brief flirtation with the dual role of women in the period of post-war reconstruction and the experiment with social democratic ideology in the 1960s, there was an ideological climate that increasingly emphasised women's place in the home.\(^\text{218}\) Deem believed that girls leaving school had little possibility of entering employment. With cutbacks in welfare provision and the renewed emphasis on the importance of women's domestic role in the family, she claimed that women could no longer rely on the state to secure equality or alleviate oppression.\(^\text{219}\)

Recapping the argument to date, the state is much more than a set of institutions or a 'thing'. Rather, it is a 'social form'\(^\text{220}\) or 'social process'\(^\text{221}\) that constitutes in struggle the hegemony between various social groups. According to Connell, the state (schools) was doing more than regulating gender, it was "the centre of a reverberating set of power relations and political processes in which patriarchy is both constructed and contested".\(^\text{222}\) The emphasis upon human practice opens the way to see the construction of gender as a dynamic relation between the macro-level and the individual level.

This more lively perspective challenges politically impotent Marxist accounts of schooling. Writers such as Livingstone turned to Gramsci's emphasis on culture and ideology to develop the ideas of critical pedagogy, cultural power and transformation. Livingstone defined critical pedagogy as the:

...empowerment of subordinate groups through shared understanding of the social construction of reality.\(^\text{223}\)

For Livingstone, the focus of analysis was on the 'appropriation', 'articulation' and 'transformation' of 'cultural materials' through which

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\(^{219}\) Ibid., p.141.


subjectivity was transformed. According to Simon, this meant understanding "how people are, what they say and do in the domain of body, language and activity". As a result, subjective life and collective action and movement became the focus for political struggle and transformation. Connell summarised this more active analysis in the following passage:

The present we live in was no more a historically necessary development than any of our possible futures is. Human practice produced it, not the operation of a mechanism, whether cosmic, logical or biological. The present moment, then, is not a culmination but a point of choice.

In conclusion, this section explains the connection between the state and the social construction of gender. A key argument is that radical, liberal and Marxist feminist theories of the state all have their theoretical and strategic limitations. Liberal feminism fails to account for the wider social relationships of capitalism. It is premised on the naive political assumption that the state is neutral and capable of altering inherently unjust social relationships. Radical feminism focuses on male dominance as the sole reason for women's oppression. Marxist feminism, is caught up in the unsatisfactory debate concerning the primacy of the economic sphere. In search of a more adequate way of conceptualising the state and gender, this part of the chapter turns to the recent post-Marxist emphasis on hegemony theory, discourse and subjectivity. At the core of this thesis is the view that the state historically constructs and regulates social relationships that benefit men over women, whites over blacks and the rich over the poor.

RACE

When we turn to race as an explanatory variable, it becomes apparent that Marxist theories of the state are seriously underdeveloped. Several commentators point to the fact that while feminist theory successfully drew attention to patriarchal relations as a pervasive organising principle in society, like Marxist theory in general, it neglects the issue of race. Sarup quoted Carby's comment on the British scene:

\[\text{225} \text{R.I. Simon (1987), p.158.}\]
\[\text{226} \text{R.W. Connell (1987), pp.278-279.}\]
It is not just our history before we came to Britain that has been ignored by white feminists, our experiences and struggles here have also been ignored. The struggles and experiences, because they have been structured by racism, have been different to those of white women.\textsuperscript{228}

The lack of theorising on 'race' is partly the result of the theoretical complexities that are only just beginning to receive attention.\textsuperscript{229} Barrett and McIntosh highlighted some of these theoretical problems:

... the question of race as an independent social division is an extremely pressing one. Do we take the view that the introduction of a third system must necessarily fragment the analysis that was already creaking at the seams over feminism? Or should we regard race as easier to incorporate into a classic Marxist analysis than feminism proved to be? Or should we concentrate on the relations between race and gender and ignore for the moment the consequences of this for a class analysis? Or should we apparently back down from these academic debates and adopt a more pragmatic political approach by identifying areas of common and progressive struggle? Can we argue that racism, like women's oppression, has independent origins but is now irretrievably embedded in capitalist social relations.\textsuperscript{230}

The purpose in this part of the chapter is to explain the characteristics and limitations of liberal, radical and Marxist interpretations of racism. The final part of the section alludes to the contribution of Gramsci's non-reductive understanding of the educative role of the state and how it can better explain the social construct of 'race'.

\textit{Liberalism, racial equality and the state}

Liberal theories of the state emphasised the twin ideals of pluralism and democracy. They argued that racial equality was achievable through the enactment of citizenship rights and equal opportunity legislation. In the liberal tradition, according to Troyna and Williams, the state was open to rational arguments about the need for multicultural and antiracist education.\textsuperscript{231} As a consequence, liberal reformists argue that the state was capable of accommodating the aspirations of all citizens, including Aboriginal

\textsuperscript{228} M. Sarup (1986), p.61.
\textsuperscript{230} M. Barrett and M. MacIntosh (1985), p.41.
\textsuperscript{231} B. Troyna and J. Williams (1986), \textit{Racism, education and the state}, Croom Helm, Sydney, p.119.
and ethnic minorities. The Western Australian *Beazley Report* (1984) reflected the liberal perspective in the following comment:

Systematic effort is required to reduce educational disadvantage and this necessarily will involve not only schools ... but also central authorities.\(^{232}\)

Jennett claimed that the liberal state not only attempted to improve the lot of Aborigines but to integrate them into a liberal democratic political system as a legitimate 'interest' group. As a result, Aborigines had the right to assert their identity as people and make appropriate demands for reform.\(^{233}\) The liberal proponents of equal opportunity sought to introduce a range of compensatory educational reforms to encourage equal access, performance and outcomes. Despite the rhetoric, the educational research consistently demonstrated that Aboriginal children continued to fail in a school system that was both alienating and discriminatory.\(^{234}\)

Nowhere, is the liberal approach to equal opportunity more apparent than in the state sponsored policy of multiculturalism. Emerging in the early 1970s, multiculturalism became a dominant public policy perspective. Multiculturalism as a desirable model of society aims to support the cultural aspirations of minority groups within a commitment to the contemporary political and economic order.\(^{235}\) As a consequence, multiculturalism tends to explain Aboriginal educational failure in terms of the 'deficit model' that links Aboriginal failure to family, culture and material position. Again, the *Beazley Report* (1984) articulated the 'deficit' perspective:

Aborigines are probably the most disadvantaged group in our community. Aborigines suffer disadvantages from cultural differences, history, living conditions and illness. These difficulties translate into severe educational disadvantage.\(^{236}\)


\(^{233}\) C. Jennett (1983), 'Aborigines, land rights and mining' in E.L. Wheelwright and K. Buckley (eds.), p.132.


In response, multiculturalists put forward a range of compensatory policies designed to remedy the supposed linguistic, cultural and identity deficits of ethnic and black children.\textsuperscript{237} According to the National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education (NACCME) the aim of multicultural education is to pursue equality of access and participation for minorities, inter-cultural understanding, and the development of cultural and ethnic identity.\textsuperscript{238} In this context, the development of Aboriginal curriculum material is central to increasing Aboriginal children's motivation and commitment to the goals of school life. At the same time, multicultural education hopes to develop a sense of tolerance, understanding and empathy toward black children. The aim of multicultural education is to encourage 'tolerance for differing backgrounds, an eagerness to learn from others, and an attitude of understanding and appreciation'.\textsuperscript{239}

The liberal position assumes that people become less ethnocentric once they are familiar with other cultures. Henriques claimed that such a view assumes that 'we all make mistakes'. In this sense prejudice was an 'individualized, exceptional phenomenon that exonerates society as a whole'.\textsuperscript{240} The assumption is that ignorance is the problem and multicultural education the solution. Henriques argued that such a view was problematic because it assumed the problem of ignorance lay with black people as the unknown object rather than with the prejudiced individual as the unknowing subject.\textsuperscript{241} For Henriques and others, racism is not reducible to biological explanations or ignorance. Rather it must be understood as a social and historical construction.\textsuperscript{242}

The critics of the liberal perspective argued that multiculturalism was an ideology that reifies social processes and power relations. It has the tendency to ameliorate political issues like class inequality and social and economic disadvantage.\textsuperscript{243} According to Kalantzis, the focus of multiculturalism on culture and 'things private' perpetuated 'silences' about structural inequalities and injustice. Thus, the ideology of multiculturalism served to

\textsuperscript{237} See B. Troyna and J. Williams (1986), p.47.
\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., p.85.
\textsuperscript{242} Ibid., p.89.
\textsuperscript{243} See F. Rizvi (1986), \textit{Ethnicity, class and multicultural education}, Deakin University Press, Geelong; and M. Sarup (1986).
create cohesion out of diversity by articulating a new hegemony around the
idea of national identity.244 In this perspective, the state is directly
responsible for organising racial policies that aim to minimise conflict and
tension and reproduce the social structures necessary for capital
accumulation. State racial policies prescribe equality within a society
structured on unequal social relations.245

For this reason, Brown was suspicious of the trend toward promoting
concepts like ethnicity as a mode of cultural identification. According to
Brown, the rediscovery and celebration of ethnicity had two significant
ideological implications. First, it tends to move attention away from the
ideas and practices of oppression toward a culturalist emphasis upon
cultural difference, attitude and strategies of coping/competing. Second, in
stressing the universality of ethnocentrism it perpetuates the idea of natural
racial difference and cultural inferiority.246 As a result, common sense
notions of natural difference leading to us and them divisions continue to
reinforce racist ideologies and practices.

The racist state
Jennett claimed that a central problem with the pluralist view of the state
for Aborigines is that "white politicians and business dominate the setting
of priorities for what is in the national interest".247 As a result, Aborigines
are co-opted into a political system that leaves them powerless as an
'interest' group in comparison with transnational mining companies and
bureaucrats. Jennett explained:

Anglo-European Australians have a culturally based
unilinear idea of 'progress' and 'development', as being
represented by technological control over nature to produce
more and more consumer goods. Anything which can be
represented as producing profits, jobs and/or consumer
goods is defined as 'development'. However, frequently
what this has brought about for Aborigines is
'underdevelopment', dispossession and hardship.248

244 M. Kalantzis (1988), 'The cultural deconstruction of racism: education and multiculturalism' in M.
de Lepervanche and G. Bottomley (eds.), The cultural construction of race, Meglamedia, Annandale,
p.92.
246 K.M. Brown (1986), 'Establishing difference: culture, 'race', ethnicity and the production of
248 Ibid., p.137.
In this context, according to Jennett, the state enforced claims of non-Aboriginal ownership of the land that Aborigines argue once belonged to their ancestors and for which they had a rightful claim. Viewed in this way the state and its agencies exist to enforce the dispossession of Aboriginal people from their land. In this situation, state apparatuses are illegitimate in the eyes of Aborigines. The Western Australian paramilitary operation organised by the Court liberal government to stop Aboriginal protests at Nookanbah in 1984 clearly demonstrated the coercive nature of the state.

In response to the white coercive state some black people advocate a strategy of separatism. In the words of John:

To wish to integrate with that which alienates and destroys you, rendering you less than a person, is madness. To accept the challenge to join it and change it from within when it refuses to accept that you are there in your fullness and refuses to acknowledge the results of interaction between you and it, is double madness.

The argument put forward by the proponents of separatism was that the battle against racism could only be viable and effective outside state agencies. The isolationist perspective stimulated the establishment of community schools to teach Aboriginal children about their language, culture and beliefs. Aboriginal community schools aim to educate children with the understandings and skills that will enable them to achieve self-determination. From this perspective, the basis of change and reform centres on independent political action.

While acknowledging that the state eschewed racist attitudes and practices, Troyna and Williams argued that there were theoretical orientations that could offer openings for change. First, they argued that Gramsci's idea of the 'extended' or 'integral' state including both formal and private institutions provided the terrain on which the struggle against racist ideologies and practices could occur. For them, the idea of the 'integral' state meant that the political struggle against racism extended to the complex totality of civil society. Ben-Tovim believed that many positive reforms could be won from the state such as anti-racist legislation, urban renewal and youth

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249 Ibid., p.126.
250 Quoted in B. Troyna and J. Williams (1986), p.120.
251 Ibid., p.120.
At the organisational level, Troyna and Williams called for an alliance between all oppressed groups including blacks, women, and the poor. They believed that a wide alliance of oppressed groups could offer a more effective political organisation in the struggle for justice and democratisation at all levels of society.

**Marx and 'the race-class question'**

Attempts to address whether 'race' and/or 'class' are/is the primary variable for explaining oppression illustrates the complexity of the theoretical debate surrounding the inter-relations of class, race and gender. Hall succinctly presented the theoretical complexities of 'the race-class question':

> In this field of inquiry, 'sociological theory' has still to find its way, by a difficult effort of theoretical clarification, through the Scylla of a reductionism which must deny almost everything in order to explain something, and the Charybdis of a pluralism which is so mesmerized by 'everything' that it cannot explain anything.

Marxist authors generally paid little attention to the question of racism. The dogmatic fixation on classes and class struggle as the determinant of socio-historical conditions meant that any theoretical and intellectual debate on 'race' was of secondary importance to the 'true' motor of historical development. Hall summed up the 'economic' Marxist position as follows:

> ... they take economic relations and structures to have an overwhelmingly determining effect on the social structures ... Specifically, those social divisions which assume a distinctively racial or ethnic character can be attributed or explained principally with reference to economic structures and processes.

Dependency theory clearly illustrated the Marxian emphasis on economic structures. Dos Santos explained the object of dependency analysis:

> To understand dependence as a conditioning context of certain kinds of internal structure is to understand development as a world-wide historical phenomenon, as a
consequence of the formation, expansion and consolidation of the capitalist system. This approach implies the need to integrate into one single historical account the capitalist expansion of the developed countries and the consequences of that expansion in the countries which are today adversely affected by it.257

The impact of colonialism on the Aboriginal people was disastrous. According to Hodgkin, colonialism lead to a loss of sovereignty, defeat of military and political resistance, pacification, imposition of a colonial administration, the construction of a framework of institutions designed to preserve European dominance, organisation of a system of collaborating groups, and elaboration of an ideology of imperialism designed to explain and justify the new structure of social and political domination.258

Marxist writers like Carnoy attempted to explore the link between colonialism and schooling. For him, schooling was a part of the attempt to impose a new set of economic and political relationships.259 According to Nyerere's analysis of the African experience of colonialism, the education system inculcated the values of the colonial society and trained children to work for the colonial state.260 In Western Australia, Green argued that the education of Aboriginal children served the purpose of satisfying the colony's requirement for servants and labour.261

According to Friere, the process of economic exploitation was dependent on people's thoughts being alienated from the reality of their position in society. Oppressed people's like the Aborigines were maintained in what Friere called a 'culture of silence'. Central to maintaining this silence was a process of myth-making in which one group's superiority was articulated over another through 'manipulation, cultural invasion, conquest and division'.262 There can be no doubt that racial oppression is largely the result of colonialism and the associated myths surrounding the cultural superiority of whites over blacks. The history of dispossession, exploitation

261 N. Green (1984), Broken Spears: Aboriginal and Europeans in the southwest of Australia, Focus Education Services, Perth, p.150.
262 P. Friere (1972), Pedagogy of the oppressed, Penguin, Sydney, p.133.
and alienation of Aboriginal people is a source of oppression in its own right.

A major problem with Marxist interpretations of racial oppression is that blacks are subsumed under the banner of a 'universal class' - the proletariat.\textsuperscript{263} One consequence of this kind of analysis, according to Barrett and McIntosh is that black people are 'stereotyped', 'ghettoized' and 'invisible'.\textsuperscript{264} As a result, 'race', is 'incorporated' and 'dissolved' away as just another disadvantage that members of the working class have to put up with.\textsuperscript{265} Flowing from the class reductionist perspective is the view that the state develops racist ideologies to justify exploitation and colonial subjugation.\textsuperscript{266} According to Ben-Tovim, this simplistic analysis of racism coincided with an unnecessarily instrumental view of the relationship between state policy and class interests.\textsuperscript{267} The critics of traditional Marxist explanations argued that racist ideologies were not solely reducible to the economic level or class. Ben-Tovim advocated the view that racism had a "life of its own".\textsuperscript{268}

Wright's work on reconstructing Marxian class theory offered some promise in resolving the problem of relative autonomy. Wright argued that class structure imposes limits on class formation, class consciousness and class struggle. In his view, while class structure was the 'basic determinant' of the other non-class identities (race and gender) it was not the sole determinant. Wright explained this modified position in the following way:

The claim that class structure limits class consciousness and class formation is not equivalent to the claim that it alone determines them. Other mechanisms (race, ethnicity, gender, legal institutions, etc) operate within the limits established by the class structure, and it could well be the case that the politically significant explanations for variations in class formation or consciousness are embedded in these non-class mechanisms rather than in the class structure itself ... What is argued ... is that these non-class mechanisms operate with limits imposed by the class structure itself.\textsuperscript{269}

\textsuperscript{264} M. Barrett and M. McIntosh (1985), p.24.
\textsuperscript{265} See A. Brittain and M. Maynard (1984), Sexism, racism and oppression, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, p.36.
\textsuperscript{266} G. Ben-Tovim (1978), p.203.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid., p.204.
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid., p.205; See also R. Miles (1982), Racism and migrant labour, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Melbourne, pp.101-103.
Others, like Geschwender, extended their refinement of Marxism to focus on race. In developing the connection between class and race, Geschwender used the idea of 'nation-class' or 'a social collectivity composed of persons who are simultaneously members of the same class and the same race'. For him, race was just as important as economic class in social analysis and political action. According to Outlaw, the idea of nation-class preserved space within Marxist theorising for appropriate recognition of racial and ethnic identity as a major feature of people's world-view.\textsuperscript{270} The Aboriginal situation illustrates the usefulness of the 'nation-class' idea. According to Weineke, Aboriginal people resisted the process of incorporation into the class system of capitalism. In her words:

\begin{quote}
It is precisely the resistance of Aborigines to become incorporated into the working class or to adopt its ideological position that has permitted Aboriginal groups in central and northern Australia to retain many elements of their pre-colonial social structure.\textsuperscript{271}
\end{quote}

While Aboriginal people live their daily lives within the context of capitalism they refused to accept the ruling-class ideology of development.\textsuperscript{272}

In conclusion, the Marxist literature made a number of significant contributions to the class/race debate. First, Marxists showed a sensitivity to the wider connection between capitalism, colonialism and 'race'. Second, Marxists illuminated the relationship between capitalism, schooling and racism. Finally, neo-Marxism began to explore the interconnections between race, class and gender. Nonetheless, Marxist accounts of race (and gender) continued to see the class struggle as the 'real motor' of history. This chapter argues that any useful social analysis must take account of the multiple and contradictory subject locations of individuals. With this proposition in mind, the next part seeks to explain how the state constitutes Aborigines as racial subjects.

\textbf{The social construct of 'Being Aboriginal'}

The aim here is to explain how the state constructs the social identity of 'Aboriginal'. A central argument is that the social categories of 'race' and 'Aboriginal' have nothing to do with biological or 'natural' differences but

\textsuperscript{270} Ibid., p.117.
\textsuperscript{271} Quoted in C. Jennett (1983), p.125.
\textsuperscript{272} Ibid., p.124.
are ideological constructs with discriminatory consequences. Miles succinctly summarised the nature of the theoretical and empirical task confronting researchers:

The problem is, therefore, to de-construct the idea of 'race' and to reconstruct, historically and with due regard to the limitations placed upon social processes by production relations, the way in which racial categorization has become a significant feature of not only political and ideological relations but also economic relations. \(^{273}\)

While racial oppression is the product of material conditions (materialist premise), political and ideological social processes are never totally reducible to the economic level. Hall argues this point in the following passage:

At the economic level, it is clear that race must be given its distinctive and 'relatively autonomous' effectivity, as a distinctive feature. This does not mean that the economic is sufficient to found an explanation of how these relations concretely function. One needs to know how different racial and ethnic groups were inserted historically, and the relations which have tended to erode and transform, or to preserve these distinctions through time - not simply as residues and traces of previous modes, but as active structuring principles of the present organisation of society. Racial categories alone will not provide or explain these. \(^{274}\)

The concept of 'race' developed to explain biological (physical and intellectual) differences between Europeans and Aborigines during the period of British colonialism. According to Carter and Williams, the process of assigning characteristics to a group of people in a deterministic way (racism) was usually articulated around some type of cultural or biological feature. According to Carter and Williams, racism employs 'race-ial' characteristics to explain behaviour, feelings, attitudes and way of life. \(^{275}\)

According to Pettman, the social category 'Aboriginal' excluded Aboriginal people from the emerging nation. By constructing Aborigines as 'the Other', they were discriminated against physically through displacement and confinement to reserves, legally through subjection to a distinct and inferior

\(^{273}\) R. Miles (1982), p.94.
legal status, and culturally through 'forgetfulness' which effectively silenced
the history and experience of Aborigines from the new nation.276

It is now acknowledged that the idea of discrete biological groups or 'race'
has no scientific basis and is an inappropriate way of dividing the human
species.277 Nonetheless, the idea of 'race' based on the misconception of
biological differences still informs explanations of race relations and race
problems.278 As a consequence, Brown claimed that there was a "slide
towards a conception of natural and therefore, understandable and
unchallengeable difference".279 In contrast, this thesis argues that the idea of
'race' is an example of mystification that aims to conceal social processes
linked to exploitation, appropriation, genocide and exclusion. According to
Memmi, the category of 'race' was linked to "profit, privilege and
usurpation".280

As already argued, discourse theory offers a way of understanding the
ideological construct of 'race'. According to Ball, discourses were about what
could be said and thought, and also who could speak, when, and with what
authority. They constitute subjectivity and power relations.281 In this sense
racism is both discursive and systemic. According to Pettman, it was an
ideology, a field of language and images about 'race'. As a consequence, the
idea of 'race' produced a set of social practices that constructed and
reproduced unequal social relations.282

The state played a key role in constructing the category 'Aboriginal'.
According to Knight, Smith and Sachs, the state embodied the fusion of 'the
people' and therefore, was "the speaking subject of the text".283 In their
view, the state enacted a leadership function for an unproblematic,
division-less mono-cultural society.284 As a consequence, state policies and

276 J. Pettman (1988), 'Whose country is it anyway? cultural politics, racism, and the construction of
being Australian', Journal of Intercultural Studies, vol.9, no.1, p.3.
277 See R. Miles (1982), chpt.1.
278 See R. Miles (1982); R. Miles (1988), 'Beyond the race concept: the reproduction of racism in
England' in M. deLepervanche and G. Bottomley (eds.), p.8; and G. Cowlishaw (1986), 'Race for
exclusion', Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, vol.22, no.1, p.3.
281 S.J. Ball (1990), 'Introducing Monsieur Foucault' in S.J. Ball (ed.), Foucault and education:
Martin (eds.), p.185.
283 J. Knight, R. Smith and J. Sachs (1990), 'Reconstructing hegemony: multicultural policy and a
populist response' in S.J. Ball (ed.), p.141.
284 Ibid., p.142.
discourses attempted to represent the world as 'natural' by focusing on individual and cultural differences while leaving society untouched.\textsuperscript{285}

Pettman believed that the state was a crucial site for validating and imposing definitions of normality. In her view, the state defined boundaries for "excluding, enclosing and exploiting others".\textsuperscript{286} Pettman explained:

Where Aboriginal people are made visible and easily located, they are often enclosed within their 'own' category, focusing on 'them', rather than, for example, on the relationship in which they stand to dominant groups, on the material circumstances which entrap them, or on the racism and sexism which render their inequality seemingly natural, and which devalue their humanity. Such a focus continues to construe Aborigines as 'other' and reinforces the tendency to talk about 'them', in terms of 'their' problems, wrenched out of the structure that generates and reproduces these problems.\textsuperscript{287}

According to Brittain and Maynard, the history of racism (and sexism), was the history of the objectification process. For them, objectification implied a continuous attempt by some human beings to dominate and control others.\textsuperscript{288} They claimed that a person who was treated and classified as a 'race' object came to define their body as 'racialized'.\textsuperscript{289} Schools play a key role in the objectification process. They bring together the exercise of power and the constitution of knowledge in order to shape children into particular types of subjects. In the process, schools produce governable individuals or what Foucault called 'docile bodies'. As already discussed, Foucault, believed the process of objectification was dependent upon continuous 'surveillance', 'normalization' and 'the examination'. With the development of the social sciences, in particular developmental psychology, schools developed a comprehensive profile of the child and in so doing constructed the 'normal' case.

According to Brittain and Maynard, individuals were objectified in five major ways: first, through common sense where people appear to absorb uncritically the images and beliefs about 'races' (and gender.) It is what everybody knows to be true about Aborigines; second, commonsensical

\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., p.147.
\textsuperscript{288} A. Brittain and M. Maynard (1984), p.205.
\textsuperscript{289} Ibid., p.13.
knowledge assumes a pre-social status that creates a false and unshakeable sense of reality; third, ideology as a constituent part of everyday experience reproduces racism; fourth, racism becomes a part of a persons sense of self (unconscious); and finally, racist assumptions and beliefs are so entrenched in the state, family and educational system that they become a part of the collective social conscience. 290

As already noted, Foucault’s purpose went beyond the constitution of the subject. At the centre of his genealogy was the concern to challenge the familiar to unmask relationships of domination and subordination. He wished to deconstruct hegemony and what flowed ‘naturally’ from it. According to Kenway this meant that:

...discursive hegemony is fragile and dynamic and thus open to reversal through sustained ideological work. 291

As a consequence, Brittain and Maynard argued that oppressed groups like Aborigines, were always capable of resisting objectification by insisting on their status as ‘intentional beings’. 292 For Brittain and Maynard, the terms of oppression occurred not only in history, culture and the sexual and social division of labour but at the site of oppression. 293 In other words, racism is not something out there, rather it exists in personal and mundane circumstances. 294 Thus, racism is simultaneously an individual and collective phenomenon. 295

However, there can be a real danger in equating oppression with the personal. Bourne claimed that identity politics and culturalism can reify categories and boundaries in isolation from a consideration of the material forces that generated and reproduced them. As a result, oppression and not exploitation can become the focus of study:

Power then becomes primarily a personal issue between individuals’ - men and women, white and black, gentile and Jew, heterosexual and gay - and not the way an exploitative

293 Ibid., p.34.
294 Ibid., p.4.
295 Ibid., p.213.
system is hierarchically structured so as to get maximum benefit from maximum differentiation.\textsuperscript{296}

Spivak highlighted the difficulties of speaking to multiple subject positions. In Spivak's words:

The moment I have to think of ways in which I will speak as an Indian, or as a feminist, the ways in which I will speak as a woman, what I am trying to do is generalize myself, make myself a representative ... There are many subject positions which one must inhabit, one is not just one thing.\textsuperscript{297}

For Pettman, the deconstruction of categories like 'race' meant moving beyond 'essentialism' to recognise the ideological and political interests different groups (race, gender and class) had in opposing particular category constructs. For her, this means examining identity within larger social structures and material circumstances that produces different lives and multiple oppressions. Pettman attempted to elaborate a dialectic analysis of material conditions and the genealogical construction of 'being Aboriginal' in the following passage:

'Aboriginal' is not only a racial or cultural identity category, nor is it only constructed by, or in resistance to racism. Being Aboriginal also means being part of an indigenous people, whose dispossession and colonization were the necessary prerequisite for white national foundation and development. Further, Aboriginal exclusion and management, legally and politically, and their unequal incorporation into the economy, meant that Aborigines have experienced the Australian state and labour market differently from other Australians.\textsuperscript{298}

The aim in this chapter is to avoid the reductionist logic that occurs by giving explanatory primacy to one structure (class). Following Apple, the argument is that the "interconnections among all three (class, race and gender) must be given equal weight in the analysis of any concrete situation".\textsuperscript{299} However, as Pettman pointed out, it is not just a matter of multiple identities - Aboriginal, female or poor - added together. For her:
The reality is the interrelationship of the different forms of inequality, and the dynamics which generate them. This is the key to understanding oppression and exploitation in individual lives.300

In the Australian context, the collection of essays edited by Bottomley, de Lepervanche and Martin (1991) explored the interrelation between class, race and gender. Collectively, this group of writers sought to avoid the idea of a homogeneous cultural identity. Instead, they advocated a perspective that was 'historical, non-essentialist, non-universalising and sensitive to contradictory and multiple subject positions'. Vasta summed up the theoretical position adopted when she stated that:

Constructions of class, gender and ethnic subjectivities are not analytically distinct from each other. Often they are constructed and defined within one another in ambiguous ways and sometimes they are constructed separately. Gender and race relations cannot always be reduced to the effects of class ... they are constituted through historical experience and political struggle.301

de Lepervanche argued that women's reproductive capacities, dependent status and mothering had all been crucial in the ideological struggle around the issues of race and nation. de Lepervanche quoted Gordon on the complex relation between racism and sexism:

The oppression of women is closely interwoven with notions of race. In Australia ... the desire for a high birthrate and the maintenance of racial strength and purity have long been national priorities ... concomitant with the cry 'to populate or perish', the decimation and containment of Aborigines and the exclusion and restriction of non-white immigrants has been the confinement of women to their reproductive functions. White women in Australia have been viewed primarily as breeders of the Anglo-Saxon strain.302

In conclusion, this chapter advocates a theoretical position that can account for the triple oppression of class, race and gender. To seek explanatory primacy in any one site of oppression is to deny human experience. It is

necessary to recognize the diversity of experience within categories like 'race'. While we cannot explain racism in isolation from gender or class neither can it be reduced to those relations. According to Pettman, the task is to pursue historically the connections between different forms of oppression and to locate them within their overall social, political and economic context.

CHAPTER THREE

SECONDARY SCHOOLING FOR ALL

INTRODUCTION
THE ORIGINS OF INEQUALITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLING
MASS SECONDARY SCHOOLING AFTER WORLD WAR TWO
CHAPTER THREE

SECONDARY SCHOOLING FOR ALL

If we believe in democracy, and really do want our children to have equal opportunities, then our answer lies in the comprehensive school.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to explain the reasons for the rapid extension of state secondary schooling in Western Australia after 1945. It is not my aim to provide a detailed narrative account as others have done elsewhere. Rather, the intention is to examine four major propositions emerging from the discussion of the state's contradictory functions: first, state secondary schooling in Western Australia attempted to facilitate the process of capital accumulation and at the same time, satisfy the social demands of all citizens for greater equality of opportunity; second, the growing middle class formed an alliance with progressive sections of the ruling class who could see the advantage of an expanded secondary school system; third, the task of satisfying the contradictory functions of capital accumulation and social democracy was always precarious given the inequities in Australian society; and finally, the state through the provision of mass secondary schooling sought to establish its own legitimacy.

The chapter begins with a historical sketch of the patterns of educational inequality that existed in secondary schooling before 1945. Against this background, the remainder of the chapter explains why there was a rapid and dramatic shift to an educational system that saw secondary schooling as the right of all children. Central to this chapter is the view that a broad 'historic bloc' galvanised itself around the discourse of social democracy. While the motives may have varied there was a consensus that a comprehensive secondary school system was desirable. That educational inequality persists

1 The Education Circular WA (1958), vol. LX, no.11, p.240.
2 See W. D. Neal (ed) (1979), Education in Western Australia, University of Western Australia Press, Perth; F.G. Bradshaw (1953), 'The history of state secondary education in Western Australia', Educand, vol.1, no.4, pp.17-22 and vol.2, no.1, pp.15-20; L Fletcher (1981), 'Education of the people' in C.T. Stannage (ed); and D. Mossenson (1972), State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.
despite the historic transformation of secondary school provision after 1945 raises the question of why?

THE ORIGINS OF INEQUALITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLING

The aim in this section is to show how the provision of secondary schooling in Western Australia before the Second World War established patterns of social inequality in access and privilege for different classes and groups of children. While the ‘Free, Compulsory and Secular Act’ (1871) established state primary schooling for the masses, secondary schooling remained a privilege for the children of the social elite and a few of the more 'able' children drawn from the 'lower orders' of society.

ELITE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLING

In Western Australia, like the rest of Australia, the state did not generally show an interest in secondary education until the first decade of the twentieth century. At this stage there was insufficient support to develop a comprehensive state secondary school system to match the emerging elementary school structure. Meanwhile, the private church schools rapidly found a market in educating the sons and daughters of the colonies social elite. The Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists all made moves to establish their dominance in the provision of secondary schools. The eastern states saw the establishment of Scotch College, Geelong Grammar, Geelong College, Melbourne Grammar and Wesley College (Victoria); Lyndhurst and Newington (NSW); St Aloysius and Prince Alfred (SA); and All Hallows Convent (Brisbane).

In Western Australia, Perth High School (formerly the Bishop's School and recently Hale School) (1878); Guildford Grammar (1896); Scotch College (1897); and the Christian Brothers College (1894) catered for the children of the colonies' upwardly mobile families. With a sense of shared destiny the Western Australian elite private schools combined to form the Public Schools

4 Ibid., p.39.
Association of Western Australia (1905) to facilitate interschool sporting competitions. A more important function of the Association was to establish a network that served to exclude potential rivals. It wasn't until the 1950s that Wesley College (1952) and Christ Church Grammar (1956) joined the elite organisation.

Further rapid expansion of private church schooling occurred in the first two decades of the twentieth century. In this period the Roman Catholic Church continued to encourage their religious teaching orders to Western Australia. Despite the setback of the Assisted Schools Abolition Act (1895), the religious orders successfully expanded their numbers and facilities to cater for the majority of the colonies young Catholic primary school children. Sitting on top of the expanding primary school structure was a small number of elite Catholic secondary schools like the prestigious Christian Brothers College. In the period 1896-1929 a significant growth of Catholic Order secondary schools in towns such as Albany (1898), Fremantle (1901), Kalgoorlie (1906) and Geraldton (1926); the Marist Brothers' at St Idephonsus, New Norcia; the Sisters of Mercy in Victoria Square (1925); the Presentation Sisters' Iona College in Mosman Park (1908); the Loreto Sisters' convent in Claremont (1901); and the Institute of Our Lady of the Mission Sisters' Sacred Heart Convent in Highgate (1897) helped to alleviate the imbalance between primary and secondary school provision in the Catholic Sector.

In establishing secondary schools the Roman Catholic church aimed to provide an education for a wider cross section of the community. In catering for the 'poorer', 'humbler' and 'dangerous' classes, some people thought that the religious orders were offering an inferior education compared to their Protestant counterparts. However, as Ely argued, once the Catholic Church established 'select', 'superior' and fee-paying schools they began to attract the wealthier, 'respectable' and upwardly mobile Catholics.

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6 For an analysis of the social function of sporting competition in elite private schools see G. Sherington, R.C. Petersen and I. Brice (1987), Learning to lead: a history of girls' and boys' corporate secondary schools in Australia, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, pp.52-55.


8 Ibid., pp.183-185; and D. Mossenson (1972), pp.118-120.


10 P. Tannock (1979), pp.144-157; and D. Mossenson (1972), p.120.

Parallel ing the achievements of the Catholic Orders was the Protestant Churches. Unlike the Catholic Church, the Protestant focus was mainly on the provision of secondary schools. In the same period the Protestant Churches opened a number of girls' schools: Perth College (1902); Methodist Ladies College (1915); St Mary's Church of England School (1921); and Kobeelya, Katanning (1922). In addition, two Protestant boys' schools were established: Christ Church Grammar School (1917) and Wesley College (1923).

The construction of patterns of educational inequality in secondary schooling occurred early in Western Australia's history. Australian school children attended either a State, Catholic or Private school. Before the Second World War, the Protestant and Catholic elite private schools dominated academic secondary education and as a consequence, university graduation. The emerging professional and middle class families effectively used the elite private school system to define and reproduce their privileged position in society.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF ELITE PRIVATE SCHOOLING

Gramsci, observed that a differentiated school system perpetuates social differences. He noted that:

[The] social character [of schools] is determined by the fact that each social group has its own type of school, intended to perpetuate a specific traditional function, ruling or subordinate.

According to Miller, the evidence consistently shows that private church schools are elitist. While the rhetoric may change there is 'a consistent picture that the children of wealthier and professional families have a greater chance of attending a private school, doing well in their exams, gaining entry to university and obtaining a professional job'. In short, the private denominational schools became the preserve of a social and economic elite.

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12 D.H. Rankin (1926), pp.183-194; and D. Mossenson (1972), p.120.
The so called Great Public Schools of Western Australia imitated the English
tradition of preparing boys for entry to the University of Western Australia and
careers in law, medicine and the public service.\textsuperscript{17} The local headmasters of the
Christian Brothers' College, Scotch College and Perth High School quickly
assimilated the English public school ideals of 'godliness, good learning and
manliness'.\textsuperscript{18} According to Smolicz and Moody, the independent schools aimed
to cultivate the qualities of leadership and service to the community.\textsuperscript{19} Like
their eastern states' counterparts the local elite private schools looked back to
England and a conservative tradition to create and sustain privilege. According
to Ely, the elite private schools guaranteed educational privilege for the
children of the colony's 'nascent aristocratic families'.\textsuperscript{20} The elite private schools
were not backward in promoting their social role in the community. For
example, the Bishops School (1858-72) in seeking parental patronage declared:

\begin{quote}
If the son of a gentleman is to keep his natural position, or the
middle-class boy to gain a higher footing, the parents of the one
must equip him with more than hereditary privilege, and the
other find more than the inheritances of broad lands and large
flocks.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

Following the English private school model, the local elite private schools
emphasised a classic curriculum. Most headmasters and school governors
believed that the classics provided the most suitable training for the future
leaders of the colony.\textsuperscript{22} The curriculum of the elite private schools reflected the
classical and intellectual orientation of the University of Western Australia.\textsuperscript{23}
According to Turney, the elite private schools took on "the broad unity of
purpose of preparing pupils for university examinations".\textsuperscript{24} The establishment
of the University of Western Australia in 1913 cemented the relationship
between the University and the elite private schools.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{17} F.D. Adams (1988), p.42; and D.H. Rankin (1926), p.185.
\textsuperscript{18} D. Leinster-Mackay and G. Hancock (1979), 'Godliness, Manliness and Good Learning: Victorian
virtues and Western Australian exemplars' in S. Murray-Smith (ed.), \textit{Melbourne Studies in Education},
\textsuperscript{19} J.J. Smolicz and J.M. Moody (1978), 'Independent schools as cultural systems' in S. Murray-Smith
\textsuperscript{20} J. Ely (1978), p.43.
\textsuperscript{23} B.K. Hyams and B. Bessant (1972), p.41.
\textsuperscript{24} C. Turney (1975), \textit{Sources in the history of Australian education 1788-1970}, Angus and Robertson,
Sydney, p.295.
model of 'proper' secondary education the elite private secondary schools effectively subverted any attempt to establish competing ideals.\(^{26}\)

Meanwhile, the outside world was changing. The University of Western Australia was under pressure to offer a curriculum more relevant to the requirements of the contemporary world. Following the lead of public examination changes taking place in England, Australian universities widened the range of matriculation subjects on offer to include a number of modern subjects such as English, history, geography, French and German.\(^{27}\) As a consequence, Western Australia's elite private secondary schools reluctantly agreed to include the more popular modern subjects into their curriculum.\(^{28}\) Despite some tinkering with the curriculum the private schools, like the universities, remained 'educational anachronisms' largely sponsored by the social elite.\(^{29}\)

School ethos and community loyalty were significant features of the raison d'être for elite private secondary schools. According to Sharp, public schools mirror the social characteristics of the social classes that patronise them. Therefore, it was not surprising that the elite private secondary schools sought "to reinforce a separatist mentality and a sense of superiority vis-a-vis the masses".\(^ {30}\) They provided a training ground for students entering university and leadership positions. As a consequence, the rules, traditions and curricula of the private secondary schools coincided with the needs of the social elite. According to Rankin, the elite private secondary schools inculcated their students with the bourgeois values of 'scholastic success, culture, good work, keen sport and service to the community'.\(^ {31}\)

In producing 'strong, hardy and vigorous Christian gentlemen' the elite private secondary schools established a system of rituals modelled on their English prototypes.\(^ {32}\) Sharp described these features in the following passage:

The old-world authoritarian chain of command - from head down to senior, then to junior staff, to prefects, house officers, monitors and thence to the lower ranks; the heavy emphasis on externals - tie, cap, badge, uniform (often justified nowadays as


\(^{27}\) B.K. Hyams and B. Bessant (1972), p.41.


\(^{29}\) B.K. Hyams and B. Bessant (1972), p.83.


\(^{31}\) D.H. Rankin (1926), p.189.

\(^{32}\) Ibid., p.185.
the great equaliser), the whipping up and maintaining of school and house spirit, the fierce and even bizarre sporting competitiveness, even the moribund form of speech nights, are remarkable evidence of the way social structures can retain a strong thread of continuity despite rapid changes of context. While seemingly incidental and purposeless, the rituals of tradition contribute to an intense experience of group membership quite central to the personal make-up of the 'old boy'.

According to Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett the elite private schools were a focus in "a dense and extensive network of relationships". The ethnographic research of Connell et al. showed that children who attended the elite private secondary schools received social advantages that extended beyond an academic education. They conclude that private secondary schools establish contacts and build networks, identify their children as different from children attending non-independent schools, encourage an imagery of "order and tautness", and organise a sense of ruling-class solidarity.

To date this section has ignored the different experiences of privileged boys and girls. In the period before the Second World War upper and middle class boys were the main beneficiaries of secondary education. The emergence of privileged girls' schools served a social rather than an intellectual function. According to Windschuttle, girls' education had three aims: to teach girls the customs, morals and style of their parents, to reinforce sex based roles, and to impart a limited number of skills that were 'useful' (literacy and numeracy) and mostly 'ornamental' (music, painting and French).

Once established the debate on the nature of girls' private school education shifted to the question of academic studies. There was a growing body of opinion that girls should receive an academic education similar to boys'. As a result, the elite private girls' secondary schools offered a similar curriculum and 'externals' like the uniform, prefect system and house system to the boys' schools. Yet, significant differences remained.

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38 Ibid., p.125; also G.Sherington, R.C. Petersen and I. Brice (1987), p.44.
Writing on the Victorian education scene in 1875, Pearson argued that girls of a 'higher culture' should receive an education. He believed that education was appropriate for those girls who 'worked as governesses, schoolteachers, or writers for the press'. For many unmarried women, education offered an alternative pastime to 'idleness' and frivolity. However, the nature of girls' schooling remained a contentious issue. The debate revealed the contradiction surrounding women's place in society. On the one hand, it was beneficial for girls to receive an education equal to boys. On the other hand, it was important that girls be prepared for their future roles as wives and mothers. Pearson described the nature of the debate on girls' education in the nineteenth century:

- The doubt I suppose is, whether, when four out of five women have to be wives and mothers, it is worth while to give them more than the most superficial acquaintance with the names of things: whether they will be better companions to their husbands, better housewives, better mothers, for having learned the Latin grammar, and attended lectures on history or physical science?

Education for girls' attempted to prepare them for future domestic work rather than university studies. For example, the study of health science would prove useful in administering the health and hygiene requirements of the family while the study of mathematics provided better habits of order, precision and household accounting.

Alongside the academic curriculum, girls' education concentrated on developing the traits of 'grace, gentility and housewifely virtues'. Girls received an education in the 'polite accomplishments' such as French, music, dancing, drawing and needlework. In preparing girls for their future role in marriage, the emphasis was on 'culture, refinement and happiness'. Thus, girls' education in the elite private secondary schools reflected the contradiction between class and gender location. On the one hand, as the beneficiaries of a private school education that emphasised competition, achievement and superiority they usually acquired the better paid jobs in the labour market. On

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40 Ibid., p.312.
41 Ibid., p.313.
the other hand, segregated education tended to marginalise girls and prepare them for their subordination to men.45

The emerging social concern with eugenics, the parental role, and the welfare of children reinforced the idea of education for separate spheres.46 Experts who advocated the necessity of social efficiency in all spheres of life believed that women required proper training in domestic work. This meant that girls training should embrace motherhood, home duties and appropriate female qualities such as gentleness, nurturing, subservience, and domesticity. Common sense thinking at the time suggested that a separate education for girls was necessary if they were to satisfactorily perform the important national task of bearing and rearing children.

ESTABLISHING A DIFFERENTIATED STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

In 1912 Cecil Andrews, the Inspector General of Schools, presented a carefully argued case for coordinating the system of post-primary schooling in Western Australia. Andrews believed that children should step into their future vocation with the 'least possible amount of re-adjustment'.47 Andrews' planned hierarchy of secondary schools divided children into three distinct groups at the end of sixth standard. In most cases the social class of the child's parents determined the type of education received and the anticipated length of school duration.

In the first group, children completed four years of High School in preparation for studies at either the Teachers' Training College or the University of Western Australia. With the establishment of the University of Western Australia, the Public Examinations Board representing the Professorial Board, the Education Department and the independent schools oversaw the Junior and Leaving Certificates.48 The first state high school established in Western Australia was the select Perth Modern School. According to Mossenson, public examination results preoccupied the new state high schools.49 Thus, the elite private secondary school and university connection proved a significant force in

49 D. Mossonson (1972), p.121.
defining the legitimate nature of state secondary schooling in Western Australia.

Perth Modern School (1911) was the only Western Australian Government state high school in the metropolitan area offering a full secondary education. The scholarship examination offered selected entry to a minority of children to study academic courses designed to prepare them for the professions. The children who gained entry to Perth Modern School went on to the Junior and Leaving Certificate. A good performance in these examinations opened entry into the professions in the Commonwealth and State Public Services and career positions in the private sector.

The state's entry into secondary education did not go unchallenged. Before the establishment of Perth Modern School, private church schools monopolised secondary education. Therefore, it was not surprising that the elite private secondary schools vehemently opposed Andrews' proposal. The West Australian newspaper joined forces with the headmasters of the boys private secondary schools to mount a personal and vitriolic attack on Andrews' plan to compete with the established monopoly of the elite private schools.

The second tier of education was appropriate to either commercial or industrial life. Those children not selected for Perth Modern School attended the new central schools established in 1913. The central schools offered an additional two-year secondary course beyond sixth standard. Central schools aimed to meet the different vocational needs of boys and girls. Boys could choose an industrial or commercial course while girls could choose either a commercial or domestic strand. For those children, usually from the working class, who for economic reasons had to leave school at 14 years of age, evening Continuation Classes were available at technical centres.

Specialist Farm Schools formed the third tier of education. In the Farm Schools children received practical training and 'greater knowledge' about farm work. Due to the cost of establishing boarding schools, Andrews proposed that the State Farms at Chapman and Narrogin could provide a viable option for

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51 Ibid., p.2.
52 Ibid., p.3.
54 M.H. Helm (1979), p.224.
educating children destined to work on the land. By differentiating secondary schools into academic, professional and technical streams, Andrews effectively constructed a hierarchy of schools that offered different knowledge and skills to different classes of children.

Despite a brief flirtation with the ideals of social democracy and an awareness of the danger of creating a differentiated education system, Andrews pushed ahead with the construction of a hierarchical secondary school system. In countering the hostile attacks of the private school sector, Andrews claimed that universities and high schools, were national institutions that should meet the greater needs of society. For him, 'the university must apply knowledge to industries of all kinds, practical vocations and domestic economy'. Andrews believed that high schools afforded the main connection between lower schools and the University of Western Australia. He argued that high schools should be a pre-requisite stage in preparing and screening a minority of students for the privileges associated with university qualifications. As a consequence, Andrews faced the contradictory problem of providing further common schooling for all children and at the same time, offering 'training and guidance' to those students who slotted into the growing number of industrial and agricultural jobs in Western Australia's rapidly diversifying economy. Andrews was conscious of the American and Canadian experience of establishing High Schools with a directly industrial aim. For Andrews, this meant establishing High Schools that would provide a direct bridge between primary school and the child's future life-work.

Driving the push for a hierarchy of secondary schools was the changing nature of the Western Australian economy. The business and manufacturing sector demanded the provision of 'vocational' education so that children would fit more easily into the work force. Scientific and industrial life required children who could apply the principles of science and mathematics to the industrial workplace.

As the most practical solution to the problem of supplying appropriately trained children for the increasing number of engineering works and allied industries, Andrews proposed the establishment of Intermediate Schools.

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55 C. Andrews (1912), p.32.  
56 Ibid., p.3.  
57 Ibid., p.12.  
58 Ibid., p.12.  
60 Ibid., p.24.
Drawing on the example of the English Day Industrial Schools, Andrews believed that the Intermediate Schools would perform a 'clear and distinct' function. He believed that these schools would cater for those children who did not undertake the full High School Course. Andrews outlined his vision for secondary education in the following extract:

The course should not be a mere continuation of the work of the Primary School, but should bring the pupil to face his subjects in a new light - in their bearing upon his future life's work. ... The pupil should be enabled to enter his life's work with some elementary acquaintance with the problems that lie before him, and with an intelligent interest in his new surroundings and conditions ... in which he is able to see the relation of his particular piece of work to the general scheme.61

In preparing children for their place in society, Andrews envisaged a distinctive emphasis on industrial, commercial or domestic courses. For those boys who intended to become tradesmen, some knowledge of elementary mechanics and chemistry, trade arithmetic and drawing, the distribution of raw materials, manufactures and industries, and the actual handling of tools were appropriate. Knowledge of economics and business principles, commercial arithmetic, distribution of trade and products, and the method of transport and communication were most useful to those children entering the commercial world. For girls, an understanding of hygiene, household accounts, cookery, laundry, general housewifery, child care and sick-nursing was practically useful.62

In distributing different sorts of knowledge to different classes of children state secondary schools played a key role in reproducing established social divisions. The processes by which secondary schools differentiated children is a continuing theme in the following chapters. For now it is important to note that parents and students valued the academic schools more highly because they were geared to the needs of the university controlled public examinations.63 Therefore, it was hardly surprising that Joseph Parsons (1912-39), headmaster of Western Australia's first state secondary school, imitated many of the social values of the elite private church schools.64

61 Ibid., p.24
64 J. Gregory (1990), p.3.
Unfortunately, the state's entry into full secondary education did nothing to enhance the opportunity of those children from the 'lower orders' of society. The actual numbers of children who gained access to the prestigious academic courses at Perth Modern High School were restricted by the selective examination and the ability of parents to forego the potential loss of family income. Only a comparative few (14%) of the children who completed primary school went on to complete five or even three years of secondary education. Gregory's research on the social background of those children who passed through Perth Modern School in the interwar years exploded the myth of social mobility. Gregory found that children from an elite or middle class background rather than the working class had a much higher chance of completing the Leaving Certificate and gaining entry to the University of Western Australia. From the evidence examined, it is difficult to sustain Mossenson's claim that "Andrews prevented secondary education from becoming the preserve of an intellectual or social elite".

Mossenson's argument is even more doubtful when we consider the education of Aboriginal children. McConnochie summed up the gloomy situation facing Aboriginal children:

... for most of the 200 years of white occupation of Australia, most Aboriginal children have not been offered an adequate education. Indeed, most Aboriginal children have not had any access to education at all.

Between 1829 and 1860, Aboriginal education policy attempted to 'Christianise and civilise' the Aboriginal population. Unfortunately, the white community could not comprehend the failure of Aborigines to assimilate to Christianity and 'civilised' life. As a result, they concluded that Aboriginal people lacked the intellectual sophistication of the rest of humanity. Samuel Marsden's comment on the New South Wales scene was one good example of this kind of thinking:

It was impracticable to civilize these natives, that they were little above the rank of beasts of the field and that all attempts

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65 D. Mossenson (1972), p.117
66 J. Gregory (1990), p.11.
69 Ibid., p.21.
to ameliorate their condition and improve their minds would be useless.\textsuperscript{70}

With the failure of the mission schools and protectorates, the period 1860 to the 1940s witnessed the development of Aboriginal reserves. The reserves fulfilled the dual purpose of protecting Aborigines from colonial society and preventing them from obstructing the orderly development of the pastoral and agricultural economies. Belief in the idea of 'survival of the fittest' underpinned the policy of confinement, isolation and 'protection'. McConnochie portrayed a rather grim picture of Aboriginal life on the reserves:

A central element of the 'institutional racism' of this period was the Reserves, within which generations of Aborigines have lived their lives encapsulated in Discriminatory and restrictive legislation, enforced by geographic and social isolation in managed institutions within which they had little opportunity to control their own lives, and even less opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for survival in a western type society. Under the banner of 'White Australia', Aboriginal children with light skins were forcibly removed from their parents and families, placed in orphanages and then thrown into a hostile white society. Those who remained with their families were offered at best an inadequate school system seemingly designed to trap them in the lowest stratum of Australian society.\textsuperscript{71}

In this period, education was the responsibility of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs rather than the Department of Education. Aboriginal children were separated and refused access to the white school system. The policy of exclusion meant that Aboriginal children were admitted to government schools only if the local white parent community had no objection. As a result, Aboriginal children were excluded from schools at Mt Barker, Quairading, Pingelly, Wagin, Kellerberrin, Brookton, Sharks Bay and Carnarvon. Often the Chief Protector of Aborigines through the 1905 Aborigines Act removed Aboriginal children from their parents and relocated them in Church schools.\textsuperscript{72} Poor facilities, unqualified and inexperienced teachers and a curriculum that at best prepared them for poorly paid seasonal work characterised Aboriginal education.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{70} Quoted in J.J. Fletcher (1989), Clean, clad and courteous: history of Aboriginal education in New South Wales, Southwood Press, Sydney, p.18.
\textsuperscript{71} K. McConnochie (1982), p.23.
\textsuperscript{73} K. McConnochie (1982), p.22.
With the 1920s rural expansion and strong country parliamentary representation, the number of secondary schools available to the white rural community steadily grew. Schools established included the Eastern Goldfields High School in 1914, Northam 1921, Bunbury 1922 and Albany in 1925. By 1929 the state conducted five full high schools containing 1,390 pupils, two district high schools with 221 pupils and nine central schools with 3,581 pupils. The full high schools educated children through to year twelve, district high schools to year 10 and the central schools topped up children's primary education.

In summary, Andrews attachment to the idea of social efficiency resulted in a differentiated education system that in his words was "of infinitely greater service to the individual and the state". This meant that different classes of children received different types of school knowledge. Children attending the elite private secondary schools received the social benefits of the competitive academic curriculum. Working class children studied low status technical and practical knowledge. Girls found themselves studying home science in preparation for their future place in the home. Aboriginal children because of their well known inability to handle the competitive academic curriculum were shunted into practical farm and labouring type courses. A few capable working class children and a growing number of children from aspiring middle-class families competed for a small number of scholarships to the select Perth Modern School. As a result, the secondary education system efficiently administered the status quo rather than transforming capitalist social relations.

THE DEPRESSION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND SCHOOLING

The impact of the 1930s depression and rising youth unemployment temporarily slowed the expansion of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. Instead, the idea of technical education and training of workers for particular trades gained support. In April 1937 the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir James Mitchell established a Royal Commission on Youth Unemployment in Western Australia. Royal Commissioner Wolff reported on the position of

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74 D. Mossenson (1972), pp.116-117.
76 For a detailed history of technical training and education in Western Australia see M.A. White (1981), 'Apprenticeship training in Western Australia' in Murray-Smith (ed.), Melbourne studies in education, Melbourne University Press, Carlton; and M.A. White (1979), 'The establishment of technical education in Western Australia' in Murray-Smith (ed.), Melbourne studies in education, Melbourne University Press, Carlton.
youth unemployment in industry, training and ways of absorbing youth into primary and secondary industries.77

Central to the Wolff Report (1938) was the assumption that unemployment was a necessary although undesirable consequence of the economies 'much vaunted industrial efficiency'.78 In Wolff's view, unemployment was an acceptable price to pay for 'progress'. While the impact of industrialisation and mechanisation on youth unemployment remained unproblematic, the education system came under attack. Wolff turned to the education system as the panacea for the growing social-political crisis created by youth unemployment. As already argued, in this situation, the state must mediate in the economic crisis to maintain the legitimacy of the status quo. For Wolff, this meant minimising the impact of unemployment so that, in his words, "it will no longer cause embarrassment and threaten to overthrow the social system".79 In other words, there was a need to realign the education system with the requirements of the labour market.

The Wolff Report (1938) cited evidence of the unsatisfactory relationship between the needs of industry and the nature of children's education. For instance, the President of the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce, complained of the low average standard of commercial efficiency among children entering the world of business. Paton claimed that children received little or no specialised training because schools emphasised a general cultural education.80 Wolff cited the New South Wales Technical Education Commission Report (1935) to support this argument:

Many complaints with regard to the education of boys and girls up to the age of 15 years have been made to the Commission, concerning the inability of children to spell correctly, write a simple and intelligent composition, and perform the simpler operations in arithmetic.81

Underlying much of this criticism was the view that secondary schools should be 'relevant' and 'reflect' the reality of the world of work. The implication was that a general education is of secondary importance and an unnecessary

78 Ibid., p.vii.
79 Ibid., p.vii.
80 Ibid., p.xv.
81 Ibid., p.xvi.
financial burden on the state. Wolff believed that High Schools had become 'top heavy' and as a result, were 'wasting' time and effort in educating the seemingly uneducable child.\textsuperscript{82}

The \textit{Wolff Report} (1938) recommended that the solution to the unemployment problem was in the provision of technical training. In evidence to the Wolff Commission, the Director of Education, Klein argued that:

\begin{quote}
In life it is usually the nature of a man's work that tends to divide him off from other individuals, for these duties must of necessity differ widely from group to group in the community. Thus it is natural to expect that the technical training provided in any educational scheme should be of a relatively specialised nature ... it should train them for some rather specialised activity in the working life of the community.\textsuperscript{83}
\end{quote}

Closely connected to the argument for technical training in High Schools was the question of lifting the school leaving age. By raising the school leaving age from 14 to 15 years the supporters of extended secondary schooling claimed that it would give the education system more time to thoroughly 'train' children for a vocation and citizenship. As a result, the \textit{Wolff Report} (1938) argued that children would find it easier to adjust physiologically and psychologically to the demands of industry.\textsuperscript{84} In Wolff's opinion the majority of children who left school at the age of 14 years were "unsuited to imbibe a cultural education". The \textit{Wolff Report} (1938) concluded that it was inappropriate for these children to receive instruction in cultural subjects for which they were "temperamentally unsuited".\textsuperscript{85}

The education of girls came in for special consideration in the \textit{Wolff Report} (1938). While Wolff dismissed any suggestion of imposing restrictions on the employment of women in commerce and industry, he believed that education should prepare women for those areas of employment that suited their 'adaptability' and 'temperament'.\textsuperscript{86} Wolff believed that tedious and monotonous jobs such as machine work, shorthand and typing best suited a woman's temperament and ability. These jobs, he thought, would be of little interest to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p.xix.
\item \textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p.xix.
\item \textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.ix.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p.x.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. xiv.
\end{itemize}
men because they were 'uninteresting' and offered little or no prospect of career advancement.87

In conclusion, by the 1940s the general patterns of educational inequality in secondary schooling had been established along well defined class, gender and race lines. The elite private church secondary schools catered for the sons and daughters of the landowners and entrepreneurs of the upper class. State secondary schools educated the growing middle class while the technical and post primary central schools prepared the working class. In the case of girls', the educational focus was on their preparation for marriage and motherhood. Secondary schools established the idea of 'natural' separate spheres for boys and girls. If you happened to be born black, the education system was at best irrelevant. Aboriginal people were the victims of the unjust 1905 Aborigines Act that legalised their segregation, isolation and poverty. For Aboriginal children this meant a life that was on all counts inferior to their white counterparts. It is against this background of educational inequality that the next section shall examine the expansion of Western Australian state secondary schooling.

**MASS SECONDARY SCHOOLING AFTER WORLD WAR TWO**

According to Hyams and Bessant public opinion changed so markedly in the late 1930s and war years that opposition to state secondary schooling for all virtually disappeared. People took for granted that children should receive a post-primary education.88 In the decades after the Second World War state secondary schooling expanded rapidly. Although the timing and pace of the expansion varied from state to state, the overall pattern of growth reflected the Western Australian experience. Beginning with six high schools in 1945 the number rose to 129 in 1979, the year marking the 150th anniversary of Western Australia's foundation as a colony. In the period 1945 to 1982 the total number of secondary students rose from 5,995 to 68,257. The number of secondary teachers jumped from 136 to 5,153 and the educational budget increased from 52,394 pounds to approximately $178 million in the same period. By any standards this is a remarkable picture of growth.89

87 Ibid., p.xii.
89 The Education Department of W.A. Annual Reports, 1945, 1979 and 1982.
While the push for the democratisation of secondary education had positive moments and possibilities, the evidence continually shows that the social democratic principles underlying state intervention are yet to be realised. This thesis argues that the extension of mass secondary schooling reinforces and legitimises existing social divisions. To understand the nature of the post-war social democratic settlement this section focuses on three major questions: Why did the state intervene in the provision of secondary education? Whose arguments justified state intervention? Who benefited? The answers to these questions provide the necessary background for understanding the specific themes to be pursued in the chapters to follow.

THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC STATE AND SCHOOLING

As already argued in chapter two, the ideals of liberal democracy justified increasing levels of state intervention in the provision of secondary schooling. However, contradictions emerged because liberalism is based on the market place ideology of individualism, free enterprise and minimal state intervention. In its extreme form, liberalism justifies the self-interest of the capitalist class over the working class. At the heart of laissez-faire liberalism is the view that what is good for the owners of the means of production is good for the rest of the community. But, juxtaposing the nineteenth century notion of liberalism was the logic of democracy that called for greater participation and equality. According to Wolfe, the history of capitalist societies is the history of the tension and contradiction between the liberal and democratic conceptions of the state.90

Australia's penal origins and the harsh realities of its geography and isolation, created a strong state presence in all spheres of Australian life. With the desire to minimise the excesses of the British class system, the state played an active role in economic and social life. As the unbridled consequences of laissez-faire capitalism unfolded during the 1890s depression and the First World War, pressure mounted for increased levels of state intervention. McCallum argued that the failure of the capitalist economy to merge the interests of capital with the demands of labour required the intervention of the state to act as a source of "rationality and amelioration".91 After the Second World War, the idea of

‘welfare statism’ became the fully articulated policy of the labour movement. According to Gollan, the wartime experience and Keynesian theory came together to provide a vision of a modified capitalism that would provide services to fulfil needs not provided by the market. This meant providing job security, increasing the standard of living, social security against unemployment, old age and sickness and education. What emerged, according to Wolfe, was a two-headed form of government. On the one hand, there was the quiet, rational and efficient state that maintained social order in the interests of the elite. On the other hand, Wolfe believed the public state was “a spectacular and theatrical one for the masses”.

In Australia, Ely argued that the upwardly socially mobile group consisting of “British immigrants of limited capital, high hopes and economic and social aspirations” were able to persuade the ‘bunyip aristocracy’, those wealthier men of property, not only of the desirability, but of the necessity of extending education to the ‘masses’. According to Ely, the socially mobile used three interrelated arguments to persuade the economic elite of the desirability of expanding educational provision: the economic and political dangers of ignorance, the necessity of keeping abreast of other nations in educational developments, and the usefulness of a trained and industrious work force. Even though the ‘exclusives’ and the ‘upwardly mobile’ disagreed on many matters, they agreed on the desirability of maintaining social consensus. Ely explained:

Social turbulence and disorder was to be superseded by cooperation and coincidence of interest between the upwardly mobile and the classes above them. Those on the tracks closest to the privileged centre had most to gain from a quiet transition and little to gain from direct class conflict.

In this context, the provision of state secondary schooling acted as a 'safety valve' in tempering the potential for social unrest. The ruling class by conceding to the demands of the middle and working classes, had most to gain from a stable political environment. It was their desire to forge compromise and social harmony that allowed the state to increasingly intervene in matters

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93 Ibid., p.219.
94 A. Wolfe (1977), p.177
96 Ibid., p.21.
97 Ibid., p.29.
such as industrial arbitration, social welfare and schooling. Schooling for the aspiring middle class was the means for attaining further ascendancy and privilege. For the working class, education offered hope and a chance of social mobility. Schooling, in this perspective, was the great equaliser. Children from all sorts of background had the same opportunity to rise to the top. Through diligence, self-discipline and hard work everyone could succeed in life. No longer would class, gender or race prevent children from succeeding in life. Rather, individual merit determined how far and high a child could rise through the ranks.

The expansion of mass secondary schooling served the dual function of maintaining the process of capital accumulation in a reasonably harmonious environment and at the same time, perpetuating the egalitarian myth that had become a part of Ward's Australian legend. Despite the provision of mass secondary schooling for a greater number of children, the evidence in the chapters to follow shows that the rhetoric of egalitarianism is nothing more than a myth.

In Western Australia, state-building educators such as Walton, Jackson, Andrews, Robertson, Dettman, and Mossenson played a crucial role in articulating the liberal progressive arguments of the ruling bloc. It was the educational administrators who assembled, articulated and persuaded the decision-makers that the expansion of state secondary schooling was crucial to the future of democracy and the national interest. As a consequence, mass secondary schooling, democracy and the cultivation of individual merit went hand in hand. Education was perceived to be a vehicle for social change, progress and equality of opportunity. McCallum summarised the liberal progressive point of view:

Thus schooling was an important arm of contemporary liberal political theory. It offered a rational approach to social organisation and to the problem of social order because it represented the school as a socially neutral institution permitting all the resources of the nation, represented by the

101 See I. Katznelson and M. Wier (1985), Schooling for all: class, race and the decline of the democratic ideal, University of California Press, Berkeley.
talents and energies of individuals, to be liberated - a broad stairway for all children capable of climbing it.\textsuperscript{103}

In brief, two interconnected and contradictory discourses emerged to justify the expansion of state secondary schooling for all. One centred on the national interest and the desirability of the principle of meritocracy. The other focused on the idea of democracy and social equity.\textsuperscript{104} The parts to follow will elaborate both these discourses.

\textit{The Rhetoric of National Needs}

As far back as Andrews' 1907 annual report, the case for national efficiency was at the forefront of the struggle to extend state secondary schooling in Western Australia. In the words of Andrews:

\begin{quote}
It is surely unnecessary to point out how unsatisfactory a complete lack of scientific education is in a State that depends so largely on mining and agriculture, and that look forward confidently to industrial and commercial development. The lesson taught by all nations that have made rapid advances in modern times in industrial, commercial, or agricultural matters is that success in these fields is ultimately bound up with widespread facilities for science education.\textsuperscript{105}
\end{quote}

After the Second World War, the debate on the expansion of secondary schooling expressed similar sentiments. This time, N.E. Sampson, President of the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia, cited evidence from the National Bank to support the argument of secondary schooling for all. In his 1955 annual address Sampson claimed that:

\begin{quote}
To meet the future needs of Australia's rising generation, vast programmes for national developments are envisaged. The many public works projects, at present no more than recorded ideas, will require engineers and draftsmen. The rapidly growing population will need doctors, dentists, lawyers, architects and accountants. Trained scientists will be necessary to study the country's economic and production problems and to apply technological developments from abroad to both primary and secondary industry.\textsuperscript{106}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{104} See N.E. Sampson (1955), 'The need for higher education', \textit{The W.A. Teachers' Journal}, vol.XLV, no.8, p.13.
\textsuperscript{105} Quoted in M.A. White (1979), pp.102-103.
\textsuperscript{106} N.E. Sampson (1955), p.133.
Educational inquiries around Australia arrived at the same conclusion. For instance, the Karmel Report (1971) on education in South Australia stated that:

Technological progress is producing an industrial structure which requires an increasingly skilled and sophisticated workforce; and employers are demanding higher educational standards of applicants for jobs. Schools are offering an increasing number of courses to suit the differing aptitudes, ability and needs of pupils.107

In Britain, Rubinstein and Simon argued that the demands made on the education system were a result of technological and economic advances. They claimed that long term technological changes connected with automation (the second industrial revolution) encouraged skill specialisation. Education was important because it produced adaptability and raised the education level of the population as a whole.108

The arguments for state involvement at the secondary level consistently refer to the themes of international survival, national efficiency and the need for a trained workforce. According to Ely and Hyams and Bessant, the Directors-General were able to effectively muster the argument of national interest to appeal to the governing elite.109 Despite some high-minded talk about culture and enlightenment the secondary school, according to Crittenden, has largely been an instrument of economic and political ends.110 After the Second World War, the instrumental logic of 'human capital' theory drove the push for the expansion of state secondary schooling.

Human capital theory effectively forged a link between industrialisation, progress and schooling. According to Crittenden, the assumptions of human capital theory are: the higher the level of the education in a society generally, the richer the society will be; the better educated an individual is, the better his or her income is likely to be; as more people attain higher levels of formal education, the economy generates an adequate number of appropriate jobs; as the general level of formal education in society rises, inequality in the range of incomes tends to be reduced.111 Human capital theories emerged in the 1950s

107 Quoted in C. Turney (1975), p.133.
111 Ibid., p.228.
and received further attention in the *Martin Report* (1964) and *Williams Report* (1979). Both reports recommended the need to realign the education system with the emerging requirements of the new international division of labour.\(^{112}\)

So strong was the faith in 'human capital theory' that politicians, educators, parents and the media assumed a direct connection between education and national and individual wealth. There was a strong presumption that the key to growth was the rate at which educational investment of a country increases or decreases. Some enthusiasts suggested that 60 to 80 per cent of a country's growth was due to education.\(^{113}\) This belief lead to a push for increased emphasis and funding for science education in secondary schools. On a visit to Perth in January 1963, the New South Wales Director-General of education, H.S. Wyndham told teachers that young children in this age can no longer be ignorant of science.\(^{114}\)

In 1960 industry responded by launching the Science Fund in Sydney to advance scientific education in schools. The fund aimed to increase the number of scientists and technologists, use the most suitable talent among students, increase scientific awareness in the community and increase productivity.\(^{115}\) In Western Australia, a 12,000 pound fund helped to forge a closer link between schools and industry. Interestingly, funds were only available to boys' schools. Only if money was left over were girls' schools entitled to receive science education funding.\(^{116}\)

According to Crittenden, the evidence indicates that the initial faith placed in human capital theory was wrong. He argued that there was no sound evidence that productivity and wealth in the economy increased by extending general education beyond basic schooling. On the contrary, Crittenden claimed that increased expenditure on education was "an effect rather than a cause of economic prosperity".\(^{117}\) Human capital theorists assume that more schooling offers people the chance to obtain better paid jobs and social mobility. However, the evidence cited in the *Fitzgerald Report* (1979), showed that it was

\(^{112}\) M. Gallagher (1979), 'The restructuring of the education system in Australia: its relationship to the new international division of labour', *The Australian TAFE Teacher*, vol.11, no.3, p.7

\(^{113}\) M.S. Adiseshiah (1967), 'Education as development', *The W.A. Teachers' Journal*, vol.LVII, no.2, p.56


\(^{115}\) *The Western Australian*, 3 February, 1960, p.10.

\(^{116}\) *The Western Australian*, 31 May, 1960, p.2.

class, race and gender and not length of schooling, that determined a person's wealth and status in society.

Interconnected with the argument of national efficiency was the principle of selection by merit. Human capital theorists believe that ability and talent rather than privilege are a more desirable criteria for developing the nations human capital. Young made the point that whereas 'the family is the guardian of the individual, the state is the guardian of collective efficiency'. According to Ely, the threat of international competition, the 'forcing house for merit' led to the belief in the value of providing educational opportunities for children irrespective of social background.

Previously, the hierarchy of secondary schools (academic, professional and vocational) differentiated the school population. Now a new science of social allocation was necessary. According to McCallum, educational theory put aside the emphasis on moral philosophy in favour of a scientific methodology in teaching and school organisation. It adopted a psychological emphasis on the individual child to explain social differences. For McCallum this meant:

- Particular monitoring and scrutinizing procedures, particular categories for understanding different sections of the population, their educational 'needs and abilities', and particular techniques of allocating reward and 'merit'.

The problem of developing an objective standard with which to select and promote merit in the comprehensive secondary schools was the cornerstone of the 'science' of education. McCallum explained:

- The rationality of the system depended on the school as a neutral agency of selection (now provided by the state and formally open to all) and its efficiency to recognize talent. It called to prominence a more scientific approach to education to oversee this neutrality and efficiency and to concentrate attention on the individual child.

McCallum made the point that liberal equality of opportunity policies "produced the category of the 'pre-social' individual, whose relations in the

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120 D. McCallum (1990), pp.xi-xii.
world could be represented as legitimate, and indeed inevitable, since they merely confirmed the fact of nature”. The 'naturalisation' of social differences helped to legitimise the efficient allocation of people. McCallum argued, that the insertion of the 'pre-social' individual into established social institutions and practices reflected the social power and political influence of the traditional users of secondary education (the private schools). The social function of intelligence testing is the focus of discussion in chapter four.

The Rhetoric of Social Democracy
Closely connected to the national interest argument was the often contradictory political argument of democracy. Professor Freeman Butts, a visiting American educationalist outlined the democratic principles underlying the push for mass secondary schooling:

I assume that in a democratic and complex society education should be available freely and equally to all people. In general I believe in more education for more people rather than a little education for the many and a great deal of education for the few. The educational base of a democratic society should be broad and generous. I believe in equality of educational opportunity rather than in a stratified dual system of education whether that dualism be along lines of race, religion, economic status, social class, or sheer intellectual ability... The goal should be not only to permit but to encourage every child to climb up the educational ladder as far as his talents will take him. The dull, the normal, and the brilliant all deserve special attention.123

Under the influence of the Second World War a consensus emerged around the desirability of state intervention, planning and social provision. While the conservatives wanted to maintain restricted access and subordinate education to the requirements of employers, a new alliance argued the need for post-war reconstruction, social harmony and modernisation. Increasingly, the discourse around secondary schooling stressed the notions of democracy, social harmony and equal opportunity.

After the Second World War, the proponents of state secondary education argued that only a free, compulsory and secular secondary school system could maintain the democratic ideals of democracy and offer all citizens the

122 D. McCallum (1990), p.139.
123 R. Freeman Butts (1955), Assumptions underlying Australin education, ACER, Canberra, p.4.
opportunity of social advancement.\textsuperscript{124} During the long boom years of the 1950s and 1960s people believed that education was a vehicle for social reform and democratisation. Many parents and children placed their faith in the new comprehensive high school to fulfil their aspirations of social mobility. This meant a school system that was open to all irrespective of class, gender, race or religion.\textsuperscript{125} In the post-war era, the rhetoric of social democracy directly shaped the administration and provision of state secondary schooling. The discourse of equal opportunity proved to be an effective strategy in depoliticising the selective social function of schools. Unfortunately, the rhetoric of equal opportunity did not match the reality of a hierarchically structured education system.

The advocates of expanded secondary schooling successfully intertwined the ideals of democracy with the economic value of extra schooling. Central to the arguments of educational administrators', union officials', politicians', and teachers' was the view that the survival of democracy was interdependent with a comprehensive secondary school system. \textit{The W.A. Teachers' Journal} strongly advocated the view that all people living in a democracy should be educated.\textsuperscript{126} The Education Department officially encapsulated the relationship between secondary schooling and democracy in 1958:

\begin{quote}
As a community we have accepted a policy of education for all and as a democracy the separation and stratification of our youth is neither necessary nor desirable.\textsuperscript{127}
\end{quote}

If democracy was going to work, it required the right kind of citizen. Secondary schools would become important institutions in producing 'good' and loyal citizens. Faye argued that the constitution of the democratic subject in the period of post-war reconstruction was essential to understanding the expansion of secondary schooling. She claimed that young Australian children were increasingly the objects of state intervention. According to Faye, the major function of secondary schooling is to produce the self-governing individual or democratic citizen.\textsuperscript{128} In 1952, the \textit{Box Report} (1952) expressed its concern about

\begin{thebibliography}{128}
\bibitem{Sampson1955} N.E. Sampson (1955).
\end{thebibliography}
the education of adolescent children. It considered that the adolescent child presented some unique problems for society. In the words of the report:

He is becoming more individualistic in pattern than in his earlier years, more independent in thought. He commences to question authority, to seek reasons for what is right and what is wrong. In short he is no longer willing to accept the judgement of others - of his parents, his teachers and of others in authority...

Directly related to the concern with adolescent children's behaviour was the fear of communism. Faye made the point that if schools failed to teach pupils the right way to live, then ominously they were building up material for dictatorship. Supporters of secondary schooling argued that an education emphasising the right attitudes and habits was the best insurance against any potential agitation. In reducing the potential threat of communism one commentator argued in 1950 that "the surest way to be rid of a bad idea is to replace it by a better idea".

In brief, secondary schooling is a major 'disciplinary site' that produces particular 'regimes of truth' about social constructs like citizenship. Schools are significant sites in training the 'good' and 'docile' citizen. Faye argued that citizenship education relied more on the a desire to do 'the right thing' than coercion. Thus, secondary schools aimed to produce children of a 'high moral standard' and foster the spirit of the 'Golden Rule'. In short, secondary schools' constitute the child as a desired object of the state. The idea of citizenship education is the focus of discussion in chapter five.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AT WORK: TOWARD EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Co-educational, Comprehensive, Community High School

Before the introduction of comprehensive high schools in the late 1950s no uniform pattern of secondary schools existed. The 1952 Box Report outlined the differentiated structure of secondary schooling in Western Australia. Three girls' schools operated: Perth Girls' High School (academic and home science

131 The W.A. Teachers' Journal (1950), vol.50, no.6, p.41.
133 W.D. Neal (1955), Superintendent of Research and Curriculum in a letter to primary school principals participating in a curriculum review. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE NO. 1131/1955.
courses); Girdlestone High School (commercial courses); and Princes May High
school (academic and commercial courses). Four boys' schools offered a range
of academic and technical education: Perth Boys' High School (academic
courses); Forrest High school (Junior technical courses); Perth Junior Technical
School (Junior technical courses); and Fremantle Boys' High School (Junior
technical courses). Besides the single-sexed schools, four co-educational schools
existed: Perth Modern School (academic course to fifth year); Kent Street High
School (academic course to fifth year and junior technical and home science
courses to third year); Midland Junction High School (academic course to fifth
year and Junior technical and home science courses to third year); and
Claremont High School (academic and home science courses to third year).\textsuperscript{134}
Community, comprehensive and co-educational high schools were first
established in the principal country towns during and after the First World
War. Junior high schools, a more recent development, opened between 1950
and 1958. These schools were larger primary schools with an enrolment of at
least 25 post primary pupils.\textsuperscript{135}

During the 1950s secondary school enrolments doubled while retention rates
dramatically increased. As a consequence, the Western Australian government
had two choices.\textsuperscript{136} On the one hand, it could continue with single-sex,
separate stream schools that provided different sorts of school knowledge for
different classes of children. On the other hand, it could opt for the
comprehensive school model that offered a more socially ameliorating solution
to the problem of educating the state's children.\textsuperscript{137}

After World War Two, the Education Department developed a policy to make
all high schools co-educational, comprehensive, and community based.\textsuperscript{138} On
the recommendations of the \textit{Box Report} (1952) the Education Department
argued that the idea of co-educational schools would better reflect the reality of
living in a democratic society. The department claimed that children would
better understand and respect the opposite sex if they lived, worked and
played together during their school time.

Comprehensive high schools attempted to reflect the reality of society. The
Education Department argued that students should mix with a range of

\textsuperscript{134} \textit{The Box Report} (1952), pp.3-4.
\textsuperscript{135} \textit{The Education Circular, W.A.} (1958), vol.LX, no.11, p.238.
\textsuperscript{136} ibid., p.238
\textsuperscript{137} EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1342/1952.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{The Education Circular, W.A.} (1958), vol.LX, no.11, p.238.
children with different backgrounds, interests and abilities. The *Box Report* (1952) was eager to avoid the stigma of a socially differentiated education system. Citing the elitist Perth Modern School and Perth Junior Technical School as examples, the *Box Report* (1952) claimed that streaming accentuated a "caste system" and reinforced in children the notion of superiority and inferiority.\(^{139}\) The comprehensive high school aimed to provide a wide range of courses to cater for individual interests and abilities. To offer a satisfactory range of subjects, the Education Department recommended a minimum of 1,000 students to achieve efficiencies in operation and cost. Cost was a vital consideration given Western Australia’s natural increase in population and the Federal Government’s desire to attract more immigrants. Departmental advice indicated that as enrolments exceed 1,000 the cost per student starts to drop rapidly.\(^{140}\) The Education Department’s official policy statement on secondary schools assumed that democracy and schooling were mutually co-existent. The Education Department argued that the selective school was a vestige of an old-fashioned and irrelevant educational policy. According to the Education Department:

> Segregation of the sexes, isolation of the intellectually gifted, promotion by examination, subject-centred curricula and education for an elite, not for all, have their roots in educational policy laid down in a society over 100 years ago. Secondary education in our time should be completely different, just as society today is completely different from society of the 1850’s. We cannot afford to have a new nation built around an old educational system.\(^{141}\)

In a society founded on unequal economic and social relations the task of satisfying political democratic rights was always a threat to the establishment. Social democracy provided a push from below and forced the ruling elite to make significant concessions or face the possibility of social disharmony. Official educational policy statements recognised the contradictions facing the state:

> It is imperative to the well-being of democratic society that the school acts as a unifying process, at all times holding together children of diverse aptitudes, emotions and interests, whilst at

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\(^{139}\) *The Box Report* (1952), p.7.

\(^{140}\) *The Education Circular, W.A.* (1958), vol.LX, no.11. p.240

\(^{141}\) Ibid., p.240.
the same time encouraging individual differences to be utilized for the common good.142

The comprehensive high school was a successful strategy in satisfying the contradictory demands for equal opportunity and at the same time, perpetuating social divisions under the guise of ability and merit. The concern for equality dominated the debate in the parliament, media and Education Department itself. For instance, in 1958 W. Hegney, the Minister for Education in the Hawke Labor Ministry stated that:

Selection and segregation of talented students no longer fitted into state policy which was now to provide the opportunity for secondary education for all children. With three new five-year high schools in the metro area there was no need to concentrate the ablest children in one school.143

In establishing a more equitable state secondary school system a number of barriers existed. Included were the scholarship examination, the problem of wastage, the public examination system, and the financial crisis of the 1960s. The remainder of the chapter elaborates each of these factors to show how the discourse of equal opportunity helped to forge a mass secondary school system.

Letting the 'Dumb' Kids in: Removal of the Scholarship Exam

A major barrier to educational reform was the scholarship examination. In 1955 an Education Department document argued that the government scholarship system was undemocratic as the few winners enjoyed privileges that were not available to everyone. These children received an annual book allowance and had their fees for the Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations paid by the government. The Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme also came under attack for the disproportionate number of scholarships granted to children attending independent schools. In the Legislative Council in 1968, the Hon. J. Dolan cited Professor G. Reid's comments on the scholarship anomalies:

If you wish to enjoy the highest odds in the scholarship competition you must seek to be a member of the upper income brackets ... Competitive scholarships created an elitist society.

142 Ibid., p.240.
The Commonwealth government appeared to be fostering an educated middle-class elite.\textsuperscript{144}

Supporting this view was a growing body of sociological evidence on the direct relationship between social class and educational opportunity. The mounting evidence coming out of Britain showed that a boy had a greater chance of entering a grammar school if he came from a middle class rather than a working class home. As noted, Gregory's research on the social background of children going through Perth Modern High School reached the same conclusion.\textsuperscript{145} Summarising the British research, Floud argued that there was 'a substantial reserve of uneducated ability in the offspring of the working class.'\textsuperscript{146} The Western Australian Education Department argued that the child who came from an educated home had a distinct advantage over a child of equal ability who came from a comparatively uneducated family. Children from middle class families often performed better in the scholarship examination due to extra tuition paid for by their parents. On democratic grounds and in the interests of the good unsuccessful child the Education Department proposed that the scholarship exam be replaced by chronological promotion.\textsuperscript{147}

Public reaction to the abolition of the scholarship examination and the selective Perth Modern School was minimal. For most people the writing was on the wall. However, the 'Old Modernians Association' pointed to the outstanding men and women who passed through Perth Modern School to become prominent professional and community leaders.\textsuperscript{148} There was a feeling amongst the 'Old Mods' that the school performed an important social function for the community. Any attempt to 'open-up' the school would retard the brighter students and drag them back to mediocrity. The W.A. Teachers' Union also opposed the attempt to turn Perth Modern School into a comprehensive high school. The annual conference of teachers in 1958 passed a motion calling on the government to retain Perth Modern School and its special function of educating prospective university students.\textsuperscript{149} The Minister for Education argued that it was inconsistent to continue with a selective secondary school

\textsuperscript{144} Quoted in \textit{Hansard} (1968), vol. 179, p.252.
\textsuperscript{145} J. Gregory (1990).
\textsuperscript{146} Quoted in D. Rubinstein and B. Simon (1973), p.63.
\textsuperscript{147} Quoted in a report prepared by C. Goodridge, Education Officer. EDF, AN 45/34 ACC 3097 FILE No. 756/1979.
\textsuperscript{148} The \textit{West Australian} (1958), 13 August.
\textsuperscript{149} J. Currie, General Secretary of the W.A. Teachers' Union in a letter to the Hon. Minister for Education, 7 November 1958. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No 1342/1952.
when comprehensive high schools were available to all students. The Minister claimed that equally strong academic courses existed in the new comprehensive high schools.\textsuperscript{150} Under Dr. T.L. Robertson, the Director-General of Education, himself an 'Old Modernian', the selective role of Perth Modern School ended. In his initial submission to Cabinet in 1958, the Minister for Education, A. Watts in a letter to the State School Teachers' Union, 4 December 1958. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1342/1952.

Dropping Out of School: The Problem of Wastage

An increasing concern of the Education Department was the rate of wastage in the school system. In 1955 the Superintendent of Research and Curriculum, W. Neal prepared a report showing wastage in secondary schools at various levels. Of all the twelve year old children in government schools almost 40 per cent left by the time they were fourteen years old. By the time they were fifteen years or older the original enrolment had decreased by 73 per cent. In the period 1950 to 1955, 91.9 per cent of children who started first year remained at the beginning of second year; 43.9 per cent began third year; 8.5 per cent fourth year; and only 7.1 per cent commenced fifth year.\textsuperscript{152}

While these figures provide some general indications about the nature of the wastage problem, further analysis exposes exactly who left school early. For instance, whereas 50.9 per cent of boys completed three or more years of secondary schooling only 38.7 per cent of girls stayed on to third year. Besides gender, those children from the homes of the unemployed and unskilled who presumably had most to gain from the benefits of an education, comprised the bulk of early-leavers.\textsuperscript{153} Further differentiation occurred depending on whether children attended a private or state secondary school. Neal's statistics showed that a much greater proportion of the pupils who began a high school course in non-Government schools complete the fifth year compared to the original first year intake in government schools. On this basis, the holding power of the non-

\textsuperscript{150} The Minister for Education, A. Watts in a letter to the State School Teachers' Union, 4 December 1958. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1342/1952.
\textsuperscript{151} The Minister for Education, W. Hegney to the Hon. Premier 25 July 1958. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1057/56.
\textsuperscript{152} EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1057/56.
\textsuperscript{153} B.K. Betts (1965), A review of the problem of the early school leaver and its relation to wastage of intellectual potential, Education Thesis for the THC, pp.15-22.
Government schools was more than three times as great as the Government schools. Significantly, the Government schools catered for about three quarters of the first year scholars. At each grade level this difference in actual numbers decreased until at the third year level the government school enrolments were only slightly more than those of the non-government schools. However, in the final two years the emphasis changed and there were more fourth and fifth year pupils in private secondary schools than in government schools.154

Studies in Australia and overseas consistently show that a disproportionately high number of students failing to complete their secondary education come from lower socio-economic groups.155 For example, Smilansky and Nevo argued that:

Each group, whether it be of ethnic, social class, economic or geographical origin possesses its own unique cultural patterns as well as its own social interests which may contradict and clash with the expectations, patterns, interests and institutions of a dominant group. As a result, the minority group is unable to obtain certain socio-cultural privileges and opportunities and becomes culturally disadvantaged.156

The problem of wastage and the selective nature of the scholarship exam were effective arguments in the case for opening-up the secondary school system. However, the educational reformers found that the public examination system was a major obstacle to the expansion of mass secondary schooling. The University of Western Australia maintained control and influence over the Junior and Leaving examinations and syllabi. The task of breaking down the academic emphasis of secondary education proved difficult given the established hegemony of the elite private church secondary schools over the social value of the competitive academic curriculum.

**A Testing Time: Loosening the Control of Public Examinations**

Public examinations in Western Australia date back to 1895 when independent schools sat their students for the University of Adelaide entrance

154 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1342/1952.
examination.\textsuperscript{157} This practice stopped with the opening of the University of Western Australia in 1913 and the establishment of the Public Examinations Board in 1915. The Public Examination Board membership included the university's Vice-Chancellor, seven representatives of the university, three State Education Department representatives and five representatives of the private schools. For private schools to elect a representative, they first required 'approval' from the university's Professorial Board.\textsuperscript{158} The Public Examination Board that created the Junior and Leaving certificates remained an integral part of the secondary school system until replaced by the Board of Secondary Education in 1969. The Junior and Leaving Examination assumed a disproportionate influence over the secondary school system. Increasingly, the civil service, business, industry and professional bodies used the examination results for employment and training purposes. According to White, secondary schools were "wedded to the external examination syllabuses and excessively conscious of examination successes".\textsuperscript{159}

Many schools used the Junior Examination to select potential university candidates. Semi-tertiary educational institutions such as the technical colleges, schools of mines, teachers' colleges and agricultural colleges also employed the Junior exam for their own particular purposes. Students who passed their examinations at the end of the twelfth year received the Leaving Certificate. The Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate provided a measure of employability to potential employers in government, commerce and industry.\textsuperscript{160} Students wishing to gain entry into the university, sat a university matriculation examination. From the beginning, the Public Examination Board (PEB) set admission requirements to the university.\textsuperscript{161} While the public examination system continued to serve only the elite private church schools and a few academic state schools, the system worked satisfactorily. Despite some noise from the State School Teachers' Union (SSTU) in the 1920s and 1930s over the universities control and influence on the curriculum there was little impetus at this stage for change.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{157} M. White (1975), 'Sixty years of public examinations and matriculation poliy in Western Australia', \textit{The Australian Journal of Education}, vol.19, no.1, p.64.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid, p.65
\textsuperscript{159} M. White (1974), Public examinations in Western Australia: reflections on their establishment', \textit{Australian and New Zealand History of Education Journal}, vol.3, p.50.
\textsuperscript{160} C. Sanders (1967), 'Public examinations and university matriculation', \textit{The W.A. Teachers' Journal}, vol.LVII, no.1, p.9.
\textsuperscript{161} M. White (1974), p.43.
\textsuperscript{162} M. White (1975), p.66.
However, the sheer weight of numbers entering the secondary school system after the war dramatically challenged the elitist assumptions of the public examination system. Dr. J. Gentilli, of the geography faculty at the University of Western Australia, collated some revealing statistics on the number of students sitting for the public examinations. In the period 1957 to 1961, the number of Junior candidates increased by 59 per cent from 4,814 to 7,642. Leaving Certificate candidates rose by 65 per cent from 1,452 to 2,391 in the same period. The number of 15 year-olds at school grew by about 18 per cent and 17 year-olds by 26 per cent. The estimated proportion of all 15 year-olds sitting for the Junior examination in 1957 was 43 per cent. By 1961 it had risen to 61 per cent. The percentage of 17 year-olds sitting the Leaving increased from 15 per cent to approximately 20 per cent in 1961. Between 1957 and 1961 the Junior candidates trained at private secondary schools increased by 39 per cent and those in government schools increased by 72 per cent. In the same period the Leaving candidates from private secondary schools increased by 45 per cent and those from government schools by 91 per cent.163

While the explosive increase in the number of candidates was a concern, the high failure rate eventually forced a reassessment of the role and function of public examinations. In 1957, 1,146 of 4,814 Junior candidates who sat the Certificate failed. In 1961, 1,845 of the 7,642 candidates did not pass. Thus, approximately one candidate out of every four failed.164 This posed the question of what to do with the academically less able 'by-product' who had no desire or intention of going to university.165 What schools should do with the large number of children with different abilities and interests has been a major preoccupation of educational administrators since the war.

One unsuccessful attempt to provide an alternative to the Junior Certificate was the less academic High School Certificate course introduced in 1954. The High School Certificate (HSC) aimed to assist those 'non-academic' children who required an education "better suited to both their abilities and to their future needs".166 The Education Department anticipated that a very large proportion of the school population would elect to undertake these courses. In practice this did not happen as the course enrolled the bottom 15 to 20 per cent of the second

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164 Ibid., p.43
165 Ibid., p.45
166 J.H. Barton, Director-General of Education. EDF, 1983-66.
year population. Despite some effort by the Minister of Education, A. Watts, to 'talk-up' the popularity of the High School Certificate, there was little support from parents, students or employers. The Superintendent of Guidance and Special Education claimed that the Junior Certificate had greater prestige in the community and opened up more employment opportunities than the High School Certificate. Children who did not have the Junior Certificate were ineligible for permanent employment in the State Public Service, Banks and Insurance Companies. Therefore, it was not surprising that in 1957 only thirty students were awarded the certificate. Even though the numbers increased to one hundred and sixty in 1960, the attempt to differentiate the school population into 'academic' and 'non-academic' students proved very unpopular.

Connell and associates explain the non-academic High School Certificate's unpopularity in relation to the 'hegemonic curriculum' or "the hierarchically organised bodies of academic knowledge appropriated in individual competition". According to them, the hegemonic curriculum marginalised other kinds of knowledge by creating divisions of practical versus theoretical, abstract versus applied, and 'bright' versus 'dumb'. The academic program remains hegemonic in the eyes of the teachers', parents' and children because the best students do the academic stream. Thus, the 'non-academic' subjects or alternative courses like the High School Certificate became a subordinate curriculum.

Opposition to the system of public external examinations steadily mounted. The Public Examination Board expressed concern about its ability to cope with the wave of candidates. It expressed concern about the availability of suitable examiners, payment, the changing emphasis on the non-academic curriculum, the need for additional administrative staff, and the desirability of having a body with autonomy relating to matters of secondary education. The Interstate Conference of Superintendents of secondary schools held in Perth in September 1960 expressed dissatisfaction with the general restrictions imposed

167 Ibid.
169 The Superintendent of Guidance and Special Education to the Principal of Kwinana High School, 4 May 1960. EDF, AN 45/34 ACC 3097 FILE No. 228.
170 The West Australian (1961), 27 January, p.20
171 R.W. Connell et al. (1982), p.120.
172 Ibid., p.122.
173 The Chairman of the Public Examination Board, Professor C. Sanders in a letter to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, 22 November, 1957. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 704/1958.
by external examinations. They argued in favour of a broad liberal education. The Standing Sub-Committee of the Australian Education Council (AEC) on secondary schooling also expressed concern about the high degree of specialisation at the university level and the dangerous implications for a liberal education at the secondary level. As far back as 1935 the New Education Fellowship supported the abolition of written exams.

On top of these pressures the Robertson Inquiry (1963) into the secondary school curriculum favoured the abolition of the Junior Certificate. The inquiry proposed a certificate showing a child's cumulative record of achievement. In the same year, the University Senate on the advice of the Public Examination Board commissioned Dr. J.A. Petch of the Joint Matriculation Board of England to report on the public examination system in Western Australia. The major impetus for the inquiry was the dramatic increase in numbers of public examination candidates. In the period 1956 to 1963 the number of candidates rose from 7,566 to 16,138. Naturally, the Public Examination Board was anxious to find a solution to the problem. However, the Petch Report (1963) favoured modification rather than any radical change to the existing examination system. Petch claimed that the Public Examination Board was the only reliable bulwark against privilege and patronage. He opposed internal cumulative assessment and advocated the need for an examination at the end of a student's secondary schooling. According to White, the Petch Report (1963) was the climax of the restrictive and elitist attitude toward university admission. White claimed that from this point "a fundamental revision of public examination policies could be delayed no longer".

The major problem facing secondary education was the rigidity imposed on schools by the Junior and Leaving exams that met the needs of a very small percentage of students who wished to enter university. The Neal Report (1964) argued that the selective Junior exam may have been a valid mechanism in the past but it was no longer relevant to the needs of contemporary society. For Neal, the greatest problem facing secondary education was the lack of

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176 The West Australian (1935), 16 August.
177 The Robertson Inquiry (1963), chpt 5.
178 J.A Petch (1963), A report on the public examination system in Western Australia, University of Western Australia, Perth, p.5.
179 M.A. White (1975), p.75.
flexibility.\textsuperscript{180} The \textit{Neal Report} (1964) argued that the Junior Examination suffered certain fundamental deficiencies. First, it emphasised academic subjects to the detriment of the so-called 'non-academic' subjects. Second, pupils made a choice of subjects too early in their secondary schooling. Third, the Junior Certificate failed to provide sufficient detail on a child's performance at school. Finally, the public examination system went against established findings in the field of educational learning.\textsuperscript{181} As a consequence, the \textit{Neal Report} (1964) recommended a major reorganisation of the first three years of secondary education. It recommended a research project involving a limited number of government and non-government secondary schools be established to trail the content and organisation of a cumulative certificate.\textsuperscript{182}

In May 1967, Dettman the Director-General of Education recommended that yet another committee be established to report on the future organisation, structure and courses in Western Australian secondary schools. The major aim of the Dettman Committee was to review the changes occurring in assessment procedures throughout the rest of the world, to evaluate Achievement Certificate trails and to assess the function of external exams.\textsuperscript{183} Chapter eight of the \textit{Dettman Report} (1969) referred to the arguments of the Scottish \textit{Fyfe Report} (1947) on secondary education to support its recommendation to abolish external examinations:

The influence of examination is three-fold. It affects the treatment of the examinable subjects themselves, tending always to exalt the written above the spoken, to magnify memory and mastery of fact at the expense of understanding and liveliness of mind. It depresses the status of the non-examinable, so that the aesthetic and creative side of education, with all its possibilities for human satisfaction and cultural enrichment, remains largely undeveloped and poorly esteemed. And lastly, the examination which began as a means, becomes for many the end itself. In the atmosphere created by this preoccupation with examination success, it is difficult to think nobly of education to see it the endless quest of man's preparation for either society or solitude.\textsuperscript{184}

\textsuperscript{180} The \textit{Neal Report} (1964), p.5.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., pp.15-17.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., pp.30-42.
\textsuperscript{183} EDF, 686/1967.
In 1969 the *Dettman Report* recommended that:

> Because of their fallibility and the restraints which they place on curricula and teaching methods, external examinations should be discontinued and replaced by internal school assessments. The Junior examinations should be conducted in 1971 and the last Leaving examination in 1973.  

In 1971, First Year students in all Western Australian state secondary schools except two embarked on courses leading to the Achievement Certificate. The Board of Secondary Education, established in early 1970, monitored the secondary curriculum and administered the Achievement Certificate. The Tertiary Admissions Examination (TAE) that replaced the old Leaving Exam, operated under the supervision of a joint committee from all tertiary institutions in Western Australia. After the first year, school based assessment contributed 50 per cent toward the Tertiary Admissions Examination grade.

**Who pays? The Karmel Report and Equality of Opportunity**

In the 1960s, demographic factors and the growing inability of the states' to finance the necessary expenditure on secondary schools created a 'financial crisis' in education. Mathews showed that in the period 1952 to 1962 enrolments in government primary schools increased by 37 per cent and secondary schools by 139 per cent. In addition, participation rates were also higher. This 'crisis' manifested itself in increasing shortages of teachers, classrooms and other essential facilities. As a result, the Federal Government was under pressure to solve the problems facing both government and non-government schools. The 1960 Nationwide Survey of Needs highlighted the seriousness of the 'financial crisis'. In a four year period from 1964-65 it recommended that an additional $208 million be spent on education.

The call for Commonwealth intervention in the funding of schools was not new. Drummond, the Minister for Education in New South Wales stressed the necessity of Federal aid at the first meeting of the Education Council in 1936. The question re-surfaced when the Commonwealth Government called on

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185 Ibid., p.104.
189 Ibid., pp.59-71.
Technical Departments to launch a National Fitness Campaign. As noted, the extraordinary growth in secondary school enrolments after the Second World War posed a serious funding shortfall in the education system. In submitting a case to the Commonwealth Grants Commission in 1945, M. Little the Director of Education in Western Australia argued that education was a national and not a provincial instrumentality. He argued that equalisation measures were necessary to assist the states most in need.191

With the election of Menzies' conservative liberal-country party coalition in 1949 there was a backlash to the view that primary, secondary and technical education was a state responsibility. Nonetheless, between 1963-1972 the Commonwealth's role expanded through a series of programs announced by Prime Ministers Holt and McMahon. For example, the establishment of the Commonwealth Department of Education and Science in 1966; the Commonwealth Secondary Schools Libraries Scheme in 1968; the Commonwealth Programs of Aboriginal Secondary Scholarships (1969) and Child Migrant Education (1970); general purpose capital grants for government and non-government schools (1971); five year programs of capital assistance to both types of schools (1972); and in 1972 Gough Whitlam's promise to establish a Schools Commission that would provide financial assistance to schools on the basis of needs. According to Smart, the period 1963 to 1975 witnessed an "unparalleled expansion of the Commonwealth government's involvement in Australian education at all levels".192

In December 1967 the State School Teachers' Union and Parents and Citizens' Association of Western Australia publicly voiced their concern about the 'schools chaos'.193 The Minister for Education H.M. Lewis, reacted to this situation by requesting that Dettman, the Director-General of Education, be selective in providing information to either the Parents and Citizen's Federation or the Teachers' Union. He believed that these organisations would distort information to create a negative public image of the education system.194 In response, the secretary of the W.A. Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Association urged the Premier J. Tonkin to instigate an independent inquiry in Western Australia as the forerunner of an Independent National Enquiry that

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191 M. Little, The Director-General of Education in a letter to the Hon. Minister of Education, 26 February 1945. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 98/1945.
ocurred in 1970.\textsuperscript{195} The findings of the 1970 survey of needs indicated a shortfall of some $1,443 million existed for the coming five year period. In response, the Australian Teachers' Federation orchestrated a nation-wide campaign to demand Commonwealth funding of schools. In Perth, the State School Teachers' Union and the W.A. Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations organised a mass meeting in the Perth Town Hall on the 22 June 1971 to demand Commonwealth action.

Before the 1972 election a great deal of public concern over educational inequality existed. Kennedy highlighted the nature of this concern:

\begin{quote}
Inequalities can be abolished only by a deliberate policy of social and economic change and by an education policy aimed not merely at giving opportunity to those whose needs are greatest.\textsuperscript{196}
\end{quote}

Increased public awareness of education guaranteed that it would be a key election issue in 1972. The Australian Labor Party developed a policy that was committed to increased Commonwealth involvement in education. It recommended that a Schools Commission be responsible for assessing the 'needs' of both primary and secondary government and non-government schools. To defuse the controversial issue of state aid the 1969 Labor Party Conference developed the idea of 'needs' funding.\textsuperscript{197} This particular approach had two distinct advantages for the Labor Party. First, it brought some unity within the Party over the state aid issue.\textsuperscript{198} Second, it helped to overcome the concerns of the non-government sector, in particular the Catholic Schools, about their low resource levels.\textsuperscript{199}

At the heart of the Labor Government's education policy was a concern with equality. The \textit{Karmel Report} (1973) argued that "there are good reasons for attempting to compensate to some extent through schooling for unequal out-of-school situation".\textsuperscript{200} However, the Committee concluded that equal provision

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{197} A.L.P. (1969), \textit{Platform, constitution and rules}.
\textsuperscript{198} See P. Weller (1977), 'The establishment of the Schools Commission: a case study in the politics of education' in I.F.K. Birch and D. Smart (eds.), p.49.
\textsuperscript{199} J. Blackburn (1977), 'Schools and the Schools Commission' in I.F.K. Brich and D. Smart (eds.), p.178.
\textsuperscript{200} \textit{The Karmel Report} (1973), AGPS, Canberra, p.10.
\end{footnotes}
"might still result in unequal outcomes between social groups". As a result, the Committee focused on the idea of equality of outcome. Within this framework the Committee defined 'needs' in terms of resources to schools and school systems and the degree of disadvantage to groups of pupils in particular schools.

The Report of the Interim Committee recommended expenditure of $694 million in 1974 and 1975. Of that amount $466 million would be for government schools and $198 million for non-government schools. A further $30 million would be available for joint programs in both sectors. These figures represented a dramatic increase in expenditure on primary and secondary schools. According to K. Beazley the Minister for Education, "it was the aim of the Labor party to carry through a revolution of access to education".

In conclusion, the provision of comprehensive high schools, the abolition of the scholarship examination and public examinations, increased retention rates and the massive injection of Commonwealth funds all lend support to the democratisation thesis. However, the expansion of the secondary school system was wrought with contradiction and tension. On the one hand, Western Australian secondary schools attempted to satisfy the demands of the 'market' for unequal educational outcomes. On the other hand, state secondary schools sought to provide all children with the same opportunity for an education irrespective of class, race or gender. The onset of the 1970s economic recession amplified the state's contradictory role as it attempted to meet the needs of a changing economy and at the same time, legitimise its role in perpetuating unequal social relations. Against this general background of growth and development of secondary schooling in Western Australia, the following chapters examine how state secondary schooling operated to perpetuate educational inequalities. This task begins by examining the social function of intelligence testing in Western Australian state secondary schools.

201 Ibid., p.22.
202 Ibid., p.50.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE IDEOLOGY OF INTELLIGENCE, MERITOCRACY AND SCHOOLING

INTRODUCTION
THE IDEOLOGY OF INTELLIGENCE TESTING
SELECTION BY DIFFERENTIATION
CHAPTER FOUR

THE IDEOLOGY OF INTELLIGENCE, MERITOCRACY AND SCHOOLING

The possibility of understanding the individual child according to the canons of science arises from the convergence of mass schooling and biological discourses in the late nineteenth century.\(^1\)

Those classed as 'feeble minded' will in general, be a charge upon the state and its institutions for life; 'borderline' will require specialised education and supervision; 'dull' will not benefit in even an average degree by ordinary education and are likely to show an unduly high proportion of social misfits.\(^2\)

INTRODUCTION

With the massive expansion of comprehensive community high schools following the Second World War, the breaking down of barriers to access, increased retention rates, consolidation of Federal funding, more teachers', new buildings and the increasing focus on disadvantage, social democracy appeared to triumph over the selective and hierarchically differentiated secondary education system that existed before the war. But has anything fundamentally changed?

Certainly the new comprehensive community high school appeared to be equitable. Secondary schooling, traditionally the right of the wealthy and a few selected and deserving children from the working class, opened up to become a mass secondary school system in a short time. The problem facing the secondary education system was how to select and grade children into a hierarchically divided society that required only a small elite to fill leading positions in commerce, industry, the civil service and the professions. Central to this chapter is the argument that the policy of secondary schooling for all required the development of other mechanisms of social selection to meet the needs of a socially divided society. Comprehensive high schools used a variety of dividing practices to stream and stratify

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2 J. McCall (1949), 'Distribution of intelligence in the migrant children'. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 77/50.
children in the interests of maintaining established economic, political and social divisions.

The aim in this chapter is to show how the discourse of ability or intelligence was used to justify the social differentiation of children. It seeks to explain how the science of psychology upheld a form of school organisation and pedagogy that effectively denied equality. The ideology of intelligence and its corollary the testing movement provided the means whereby children received different sorts of school knowledge. Intelligence testing reproduced a divided and segregated system of education by offering different educational experiences to different classes of students. The focus is not on how children acquire intelligence but the way in which the idea of intelligence perpetuates and justifies the selective role of secondary schools in an already divided society. Following Henderson, this means unearthing how the ideology of intelligence "is made relevant, evaluated and rewarded within a specific social context and with explanations of this situation".3 To this end, chapter four traces the development of the testing movement overseas and its uses in Western Australian secondary schools. In addition, it highlights the relation between the educational state and the shift in educational theory toward a concern with individual difference. In brief, the purpose is to explain the link between the idea of ability, individual difference and the consequences for educational provision and administration.

THE IDEOLOGY OF INTELLIGENCE TESTING

THE ORIGINS OF INTELLIGENCE TESTING

In the late nineteenth century educationalists turned to the scientific method and its belief in objectivity to observe the developmental stages of children. People such as S. Hall observed and documented the physical characteristics of hundreds of children. While the child-study movement successfully gathered mountains of data, its usefulness according to Selleck, often remained with the "dictates of common sense".4

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4 R.J.W. Selleck (1968), The new education; the English background, Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Melbourne, p.283.
It was not long before the scientific educationalists turned their 'gaze' from the physical attributes of children to their 'mental capacities'. There was a growing conviction among educational psychologists that a better scientific understanding of the individual mind was a necessary foundation for improving educational practice. One early British educationalist wrote to the *Journal of Education* suggesting:

If the art of Education is to advance, and the practice of Education to improve, it is desirable that the present generation, educated as it has been by experiment, should be familiarised with the notion that Education is a science founded upon intelligible and certain principles, which may, through ignorance, be violated, but cannot be violated with impunity.\(^5\)

According to Selleck, there was a growing interest in the study and measurement of "the higher faculties" of memory, imagery, imagination, attention, comprehension, suggestibility, aesthetic appreciation, moral sentiments, strength of will and motor skills.\(^6\)

The scientific educationalists assumed that intelligence was measurable in much the same way as a person's physical characteristics. The early testers such as Galton, Pearson, Spearman and Burt in Britain; and Cattell, Terman, Goddard and Yerkes in America believed that individuals possessed inborn 'intelligence' or 'mental ability'.\(^7\) In 1933 Burt described his views:

By intelligence, the psychologist understands inborn, all round intellectual ability. It is inherited, or at least innate, not due to teaching or training; it is intellectual, not emotional or moral, and remains uninfluenced by industry or zeal; it is general, not specific, i.e. it is not limited to any particular kind of work, but enters into all we do or say or think. Of all our mental qualities, it is the most far-reaching; fortunately it can be measured with accuracy and ease.\(^8\)

The mental testers assumed that standard intelligence tests measured innate intellectual capacity. The advocates of this view believe that people's genes determine intelligence in much the same way as a person inherits physical

\(^5\) Ibid., p.274.
\(^6\) Ibid., p.287.
\(^8\) Ibid., p.220.
characteristics. Burt claimed that children were born with varying amounts of "innate general cognitive ability" that determined individual achievement in school. In short, biology determines the human condition. According to Rose and Rose, biologism performs an important ideological function in legitimising the established social order. They argued that biological explanations of historical structures and human relationships reinforced certain social arrangements as 'just' and logical. From this perspective, genetics determines economic inequality in society. According to Harris, this meant that "the poor are poor because they are dumb; and blacks are poor because they are dumb". The belief that individuals succeed or fail because of intelligence serves to mystify established social relations. It assumes that individual problems and deficiencies produce social inequalities while leaving unjust structural arrangements intact.

McCallum's work showed how the theory of individual difference and the emergence of mental testing in Australia related to the concern of the medical profession and the eugenics movement with the physical and mental health of the population. In McCallum's view, the testing of school children in Australian state elementary schools began after the medical profession was able to convince educational authorities of the potential danger posed by feeble-mindedness. According to McCallum, the major objective of the eugenics movement was to cleanse society of the "growing army of unskilled labourers, vagrants, habitual inebriates, criminals and lunatics". Central to this process, he claimed, was the scientific search for the 'abnormal' in the classroom.

In America, the early testers such as Terman, Goddard and Yerkes wanted to detect genetically inferior groups who posed a potential threat to the established social order. In this context, intelligence tests play a major role in justifying one group's dominance over the other. In the introductory chapter to Inquiry into Human Faculty, Galton advocated the use of selective reproduction to improve the human race:

9 Ibid., p.63.
10 S. Rose and H. Rose (1976), 'The politics of neurobiology: biologism in the service of the state' in R. Dale, G. Esland and M. MacDonald (eds.), p.120.
11 K. Harris (1979), p.103.
12 Ibid., p.105.
13 D. McCallum (1990), chpt 2.
14 Ibid., pp.22-23.
My general purpose has been to take note of the varied hereditary faculties of different families and races, to learn how far history may have shown the practicability of supplanting inefficient human stock by better strains, and to consider whether it might not be our duty to do so by such efforts as may be reasonable, thus exerting ourselves to further the ends of evolution more rapidly and with less distress than if events were left to their own course.16

Galton's theory of hereditary intelligence explained the difference in test scores between whites and other races in America. Terman, one of the pioneers of American testing, claimed that intelligence reflected racial differences. Terman's racist views came through in his observation of Mexican-American and Indian children:

Their dullness seems to be racial or at least inherent in the family stocks from which they come. There will be enormous significant racial differences which cannot be wiped out by any scheme of mental culture. Children of this group should be segregated in special classes ... There is no possibility at present of convincing society that they should not be allowed to reproduce.17

The hereditary argument of the intelligence testers re-surfaced again in the work of A. Jensen who argued that black Americans were innately less intelligent than whites and that working class whites were less intelligent than upper and middle-class whites. For Jensen, psychometry indicates that both racial and class differences are significant.18

Foucault's work is useful in illuminating the connection between the science of intelligence testing and the 'objectification' of the body.19 Foucault argued that the new administrative idea of human welfare, an increasing concern of the state, related to the growth of the study of individuals as objects and subjects. In his view, disciplinary technology operated primarily on the body as an object to be "subjected, used, transformed and improved".20 Central to the process of objectification was the way in which the new sciences of the body appealed to the trained expert and the neutral language of science as the final determinants of 'truth' and

17 Ibid., p.2.
what it means to be human. According to Dreyfus and Rabinow, intelligence became a technical issue for the experts to debate.21

Underlying the state's increasing intervention in the life of the individual as an object of power was the concern with efficiency, productivity and normalisation. According to Dreyfus and Rabinow, a technical matrix defined normality and promised happiness through the application of science. If individuals failed or resisted, it justified the need to reinforce and extend the power of the experts. They argued that technologies of power were essential for inserting disciplined orderly individuals into the machinery of production and controlling the distribution of the population.22 As the individual became an object of state power, life itself became a matter of political choice.

THE 'PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPTURE' OF EDUCATION

Psychologists, the group of experts empowered to speak on individual difference were a significant influence in shaping the thinking of the Education Department, teachers, parents and children. McCallum's work demonstrated how the 'psychological capture' of education was the central thread in the expansion of mass secondary schooling where merit was the key to success.23

K.S. Cunningham one of the founding fathers of Australian educational psychology wrote an insightful account of the influence of overseas psychological theory on Australian education.24 Cunningham with people such as G.E. Phillips, C.R. McRae, G.S. Browne and P.R. Cole advocated the benefits of psychological theory in education.25 In recollecting the major ideas, theories and assumptions influencing Australian education, Cunningham believed that the social sciences, in particular psychology and the advances in the physical and biological sciences of physiology, neurology and endocrinology, revolutionised Australian educational thinking and practice. 'Progressive' educationalists, disenchanted with the 'old' teaching methods based on memorisation, factual learning, exactness, sameness, routine, and passiveness turned to the new sciences to begin an era of

21 Ibid., p.196.
22 Ibid., p.135.
'experimental education' founded on the assumptions and techniques of differential psychology'. In Cunningham's opinion, the emphasis on measurement and statistical analysis represented the "root system of today's very flourishing tree known as educational research".

Cunningham argued that the overseas work on individual difference undertaken by Wundt in Germany, Hall and Cattell in America, Galton in Britain, and Binet in France, significantly influenced the Australian educational scene. As a consequence, teachers' colleges and universities around Australia established psychological laboratories that stimulated test construction, surveys and clinical work as well as training a future generation of teachers.

The establishment of the Carnegie Corporation funded Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) was a significant development in the history of the testing movement in Australia. ACER's Test Division produced, disseminated and legitimised test materials related to the assessment of individual difference. The ACER played an important role in forging international links between educationalists. Some four hundred 'influential' educators undertook short study tours to confer with colleagues and learn about the latest methods of teaching. Along with the short study tours, fifty Australian teachers received funds to study overseas for post-graduate awards. Significantly, this process of cultural imperialism stimulated the establishment of research, psychology and guidance sections in Education Departments around Australia and provided a thriving market for testing material, much of it produced in America.

Just as Australian educators looked to overseas developments in psychology, Western Australian educators crossed the Nullarbor to study the intricacies of intelligence testing. In 1951, the Western Australian Education Department nominated L. Pond to participate in Professor F. Schonell's Educational Psychology course at the University of Queensland. Pond for many years a lecturer in Education at Claremont Teachers' College was well placed to spread the ideology of intelligence testing. Upon his return to Western Australia, Pond reported on the usefulness of selecting

26 Ibid., pp.103-104.
27 Ibid., p.107.
28 Ibid., p.109.
29 Ibid., p.117.
30 Ibid., p.112.
31 Ibid., p.116.
children for various types of special classes. According to Pond, this meant the necessity of assessing the child's innate ability (intelligence), scholastic achievement, emotional problems and physical condition. Pond advocated the introduction of scientific methods and procedures to assess children in Western Australian schools. He believed that the testing instruments of science should play an important role in identifying 'dull', 'backward' and 'physically handicapped' children who could benefit from their allocation to special classes. A more sinister motivation appeared to be the desire to identify those children deemed to be educable and capable of further education. Once identified, Pond believed that schools should allocate children to special classes where the benefits of scientific teaching and grading could better 'fit' their needs and positively promote their mental health.

Within the Western Australian Education Department there was a great deal of enthusiasm to train more psychologists who could carry out the important task of testing and grading children. In teacher training greater attention was payed to the idea of individual difference, mental testing and the scholastic tests available through ACER. Educational authorities acknowledged 'the great value of psychological principles' in solving educational problems such as grouping, selection, guidance, teaching methods and remedial measures for backward children. As a result, there was a greater demand for educational psychologists trained in psychological principles of learning, diagnostic testing, remedial teaching, intelligence testing, selection and guidance, vocational guidance, and backwardness. By 1967 the Guidance Branch had a permanent home at Claver House in Perth employing 293 people, including 58 guidance officers and 17 teacher counsellors.

While the 'psychological capture' of education seemed complete there was some concern expressed over the use and effect of intelligence testing. For instance, Professor C. Sanders of the University of Western Australia pointed out that comparing children on intelligence test scores reflected the nature of the tests and the social and educational background of the people doing the tests rather than any innate ability differences between people. For this reason, Sanders urged fellow educators to consider the nature of

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32 Professor P.E. Vernon, quoted in The West Australian (1953), 20 June.
33 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE NO. 41/51.
intelligence within the educational medium in which it functions. The Education Department also expressed concern about the effect of labelling children. Usually, children did not receive the results of intelligence tests. The Education Department recommended that below average children should be referred to as 'slow' to avoid the hurtful implications of being labelled 'dull', 'backward' or 'deficient'.

There was an unprecedented interest in psychological research on Aboriginal children in the 1960s and 1970s. Kearney and McElwan's edited collection *Aboriginal Cognition: Retrospect and Prospect* (1976) and Tannock and Punch's research *The Educational Status of Aboriginal Children in Western Australia* (1975) are two such examples. According to McConnochie, the research interest in Aboriginal children's ability occurred in the context of compensatory education programs. Most of the research focused on intelligence, cognitive characteristics and psycho-linguistic abilities of Aboriginal children. Insofar as Aboriginal children performed badly, it reinforced the perception of intellectual, cognitive and psycho-linguistic deficiencies. As a result, McConnochie claimed that:

The adoption of culture and class specific, normative and prescriptive models of intelligence has led psychologists to generate a distorted image of black behaviour, in which the abilities of black children are ignored and the differences between the behaviour of black children and that expected by the testers are interpreted as deficits in the black child.

Psychometric studies tended to institutionalise the values and behaviour of white middle class groups above minority groups. Aborigines and working class children who did not perform well on intelligence tests were usually considered to be intellectually deficient compared to the rest of the population. For this reason, educational research on the Aboriginal 'problem' focused on identifying inadequacies in Aboriginal children. The purpose was to design programs that might solve the Aboriginal 'problem' identified by the tests. Watts outlined the nature of the deficit model perspective in the following way:

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34 Professor C. Sanders (1951), 'Aspects of scholastic intelligence', Paper presented to the advancement of science conference, Brisbane, 24 May. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 845/1951.
35 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1827/1952.
37 Ibid., p.127.
... there is a growing body of research data on what have been called 'culturally deprived' children. The descriptions of these children, as contrasted with middle-class children, fit very well the group with whom we are now concerned (Aboriginal children). The feature of greatest educational significance is not that these children are Aborigines, but that they have been reared under particular circumstances which are not conducive to success in school learning. Furthermore, it has been shown that the culturally deprived children suffer also linguistic and cognitive impoverishment.38

Tannock and Punch's survey of Western Australian teacher attitudes and perceptions toward Aboriginal children reinforced the 'deficit' explanation of Aboriginal performance. In their study, they claimed that while ability was a difficult thing to define, 'most educators appeared to understand what ability was and were fairly consistent in their estimation of it'. In rating Aboriginal children's ability, Tannock and Punch discovered that only ten out of 4,300 children surveyed rated as having outstanding ability. What they found was that Aboriginal children did not follow a normal distribution but were "skewed heavily towards the low ability side".39 Tannock and Punch found that teachers tended to locate the problem in the individual. In the words of Tannock and Punch:

The picture that emerges of the education of Aboriginal children is a grim one ... Aboriginal children are said to be insufficiently motivated for school work, to have poor concentration, inadequate language skills, low reading capacity, excessive shyness, poor attendance, and to be victims of under-encouragement by parents.40

Concern with the quality of immigrants arriving in Western Australia in the post-war period was another significant reason for the obsession with intelligence testing. The Department of Immigration assured the Commonwealth Office of Education that appropriate procedures (intelligence testing) would 'bring to light any backwardness'.41 In 1949, the Superintendent of the Guidance Branch J. McCall undertook a study of the intelligence of Catholic migrant children at Castledare, St. Joseph's, Nazareth House and Clontarf. His test results showed that migrant children

38 Ibid., pp.127-128.
41 T.H.E. Heyes Secretary Department of Immigration to the Director of the COE, 19 October, 1950. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 77/50.
contained three times the usual proportion of feeble mindedness; three-and-a-half times the usual proportion of borderline defective; twice the usual proportion of dull; three-fifths the usual average; one-sixth the usual bright; and no children classified as superior. Similar test results at Fairbridge Farm confirmed that migrant children were, in McCall's words, "a very poor sample of human material". He went on to conclude that:

Those classed as 'feeble-minded' will in general, be a charge upon the state and its institutions for life; 'borderline' will require specialized education and supervision; 'dull' will not benefit in even an average degree by ordinary education and are likely to show an unduly high proportion of social misfits.42

It was the problems of assimilation and delinquency that most worried educational authorities. One official of the New South Wales Education Department claimed that the quality of immigrant children was "surprising, distressing and almost calamitous".43 Intelligence testing became an efficient weapon in identifying and labelling the 'abnormal' child. Both the Child Welfare Department and the Education Department expressed concern about the 'intelligence' of the migrant child and their potential difficulties in becoming well adjusted and employable citizens. As a result, all migrant children coming into Western Australia underwent medical and educational examinations so that the Department 'could have a full history of each child'.44

As Foucault tells it, knowledge is power. From his perspective the science of psychology is a technology of regulation in the hands of the powerful. According to Carey, it is usually the lives, motives and attitudes of the weak and vulnerable that become the interest of psychological and sociological investigation. Thus, children, women, workers, mentally or emotionally handicapped people and minorities who do not conform to the dominant values of society usually become the focus of psychological curiosity. As 'abnormal' cases these groups require appropriate treatment to normalise them to the dominant social culture. In Carey's words:

42 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 77/50.
43 A.H. Pelham, N.S.W. Education Department, quoted in The West Australian (1956), 28 January.
44 F. Mather Acting Secretary, Child Welfare Department to the Director of Education, 2 December, 1954. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 77/50.
Western psychology and its theories have been built almost entirely on a study of the vulnerable, the powerless. Hence, it is very little use except to the powerful.\(^{45}\)

**INTELLIGENCE TESTING, MERITOCRACY AND SCHOOLING**

As already argued in chapter three, the principle of equal opportunity stimulated the expansion of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. People believed that all children irrespective of their social background, should receive a secondary education. On the surface this appeared to be fair and equitable. However, considering the evidence contained in the Fitzgerald Report *Poverty and Education in Australia* (1976), it appears that equality of educational opportunity has been unsuccessful in creating social equality. Fitzgerald concluded that success in schools was determined by factors such as social class, ethnic background and geographic location. Education simply helped to maintain the existing distribution of status and power.\(^ {46}\)

As noted in chapter one, Western Australian society mirrors the unequal social relations of capitalism. The early middle class investors who received generous land grants emerged to positions of prominence and power. They quickly established for themselves a 'comfortable' lifestyle at the expense of Aborigines, labourers and convicts. The ruling class used the idea of individual freedom and the right to prosper through one's own effort and good fortune to justify their new social status. Hierarchically structured differences in wealth, property and power characterised Western Australian society. In this context, the liberal ideas of equality of opportunity and freedom developed. Essentially this meant that equality existed only within established structures of inequality. Thus, the liberal idea of equality sanctioned the social relations of capitalist production.\(^ {47}\) In this context, it is possible to link the emergence of intelligence testing with the rise of meritocracy and the ideology of individualism.

The assumption that children succeed or fail because of greater or lesser amounts of ability is a part of common sense thinking about education. The ideology of ability assumes that the individual and not the social relations of society are the cause of a person's life situation. Young used the term

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'meritocracy' to describe those societies in which merit and individual effort and not family inheritance determined power and status. Harris explains the notion of meritocracy in more detail:

In more fleshed-out form, it claims that children differ in general mental ability or intellectual merit, that the relevant differences can be measured by standardised tests or cognitive or mental ability, and that the demands of school work increase in direct proportion to this particular merit such that the more able one is the longer one can stay on at school mastering increasingly difficult and more demanding content. It is then taken to follow that this intellectual merit is a reliable indicator of a person's productive value, and that schooling thus fairly and properly selects the more able people for the more intellectually demanding jobs: jobs which in turn bring with them high social status, economic and other privileges, and increased life chances along many dimensions. The end result of this is that merit, as measured by school performance, tends to become indicative of personal merit in a far wider sense, such that a large range of opportunities open up for those who have demonstrated particular capabilities at school.

From this perspective the idea of innateness of ability determined children's capacity to learn and find suitable employment. It was the logic of innateness that sustained the case for a differentiated school system. Hence, intelligence testing served to justify unequal educational outcomes. In Simon's words:

Not only do they provide the practical means of selection, and so smooth the functioning of the present system, but also the theories which have evolved as a result of testing justify a divided educational structure, and indeed lead logically to more exact and precise streaming than that already described.

Karier claimed that intelligence tests provided a 'scientific' rationale for educational practices designed to convince the 'lower classes' that their lot in life was the result of 'nature'. Karier claimed that educational testing supported the belief that people who were in positions of privilege, power and status are there because of superior talent or ability. The evidence

48 M. Young (1958), The rise of meritocracy 1870-2033, Thames and Hudson, London.
52 Ibid., p.137.
available shows that this is not the case. According to Harris, children from the middle and upper classes stay on at school longer than those children of lower social-economic classes who have similar ability.\textsuperscript{53} For instance, children of professional parents have twenty times greater chance of entering medical school than children from the working class. In short, schools reward children from privileged backgrounds.\textsuperscript{54}

Henderson maintained that the social changes related to industrialisation such as social mobility, geographical mobility, urbanisation, and bureaucratisation, posed a serious threat to the professional and upper middle classes.\textsuperscript{55} Henderson argued that the pressure for educational qualifications had more to do with controlling social mobility than producing a skilled population. For Henderson, the development of intelligence testing was a part of the struggle between the ruling class and working class over access to high status positions.\textsuperscript{56} In this context, the dominant class defined the behavioural characteristics deemed to be 'intelligent'.\textsuperscript{57} For this reason, Simon argued that 'intelligence' tests reflected what one person or group thought intelligence was. In other words, intelligence testing maintains the social privilege of some groups over others.\textsuperscript{58}

**SELECTION BY DIFFERENTIATION**

The previous section argued that the ideology of intelligence was an important technology in legitimising a hierarchically divided society. The science of mental testing and its underlying assumption of innate ability had far-reaching effects on the practice and theory of education. With the extension of Western Australian state secondary schooling, psychological theory played a central role in articulating a differentiated education system. As McCallum explained, psychological theory laid the foundation for 'a suitable institutional structure for processing and interpreting unequal patterns of achievement amongst children'.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{53} K. Harris (1982), p.106.  
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p.107.  
\textsuperscript{55} P. Henderson (1976), p.144.  
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p.145.  
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., p.147.  
\textsuperscript{58} B. Simon (1971), p.200.  
\textsuperscript{59} D. McCallum (1990), p.71.
This section examines how psychological theories postulating the fixed and determined nature of intelligence justified the educational practice of streaming. In Western Australian secondary schools, scholastic attainment supplemented by 'intelligence' tests provided a mechanism to divide children of a given age into different streams.60 Once incorporated into the education system the idea of ability operated to stratify the school population. What is significant, according to Simon, is how educationalists and psychologists readily adopted the assumptions underpinning the ideology of intelligence.61

THE OFFICIAL DISCOURSE OF ABILITY

Official discourse defined not only what people could say and think but, who could speak, when and with what authority.62 This part of the chapter examines how Western Australian educational reports articulated and legitimised the discourse of individual difference. A key argument is that educational reports played a significant hegemonic role in constructing particular 'truths' about the nature of intelligence and education.

With the opening up of Western Australian state secondary schooling promotion of children occurred by chronological age rather than a selective entry examination. However, once through the gates, children found themselves bombarded by a range of intelligence tests and evaluation procedures to measure intelligence, aptitudes and competence. School administrators used a host of individuating mechanisms to question, assess and scrutinise each child. The logic behind these dividing practices was to 'know' everything about the individual in order to administer the appropriate kind of schooling. As McCallum noted, 'selection by differentiation replaced selection by exclusion'.63

Educational reports on secondary education in Western Australia clearly demonstrated the preoccupation of authorities with matching children's 'natural' ability, courses of study and future vocational needs. As noted, Andrews Report on Educational Organization (1912) established a hierarchy of secondary schools to cater for the different abilities and aptitudes of children. Andrews envisaged that children should attend either an

61 Ibid., p.239.
63 D. McCallum (1990), p.98.
academic, professional or technical school. He believed that the aim of post-primary education was to fit children into their future work and social position with the 'least possible amount of re-adjustment'. The Wolff Report (1933) further buttressed the idea of individual ability. It expressed concern about the educability of children and whether the state was simply wasting its time and money in offering all children a high school education. For him, many children did not have the ability or temperament to 'imbibe a cultural education'. According to the Wolff Report (1933), the solution to the social problem of youth unemployment was best solved by making schools relevant to the needs of the child. This meant offering an education that 'trained' children for both a vocation and citizenship. While the Depression slowed the move toward secondary schooling for all, it paved the way for differentiating the school population. At the same time, it justified the requirements of society for a differentiated and pliable work force.

After the Second World War V. Box prepared the first significant report on Western Australian secondary education. The Box Report (1952) expressed concern about the increasing range of ability and attainment between the smartest and slowest pupils. The 1962 Melbourne conference on individual difference expressed a similar view. The conference claimed that a wide variability of performance existed at all levels of the primary school and this increased with age. The Box Report (1952) argued that all children should develop to the greatest extent of their innate abilities. This meant that secondary schools had a responsibility to cater to a large range of abilities, interests and aptitudes. It claimed that some children showed an interest in maths and science, others in arts and crafts, some were keen to master tools and not surprising, girls had a 'natural' inclination to those subjects related to the practice of the home. The remainder of this part seeks to explain how the ideology of intelligence justified different educational experiences for different classes of students.

The Box Report (1952) claimed that large secondary schools established a sense of normality because they offered a better distribution of abilities and sufficient numbers to group children of similar aptitudes. The twisted logic

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64 C. Andrews (1912), p.15.
65 A. Wolff (1933), p.x.
66 Ibid., p.ix.
of the report suggested that 'dull' children grouped in the same classroom had a better chance of feeling like 'normal human beings than abnormal freaks'. In reality the streaming of first year classes tended to serve administrative requirements for efficiency and control. As a part of the state's effort to rationally administer the population it was easier to stream 'special classes' in order to administer appropriate knowledge, values and attitudes. As a consequence, 'dull' children participated in workshop activities that better reflected their abilities. On the surface, the opening-up of secondary education created the impression that all children received fair treatment. In reality, equal opportunity simply meant the chance to 'wear the same uniform' and the opportunity to succeed or fail on the basis of individual ability.70

The *Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee* (1957-1958) under the chair of Dr. T.L. Robertson the Director of Secondary Education outlined the general aims of the secondary school curriculum in Western Australia.71 It fashioned a curriculum appropriate to the upper 85 per cent of the school population. Underlying the Committee's work was the assumption that secondary schools should provide a wide variety of courses for all boys and girls to satisfy the democratic demand for equal opportunity.72 The top 15 per cent of 'able' academic students received special supplementary courses and the 'opportunity to explore wider fields of experience including academic, professional, industrial and cultural pursuits'.73 Robertson clearly stated the Western Australian Education Department's position on ability and streaming:

It certainly is not the policy of this Department to place in every "class" children ranging from the very bright to subnormal. It is the policy that children of all normally educable groups shall attend the same school so that all may enjoy common experiences and mix with their own age groups ... The Department does not consider this can be achieved when students of I.Q. 130 and 90 are given exactly the same courses.74

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70 Ibid., p.2.
72 Ibid., p.2.
73 Ibid., p.3.
74 The Director-General of Education, Dr. Robertson in a letter to R.A. Fowler, Headmaster Bunbury High School, 30 May 1952. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 368/1951.
The *Neal Report* (1964) refined the organisational mechanism to differentiate students into different courses.\(^{75}\) It proposed that a typical first year intake of students should consist of five streams: stream 1 students of low ability and achievement approximating 25 to 30 per cent of the group; stream 2 students of average-minus ability and attainment comprising approximately 20 to 25 per cent of the group; stream 3 students of average ability and attainment comprising 20 to 25 per cent of the age group; stream 4 students of above average ability and attainment approximating 15 to 20 per cent of the group; and stream 5 students of high ability and attainment comprising 10 per cent of the age group.\(^{76}\) Information obtained from the primary school and 'such other testing as schools cared to carry out' determined student placement. A 'sorting out period' in the first three months of secondary schooling assisted the allocation process. As a result, the report recommended that secondary schools should place greater emphasis on 'educational guidance and the associated testing techniques to establish a record of information'.\(^{77}\)

The *Dettman Report* (1969) took an ambivalent, if not inconsistent position on the issue of intelligence and its implications for school organisation. The report stated that:

A student's achievement depends on his intelligence (or mental ability) and the effort which he makes to learn. His intelligence depends upon an innate capacity due to hereditary factors, and an acquired capacity (what he has learnt) influenced by environmental factors .... As these factors are not readily subject to control, it seems fruitless to attempt to determine to what extent achievement is dependent on each .... Hence it is considered to be more appropriate to treat students according to their achievement ... than intelligence, whether general ability or specific aptitude.\(^{78}\)

As a consequence, the *Dettman Report* (1969) claimed that 'intelligence was not a unitary trait but a combination of factors specific to a particular ability'.\(^{79}\) The report expressed concern about the variability of student performance within streamed classes. Research showed that streaming on general ability only marginally reduced variability of performance within

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\(^{76}\) Ibid., pp.22-23.  
\(^{77}\) Ibid., p.26.  
\(^{79}\) Ibid., p.78.
the mathematics class groups formed. With a sleight-of-hand, the Dettman Report (1969) turned to the idea of providing differentiated instruction by sub-dividing a class into groups 'according to ability so that each group received instruction at an appropriate level'. In the words of the report:

Individual differences among students should be catered for by the provision of differentiated courses. A multi-level approach is recommended for English, mathematics, science, and social studies, but a unit progress approach may prove more appropriate for other subjects.

Before the extension of mass compulsory secondary schooling, children were sorted for socio-economic roles on the basis of whether they had been to school or not. Then the sort of secondary school attended became crucial (academic, technical or agricultural schools). Within the 'comprehensive' secondary schools of the late 1950s, children were sorted into different streams on the basis of individual ability. Despite the rhetoric of equality of opportunity there was mounting sociological evidence to show that upper and middle class children benefited most from the education system. Thus, the science of individual ability played an important part in legitimising unequal educational outcomes for the poor, girls and Aborigines.

STRUCTURING SCHOOL LIFE

The purpose in this part is to show how Western Australian state secondary schools acted as major disciplinary sites in differentiating the school population. Socially invented practices such as ability grouping, grading, time-tabling and subject selection played a key role in dividing students. A major argument is that state secondary schools segregated children by offering them different sorts of school knowledge dependent upon their ability.

As argued in chapter three, the opening-up of state secondary schooling posed the problem of what to do with the huge number of students wanting access to the academic curriculum. The numerous reports into secondary education that came out in the 1950s and 1960s attempted to grapple with this issue. Educational administrators attempted to find a curriculum and

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80 Ibid., p.82.
81 Ibid., p.83.
82 Ibid., p.88.
method of school organisation that justified the exclusion of the majority of children from tertiary education. In short, secondary schools had the unenviable job of guaranteeing equal opportunity for every child and at the same time, selecting a few able students to attend university.

*Academic Versus Non-Academic Courses*

Children entering Western Australian state secondary schools were quickly categorised as either 'academic' or 'non-academic' students. Students entered non-academic vocational streams on the assumption that it satisfied their 'natural' interests. This group of students usually left school as soon as work became available. The early school leavers found their occupational choice confined to the manual labour market with the associated risk of unemployment. On the other hand, a smaller number of 'bright' students studied the academic curriculum to prepare for a comfortable white collar or professional job. As already argued, the academic curriculum carried greater social value because it matched the more prestigious knowledge to be found in the elite private secondary schools. 'High status' knowledge emphasised abstract thought, independent work, critical thinking and language skills that were appropriate to professional jobs. Thus, secondary schools played a significant role in determining future life experiences by dividing students into different ability groups.

The *Interim Report of the Secondary Schools Committee* (1958) stated that secondary schools should 'provide a wide variety of courses for all boys and girls according to interests and abilities'. It argued that differentiation within courses was necessary to cater for the academic stream and those leaving school at different age levels. The *Report on Secondary Education* (1963) elaborated the view that a flexible curriculum and examination system would allow greater freedom of choice. Both reports reinforced the idea that 'comprehensive' secondary schools should offer a variety of courses determined by individual ability and interest.

As noted, intelligence testing played a major part in classifying, sorting and arranging students on the problematic basis that the distribution of intelligence fitted a normal distribution curve. As a consequence, common sense dictated that children should be selected and streamed from

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84 Ibid., p.3.
the best to worst student. As noted, the educational practice of differentiating students dates back to the work of the early mental testers. People like Burt wanted to establish a tightly streamed education system. Burt explained:

The ideal plan would perhaps comprise a 'treble track' system - a series of backward classes for slow children, a series of advanced classes for quick children, both parallel to the ordinary series of standards for children of ordinary average ability.87

On this basis, Western Australian state secondary students studied either an academic, commercial or technical course. The academic course facilitated those students who planned to take the full five years of secondary education leading to a professional career. Children of 'high intelligence' who expected to further their education and take up more senior executive positions in industry and commerce enrolled in the commercial subjects. A third tier of non-academic boys and girls, approximately 50 per cent of the school population, studied practical subjects to prepare them for jobs at the bottom end of the labour market. For the few students interested in farm work, courses were available at Narrogin High School and Junior High Schools at Harvey, Pinjarra, Denmark and Margaret River.

The non-academic curriculum emphasised practical and social skills that prepared students for their future vocation and social position. The non-academic curriculum for boys included: woodwork, metalwork, technical drawing and practical science; oral and written expression with little attention to formal English; mathematics with an emphasis upon social and trade requirements; and social studies that focused on descriptive information rather than logic. For girls, the curriculum emphasised home science and subjects relevant to running an efficient home.88

As noted in chapter three, the introduction of the alternative High School Certificate for the non-academic student proved unpopular. Box, the superintendent of secondary education, argued that the only way to make the non-Junior award more attractive was by weakening the hegemonic control of the more prestigious Junior Certificate.89 However, parent-

87 Ibid., p.219.
88 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 490/1952.
89 V. Box Superintendent, of Secondary Education in a memo to D. McDonald, Superintendent Curriculum Research, 1 September 1954. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 490/1952
resistance to their children studying the less valued High School Certificate was widespread. In a letter to the press, one parent expressed concern with the 'watering down' of the academic syllabus for non-academic students:

More academic subjects are being discarded to make room for non-essentials. My daughter is in Form 2A at a metropolitan High School and is at present spending only 26 out of 40 possible periods a week on academic study.90

The hegemonic competitive academic curriculum, once the preserve of the elite private church schools became the yardstick to measure the social value of non-academic subjects. For some, the attempt to move toward a truly comprehensive or general education would lead to a lowering of educational standards and mediocrity. The W.A. Teachers' Journal and The Education Circular of W.A. were important voices in articulating the ideology of education for difference. In 1958, The Education Circular of W.A. hailed the views of Dr. J.B. Conant, a visiting American scholar under a Carnegie grant to the Educational Testing Service. Conant was a strong advocate of the role of scholastic aptitude tests and academic inventories in solving educational problems facing the state. Conant believed that it was in the interest of the individual and the state to identify and stream academic students into special classes. He argued that comprehensive secondary schools should not mix children of different academic abilities but encourage them to accept patterns of differentiation. In elaborating the hegemonic function of schools Conant claimed that 'the future factory owner and the future lathe operator should in the school learn to know and to respect each other'.91

Locally, Dr. A.W. Anderson of the University of Western Australia expressed similar sentiments in 1963. He argued that choice and flexibility in the curriculum was essential to maintaining academic standards. Anderson argued that any attempt to offer a general education 'would prevent the talented and academically able from using their special abilities'. His concern was that secondary schools might emphasise similarities to the almost complete exclusion of individual differences. Anderson feared that schools might resemble an 'amorphous welfare institution tending to evade the necessary rigours of academic discipline.'92 Anderson's views struck a responsive cord with the private church schools. In numerous public

forums the headmasters' of the elite private secondary schools advocated the merits of a differentiated school system. At a Perth Legacy Club meeting in September 1950, the headmaster of Guildford Grammar School, P. Thwaites argued that the only way to maintain the integrity of the academic curriculum was to 'recognise the complexity of individual personalities'. In his view, the English three tiered system of education' provided the best possible model of education because it kept the children of the less affluent and sophisticated families in their rightful place.  

**Differentiated Instruction: The Achievement Certificate**

Post-war education reports on secondary education in Western Australia recommended that the Junior Certificate be replaced by a cumulative grading and assessment system. *The Dettman Report* (1969) recommended that streaming on general ability be discontinued and instead:

- Individual differences among students should be catered for by the provision of differentiated courses.  
- Operational decisions, such as the grouping of students, should be based on their records of achievement.  
- Important decisions, such as the course placement of students should be regarded as flexible, being subject to change in the light of future achievement.  

The new Achievement Certificate course offered a multi-level approach to the core subjects of English, Science and Social Studies. On the assumption that there was a normal distribution of ability compared to the rest of the state this meant a distribution of 25 per cent (advanced), 50 per cent (intermediate), and 25 per cent (basic). In Mathematics, 25 per cent of the school population studied at the 'advanced', 'ordinary', 'elementary', and 'basic' levels respectively.  

An integral feature of the Achievement Certificate was the provision for students to move between levels. The Achievement Certificate intended that:

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95 Ibid., p.92.  
96 Ibid., p.93.  
Measures should be taken to facilitate movement between levels, particularly upward transfer. Cross-setting facilitates this movement by making it possible for a student to change levels in one subject without having to change in other subjects. A measure which could prove helpful in the case of upward transfers would be the provision of adjustment classes in which very small numbers of promising and willing students could be given additional help in adjusting to classes at higher levels.98

However, the adjustments envisaged by the Dettman Report (1969) did not materialise. A special committee of inquiry into the Achievement Certificate established by the State School Teachers' Union reported in 1976 that comparatively few children moved between levels of instruction because of the organisational difficulties of setting up and staffing adjustment classes. The committee of inquiry concluded that the Achievement Certificate model of different levels was simply a continuation of ability grouping in the guise of specific ability rather than general ability. In short, setting replaced streaming.99

The Dettman Report (1969) advocated the view that achievement rather than general ability should determine subject levels. Since general ability streaming proved ineffective in determining classroom performance, the report recommended that individual effort should be the major criteria of educational allocation. The Dettman Committee concluded that 'streaming served little if any useful purpose and may be harmful'.100 Dr. Conway, the headmaster of a Comprehensive High School in London, claimed that "early streaming merely transferred to within a school the defects of a selective system which educationalists had hoped to avoid in introducing comprehensive schools".101

As already noted, the Dettman Report (1969) position on intelligence was ambivalent and illogical. On the one hand, it condemned the use of streaming because it assumed that children were born with fixed amounts of innate general ability. On the other hand, the report wanted to organise schools to cater for individual achievement that reflected ability. The circular logic goes something like this: intelligence depends upon innate capacity; because intelligence is difficult to measure and is not always a good

100 The Dettman Report (1969), p.82.
101 Ibid., p.81.
indicator of how well the child will perform, it is necessary to measure achievement; since achievement is the best available means of measuring intelligence.

In 1976 the Board of Secondary Education attempted to clarify the distinction between achievement and ability:

In the assessment of students a distinction needs to be made between achievement and ability or potential. As the name implies, an Achievement Certificate reports a student's achievement and not his ability. The two are closely related in that a student's ability is an important factor affecting his achievement .... Assessments provided to the Board of Secondary Education by schools should accurately describe the achievement of students and not any attempt to assess ability by taking into account the conditions of learning.102

The Dettman Report (1969) recommended that students' should be graded into three levels: 25 per cent of the school population were in the top A level, 50 per cent B level, and 25 per cent C level. This model assumed that all children were working at the level appropriate to their ability. However, in the event that a student did not make the grade there was an allowance for an F - fail.103 Underpinning this distribution of grades was the assumption that a normal distribution of intelligence existed. While intelligence tests of the standardised sort have largely been replaced by aptitude and achievement tests, a strong belief in the normal distribution of intelligence remained. These tests were primarily concerned with selecting and sorting students into different classes. In this way, Western Australian state secondary schools used the ideology of intelligence testing to legitimise existing social differences.104

The Dettman Report (1969) also recommended that procedures should be set in place to make sure that the assessment of students in one school were comparable to other schools. Employers and higher institutions of learning wanted to know how reliable the Achievement Certificate was from one school to another. The Dettman Report (1969) feared that if this problem was not resolved, a variety of external examinations would be imposed on

students for selection purposes.\textsuperscript{105} The \textit{Dettman Report} (1969) referred to the Scottish \textit{Fyfe Report} (1947) on the issue of comparability:

\begin{quote}
The results of research and the experience of examining bodies show that teachers are, as a rule, very accurate in placing their pupils in an order of merit; indeed we are satisfied that in this respect the teachers' grading is more trustworthy than any other.\textsuperscript{106}
\end{quote}

While the \textit{Dettman Report} (1969) was generally happy with teachers' ranking of children, it recommended that comparability tests were the only safeguard to guarantee standards. These 'comparability surveys' provided information on how a group of students in one school performed in comparison with all students in the state. The purpose of these tests was to 'give meaning' to a students level compared to similar levels in other schools. Comparability tests sought to assess understanding rather than factual knowledge. The tests were of the type constructed by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton in the United States and called the Sequential Tests of Education Progress (S.T.E.P.). On the basis of the test results, the Board of Secondary Education recommended to each school the number of students to be placed in each particular subject level. The number of students allocated to each level reflected the group's performance compared to the performance of all other students in the state.\textsuperscript{107}

Strangely, the non-competitive academic curriculum did not receive the same intense scrutiny. The non-core subjects or options were those subjects selected by the student for a total of 10 periods per week compared to 36 periods per week for the core subjects. The Education Department argued that 'sound principles of learning' determined the grouping of students in the core subjects. However, it was willing to overlook the same criteria for the optional subjects. In the option subjects individual differences were to "be effected in heterogenous groups without the formation of distinct achievement groups".\textsuperscript{108} One can only assume that the optional subjects did not have the same status as the core subjects or the practice of ability grouping of students into levels served purposes other than educational ends.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{The Dettman Report} (1969), p.106.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., p.104.
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{The Education Circular, W.A.}, (1971), vol.LXXIII, no.1-11, p.5.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p.4.
One critic of the Achievement Certificate summarised the ideological function of the competitive multi-level approach to school organisation in the following way:

It seems to me the Achievement Certificate makes schooling a competition with the emphasis on whom you can beat rather than a journey along a continuum with the emphasis on how far you can get.\(^{109}\)

**Gifted and talented children**

The *Dettman Report* (1969) further differentiated the school population on the basis of 'giftedness' and 'handicap'. According to the report the gifted and handicapped child 'posed special problems because they were not numerous enough to form a special class'. The *Dettman Report* (1969) recommended that the Guidance Branch identify the gifted or handicapped child so that special subject classes could cater for their needs.\(^{110}\) It claimed that the modification to the comprehensive school principle whereby certain government secondary schools were developing specialities for students with gifts in specific areas represented a move in the right direction.\(^{111}\)

In 1978, the Education Department established a Committee on Gifted Children. The Committee on Gifted Children used Terman's guideline that children above an intelligence of 140 had the potential to be the 'nations' greatest'. In the committee's view the 'Sputnik' era and the urgent need for scientific and technical skills stimulated the search for the state's brightest students. The committee believed that some kind of initiative at the state level was necessary.\(^{112}\) As a result, the Education Department issued a policy statement on *Gifted and Talented Children in Western Australian Schools* (1978). The document defined the 'gifted' child as:

... one who demonstrates outstanding capacities and/or potential in intellectual skills, creative thought or action, or areas of special ability. The term 'talented' is used to describe a child who may possess an outstanding ability in a particular skill area. The terms 'gifted' and 'talented' are not mutually exclusive.\(^{113}\)

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\(^{109}\) B. Bowden quoted in *The W.A. Teachers' Journal* (1968), vol.58, no.4, p.2.


\(^{111}\) Ibid., p.91.

\(^{112}\) EDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1140/1978.

\(^{113}\) *The Education Circular, W.A.* (1978), vol.80, no.7, p.171.
The Education Department gave two reasons for offering gifted and talented students specialised attention. First, schools had a responsibility to provide individual development for all children. Second, the education system had to produce 'expertise and intellectual excellence' to benefit the whole state.114 Some educational administrators like Dr. D. Mossenson, the Director-General of Education, believed that the comprehensive school model pursued the notion of equality, at the expense of the 'gifted' child.115 In a paper delivered to the Fourth World Congress on Gifted and Talented Children in 1981, Mossenson encouraged a return to the ideals of 'quality', 'individual excellence' and 'dignity of work'. While Mossenson acknowledged the reactionary sentiments of his views, he believed it would draw support from many 'thoughtful' members of the public.116 For Mossenson, the top 5 per cent of the school population deserved the same attention, funding and staffing as those children labelled 'disadvantaged'.117

Teachers faced the problem of identifying and selecting students to participate in specialised 'gifted' programs. The Education Department acknowledged that there was no absolute definition of 'gifted' and that the line of demarcation between the gifted and non-gifted would be determined by those working in the field.118 According to the experts, the characteristics of general intelligence, special abilities and creativity were good indicators of 'giftedness'. Intelligence tests were widely used to measure 'giftedness' because there were no ready made tests to assess the latter two criteria. The Education Department recommended that the best measure of 'giftedness' was likely to be teacher-principal-parent opinion.119 This view adds weight to Simon's claim that intelligence is nothing more than what the testers think it is and as a consequence, can only be "a shot in the dark".120

In a follow up policy statement on The Education of Gifted and Talented Students (1981), the Education Department noted that all Australian education systems were moving toward more positive intervention programs for the intellectually talented. The policy stated:

114 Ibid., p.171.
116 Ibid., p.4.
117 Ibid., p.25.
118 The Education Circular, W.A. (1978), vol.80, no.7, p.172
119 Ibid., p.172.
120 B. Simon (1971), p.69.
In the Department there is now a measure of acceptance of the view that the major concern is for the upper 1 per cent to 5 per cent of each age group, where inclusion in the group is determined on the basis of a variable range of personal and socio-psychological factors. Since it is more difficult to identify the very young gifted student, largely because appropriate instruments and procedures are not available, it will be Departmental policy to provide special programmes for about 5 per cent of each age group at the junior-primary level of education and for about 1 per cent at the upper-secondary level.\(^{121}\)

In February 1980, the Department established the Gifted and Talented Children's Programme Project. The project staff consisted of primary, secondary and early childhood specialists, educational psychologists, counsellors and resource specialists. This group of experts identified gifted students and developed appropriate programs. In 1981 eight senior high schools devised special programs to allow gifted children "to progress through the secondary curriculum at a rate and to a depth suited to their intellectual ability". At Girrawheen Senior High School in the northern suburbs of Perth, a group of intellectually gifted students from the surrounding Metropolitan North-East region formed a family-group class for their Year 8 to Year 12 classes. The 'family-group' allowed gifted children the opportunity to pursue accelerated programs in the core subjects and in areas of special interest to them.\(^{122}\)

In conclusion, people's faith in the democratic ideal of comprehensive secondary education for all proved nothing more than an illusion. As it turned out, the application of the science of individual difference effectively constructed an organisational pattern that produced unequal educational outcomes. Children placed in the gifted program usually gained access to the upper secondary academic courses that in turn gave access to universities. Instead of promoting greater equality, Western Australian state secondary schools provided the institutional mechanisms to legitimise a differentiated social structure that benefited a few at the expense of the majority.

**Vocational guidance**

So far, this chapter has focused on the role of intelligence testing in allocating children into different school classes and courses of study. This part seeks to explain how the testing movement and vocational guidance


\(^{122}\) Ibid., p.116.
differentiated students for the world of work. The vocational guidance
movement assumed that a hierarchy of 'natural ability' determined who
got what jobs and this was determined by individual strengths and
weaknesses. On this basis, some children got well paid jobs and others got
no job at all. The assumption is that only a limited number of students are
capable of doing a limited number of well-paid jobs. It just so happened that
the distribution of 'natural ability' among the school population 'corresponded' to the capitalist division of labour. Therefore, school
guidance officers with their barrage of intelligence tests, personality
inventories and aptitude tests convinced children and their parents that it
was 'nature' and not the economic system that determined what kind of job
they would get, if at all. This was the primary hegemonic function of the
vocational guidance movement.

Vocational guidance became a part of the Western Australian education
scene in 1941. In co-operation with the Youth Employment Committee of
the Department of Employment, J. McCall, who later became the Director of
Child Welfare, acted as a careers' officer in metropolitan secondary schools.
In 1943, he became the permanent Careers Research Officer in the Education
Department.\footnote{The Education Circular, W.A. (1971), vol.LXXIII, p.24.}

In the aftermath of the 1930s depression and the Second World War,
vocational guidance aimed to strengthen the relationship between schools
and the world of work. Under the direction of McCall and the Perth
Technical College Testing Officer, eleven officers from the teaching service
trained in the field of vocational guidance. The primary role of guidance
officer's was to interview students to assess their ability and suitability for
different sorts of work. Guidance officer's would then discuss the result of
the interview with the child's parents. In 1944, about 4,000 students received
vocational assessment and advice. By 1945 all metropolitan secondary
schools had a guidance officer. Increasingly, principals found the guidance
officer to be a useful referral point for testing and assessing problem
children.\footnote{Ibid., p.214.}

As noted, group intelligence testing became a way of life for all children
transferring from grade seven to secondary school. By 1949, the number of
students processed totalled 3,000 secondary and 2,700 grade seven students.
As a result of this work, the Guidance Branch identified four categories of children: 1) the physically handicapped for whom special provision existed; 2) the socially maladjusted who received special attention from the Child Guidance Clinic; 3) children of normal intelligence with educational retardation for whom existing provision was inadequate; and 4) the mentally handicapped. Much of the guidance work involved preparing a dossier on the potential, attitudes, behaviour, health and ambition of every child leaving the primary school.

Secondary schools administered a battery of intelligence, personality and vocational aptitude tests to second year students. A series of attainment tests in mathematics, reading, English and spelling provided further detailed information to determine a child's aptitude and ability for particular sorts of work. On the surface, students and parents readily accepted the fate that science determined for them. Chapter five argues that establishing compliance to established social arrangements was a major function of secondary schooling.

Testing became an important cog in the machinery of the vocational guidance movement. As noted, by 1967 the Guidance Branch had a permanent home at Claver House in Perth employing 293 people, including 58 guidance officers and 17 teacher counsellors. Against this background, the remainder of this part seeks to explain how vocational guidance legitimised the social differentiation of the school population.

At first, vocational guidance concentrated on careers counselling. Under the influence of the testing movement, the mental health movement and child-centred education, vocational guidance broadened its horizon to take account of the 'total' child. As a consequence, vocational guidance monitored the educational, social and personal development of each student. If vocational guidance was going to be effective the school psychologist needed to know about the specific problems, desires, frustrations and ambitions of each pupil. According to the Education Department, the role of the guidance officer began with the individual and

125 Ibid., p.214.
126 Ibid., p.215.
127 Ibid., p.215.
their unique set of problems. The Education Department claimed that the special function of the guidance service:

... is to nourish the processes by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and utilise his abilities, aptitudes, interests and attitudinal patterns in relation to his aspirations.

In reality, this meant helping students to find a job suited to their social station in life. Underpinning the guidance movement was the view that schools must fit the child into an established and unquestioned set of social arrangements. In this situation, the role of the guidance officer was to help the child make a decision about their future career. In making decisions, the child's circumstances and 'natural' capacities demonstrated in a series of intelligence, personality and aptitude tests received special attention.

In getting to know each child, guidance officers' assumed a number of things. They believed that effective surveillance began at pre-school and continued to adulthood. For the guidance movement, ongoing monitoring was essential if the child was going to be 'normalised' to 'the developmental behaviours dictated by a urban, industrialized and technological culture'. The vocational guidance movement claimed that guidance 'must be a continuous, systemic ongoing process'.

In this context, guidance officers built a comprehensive profile of each child using a range of techniques including observation, cumulative records, interviews with family, staff, peers and others, conferences with other agencies, interviews with the subject and psychological testing. Guidance officers used this information to dissect the physical, affective, social, linguistic and educational characteristics of the child. Using the constructed profile, the guidance officer made an informed hunch about the child and how he/she fitted in compared to the 'norm'. Once diagnosed, a host of corrective practices normalised the child into a set of pre-ordained hegemonic values, attitudes and behaviours belonging to the dominant social classes. The knowledge gleaned from the various technologies of

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129 Ibid., p.15.
130 Ibid., p.17.
131 Ibid., p.19.
132 Ibid., p.45.
133 Ibid., p.46.
surveillance became the basis for student counselling. In general, counselling tended to fall into one of four categories: 1) vocational guidance that acquainted the student with the nature of work, prerequisite requirements, and relevant procedures for entry into jobs; 2) personal guidance that focused on interpersonal conflicts, behavioural disorders and adjustment problems; 3) physical disabilities; 4) and educational guidance that sought to advise students on the range of courses, subjects and options available to them.134

The power of the guidance movement was not so much with its capacity to impose particular world views on the individual but to establish consent from within. At the heart of the guidance movement was the hegemonic function of developing 'positive' and 'responsible' attitudes toward the education system. Paralleling this educative role was the process of 'vocationalisation' whereby children learnt the 'values, knowledge and skills appropriate to the world of work'. Essentially, the guidance movement concentrated on 'character education' and the production of good workers and loyal citizens. In the words of Miel and Brogan:

We need a world with fewer hostile people and more warm and friendly ones, fewer lonely people and more who can communicate with others, fewer incapable people and more who know how to act responsibly, fewer people who don't care and more who have concern for the common welfare.135

Secondary schooling sought to establish hegemony by legitimising the ideology of 'natural' ability. The guidance officer acted as a mirror in assisting the child to bring forth the interests, abilities, experiences and personality that 'nature' determined for them.136 Basically, this meant accepting one's station in life. The result of all this scientific effort was to reinforce fairly well established views of educational inequality. That is, children of the rich are probably brighter than working class children and definitely smarter than Aboriginal children. As a result, the science of intelligence testing generated, on the whole, the same sort of social and economic stratification that existed before the universalisation of state secondary education.

135 Ibid., p.44.
136 Ibid., p.19.
CHAPTER FIVE

SCHOOLING FOR SOCIAL ORDER

INTRODUCTION
YOUTH, SOCIAL ORDER AND SCHOOLING
IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL HARMONY
CHAPTER FIVE

SCHOOLING FOR SOCIAL ORDER

It [discipline problems] is not a movement of a militant political nature challenging the established function of schooling. While students may be more critical of the way they are being educated, the most difficult problems involve students relatively inarticulate of their proper role in society.\(^1\)

Our curriculum is so framed that in following its teachings our scholars learn the attributes of loyalty and patriotism and have never yet failed to show that they have profited by the lessons given in these subjects.\(^2\)

INTRODUCTION

With the extension of state secondary schooling after the Second World War pedagogical practices aimed to win the 'heart' rather than the flesh of the child. As already argued in chapter two, secondary schools are major disciplinary sites that shape children into governable or 'docile bodies'. They shape the values, knowledge and behaviour of young people in the interest of the established social order. In a democracy, the self-regulating child who is conscious of his/her social obligations is of infinitely greater value to society than the child who has to be coerced. This chapter examines some of the mechanisms of moral regulation used in Western Australian secondary schools after the Second World War. The first section outlines the nature of the youth delinquency problem, why it became a matter of public concern and how the state intervened to control the physical, social and moral well being of Western Australia's youth. The second section argues that Western Australian secondary schools inculcated children with the ideals of patriotism, loyalty and citizenship. The Western Australian social studies syllabus provides an interesting case study to illustrate the ideological role of the secondary school curriculum in producing children with the habits, attitudes and desires characteristic of the bourgeois social order.

\(^1\) The Education Department of Western Australia (1972), Discipline in secondary schools in Western Australia: report of the government secondary schools discipline committee (The Dettman Report), Education Department of W.A., Perth, p.118.
\(^2\) The West Australian (1948), 2 January, p.5.
YOUTH, SOCIAL ORDER AND SCHOOLING

DELINQUENCY, PUBLIC CONCERN AND STATE INTERVENTION

In an address to the Perth Legacy Club in 1943, Major H.A. Corbett claimed that public outrage over youth crime and delinquency was nothing new. In his words:

If people thought there was a time when children did not cause difficulties to the law, they were much mistaken. A special word was invented for the trouble in Australia - larrikinism! Boys and young men had their "pushes". There were gangs of young men and boys who wandered about in the streets at night damaging property, insulting property holders and terrifying women and girls.3

In 1943, the Honorary Royal Commission appointed to inquire into youth delinquency in Western Australia recommended the establishment of a Child Council consisting of 'those socialising instruments of government concerned with separate aspects of youth welfare'.4 These socialising agencies included the Education Department, the Child Welfare Department, the Children's Court, the Youth Section of the Department of Labour and National Service, the Medical Department and the Police Department. The Child Council acknowledged that state intervention in the social life of children was necessary 'to acquire' knowledge of the circumstances of each case of delinquency so that sustained effort at reform might be effective'.5 R.E. Halliday, Chairman of the State Child Council claimed that the most controversial issue in the field of juvenile delinquency in Australia was the extent to which the state must assume control of the detection and treatment of delinquents.6 In this context, the Royal Commission recommended that schools should play a key role in socialising children. In other words, it was deemed desirable to institutionalise all children from an early age until they reached the compulsory school leaving age. Even then, the state had the responsibility of monitoring the social activities of those children outside compulsory institutions. For this reason the government established Police Boys' Clubs throughout the state to supervise the leisure time of youth. The popular

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3 The West Australian (1943), 27 January.
4 The West Australian (1943), 10 June.
5 Ibid.,
6 Memo to the Minister of Education, 16 December 1947. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 488/1948.
press argued that the school leaving age should rise from fifteen to sixteen years of age to guarantee the effective surveillance of youth.7

By 1950, community youth programs were expanding so rapidly that the Associated Youth Committee was established to oversee those voluntary bodies working in youth service. Towards the end of 1950, the Education Department was approached by the Associated Youth Committee to operate community centres at Fremantle Boys School and Princess May Girls School. A full-time district youth organiser was appointed to the Fremantle District to co-ordinate the programs. This experiment proved so successful that the Youth Education Branch of the Education Department was established in 1951 with the appointment of a Youth Advisory Teacher on a full-time basis. By 1958, twenty three District Youth Centres under the guidance of District Youth Organisers were located in metropolitan and country areas.8

In 1958 the Adult Education Board of Western Australia arranged a series of weekly lectures on the subject of juvenile delinquency. Notable community leaders including Professor W. MacDonald, Professor of Child Health in the University Medical School; Dr. D. Moynagh, Director-General of Mental Health; Dr B. Buttsworth, British Medical Association; Rev. K. Dowding, Australian Labor Party; Dr. W. Wyatt, Child Guidance Clinic; J. O'Brien, Commissioner of Police; J. Yates, Education Department; J. McCall, Director of the Child Welfare Department and others addressed the issue of youth misbehaviour. The forum recommended that a widely representative committee inquire into the prevention of juvenile crime.9

In 1958 the Premier, A. Hawke established a committee consisting of the Commissioner of Police, the Director of Mental Health Services, the Director of the Child Welfare Department and the Director of Education. The committee's terms of reference included the 'causes, 'prevention' and 'remedies' of youth delinquency. Before addressing these issues the committee outlined the nature of the juvenile delinquency problem in Western Australia. Evidence before the committee showed that: 1) delinquency in Western Australia was increasing relative to the juvenile population; 2) the incidence of misbehaviour among boys was more than

7 The West Australian (1943), 10 June.
8 Department of Physical Education and Health Studies WACE (1982), The development of youth education in Western Australia between 1940 and 1980, WACE, Nedlands Campus.
9 EDF, AN 45/13 ACC 1606 FILE No. 1581/1958.
six times the incidence among girls; 3) the incidence of misbehaviour among girls had a relative increase of fifty per cent compared with that of boys; and 4) the proportion of children offending against the law was five times greater in the city than in the country. For boys, stealing accounted for 66 per cent of all charges, offences with motor vehicles 14 per cent, followed by wilful damage 4 per cent, liquor and betting offences 4 per cent, disorderly conduct 3 per cent and sex offences 2 per cent. In the case of girls, sexual misbehaviour accounted for 47 per cent of all girls' offences, stealing 36 per cent, followed by similar percentages as boys for the other types of offences. In general, stealing and illegal use of motor vehicles accounted for 80 per cent of offences by boys while sexual misbehaviour and stealing totalled 83 per cent of all offences for girls. In short, it was okay for boys to have sex but not to get caught stealing. In contrast, the sexual behaviour of girls aroused considerable public anxiety.\(^{10}\)

In the interest of social harmony, the state deliberately intervened in the private life of families. In most cases state intervention involved working class and Aboriginal families whose values, attitudes and behaviour did not match those of the 'respectable' middle class. In Foucault's language, the state attempted to reduce the 'gaps' and 'correct' those families that failed to measure up to the rule.\(^{11}\) For this reason, M. Little the Director of Education argued in 1943 that "the state cannot relieve itself of its responsibility in the reclamation of these unfortunate children". For Little, this meant re-educating the child with trained teachers who had "a sympathetic and a scientific understanding of the problems of youth".\(^{12}\)

In April 1962, the Minister for Education, E.H.M. Lewis appointed a committee to investigate and report to the Government on ways and means of promoting youth education in Western Australia. The appointment of the committee was the result of a request from the Associated Youth Committee, acting through the National Fitness Council of Western Australia. The investigation was largely in response to the publication in November 1958, of the United Kingdom Report of the Youth Service of England and Wales (the Albemarle Report). The primary purpose of the Albemarle Report was to address the growing youth problem generated by rapid social and economic changes occurring in Britain. The subsequent

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Western Australian *Youth Service* (1962) report expressed concern about the large number of young people who were outside the influence of existing youth agencies. The committee argued that Government intervention and 'wisely planned assistance could effect the required improvement in the provision of youth services'. The report recommended the establishment of a co-ordinated Youth Service directed toward the large number of youth no longer catered for by formal educational institutions. It recommended that a controlling body known as the Council for Youth Services be responsible for formulating a comprehensive youth plan.13

In 1969, public concern about the 'youth problem' re-surfaced. This time, pressure from the Federated Chamber of Commerce of Western Australia forced the Minister for Police J. Craig to establish a Vandalism Research Committee under the chair of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, A.L.M. Wedd in May 1969. The committee recommended that the school curriculum should inculcate children with an 'awareness of their role in society relative to proper conduct'. The report claimed that children had too much uncontrolled leisure time. It urged the education system to provide more civic minded activities to engender a sense of 'responsibility and respect for citizenship'.14 The Superintendent of Youth Education recommended additional curriculum activities and the appointment of Youth Education Officers to co-ordinate the integration of each individual into adult society. As a result, the Youth Education Branch placed a full-time Youth Education Officer into the senior high schools. The main task of the Youth Education Officer was to assist young school leavers in adjusting to employment and leisure and establishing appropriate social relationships.15

**STUDENT RESISTANCE**

As already argued in chapter two, schooling is a site of broader societal contradiction, struggle and resistance. This part of the chapter claims that Western Australian state secondary schools are sites of contestation and student resistance. Whereas, liberal democratic accounts of schooling emphasise harmony and consensus, this part of the thesis argues that

13 Report of the investigating committee appointed by the Minister for Education Mr. E.H.M. Lewis (1962), *A Youth Service for Western Australia*, Government Printer, Perth.
14 EDF, AN 45/13 ACC 1606 FILE No. 1618/1966.
classrooms are an arena or site of contestation between teachers and students. Drawing on Willis' work on student resistance, the central argument is that students and teachers are 'worlds apart' and this leads to contestation in the classroom setting. In the words of Waller:

> Teachers and pupils confront each other in the school with an original conflict of desires and however much that conflict may be reduced in amount, or however much it may be hidden, it still remains.

Wood argued, that the teacher's successful survival in the classroom depended on 'controlling, handling, avoiding, masking, weathering or neutralising any incident that fractures the teacher's peace'. According to Henry, Knight, Lingard and Taylor these coping strategies became so closely interrelated with teaching that they blended into the teaching process itself. From the students point of view misbehaviour is often a reaction to boredom and oppressive authority. Connell et al. argued that student disruption in the classroom reflected a "particular relationship, a form of resistance to conventional schooling". They did not believe that misbehaviour was some kind of 'irrational, pathological failure on the part of the individual student'. For them, student negativism was an attempt to escape from an 'oppressive, stifling environment with some degree of self-respect'. According to Connell and his colleagues, working class children's troublemaking is symptomatic of an 'indirect' and 'inarticulate' form of class struggle.

In response to concerns expressed by the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia, a committee under the chair of the Director-General of Education, H.W. Dettman, investigated the discipline problem in Western Australian state secondary schools. The *Discipline in Secondary Schools Report* (1972) outlined its concern about children's behaviour:

> Most of the problems faced by teachers in Western Australian high schools are essentially similar to those faced by their predecessors in earlier decades. There would appear, however, to be a new dimension in high school student

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17 Ibid., p.49.
18 Ibid., p.52.
19 Ibid., p.54.
21 Ibid., p.87.
behaviour. To the problems of behaviour that have always been associated with adolescence has been added a tendency to question the authority of the teacher. This undoubtedly reflects a tendency in society generally to question social order and authority.\footnote{The Dettman Report (1972), p.xiii.}

The Discipline in Secondary Schools Report (1972) gauged the nature of the discipline problem through a questionnaire that asked teachers to rate behaviour according to 'frequency, seriousness, troublesomeness and pattern of occurrence'.\footnote{Ibid., p.111.} In summarising the results, the report claimed that the most frequently occurring discipline problems named by teachers included failure to come properly equipped for lessons, non-compliance with school rules (inadequate standards of dress, smoking and so on), completing classroom work of quality considerably less than the student's capability, creating a disturbance in class (laughing, giggling, whispering, etc.), and coming late for lessons. The report claimed, that these behaviours were increasing compared to other discipline problems.\footnote{Ibid., p.114.}

According to the report, teachers' believed that student apathy and lack of interest in schooling were major problems. Teachers' expressed concern about the lack of effort in completing tasks, half-hearted response to teacher questions and withdrawal from classroom activities and general unresponsiveness. The report claimed that while this kind of behaviour was not serious, it was "symptomatic of the real malaise that many observers feel has infected school systems within the past decade". The committee expressed concern that teachers' did not view the general detachment and alienation of children as a more serious illustration of 'maladjustment'.\footnote{Ibid., p.117.} The report referred to the "prevailing apathy towards school-based activities among a large segment of the high school student population".\footnote{Ibid., p.110.} Of particular concern to the committee was the unwillingness of many students to compete for high academic marks. As already mentioned, the gap between the myth and reality of secondary schooling appeared to be a major reason for the degree of youth alienation. While more education promised social mobility, the reality was very different. The impact of technology and rising youth unemployment created
an increasingly disaffected group of people who failed to see the relevance of schooling.

The following two case studies illustrated the nature of student resistance in Western Australian secondary schools:

Case Study 1

1970 - Truant - taken to court - put on probation.
1971 - Special class.
   - Already a record of truancy - "on probation'.
   - Continued and continual lateness and absences.
   - Suspected of theft.
   - Apparently out late at night.
   - Very disruptive in class.
     18/02: disobedience and out of bounds - warned
     24/03: persistent and wilful disobedience - caned - 2
     07/05: interfering with a students bag
     11/06: playing on bikes - serious warning
     29/06: shooting pea-shooter in class - caned - 2
     02/08: truant and putting stones on railway line
     12/10: persistently and wilfully arriving half hour to one and a half hours late - caned - 2

December obtained job at pump hire firm ...lost the job when, after being reprimanded mildly for failure to carry out an errand and then lying about it, he did not return to work.

1972 returned to school ... finally taken to court with failure to attend school.27

Case Study 2

8.3.71 In the company of another girl Karen had threatened three girls who responded to a call for information relating to vandalism in the girls' toilet. The three girls had been too terrified to come to school alone.

27.7.71 Karen was insolent to a male maths teacher, refusing to do any work for him. She also skipped two periods of dressmaking. By now she had been sent to the Principal Mistress so many times for misbehaving in class that it had become necessary to send for her mother.

29.7.71 A home economics teacher sent Karen to the office stating that Karen had turned up for lessons again with no work. The teacher reported that she had had no work all year and now could not put up with her "idleness and rudeness combined".

16.8.71 Karen threatened a first year student and demanded that she come to the toilets at lunch time or else she would "get" her.

When called to the school Karen's father said that they were at their wits end. Karen had been very troublesome at home, involved with boys, and police were investigating. Her parents want to place her in a home. The Principal Mistress advised the

27 Deputy Principal David Carlson, Cannington Senior High School to the Secretary Schools' Discipline Committee, 31 May 1972. EDF, AN 45/18 ACC 1668 FILE No. 331/1972.
parents to approach the Home of the Good Shepherd. They did and a social worker there became interested in the case. For a time Karen was not in so much trouble at school, but by the end of the year was again becoming aggressive with others while her behaviour in school was rude and disruptive.

A first year girl was brought to the Principal Mistress crying because Karen had threatened her and demanded that she fight. The Principal Mistress approached the Women Police. During the next three weeks Karen was sent to the office on several occasions for disruptive behaviour in class.

In front of a large crowd of students after school Karen participated in a fight with a first year girl whom she had apparently provoked earlier in the week.28

The Committee expressed concern that some children's unwillingness to submit to the authority of the education system posed a significant long term problem for the state. The Discipline in Secondary Schools Report (1972) argued that outward signs of rebellion were much easier to identify, isolate and treat. However, alienated children who chose to remain aloof and uninterested posed a more serious challenge to the school's authority.

Teachers believed that student misbehaviour directly eroded traditional teacher authority. Misbehaviour such as creating a disturbance in class, complying with authority slowly and tardiness in responding to calls for silence challenged the established patterns of school control, purpose and operation.29 The report claimed that if a clash of wills occurred, the teacher usually prevailed, but not before the student made at least a token resistance.

Eager to reinforce the authority of schools, the Western Australian Government passed legislation in 1982 permitting the expulsion of disruptive students. Two years later the Beazley Report (1984) reinforced the right of schools to suspend disruptive students.30 Hyde and Robson's analysis of student suspension in Western Australian Government secondary schools showed the following suspension rates in the period 1968 to 1971 and 1981 to 1983:

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28 EDF, AN 45/18 ACC 1668 FILE No. 331/1972.
Suspension Rates for all Government Secondary Schools in Western Australia 1968-1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>No. of Students Suspended</th>
<th>Suspension Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>46,152</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>49,117</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>50,769</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>53,214</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>66,003</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>68,257</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>70,840</td>
<td>212 (450 projected)</td>
<td>.64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistics indicate that there was a fivefold increase in suspension rates in Western Australian state secondary schools in the period 1968 to 1983. This totals 400 student suspensions out of a school population of over 70,000 students. The study found that only a small number of schools were responsible for this general increase. Disobedience accounted for 45.8 per cent of suspensions in 1971 and 47.4 per cent in the period 1980 to 1983. The suspension rate for boys was twice that of girls, with 78 per cent of all suspensions occurring among year 9 and 10 students.

Hyde and Robson believed that suspensions were symbolic rituals that aimed to reinforce the authority of schools. They argued that many suspensions were 'symbolic' acts that sounded a warning to other students and at the same time, restored order and staff morale within the school. However, Hyde and Robson argued that 'symbolic' suspensions came at a 'cost' to the school. While the suspension boosted staff morale, it usually hardened the student's attitude to school and created peer support and sympathy. On the other hand, the 'cumulative' type of suspension was a consequence of a lengthy process of confrontation between a student and the authority of teachers' and school administrators'. Hyde and Robson believed that the cumulative suspension was the culmination of a student's frustration and rejection that usually lead to a 'sensational outburst'.

Truancy is another indicator of the level of student alienation. The recent Western Australian Parliamentary Select Committee Into Youth Affairs

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31 Ibid., pp.13-14.
32 Ibid., p.46.
33 Ibid., p.32.
34 Ibid., pp.18-19.
35 Ibid., p.31.
36 Ibid., pp.35-36.
revealed that absentees average 10 per cent daily or 25,000 to 28,000 children. The majority of absentees identified alienation as the major reason for non-attendance. The report estimated that 30 per cent or 7,000 to 8,000 of these students were 'chronic non-attenders' who spent the day wandering the streets. According to the report, labelling poorly performing students had a negative effect on their self-esteem and 'commitment to the goals and norms of school'.

One Deputy Principal told the Committee that:

We are seeing the introduction of a subculture which supports students who do not go to school, who fail, who misbehave and who do not achieve.

Evidence before the committee demonstrated a correlation between socioeconomic disadvantage, poor academic achievement and student alienation. In the poorer northern suburbs of Balga and Girrawheen, staff analysis of academic results in the senior secondary schools revealed:

- Forty-four per cent of Balga students and 36 per cent of Girrawheen students do not achieve a D grade at a Stage 6 Unit in English. This is significantly higher than other schools and the State average which is 24 per cent.
- Forty-nine per cent of Balga students and 56 per cent of Girrawheen students in Year 10 do not achieve beyond Stage 4 Mathematics, the State average being 38 per cent.
- Nearly 50 per cent of Year 8 Balga and Girrawheen students have a reading age of two years below the expected reading age for this cohort.
- This data indicates that Balga students have less likelihood of attaining tertiary status; 60 per cent of Year 12 students applied for a tertiary institution; 33 per cent obtained offers. State figures were 68.7 per cent and 63.7 per cent respectively.

According to the Executive Officer to the State Advisory Committee on Young Offenders, students began a cycle of truancy and criminal activity because they did not see the relevance of schooling. In his words:

Young people seek alternative forms of status, enjoyment and challenges through being on the street with their peer group instead of through the education system.

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38 Ibid., p.6.
39 Ibid., p.7.
40 Ibid., p.5.
A school based social worker explained her feeling of frustration to the Parliamentary Committee:

I can go to the local shopping centre and tell the kids they must come back to school right away. But they reply, "Why? who is going to make us?" I say, "I will make you, get into my car now". I can tell them that I will send the welfare officer out, but they only laugh at me because it just does not happen. In the three years I have been at Kwinana, a kid has never been taken to court, and they know they will not be taken to court. They know also that they do have to go before the panel, all their mother has to say is, 'I attempt to get Johnny out of bed, I have his lunch ready and I tell him he has to go to school', then the parents are not considered responsible because they have done all they can ... The end result is that the Department for Community Services can be called in, but it will not be. We cannot get the Department for Community Services to come in on a truancy case.41

BLAMING THE VICTIM

The Secondary Schools Discipline Committee (1972) defined deviant behaviour in the following way:

Deviant children may exhibit a wide range of norm violating behaviour. These include swearing, truancy ... which while they are regarded as serious by the school are not so regarded by the children's most immediate reference group. "Deviant"... identifies children who deviate from school norms.42

The committee claimed that family background (poor parent attitudes, broken homes and low social-economic status) was often the major cause of 'deviant' behaviour in children. Sixty one per cent of children identified as deviant came from working class backgrounds.43 In identifying working class children as the major problem, the committee cited a National Education Association study carried out in America to support its view:

Norm violating behaviour by lower class pupils which serves to "test" the firmness of school authority may represent an expression of the need for "being controlled", which is often equated with "being cared for" by superordinate authority. If kicking up, talking back,

41 Ibid., p.4.
43 Ibid.
truanting, or running from an institution are dealt with severely, firmly and quickly, the pupil is reassured, although he may complain bitterly about his "unfair" and "tough punishment" or the "bad luck of being caught ..." restrictive social environments such as the school, after being tested by the norm violating youngsters, may be rejected for failing to be strict enough rather than for being too strict.44

Evidence before the committee indicated that working class children suffered the effects of negative factors such as broken homes, working mothers and poor parental education. The committee claimed that 13 per cent of the parents of children within the sample were divorced and 20 per cent separated. In addition, 44 per cent of the parents had an average income, while 36 per cent lived below the average income. In short, working class children failed because they were 'dumb' and the reason they were dumb was because they were working class. Interestingly, the report failed to offer any evidence as to whether these statistics were any lower among the rich.

Teacher perceptions reinforced the deficit view of working class families. Teachers' indicated that working mothers had a negative effect upon the emotional adjustment and general behaviour of children. The data indicated that 33 per cent of mothers of children who exhibited seriously deviant behaviour worked full-time. The evidence also showed that a majority of deviant students came from families whose parents had little or no secondary schooling.45 The following case study prepared by a Metropolitan High School Guidance Officer in 1972 is typical of a large number of deviant students identified by the committee:

Jerry

The family of nine lives in a wood iron house with leaking roof, poor drains, no hot water system, and holed walls. The house is owned by Jerry's mother and his father, who has a labouring job, refuses to assist with the repairs, even to stop a trickle of water into the kitchen during the rain. The parents had been separated for a period of five years prior to 1972. Jerry has a bedroom to himself, but there appears to be no regular evening meal time and the family generally do not eat together.

The parents are generally disinterested in home life and do not appear to be concerned with their children. The father arrives home each evening after spending some time in the local hotel. He is often the "worse for wear" after these visits. The mother spends most of her time lying down in

44 Ibid., p.5.
the day while Jerry's older brother (16 years of age) cleans the house, makes the beds, etc.

Jerry is a problem at home and often upsets his parents. He does not get on well with his elder brother who has left school but does not work. Clashes often occur with the result that Jerry is told to leave the house.

Jerry's leisure time is generally spent watching T.V. at a friend's house, usually until 10.00-10.30 pm each evening, after which he sometimes goes home and eats his evening meal which has been left heating on the wood stove. On the weekends he spends a lot of time riding his bicycle. None of his leisure time is organized. Jerry has been apprehended by the police for breaking and entering. He spent the final two years of primary school in a boys' home in Perth.

Jerry has a slightly below average I.Q. He shows no incentive to work at school. Consequently, he is in basic level in all core subjects though has moderate success in manual arts and art. Jerry has to frequently change classrooms and appears to take advantage of this situation by playing truant.

Jerry has had consistent confrontations with all eight class teachers. He appears to display a definite antagonism towards staff members in classroom situations though it appears possible to establish rapport with him when he is isolated with individual teachers. He has indicated to the Guidance Officer that he enjoys seeing teachers "get mad" at him. Jerry is a leader of a group of "dissident" students at school.46

Case studies such as Jerry's led the committee to conclude that deviant school behaviour was "often the tip of an iceberg of maladjustment, the bulk of which is centred in the home".47 As a consequence, the committee argued that remedial measures applied within schools required corresponding measures in the out-of-school situation. This meant the intervention in children's lives of those state agencies that specialised in the science of personal and social adjustment. For example, the Guidance and Special Services Branch and the School Welfare Branch of the Education Department, the Child Welfare Department, Mental Health Services, the Public Health Department, the Police Department and church-based welfare agencies.48 Vocational guidance officers supervised the extremely maladjusted students while attempting to find them a job.49

As already argued in chapter three, Aboriginal children experienced low socio-economic status and racism. Tannock and Punch's research indicated that teachers and administrators blamed Aboriginal children's poor

48 Ibid., pp.283-284.
49 Ibid., p.285.
academic performance on factors outside the school. Teachers and principals identified under-encouragement by parents, poor concentration, poor reading ability, inadequate language skills, withdrawal, excessive shyness, and general attitude as the major cause of Aborigines failing in Western Australian schools. In other words, schools could not be held responsible for the poor performance of Aboriginal students.

Surprisingly, Western Australian teachers did not regard Aboriginal students as a major discipline problem. Two possible reasons can explain this perception. First, there was only a small number of Aboriginal students in the secondary school system. According to Green, only 33 Aboriginal children out of a total of 1389 that enrolled in year one in Western Australian schools in 1979 remained to year twelve. Second, according to Christie, Aboriginal children believed that 'optimum pupil behaviour is conforming, passive and carefully independent'. According to Tannock and Punch, Aboriginal children's excessive shyness and withdrawal was often regarded as the major reason for their poor progress at school. The form of Aboriginal resistance to white schooling is the focus of discussion in chapter seven.

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

The Secondary Students' Union of Western Australia blamed student alienation on the architectural and organisational patterns of state secondary schools. In a submission to the Secondary Schools Discipline Committee (1972) the student union argued that misbehaviour was not the result of a breakdown in the enforcement of rules and regulations but the failure of schools to develop co-operative attitudes to learning. In their view, school authority was more applicable to training than education in the broader sense. The student union claimed that:

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51 Ibid., p.82.
54 M.J. Christie (1985), Aboriginal perspectives on experience and learning: the role of language in Aboriginal education, Deakin University, Geelong, p.64.
Large school classes, the regimental environment of rows of desks, grey walls and bitumen quadrangles all create discipline problems.56

Preston and Symes' cultural analysis of Australian school life explains how space and buildings can have a significant impact upon the well-being of individuals. They argued that buildings 'act like a set of parentheses, bracketing experience and containing a specialised set of conduct that are not exercised elsewhere'. For them, schools are a 'framed environment' that are 'physically set apart from surrounding environments and normal kinds of social intercourse'.57 As already argued in chapter two, schooling is a major institution of surveillance. These days, modern technologies of regulation such as comparability tests, performance indicators and teacher appraisal offer a more sophisticated, subtle and compelling mechanism of social control than was practiced in the earlier monitorial schools.58

As shown in chapter four, modern secondary schooling introduced a series of dividing practices to control and monitor the school population. Preston and Symes explained how these dividing practices work:

... the school environment has become increasingly a grid of segmentation, of spatial specification, parallelling that of the timetable, with its strong frames. The classroom, the basic cell of school life facilitates the divisions and demarcations between groups of pupils, who are allocated to different areas and rooms within the school according to their subject preferences, their abilities and their capacities, and also their age.59

Thus, state secondary schools provided the physical structure and organisational pattern within which students played out their day-to-day experience of school life. As noted in chapter two, Giddens' idea of the 'duality of structure' explains the regulatory nature of schooling. Giddens' argued that the subject was the product of the ongoing dialectic of structure and practice. This means that students carry out their daily routines within a structured totality that is both enabling and constraining. Thus, mechanisms of social control such as segmentation, timetabling, lessons, breaks, bell times and so on, tend to reinforce routines that naturalise established social relations. Preston and Symes claimed that once the curtain

56 EDF, AN 45/18 ACC 1668 FILE No. 331/1972.
58 Ibid., p.182.
59 Ibid., p.184.
was raised on the school day, students proceeded to certain spaces to act out their daily routines and rituals.\(^{60}\) According to Giddens, routine involves a continual 'regrooving of established attitudes, behaviour and outlooks.\(^{61}\)

In this context, the alienating impact of the physical environment of Western Australian secondary schools becomes clearer. The Secondary Students' Union claimed that large secondary schools inhibited personal interaction and communication. To support their case the student union submission to the *Secondary Discipline Committee* (1972) quoted a study carried out in Western Australia by Professor Kidd. The study showed up to 1,000 in every 10,000 students had emotional conflict requiring some sort of professional help, up to 25 students required treatment in a mental hospital, and up to 20 students attempted suicide, 3 successfully. The Student Union argued that alienation was a consequence of rigidity, boredom, and impersonality. They believed that the mechanical and regimented approach to teaching killed interest and led students to revolt in various ways against the education system.\(^{62}\)

### IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL HARMONY

The purpose in this section is to explain the mechanisms by which Western Australian state secondary schools attempted to create social harmony. The previous section outlined the nature of youth delinquency and student resistance to state secondary schooling. In this context, secondary schools were under pressure to re-attach students to the goals and practices of the education system. In other words, secondary schooling performed an important hegemonic role for the dominant classes. This section examines some of the ways in which Western Australian state secondary schools sought to promote the ideals of patriotism, loyalty and citizenship.

### PROMOTING PATRIOTISM AND LOYALTY

In 1952, *The Education Circular, W.A.* published an extract from a document entitled *Call to the People of Australia* written and issued by a group of prominent Australians. In part the statement said:

\(^{60}\) Ibid., p.178.
\(^{62}\) EDF, AN 45/18 ACC 1668 FILE No. 331/1972.
Australia is in danger. We are in danger from abroad. We are in danger at home. We are in danger from moral and intellectual apathy, from the mortal enemies of mankind which sap the will and darken the understanding and breed evil dissensions. Unless these are withstood, we shall lack moral strength and moral unity sufficient to save our country and our liberties.63

In a presidential address to the racist Australian Natives Association of Western Australia in 1946, H.T. Shannon warned Australian-born citizens that their way of life was under threat:

My words, therefore, are meant to be a challenge. A challenge to you to raise the banner of Unity. To call upon our people to sink party differences and sectional strife to defeat the hydra-headed monster of discord and disunity which imperils our national way of life and which by various means is endeavouring to create National chaos in order that a ruthless minority may seize the reigns of government in this country for its own personal ambition and profit.64

In the context of the Cold War and the White Australia Policy, the universalisation of secondary schooling meant that more children could be exposed to patriotic messages over a longer period of their formative years. In 1981 the Western Australian Education Department produced a statement on *Patriotism in Schools* that outlined how schools should acquaint children with the meaning and importance of Australian citizenship. The Education Department stated that schools should use explicit symbols such as the Australian flag, Special Days, Western Australia Week, the Keep Australia Beautiful Week and the curriculum to promote the ideals of patriotism. Specifically, the Education Department statement identified seven major ways through which the education system could promote patriotism: 1) *school principals* who could encourage a sense of nation through flag raising ceremonies, assemblies, school councils, citizenship, school climate, community involvement, ceremonial days and school clubs; 2) the *curriculum branch* that was in a position to emphasise cultural heritage, citizenship courses, patriotic themes and supplementary teaching materials; 3) *regional superintendents* who could request the inclusion of patriotic themes in school courses, appeal to children as an

64 Australian Natives Association of Western Australia, Report of the proceedings of the forty-fourth conference, 1946, p.4.
authority figure, offer in-service courses and appoint advisory teachers to spread the message of patriotism; 4) the Director of Schools who could influence the message of patriotism at senior levels by requiring policies on citizenship and sportsmanship; 5) the Director-General who as the chief executive officer was in a position to issue policy statements on citizenship, make awards for community service and direct Departmental publications; 6) service clubs and community agencies that could offer competitions and/or awards for citizenship and provide guest speakers; and 7) politicians who could speak on students' obligations as citizens, attend significant days and encourage children to attend Parliament House where they could learn about Australia's heritage.\footnote{SEDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1987/1966.}

After the Second World War, Western Australian secondary schools celebrated days that reinforced Australia's links with the British Empire: Anniversary Day, Australia Day, Princess Elizabeth's birthday, Anzac Day, Coronation Day, Empire Day, Queen Mary's birthday, Queen Elizabeth's birthday, Armistice Day, Anniversary of the King's accession, and the King's birthday.\footnote{The West Australian (1948), 15 January, p.8.} Royal visits were important occasions for celebrating Australia's connection to the British Empire and developing in children a sense of loyalty. In demonstrating their loyalty and affection to the royal family, school children united in common purpose irrespective of the social divisions that divided them. Robertson, the Director-General of Education, issued the following comment before the Queen's visit in 1954:

Before long Her Majesty the Queen will be visiting us. Children and adults will be gathered in probably unprecedented crowds to demonstrate the loyalty for which West Australians are justly proud in peace and war. Enthusiasm and spontaneity in demonstrations are highly desirable and will assuredly mark our assemblies .... The whole circumstances connected with the Royal Visit should afford teachers with excellent opportunities for Citizenship lessons .... Teachers are requested to pay special attention to the subject of civic responsibilities in the coming year.\footnote{The Education Circular, W.A. (1954), vol.LVI, no.2, p.1.}

Schools paid meticulous attention to preparing children for royal visits. In 1953, The Education Circular, W.A. claimed that 'teachers were unsparing in their efforts to prepare children to take an interest in the occasion of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II'. A commemorative issue of the School
Paper and a special ceremony conducted in each school guaranteed the royal family a special place in the hearts of most school children. School ceremonies included 'religious elements, choral work and an instructive address'. School children received special instruction on appropriate behaviour, orderliness, enthusiasm, dress and language. Children spent hours rehearsing to ensure that royal visits ran smoothly. Songs played an integral part in the formal proceedings of royal visits. School choirs learnt the lyrics to patriotic songs such as Heritage which expressed Australia's link with the British Empire:

It fits not with unseemly boast to hymn our ancient state,  
But with due thankfulness of heart To those who bore the sterner part And made our Empire great Their sons today need take no shame To magnify their father's name. From their heritage in England, From home, tranquillity and ease, Stout and bold our fathers of old, Sailed forth to unknown seas, Through the desert and the mountains, By tracks inscrutable, unseen, This the message that they still bore forth, "One Faith, one Realm, one Queen!" The courser's of the years pursue Their unrelenting trail, Through alien pride may wax and fail, Yet still unchangeable through all Our fortunes do not pale. For those who wrought these things to be were the elect of Destiny. Yea, rightmanfully they planted and time hath multiplied the seed, Still today in lands away Their sons maintain their creed. Homeward from the distant corners Their voices leap the seas between, Shake the sky in one united cry, "One Faith, one Realm, one Queen!"  

On the occasion of the 1954 royal visit, the editorial of the W.A. Teachers' Journal emphasised Australia's loyalty to the British Empire:

Australians in every State have been united in loyalty to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, who in the high office she so graciously fills, links together the varied nations of the British Commonwealth - thus giving to the world an example of the free co-operation of sovereign States, each following its own pattern of life but all associated by their common loyalty to a constitutional monarch and to the democratic ideal.  

Royal visits were occasions to forge 'a broad and integrated culture dedicated to the national good'. They developed children's attachment to the imaginary nation state. As a consequence, royal visits served to mask social divisions based on class, gender and race.

Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies reinforced Australia's imperial links. The Education Department argued that the degree to which schools developed patriotic values depended on the emphasis given to these occasions. A typical Anzac Memorial Ceremony took the following format: arrival of official guests; singing of 'God Save the Queen'; introductory remarks and prayer; brief statement of ideals by representatives of children's groups; singing of 'My Country'; reading by two students; laying of wreath by a boy and girl; playing of 'The Last Post' followed by a period of silence ended by 'Reveille'; raising of flags; 'In Memoriam'; a short speech from an invited guest speaker; and the singing of the 'Song of Australia'. In the 1970s, the emerging peace movement questioned the appropriateness of celebrating ANZAC Day in Western Australian schools. They wanted to downplay the celebration of Australia's involvement in war. In contrast, the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) expressed concern about the apparent apathy of the education system in celebrating ANZAC Day. In 1981, the National Secretary of the Returned Servicemen's League, P. Young wrote to the Western Australian Minister for Education claiming that:

... schools are not being made fully aware of the great heritage of Australia's military participation in the Sudan, the two Great Wars and subsequent action, as well as Australia's participation in Vietnam.

The conservative Returned Servicemen's League was eager to see the Australian flag flying at all state and Independent schools. In 1978, the RSL urged the Premier Sir Charles Court to introduce a Pledge of Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, Flag and Country. The Education Department considered that special days such as ANZAC Day and Australia Day were opportunities for 'stressing the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship'.

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71 Ibid., p.1.
72 EDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1987/66.
73 P. Young, National Secretary RSL to W. Grayden, Minister for Education, 29 July 1981. EDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1987/66
74 D.H. Bruce, Secretary RSL to Sir Charles Court, Premier, 18 July 1978. EDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1987/66.
75 EDF, AN 45/25 ACC 2499 FILE No. 1987/66.
On special days schools developed patriotic themes, lessons and activities to reinforce patriotic values.

As noted earlier, youth organisations proved to be a valuable training ground for citizenship. The Education Department expressed concern about the third of 14 to 20 year olds who did not belong to any formal institution after leaving school. In counteracting the 'disturbing drift in national characteristics' the Education Department established an experimental Youth Centre at Fremantle Boys' and Princess May High Schools in 1952 and appointed Youth Education Organisers in country towns including Merredin, Pinjarra, Corrigin, Wagin, Busselton, Donnybrook and Kalgoorlie.76

In 1958 the Education Department established a Youth Education Branch to oversee the organisation of the Youth Centres. The main function of the Youth Centres was to monitor children's leisure time.77 Twenty-seven Youth Centres under the guidance of Youth Committees organised a range of hobby classes designed to 'produce happy and well-adjusted adults within an ordered community'.78 Despite the initial success of the Youth Centres, the number of active youth committees gradually declined to six in 1975.79 Thirty-two full-time Youth Education Officers (YEO) appointed to secondary schools throughout the state took over the work of the youth committees. They worked with district youth and sporting clubs to organise activities including film clubs, community awareness schemes, sex education, and fishing clubs.80

The Associated Youth Committee of Western Australia under the direction of a special Council appointed by the Governor Sir Charles Gairdner, was particularly interested in encouraging among children 'the ideals of Empire, brotherhood, tolerance and co-operation'.81 The Associated Youth Committee organised special patriotic events such as Commonwealth Youth Sunday, the State Youth Conference, Youth Week, Youth Sunday and the State Youth Art Competition. The Youth Council of Western

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76 Education Department Annual Report (1952), p.25.
81 The Sunday Times (1960), 10 April.
Australia established under the Youth Service Act of 1964 replaced the Youth Committee in 1965.

The Youth Council of Western Australia focused on the 40,000 school leavers who were 'unattached' to any formal social institution. Its main purpose was to offer leisure opportunities that promoted the qualities of leadership and responsibility. Some people, like the Minister for Defence, D.J. Killen argued that the reintroduction of the school cadets would be the best way of encouraging young people to develop the qualities of 'leadership, self-reliance and loyalty'.

The Junior Farmer Clubs fulfilled a similar function in the rural areas of Western Australia. They attempted to bring young men and women together in country areas and inspire them to serve the community. According to the Education Department, the Junior Farmer Clubs provided rural youth with a better appreciation of the value of the agricultural industry and 'country things in general'. They offered young people the opportunities to develop leadership in 'agricultural affairs and the the rural community'. District Councils and Organisers established the Junior Farmer Clubs in country areas including Avon Valley, Miling and Districts, Lower Great Southern, Lower South West, North Eastern Districts, Central Great Southern, Harvey and Districts, and The Blackwood. By 1951, 70 clubs with a total membership of 1601 (1002 boys and 599 girls) operated around the state.

The more community conscious Junior Red Cross organisation played a significant role in developing the belief in the 'caring society'. The Junior Red Cross encouraged children to show concern for those least able to care for themselves. In particular, it emphasised service to the aged and needy. Children learnt the value of community work by assisting at local hospitals, collecting and distributing parcels of clothing, toys and books, and packing Christmas hampers. In 1975 there were 93 Junior Red Cross circles operating in Western Australian schools.

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82 Minutes of second meeting 26 March, 1965. EDF, AN 45/9 ACC 1574 FILE No. 1709
84 Education Department Annual Report (1949), p.16.
87 Education Department Annual Report (1975), p.43.
Besides youth organisations, school knowledge played an important educative role in promoting the ideal of patriotism. The Publications Branch of the Education Department became an important conveyor of patriotic messages. Established in June 1951, the Publications Branch produced the monthly *School Papers* that provided the basis for reading instruction. Each Year 3 student received three editions per year while students in Years 4 to 7 received ten per year. In countering the influence of English and American reading materials, the *School Papers* concentrated on producing stories and articles with an Australian emphasis. A series of *Supplementary Readers* reinforced the attractiveness of the Australian way of life. Titles such as 'Swan River Settlement', 'Beneath the Southern Cross' and 'Blazing the Trail' encouraged a sense of national pride and loyalty among school children. The *High School* magazine established in 1955 performed a similar patriotic function in Western Australian secondary schools. Published three times per year the *High School* magazine contained Australian material with approximately two thirds of the material emphasising social studies and one third literature and art material.

Along with the written publications, the Audio-Visual Branch of the Education Department produced a series of film strips, study prints, films, and slide sets that emphasised things Australian. The Audio-Visual Branch produced material that reinforced the virtues of Western Australia's history and way of life. Published material included titles such as 'Salute to Captain Stirling', 'Retracing Forrest's Footsteps of 1874', 'Chunks of Gold', 'Life in Outback Australia', 'Early Farming', 'Western Australians', and 'Western Australian Discovery and Exploration'. Great Australian Prime Ministers including Alfred Deakin, Stanley Bruce, Joseph Lyons, John Curtin, Ben Chifley and Robert Menzies received special treatment in a series of films.

History was a major conveyor of patriotic values and citizenship. *The Curriculum for Primary Schools* published in 1951 explained the hegemonic role of history:

> If our teaching is of the right sort, the child should acquire an intelligent appreciation of his nation and of its institutions; he should feel a profound gratitude and deep admiration for the men who won for us our liberties and who have made our race eminent in the industrial and

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89 *Education Department Annual Report* (1955), p.28.
scientific world, who have laboured to better the condition of the weak and who have built up the great British Commonwealth of Nations. Such a teaching of history might be expected to inculcate a nobler and truer form of patriotism than that which vaunts past achievements, battles won and victories gained, etc., and laments sorrowfully battles lost: a patriotism that finds expression in a high ideal standard of future contact.91

The Western Australian primary history syllabus (1951) emphasised the development of the British Empire and the spirit of living together in the modern world.92 Unfortunately, the breadth of the history syllabus was so great that it forced teachers and students to rely heavily upon the use of textbooks. As a consequence, students spent most of their time reading, summarising and memorising information about the triumphs of the British Empire.93 In developing among students an appreciation of their heritage and responsibilities, the history syllabus encouraged children to study the special role of heroes and a few heroines. The primary school history syllabus stated that if students developed an interest in heroes, and heroines, they might better appreciate the ideals of unselfish and devoted service.94

To promote patriotism in Western Australian secondary schools the Education Department recommended a number of strategies to stimulate awareness and interest. The Education Department encouraged active student participation on ceremonial occasions including raising the flag, organising assemblies, attending Royal Visits, observing Anzac Day and attending major social institutions such as Parliament House. Besides displays of patriotism, all students studied Australia's historical development, significant leaders, the contribution of the armed forces and an understanding of Western Australia's geography. School children learnt the values of Christianity, participated in morning prayers and developed an appreciation of the place of the churches in the state. The emphasis on citizenship education involved learning tolerance of other ethnic groups, respect for private property, pride in the environment, respect for flora and fauna, good manners and respect for government and its institutions. In culture and literature, children learnt about the work of Australia's great

92 Ibid., p.6.
93 Ibid., p.13.
94 Ibid., p.33.
writers. Students recited the National Anthem and patriot folk songs like Waltzing Matilda. In the sporting arena, schools encouraged a respect for authority and a sense of fair play.95

In conclusion, this part of the chapter illustrates some of the ways through which Western Australian secondary schools produced the patriotic and loyal citizen. In bringing together the exercise of power and the constitution of knowledge, state secondary schooling shaped children into governable individuals or in Foucault's language 'docile bodies'. With growing public concern about youth delinquency and student misbehaviour, secondary schooling played an increasingly important role in controlling and re-shaping adolescents as desired objects of the state.

SOCIAL STUDIES: EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

This part of the chapter focuses on the Western Australian social studies curriculum at the lower secondary level after the Second World War. The purpose is to understand how the social studies curriculum constituted citizens with the habits, attitudes and desires supportive of the bourgeois social order. As already argued in chapter two, hegemony refers to the 'entire system of values, beliefs, morality and practices that are supportive of the established order and the interests that dominate them'.96 This section argues that school knowledge plays a significant role in winning the 'heart' of the child so that he/she will desire to be a morally correct citizen. The focus is on understanding how the social studies curriculum attempts to produce subjects of a "high moral standard" who desire an appreciation of their duties as potential citizens and are willing to "foster the spirit of the Golden Rule". In this context, the political function of the social studies curriculum is to produce loyal citizens who will be "cherished by the state".97 In other words, the secondary school curriculum shapes children to desire a particular set of social arrangements founded on unequal relationships of power and domination.

In a review of the Western Australian social studies curriculum conducted in 1990 M. Print claimed that:

97 EDF, 1131/1955.
In any society the young need to be enculturated into the ways of that society so that they may function effectively within it. A significant vehicle for attaining that goal is the schooling system and within that structure the means of achieving the socialization outcome is the school curriculum.\textsuperscript{98}

Social studies education is that area of the curriculum specifically responsible for developing the idea of citizenship. While there is much controversy among social educators as to the nature, content and process of social studies \textsuperscript{99} there is an underlying agreement that social studies should produce children who have the skills, knowledge and values that will prepare them for effective participation in society.\textsuperscript{100}

The purpose in this part of the chapter is to elaborate three distinct attempts to develop social and political education within the Western Australian secondary school curriculum: the \textit{Social and Moral Education Curriculum} published in 1955, the progressive social studies curriculum of the 1970s and 1980s, and the Federally sponsored political education movement of the late 1980s and 1990s. Although each movement began with a different set of assumptions, values and methodology, all shared a common goal of preparing children for life in contemporary capitalist society.\textsuperscript{101}

\textbf{The 1955 Social and Moral Education Curriculum}

The \textit{Social and Moral Education Curriculum} (1955) reflected growing public concern about juvenile delinquency in Western Australia. Its primary purpose was to socialise children into post-war society. The \textit{Social and Moral Education Curriculum} (1955) emphasised "the importance of active and willing co-operation on the part of the individual in effectively meeting the great human needs".\textsuperscript{102} Social education attempted to develop in children a sense of co-operation, responsibility and loyalty to Nation and Empire. The syllabus preamble explained the idea of co-operation in the following passage:

\textsuperscript{98} M. Print (1990), \textit{Curriculum review of social studies and social sciences education: an inquiry into the social studies and social sciences curriculum K-12 in Western Australia}, Ministry of Education, W.A. Perth, p.3.


\textsuperscript{100} Education Department of W.A. (1981), \textit{K-10 social studies syllabus}, Department of Education, W.A. pp.2-3.


\textsuperscript{102} Education Department of W.A. (1955), \textit{Social and moral education curriculum}, Government Printer, Perth, p.3.
Furthermore, without the general spirit of co-operation, the individual cannot fully realize his possibilities; in other words, he can find the opportunity of a full development of his powers only by co-operating with others: apart from society, the individual is an abstraction. The importance of socialization in any scheme of education is therefore obvious.\(^{103}\)

The *Social and Moral Education Curriculum* (1955) elaborated the idea of citizenship education in the following way:

The study of citizenship includes the study of all things which make for public welfare - such as matters of property - personal and public; health - personal and civic; education of the youth; and laws regarding all community adjustments .... The special aims of citizenship teaching may be enumerated as -

1. to inculcate habits of good behaviour and right conduct and foster the spirit of the "Golden Rule";
2. to develop in children a sense of social responsibility as a preparation in community and national life; and
3. to give children a general knowledge of social institutions and some of the problems of government.\(^{104}\)

The emphasis upon patriotism, loyalty and co-operation was in part a response to public concern about Australia's post-war immigration program. To assist the process of economic development after the Second World War Western Australia encouraged a large number of British and European migrants to the State. As noted in chapter one, migrants were an invaluable source of cheap and easily manipulated labour in Western Australia's push for economic growth. While much of the initial debate on migrants centred on their industrial absorption, the implications for the education system soon became apparent. The major goal of educational authorities was to quickly assimilate the 'new arrivals' into Western Australian society.\(^{105}\) At especially constructed processing camps education officials formerly assessed migrant children and taught them some basic English. The migrant children were then placed into special classes in local primary and secondary schools. The social studies curriculum played a significant role in developing the belief that all children must 'work

\(^{103}\) Ibid., p.3.
\(^{104}\) Ibid., p.6.
together'. To encourage social harmony the 'newly admitted children' participated in group activities to develop a sense of common purpose and responsibility. The fear of communism and the preoccupation with Australia's security were other significant influences on the social studies curriculum. The designers of the Social and Moral Education Curriculum (1955) believed that education should teach children to 'accept loyalty to their country as a worthy and noble obligation'. In other words, schools should establish the superiority of democracy over communism. The President of the Western Australian Teachers' Union, F. Wallace, clearly expressed the political function of the school curriculum when responding to charges of teacher disloyalty in 1948:

> Our curriculum is so framed that in following its teachings our scholars learn the attributes of loyalty and patriotism and have never yet failed to show that they have profited by the lessons given in these subjects.

The Social and Moral Education Curriculum (1955) attempted to establish social order by inculcating children with the attitudes and habits of "truth, responsibility, morality, tolerance and character". It wanted to give students a 'better appreciation of their expected role within the democratic and Christian fibre of Western Australian society'. In 1962, the Acting Director-General of Education H. Dettman, stated that these values were appropriate in preparing children for their future responsibilities as good citizens and workers. In the post-war period, educators emphasised the importance of habits and attitudes as powerful determinants of character and behaviour. They believed that schools 'must take cognisance of them and constantly build up the right attitudes'. The foreword to the Primary Schools Curriculum (1955) stated that "unless children breathe the very spirit of the desirable attitude, it will have little or no positive effect on their development". These desirable attitudes included co-operation, conservation, thrift, honesty, industry, sincerity, accuracy, reliability; efficiency, progress, loyalty, neatness, cleanliness, courtesy, open mindedness, and tolerance. The curriculum statement claimed that these

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107 Ibid., p.4.
108 Ibid., p.5.
109 The West Australian (1948), 2 January, p.5.
111 EDF, 1608/1962.
industrious attitudes would inevitably attract "the attention of the teacher".\textsuperscript{112} In short, the aim of social and political education was to develop 'habits as social ritual'. One educational authority argued:

\begin{quote}
If we had to form judgements as to all cases before we could act on them, and if we were forced always to act rationally, the burden would be unendurable. Beneficent use and want save us the trouble.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{quote}

\textit{The New' Social Studies}

Emerging in the 1970s, a 'new' and more 'progressive' version of social studies approached citizenship education using a different set of assumptions and methods. It pointed to the pluralistic nature of the Australian population, the growing diversity of beliefs and practices, the massive changes taking place in the economy, the social impact of technology, and the emergence of new fields of knowledge.\textsuperscript{114}

In the context of these dramatic social changes, the new social studies curriculum was sympathetic to the social issues of the day including drugs, violence, the environment, multiculturalism and technology. It was critical of the lack of relevance and scientific rigour contained in the previous approach to social studies. For this reason, the \textit{K-10 Social Studies Syllabus} (1981) drew upon the conceptual and methodological approach of the social sciences to organise the social studies curriculum. The \textit{K-10 Social Studies} (1981) curriculum planners believed that the only way children could develop an understanding of contemporary society was through the application of the social-scientific method of inquiry. A significant feature of the new social studies was the sequential planning based on the content, skills and processes of the social sciences and the valuing process from social education.\textsuperscript{115}

While the new social studies shared the same concerns about co-operation, social harmony and citizenship as the earlier conservative model, it organised the curriculum using a different set of values and assumptions.\textsuperscript{116} It emphasised process skills, evaluative techniques,

\begin{flushleft}
\footnotesize\textsuperscript{112}Education Department of W.A. (1955), \textit{Introductory booklet to the curriculum for primary schools}, Government Printers, Perth, p.7.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p.6.
\textsuperscript{114} Social Education Association of Australia (1984), \textit{Social education for the eighties}, pp.8-9.
\textsuperscript{115} Western Australian Education Department (1981), \textit{Social studies K-10 syllabus}, Education Department of W.A., Perth, p.1.
\end{flushleft}
decision-making, participation and social action. More recent social education frameworks argued that a social-science based social studies curriculum should develop 'a critical approach that leads to social and political action'.

For example, the Victorian Social Education Framework P-10 (1987) argued that:

> Social action is an essential dimension of social education because it enables the students to be active learners, and their learning to take a concrete and practical form. By proceeding from knowing and thinking about an issue to considering what can be done and how, students are working towards the goal of being effective participants in society.

While the rhetoric sounds progressive the new social studies curriculum performed a similar conservative role to the Social and Moral Education Curriculum (1955). The underlying assumption of the new perspective was that ignorance and prejudice create social disharmony. It assumed that the knowledge generated by the social sciences would better inform students about their role and responsibility to actively participate in the democratic process. According to Whitty, the social sciences aimed to liberate students from the parochial and conservative outlook that the earlier social studies curriculum inculcated. The advocates of the new social studies believed that the education system could no longer maintain legitimacy through its appeal to Empire, authority and loyalty alone. In a technologically complex society, it was necessary to produce a different sort of democratic citizen who was flexible, adaptive, reflective and capable of making decisions.

However, Whitty argued that the undue emphasis on teaching the ideas and structures of the social sciences, as the cornerstone of critical awareness, produced a social studies curriculum that was often less relevant and meaningful to students than the earlier conservative and parochial approaches to citizenship. According to Whitty, social studies students perceived that the subject 'had little more than certification value'. As a consequence, they 'renounced practical connections and relevance to the

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120 Ibid., pp.276-277.
personal in favour of the industrial and commercial world'. In this sense, the new social studies curriculum drew upon a utilitarian tradition that aimed to produce citizens who could fit into a pre-existing set of social arrangements. According to the Curriculum Review of Social Studies in Western Australia (1990) social studies played a vital role in preparing citizens who could 'meet societal needs'. This required a curriculum that could develop 'purposeful values that emphasised social justice, effective participation, support of the democratic process and awareness and support for equity issues'. Therefore, the social studies curriculum was a part of the larger process that sought to maintain stability and social harmony rather than any fundamental transformation of society. As Popkewitz argued, progressive educational reform is often part of the ritual aimed at legitimising the role of schools. For him, the purpose of reform was "to direct attention to surface qualities, thus to deflect attention from the underlying social values, assumptions and implications of institutional life".

Political Education for the 1990's

On 23 March 1988, the Senate requested that its Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training conduct an inquiry into 'education for active citizenship in Australian schools and youth organizations'. The report Education for Active Citizenship (1989) encouraged schools to provide students with an understanding of how government works, an appreciation of the role of community groups and non-government organisations, and motivation to be active citizens. The Committee expressed concern about the 'crisis' of ignorance and participation in the political processes of Australian society. Its primary aim was to develop a sense of political and social harmony in a society confronted with increasing diversity and alienation among young people. The Commission for the Future report, Casualties of Change: The Predicament of Youth in Australia (1988) pointed to the 'alarming escalation in the social and psychological problems facing young Australians'.

121 Ibid., pp.277-278.
124 Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (1989), Education for active citizenship in Australian schools and youth organisations, AGPS, Canberra, p.4.
125 Ibid., p.6.
Education for Active Citizenship (1989) attempted to develop an appreciation and understanding of how the political institutions of Australia function. This meant developing children's 'knowledge about how society works, the skills needed to participate effectively, and a conviction that active participation is the right of all citizens'.\textsuperscript{127} The active citizenship approach to political education sought to create 'a more complex and sustained effort' at political education than the old-style 'civics' approach. This meant developing a broad strategy of political education that went beyond the academic syllabus to include teacher education, the provision of adequate resources, the role of youth organisations and a Commonwealth national program in education for citizenship directed at the whole community.\textsuperscript{128}

The stimulus for citizenship education came in the national policy initiative contained in the Hobart Declaration on Schooling ratified by the Australian Education Council (AEC) in 1989. The Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia (1991) agreed:

To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.\textsuperscript{129}

Curriculum documents around Australian reinforced the growing emphasis upon citizenship education. For instance, the Queensland Education Department's P-10 Social Education Framework (1989) contained a special section on active citizenship. It stated that:

All citizens of all ages have certain social roles, rights and responsibilities. To enable children to fulfill these roles and to exercise their rights and responsibilities, both now and in the future, certain learning is considered essential. This learning includes the relevant knowledge, particular skills, processes and attitudes necessary for children to develop and maintain a thoughtful and practical commitment to democratic principles and values. In addition, children should have the ability to respond effectively to the functional demands of institutions in society. The school itself can and should provide an environment where students can test the relationship between democratic ideals

\textsuperscript{127} Education for active citizenship (1989), p.7.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p.16.
\textsuperscript{129} Quoted in Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (1991), Active citizenship revisited, AGPS, Canberra, p.9.
and school realities, and pursue emergent issues as active citizens-in-training.\textsuperscript{130}

The Western Australian Ministry of Education responded to the increasing emphasis on social competence, social action and active citizenship by stating that:

These areas will be a focus for development in the Western Australian social studies curriculum during this decade .... In addition, while recognizing that we live in a changing and multicultural society, Western Australia will place increasing emphasis on promoting basic, democratic values.\textsuperscript{131}

How can we explain the growing acceptance of citizenship education onto the national political agenda? As already argued in chapter two, liberal democracies face the predicament of satisfying competing and contradictory tendencies. On the one hand, liberalism articulates the 'market' place ideology of individualism, competitiveness, free enterprise and personal liberty to pursue one's own interest. In short, what is good for the owners of the means of production is good for the rest of the community. On the other hand, the logic of democracy calls for greater participation in the political process and equality. As a consequence, competing and contradictory interpretations of the meaning of democracy and citizenship emerge.\textsuperscript{132} In liberal democracies citizenship means responsibilities rather than rights. The emphasis is upon law abiding behaviour, service to the community and the kind of patriotism evident in the 'civic' curriculum of the 1950s. In this sense, citizenship education reinforces the status quo. Its purpose is to develop in children a commitment to preserving society 'as it is'. The aim of citizenship education is to produce uncritical, conforming and domesticated citizens who agree to the principles and practices of parliamentary politics. In the context of rising youth unemployment and the restructuring of world capitalism, the citizenship education movement plays an important part in the overall strategy to establish the hegemony of corporate capitalism.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{130} Department of Education, Queensland (1989), P-10 Social education framework, Department of Education, p.5.
\textsuperscript{131} Ministry of Education, Western Australia (1990), Social studies in prospect, Ministry of Education, W.A., p.9.
\textsuperscript{132} A. Wolf (1977), p.177.
\textsuperscript{133} G. Whitty (1985), p.280.
In contrast, the 'moral' model of citizenship emphasises direct participation of all citizens in the political process and greater equality. While the *Active Citizenship Revisited* (1991) report attempted to reinforce the idea of 'participation', it failed to elaborate some of the broader political questions about participation in a democracy. In a submission to the *Active Citizenship Revisited* (1991) report, J. Fien of Griffith University alluded to the conceptual problem of defining active citizenship:

> Education for Active Citizenship advocates the liberal-pluralist notion that the political arena is for everyone and that individuals can play a role in influencing political decisions .... The Report talks about participation, but participation in what type of politics? Planning a political education (and teacher education) curriculum to foster participation in "personal politics" and "community politics" is a fundamentally different task from planning a curriculum to promote participation in "party politics" and "representative democracy". There is a similar difference between a curriculum for participation in a "participatory democracy" and in a "representative democracy". Perhaps these judgements are harsh as it might be said that the "intelligent reader" of Education for Active Citizenship should be able to deduce the conceptions of politics and participation upon which the Report is based. However, it is in trying to make such a deduction that it is possible to read mixed, but essentially conservative, messages about the nature of politics.

According to Carr, the 'moral' model of democracy was not so much concerned with institutional politics but the political expression of the values of self-fulfillment, self-determination and equality. For him, democracy was 'moral' to the extent that it prescribed the moral principles for evaluating social relationships, political institutions and cultural practices of societies founded on democratic values and ideals.

In conclusion, this section explains how the universalisation of Western Australian state secondary schooling exposed children to school knowledge and practices that inculcated the values of patriotism, loyalty and citizenship. Along with the universalisation of secondary schooling came various pedagogical practices that aimed to win the 'heart' and 'character' of

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135 *Active citizenship revisited* (1991), p.3.
136 Ibid., p.5.
the child. In a democracy, the self-regulating child who was conscious of his/her social responsibilities was of greater value to society than the child who had to be coerced. Specifically, this section explains how the social studies curriculum reaches into the very structure of individual personality in shaping and forming the democratic subject who is of benefit to established social arrangements. At the same time, it must be remembered that hegemony is never complete but always open to competing ideologies and practices. Hence, the task of social educators is to deconstruct those seemingly 'natural' meanings that lay behind particular discourses about citizenship and expose the interests that drive them.
CHAPTER SIX

SCHOOLING AND THE WORLD OF WORK

INTRODUCTION
YOUTH CRISIS
CONSTRUCTING THE HEGEMONY OF SOCIAL EFFICIENCY
WORK EDUCATION
CHAPTER SIX

SCHOOLING AND THE WORLD OF WORK

Free enterprise business is the ultimate consumer of the people trained in our education system.\(^1\)

Measures need to be taken to secure that the general education system of the country and its technological needs are maintained in continuous rapport.\(^2\)

INTRODUCTION

Work is one of the dominant aspects of the lives of most people. According to the Schools Commission report *Schooling for 15 and 16 Year-Olds* (1980) work is of overriding importance in the economic structure of society. Unless the production of goods and services continues the physical survival of human communities is in danger. Work is also an important source of identity for many people. While a person's sense of satisfaction can come from recreational, family and social involvement, it is often work that provides the environment in which a person's self worth and friendships come. As well, work is a central determinant of the major social divisions that exist in society, for example, divisions between social classes, men and women and blacks and whites. The negative image associated with unemployed people reinforces the significance of work for the individual and society. There is a common assumption that unemployed people are dole-bludgers, cheats and lazy. Many people assume that unemployment is a condition that some people choose rather than work. The impact of technological change and the restructuring of capital is seldom questioned. In this context, the problem for unemployed people is how to maintain their physical, psychological and social existence in a society embedded with a strong Protestant work ethic. In considering these cursory remarks, there is little wonder that a major aim of secondary schooling is to help students to come to terms with the world of work.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) Hon. G.C. MacKinnon MLC in a speech to the Western Australian Institute of Management Open Joint Development Course, 29 April 1974. EDF, AN 45/9 ACC 1574 BOX 16 S 74/85.

\(^2\) R.C. Mills, Director Commonwealth Office of Education to M.G. Little, Director of Education, W.A., 4 October 1949. EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 1104/49.

The purpose in this chapter is to understand the part Western Australian state secondary schools played in the social reproduction of the labour force in the period after World War Two. The experience of full employment from early 1940s to early 1970s allowed young people to make a fairly smooth transition from school to work. However, as monopoly capitalism developed increasingly sophisticated levels of technology, in particular electronics and micro-processors, larger numbers of workers were forced onto the scrap heap. In the last two decades technology has wrought fundamental change to the economy and peoples way of life. The signs are clearly evident in the changing patterns of employment and increased levels of unemployment. According to Graycar and Jamrozik, certain trends are clearly identifiable. Among these are the growth of jobs in community services and professional occupations, the increasing levels of female participation in the labour force, the significant increase in the levels of educational qualifications required for jobs, the growth of part-time employment particularly among young people in the 15-19 year age group, and the growth of unemployment.4

Preston and Symes claim that work patterns are now more flexible, involving part-time and transitory work based around contracts and periodic retraining (post-Fordism). In their view, post-Fordism creates a work force where "roughly two-thirds do quite well and one third are assigned to perpetual insecurity or unemployment".5 Thus, changes to the labour process are leading to changes in the quantity and quality of labour power required by capital. Secondary schools as major organisers and producers of labour power have been profoundly affected by these structural forces. In this context, chapter six seeks to understand how Western Australian secondary schooling produces students with knowledge, skills and values appropriate to the smooth functioning of the economy.

YOUTH CRISIS

With the onset of the world-wide recession of the 1970s and 1980s and the Australian Labor Government's preoccupation with macro-economic policy, the link between secondary schooling and work came under increasing scrutiny. As the Federal Labor Government grappled with the underlying structural weaknesses in the Australian economy, the reorientation of capital to the Pacific Rim, and high youth unemployment rates, a renewed

debate concerning the education-economy relationship dominated the political agenda about education. The concern in this section is to provide a historical analysis of, and some explanation into the forces that shaped the dominance of the educational discourse known as economic rationalism.

**BOOM TO CRISIS**

Chapter one mentioned Western Australia's fluctuating economic fortunes before 1945, including the 1914 drought, the First World War and the 1930s depression. However, the severe economic conditions that produced the *Wolff Report* (1938) soon faded as Australia entered World War Two. Emerging from the war Australian society underwent fundamental change. A significant development was the intervention of the Federal Government into all spheres of public and private life. As shown in chapter three, the Commonwealth Government came under increasing pressure from teacher and parent lobby groups to secure the financial position of all levels of Australian education.

In the Western Australian context, the era of Labor Party ascendancy ended in 1947 with the election of the conservative McLarty-Watts Liberal Country Party coalition. However, the Labor Party's ascendancy during the 1950s continued with the election of the Hawke Ministry in 1953. The defeat of the Hawke Government in 1959 marked the beginning of an era of conservative dominance with the Brand Liberal Country Party maintaining control until 1971. In the period 1971 to 1973 the Tonkin led Labor Party returned for a brief stint on the government benches before the conservative parties regained power for a further ten years.

In the post-war period both conservative and Labor political parties maintained a parochial outlook that gave priority to rural and developmental policies. The opening of the Kwinana refinery and industrial complex in 1959 marked a watershed in Western Australian history. Over the next few years, significant developments proceeded: in 1966 an agreement was signed to explore iron ore deposits in the North West of the state, a wood chipping industry was established in the South-West, a natural gas field opened at Dongara in 1970, and an agreement for bauxite mining and an alumina refinery near Bunbury was signed. As a result,

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7 Ibid., p.441.
significant changes occurred in Western Australian society: the state's population rose significantly, migration increased, export earnings from the mineral boom rose dramatically, manufacturing production improved, the population drift to urban areas continued, and employment opportunities continued to grow in the service sector. 8

For education, the boom decades of the 1950s and 1960s encouraged economic ideologies that emphasised the benefits of human capital investment. Successive Commonwealth Governments, influenced by the perceived economic and social benefits that would flow from increased spending on education, gradually extended assistance to the tertiary sector and then secondary schools, private schools and disadvantaged groups. The election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972 saw an unprecedented injection of funding to all levels of education. Economic conditions at this juncture of history enabled the Federal Labor government to undertake a redistribution of wealth in favour of the disadvantaged. In periods of economic growth the transition from school to work is relatively smooth. Usually, it is only a matter of the school leaver finding a job that matches their educational qualifications. However, in recessionary times, the state finds it increasingly difficult to balance its democratic function and at the same time, satisfy the process of capital accumulation. After 1975, conservative forces effectively articulated a new hegemony on the role of secondary schools in restructuring the Australian economy.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The high proportion of youth unemployment dramatically influenced the school to work debate. With the onset of the 1975 recession, conservative employers, politicians and educationalists mounted an attack on what they perceived to be declining educational standards and lack of discipline in the education system. The purpose in this part of the chapter is to examine the nature of the youth unemployment problem and how the conservative forces articulated a new hegemony on the role of secondary education.

After World War Two, Australian society underwent dramatic social, economic and political change. A significant change was the emergence of the social category 'youth' into popular discourse. According to Eckersley, the stage of youth occurs after adolescence and before adulthood. In his words:

8 Ibid., p.462.
Youth marks the awkward and often confusing metamorphosis from child into adult: a time when we mature physically and mentally, a time when we determine our identity, values, beliefs and goals. After the dependence of childhood, we encounter a rapid succession of adult rights that entitle us, at least legally, to take charge of our own lives: the right to leave school, to work, to leave home, to have sex, to drive, to buy alcohol, to vote, to enter into contracts. We also reach the age when our parents are no longer liable for our welfare, when we can be forced out into the world.9

We turn now to consider the changing nature of the relationship between youth, the labour market and schooling. The increase in youth unemployment over the past two decades reveals the predicament of young people. The number of unemployed youth increased from approximately 3 per cent in 1968 to 22.5 per cent in 1983.10 In Western Australia the youth unemployment rate grew to 35.5 per cent in February 1992.

The total unemployment rates for people aged 15 to 24 are five times those 20 years ago. For people in the age group 15 to 19, it is 18.7 per cent, while for those 20 to 24, the rate is 11.7 per cent.11 Freeland, in his analysis of the full-time teenage labour market observed that teenagers in full-time jobs fell from 59 per cent in August 1966 to only 32.6 per cent in August 1984. For males, the fall was 61 to 36 per cent and for females 57 to 29 per cent. Freeland claimed that teenagers share of total full-time employment dropped from 14 to 8 per cent. For males, the fall was 7.3 to 4.4 per cent and for females 6.8 to 3.4 per cent. Freeland argued that a number of factors contributed to the declining teenage full-time employment market: the imposition of staff ceilings in public sector employment, the removal of discriminatory employment practices against married women, changes in the organisation of work, and technological change.12 According to Sweet, changing employment patterns that accompanied rising productivity contributed to the full-time unemployment rate among teenagers. In his view, future economic growth and improved productivity were unlikely to create additional full-time jobs for young people.13

10 Ibid., p.28.
11 Ibid., p.28.
12 J. Freeland (1986), The political economy of schooling, Deakin University, Geelong, p.7.
While the full-time labour market witnessed a reduction in employment opportunities for 15 to 19 year olds, the part-time teenage labour market increased dramatically. The number of 15 to 19 year olds employed part-time increased from 51,000 to 249,000 in the period 1971 to 1986. According to Freeland, in the period 1966 to 1984 the number of teenagers holding part-time jobs increased by 129,700 or 355.3 per cent. For males, the increase was 251.1 per cent and for females the gain was 468 per cent. Freeland showed that the spectacular expansion in part-time work failed to benefit those teenagers outside education. Most employers prefer students as part-time workers because they are willing to accept poor pay and conditions to earn some pocket money. The following story dramatically illustrates the impact of the collapsed employment market on teenagers seeking full-time work:

Yeah, it's very hard for girls of my age now to get a job because I'm too old. They don't like paying ... you know I'll be eighteen in another five months, and they don't want to pay adult wages up here. Particularly in the delis and places like that, so it's a vicious circle. If you leave school at Year 10 the chances are you probably will get a job. You think you're doing the right thing by going through doing Year 11 and 12. You know, "you're better off". But I think I would have been better off leaving at Year 10. At least ... I [wouldn't] have wasted two years. Two years down the drain, really. All for nothing, you know.

The changing nature of the teenage labour market meant that teenagers had lower labour force participation rates, were less likely to be engaged in full-time work, were likely to be exploited in casual part-time jobs and experienced high rates of unemployment. According to Sweet, Australia had a rapidly growing number of:

... marginal, deskillled, dead-end, casual, part-time jobs that are not linked to training or to career paths.

14 Ibid., p.30.
16 J. Fitzpatrick (1987), Unemployed school leavers in Western Australia - comments on the life and times of the young and unemployed in the mid-1980's, Department of Employment and Training, Perth, p.35.
INCREASED RETENTION RATES

In response to the high youth unemployment rate, a growing proportion of young people stayed on to complete Years 11 and 12. With the high correlation between the deterioration of the full-time labour market and the increase in full-time educational participation students were becoming increasingly anxious about the importance of educational credentials in a tight employment market. The following two student comments illustrated the increased awareness of the value of extra education:

Stay at school as long as possible for a start. 'Cause unless you’re going to go to a tech school or something like that and do a pre-apprenticeship course or something like that. But don't come straight out of school and try and hope to expect to get a job straight away, because there's no way. Unless you're very lucky to get one.18

Because in this day and age education is the key. No longer do you need to just read and write. You have to have knowledge of lots of things. Just to be able to get on in life. It's pretty bad if you haven't done your full ten or twelve years of schooling. Because if you haven't it's going to be pretty hard to get a good career. But that's just my opinion.19

Stories like these explain why Secondary Education Authority statistics showed a fairly uniform pattern of increasing retention rates to Year 12:

![Retention Rates Table]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Year 11 Females</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Year 11 Males</th>
<th>Year 12 Females</th>
<th>Persons</th>
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<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>22.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
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<td>35.5</td>
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<td>23.8</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>50.8</td>
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<td>33.7</td>
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<td>61.3</td>
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<td>65.1</td>
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<td>79.7</td>
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<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19 Ibid., p.30.
20 Secondary Education Authority (1990), Year 11 and 12 course statistics, SEA, Perth, p.120.
In the first phase of mass secondary schooling in Western Australia (1955 to 1975) the retention rates showed a dramatic increase in the number of students staying on to Year 12. In this period there was a 22.7 per cent increase in the overall retention rate. For males, the increase in retention was 21.3 per cent, while for girls the increase was slightly higher at 24.0 per cent. In the second phase (1975 to 1983) retention rates showed a fairly static pattern with a notable difference in male and female trends. For females, the retention rate rose by 5.1 per cent compared to 2.9 per cent for males. In the third phase (1983 to 1990) retention rates increased from 38.0 per cent to 58.5 per cent. For males the retention rate increased by 17.1 per cent, while the rate for females increased by 24.0 per cent. While the overall pattern showed a general increase in retention rates, particularly for females, substantial inequities related to social class existed. Figures published by the Australian Education Council provided a clear picture of the class bias of retention rates:

### Estimated Year 12 Completion Rates
**By Socio-Economic Status and Sex, Australia 1985-1990**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Low Socio-Economic Status</th>
<th>High Socio Economic Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>36</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>46</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These statistics showed, for example, that in 1990 students from high socio-economic backgrounds had a 70 per cent completion rate compared to students from low socio-economic status with 53 per cent. For females, the completion rate was 76 per cent and 59 per cent respectively. In the case of males, the completion rate was significantly lower than that for females in both the low and high socio-economic groups.

School retention rates in Western Australia also significantly differed depending on whether students attended Government, Catholic or Independent schools. In 1989, apparent retention to Year 12 was 55.5 per cent for government schools, 66.6 per cent for Catholic schools and 80.3 per cent for other non-government schools. Although apparent retention rates increased dramatically for all categories of schools (35.5 per cent, 35.9 per cent

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and 38.5 per cent respectively) in the period 1971-1990, the non-government sector and Catholic schools maintained a larger proportion of students than the government sector.22

Eckersley's study of youth problems in Australia showed that as more students remained on at school in tough recessionary times, educational credentials became more important in getting a job. As a consequence, competitive pressure for educational qualifications intensified. For instance, in the tertiary education sector entry scores increased as more students demanded access to universities. In 1987, 13,000 to 20,000 eligible students failed to gain a place in higher education institutions. This represented an increase of 22 per cent over the 1986 figures.23

At the personal level, this competitive situation created tension. While most students acknowledge the importance of education for a career, they express disenchantment with many aspects of their school experience. A common source of discontent is the mismatch between the school curriculum and post-school needs. Walker claimed that dramatic economic, industrial and technological change leading to high youth unemployment created the perception among students that the curriculum was irrelevant. In Walker's opinion:

If, perhaps, 'the world of work' has changed too rapidly, the curriculum has changed too slowly. Hence we have the problems currently facing secondary students and teachers. For a large proportion of students, the curriculum is perceived, at worst, as largely irrelevant; at best, as relatively ineffective.24

It is not surprising then, that students had an ambivalent attitude toward the education system. For example:

I went to school, I got my education, but it hasn't really helped me. I mean, if it had've helped me I would have had more than two jobs in my life, since I left school in 1981. I look at it, two jobs in probably six years, five years, is not the greatest record you could have. I'm not proud of it but there's not much I could've done.25

22 Ibid., p.18.
24 Quoted in Ibid., p.27.
25 J. Fitzpatrick (1987), p.31
When you're at school you see guys just mucking around you know, don't worry about school. Then when you see them unemployed you think, "Oh yeah. You deserved it you know. You really didn't do that well at school you know. Used to muck around". But then you think about yourself, "I didn't muck around. I went all right at school. Still can't find a job".26

Eckersley's research confirmed the general sense of malaise. He claimed that suicide, drug addiction and crime were extreme expressions of young people's alienation.27 Other commentators observed the trend toward student conservatism in response to economic realities:

They are working harder; they are less interested in politics. They are not alienated from the system at all. Ten years ago, they didn't want to have anything to do with the system. Now they are buckling down; they're extraordinary conservative.28

Kids are facing up to realities. They have to work harder to get a good job. They are literally told when they enter high school that only a few are going to make it.29

The implications of such attitudes for Australia are serious, according to Eckersley. It reflected a general decline in interest about social problems such as unemployment and war, and increasing concern about personal matters like education, career decisions and security.30 Eckersley believed that the swing to conservative and self-centred attitudes raised the serious problem of young people losing interest in political processes, democracy and questions of social injustice.31

**CONSTRUCTING THE HEGEMONY OF SOCIAL EFFICIENCY**

This section examines the state's response in re-thinking the role of secondary schooling in Australian society. As explained in chapter two, the Australian state played an increasingly important role in facilitating capital accumulation and at the same time, maintaining social harmony through increased expenditure on education, unemployment and training programs.

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26 Ibid., p.31.
28 Professor J. Goodnow quoted in ibid., p.15.
29 J. Owen, a former president of the Youth Affairs Council of Australia quoted in ibid., p.15.
31 Ibid., p.17.
During the Whitlam era, massive increases in expenditure on education created an optimistic mood about the egalitarian potential of schooling in society. However, with the end of the boom decades in the mid-1970s, official Federal and State level educational policy took a sharp swing to the right as conservative forces attempted to re-establish their hegemony over the role of state secondary schooling. The emphasis moved to a closer relationship between schooling and work. This meant emphasising skills, careers, vocational education and attitudes that would enable students to fit more readily into the rapidly changing labour market. A central argument in this section is that the official educational discourse of efficiency and quality played a key organising role in the ideological struggle over the nature and purpose of secondary schooling in Western Australia. The aim is to show how various Federal and State government educational committees sought to realign secondary schools more tightly with the needs of capital.

THE WILLIAMS REPORT: ESTABLISHING THE HEGEMONY OF THE NEW RIGHT

The Williams Committee of Inquiry established by Prime Minister Fraser on 10 September 1976 marked a significant turning point in the ideological struggle for control of state secondary schooling. The national committee of inquiry into education and training undertook a comprehensive review of post compulsory schooling with particular emphasis on the changing relationship between the education system and the labour market.

The Williams Report (1979) expressed concern about the increasing level of government spending on education as a proportion of gross domestic product.\(^\text{32}\) In the context of the world-wide economic downturn and financial constraints on government spending, the Committee signalled the demise of the social democratic settlement of the 1960s. The Williams Report (1979) urged a period of stabilisation and gradual reform in education rather than sweeping structural changes.\(^\text{33}\) The Committee argued that Federal and State governments should enforce greater efficiency, quality and accountability in education. In contrast to the Karmel Report (1973) and its emphasis on equality, the Williams Report (1979) advocated a differentiated education system. It argued that education was a significant variable influencing labour productivity and economic growth, therefore, the


\(^{33}\) Ibid., p.2.
amount of money invested in education should show quantifiable increases in production:

In any community, economic growth, measured by the increase of goods and services produced, flows from changes in inputs of labour and of capital. Quantitative changes in these two factors may be accompanied by improvements in the quality of labour caused by an extension of education.34

The report went on to argue that Australia's economic crisis and high youth unemployment were the result of the failure of past education policies to produce people who could easily adapt to the rapidly changing labour market. In short, the education system was to blame for high youth unemployment. In 1977, the Schools Commission claimed that secondary school students lacked the skills appropriate to working life and insufficient experience of vocational subjects.35

This sort of criticism touched a cord with conservative teachers and academics, employer organisations and the media. Right wing attacks on the education system increased as the economic crisis deepened and youth unemployment and school retention rates skyrocketed. The 'back to basics movement' effectively articulated much common sense thinking about the role of secondary schooling in preparing students for the world of work. Driving the school to work debate was the assumption that technology lead to economic growth and employment opportunities. The Williams Report (1979) claimed that while technical progress may cause short term unemployment and displacement, in the long run, it would produce economic growth and jobs requiring new skills. According to the Williams Report (1979):

... technical change which saves labour in existing activities and creates a demand for it in new fields calls for training in new skills and the retraining of displaced workers.36

Sweet argued that there were strong grounds for remaining pessimistic about the employment opportunities generated by technology. While the Williams Report (1979) argued that the education system could not overcome problems of general unemployment, especially for youth, it could shape basic

34 Ibid., p.52.
35 Quoted in J. Williams and T.A. Priest (1978), Attitudes of employers to school leavers in Western Australia, Education Department of W.A., Perth, p.2.
skills and attitudes more attuned to the effect of new technologies. This meant that secondary schools must prepare young people for future work and in so doing, demonstrate greater flexibility in meeting community needs. In response to employer concerns, the Williams Report (1979) recommended that secondary schools should place greater stress on vocational education, careers guidance, work experience programs, liaison between TAFE and schools, differentiation of the curricula, and the interaction of staff and resources between schools, industry and public agencies.37

IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

In the path of the ideological work of the Williams Report (1979), a plethora of Federal and State government reports sustained a small industry inquiring into schooling's relation to youth unemployment.38 In the past two decades much debate has occurred over the aims, purpose and content of secondary schooling in Australia. The purpose in this part of the chapter is to examine official state ideology on the nature and role of secondary schooling in Australia. Federal government documents discussed include Schooling for 15 and 16 Year-Olds (1980), Quality of Education in Australia (1985), In the National Interest: Secondary Education and Youth Policy in Australia (1987), Strengthening Australia's Schools (1988), and A Changing Workforce (1988). The final part of this section considers the Western Australian Government's response to these developments.

The Schools Commission study Schooling for 15 and 16 Year-Olds (1980) examined a number of central issues relevant to the education of 15 and 16 year olds. The Commissioners targeted this age group for two major reasons. First, at this age almost half the age group ended formal schooling and second, the increasing youth unemployment problem alluded to in the previous section was creating a particularly sensitive political issue.39 In this situation, the Commissioner's were conscious of the contradictory forces seeking to control and influence the education system. On the one hand, they acknowledged the significant role of education in developing the human and personal dimension of individuals. On the other hand, the

37 Ibid., pp.8-9.
Commissioners showed an awareness of the demands placed on secondary schools by the economy. As a result, progressive educators used the discourse of the 'adaptive school', 'critical self appraisal', 'comprehensiveness' and 'serving all students', to bring about educational reform. In contrast, conservative forces used the sense of 'unease', 'anxiety', 'alienation' and 'discontent' with the role of state secondary schooling to construct a new hegemony supportive of the dominant interests in society.

*Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds* (1980) argued that secondary schooling must do a better job in helping students to negotiate the world of which they were a part. In achieving a more desirable fit between secondary schooling and the world of work, the report recommended that secondary schools should produce students who had developed the skills and knowledge appropriate for paid employment or further education, appreciated the working of the physical and social world of which they were a part, and had a sense of self-worth.\(^{40}\) The Commissioners argued that secondary schools must 'reappraise' and 'adjust' so that they educated 'all children' with knowledge relevant to 'life situations'.\(^{41}\) As a consequence, secondary schooling played an important hegemonic role in articulating/rearticulating the legitimacy of the traditional selective social function of secondary schooling.

To achieve relevance *Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds* (1980) argued that the secondary school curriculum should emphasise an understanding of the idea of work. The report stated:

> The study of work, as it is appropriate to the school is not essentially concerned with the making of choices about the kind of paid work individual students will do, though it could greatly assist that. It is rather concerned with definitions of what work is, why it is important to people, how its nature and availability has been affected by technological change in the past, is being affected in the present and is likely to be affected in the future. The range of paid and unpaid work in the society and the conditions under which it is performed and rewarded, the significance of qualifications in gaining different kinds of work and the study of such arrangements as apprenticeship and its alternatives in industrial training, the sexual or ethnic division of labour, decision structures in work situations ranging from self-employment through traditional

\(^{40}\) Ibid., p.5.  
\(^{41}\) Ibid., pp.5-6.
bureaucracy to worker participation of various kinds, the history and functions of trade unions, the making of investment decisions affecting labour demand, employment and unemployment and the alternatives to being employed by someone else may be its content.42

In emphasising the importance of the world of work, the report sounded a warning about the political danger of school transition programs (work experience, career education, alternative courses and link courses). The report argued that school to work transition courses ran the risk of polarising and alienating students 'by assigning to the scrap heap students who failed the unchanging academic curriculum'.43 The report expressed concern that transition programs were interpreted by some as a 'confession of failure of the whole curriculum'.44 With these potentially dangerous consequences, the report argued that secondary schools must reform themselves to depoliticise and ameliorate any potential discontent that may result. In brief, the function of secondary schooling was to maintain social harmony. The report illustrated its sensitivity to this problem in the following passage:

... the question is not one of whether schools should 'educate for unemployment' but rather of how schools can tackle this task in a constructive rather than a potentially destructive way.45

The publication of the Quality of Education in Australia Report (The QERC Report, 1985) continued the search for a 'constructive' settlement. This report reflected the Commonwealth Government's desire to ensure the 'effectiveness' and 'efficiency' of primary and secondary education outcomes. It aimed to improve:

...the standards attained by students in communication, literacy and numeracy and for improving the relationship between secondary schooling and subsequent employment and education.46

The QERC Report (1985) was conscious of the barrage of criticism from employer and industry groups, the impact of the sharp economic downturn and the changing composition of upper school retention rates. It attempted
to make sure that the education system produced appropriate educational outcomes in a post-industrial economy.\(^{47}\) The report claimed, that in a complex technological age, a greater proportion of people must complete a "broad level secondary education as a foundation on which to build the necessary occupational skills".\(^{48}\)

The centrepiece of the \textit{QERC Report} (1985) was the idea of \textit{competence} and the desire to guarantee that all children completed a broad level of secondary education satisfactorily. Competence referred to:

\[\ldots\text{the ability to use knowledge and skills effectively to achieve a purpose. Emphasis is therefore placed on the results of learning, which should be purposeful and have demonstrable effects.}\^{49}\]

Given the increasing role of technology and science in society, the report argued that the general competencies required by all individuals should include acquiring information, conveying information, applying logical processes, undertaking tasks as an individual, and undertaking tasks as a member of a group.\(^{50}\) The report also argued that students must acquire the skills and attitudes required in the work place. This meant that secondary schooling should produce individuals who were compliant and capable of "selecting behaviour that is appropriate in the workplace". By appropriate workplace behaviour, the report meant the willingness of students to accept authority and comply with employer directions.\(^{51}\) The report acknowledged that while schools should not undertake the task of occupational training, they should prepare students in understanding the nature of work and appreciating the "responsibilities and duties involved in work".\(^{52}\) It also recommended that secondary schooling prepare individuals to be effective participants in the political process.\(^{53}\) In other words, secondary schooling should play an important socialising role by building the cultural and social hegemony of capitalism.

According to the \textit{QERC Report} (1985) the curriculum was a major vehicle through which schools could develop the competencies appropriate to a

\(^{47}\) Ibid., p.189.  
\(^{48}\) Ibid., p.190.  
\(^{49}\) Ibid., p.190.  
\(^{50}\) Ibid., p.191.  
\(^{51}\) Ibid., p.72.  
\(^{52}\) Ibid., p.74.  
\(^{53}\) Ibid., p.76.
technological society. In particular, the report urged the Commonwealth government to give attention to communication skills, mathematics, science and technology, the study of work and Australian studies. The QERC Report (1985) recommended that education authorities emphasise the acquisition of skills in operating computers, the employment of new technology in the classroom, the role of technological change in social and economic development, and the teaching of mathematics and science.54

The Commonwealth Schools Commission policy statement *In the National Interest: Secondary Education and Youth Policy in Australia* (1987) elaborated many of the themes and issues raised in the two documents considered so far. Focusing on the role of secondary schools, this document attempted to defuse the tension between the contradictory role of producing individuals to fit contemporary society, while preserving and extending the national government's commitment to democracy and social justice.55 The policy statement was acutely aware of the political minefield created by the government's objective of "providing more young people with an extended and successful secondary education" and at the same time, "acting as a gatekeeper rationing increasingly sought-after rewards".56

In tackling the widespread criticism that education must 'correspond' more closely to the requirements of the economy, the report sought to develop a 'reciprocal' relationship between education and the economy. *In the National Interest* (1987) identified three principal factors that shaped the relationship between education and the economy. First, the knowledge, skills and attitudes that education develops and industry uses. Second, the qualifications or credentials that education gives students, and employers use as the basis of selection. Finally, the requirements of the labour market itself. The report claimed that in a well-ordered relationship there should be a 'consistency' or 'correspondence' among these three aspects.57

In developing a closer link between education and the economy the report stated that the role of secondary schooling was "to create the cultural pre-conditions favourable to economic and technological development". This meant that secondary schools must "establish relationships with and

54 Ibid., p.192.
57 *In the national interest* (1987), pp.4-5.
create expectations of their students that are similar to those required in the workplace". The report argued that secondary schools should establish acceptable standards (competencies), a sense of responsibility for work done and limit interactions in the classroom to those relevant to the task at hand. In short, secondary schooling should encourage behaviours suitable to the workplace rather than the informal setting of family or social life.\textsuperscript{58}

Specifically, \textit{In the National Interest} (1987) acknowledged that secondary schools should provide important general knowledge and skills relevant to work. In preparing students for the work force, the report identified the following desirable attributes: the ability to communicate clearly and effectively in written and oral forms, technological literacy, creative and expressive talent, analytical thinking, adaptability, confidence, and collaborative and participative decision making.\textsuperscript{59}

Educational credentials are another significant dimension to the education and economy relationship. The Schools Commission report claimed that educational credentials were "important regulators of the work of secondary schools".\textsuperscript{60} As already argued in chapter three, public examinations traditionally acted as a gateway to employment opportunities and further education. As a result, educational credentials exerted a disproportionate influence on the content, balance and diversity of secondary education.\textsuperscript{61} According to the report, secondary school qualifications operated most often as a pre-selection device to screen potential candidates for jobs.\textsuperscript{62} This meant that students who failed to get satisfactory examination results didn't have the necessary academic qualifications to obtain work.

In this way, credentialism perpetuated the selective social function of secondary schooling that existed before the Second World War. In expanding the opportunity for all students to gain a secondary education based on merit rather than social position, there was an increased demand for educational qualifications. With more students staying on at school, credentialism became a significant 'social currency'. As the value of educational qualifications increased, so did the competition for places in tertiary

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., p.9.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., p.9.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p.10.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p.10.
\textsuperscript{62} \textit{In the national interest - an overview} (1987), p.10.
Institutions. *In the National Interest* (1987) emphasised the implications of credentialism in the following extract:

> The increasing dominance of a credential largely serving the purpose of selection for tertiary entrance, but widely appropriated for other purposes, raises serious questions about the justice of this system for the majority of students who are failing to gain such credentials and the many others who aim for the credential but do not gain a respectable score. The cost of this system is high in terms of attrition whether one looks at the numbers of students who choose not to enter the competition or at those students who inappropriately and unsuccessfully take part. The long-term effect of this must be to waste talent and to diminish the confidence and self-esteem of a large proportion of Australians, thereby weakening the nation's adaptability and will.\(^{63}\)

In conclusion, while the report acknowledged some positive features of the relationship between education and the economy, it recommended the need for "close and more dynamic relationships in the interests of the economy". Specifically, the report recommended:

- the education system and the economic partners should seek greater agreement about the knowledge and skills which are most valuable;

- schools should develop better relationships with their economic environments;

- employers and educators need to reach agreements about the most useful forms of certification of student achievement;

- the share of jobs going to Year 12 graduates will need to increase in line with increased retention to Year 12;

- more young people need to be attracted to the most economically and socially important tasks in the society.\(^{64}\)

While *In the National Interest* (1987) articulated the desirability of a closer working relationship between secondary schooling and the economy, it also demonstrated a commitment to democracy and social justice. Failure to do so, would result in discontent and agitation by those groups disadvantaged by the education system. Thus, any politicisation of the education system

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\(^{63}\) In the national interest (1987), pp.25-26.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., p.14.
would pose a direct political threat to the legitimacy of secondary schools in performing their traditional selective social function.

The discourse of democracy and social justice maintains people's faith in the education system and defuses the potential for social disorder. While progressive forces attempted to assert the desirability of comprehensive secondary schooling as a reflection of the democratic aspirations of society, others demanded greater selectivity and differentiation because it encouraged excellence in relevant subjects such as mathematics, science and technology. Many people argued that the focus on equality denied 'nature' and as a consequence, was responsible for all that was bad in education and society. Despite such criticism, *In the National Interest* (1987) argued that the question of democracy and equality was a matter of concern. To achieve greater equality of outcome the report elaborated the principles of inclusiveness, co-operativeness and differential resource allocation. The principle of *inclusiveness* attempted to affirm and include the background of all students in the work and life of the school. *Co-operativeness* aimed to provide activities relevant to all students' successful participation in schools. Finally, *differential resource distribution* attempted to favour those students with greatest educational needs.⁶⁵

Ministerial announcements in 1988 by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, J. Dawkins placed increasing pressure on the democratic and social justice objectives of secondary schooling. Dawkins argued that education was an important tool in the process of restructuring the Australian economy. Dawkins technocratic logic comes through in the following statement:

> The Australian economy is part-way through a process of substantial structural change. The basic need has been, and remains, to shift the balance of economic activity towards greater domestic production of high value added goods and services that are traded internationally. Australian industry must become more competitive through effective use of resources, improvements in the quality of its goods and services and more effective exploitation of technological developments and opportunities. Our capacity to make these changes will determine our ability to achieve sustained improvements in living standards in the future.⁶⁶

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⁶⁵ Ibid., p.15.
Dawkins believed that employment, education and training policies played a crucial part in fostering the skilled and flexible labour force needed to facilitate the process of structural adjustment. Specifically, he claimed that secondary schools should provide "the foundation upon which development of a more highly skilled, adaptable and productive labour force depends". In forging closer links between education and the economy, Dawkins argued that secondary schools must maintain the traditional objectives of citizenship education, personal development and the productive use of leisure time. At the same time, secondary schools must continue to ensure greater levels of participation and increased retention rates. While acknowledging the democratic role of secondary schooling, Dawkins was anxious that the school curriculum should better reflect the world of which it was a part. He had in mind, a curriculum that would instil "positive habits of learning, and attitudes and values such as initiative and responsibility, the pursuit of excellence, teamwork and competitiveness". Dawkins, in developing a national effort to strengthen the role of secondary schooling in the process of economic restructuring, helped to build the hegemony of the dominant class.

**THE BEAZLEY AND BETTER SCHOOLS REPORTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

In Western Australia the *Beazley Report* (1984) and *Better Schools Report* (1987) reflected the contradictory role of the state. On the one hand, they expressed the need for schools to be responsive to the needs of the economy and on the other hand, they attempted to legitimise its unequal social relations and satisfy the demands of subordinate groups for democratic and human rights.

In both reports there was an instrumental logic that argued if only schools could better reflect the needs of the economy everything would be all right. The *Beazley Report* (1984) expressed concern about the impact of technology, unemployment and poverty on school-leavers. The relationship between schooling, employment and post-school life was a major focus in the *Beazley*...
Report (1984). Its terms of reference aimed to make secondary schooling relevant to the changing nature of the Western Australian economy. The inquiry focused on curriculum relevance to further education, employment and post-school life, literacy and numeracy, certification requirements of the community, increasing retention rates for personal and vocational skills, community involvement in decision-making, and the role of TAFE in developing vocational skills in secondary schools. An underlying assumption of the report was that the solution to Australia’s economic crisis lay in making appropriate educational reforms. According to the Beazley Report (1984), educational reforms must "nurture and develop those skills necessary for the individual to meet the challenges that life will bring ...." In other words, secondary schools should produce students with the appropriate skills, behaviour and attitudes to cope in a complex and hierarchically divided society. For this reason, the Beazley Report (1984) recommended increasing retention rates, improving the standards of literacy and numeracy, reducing the excessive influence of the Tertiary Admissions Examination, developing stronger and more formalised links between secondary schooling and TAFE, emphasising computer education and technology, developing an appropriate credentialling system to help students gain employment and assist employers in making accurate judgements about suitability for employment, and making teachers more accountable for the product of the education system.

The Better Schools Report (1987) argued the desirability of developing a flexible and responsive education system that could cope with the unprecedented changes created by new technologies and the needs of the future. The Report was a follow-up to the review of the education system conducted by the Western Australian Government Functional Review Committee. It aimed to restructure the school system in line with the management techniques of the corporate world. This meant creating a responsive, flexible and accountable administrative style. Central to the report was the assumption that the application of efficient management techniques to schools, could cure the problems facing the education system and the economy. This logic implied that technical solutions can solve

73 Ibid., p.xiii.
74 Ibid., p.2.
75 Ibid., p.29-32.
inherently contradictory educational problems.\textsuperscript{77} In other words, the discourse of scientific management (efficiency, flexibility, management, accountability, responsiveness and performance indicators) becomes the means and ends for dealing with educational issues. As a consequence, questions concerned with justice and the moral purpose of secondary schooling disappeared from the educational agenda.

Attempts to realign secondary schooling more closely with the needs of capital are dependent on developing children with a favourable attitude to work, particularly among the increasing number of non-academic students remaining on at school. Therefore, it was not surprising to see the \textit{Beazley Report} (1984) stress the importance of producing "a great variety of forms of excellence". This meant encouraging "intellectual rigour" for the more capable students and justifying to the non-academic students the streaming process. The latter group of students entered into career paths such as manual skills, performing arts and technical forms of service.\textsuperscript{78} Unfortunately, both reports ignored the impact of technology on the division of labour, the process of deskilling and unemployment. They glossed over any critical analysis of the role of secondary schools in perpetuating the division of labour and the inequalities of society.

In chapter two of this thesis, Gramsci's idea of hegemony helped to explain how the interests of the hegemonic class became the interests of subordinate groups. This chapter argues that Federal and State level educational reports provided the 'intellectual and moral leadership' required in constructing and maintaining social consensus about the aims and purpose of secondary schooling.\textsuperscript{79} As noted in chapter five, one way of developing consensus was by encouraging children to value service to the community and the established social order. In this way, the 'collective-will' can serve to ameliorate potential dissatisfaction by masking unjust social relations.

Corrigan and Sayer argued that the aim of the state was to reconstitute children through regulated forms of social relationships.\textsuperscript{80} The \textit{Beazley Report} (1984) attempted to individualise children through a competitive curriculum, grading and certification. As a consequence, children began to

\textsuperscript{77} J.J. Prunty (1984), \textit{A critical reformulation of education policy analysis}, Deakin University, Geelong, p.31.
\textsuperscript{78} The \textit{Beazley Report} (1984), p.23.
\textsuperscript{79} C. Mouffe (1979), p.181.
\textsuperscript{80} Corrigan and Sayer (1985), p.184.
locate the cause of failure and inequality in the individual rather than making any connection to the wider socio-economic structures of society. As explained in chapter four, the logic of meritocracy played a crucial role in defining a child's sense of identity. From an early age, individual experience and school routines and practices encouraged the value of personal ability and effort in the classroom. As a result, the ideology of meritocracy functioned to obscure deeper social divisions produced by capitalist social relations.

The Beazley Report (1984) devoted considerable time and space to the democratic aims of secondary schooling. The report recommended that 'special groups' including students disadvantaged by home background, isolation and race should receive additional resources and services. Unfortunately, the Beazley Report (1984) assumed that 'special groups' existed because of unique and individual circumstances, usually the 'home background'. While it acknowledged the 'intricate' nature of the relationship between the home and school, it failed to address the structural reasons for educational inequality. Therefore, it was hardly surprising that it advocated 'vigorous evolution rather than marked revolution' in educational policy.

WORK EDUCATION

The previous section discussed the official ideology of government reports at the Federal and State level regarding the appropriate role of secondary schooling in preparing students for the world of work. In the present social, political and economic crisis the state must address the rapidly rising level of youth unemployment and prepare students to fit into a world very different from that which existed twenty years ago.

In historical perspective, educational policy initiatives to realign the Western Australian secondary school system to the requirements of the labour market are hardly new. As noted in chapter three, Andrews in 1912 advocated the construction of a differentiated secondary school system to better reflect the labour market. He wanted to provide a direct link between schools and children's future work. With the onset of the 1930s depression

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81 Ibid., p.289.
the Wolff Report (1937) on youth unemployment and training renewed the push for vocational education. Wolff’s major recommendation was that the education system should be more relevant to the demands of industry. It is ironic that the emphasis on vocational training and the push to meet the demands of the job market occur precisely in periods when job opportunities for young people are most limited. Any attempt to link secondary schooling with the demand for technically trained labour power is misleading. Of greater relevance to employers is the need for a preparatory general education that produces workers with attitudes related to work socialisation. In periods of economic restructuring industry requires workers who are compliant, adaptable and flexible. In this context, secondary schooling played an important political role in socialising future workers.

In the period of post-war reconstruction and economic growth, the advocates of human capital investment joined forces with the proponents of equal opportunity to argue the case of secondary schooling for all. However, the beginning of the economic crisis in 1975 created a conservative backlash against the ideological settlement established in the 1960s. With the breaking up of the post-war hegemony the educational debate shifted to the failure of secondary schooling to produce economic wealth. As a consequence, conservative forces reasserted their ideological control over the educational agenda by introducing a new ‘common sense’ understanding about education. Under the banner of ‘back to basics in education’ the rhetoric shifted to standards, control, discipline, streaming, choice, diversity, priorities and standardisation.

Those who argue for a closer relationship between secondary schooling and work do so on the assumption that the knowledge and skills gained at school are relevant in the work place. Human capital theorists believe that the rapid technological changes occurring in the economy requires a more highly trained and skilled population. At the national level, Australia Reconstructed (1987), the report of the Australian Trade Union (ACTU) and the Trade Development Council (TDC) Mission to Western Europe was influential in shaping this line of thinking at the Federal level of government. In the words of the report:

Evidence suggests that Australia is not producing the right skills as well as not producing enough skilled people .... Australia has a relatively low proportion of the population with degrees or qualifications in science, engineering or technology-related disciplines .... Australia’s performance has
improved in recent years, but its competitors are not standing still. It must strive to improve the base of skills and knowledge on which our future competitive position in world trade depends.83

Dekkers, De Laeter and Malone's analysis of upper secondary school science and mathematics enrolment patterns in Australia in the period 1970 to 1989 expressed a similar concern about Australia's lack of technological expertise. They argued:

One of the most important issues facing Australia today concerns the question of how to become part of the post-industrial revolution which has swept the Western world in the last 25 years. Whilst many developed countries have become participants in this technological revolution, Australia has been content to be end-users of the technology and to depend on overseas products to a greater and greater extent. The low level of economic development, the decline in the value of the Australian dollar, and a high unemployment rate are all indicators of a deeper malaise - the failure of Australian society to understand the forces of technology that are at work in the world, and how to adapt educational and political thought to meet this challenge.84...

A sound mathematics and science education system ... is an important component in any plan to enable Australia to compete successfully in an increasingly technological world.85

In searching for an explanation to Australia's economic predicament, the human capital approach claimed that the educational system was dysfunctional to the requirements of the economy. As noted in the previous section, Federal and State government educational reports over the past decade assumed that the solutions to Australia's economic problems lie in readjusting the secondary school system to new economic realities. As a consequence, qualitative educational reforms attempted to achieve a better match between the education system and the requirements of the labour market.

According to Smyth, the fundamental problem with the human capital approach is that it relies on the idea of 'individualism' to explain Australia's

85 Ibid., p.68.
economic crisis. As a consequence, it fails to consider the impact of international economic forces that contributed to Australia's 'de-industrialisation', 'de-regulation', 'de-nationalisation' and 'marginalisation'. In particular, Smyth argued that Australia's absorption into the international capitalist economic order caused a fragmentation and de-skilling of the labour force. Smyth quotes Froebel on this point:

... fragmentation of jobs has progressed to such a degree, especially in manufacturing, that the performance of individual fragmented operations of even technologically very sophisticated processes now usually requires a training period of no more than a few weeks - even for unskilled labour.

Therefore to claim, as the human capital approach does, that the education system develops the necessary skills and knowledge for economic growth is wrong. Certainly, secondary schools do have a role to play in giving students a standard of literacy and numeracy that will enable them to survive in a complex technological society. However, the often repeated argument that secondary schools are to blame for the present crisis because they do not teach the appropriate skills to enable students to find a job is at best misleading. The simple fact is, that the process of re-structurig and de-skilling of the labour force results in more not less unskilled, repetitive, boring and poorly paid jobs. Conversely, there are fewer jobs that require an education or even substantial training. Critics of vocationally oriented education like Grubb and Lazeron (1975) argued that:

... the particular jobs available in advanced capitalist economies lack the moral qualities attributed to work generally. In fact, most work is boring. Its unvaried routine, the simplicity of most tasks, and the constant supervision characteristic of hierarchical settings all deny workers a sense of competence and a feeling of responsibility. Because their roles in the production process are so small and the products they produce are so often superfluous and trivial, workers have little sense of accomplishment. They are denied a sense of connectedness with their fellow workers and the rest of the economy because they are systematically isolated from one another and because personal relations are mediated by impersonal market relationships.

87 Ibid., p.28.
Indeed, if this is the case, it seems that the political function of secondary schooling is to socialise children into a hierarchical labour market rather than preparing a more sophisticated and skilled population.

Work education plays an important ideological role in producing workers with appropriate cultural attitudes and knowledge. For this reason, Preston and Symes argued that work education and the 'back to basics movement' were a 'cloak' for the hidden agenda of producing 'good workers'. They believed that vocational education in secondary schools is about 'economic competitiveness, technocratic efficiency and marketplace education'. In their view, vocational education reinforced 'society's hierarchies' and in so doing, perpetuated 'injustice, elitism and class and gender inequities'.

In this chapter, the idea of work education encompasses various educational programs and services aimed at preparing students for post-school life. Work education or vocational education refers:

... to those activities designed to lead to an understanding of work, of its place and importance in society, and in the life of each individual. This definition obviously includes not only the formal study of work but such work-related activities as work experience, career education, school industry twinning, industry visits and community service.

The following section will examine some of the educational mechanisms through which Western Australian secondary schools produced students with knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the work place.

PRODUCING THE 'GOOD' WORKER

A Western Australian survey of employer attitudes toward school leavers conducted in 1978 reinforced the view that secondary schools were failing to produce the right kind of worker. In a wide-ranging survey of Perth metropolitan businesses employers expressed concern about the quality of the students produced by the education system and the personal qualities of school leavers. The majority of private sector employers believed that young people lacked the qualities of industriousness, application, responsibility, self-discipline, motivation, respect and courtesy toward others. Employers

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were particularly critical of the intolerance of young people to carry out routine (boring) jobs and their lack of motivation. From the employer's perspective, desirable qualities for employability included a positive and willing attitude, neat dress and appearance, good manners, a sense of responsibility, respect for authority, punctuality, diligence, and the ability to work without supervision.\(^9\)

Many employers believed that secondary schools divorced themselves from the reality of the workplace. Sixteen per cent of respondents to the survey claimed that secondary schools were ineffective in the general area of vocational preparation including awareness of work requirements, types of jobs available and interview presentation. Some 59 per cent of employers believed that schools failed to give sufficient attention to the preparation of students for employment. This meant that secondary schools gave undue emphasis to academic work at the expense of more practical career orientated options.\(^9\) For employers, it was important that secondary schools should better prepare students for the kind of work that suited their future station in life.\(^9\) Besides attitudes, employers expressed concern about the apparent failure of secondary schools to develop students with even the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In comparing school leavers with their counterparts of five years ago, more than 50 per cent of employers rated current standards of literacy (spelling, handwriting, reading and following written instructions) as worse.\(^9\)

This sort of evidence supports Blaug's argument that the primary function of secondary schooling is to 'socialise' students to 'co-operate in carrying out the tasks of the employing enterprise'.\(^9\) Blaug rejected the 'old' economics of education view about the alleged economic value of secondary schooling. Instead, he claimed that secondary schools functioned to 'socialise', 'screen' and 'segment' the labour force in the interest of capitalist social relations.\(^9\) Bowles and Gintis' book *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) is perhaps the best exposition of this kind of analysis. Briefly recapping, Bowles and Gintis claimed that there was a 'correspondence' between the personality

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\(^9\) J. Williams and T.A. Priest (1978), *The attitudes of employers towards school leavers in Western Australia*, Education Department of Western Australia, p.9.
\(^9\) Ibid., pp.56-58
\(^9\) Ibid., p.10.
\(^9\) Ibid., p.11.
\(^9\) M. Blaug (1985), 'Where are we now in the economics of education', *Economics of Education Review*, vol.4, no.1, p.55.
\(^9\) Ibid., p.48.
traits produced in schools and the workplace. The Youth Guidance Service of the Western Australian Education Department articulated some of the personality traits desired in potential workers when constructing its personality assessment schedule in the late 1940s. Youth Guidance Officers assessed student personality traits using the following questionnaire:

**Youth Guidance Service**  
**Personality Characteristics Questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORK ATTITUDES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you consider the pupil is self confident at work?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Would you consider the pupil to be a careful worker?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does the pupil work without having to be &quot;kept at it&quot;?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is the pupil reliable at work?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL ATTITUDES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the pupil self-confident when meeting or talking to other people?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does the pupil work well with others in group activities?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the pupil popular with other children?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you consider the pupil has qualities of leadership?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is the pupil willing to accept responsibility?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEMPERAMENTAL QUALITIES</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the pupil display initiative (originality, resourcefulness, self reliance, readiness to experiment, ability to get along undirected).</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is he/she reliable (helpfulness and co-operation, include most of the genuine moral qualities - honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, sense of honour, conscientiousness?)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does he/she display persistence (perseverance, tenaciousness, determination to finish a task even</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jean Anyon's research in America showed that while there were general personality traits desirable in the workplace, specific characteristics are class related. She showed that the educational experience of working class children emphasised teacher control and factual learning. They learnt punctuality, obedience, orderliness and other habits that would make them 'good' workers. On the other hand, students in the more affluent schools learnt sophisticated analytical tasks. Students being prepared for the top of the occupational ladder learnt a different set of personality traits such as self-esteem, self-reliance, problem-solving, flexibility, and leadership.

Braverman's analysis of the labour process showed how the logic of modern transnational corporations contributed to the deskilling of the labour

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97 EDF, AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 618/1947.  
98 J. Anyon (1981), 'Social class and school knowledge', *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol.11, no.1, pp.3-42.
process. He argued that the distinction between mental and manual labour effectively disempowered workers who became appendages to the production process with little or no control over their labour.\textsuperscript{99} In this situation, the 'good' worker was someone who was obedient, hard working and passive. Thus, if secondary schools were going to reflect the dispositions required in the workplace, it was logical that they encouraged the attitude of compliance to 'expert' authority. At the same time, secondary schools also prepared a smaller number of students to fill positions of management in which the qualities of independence, initiative and control were appropriate.

Returning to Blaug's argument, it is now clear how educational credentials act as a 'screening' mechanism. According to Blaug, educational credentials mirror individual effort and industriousness. Chapter four illustrated how the ideology of individual ability differentiated the secondary school population in a way that was acceptable to all. Thus, credentialism is an important ideological weapon in sanctioning the hierarchical structure of the labour force. According to Blaug, credentialism functions to diffuse potential conflict. In his words:

\textit{... screening by educational qualifications is economically efficient not because 'good' students are always 'good' workers but because educational credentialism avoids the inherent conflict of interests between workers and employers.}\textsuperscript{100}

However, there is a real danger in portraying an overly simplistic 'correspondence' between schooling and the world of work. As shown in chapter five, students often resist the authority of schools and demonstrate a sense of alienation with their school experience. Apple argued that the reproductive image of the labour process, whereby workers submit to structures of authority and the norms of compliance and punctuality was too simplistic. For Apple, the work culture was far more complex than reproduction theory lead us to believe. He argued that the work culture:

\textit{... provides important grounds for worker resistance, collective action, informal control of pacing and skill, and reasserting one's humanity.}\textsuperscript{101}


\textsuperscript{100} M. Blaug (1985), p.25.

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

In Western Australia, work experience programs play a key role in bringing students into contact with work culture. As noted in chapter four, the establishment of the Youth Education Branch in 1958 played an important part in achieving a smooth transition of early school leavers into society. The Youth Education Branch devoted considerable time and effort to organising young people's leisure time. However, with the appointment of eight Youth Education Officers (YEO) to secondary schools in 1969, the transition for students to the world of work received greater emphasis. By 1983, the number of Youth Education Officers attached to schools rose to seventy-six.\(^{102}\) With work experience programs growing in popularity, the Education Department appointed three co-ordinators in 1980 to encourage community interest and support.\(^{103}\)

As discussed in chapter four, vocational guidance officers played an important role in testing and assessing children to find their suitability for different sorts of work. Gradually the work of guidance officers' extended beyond careers counselling to encapsulate the 'total' child. However, with the increase in youth unemployment and the appointment of Career Advisers in 1976, secondary schools renewed the focus on organising and administering vocational information and counselling. The newly appointed Career Advisers took responsibility for co-ordinating the popular work experience program. By 1980, there were 47 Career Advisers attached to district high schools and five to senior high schools.\(^{104}\) The number of student placements in work experience programs jumped from 9,000 to 12,500 in the period 1979 to 1980.

The Education Department's interest in work experience was largely a response to growing pressure, from official international and national educational reports, the business sector, educationalists and students to make secondary schooling relevant to the needs of the 'adult working world'. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in a review entitled *Australia: Transition from School to Work or Further Study* (1977), highlighted the growing concern about the transition from school to work.

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102 Education Department of Western Australia (1983), *Annual Report*, p.56.
103 Education Department of Western Australia (1980), *Annual Report*, p.29.
and the general sense of unease about the role of education in social and economic development. The OECD review quoted a submission from the Department of Employment on this point:

The education system must take an increasing responsibility for the preparation of all students for working life ... The Department sees an individual's preparation for entry to work or further study as a continuous developmental process. This process should logically be supported in the context of the school setting, where ongoing access to young people is practical.

Specifically, the OECD review argued that work experience schemes should play a vital role in:

... broadening understanding of the working environment, of social relationships, and of the actual conditions of working life ...

In the case of industry, the desire to socialise the cost of training future workers was an important consideration. In 1982 the Minister for Labour and Productivity received advice that:

In Western Australia with vocational education and training being essentially left to a "free market" with employers providing less in-company training, the levels of skill in the community are falling rapidly below our overseas competitors.

While employers did not expect school leavers to have specific pre-vocational training, they did emphasise that secondary schooling should be relevant to the world of work and less preoccupied with the content of examinations. Employers urged secondary schools to emphasise skills that were transferable to day-to-day adult problems including reading, listening and talking, planning and problem solving, writing, and manipulative skills such as measuring and drawing.

105 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1977), *Australia: transition from school to work or further study*, OECD, Paris, p.15.
106 Ibid., p.62.
107 Ibid., p.65.
109 Ibid., p.9.
The Queensland Board of Teacher Education surveyed teacher attitudes toward work experience in 1982. The survey concluded that secondary school teachers believed they had an important role to play in preparing students for the world of work. Teachers believed that greater emphasis should be given to the transition to work aspect of schooling. This meant participating in work experience programs and forging closer links with industry. However, there was a general feeling amongst teachers that schools had other aims and the best way of preparing students for the world of work was through a general education.\textsuperscript{110}

Students themselves demanded that education should be relevant to the 'real world'. With increasing retention rates, rising youth unemployment and a growing demand for credentials, secondary schools attempted to make education relevant to the world of work. The following student comment indicated the sort of pressure that secondary schools were under:

Really. I mean, which boss is going to interview you and say, "Well, what's the highest mountain in South Africa? If you can tell me this, you've got the job". They need to put, I think, they need to put more emphasis, on actual work itself and what you've got to know for work, not what they say you'll have to know sort of thing. I reckon mainly the Education Department should go out and start doing some work, some proper study and finding out what people have to know.\textsuperscript{111}

The Education Department responded to these pressures by preparing a document in 1977 entitled \textit{Work Experience Programmes - A guide for teachers}. Its purpose was to assist secondary schools in establishing and operating work experience programs. The document defined work experience as:

... an 'educational strategy' which can be used in the social and vocational development of students. Its purpose is both to motivate the students' and to assist in the transition from school to the working life of the community .... It is intended to help students perceive the relationship between school studies and the world of work.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{110}Board of Teacher Education, Queensland (1982), \textit{Secondary schooling and the world of work}, BTE, Queensland, p.27; also Commonwealth State Working Party, First Report (1978), \textit{Transition from school to work or further study}, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.3.

\textsuperscript{111}J. Fitzpatrick (1987), p.32.

\textsuperscript{112}Education Department of Western Australia (1977), \textit{Work experience programmes: a guide for teachers in implementing work experience in secondary schools}, Education Department, Perth, p.9.
Specifically the objectives of work experience programs included helping students to:

- Become aware of the adult working world, which often proves so different from school and home;
- Evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes; balance ambitions with reality;
- Improve their knowledge of the career options and the facts and intangibles surrounding these options;
- Decide on the educational goals which are relevant to the career or careers that interest them.\(^{113}\)

In a major evaluation of work experience programs in government secondary schools, Robertson and Dunnell found that work experience programs were "extremely popular" at the Year 10 level, traditionally an exit point for those students wishing to leave school and find a job. For Year 11 students, work experience was also a popular career activity with the majority of participants coming from alternative courses or vocational business education courses. Education authorities believed that those students not wishing to go on to tertiary studies would gain more from direct contact with the workplace than learning from textbooks. This fact is borne out by the lack of career activities for Year 12 students, who tend to focus their energy on achieving good academic results. The following table indicates the nature of career activities and the emphasis at different year levels in government secondary schools in 1981:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Year Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=108</td>
<td>N=68</td>
<td>N=68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to CES offices</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career nights</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting speakers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Films/Tapes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Course</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulated work situations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job observation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory visits</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seeking skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{113}\) Ibid., p.9.

Robertson and Dunnell’s research findings showed that the staff of most secondary schools believed that the major objective of work experience programs was to develop general attitudes and habits appropriate for work. In other words, the hegemonic function of work experience programs was to establish consent to a particular set of work arrangements characteristic of a differentiated and technological society. Certainly, the attitudes and habits of obedience, punctuality, passiveness and respect for authority that employers saw as ‘good’ worker qualities support this proposition. In a broader sense, secondary schools should also produce people who had a positive and supportive attitude to science and technology. A report entitled Science and Technology Education in Western Australia: A Matter of Public Concern (1987) expressed concern about the declining recognition of the importance of science and technology and its contribution to national wealth. The report argued that secondary schools had an important role to play in creating an environment that was supportive of technology. The report claimed that secondary schools should encourage the diffusion and implementation of new technology, foster new technological developments, create market acceptability for technological products, and minimise social and industrial concerns.

According to Robertson and Dunnell’s survey, other objectives given high priority by secondary schools included the development of ‘career options’ and ‘occupational goals’. For the more vocationally orientated, business education and alternative upper school courses focused on ‘specific job preparation’, ‘job placement’ and ‘personal awareness’. In the case of terminal students, work experience programs attempted to develop a sense of self-awareness and personal confidence in preparation for participation in the work force.

In evaluating the perceived benefits of work experience programs the majority of secondary schools surveyed identified career information, goal crystallisation, self-development, and awareness of the world of work as the major outcomes. Other advantages included greater staff-school awareness of the employing community, better student awareness of work, greater employer awareness of school and student needs, better integration of work

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115 Science Teachers’ Association of Western Australia, Royal Australian Chemical Institute (W.A. Branch) and Australian Institute of Physics (W.A. Branch) (1987), Science and technology education in Western Australia: a matter of concern, p.13.
116 Ibid., p.4.
experience in schools, and more employment opportunities for youth.\textsuperscript{118} Employers believed that work experience was a valuable exercise because it gave students a taste of the 'real world'.\textsuperscript{119} For students, the benefits of work experience were seen in 'a personal, self-developmental way'.\textsuperscript{120} The following two student comments illustrate the perceived value of work experience:

But the work experience was, for a week it probably had the most influence on my life of any particular week I can remember. It was sort of like, well I thought, "This is it, this is where I could see myself in forty years time". And (after working at it) I couldn't, I couldn't see myself there at all.

I really wanted to be a gardener 'cause I did four weeks work experience up at the Albany Regional Hospital as well as town council on the gardening and I thoroughly enjoyed it'. That's what I just wanted to do.\textsuperscript{121}

In the late 1980s, the Ministry of Education adopted a number of work experience models to cater for a wider range of students seeking to understand the nature of work. For instance, the idea of 'work shadowing' entails students observing individuals at work. The objective is to help students gain an appreciation of work processes in the organisation and the general environment of the workplace. 'Negotiated work' experience gives students the opportunity to undertake an agreed contract to perform a particular task and develop attitudes and skills supportive of the work place. The 'research work experience' model encourages a direct link between the classroom and work experience. Its purpose is to develop the application and transferability of skills learned in the curriculum to specific issues relevant to the work place. Finally, 'job sampling' involves the student selecting a work placement in the area of their vocational interest and performing appropriate work tasks to gain first-hand experience of the world of work.\textsuperscript{122}

Work experience is not the only mechanism through which children learn the attitudes and habits desired by employers. As argued in chapter two, the discursive practices or the routines and habits reinforced in the day-to-day operation of secondary schools are powerful technologies of regulation.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., pp.46-47.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., p.53.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p.48.
\textsuperscript{121} J. Fitzpatrick (1987), p.42.
'Good' secondary schools inculcate in children the habits of self-discipline, punctuality, industriousness and hard work. In developing a strong work ethic, secondary schools constantly cajole and eventually force children to be punctual, orderly, attentive, busy, and co-operative. The 'good' student is productive, conscientious and aware of their responsibilities to themselves and others. They show respect for authority and a willingness to submit to the schools regime.

Secondary schools also reflect the work culture by developing a strict sense of time and routine. Beginning with the first bell of the school day children's time revolves around subject periods, breaks and finishing time. Once the bell goes, children take up their work stations in an orderly fashion in readiness for the teacher's next set of instructions. Most classroom work involves individual effort with co-operation and talking kept to a minimum. Classroom teacher effectiveness is usually measured to the extent that the children are working quietly and independently. Punctuality is strictly reinforced with latecomers sanctioned by the deprivation of individual free time. Even student break time for rest and recuperation is closely monitored for signs of disruptive behaviour that may threaten the schools sense of orderliness.

In conclusion, Western Australian secondary school work experience programs catered for a specific section of the secondary school population making the transition from school to work. The focus was clearly on Year 10 and 11 students involved in vocationally oriented courses. The purpose was to assist students with making occupational choices. Work experience programs prepared students to enter the work force by integrating the culture of the workplace into the school curriculum and establishing consent to the social relations of capitalism. A number of criticisms of work experience programs discussed include the failure to solve inherent economic and educational problems, streaming working class children into low status vocational programs, preparing students for dead-end jobs, perpetuating the distinction between high status and low status knowledge, reproducing work hierarchies based on sex, age and race, and failing to address the inherent problems of unemployment, poverty and student alienation.

REPRODUCING THE CAPITALIST DIVISION OF LABOUR

Before the emergence of capitalism, work centred on the family unit. The family unit usually produced enough food and clothing to make it
self-sufficient. As a consequence, many families maintained control over the production process. With the development of capitalism, the family unit lost control of the 'mode of production'. Under capitalism, the way of organising work moved to the factory system. In capitalist societies one class own or control the means of production (land, labour and capital) and organise the labour of the producing class for the purpose of generating surplus value. The owning class attempts to exploit the working class to increase its profit. As a consequence, an antagonistic relationship develops between the two classes. Among the most significant characteristics of capitalism is the attempt by capital to establish its hegemony over the labour process. According to Braverman, a central feature of modern capitalism is the process of labour degradation. Aronowitz summarised the major characteristics of Braverman's degradation thesis in the following passage:

... the rise of modern industry, with the introduction of large-scale machine production and the concomitant employment of science and technology as key productive forces, was no neutral process. The modern factory is a capitalist factory; the consequence of the rationalization of the labor process, signified by the introduction of assembly-line methods of production, has been to degrade and dequalify labor. The fundamental mechanisms of this degradation are implied by the "technical" division of labor: the separation of mental from manual labor, or as Braverman put it, the division of concept from execution, such that the worker is reduced to a detail operative under the supervision and direction of management, which (alongside science) has now been simultaneously to destroy the last vestiges of the old artisan mode of production, subordinating skilled workers to the rule of capital, and to accelerate the emergence of collective labor; the working class is largely deskilled, at the mercy of capital, and reduced in its function to an aspect of capital. Contrary to both popular belief and the ideologies of contemporary capitalism, work has become routinized, boring and repetitive.

Braverman saw work in capitalist societies as a manifestation of the class struggle in which the owners of the means of production seek to establish control over the workers. In contrast to the artisan way of organising work, capitalism fragments work into separate tasks. The division of labour under capitalism leads to the deskilling of labour to reduce costs and maximise surplus value and profit.

Aronowitz believed that 'managed capitalism' was an important part of capital's attempt to subsume the labour process.\textsuperscript{125} Scientific management developed in the early nineteenth century with the publication of Taylor's book \textit{Principles of Scientific Management} (1911). Taylor's central proposition was that management should take complete control over the labour process. Braverman quoted Taylor on this point:

Workers who are controlled only by general orders and discipline are not adequately controlled, because they retain their grip on the actual processes of labor. So long as they control the labor process itself, they will thwart efforts to realize to the full the potential inherent in their labor power. To change this situation, control over the labor process must pass into the hands of management.\textsuperscript{126}

In brief, Taylor's scientific management principles entailed the attempt to gather all knowledge belonging to workers and place it in the hands of management. This meant removing all 'brain work' from the factory floor and issuing workers with detailed written instructions of tasks to be accomplished.\textsuperscript{127} In short, 'scientific management' disempowers workers by concentrating knowledge in the hands of management. Aronowitz argued that Taylorism was a technological expression of capital's desire to dominate the labour process. He claimed that scientific management was:

... a means of creating a closed universe - such that contradictions ... take the form of the appearance of "social problems" subject to manipulation by social policy.\textsuperscript{128}

Against the background of Braverman's analysis, this part of the chapter examines the role of state secondary schooling in reproducing capital's domination over the labour process. A central argument is that the secondary school curriculum divides the student population between mental workers and manual workers. Again, it is worth emphasising the point that just as capital's control over the labour process is never complete or closed, neither is the schools hegemonic function total. Capital's hegemony, in both the workplace and secondary schools, is continually open to counter-hegemonic ideas and practices.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., p.139.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., pp.74-75.
\textsuperscript{128} S. Aronowitz (1977), p.139.
\textsuperscript{129} See M. Apple (1981); J. O'Connor (1975); and S. Aronowitz (1977).
As Foucault argued, knowledge is power. It exerts a powerful influence in forging the individual as an object and subject of the state. The argument here is that the secondary school curriculum reflects a particular set of social arrangements. Apple summarised the sociology of knowledge perspective:

I want to argue here that the problem of educational knowledge, of what is taught in schools, has to be considered as a form of the larger distribution of goods and services in a society. It is not merely an analytic problem (what shall be construed as knowledge?) nor simply a technical one (how do we organise and store knowledge so that children may have access to it and 'master' it?), nor, finally, is it a purely psychological problem (how do we get students to learn?) Rather, the study of educational knowledge is a study in ideology, the investigation of what is considered legitimate knowledge ... by specific social groups and classes, in specific institutions, at specific historical moments.130

Preston and Symes claimed that Plato's idea of a differentiated social order still lingers in modern day thinking about education. In Plato's view each individual possesses inborn qualities that determine their occupational status in society. The role of the education system is to sift and sort individuals to match them with the occupation best suited to their 'natural' abilities. Plato believed that society consisted of three distinct classes that approximated the ruling class (philosophers), the middle class, and the working class (artisans). In his view, every citizen should receive an education appropriate to their social status. This meant the philosophers or the governing elite should receive a lengthy education in matters relevant to creating the 'good' society. At the other end of the scale, the artisans required only a limited amount of education relevant to the practical and material world. Preston and Symes argued that the spectre of Plato's stratified education system haunts the modern day curriculum where theoretical knowledge is more highly valued than practical knowledge.131 The Minister for Education in the conservative Court Government, G. MacKinnon, summed up much common sense thinking about the division between mental work and manual work in a remark he made to a technical education graduation ceremony in 1974. In his words:

If I recall circumstances correctly, it (the technical school) was a bolt-hole for those who were considered not quite up to the intricacies of what was called "professional education" -

which was designed to fit you for a job in a bank or insurance office, or some other white-collar milieu.\textsuperscript{132}

As noted in chapter three, the high status theoretical subjects like mathematics, science and English literature reflected the classical tradition and its connection with the elite private secondary schools and the University of Western Australia. Practical subjects such as industrial arts and home economics represented the lower end of the hierarchy of knowledge. In short, school knowledge differentiated students as either 'thinkers' or 'doers'.

The Education Department's concern with alternative courses surfaced in a discussion paper written by Peter Hill of the Research Branch in 1977. Hill's research indicated that Year 11 retention rates increased from 30 per cent in 1966 to 52.8 per cent in 1976. As a consequence, many Western Australian secondary schools initiated modified courses to cater for the less academically orientated student. The Tertiary Admission Examinations (TAE) were unsuitable for those students who planned a delayed entry into the apprenticeship system or some other kind of work. As a result, the alternative courses emphasised workshop practice and out of school work experience programs.\textsuperscript{133}

Bentley Senior High School, located in a working class suburb of Perth, was one of the first state secondary schools to introduce an alternative course. The aim of the course was to prepare students for future employment in manual jobs. This involved emphasising pre-vocational skills by offering a range of subjects relevant to future employment opportunities. Students entering Year 11 selected subjects from one of the following streams:

\textsuperscript{132} The Hon. G.C. MacKinnon in an address to the Technical Education Division Graduation Ceremony, 29 April, 1974. AN 45/9 ACC 1574 FILE No. S74/87.

\textsuperscript{133} P. Hill (1977), \textit{The development of years 11 and 12 alternative courses in Western Australian government schools: an overview and case study}, Education Department of Western Australia, Government Printer.
Subjects being offered to Year 11 Students at Bentley Senior High School, 1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1 (TAE)</th>
<th>Group 2 (TAE)</th>
<th>Group 3 Alternative Course Subjects</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Australian Society</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied Technology</td>
<td>Commercial Law</td>
<td>Business Studies - General</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Current Events</td>
<td>Business Studies - Stenography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Media Studies</td>
<td>Drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Typewriting and Business Communication</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<td>General Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Literature</td>
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<td>French</td>
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<td>The Australian Language</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
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<td>History</td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Home Economics</td>
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<td>Metal Trades</td>
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<td>Human Biology</td>
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<td>Photography and Film Making</td>
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<td>Mathematics I</td>
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<td>Pre-Vocational Trades</td>
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<td>Mathematics II</td>
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<td>Wood Trades</td>
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<td>Mathematics III</td>
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<td>Physical Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Drawing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Alternative courses reflected the Western Australian Education Departments desire to move toward 'reorientation and differentiation in the upper school program'. According to the Assistant Director-General of Education (Secondary) H. W. Louden, students in 1983 could choose to study from a total of 57 two-year subjects approved by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) for the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). Thirty-one were Tertiary Admission Examination (TAE) subjects and twenty-six CSE (General) subjects chosen by the non-academic students. The syllabuses for the TAE subjects, formerly the Leaving and Matriculation subjects, matched the requirements of entry to tertiary institutions. Selection aggregates combined internal and external assessment marks monitored against a scaling test to measure general intelligence. On the other hand, the Certificate of Secondary Education (General) subjects had a practical and vocational orientation.

The interesting point to note is that 96 per cent (46,782) of Year 12 subject enrolments in 1981 comprised TAE subjects compared with four per cent (2,106) in CSE (General) subjects. Of the TAE enrolments, science subjects accounted for 28 per cent, mathematics 19.5 per cent, English and English

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134 Ibid., p.13.
135 Education Department of Western Australia (1980), Alternative courses in the upper secondary school, Education Department of Western Australia, Perth, p.3.
literature 22 per cent, languages 2.2 per cent, social sciences 18.7 percent and art and music 2.7 per cent. The mathematics, science, English, and social science group of subjects accounted for about 88 per cent of enrolments. Louden's analysis raised the dilemma that as retention rates increased the patterns of upper-school enrolment showed that students selected a small group of academically-orientated TAE subjects. The Western Australian High School Principals Association explained the nature of the problem in the following way:

Less than half of the students in upper school classes will enter tertiary institutions but, because they feel a pressing need to keep their options open, most of them will pursue courses that are structured to meet tertiary entrance requirements.

They have no assurance of employment; in many cases they do not know what they want to do; they cannot be certain that they will qualify for tertiary study.

Keeping options open in the upper school entails being tied to approved subjects which will accrue to the aggregate. The results of students selecting subjects in which they have very little interest is frequently a mismatch of aspiration, ability, needs and subjects, which leads to student alienation, boredom, frustration and despair.

Upper school subjects have one other unfortunate restriction: they span two years of study. This has the effect of locking students into a course from which escape is difficult. The experience of schools is that students entering Year 11, despite considerable counselling, because they have been unable to decide their ultimate career aims, do not really know in many cases what is the best combination of subjects to take. Many require the opportunity to make changes but the current system denies them this chance. Many find themselves taking units beyond their capacity but from there is no honourable way out.

The problem for education authorities was that low status non-academic subjects were not popular with students because they seriously restricted occupational choice. Those students whose future career lay with skilled and semi-skilled manual work studied the practical subjects. Therefore, the industrial arts emphasised practical experience in handling materials such as wood, metals, clay, leather textiles and plastics and making useful objects.

137 Ibid., p.61.
138 Ibid., p.63.
The hegemony of the academic subjects was so strong that students continued to enrol in the high status subjects. After the introduction of the ill-fated alternative High School Certificate in 1954, most attempts by the Education Department to differentiate the student population on the grounds of whether they studied academic or non-academic subjects, met with a similar fate. The Director of the Board of Secondary Education, F. E. McKenzie was very aware of the problem. In responding to a proposal by the Minister of Education, J.G. Clarko to introduce a Year 11 Certificate he replied:

The Board has spent a great deal of more or less fruitless effort since 1976 in developing a range of new subjects of an applied or integrated nature which would be relevant to the needs of students who are not necessarily tertiary bound. However, such is the prestige of established academic subjects, that unless changes can be made to the present tertiary selection procedures there seems little prospect that schools will be able to offer courses which are suitable to many of the students who are present in Years 11 and 12.\textsuperscript{139}

The Education Department was sensitive to the implications of dividing students into academic and non-academic categories. In a submission to the \textit{Williams Report} in 1977 the Education Department stated that the policy of secondary schooling for all had created two classes of disadvantaged students, the early leavers and non-academic students. The Education Department argued that:

\begin{quote}
Academic bias, public preoccupation with credentials and certificates, and the incomplete development of guidance and work experience programs all combine to prevent early school-leavers and non-academic students having opportunities equal to those provided for the others.\textsuperscript{140}
\end{quote}

In other words, working class boys and girls and Aborigines tended to either 'fail' in academic courses, or 'succeed' in non-academic courses. The outcome is the same in either case - they are marked for low-value work or unemployment. Louden himself, acknowledged that the problem was beyond the control of school systems and reflected wider social division in society.\textsuperscript{141} Despite increased initiatives in the areas of career education, work

\begin{footnotes}
\item[139] The Director of the Board of Secondary Education in a letter to the Minister for Education, the Hon. J.G. Clarko 12 January 1983. EDF, 821-81.
\end{footnotes}
experience programs, counselling and alternative course offerings', students were understandably reluctant to enrol in low status curriculum courses.

In searching for a solution to the inherently irreconcilable function of reproducing a differentiated labour force and offering equality of opportunity to all students, the Education Department implemented a recommendation of the 1969 Dettman Report to introduce specialist schools for gifted and talented students. In the mid-1970s ten senior high schools provided specialist programs in art, dance, drama and languages. These schools were the forerunners of the Secondary Special Placement Program (SSPP) which was introduced in 1981. Under the Ministry of Education funded program students entering year eight were selected after a state-wide talent search. Thirteen secondary schools offered programs in art, dance, theatre arts, music, and languages and ten provided academic extension programs for outstanding academic students. In competition, other state secondary schools developed various specialisations including aviation, sports, circus, computer studies, horse riding and enterprise education.142

In 1991 the Ministry of Education launched its Pathways program to achieve a more efficient allocation of students to their future vocation. A Pathway is the equivalent of a two-year (Years 11/12) study program composed entirely of Secondary Education Authority (SEA) accredited subjects leading to secondary graduation and offering a direct link to Universities, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) traineeships and employment. The aim was to "provide greater vocational direction and post school opportunities".143 In 1992 the Western Australian Labor governments policy goal for 1996 stated:

All schools will organise their upper secondary curriculum around the centrally developed and vocationally relevant pathways of study.144

Under the Pathways plan students focus on one major area of study to provide 'vocational direction' (streaming) and 'broad competencies' related to that field. Students choose six subjects, one from the English group, one mathematics, and three or four from the selected Pathway. At North Lake Senior High School Pathways offered include applied science, business studies, food, hospitality and tourism, art and design, community services,

142 The West Australian-Education Supplement (1993), 27 April, p.2
143 North Lake Senior High School (1992), Pathways.
and technology and design. Students undertaking the food, hospitality and tourism Pathway learn a range of competencies relevant to career options in the hospitality industry including chef, catering manager, travel consultant, and hotel manager. For these students, relevant subject selections include accounting, home economics, word processing, senior science, work studies, computing, applied computing and law. This sort of 'structured imposition' eventually coerces students into career paths with a narrow skill base. The Pathways policy, according to one critic, is another example of the patronising attitude toward children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In his view it says to the child:

... here is a "good alternative" course for him/her, which, in the opinion of his/her "betters" is the most suitable course for him/her because he/she is not capable of coping with the normal TEE courses.\textsuperscript{145}

The Pathways scheme is an attempt to create a more efficient mechanism of social selection. The purpose is to construct a highly stratified education system that matches the short term interest of the labour market. In practice, alternative courses continue to assign working class children to their proper place in the social order. Why else, Agocs argued, would the Ministry of Education be experimenting with Pathway programs in lower-status economic areas such as Balga, Ashfield, Queens Park, Coolbellup and Cannington, instead of wealthier suburbs like City Beach, Churchlands or Hollywood that emphasise the competitive academic curriculum.\textsuperscript{146} Thus, while everybody has access to a secondary education, not all secondary schools are the same. In other words, the distinction that was once founded on whether children received a secondary education or not, can now be founded on whether they went to a high status secondary school with a strong academic program, or a low status secondary school that emphasised leisure skills, manual arts, sport or circus.

\textsuperscript{145} Mr N. Agocs former Labor Party education policy committee convenor and member in a letter to caucus members 22 September 1991.

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
CHAPTER SEVEN

ABORIGINAL SCHOOLING

INTRODUCTION
COLONISATION AND STATE EDUCATION POLICIES
THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 'NATIVE' CHILD
A DIFFERENT, MORE PRACTICAL EDUCATION
CHAPTER SEVEN

ABORIGINAL SCHOOLING

The horrifying thing is that they will cohabit and propagate and we will then find another six students will be fed into our education system; the same system which bred these pitiful children will breed another six to be fed into the system which at the same time, is not being corrected.¹

In the South was an increasing sub-stratum of society whose inhabitants lived a dejected, spiritless life, camping on the rubbish tips of country towns, eking out their subsistence with seasonal employment on the farms and Government hand-outs of rations, barely educated to literacy level, with few skills and alternatively depressed or frustrated into anti-social retaliation by the imposition of restrictive laws and close personal control.²

INTRODUCTION

Supposedly, the extension of state secondary schooling to all children testified to the egalitarian role of education in realising the goal of equality of opportunity for all citizens. No matter whether children were black or white schools offered everyone the same opportunity to succeed or fail on the basis of individual merit and ability. In reality, the story was very different. This chapter argues that by imposing European education on Aboriginal children secondary schooling perpetuated existing racial inequality. As already explained in chapter two, the social identity of 'being Aboriginal' is an ideological construct reflecting a particular set of material conditions. After white settlement in 1829, the Aboriginal people of Western Australia experienced state policies and practices that forged the social category 'Aboriginal'. This chapter seeks to explain the part played by Western Australian state secondary schools in constructing a set of racist assumptions and beliefs about 'being Aboriginal'. The focus of discussion is the sorts of educational processes that produced the category of the 'native' child and the discriminatory educational practices that seemed to flow naturally from it.

¹ The Hon. W.R. Withers MLC speaking on a motion to establish a select committee to investigate the educational requirements of Western Australian Aborigines. Hansard, 2 August 1972, vol.194, p.2089,
The first section of the chapter provides a historical summary of state policies toward Aboriginal people. Against this background, the second section seeks to show how Western Australian state secondary schooling constituted the unique and discriminatory category of the 'native' child. The final section discusses the different sorts of educational knowledge and experience offered to Aboriginal students in Western Australian secondary schools.

**COLONISATION AND STATE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES**

According to Memmi, the process of colonisation destroyed the Aboriginal people's belief in itself and convinced them of the superiority of the colonising group. Colonisation lead to the mythical portrait of the Aborigine as intellectually inferior and undeserving in contrast to the image of the coloniser as superior in all ways. As a consequence, nineteenth century European settlers seized control of Aboriginal land that was central to their economic and spiritual well-being. Thus, white interests in the colony directly conflicted with Aboriginal aspirations. In this situation, the European invaders believed that Aboriginal people were a direct hindrance to their desire to acquire land. From the time of settlement, a process of exploitation, oppression and forceful appropriation of Aboriginal land characterised Western Australian history.

The aim in this section is to outline the history of the State's response to Aboriginal people. State policies and administrative practices directly impinged upon Aboriginal cultural change. Four distinct policy phases are identifiable: civilisation and evangelisation (1829 to 1896), Aboriginal protection and control (1897 to 1948), assimilation (1949 to 1972), and finally, the shift to the rhetoric of self-determination. Against this background, the section to follow shall examine how Western Australian state secondary schooling constructed the social category of the 'native' child.

**TO CIVILISE AND EVANGELISE**

In the period of colonial settlement and administration (1829-1896) England governed the colony until granting of self-government in 1890. The Colonial Office retained control of Aboriginal affairs until 1897 when it handed over responsibility to the Western Australian Parliament. In the

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3 A. Memmi (1974).
period 1829 to 1896, the Colonial Office established three principles to guide the treatment of Aborigines. First, Aborigines would receive the benefits of Christianity and civilisation with the unstated aim of full assimilation. Second, Aborigines would have the full status and legal rights of British subjects. Finally, the physical well-being of Aboriginal people would be fully protected. Unfortunately, the harsh realities of colonial life quickly crushed these humanitarian principles.\textsuperscript{4}

In late 1829 eighteen ships arrived at the Swan River to establish the colony of Western Australia.\textsuperscript{5} Shortly afterwards, the first Europeans established contact with the Nyungar people of the South-West of the colony. While initial contact between Aborigines and Europeans was friendly, subsequent events proved catastrophic for the Aboriginal people.\textsuperscript{6} According to Green, European settlement introduced three practices that were totally alien to Nyungar society and consequently sowed the seeds of conflict. These practices were the exploitation of human labour, the accumulation of material wealth and the enclosure of land to exclude others from its resources.\textsuperscript{7} The penetration of British capitalism into the colony inevitably led to a clash of cultures and the growth of Nyungar resistance.\textsuperscript{8} Proud Nyungar men like Yagan, Midgegooroo, Weeip and Calyute refused to submit to European domination. As a consequence, numerous confrontations took place. In response to the sporadic outbreaks of violence, Governor Stirling set out to break Aboriginal resistance. On 28 October 1834, Sir James Stirling and his 21 Regiment massacred the Murray River tribes at the Battle of Pinjarra.\textsuperscript{9} Aboriginal resistance to white domination was largely ineffective because the Nyungar people lacked the defensive techniques, modern technology and social structure to defeat the invaders.\textsuperscript{10} However, according to Green, the colonists had much more to gain by maintaining friendly relations with the Aborigines. Harmonious relations would not only ensure the safety of their crops and livestock but provide a source of cheap labour. Thus, early attempts to educate, civilise and control the Aboriginal population entailed a large degree of self-interest.

\textsuperscript{4} B.A. McLarty (1964), p.4.  
\textsuperscript{5} N. Green (1984), Broken spears: Aboriginals and Europeans in the southwest of Australia, Focus Education Services, Perth, p.56.  
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., p.71.  
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., p.73.  
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., p.75.  
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., Chpt 11.  
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p.76.
In September 1840, the Rev. J. Smithies established the Perth Native School. Many missionaries believed that the tribal ways including marriage obligations that forced Aboriginal girls back to the bush were counterproductive to the educational attempts to civilise the Aborigines. To overcome this problem, the Rev. Smithies arranged marriages between the older students of the school. The Protector, C. Symmons supported the practice of arranged marriages:

Our object therefore is to endeavour to overthrow a custom so opposed to nature and common sense and to effect, when time and circumstances may render them expedient, suitable unions between the juvenile natives now in training in our establishments.11

In 1846, Bishop Brady and his entourage of Benedictine priests, Irish sisters of Mercy and helpers arrived in the colony and rapidly established a number of Catholic missions, including the successful New Norcia Mission. Two notable Benedictine priests, Serra and Salvado, believed that the best way of Christianising the Aborigines was by giving them land to work. In Salvado's words:

It seems to me that the physical work system, as adopted in this Benedictine Mission, answers better, the practical result of it shows it, although in a short time and on a small scale. I regret of not being able to carry it out on a larger scale; but the simple reason is no other than our scanty means of private income.12

Despite the best efforts of the missionary schools to civilise and Christianise the Aborigines, success was elusive. The 1884 Annual Report of the Perth Native School noted the difficulty of 'civilising' the Aboriginal people:

We find that to undo is a great work; to disassociate them from their natural ideas, habits and practices, which are characteristic of the bush life, is a great difficulty, for notwithstanding the provision of sleeping berths, etc., in good rooms, also of tables, etc., for their use, and which are peculiar to civilised life, and with which they are associated, yet they naturally verge towards, and cling to, Aboriginal education, and hence to squat at night in the bush - to have recourse to a Bylyaduck man for ease in sickness.13

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11 Ibid., p.153.
12 Ibid., p.159.
13 Ibid., p.154.
The Aboriginal peoples rejection of Christianity and the benefits of 'civilised' society led the white community to conclude that they were an inferior race. One writer observed in 1872:

> It may occur to my reader ... that there was in the Aborigines a capacity for civilization such as no animal possesses. As a reply to this opinion, let me ask - is it not a fact, manifested in the experience of every native mission station throughout the colonies, that the nomadic instincts of the blacks render attempts at domestication and civilization almost uniformly futile? ... In other words, does not the united testimony of these stations prove that the natives are incapable of being civilized and of living under the changed conditions - in fact proving that they have not only not more capacity for civilization, but actually less than that possessed by many of the animals man has chosen as his domestic companions.\(^\text{14}\)

White society eventually forced the government to do something about the 'uncivilised' Aboriginal population. The primary concern of the white farmers and pastoralists was to protect their property and keep the Aborigines from 'flocking' to towns to live and cause trouble. The white community believed that the policy of forcefully controlling the Aboriginal population was in everybody's best interest.\(^\text{15}\) In fact, it allowed the European settlers to vigorously pursue their expansionist agenda, irrespective of the wishes of the Aboriginal people. Within seventy years of settlement, the initial humanitarian principles established to guide Colonial policy rang hollow. For the Aborigines, European civilisation equated with "depopulation, deprivation of their land and attempted social degradation".\(^\text{16}\)

**PROTECTION AND CONTROL**

The Imperial Government introduced the Aborigines Protection Act of 1866 to control the 'Aboriginal problem'. Under the Act, the Aborigines Protection Board attempted to protect Aborigines from the worst consequences of colonialism. The aim of the Protection Board was to supply Aborigines with food, clothing and education. With the granting of self-government in 1897, the Western Australian Parliament abolished the

\(^{14}\) Quoted in K. McConnochie (1982), p.22.
\(^{15}\) B.A. McLarty (1964), p.3.
\(^{16}\) I.M. Crawford (1981), 'Aboriginal cultures in Western Australia' in C.T. Stannage (ed.), p.34.
Board and established the Aborigines Department under the supervision of a Chief Protector of Aborigines.

In 1904, the Western Australian Parliament established a Royal Commission into the Aboriginal situation. The terms of reference required the Royal Commission to investigate the administration of the Aborigines Department, employment of Aborigines, the native police system, treatment of Aboriginal prisoners and the distribution of relief. The commissioner, W. Roth documented many abuses of Aborigines, particularly in the North-West of the State. Conveniently, the government ignored major recommendations contained in the report concerning a cash wage and a proposal for large hunting reserves on Crown Land. However, the government warmly endorsed the recommendation granting the Chief Protector greater power to control the Aboriginal population. The Roth Report (1905) advocated a policy of segregation that permitted the compulsory removal of Aborigines to settlements, the banishment of unemployed Aboriginal farm workers, regulations to control employment conditions and permits, and the right of arrest without a warrant.17 The Aborigines Act of 1905 encapsulated the recommendations giving the Chief Protector unprecedented power to introduce regulations to control the lives of the Aboriginal people. The Chief Protector established a number of State institutions including Moola Bulla Station at Turkey Creek in 1909, Carrolup near Katanning in 1915, and Mogumber Settlement at Moore River in 1916. According to Howard, these institutions effectively imprisoned any Aborigine deemed to be anti-social.18 In 1964, the Acting Deputy Commissioner of Native Welfare vividly described the role of these state institutions:

Ostensibly set up for the benefit of aborigines, these settlements tended to be used rather for the control of troublesome natives and became dumping grounds for illegitimate caste children compulsorily removed from their parents, for adults displaying anti-social attitudes, for the unemployed and for men and women suffering from "social diseases", a polite euphemism for syphilis and gonorrhoea.19

Official concern about the living conditions of the Aboriginal population led to another Royal Commission in 1934. Under the chairmanship of H.

Mosley, the terms of reference of the Royal Commission highlighted the rapid deterioration of Aboriginal living conditions in Western Australia. The terms of reference required the Royal Commission to investigate:

- The social and economic conditions of aborigines, with special reference to the exclusion of different classes of aboriginal persons from the native camps; proximity of native camps to towns; amelioration of physical suffering; disease and measures for treatment; native settlements; employment of aborigines; Missions and trial of aboriginal offenders;
- Laws relating to aborigines;
- Administration of the Aborigines Department;
- Specific allegations of ill-treatment of aborigines.  

Mosley's major concern was the growing 'half-caste' population that increased from 900 to 3,891 in the period 1905 to 1934. His recommendations strengthened the states control over the lives of Aborigines. The Royal Commission recommended that the Native Administration Act of 1936 tighten government control over the Aboriginal population, regulate employment and prevent the spread of leprosy. This draconian act stated that:

... no native parent or other relative living has the guardianship of an aboriginal or half-caste child ... no native, except adult half-caste males who do not live as aborigines, can move from one place to another without the permission of a protector and the giving of sureties ... Natives may be ordered into reserves or institutions an confined there ... The property of all minors is automatically managed by the Chief Protector, while the management of the property of any native may be taken over by consent or if considered necessary to do so provide for its due preservation ... Natives may be ordered out of town or from prohibited areas ... Subject to the right of appeal, the Commissioner of Native Affairs may object to the marriage of any native.  

At this time, the Aborigines Department changed its title to the Department of Native Affairs and the Chief Protector became the Commissioner of Native Affairs.  

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20 Ibid., p.5.
The state gradually assumed greater control over the lives of individual Aborigines. In the words of McLarty, official government policy:

... imposed penalties on them (Aborigines) for numerous actions which were not an offence for a non-native to commit; it placed the children of natives under the legal guardianship of the Commissioner; it empowered the Minister to have natives taken into custody, removed and confined in settlements for indefinite periods, without recourse to trial or appeal; it prohibited them from entering prescribed towns or areas without a permit; it empowered Protectors to demolish their camps and order them to move elsewhere; it provided for their banishment for cattle killing; it required permits to be secured for their employment and took from them the benefit of workers' compensation by substituting a medical insurance fund which paid their medical bills but did not compensate them for physical loss through accident and injury. Nevertheless a strong attitude of official paternalism was revealed in the continuing provisions for the distribution of food relief, for the supply of medicines and medical attendance and for the continued exercise by the Department of its duty to protect them from "injustice, imposition and fraud". The only positive measure embodied in the legislation was the duty of the Department to provide for the education of the children of natives and this, because of the inadequate resources of the Department, remained more an ideal than an effective administrative practice.²³

**ASSIMILATION**

So badly did the Aboriginal situation deteriorate that the Minister for Native Affairs R. McDonald appointed F.E.A. Bateman in 1947 to undertake another survey of native living conditions in Western Australia. The report strongly condemned the role of state institutions and recommended greater departmental control of mission institutions, abandonment of government institutions, transfer of health measures to the Public Health Department, a special curriculum emphasising practical work for native children under the control of the Education Department, and the removal of natives living on reserves to government settlements.²⁴

In response to the growing 'half-caste' problem the Commissioner of Native Welfare S.G. Middleton (1948-1962) pursued a more liberal policy of

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²⁴ Ibid., p.9.
early assimilation of 'half-caste' children into the general community. Middleton described the policy of assimilation in a letter to the Minister for Native Affairs on the 6 April, 1955:

It is the policy of the State to promote the assimilation of its aboriginal inhabitants into its economic and social framework by a process of gradual absorption which is being accelerated.\textsuperscript{25}

Middleton was a product of the Papuan native administration under the control of H. Murray. Under Murray's guidance, Middleton developed a strong and benevolent attitude toward Aboriginal people.\textsuperscript{26} Middleton stated that "natives are a dependent minority for whose guardianship, tutelage and development Australia is responsible".\textsuperscript{27} He believed, that detribalised Aborigines required concentrated education and rearing in approved institutions. Thus, under Middleton's regime, assimilation policies emphasised social and cultural rather than genetic assumptions about Aborigines.\textsuperscript{28}

Under Middleton, people acknowledged that protection measures were a disaster for Aboriginal people. As a consequence, the government turned to a policy of assimilation. The Native Welfare Conference in 1961 defined assimilation in the following terms:

The policy of assimilation means that all Aborigines and part-Aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, as other Australians.\textsuperscript{29}

The education system was one of the major hegemonic apparatus in assimilating Aboriginal people. Secondary schools attempted to train Aboriginal students to fit into the work force and the wider community.

\textsuperscript{25} S.G. Middleton to Hon. Minister for Native Affairs 6 April, 1955. ACC 1733 Native Affairs FILE No. 803/1945.
\textsuperscript{27} S.G. Middleton (1961), 'A host of the highroad of history', \textit{The W.A. Teachers' Journal}, vol.LI, no.9, p.259.
\textsuperscript{28} Notes of a meeting between members of the Roelands Progress Association and the Commissioner of Native Affairs and the Deputy Commissioner of Native Affairs at Roelands 6 March 1950. ACC 1733 Native Affairs FILE No. 803/1945.
This meant teaching Aboriginal children the skills, values and behaviour of the dominant class. In a series of articles appearing in *The W.A. Teachers' Journal* in the 1960s, Dr. R.M. Berndt of the University of Western Australia claimed that it was not a question of whether Aborigines would be assimilated because 'this was taken for granted' but how the process would occur. Berndt argued that Aboriginal culture had many valuable features worth preserving. In his view, assimilation should not mean the total discarding of Aboriginal tradition but the preservation and appreciation of Aboriginal life. Berndt acknowledged that the introduction of European schooling was an essential weapon in the battle to assimilate Aboriginal children into white society.

Theoretically, Aboriginal children (coloured) could enrol in the local schools of the district in which they lived. However, if white parents disapproved the education regulations permitted the exclusion of ‘coloured’ children. The relevant regulation read:

Children who are natives within the meaning of the Native Administration Act, 1905-1941, may be excluded with the permission of the Department if parents of children who are not natives as aforesaid substantiate their objections to their attendance on the grounds herein before stated.

Offensive and infectious disease and uncleanly habits were common reasons for excluding Aboriginal children from schools. District Inspectors reports of the time show that cleanliness was a major reason for excluding many Aboriginal children. The Education Department Annual Report of 1948 stated:

The problem of educating native children ... is made difficult when the home conditions of so many of them are so squalid. Cleanliness, happiness, pride in themselves are essential in the education of these children, but after school they return to dilapidated tin shanties.

Before the 1960s, many Aboriginal children attended ‘native only’ schools. Under the control of the Native Affairs Department ‘native only’ schools

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30 Ibid., p.27.
32 R.M. Berndt (168), 'Aborigines and education: the importance of Aboriginal traditions in the contemporary scene', *The W.A. Teachers' Journal*, vol.58, no.3, p.27.
opened at Carrolup and Moore River and Mt. Margaret and Carnarvon mission settlements. In 1951, the Education Department moved to create a more efficient and effective native school system by offering to take over the native mission schools upon request. It was willing to supply teachers, equipment, furniture and advice to missions wishing to maintain their own schools. The Education Department established native schools in the North-West reserves, appointed a district superintendent to take charge of native education and prepared a special curriculum for native schools. The Western Australian Government established schools at Moola Bulla, Carnarvon Mission, Moore River, Norseman and Jigalong. In 1957, native schools opened at the Gogo cattle station, Derby, Warburton Ranges and the Wongutha Farm School near Esperance. The Education Department argued that effective assimilation depended on an efficient native school system to inculcate "the normal habits and reactions of white children."

The capacity of the state to construct an efficient and inclusive education system was an essential ingredient in the process of assimilation. Therefore, it was not surprising that the Education Department gradually put more energy and resources into Aboriginal education. By 1960, the Education Department was able to boast that it had successfully established the foundations of 'efficient' instruction by maintaining an adequate supply of trained teachers.

Despite considerable white resistance, most primary aged Aboriginal children were receiving regular primary school education by the mid 1960s. However, the participation rate in secondary education remained very low. Although Aboriginal enrolment in secondary schools showed a significant increase over the period 1966 to 1973 Aboriginal children, in comparison to their white counterparts, were not completing secondary education at anywhere near the same rate. The following table shows Aboriginal student enrolment as a percentage of the 10-19 years age group in the period 1966 to 1973:

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38 Education Department Annual Report (1956), p.11.
Aboriginal enrolments in secondary schools expressed as a percentage of the 10-19 years age group in states and the Northern Territory, 1966-73.  

| Year | N.T. |  | VIC |  | S.A. |  | W.A. |  | NSW |  | QLD |  | AUST |  |
|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|      |      | 614 |      | 243 |      | 195 |      | 582 |      | 1080 |      | 490 |      |
|      |      | 1993 |      | 465 |      | 1250 |      | 3805 |      | 3363 |      | 4270 |      |
|      |      | 5413 |      | 1480 |      | 2399 |      | 6706 |      | 6761 |      | 12025 |      |
|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

While these figures show the alarmingly low level of secondary school enrolment among Aboriginal children, it provides only a partial picture of the true nature of educational inequality. The gap between Aboriginal and white educational attainment increases the higher one goes up the educational ladder. The odds of Aboriginal children completing a tertiary education are very remote compared to white students. The following statistics indicate the pattern of Aboriginal student wastage in the education system in 1973:

Estimate of Aboriginal enrolments, and school age populations, by State and the Northern Territory, 1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Pre-School</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>School age Population (5-14 years)</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>CAE</th>
<th>Teachers College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3085</td>
<td></td>
<td>8399</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>1701</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2854</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2065</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>2846</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>6174</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>8321</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>3970</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>6599</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Southern part of Western Australia educational attainment statistics for the local Nyungar people show a similar gloomy situation. Statistics compiled by the Katijin Nyungar Advisory Committee to Edith Cowan

42 Ibid., p.190.
University (formerly the Bunbury Institute of Advanced Education) illustrated a dramatic disparity between the Aboriginal retention rate of students going from Years 10 to 11 and Years 11 to 12 compared to the non-Aboriginal student population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The small number of Aboriginal students involved made the situation worse:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Aboriginal (No)</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal (No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>2975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Fitzgerald Report (1976) showed that Aborigines were not only seriously disadvantaged in obtaining work but in dealing with welfare agencies and participating in the political process. Sixty-five per cent of the Aboriginal population compared to 19.3 per cent of the white population were employed in poorly paid, low status jobs such as personal domestic service work or as miners, farm labourers and labourers. A Department of Aboriginal Affairs document circulated in 1975, A Guideline for Employment stated that Aboriginal unemployment was at least five times that of the overall Australian work force. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures for 1992 showed that 35 per cent of Aboriginal people in the labour force were unemployed compared to the national unemployment rate of 9

44 Ibid., p.6.
per cent. The unemployment rate for Aboriginal youth (aged 15-24) was a staggering 46 per cent.46

The picture of inequality described here shows that Aboriginal children are failing in the secondary school system. The common assumption of educators is that Aboriginal students fail because they are well behind non-Aboriginal students in academic achievement, ability and performance in the vital areas of reading and communication skills.47 Unfortunately, the 'deficit' explanation of poor Aboriginal academic performance assumes that Aboriginal children fail because they are 'dumb' and the reason they are 'dumb' is because they are Aborigines.

THE RHETORIC OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Before 1967, Western Australian laws discriminated against Aborigines on liquor rights, freedom of travel, the right to marry and the holding of firearms.48 As a consequence, Aborigines had a much higher arrest rate than white Australians:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of white population</th>
<th>% of Aboriginal population offending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956/57</td>
<td>9.62</td>
<td>14.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957/58</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>15.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958/59</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>14.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959/60</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>19.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>20.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the few Aborigines willing to apply for and receive a Certificate of Citizenship, the situation was not so bad. The certificate not only reflected their degree of 'whiteness', but entitled them to a range of benefits not available to 'non-citizens' including medical attention, relief, education and kindergarten.50

48 Commissioner of Native Welfare F.E. Gare to Hon. Minister for Native Welfare 12 June, 1963. ACC 1733 Native Affairs FILE No. 803/1948
50 Ibid., 12 June 1963.
During the 1960s the conservative Western Australian Legislative Council blocked numerous attempts to reform the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act. In a radio interview on the 17 May 1961, C. Court a major protagonist in the controversial Noonkanbah dispute in 1979, typified the thinking of the conservative rump of Western Australian society when he argued:

In general, we restrict the Citizenship Rights of our young people until they are mature enough to use them properly. And the same applies to our native people. The main difference is that the native is required to reach a certain standard in order to qualify for his rights, whereas the white person qualifies at a certain age because it is taken for granted that his upbringing has enabled him to reach the standard required.\textsuperscript{51}

Legally, the situation for Aborigines gradually improved throughout the 1960s. According to Howard, the impetus for this was in part due to the Federal government which lifted discriminatory sections applying to part-Aborigines in the Commonwealth Social Security Act in 1960 as well as granting Aborigines the right to vote in federal elections in 1961. In 1962 similar rights were extended to include State elections. The 1963 Native Welfare Act removed the remaining restrictions for Aborigines, with the exception of drinking rights in 'proclaimed areas'. This restriction wasn't lifted until 1971.\textsuperscript{52} Two significant events marked a turning point in Federal and State government policies toward Aborigines: the 1967 Referendum on Aboriginal affairs and the election of the reformist Whitlam Labor government in 1972.

The 1967 Federal Referendum affirmed full citizenship rights for Aborigines and Federal Government constitutional responsibility for Aboriginal policies. This legislation ended over sixty years of institutionalised racism in Western Australia. Interestingly, while the referendum was overwhelmingly positive, the 'Yes' vote in Western Australia was only 78.7 per cent of the population, a noticeably lower percentage than in any other State. The Tonkin Labor Government of Western Australia came to office in 1971 and set about repealing many of the unpalatable laws concerning the treatment of Aborigines. The Citizenship Rights Act was repealed, and the Native Welfare Department was merged with the Department of Community Welfare. In 1972 an Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority was

\textsuperscript{51} The Acting Premier Charles Court in a radio interview 17 May 1961. ACC 1733 Native Affairs FILE No. 803/1945.

\textsuperscript{52} M.C. Howard (1981), p21.
established to carry on those functions which could not be accommodated by existing government departments.

The election of the Whitlam Labor Government in December 1972 signalled a change in policy direction away from assimilation to self-determination. In the 1970s and 1980s Federal Government policies emphasised self-management and the recognition of Aboriginal culture. The publication of the Whitlam Government's educational showpiece, the *Karmel Report* (1973) stimulated a reorientation of educational policy toward a greater concern for equality and the special needs of Aborigines.

State educational policies moved tentatively toward Aboriginal participation in the educational policy-making process. Governments demonstrated a willingness to initiate a more co-operative approach with Aboriginal communities. These positive initiatives resulted in the employment of more Aboriginal teachers, teaching aids and liaison officers in secondary schools. The Western Australian *Beazley Inquiry* (1984) recommended the urgent need to increase the amount of self-determination in Aboriginal education. The Committee recommended a series of measures to develop Aboriginal participation in decision-making. Specific recommendations included the establishment of consultative committees, the employment of more trained Aboriginal teachers, bilingual education programs, the appointment of Aboriginal liaison officers and the development Aboriginal studies.

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE 'NATIVE' CHILD**

The previous section showed how hegemonic state apparatuses such as the Native Welfare Department and Education Department produced a set of social practices that defined Aboriginal people as the 'other'. As a consequence, the state constructed racial inequalities grounded in the forceful appropriation of Aboriginal land. The aim in this section is to explain how Western Australian state secondary schooling produced a

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particular social image of the Aboriginal child as intellectually and culturally inferior to their white counterparts.

PRODUCING THE 'NATIVE' CHILD

The work of social theorists like Gramsci and Foucault provides us with a way of understanding how modern secondary schooling operates as a site for the production of individuality. As already discussed in chapter two, the state operates a system of micro-penalties to win the hearts and minds of children. Through Gramsci and Foucault's work, it is possible to see secondary schooling as a part of the state's hegemonic apparatus that produces individual social positions and identities by which subjectivity is constructed. Viewed in this way, state secondary schooling produces Aboriginal children as racial subjects by validating and imposing definitions of normality. As a consequence, secondary schooling plays a significant part in defining boundaries for "excluding, enclosing and exploiting others".57

The Western Australian Native Welfare Department, as the major apparatus of surveillance and control of the Aboriginal population, exerted a powerful influence in constructing the legal, social, economic and psychological meaning of 'being Aboriginal'. The Department was instrumental in shaping secondary schools as major sites for regulating the personal and social development of Aboriginal children. According to the Native Welfare Department, the 'native' child was inferior in all respects compared to their white counterparts. In a special report prepared for a proposed experimental course at Pingelly Junior High School in 1967, the Native Welfare Department constructed the following social image of the 'Aboriginal child':

He is unable to achieve success with the conventional academic course for the Junior Certificate in the basic subjects.
He has little interest in books and study.
He tends to rebel against the more formal types of school work.
He has an inadequate set of basic skills, especially in reading and self expression.
He frequently has a poor social and economic background where there is little interest in education, or things of the mind.

He frequently lacks parental guidance and affection or any real parental ambition. Speech is generally poor. Native children speak what is almost pidgin patois which is almost unintelligible. He is frequently early maturing physically and takes a precocious interest in things adult (eg sex, smoking, drink). Girls are much given to precocious sex activity. There is usually a strong urge to an immediate goal (employment). He is intolerant of any schooling which he fails to see as associated with this goal. Few have any clear cut ambition. He usually has a long record of scholastic failure. In fact, his being in this class presupposes failure somewhere else. He is much given to acts of rebellion against society and to glaring forms of exhibitionism to attract attention and ease feelings of insecurity. He is defiant of authority and contemptuous of rules.58

The picture that emerges is fairly consistent. 'Native' children come from a low socio-economic background, live in either the local reserve or traditional houses in town, have poor hygiene and cleanliness, have failed to grasp fundamental communication skills, continually experience failure while at school and often leave school early for some type of low paid labouring job. In most cases, Aboriginal boys entered the pool of casual contract labour on the local farms, while girls had little or no prospect of employment. The best they could hope for was some kind of domestic work.

In 1991 the Principal of Clontarf Aboriginal College in the Perth suburb of Manning dramatically described the deprived material and social conditions of Aboriginal children. He painted the following gloomy profile of the College's Aboriginal students who: 'were illiterate; were homeless; were street kids; had been incarcerated; were involved in the Juvenile Justice System; had been adopted and now coming to terms with their Aboriginality; were experiencing for the first time living away from home; were alcoholics; were caught up in the 'drug scene'; had experienced substance abuse; were not well adjusted individuals; had been traumatised by events in their life; had not been regular school attenders; had no family or community role models; and were trying to break a "cycle of dependency"'.59

58 ACC 2817 Native Affairs FILE No. 11.24.
Many Aboriginal families live in extreme poverty, inadequate accommodation and in poor health compared to white people. Dr. H. Schapper, of the agriculture faculty of the University of Western Australia, was an outspoken critic of Aboriginal living conditions in the 1960s. He too, painted a depressing picture of the Aboriginal situation:

Delinquency, crime, imprisonment, drunkenness, idleness, unemployment, unemployability, bludging, gambling, illiteracy, institutional living, broken families, prostitution, parental deprivation, cultural disadvantage, educational retardation, emotional disturbance, disease, malnutrition and infant mortality are at much higher levels among Aboriginal people than among non-Aborigines.60

Numerous studies show that home and cultural influences are a major reason for Aboriginal students' poor academic performance in the education system. The Bourke and Keeves study of Aboriginal school performance in Australia concluded that:

... the differences in performance between the Aboriginal students and the overall Australian student samples are sufficiently large to make it clear that a problem exists. The results suggest that Aboriginal students are handicapped in their progress through the school system and that many are likely to be disadvantaged in their adult life.61

Similarly Watt's evaluation of the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme showed the serious disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal children:

It can reasonably be inferred that many of the students are not achieving satisfactory levels of academic achievement compared with the total Australian population of secondary school students.62

It must be remembered that a person's identity is a social construct grounded in particular material conditions. Jordan explained the social nature of identity formation in the following passage:

Identity is defined as the location of the self in a particular world of meaning, both by the self and others. It is a product of interactions between the individual and social structures, and the individual and others. Through this location of self,

60 ACC 1667 Native Welfare Department FILE No. 242/1964.
61 Quoted in Select Committee on Aboriginal Education (1985), p.22.
62 Ibid., p.21.
individuals recognise their self-sameness and continuity in
time, and perceive that others recognise their self-sameness
and continuity.\textsuperscript{63}

According to Gale, McGill, McNamara and Scott, this definition stressed not
only the individual's own perception of the self, but the way in which the
dominant class located the self in society. Most research shows that
non-Aboriginal people stereotype Aborigines negatively.\textsuperscript{64} In a survey of
Aboriginal children in Western Australian schools, Makin and Ibbotson
identified a number of negative images that prevented Aborigines from
being accepted in Western Australian schools. These images included lack
of personal hygiene, unreliable work habits, laziness, excessive drinking,
anti-social behaviour, permissiveness and immorality, reliance on
handouts, lack of ambition, indifference to dress, inability to manage their
own affairs, lack of interest, and shyness.\textsuperscript{65} As a consequence, Gale, et al.
believed that the dominant society constructed a boundary from without
that initially segregated Aboriginal people by legislation and subsequently
distanced them socially through negative stereotyping.\textsuperscript{66}

Intelligence testing was and still is a significant mechanism in constructing
the identity of the Aboriginal child. As explained in chapter four,
intelligence testing differentiated the Aboriginal child as intellectually
inferior to white students. According to McConnochie, to the extent that
Aboriginal children performed poorly in intelligence tests, they were
described as having inferior intellectual, cognitive or psycho-linguistic
abilities. This kind of research, and the cultural deficit interpretation of the
results, provided the rationale for a range of compensatory educational
programs.\textsuperscript{67}

The educational and social implications of 'being Aboriginal' are
far-reaching. Bourdieu's work showed that the major determinant of
success at school was the cultural capital of the family. A significant aspect of
cultural capital is the family attitude to the school. Bourdieu believed that
the family attitude was "a function of the objective hopes of success at

\textsuperscript{63} Quoted in F. Gale, D. Jordan, G. McGill, N. McNamara and C. Scott (1987), 'Aboriginal education'
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., p.2743.
\textsuperscript{65} C. Makin and D. Ibbotson (1972), \textit{A survey of Aboriginal education in selected Western Australian
schools}, p.7.
\textsuperscript{66} F. Gale et al. (1987), p.274.
school that define each social category". Despite the formal policy of secondary schooling for all, the education system perpetuated the privileges of what Bourdieu called the 'aristocratic culture'. As Bourdieu explained it:

In fact, to penalize the underprivileged and favour the most privileged, the school has only to neglect, in its teaching methods and techniques and its criteria when making academic judgements, to take into account the cultural inequalities between children of different social classes. In other words, by treating all pupils, however unequal they may be in reality, as equal in rights and duties, the educational system is led to give its de facto sanction to initial cultural inequalities.

Thus, assimilation policies tended to legitimise the democratic myth of equality of opportunity by treating all students the same and distributing rewards according to merit. In reality, equal opportunity for Aboriginal students simply meant the right to compete in a school system designed to "steer the individual towards a pattern of cultural conformity". For social groups with divergently different world views, the chances of success are minimal.

Knight's discussion of the 'structural determinants' of educational success enhances our understanding of the processes by which secondary schooling constituted the identity of Aboriginal children. He believed that student reputation, labelling, streaming and teacher expectations interacted to produce educational inequalities. Much has been written about the negative effects of labelling students. Once labelled, a student's reputation usually follows the student through their school career. Tannock and Punch's survey of Western Australian teacher and principal attitudes showed that a majority of them had a negative image of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students were usually identified with poor attitudes, inadequate language skills, poor concentration, inadequate hygiene, unresponsive behaviour and poor parental encouragement.

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69 Ibid., p.114.
70 Ibid., p.113.
73 P. Tannock and K. Punch (1975), pp.131-133.
Stigmatisation has a more telling effect when the community labels the whole school. At the top end of the educational market, Perth's elite private secondary schools and a select group of government schools have established a reputation for academic achievement. In contrast, those working class secondary schools in the Northern suburbs of Perth (Balga and Girrawheen) with a significant number of Aboriginal students have developed a reputation for poor academic performance, student alienation and discipline problems. In short, Aboriginal children attend schools at the bottom end of the educational hierarchy which is, generally, at the bottom end of society.

Besides student reputation, the practice of streaming individuals into either the 'academic' or 'non-academic' stream affects Aboriginal students. According to Knight, once streamed the student becomes 'locked in' to either success or failure. According to Henry, Knight, Lingard and Taylor, all the research shows unequivocally that working-class students, girls, migrants and Aborigines are 'cooled out' and discouraged from succeeding. As a consequence, streaming guarantees that students already suffering from socio-economic disadvantage continue to do so. The implication of streaming for Aboriginal students is the focus of discussion in the section to follow.

Finally, negative teacher expectations of Aboriginal children produces a momentum of its own. In 1990, a Report to the Australian Research Council claimed that teachers had unduly critical attitudes that blamed the Aboriginal child for failing to respond to standard teaching approaches. The report claimed that this attitude was a reflection of Euro-centric school policy that ignored Aboriginal needs. The Western Australian Select Committee into Youth Affairs (1991) heard that in some communities teachers came under enormous pressure to fall in with prevailing social attitudes:

... and if it is racist then in order to survive they tend to fall in with some of the thinking.

Green's research supports the view that teachers tended to attribute Aboriginal students' poor performance to factors outside the control of the

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77 K. Wyatt in a submission to the Select Committee into Youth Affairs (1991), p.25.
school. Green asked a group of fifteen rural teachers to list the major difficulties that they came across in teaching Aboriginal children. He found that nearly all teachers blamed the child, family or environment. Only eleven of the eighty responses attributed the Aboriginal child's learning problems to the school or classroom. The common responses in the school and classroom deficit category included:

Aboriginal children are ignored ... reading materials are inappropriate ... prejudice by teachers and non-Aboriginal children ... teachers do not have special training to teach Aborigines ... a lack of Aboriginal support staff ... inadequate extra curricular activities.

Tannock and Punch concluded that:

... teachers do not expect Aboriginal children to do well in school ... Aboriginal children, they have accepted, just cannot do well in school.

Rist's study of black children attending an American ghetto school supports the view that teachers had preconceived expectations about potentially successful academic performance. Her study concluded that teachers' preconception about children's performance related to the social status of the student. Rist's work demonstrated that when teachers based their expectations of performance on the social status of the student, and assumed that the higher the social status, the higher the potential of the child, black children of low social status would inevitably "suffer a stigmatisation outside their own choice or will". Rist found that black children were usually treated as low achievers. According to Rist, the consequences for black children included:

... differential amounts of control-oriented behaviour, the lack of interaction with the teacher, the ridicule from one's peers, and the caste aspects of being placed in lower reading groups.

In conclusion, Western Australian state secondary schools are important ideological apparatuses in constituting the social identity of the Aboriginal...
child. In producing a particular image of the 'native' child as culturally and intellectually inferior, secondary schools help to legitimise educational inequalities. However, as Donald emphasised, subjectivity involves a 'degree of aggressivity', negotiation and contestation in everyday life.\textsuperscript{82} Aboriginal children's resistance to schooling can take the form of passive resistance to classroom expectations and authority to overt kinds of disruption and absenteeism.\textsuperscript{83} We now turn to the question of Aboriginal resistance to the process of state secondary schooling.

**CULTURAL CONFLICT, RESISTANCE AND SCHOOLING**

As major disciplinary sites inculcating knowledge and values in young children, Western Australian state secondary schooling seeks to render as natural the cultural forms of bourgeois hegemony. Secondary schooling is a major hegemonic apparatus in producing and organising the moral regulation of Aboriginal children. In practice, this means the subordination of a minority culture to the dominant social force. In 1960, one commentator to the *W.A. Teachers' Journal* reflected the regulatory role of public schooling:

> With guidance and direction these mission natives proved themselves capable of changing their way of living to new conditions. At the same time some resemblance of our type of family living developed. Tree planting, lawns, cleanliness of the huts, regular washing of clothes and improved personal hygiene proved the scheme a success.\textsuperscript{84}

Children from Aboriginal families experience significant alienation from the white system of formal schooling. This is hardly surprising given their different cultural world view. It is not within the scope of this thesis to discuss in detail the Aboriginal world view. Other people more qualified to speak on the subject have already done so.\textsuperscript{85} However, before continuing to examine the nature of Aboriginal resistance to white schooling, it is important to briefly contrast the world view of white and black people.

\textsuperscript{82} J. Donald (1985), p.246.
\textsuperscript{83} Select Committee into Youth Affairs (1991), p.23.
\textsuperscript{84} The *W.A. Teachers Journal* (1960), vol.L, no.9, p.166.
Christie defined world-view as:

... a set of concepts which relate individuals within any culture to the natural universe and to other humans in their social reality.\(^{86}\)

In Harris' view, the degree of difference between Aboriginal and European culture was so great that the two cultures were antithetic. Harris believed the two cultures were so fundamentally incompatible that they were "warring against each other".\(^{87}\) Harris examined a number of key divergences to emphasise the irreconcilable differences. These included religious versus positivistic thinking, relatedness versus compartmentalisation, cyclic versus linear ideas of time, being versus doing, closed versus open society, contrasting views of work and economics, contrasting views of authority, culturally distinctive styles, and continuity in change.\(^{88}\)

According to Christie, the white world-view is the product of ten thousand years of agriculture and urbanisation characterised by people exerting their will and control over the physical environment. He argued, that the European mentality of controlling the environment transferred to the social world where individuals are objects of the disciplinary power of state instrumentalities. In contrast, Aboriginal people have in the past emphasised "an intelligent responsiveness to environmental features, rather than control over them". The Aboriginal world-view is one of harmony and co-existence rather than manipulation of the environment.\(^{89}\)

Christie drew on the anthropological work of Bain to explain the cultural difference between black and white people. Bain claimed that:

... the difference between Aboriginal and white is not so much one of attitude and value or of a preference between conceptually valid alternatives but, instead, is rooted in contrasting world-view and ontology ... The essential element of this is the interactional/transactional dichotomy.\(^{90}\)

\(^{87}\) S. Harris (1990), p.9.
\(^{88}\) Ibid., chpt two.
\(^{90}\) Ibid., p.10.
Briefly, Bain drew four conclusions from the transactional/interactional dichotomy. First, Aboriginal people know their world by the entities that surround them such as trees, rocks, people and animals. Second, social activity involves interaction between interrelated elements that are not bound by historic time or quantification. Third, Aborigines see the world through the qualities and relationships that are apparent. Finally, through ritual Aboriginal people enact the principle of interactional cause or the interrelatedness of spiritual and human beings.91

In the past, the education system ignored the cultural background of Aboriginal students. The imposition of white middle class values on Aboriginal children denigrated their language and learning style. Often, white teachers assumed that there was something wrong about the way Aboriginal children spoke English. For instance, Malcolm asked more than one hundred teachers of Aboriginal pupils to describe their communication problems with Aboriginal children and found that 57 per cent of the problems related to speech use. In his words:

Pupils did not want to talk with the teacher; they would not initiate speech with him even when needing his help; they would not reply, or even show any recognition, when addressed by the teacher. On occasions when they did speak to the teacher they would not elaborate or repeat. They would frequently move out of their place, often coming out to the teacher to address him privately rather than communicating from the class. This inhibited speech behaviour was matched, even in the same pupils, with a set of other behaviours which, by contrast, seemed to display a lack of restraint and decorum. Aboriginal children might 'call out' answers or comments instead of waiting to be nominated; they may talk a great deal to each other at inappropriate times; when one child participated in the discourse, others might tease him.92

According to Christie, teachers interpreted this kind of behaviour as rude, insolent, lazy, stupid, emotionally disturbed, or withdrawn. In Christie's view, it was more likely that these children were simply following the Aboriginal system of sociolinguistic rules of interpersonal behaviour.93 The

91 Ibid., pp.10-11.
92 Ibid., p.19.
93 Ibid., p.19.
point is, according to Christie, that Aboriginal English or Creole is a unique language with its own history, patterns and structures.\textsuperscript{94}

Malcolm described in detail the communication dysfunction evident in many Aboriginal classrooms.\textsuperscript{95} His research showed that Aboriginal children usually spoke one of two sorts of language. First, there are those children who are bilingual and use Aboriginal language extensively outside the classroom. Concerning English, bilingual children are 'second phase learners' with inferior control over the English language. Bilingual speakers usually live in the Gascoyne-Murchison, Pilbara, Goldfields and Kimberley regions. The second type of language used by Aboriginal children is a form of non-standard English or what Malcolm describes as Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English (WAACE). WAACE differs significantly from the standard English spoken by teachers in the classroom. It is spoken mainly in the Murchison and South West areas of the state. Malcolm's research showed that both bilingual and WAACE speakers faced major communication problems in the classroom. These problems, he argued, occurred at three levels. First, the communication system where linguistics (languages, dialects) and sociolinguistics (conventions for the use of speech) create communication dysfunctions. Second, the speech event, in which the domain (schools) and the situation (classrooms) constrain the way in which the communication system may be realised. Third, the individual level, where communication strategies depend upon the attitude each person adopts.\textsuperscript{96} Malcolm's work on Aboriginal communication patterns in the classroom offered further evidence of the cultural gap and misunderstandings that existed between blacks and whites.

Cultural difference also influences learning styles and provides yet another reason for the clash of cultures in the classroom. Different groups of individuals develop functional learning systems that are appropriate to their social and economic context. Traditionally, Aboriginal learning occurs incidentally during the socialisation of children into adult roles. Aboriginal children learn skills and knowledge by modelling adults in the context of everyday life largely through non-verbal methods. In contrast, according to Christie, the formal education of white people is "decontextualized, heavily verbal and consciously mediated between teacher and pupil."\textsuperscript{97} As a

\textsuperscript{94} A. Shnukal (1985), 'Why Torres Strait 'Broken English' is not English' in M.J. Christie, p.30.
\textsuperscript{95} I. Malcolm (1982), 'Communication dysfunction in Aboriginal classrooms' in J. Sherwood (ed.).
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., p.153.
\textsuperscript{97} M.J. Christie (1985), p.56.
consequence, Aboriginal children have great difficulty in coping with institutionalised and irrelevant learning. White schools, Christie concluded were "quite foreign and even antithetical to the Aboriginal way of life".\textsuperscript{98}

Nonetheless, Aboriginal people are acutely aware of the value of western oriented education. Thies' 1987 study of Aboriginal people in the East Kimberley Region showed that Aborigines are conscious of the need for their children to acquire the same competencies as other children in mainstream society. The elders in the East Kimberley believe that schools should teach Gadiya (white) things and the Gadiya way. They believe it is important for Aboriginal children to learn to read and write so they can deal with the wider society and take control over their lives in negotiating with white people.\textsuperscript{99} It is against the background of cultural difference that state educational policies and Aboriginal resistance to white schooling begins to make sense.

The 1951 Commonwealth and States Conference on Native Welfare stated that education should be available to all irrespective of race. Officially segregation did not exist but in reality, Aboriginal children for a variety of reasons did not attend white schools. The conference declaration on the use of State schools by Aborigines attempted to cover all eventualities:

To the extent to which the place of living and general standard of aboriginal children will permit, they should be taken into, and receive their education in, the same institutions as are provided for white children. Prejudices and social conditions which operate against this policy should be actively combated.

But,

Where, by reason of isolation, temporary segregation in communities, or the present degree of social and cultural development, education in normal institutions is not practicable, special schools should be provided on Government, Mission and privately owned stations.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., p.60.

\textsuperscript{99} K. Thies (1987), \textit{Aboriginal viewpoints on education: a survey in the East Kimberley Region}, National Centre for Research on Rural Education, University of Western Australia, p.43.

\textsuperscript{100} Commonwealth and States Conference on Native Welfare, Canberra, 3-4 September, 1951. AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 533/1947.
White attitudes to Aboriginal children attending the same school were a source of much conflict in Western Australia. Headlines such as 'Two White Pupils End Boycott' and 'Dispute Over Education of Young Natives' were common throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Racist attitudes were strongest in the smaller country towns where white people came into regular contact with Aborigines. The Roebourne Parent and Citizens Association objected to the Education Department's decision to admit native children to the Roebourne school. On the 2 December 1953 they wrote to the Director-General of Education expressing their grievance:

Before admitting them to the local school however, surely it would be more beneficial to all concerned to give the native youngsters several years tuition in the elementary principles of hygiene and education. Why not a type of kindergarten, somewhere away from the school ... we suggest the Native Reserve ... and operated by perhaps some mission?\textsuperscript{101}

The Gnowangerup Parents and Citizens Association also expressed opposition to Aboriginal children attending the local school. A letter written on the 5 March 1965 to the Director-General of Education read in part:

The parents of children attending the Gnowangerup Junior High School have, for some time, been concerned about the effect of the number of native children enrolled there ... the vast majority of the adult natives can only be considered third class citizens; and it is from such a tragic background that the children came to this school. They have no innate dignity, no sense of discipline and with very few exceptions, no wish to improve their lot by their own efforts.\textsuperscript{102}

Inspectorial reports reflected the same sort of racist thinking. After a visit to the Brookton school on the 14 February 1949, Inspector O'Neil's written report stated:

On the 10th February, I again visited Brookton and attended a meeting of the Local Road Board, the complaints by members of the Board are that the town is being over run with natives, they have been frequenting the Hotels including Lounges, their living conditions are unsatisfactory and they are not industrious, and some members object to

\textsuperscript{101} Roebourne Parent and Citizens' Association in a letter to the Director-General of Education, 2 December 1953. AN 45/1 ACC 1497 FILE No. 533.1947.
\textsuperscript{102} Gnowangerup Parents and Citizens' Association in a letter to the Director-General of Education, 5 March 1965. AN 45/13 ACC 1606 FILE No. 1732/1964.
Thus, Aboriginal people experienced a racist, alien and at best irrelevent education system. Participation and retention rates provide a good indication of how Aboriginal students perceived white schooling. While the number of Aboriginal students staying on to Year 12 increased in the period 1982 to 1987 (2.8 per cent to 9.9 per cent) the actual number of students completing Year 12 remained very low. Even more disturbing is the fact that Western Australian retention rates are significantly lower than is the case in other Australian states:

### Aboriginal Students in all stages of education, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>94.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 years</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-24</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sense of alienation and failure experienced by Aboriginal students in the white education system largely reflects the cultural difference between black and white people. A community health worker in Perth informed the Select Committee into Youth Affairs (1991) that the high drop out rate of Aborigines from mainstream schooling:

... is indicative of the problems they face at school and the lack of relevance they see in the existing system.\(^{105}\)

The Kwinana Town Council referred to a "flood" of Aboriginal students not coping with primary and secondary education. One Aboriginal community health worker told the Select Committee (1991) that most 'at risk' Aboriginal youth:

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\(^{103}\) Extract from a report by Inspector O'Neill on the Brookton Reserve and Native Situation, 14 February 1949. ACC 993 Native Affairs FILE No. 140/1949.

\(^{104}\) Select Committee into Youth Affairs (1991), p.21.

\(^{105}\) Ibid., p.22.
... did not have good experiences at school. Schools were horrific parts of the lives of many of the kids we have spoken to.\textsuperscript{106}

Aboriginal communities were anxious about the impact of compulsory European schooling on their way of life. Many Aboriginal elders expressed concern about white schools deliberately taking their children away and destroying traditional values. In 1965, J. Oberdoo protested against compulsory school attendance regulations. In a letter to the principal of Marble Bar school he argued:

... you were probably ignorant of the evil influences that have been active against our children and which has caused a constant erosion of parental control and the success in having them begin to look on their parents with contempt .... Because we have been silent and patient in the past this has not meant that we were ignorant of the effort that was being made not a novel situation for our folk to rob them of their children the surprise to us was that you have or may have joined this group. Until we are satisfied this is not so and unless this effort is halted it is our intention to withhold our children from attending your school for an indefinite period the Education Act notwithstanding.\textsuperscript{107}

Another person to express concern was J. Boyle, President of the Ngoonjuwah Aboriginal Committee. On the 16 January 1975, she wrote to the Minister for Education G. McKinnon complaining about the impact of white schooling on Aboriginal families and the 'non-academic' curriculum studied by Aboriginal children. She wrote:

I would like to bring to your notice, that we the Aborigines of Halls Creek, are not satisfied with your system of schooling ... the worst part is breaking up families, when children as young as 5 years, are sent away from their parents ... By the time they are 15 years old, many cannot still read and write, and they are in a class called Project, which mainly teaches them to weed people's gardens around town ... I have no families ties as my mother is a stranger to me.\textsuperscript{108}

Despite Aboriginal concern about the impact of white schooling the Western Australian Education Department stated that 'native' children

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., p.22.
\textsuperscript{107} Jacob Oberdoo in a letter to L. Barrett, Principal of Marble Bar School. AN 45/13 ACC 1606 Native Education FILE No. 1732/1964.
\textsuperscript{108} Josephine Boyle, President of the Ngoonjuwah Aboriginal Committee in a letter to the Minister for Education G. McKinnon, 16 January 1975. ACC 3097 AN 45/34 FILE No. 786/1973.
were subject to the same attendance regulations as anyone else. In other words, Aboriginal children had to attend school if they lived within the statutory radius of an approved school or bus service.\(^{109}\) Education Department authorities expressed concern about the influence of white activists like Don McLeod who had some success in radicalising the northern Aborigines. McLeod came to prominence when he organised a regional strike by Aboriginal pastoral workers on 1 May 1946. In 1959 the 'McLeod mob' set up camp on the outskirts of Roebourne where they refused to send their children to school until their living conditions improved\(^{110}\) Despite McLeod's consciousness-raising work with the northern Aborigines, the general view of the authorities and community was that the Australian Aborigines did not pose a serious threat to the status quo. A lead editorial in *The W.A. Teachers' Journal* in 1963 stated that Australian Aborigines were non-aggressive and isolated from any nationalist movement that might inspire a Sharpeville-type massacre. The editorial commented that "none of the natives make too much fuss, their resistance is passive".\(^{111}\) Nonetheless, the Director-General of Education H. Dettman, sought legislative change that would give the Minister power to compel a parent of Aboriginal children living outside the limits and not receiving 'efficient' education to send that child to an approved institution.\(^{112}\) So serious was the problem of Aboriginal absenteeism that the Premier on the request of the State School Teachers' Union approved the formation of an inter-departmental committee in 1970 to study the Aboriginal absenteeism problem.\(^{113}\) The following table dramatically illustrated the nature of the absenteeism problem in Western Australian secondary schools in 1960:

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Native Education in Western Australia, School Year 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL NATIVE CHILD POPULATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Blood</td>
<td>2275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6539</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATIVE CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year High School</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year High School</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year High School</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Leaving</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Training School</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A related issue of greater concern to authorities was the dramatic increase in the number of 'natives' convicted of offences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Natives Convicted of Offences</th>
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</table>

In this situation, the Native Welfare Department's primary function was to maintain social order. As noted earlier, the Native Welfare Department established institutions such as the Moola Bulla native station to control the spread of offences against property. In contrast, the mission schools attempted to evangelise the 'natives' and attend to their welfare and education.

In a letter to the secretary of the Country Women's Association on the 6 April 1951, the Commissioner for Native Welfare, Middleton summarised the nature of the cultural clash between Aborigines and whites:

In my opinion and experience young natives of secondary school age are seldom happy when completely isolated in the company of a large group of white children; recently a very promising lad who had reached 8th standard at the Tambellup State School was brought to Perth by this Department, clothed and otherwise completely fitted out, and accepted by the Education Department as a pupil at a

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114 ACC 1733 Native Affairs FILE No. 803/1945.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid., S.G. Middleton to the Hon. Minister for Native Affairs, 14 August 1952.
metropolitan State School where such scholars are coached for the Junior standard examination. Within a few days he became lonely and nostalgic lost interest in his studies and absconded from school, and continued in this vein until it was finally realized the experiment was a failure and he was sent back to his former district.\textsuperscript{117}

A DIFFERENT, MORE PRACTICAL EDUCATION

On the 8 November 1945, the Minister for Education J. T. Tonkin outlined special educational provisions for native children:

The district inspectors have given special consideration to the provision of a curriculum specially adapted to the needs of native children. The following objectives are envisaged:

(i) To provide the rudiments of our civilization. (ii) To attain literacy (a) to provide a working knowledge of English, so that they may speak correctly, correspond with friends or on elementary business affairs, read for recreation or of current news; (b) to provide a working knowledge of our money, weights and measures systems. (iii) To inculcate desirable habits of hygiene and living. (iv) To secure a training in rural pursuits. (v) To promote desirable moral and spiritual attitudes.\textsuperscript{118}

The Minister's statement was an interesting illustration of what Sharp called 'practical ideology', or the way the school curriculum managed to secure the conditions of capital accumulation and the reproduction of capitalist class relations.\textsuperscript{119} In the following passage Sharp explained the operation of 'practical ideology':

The manner in which schools, classrooms and knowledge are socially organized, the material practices and routines through which learning and teaching takes place provide the socially significant context which mediates any explicit transmission of formal knowledge, concepts and theories ... Through its workings a social imagery and a series of conscious and unconscious messages are transmitted which prepare students for the material practices and routines necessary for capitalist work processes in their various

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., S.G. Middleton in a letter to M.S. Niblock, State Secretary Country Womens Association, Perth, 6 April 1951.
\textsuperscript{118} W.A. Parliamentary debates,\textit{ Hansard}, vol.116, 8 November 1945, p.1739
manifestations and in the habits and rituals of 'decent law-abiding citizens'.

Central to this section is the argument that the Western Australian secondary school curriculum reflected the wider distribution of power in Western Australian society. As Apple argued:

The study of educational knowledge is a study in ideology, the investigation of what is considered legitimate knowledge ... by specific social groups and classes, in specific institutions, at specific historical moments.

As the Western Australian Minister for Education argued, the school curriculum should provide students with 'the rudiments of Western civilisation'. Thus, the curriculum contains a prescription of what knowledge is valuable, by whom and in whose interests. The issue of determining what is worthy of study in the school curriculum is a perennial question that demonstrates the contested nature of school knowledge. Just as important as what schools teach, is what they fail to teach. Disempowered groups in society are usually marginalised in curriculum construction.

For instance, Cherryholmes claimed that 'regimes of truth' in the social studies were subject to the constraints of the broader social matrix:

A social studies teacher is one who makes statements that are valid in terms of social studies practice ... Forget about claims that social studies teaches the social sciences and humanities in any broad sense, because that simply is not the case. What is found are selective descriptive and explanatory accounts of social phenomena - historical and current, about our society and that of others - that are "appropriate" in terms of dominant views of society. Labor, minority and feminist history and politics ... are excluded.

Thus, state educational policy attempts to assert those values and attitudes that support the bourgeois social order. These values include promoting a sense of national identity and social cohesiveness (chapter 5) and economic efficiency (chapter six). In short, the school curriculum is a reflection of the broader distribution of power and authority in society.

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120 Ibid., p.124.
121 M. Apple (1979), p.45.
The secondary school curriculum is also a major mechanism of social differentiation. Chapter four explained how Western Australian secondary school students were assessed, labelled and streamed on the basis of merit. Educationalists argued that student differentiation was necessary to cater for individual needs, tastes and abilities. As a result, secondary schools divided the curriculum into high status 'academic' and low status 'practical' subjects. In this way, the secondary school curriculum reinforced the hierarchical division of capitalist social relations. As Sharp explained it:

Those pupils defined as bright or able are initiated into a pure, abstract, specialized academic curriculum whereas those designated less able are relegated to receive an applied, concrete, explicitly vocational education.124

As Western Australian secondary schooling became less and less the preserve of privileged families, curriculum differentiation tended to perpetuate existing inequalities. According to Cohen and Lazeron, structural inequalities became 'matters of individual ability and effort in schools and the market place'.125

**LINKING 'RACE', ABILITY AND CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION**

Generally, teachers accept the view that Aboriginal students, for a variety of cultural reasons lack the necessary desire, interest and ability to perform well at school. As discussed in chapter four, the testing movement provided a powerful corollary to this point of view. For example, in 1961 F. Harding a teacher with many years experience in the Kimberley region claimed that:

Mentally, native children are not as advanced as white children. They are at least two years retarded. This is a subjective observation. Tests (Otis Intermediate, Schonell's Reading Test and Daniel and Diack's Reading Test) have been carried out which place the native children in the I.Q. range of 67 minus to 92 and with reading ages at least two years retarded.126

Given the ideological and racist nature of intelligence testing it was inevitable that Aboriginal students would be seriously discriminated against in the education system. Despite the rhetoric of equality of opportunity, the

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secondary school curriculum, through the idea of merit, streamed Aboriginal students into less socially valued curriculum areas. In this way, the social constructs of 'race' and 'ability' produced unequal educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

In establishing an experimental course at Pingelly Junior High School in 1967, the Native Welfare Department recommended channelling Aboriginal students into low status practically orientated courses because of their 'well known' intellectual inferiority. In determining the type of student best suited for these courses the Education Department stated:

They [students] will have been selected on the basis of their well known academic weakness which will have been well established over the years. Hence, there will be a need to offer them a different, more practical type of course. The biggest bulk of those ex Grade 6 or 7 will be native children.127

The Education Department moved to match the ability of Aboriginal students with a course of study appropriate to their limited future employment prospects. A major concern of the Native Affairs Department and Education Department was to make sure that 'half-caste' and 'quarter-caste' children did not become a 'half-caste' problem in the towns. The consensus was that systematic training and job placement was the only solution. At its 1966 national conference, the racist Australian Natives' Association urged Robertson, the Director-General of Education, to encourage Aboriginal children to take domestic and technical training courses.128 In response, the Director of Secondary Education, A. Boylen claimed that all Aboriginal children received either domestic or technical training according to their individual capacities. Students who found difficulty in following the normal high school course, received additional domestic and technical training. The purpose was to provide prevocational training to prepare Aboriginal students for employment opportunities in the areas in which they lived.129

To this end, vocational guidance played an important part in persuading Aboriginal students to be realistic about their future prospects. For this

127 ACC 2817 Native Welfare Department FILE No. 11.23.
128 Australian Natives' Association, (Victoria) in a letter to the Director-General of Education, Dr. Robertson, 10 June 1966. AN 45/13 ACC 1606 FILE No. 2291/1966.
reason, the Commissioner of Native Welfare F.E. Gare instructed the superintendent of Native Welfare for the Southern Division to pay particular attention to the ability of Aboriginal students when giving guidance and counselling advice. On the 7 September 1967, he circulated a letter to ensure that the ability of Aboriginal school leavers was commensurate with their employment. Gare wrote:

> It is requested that Superintendents arrange to interview each student and discuss his or her future ambitions and aspirations. The interviewing officer should endeavour to counsel the student if necessary but regard must be made to advice given. Obviously a student aged 15 years completing Grade VII would find it impossible to obtain an apprenticeship in a trade requiring above moderate skill and should be counselled to consider alternatives.\(^{130}\)

In 1961 S. Wallace, the Director of Primary Education claimed that theoretically the aims of Native Education should be identical with the aims underlying the normal school curriculum. However, given the 'partial or complete non-acceptance by different sections of the community', he believed that the 'full range of employment possibilities was not open to all Aborigines'. Wallace argued that it was necessary to compromise the departments long range ideals by adopting interim planning to provide courses to fit the early school leavers into limited vocational fields. During 1960, the Education Department and Native Welfare Department agreed on a scheme to develop effective practical courses for the older native children. These courses had a strong practical bias aimed at training Aboriginal children in either manual or home science projects. The rest of the curriculum concentrated on basic educational skills and the development of good citizenship.\(^{131}\)

Most 'native' boys entered a pool of casual contract labour on local farms while girls lucky enough to find work usually performed some sort of domestic duties. For boys, job opportunities included stockman, carrier, gardener, carpenter, baker, farm-hand, railway worker, shearer, factory-worker, fireman, teacher, cycle-repairer, sports store worker (repairing), and artist. For girls, the list included typist, teacher,

\(^{130}\) F.E. Gare to the Superintendent of Native Welfare Southern Division, 7 September 1967. ACC 127 Native Welfare Department FILE No. 11.24.

shop-assistant, factory-worker, domestic aid, nurse and dressmaker.\textsuperscript{132} Given the limited range of career options available to Aboriginal children, the Education Department set about designing a curriculum relevant to their abilities and needs.

**MANUAL AND DOMESTIC TRAINING**

Project education was a particular method of education designed to assist students who were unable to cope with the traditional classroom situation. According to the Education Department, the aim of project education was to improve communication skills through practical activities conducted outside the classroom.\textsuperscript{133} In 1972, the Minister for Education T.D. Evans praised project education as a practical solution to the Aboriginal education problem.\textsuperscript{134}

Derby High School introduced the first project course in the early 1960s. Classroom instruction included oral expression and basic English courses (simple appreciation of literature, reading, spelling, simple grammar and written exercises), elementary maths, specially planned social studies, art, music and scripture. Girls spent 20 periods per week doing practical work relevant to domestic life. They studied cooking, laundry, housework, dressmaking, mending and home crafts. In contrast, Aboriginal boys learnt the skills of fencing, concrete work, shed building, painting, metal-work, carpentry, leather work, saddlery maintenance, machinery maintenance, windmill repairs and pantry management.\textsuperscript{135}

The project workshop was the focus of Aboriginal boys' education. The purpose of the workshop was to inculcate Aboriginal students with the right attitudes toward work and what it entailed. In deliberately creating a factory-like workshop that was distinct from the rest of the school it encouraged Aboriginal students to acquire knowledge that would help them to be good workers and consumers.\textsuperscript{136}

At the Derby High School, Aboriginal student activities included cement and concrete work, the construction of water tanks, installing water pipes,

\textsuperscript{132} I. Mitchell, Head Teacher of Warburton Range School in a letter to the Assistant Commissioner Department of Native Welfare, Perth, 1 August 1958. ACC 993 FILE No. 31/1958.

\textsuperscript{133} The Education Circular (1974), vol.I, no.2, p.27.

\textsuperscript{134} Northern Times, 27 July 1972, p.5.

\textsuperscript{135} Education Department Annual Report (1959), p.17.

\textsuperscript{136} ACC 2817 Native Welfare Department FILE No. 11.24
ploughing, plant nursery, fencing, painting, welding, car mechanics and driver training. Project education for girls centred on a small model cottage where the girls learnt home management techniques such as receiving visitors, cooking, and cleaning. Girls also helped to run the school canteen that was open at recess and lunch breaks. They were responsible for providing children with fruits, drinks and other items, making pies, pasties and sandwiches and keeping a record of monies received. Even though a sharp differentiation of curriculum existed between Aboriginal boys and girls, there was some sharing of roles in the area of poultry keeping and market gardening.\textsuperscript{137}

Agricultural Schools supplemented the project courses at selected day schools like Derby and Gnowangerup. Agricultural Schools taught Aboriginal students' skills relevant to employment in the pastoral and farming sectors. Mission authorities and the Native Welfare Department conjointly operated the Agricultural schools. The Methodist Church opened the first Agricultural School at Mogumber in 1964 followed by the Pallotine Mission at Tardun in 1968. The Education Department established an agricultural course at Gnowangerup in 1965.

Each course covered two years and provided full time residential accommodation for the academic year. Boys 14 or 15 years of age gained entry on a competitive basis with a pass in Grade 5 and good health being the minimum entry requirements. During the course, students received practical and theoretical instruction in many subjects including vehicle driving and maintenance, farming practice, carpentry, welding and metal work, stock management and animal husbandry. At Tardun Agricultural School, students studied practical farming jobs such as scrub raking, burning, ploughing and root picking, all of which provided a 'valuable introduction to the preparation of farming land'.\textsuperscript{138}

A major problem facing the Agricultural Schools was the difficulty in attracting enough interested Aboriginal boys of the 'right calibre'. As already mentioned, Aboriginal students were reluctant to attend any school let alone Agricultural Schools located hundreds of miles away from their home. With more High Schools establishing project courses, most

\textsuperscript{137} The Education Circular (1974), pp.27-29.
\textsuperscript{138} G. Cornish, (1968), Department of Native Welfare Newsletter, vol.1, no.5, p.41.
Aboriginal boys preferred to remain closer to their families rather than travelling away to Agricultural Schools.139

In 1974, the Education Department established the Aboriginal Education Section under Mounsey, two advisory teachers and two education officers. The aim of the Aboriginal Section was to assist teachers and schools in developing programs attuned to the needs of Aboriginal children, particularly in the areas of language and early reading development. The emphasis was on remedial and compensatory programs. The Warburton Ranges settlement established the first bilingual program using the Nyaanyatjarra language as the medium of instruction. Special government funds assisted in operating these programs with the stated aim of training Aboriginal people to improve their employment prospects and providing job opportunities for Aborigines who would otherwise be unemployed.140

During 1975, the Federal Government classified the Kimberley region as an area of high priority needs. In line with the Karmel Report policy of equality based on need, additional funds expanded educational facilities and services in the region. Kununurra District High School, Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek schools received new project centres, classrooms and sheds.141

Despite the Federal Government's injection of funds into Aboriginal education and the shift toward the rhetoric of self-determination, Western Australian educational policy under Mounsey continued to operate on a deficit model. As a consequence, educational policy focused on compensatory programs and curriculum innovations designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal children. In 1977, the Gnowangerup District High School established the Secondary Noongar Alternative Education Course to teach Aboriginal students 'practical' things commensurate with their abilities and interests. This meant substituting core-subject areas with a more practical program supplemented with some functional numeracy and literacy skills.142

To sum up, the extension of state secondary schooling to the whole Western Australian population irrespective of class, gender and race has not achieved the great leap toward democracy, equality of opportunity and

141 Education Department Annual Report (1975), p.32.
fulfillment that Mossenson talked about in his history of Western Australian state schooling. Even though Aboriginal children attended secondary schools in greater numbers than previously, the mere fact of their being at school has not constituted any significant move towards equality of status and opportunity. On the contrary, this chapter argues that Western Australian state secondary schooling constituted the 'native' child as culturally and intellectually inferior to other children. As a result, the Western Australian Education Department constructed alternative educational programs to prepare Aboriginal students for some sort of 'dead-end' job. Under the guise of equality of opportunity and the ideology of meritocracy secondary schooling legitimised the belief that individuals failed because of personal weaknesses. Aboriginal children responded to the processes of European schooling by not turning up to school. Unfortunately, this sort of resistance simply compounded the social, economic and educational disadvantages that they already suffered. As a result, black children found themselves in manual and domestic training courses because of their supposed intellectual inferiority. Unfortunately, in explaining Aboriginal poverty and oppression in individual terms, the broader historical-social context remains unquestioned.
CHAPTER EIGHT

SCHOOLING FOR SEPARATE SPHERES

INTRODUCTION
THE COLONISATION OF WOMEN
STATE POLICY AND IDEOLOGY IN THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN
DIFFERENT SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
CHAPTER EIGHT

SCHOOLING FOR SEPARATE SPHERES

Some knowledge of hygiene and elementary chemistry; of household accounts; of cookery, laundry, and general housewifery; of the care of children; and of sick-nursing will give a girl an opportunity of ordering her home on healthy and intelligent principles which will be in accordance with the truest economy.¹

The Education Department supports the concept of equality of opportunity through education. It is aware that although formal or legal equality is an essential element of equal opportunity this does not guarantee equality. Equality exists when all students and teachers can freely avail themselves of appropriate opportunities and choices that have been made possible through laws and regulations without experiencing negative social sanctions.²

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the processes through which Western Australian state secondary schooling defined, constructed and reinforced particular female gender roles and identity. Pervading the Western Australian education system is the general assumption that boys and girls are innately different in ability and interests. Educational thinking tends to fall back on the deterministic view that girls' should eventually return to the home to be 'good' wives and mothers. Hence, it is not surprising that educational discourses reflected the dominant political ideology about the role of women in society. Despite the emerging rhetoric of equality of opportunity, secondary schooling remains an important hegemonic apparatus in the production of gender stereotypes that discriminate against girls.

As already argued in chapter two, along with class and race, gender is a major category of historical analysis. This chapter focuses on two major aspects of gender construction in Western Australian state secondary schools. First, it examines the stereotypical assumptions about males and females prevalent in official educational ideology and policy. Second, it considers the process of curriculum differentiation whereby boys and girls

¹ Western Australian Education Department (1912), Report upon educational organizations, Government Printers, Perth, p.24.
² The Education Circular (1980), July, p.197
received differential treatment in subject choice, streaming and achievement. The chapter begins with an overview of the historical and social origins of the dominant ideology of women in Western Australian society.

THE COLONISATION OF WOMEN

Within a supposedly free and independent Australia women are a colonized sex. They are denied freedom of movement, control of their bodies, economic independence and cultural potency. This oppressed state derives from the status of 'the family' in Australia and the responsibilities assigned to women within that institution.³

In colonial Western Australia there was a rigid sexual division of labour within the home and workplace. The idea of the full-time homemaker performing unpaid domestic duties to support her husband was the norm. Primarily, the colonial ruling class constructed the mythology of the 'angel in the house' to domesticate working class males.⁴ The family became a major social institution of stability and labour power reproduction. Therefore, it was not surprising that education for the majority of girls emphasised domestic training rather than the intellectually demanding academic subjects. Substantially, the pattern of educational inequality established in the nineteenth century remained until the late 1960s when official government ideology and policy shifted to the rhetoric of individual ability and equality of opportunity for girls. This section outlines the historical origin of the dominant ideology of the family in Western Australia and how it produced the taken-for-granted assumption that girls' education should be different to boys'.

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

Why has God filled the earth with these little bands of united individuals called families, if He had not in this arrangement, designed to promote the virtue and happiness of mankind? If there be anything which will soothe the agitating passions of the soul, which will calm that turbulence of feeling which the din and bustle of the world

do frequently excite, it is the soothing influence of a cheerful fireside. (A man) 'goes out into the world to discharge his duties, and returns to his quiet home for happiness and repose'.

Stannage argued that the image of 'the family' described by Emma Thomson in 1856 was an essential ingredient in the search for 'internal peace' in the young colony. He believed that the ideal of the family appealed to the ruling class as a way of ordering their own lives and securing social stability in the lives of the serving class. Grellier's investigation of early family life in the country town of York supported the proposition that the ruling class, as represented by the landowners and business interests, espoused a particular set of attitudes about the desired gender order and sexual morality. Grellier's analysis of the weekly newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century showed that editorials:

... above all emphasized their authors' belief in the vital socializing role of the family in building a stable, hardworking, Christian society in the raw western colony.

In the struggling colony, the romantic conception of the family was an important factor in ensuring the survival of the established social order. Without a strong Church presence in the colony, the family was an important apparatus of social control. The ruling class believed that the responsibilities of family life would guarantee working class docility and conformity. In Summers' view, the family acted as 'a retreat' where the male breadwinner could forget the drudgery and boredom of work. Grellier quoted an article printed in the Perth Gazette in 1859 to illustrate the stabilising influence of the home:

Is there any other word in the vocabulary of nations that is so expressive, so suggestive, so gentle and so important in its wide significance, as that which leads our article? Home! What a talisman it is, what a spell, what an invocation ... Everybody has his or her ideal of somewhere, of some place of rest, of complete satisfaction, where the roar and din of the great world may not enter, or if heard at all would be

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8 Quoted in M. Grellier (1981), pp.496-497.
esteemed for its contrast to the serenity within - a home, in fact, for without serenity there is no home .... We now think that a man who is happy in his home, at his own fireside, with the partner of his life smiling gently upon him and his little children looking like smiling content ... is to all intents and purposes a 'Serene Highness' .... Home is the revivifying spell that braces many a heart to do its duty ... [it] is the kingdom of the heart; and in the thatched cottage through which the hollow wind whistles, as well as in the gorgeous palatial pile ... the home spell lingers and there is no place like it. The man who with humble means and quiet wishes ... who has a home where envy and unthankfulness find no place, where dear domestic love and gentleness are the presiding angels, is indeed a Serene Highness; and long may he continue so, and may our happy country be ever celebrated as the land of Home and Hearts.

Summers argued that the myth of the ideal family caused people to overlook the reality of the social processes at work within many families. She claimed that women's experience of family life differed markedly from men in relation to the 'self', home and work. In her view, women were and still are the victims of a process of colonisation whereby 'male interests constructed and exploited women's bodies, femininity, sense of self and labour power'.

Summers major contention was that the 'self' acquired in childhood was a sex-differentiated self that imposed different sorts of behaviour and morality on boys and girls. In the family, girls learnt that they were a 'female' person with an inferior status to males. From an early age, girls began to internalise a maternal role as a part of acquiring a sense of self. Summers claimed that girls learnt a 'female culture' that emphasised child-minding, housekeeping, gardening, cooking, cleaning and washing. In Summers view:

Women are thus effectively imprisoned within family and marriage, dependent on men, and nurturing husbands and children, as their only means of psychic survival.

Summers identified two stereotypical sorts of women: 'God's Police' and 'Damned Whores'. 'God's Police' were those women who accepted the

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12 Ibid., p.113.  
13 Ibid., p.96.
dominant 'female culture', adopted the established code of femininity, sought a male protector and maintained the family institution. In contrast, prostitutes, lesbians and prisoners ('Damned Whores') tended to reject the established code of femininity.\textsuperscript{14} The controversial debate about the introduction of female convicts ('Damned Whores') into Western Australia clearly illustrated the desired role of women in the colony. On 5 May 1854, the editor of the \textit{Perth Gazette} argued:

A mistaken notion prevails that convict women are the best possible mates for convict men, but the contrary is the case. Viewing the immense influence exerted by the gentler over the sterner sex, it will be apparent that the woman who is untainted with crime, who is religious, sober and industrious, cleanly and saving, will exert that influence for good; while she who has rendered her a subject for transportation, and is the vilest and most degraded of human beings, will exert that influence for evil. By consenting to the introduction of this class, we pave the way for the total cessation of Female Immigration - that immigration which we cannot but regard as the principal, if not the only guardian of the future generation.\textsuperscript{15}

The colonial Church and legal system played a major part in upholding the ideology of the family and women's subordinate position in society. The ruling class used these hegemonic apparatuses to impose their own version of gender relations on the population of the colony.\textsuperscript{16} In the case of the Church, the Christian ideals of the indissolubility of marriage and the subordinate role of the wife were considered desirable. In February 1953 the Roman Catholic Church articulated the desired role of women in marriage in the following pronouncement:

A young woman becoming a wife should think of her new state not as one that is to make her happy but as one in which she is to make her husband happy. Her own happiness will be a by-product of that determination, and will be assured in no other way .... The good wife realizes that in becoming a wife she contracts to forget self and put her husband's happiness above her own wishes .... In the marriage contract she handed over the right to her body for the actions of marriage; she does not try to take that back again. She contracted to make a home for her husband in whatever place his work might call him; she does not proclaim any spurious independence in that regard ....

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.248.
\textsuperscript{15} Quoted in M. Grellier (1981), p.497.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p.499.
dress she tries to please, even in the privacy of the home; in speech she encourages, comforts and shares her husband's interests; in her household tasks she tries to be perfect that he may think of no place as more pleasant than his home.  

Alongside the Church, the legal system played an important role in maintaining the subjection of women to their husbands. Grellier's research showed that nineteenth century law played a central part in upholding a social system that benefited men over women. She claimed, that Western Australian colonial law kept husbands and wives together to minimise the social and economic cost of destitution. The police spent a considerable amount of time and energy issuing warrants and pursuing marital fugitives. Despite many reports of cruelty and violence against women, the Western Australian legal system was largely unsympathetic to the plight of women. According to Grellier, court rulings often amounted "to official recognition of a husband's right to enforce the marriage vow of obedience with violence if necessary". In her view, such cases highlighted:

... the massive conceptual gulf separating the ideology of home and family espoused by the ruling class from the experience of many ordinary colonials.

EUGENICS, WOMEN AND EDUCATION

This part examines the contribution of the eugenics movement to the construction of the dominant ideology of women's role in the family. Drawing on the work of Bacchi (1980) and Dyhouse (1979) it explains how the governing classes used the scientific discourse of evolution and reproduction to reinforce the 'naturalness' of women's subordination in the home.

Bacchi argued that the Australian psyche readily assimilated the 19th century belief about 'race suicide'. In a colony fearful of its isolation, underpopulation and vulnerability to the Asian 'hordes', the British concern with declining birth rates generated a great deal of interest. In this

19 Ibid., p.503.
20 Ibid., p.504.
environment, the science of eugenics dramatically influenced common sense thinking about the reproductive role of women.

Bacchi identified two influential approaches to the hereditary debate in Australia. First, Galton's deterministic claim that genetics determines a person's intelligence. Second, Lamarck's view that environmental conditions can influence individual physical attributes. Underpinning both perspectives was the assumption that genetics is the major determinant of individual characteristics. In Australia, the initial debate focused on the medical profession's opposition to girls intellectual education on the grounds that it would interfere with their natural reproductive capacity. In fact, one Australian health survey demonstrated that university study reduced female fertility. In the early 20th century, scientific studies such as this one justified different educational experiences for boys and girls. Dyhouse quoted the English Board of Education's Consultative Committee Report (1923) *The Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls Respectively in Secondary Schools* to illustrate how the science of psychology was instrumental in constructing the belief that boys and girls were emotionally and physiologically different. The English Consultative Committee Report argued:

> We are inclined to think that the predisposition of girls to nervous overstrain, especially at the period of adolescence, is one of the most important factors in the problem of female education ... there should be a well-defined difference in the extent of the demands made on boys and girls at school.

Bacchi believed that the Lamarckian emphasis on the influence of the environment stimulated an interest in the 'proper scientific training' of girls for their 'natural' vocation as housewives. For this reason, domestic science classes were the normal educational experience for most girls at the turn of the century. While the assumptions of the eugenicists and environmentalists differed, they both agreed that the proper place for women was in the home. In 1890 the *Bulletin* magazine articulated the common sense view of women's place in society:

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22 Ibid., p.137.
27 Ibid., p.151.
Women cannot be too learned, provided the learning she has helps her to fulfil her varied functions of mother, nurse, educator and trainer of her children .... Woman, as woman, cannot be too much or too well educated; but her education must have the future well in view. On her the nation's future depends. Any education which unfits her for the fulfilment of her maternal responsibilities is not only useless - it is most emphatically a curse.28

In brief, the eugenics movement played a central part in constructing the ideology of the family based on a new relationship between the state, family and education. Eugenics supported the proposition that girls' education primarily related to matters of motherhood. Against this background, the section to follow examines official state ideology and policy in the education of women in Western Australian society.

STATE POLICY AND IDEOLOGY IN THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

... the Education Department had a view of the proper form of the family, that the family was seen as a most important institution in society, that the Department viewed its function as partially to train children to fit into their appropriate roles within the family. It is also clear that those roles were sex-specific and that they represented very much the traditional nineteenth century romantic notions of home and hearth, as well as class-based notions about the appropriate forms of working class families.29

Porter's analysis of official Western Australian Education Department documents in the period 1900 to 1929 illustrated how the formal education system perpetuated the ideology of the family. In Britain, the research of Dyhouse (1978) and Deem (1981) demonstrated that state educational policy and ideology reinforced the assumption that women's proper place was in the home. This section seeks to show how the official discourse of the Western Australian Education Department, in the period after the Second World War, constructed the view that women's lives should exist around motherhood and the organisation of the home.

As already explained in chapter three, the contradictory discourses of social democracy and national efficiency were at the forefront of the ideological struggle over the extension of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. The social democratic settlement of the 1950s and 1960s won many important concessions for the working class and women. In Western Australia, the opening up of the co-educational, comprehensive high school was an important part of the post-war social democratic settlement to give all children, especially working class boys, a fairer chance in life. In 1958, the Education Department declared that:

As a community we have accepted a policy of education for all and as a democracy the separation and stratification of our youth is neither necessary nor desirable.30

The discussion so far has sought to debunk the rhetoric of equality of opportunity by showing how Western Australian state secondary schooling reproduced established social inequalities. In this section, the focus narrows to consider how the education of girls' in Western Australian secondary schools continued to reinforce the traditional role of women as unpaid home makers.

THE DUAL ROLE OF WOMEN

This part of the chapter attempts to explain the nature of girls' education in the context of the changing role of women in Australian society. After the Second World War, a serious labour shortage allowed an increasing number of women to participate in the work force. In the two decades after the war, the proportion of women in the full-time labour force increased significantly. In 1966, 29.5 per cent of the Australian labour force was female, by 1973 it was 33.3 per cent and growing. The following statistics show the changing nature of women's participation in the Australian labour force:

Participation of Women in the Labour Force: Australia 1933-1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of all women over 15 in paid work</th>
<th>Percentage of all women working who are married</th>
<th>Percentage of all married women who are in paid work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the Second World War, Australian labour force statistics revealed a changing role in society for women. By 1974, 42 per cent of all women aged 15 and over participated in the labour force. The increased work participation rate of married women was the most significant change. By 1974, married women comprised 64 per cent of the total female labour force. In Western Australia, the participation rate for women in the labour force increased steadily between 1966 and 1986 from 33 per cent to 48.1 per cent. The female labour force increased by 163,280 women, a growth of 174.8 per cent in the same period. In the case of married women in the labour force there was an increase in their participation rate from 43.1 per cent to 50.8 per cent between 1981 and 1988. In this period, the number of employed married women in the labour force increased by 53,496 (44.3 per cent) - more than three times the number of unmarried women (16,662 or 19.6 per cent). In all years, women in part-time work employment comprised more than 50 per cent for the married group and more than 20 per cent for the unmarried group.

Despite the expansion of job opportunities and the introduction of equal pay, women continued to occupy traditional 'female' jobs. The 1976 census figures for Western Australia showed that the majority of women worked in clerical jobs such as bookkeeping, cashier, stenographer and typist. Women's representation in administrative, executive and managerial positions was negligible compared to men. Even in the professional category women continued to perform 'female' jobs such as teaching and nursing. Just over half of all working women were employed in two industries -

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32 Ibid., p.27.
community services (29 per cent) and wholesale and retail (21.8 per cent).\textsuperscript{34}

Women continued to remain under-represented in the traditional male occupations of architecture, engineering, surveying, physics, the sciences and medicine.\textsuperscript{35}

Worse was the fact that 'female' occupations were poorly paid in comparison to 'male' occupations. As a consequence, women suffered serious financial disadvantage. For example, in the Australian Public Service in 1973, only 2 of the 938 people earning over $15,000 were women.\textsuperscript{36} Even though women, in particular married women, were entering the paid work force in unprecedented numbers they continued to enter a narrow range of occupations that confined them to lower paid and less skilled jobs. The following Western Australian average weekly earnings' figures for 1989 show the differential earning capacity of women and men:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Particulars & 1983 & 1988 & Percentage Change \\
\hline
Males & 351.60 & 510.30 & 45.1 \\
Females & 211.60 & 299.90 & 41.7 \\
Persons & 290.50 & 418.40 & 44.0 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

In the context of the rapidly changing economic role of women in the economy, attitudes toward girls education was contradictory. On the one hand, the discourse of equality of opportunity assumed that girls should have the same opportunities for a secondary education as boys. On the other hand, a deep conviction that women's primary responsibility was in the home remained. Although official educational policies opened the door for girls to undertake intellectual and professional courses in Western Australian secondary schools, girls' subject enrolment patterns, attainment and aspirations continued to show a sex-bias. Before discussing the sex-differentiated nature of the school curriculum, the part to follow

\textsuperscript{34} Australian Bureau of Statistics (1990), p.35.
\textsuperscript{35} Western Australian Year Book (1980), Government Printers, Perth, pp.518-519.
\textsuperscript{36} Girls, school and society (1975), p.27.
\textsuperscript{37} Western Australian Year Book (1989), p.234.
considers the nature of the shifting discourses about girls education in Western Australian educational reports in the post-war period.

DISCOURSES ABOUT GIRLS' EDUCATION

Chapter two explained how poststructuralist theory has contributed to an understanding of the connection between language, subjectivity and the social organisation of power. It explained how discourse creates reality by naming and giving it meaning. Discourse provides the means to meaning and the mechanisms through which the social production of subjectivity takes place. Importantly, discourse selectively constitutes what counts as real and true and in so doing, constitutes the individuals mind, body and emotions. This part of the chapter is interested in examining how Western Australian Education Department documents and reports constructed a particular view about the nature, content and practice of girls education in the period after the Second World War. Three distinct official discourses about girls' education are identifiable in official documents. They are biological determinism, individual ability and interests, and equality of opportunity. Each of these will be considered in turn.

Biological Determinism
The discourse of biological determinism attributed the traditional sexual division of labour to biological factors. As discussed in the previous section, the ideology of innate difference between men and women was influential in shaping early gender relations in Western Australian society. Religious beliefs and the eugenics movement reinforced the dominant ideology of women and encouraged a more scientific approach to the training of girls.

The legacy of biological determinism still haunts much contemporary thinking about women and education. For instance, research on the effects of the hidden curriculum of schools shows that patterns of teacher-student interaction, teacher expectations, the 'feminisation' of teaching and the dominance of males in administrative positions all combine to reinforce the traditional sex role of women as both 'natural' and inevitable.

Western Australian educational reports in the post-war period were important conveyors of the ideology of biologism. The Box Report (1954),

38 See B. Green (1986); A. Yeatman (1990); and C. Weedon (1987).
the first of numerous inquiries into Western Australian secondary education, espoused the view that girls' education should be different to that of boys. The report claimed that education should develop 'appropriate attitudes, cultural background and prevocational training' to produce 'decent and self-respecting' citizens. In reality, this meant that secondary schooling should socialise girls into the established patriarchal social order with the 'minimum of fuss'. The *Box Report* (1954) stated that the aims of education are:

- to make the student a decent, self-respecting individual;
- to develop in the student attitudes which will be of benefit to himself and his community in after life;
- to provide a cultural background necessary for an understanding of our way of life and environment;
- to establish in the individuals the skills necessary for successful living in a modern democratic community;
- to give a measure of pre-vocational training.\(^4\)

Therefore, it was hardly surprising that the *Box Report* (1954) recommended that girls' education should closely approximate the community into which they were expected to live. Put simply, the purpose of girls' education was to prepare them for motherhood and a life of service. Even the 'outstanding women' of the Western Australian Education Department experienced the discriminatory effects of being born female. The *Box Report* (1954) stated:

> The Headmistresses are the outstanding women of the Department, and *had they been men* would, without doubt, have long occupied positions on the administrative staff with honour to themselves and credit to the Department.\(^4\)\(^2\)

As already argued in chapter two, secondary schooling plays a major part in the process of identity formation. In the Western Australian secondary education system, girls' found their identity and self-worth largely defined through the ideology of innate capacities and interest.\(^4\)\(^3\) The *Box Report* (1954) articulated a particular ideology about the family and male and female roles. This was clearly shown in its attitude toward the physiological changes affecting adolescent children. The report expressed concern about the transition of children from 'more or less sexless individuals into men and women'. The *Box Report* (1954) warned about the potential moral

\(^{41}\) The *Box Report* (1954), p.6.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., p.7.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., p.7.
dangers awaiting adolescents and recommended that all secondary school children should know something about the 'proper' ideals of 'womanhood' and 'manhood'.

Biological arguments also justified the sexual division of labour in the home and work force. The belief in the different innate capacities of men and women largely determined the sorts of jobs that women could do. The Box Report (1954) concluded that while economic necessity may determine job opportunities, it was 'fundamental innate psychological differences between boys and girls that were responsible for determining their vocational choice'. The report claimed that vocational choice "would be just as varied if an economic vocation were not necessary". In short, girls were born different, therefore it was only natural that they should receive a different education more attuned to domestic life.

Having established that girls and boys were innately different, the Box Report (1954) attempted to match the secondary school curriculum with the innate needs of the sexes. In the case of girls, the study of Home Science and proper 'cultural and civic training' was appropriate in preparing girls for home duties. Thus, girls' education involved the study of cookery, laundry, housewifery, outfit and dressmaking, home nursing and home making. On the other hand, boys learnt to be good breadwinners through the study of subjects like woodwork, drawing, metalwork and forgework. The differentiated nature of boys and girls curriculum is the focus of discussion in the section to follow.

The Discourse of Individual Ability and Interest

In the late 1950s and 1960s official educational discourse in Western Australia shifted from sex-specific language to a preoccupation with the non-sexed individual. As already argued in chapter four, the idea of innate intelligence and merit guided Western Australian educational thinking and practice in the post-war period. As a consequence, secondary schools spent a considerable amount of time and effort trying to discover each student's innate abilities and interest so that they could better differentiate the school population for appropriate instruction. This part examines the implications of the discourse of individual ability and interest for the education of girls in Western Australian state secondary schools.

As noted in chapter three, the extension of co-educational, comprehensive secondary education to the whole population during the 1950s and 1960s reflected the social democratic settlement of 'secondary schooling for all'. The assumption was that co-educational, comprehensive secondary schooling would eradicate the social inequalities (mainly class) created by the tripartite system of education that existed before the Second World War. On the surface, the opening up of secondary schooling appeared equitable and fair but social differentiation continued to operate under the guise of individual merit. In the case of girls, the ideology of innate biological difference was a major factor in determining their school experience.

In 1958, the Minister for Education, the Hon. W.J. Hegney, established the Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. T.L. Robertson the Director-General of Education, to evaluate the nature and relevance of the secondary school curriculum. In keeping with the post-war social democratic consensus, the report argued that secondary schools should serve the needs of all students by:

... providing a wide variety of courses for all boys and girls and doing so under democratic conditions of equal opportunity for all, according to interests and abilities.\(^{46}\)

As noted, the concern with national efficiency and equality of opportunity allowed women the opportunity to participate in the labour market and undertake additional education. Women's opportunities to participate in the work force were significantly enhanced by changing social circumstances including decreasing family sizes, birth control, growing affluence and the growth of the welfare state. Yet, despite the increased participation rate of women in the work force and the introduction of equal opportunity legislation, the dominant ideology of the state still reflected the traditional model of women's role.

The expansion of state secondary schooling produced very different consequences for girls than boys. In most cases, the provision of secondary schooling made little difference to girls beyond preparing them to become 'young women' capable of managing their homes. For girls, the expansion of secondary education involved the study of domestic science, physiology, typing and shorthand. In 1954 the Eighth International Congress of Home Economics Teachers strongly reinforced the traditional role of women:

Since the home is the foundation of the State all girls should have sound training in Home Science or Home Economy.\textsuperscript{47}

The interim report of the \textit{Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee} (1958) placed great emphasis upon socialising children into the established social order. The report argued:

\ldots education must be useful and have a direct application to the real life situations of pupils so that they might live and work effectively as a citizen in the community.\textsuperscript{48}

Thus, the interim report emphasised not only the traditional intellectual objectives of education but the personal and moral responsibilities of individuals. For girls, this involved their gradual assimilation into the purposes, values and organisation of a patriarchal society.\textsuperscript{49}

The final \textit{Neal Report} (1964) recommended a cumulative curriculum to better differentiate the school population. The report aimed to establish an organisational pattern that would allocate students into different streams of school knowledge. The basis of allocation was the student's performance in a series of intelligence and aptitude tests. At the time, people believed that the ability and interest of boys and girls were fundamentally different. The \textit{Neal Report} (1964) expressed the opinion that manual training for boys and domestic training for girls should have a practical orientation relevant to their future. The report argued:

\begin{quote}
The two period unit may well concentrate on the skills and background of knowledge required say by the handyman (in manual training) in the modern day of power tools, and for the housewife in today's home (in home science).\textsuperscript{50}
\end{quote}

The \textit{Dettman Report} (1969) also reinforced the idea of education for 'separate spheres'. The report expressed different expectations for boys and girls about subjects studied and occupational choices. The report recommended that boys should undertake preparatory studies in woodwork, metalwork and home handyman courses while girls energy should be directed to the study of home science and personal and social development. Thus, Western Australian secondary schooling structured

\textsuperscript{47} The Education Circular of W.A. (1954), vol.LVI, no.6, p.121.
\textsuperscript{48} The interim report of the secondary schools' committees (1958), p.5.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p.15.
\textsuperscript{50} The Neal Report (1964), p.35.
different educational experiences for boys and girls. The following time-table arrangement illustrates how Western Australian secondary schools organised separate educational experiences for boys and girls in 1969:

High School Certificate Time-Table, 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Science</td>
<td>8 periods</td>
<td>Woodwork 4 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
<td>4 periods</td>
<td>Metalwork or Typing 4 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>2 periods</td>
<td>Transport 4 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
<td>2 periods</td>
<td>Home Handyman 4 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Subjects</td>
<td>14 periods</td>
<td>Core Subjects 14 periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Education</td>
<td>11 periods</td>
<td>Social Education 11 periods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Dettman Report (1969) went on to recommend that girls wishing to leave school before fifth year should enrol in the fourth year terminal commerce course. The focus of the commerce course was on subjects such as shorthand, typing, bookkeeping and English. Girls also studied home science, art, music, health education, and special religious instruction.

The report strongly argued that Western Australian secondary schools should integrate children into the established social, cultural and political traditions of society. This involved teaching children a sense of responsibility to their 'family, society and the State'. In particular, the Dettman Report (1969) expressed concern about the destabilising impact of technological and social changes on the home. To address this problem, the report recommended that secondary schools should take greater responsibility for children's moral well-being. The report argued:

It is undoubtedly true that no influence can replace that of a good home where love and harmony abide and intelligent guidance is present .... In current society however, with so many homes where both parents go to work, where many children are unsupervised for an appreciable time after school, and where many homes seem to be affected by a diversity of factors harmful to children, the school must assume more and more responsibility in the field of character training.

52 Ibid., p.46.
53 Ibid., p.59.
54 Ibid., pp.71-72
In the context of major economic and social upheaval there was a swing back to conservative views about the proper role of women in society. The *Dettman Report* (1969) reflected this backlash when it recommended that girls should receive additional instruction in personal development to enable them to cope with 'teenage problems, the world of work and marriage'.\(^{55}\)

**The Discourse of Equality of Opportunity**

Trends in the post-war period indicate that gender differences in participation and retention rates gradually narrowed between 1955 and 1975, after which there was a widening gap between male and female participation rates in favour of girls. The following figures show the pattern of increasing female participation in secondary education, particularly at the year 11 and 12 level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year 8 Male</th>
<th>Year 8 Female</th>
<th>Year 9 Male</th>
<th>Year 9 Female</th>
<th>Year 10 Male</th>
<th>Year 10 Female</th>
<th>Year 11 Male</th>
<th>Year 11 Female</th>
<th>Year 12 Male</th>
<th>Year 12 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>100.2</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.5</td>
<td>101.2</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>100.2</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.4</td>
<td>101.4</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such figures can show the success of the universalisation of secondary schooling for all. However, it must be keep in mind that the retention rate figures shown above hide the discriminatory effect associated with the type of secondary school attended. In the period 1971 to 1990, Western Australian retention rates by category of school show that 63.5 per cent of girls in Government schools completed Year 12 compared with 76 per cent in Catholic schools and 84.9 per cent in non-government independent secondary schools. These figures largely reflect the impact of class on girls

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p.139.

\(^{56}\) Secondary Education Authority (1990), p.121.
educational experience. The following table shows the apparent retention rate by sex and category of school in the period 1971 to 1990:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kenway's ethnographic research helps to explain why there is such a difference between government and elite private secondary girls' school retention rates. She argues that the prestigious private girls' schools inculcated their students with a culture of achievement and success that was not only expected but actively constructed by the more sophisticated clients of these schools. Kenway concluded that:

High academic achievement, preparation for prestigious tertiary study and a meritorious career continue as one of the main messages from the school which the girls are conscious of receiving. Choice, meritocracy and investment, financial debt and waste are the central motifs in the discourse, which is deliberately articulated by the school and the parents and absorbed and replayed, little altered, by the girls.58

With the publication of the Schools Commission report *Girls, School and Society* in 1975, a succession of Federal and State level government reports on the education of girls documented the sex-based inequality of opportunity in Australian schools. The evidence conclusively showed the differential treatment of girls in post-secondary education courses of study, subject choices, classroom interaction, and vocational guidance. Specifically, the *Girls, School and Society* (1975) report pointed to a number of school practices that reinforced sex differences. These included:

57 Australian Education Council (1990), p.18.
• single sex schools;
• the use of sex as a basis for classifying children and young people;
• the provision of different options in curriculum for girls and boys;
• discipline policies, dress requirements, segregation in play and classes;
• reinforcement of expectations that different sorts of behaviour are expected of girls and boys;
• assignment of girls and boys to different duties;
• vocational guidance which suggests sex limitations on occupations.\(^{59}\)

Besides overt sorts of school practices, the report argued that the hidden curriculum played a major part in perpetuating the inferior status of girls. For example:

• the use of sex biased curricula materials;
• organizational patterns which act as a barrier to parental participation and assume the traditional model of the family;
• the omission of women from the content and processes of history except as mothers and wives of great men;
• the absence of education in human sexuality and the under valuing of the skills of interpersonal relationships;
• the comparative absence of women in positions of high administrative responsibility in schools and school systems.\(^{60}\)

In Western Australia, the *Beazley Report* (1984) explained the relation between secondary schooling and sex-based inequalities in the following way:

Although there have been some changes over the past decade, schools in general continue to adhere too closely to a pattern which assumes that males will be predominately breadwinners and females predominantly homemakers. Schools seem to assume that boys have little need of nurturing and interpersonal skills while girls have little need for marketable skills, other than those relevant to a narrow range of low-status, poorly paid jobs.\(^{61}\)

Chapter two of this thesis explained how liberal feminism argues that sex-role stereotyping produces patterns of sex-based inequalities in the

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\(^{59}\) Schools Commission (1975), *Girls, school and society*, Schools Commission, Canberra, p.156.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., pp.156-157.


Girls' potential ... is being limited by deeply entrenched sex-stereotyping ... the male stereotype encourages boys to explore a wide range of options and to aspire to high achievement. Social forces limit girls' options, their aspirations, their curiosity, their speech and their space. Schools should help girls to break these limits.62

In much the same way, the Western Australian *Beazley Report* (1984) stated:

The Committee received evidence of sex stereotyping in the curriculum. This took the form of bias towards males in texts and other curriculum materials and of sex-differentiated patterns of subject choice which work to the disadvantage of females.63

Liberal feminists believe that it is possible to achieve an equal relationship between the sexes by introducing the principle of gender neutrality, whereby no sex has power or privilege. To achieve an equal relationship in the public domain both Federal and State Governments have gradually extended individual rights to include women. The major assumption of the liberal perspective is that rational educational reform can reduce 'gender-based educational pathways'.64 The Commonwealth Schools Commission report *The National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools* (1987) is a good example of the liberal feminist position:

There is ... a need to ensure that all students are treated fairly while they are in school, and that practices which cause disadvantage on the basis of gender are eliminated from schools and systems. It is the responsibility of all schools to contribute to eliminating educational inequalities arising from gender.65

In this context, the Western Australian *Beazley Report* (1984) recommended a range of educational reforms to improve the situation of girls. These reforms included programs to raise student, parent and teacher awareness of

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the consequences of sexism, the establishment of an Equal Opportunity Unit, the setting-up of a policy committee to monitor the implementation of policy on equal opportunity, establishing guidelines and procedures to promote equal opportunities for women, and the revision of promotion policies for the Education Department with the aim of eliminating bias against women. To achieve greater equality for girls in the education system, the *National Policy for the Education of Girls* (1987) identified a number of national priorities including greater awareness in schools and the wider community of the educational needs of girls, equal access to and participation in the school curriculum, a supportive and challenging school environment in which girls and boys are equally valued, and appropriate resource allocation policies and practices by school and system authorities.

In conclusion, official educational reports are significant ideological instruments in conveying the dominant political ideology about girls and education. While the rhetoric of individual ability and equality of opportunity tempered the discourse of biological determinism, a deeply embedded assumption about the traditional role of women in the home still remained. The section to follow seeks to explain how patterns of curriculum organisation and choice in Western Australian state secondary schools reinforced the dominant conservative ideology about girls education.

**DIFFERENT SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS**

A central assumption behind the establishment of co-educational, comprehensive high schools was that they would eventually create greater equality between all citizens. The purpose in this section is to show how the extension of state secondary schooling in Western Australia rather than bringing about greater equality between the sexes, in fact produced unequal consequences for girls in subject choice, opportunities and achievement. This raises the question of why in the light of liberal feminist objectives about equality of opportunity has rigid gender differentiation in subject choice been so resistant to change?

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67 *The national policy for the education of girls in Australian schools* (1987), pp.33-34.
SUBJECT DIFFERENTIATION

In Western Australia the pattern of education for boys and girls has been remarkably consistent. The Education Department offered boys and girls a choice of courses in the categories of professional, commercial, technical and domestic. The technical course was the domain of boys while girls studied home science. However, both boys and girls were free to enrol in the professional and commercial courses. The type of school knowledge studied produced not only hierarchical differences but 'separate spheres' for boys and girls. For instance, the time-tabling arrangement at Boulder High School in Kalgoorlie clearly illustrated the sex-differentiated pattern of curriculum organisation in Western Australian secondary schools in the 1950s and 1960s:

High School Courses Available at Boulder High School, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Practical English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiology &amp; Hygiene (1st Year only)</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Physiology &amp; Hygiene</td>
<td>Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>General Studies</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>General Studies</td>
<td>Handcraft (in 1st year)</td>
<td>Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Science</td>
<td>Woodwork</td>
<td>Woodwork</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping 2nd Shorthand 1 &amp; 3rd Typing Years</td>
<td>Metalwork</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>General Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Handcraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Commercial Junior (3 years)</td>
<td>To Education Department Third Year Certificate (3 years)</td>
<td>To Education Department Third Year Certificate (3 years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was common practice in Western Australian state secondary schools to differentiate between girls' and boys' courses. In preparation for the world of work the majority of boys studied some kind of manual training which included woodwork, drawing and metalwork with smaller numbers doing forgework, leatherwork, composite and motor mechanics. It was expected that every girl received a working knowledge of running a home and making clothes. In preparation for domestic life girls studied cookery,

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68 EDF. AN 45/11 ACC 1497 FILE No. 618/1947.
laundry, housewifery, outfit and dressmaking, home nursing and home making.\textsuperscript{69}

As noted, the Schools Commission report \textit{Girls, School and Society} (1975) documented the differential treatment of boys and girls in Australian secondary schools. Drawing on international and national research the report concluded that:

The process of 'choice' of electives and even examinable subjects at secondary level is often based on unnecessary and unjustifiable sex distinctions. Girls, for example, are offered Domestic Science, Typing, Shorthand, Sewing and Cooking; boys do Metal and Woodwork or Industrial Arts and Technical Drawing.\textsuperscript{70}

The Schools Commission report played a significant role in publicising the under representation of girls in male dominated subjects such as mathematics and science. It produced evidence to show that girls tended to enrol most in the humanities like history, biology, geography and French while boys enrolled most in science, mathematics and economics.\textsuperscript{71}

In the wake of the \textit{Girls, School and Society} report (1975), the Western Australian Minister for Education, G.C. MacKinnon appointed a committee in 1976 to inquire into the incidence of sex-based discrimination in the Western Australian education system. One area the committee investigated was access to courses. The final report, \textit{Males and Females in the State Education System of Western Australia} (1976), showed that under the Achievement Certificate, girls at Year 8 level continued to choose home economics and boys manual arts. The committee identified a number of factors that contributed to the sex-bias of subject selection. These organisational factors included schools giving preference to one sex when processing applications, presenting certain options as being suitable for one sex only, insisting on prerequisite subject experience, timetabling arrangements, and teacher preferences and attitudes.\textsuperscript{72} As a consequence, sex-based differentiation occurred very early in Year 8 with dramatic implications for the students' future career options. In the case of girls, home economics and business studies courses offered a very limited

\textsuperscript{69} Education Department of W.A. (1959), \textit{Annual Report}, p.59.
\textsuperscript{70} Girls, School and Society (1975), p.80.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., pp.85-86.
\textsuperscript{72} Education Department of W.A. (1976), \textit{Males and females in the state education system of Western Australia}, Government Printer, Perth, p.42.
number of low status and poorly paid vocational opportunities. In contrast, manual training for boys tended to open up a greater range of pre-vocational career options.\textsuperscript{73}

Teese's analysis of Melbourne public high school enrolment patterns reinforces the argument that state secondary schools acted more as instruments of selection for girls than boys largely because technical schools had already sifted boys out of the education system. As a consequence, Teese believed that a larger number of girls than boys were seemingly less suited for academic studies in high schools. Commenting on the Victorian scene, Teese summarised the implications of the sex-differentiated character of girls' education:

The practice of grouping by ability and streaming to commercial or vocational subjects influenced the perceptions of girls themselves, encouraging self-selection by producing predominantly male and predominantly female classes. The practice of "block timetabling" - in which certain subjects (eg. shorthand and typing) were taken as a group and blocked against other subjects - enforced sexual segregation, and this was redoubled in the space of the playground and in sports.\textsuperscript{74}

In 1981 the Research Branch of the Western Australian Education Department investigated the relationship between sex and participation rates in subjects in Western Australian secondary schools. Its report, \textit{Girls, Boys and Subject Choice} (1981), analysed the participation rates of girls and boys in various Achievement Certificate subjects in Years 8 to 10, in technical and apprentice education, and in Year 11 and 12 courses and subjects. The findings showed that girls, through a process of self-selection tended to study 'female' subjects that reproduced their subordinate position to boys. Ironically, the Education Department study found no substantial difference between girls' and boys' performance at the lower secondary level (Years 8 to 10) in mathematics and science but in English and social studies girls achieved at significantly higher levels than boys.\textsuperscript{75}

Parker and Offer's analysis of Achievement Certificate results confirmed these earlier findings. They found virtually equal achievement by girls and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., p.46.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
boys in mathematics and science and a large disparity in favour of girls in achievement in English between 1972 and 1982.\textsuperscript{76} Their analysis also showed that "although many girls choose the biological sciences, relatively few continue in the physical sciences and, overall, girls choose easier mathematics and less science than boys do".\textsuperscript{77}

In the case of option subject choices, clear sex-differentiated patterns emerged. In 1979, there were 119 Board of Secondary Education (BSE) approved options that Year 10 students could choose from in Western Australian government secondary schools. The \textit{Girls, Boys and Subject Choice} (1981) report showed that in no secondary school did both boys and girls enrol in every subject. On average, each school offered four subjects that were taken exclusively by girls, and six exclusively by boys. The findings indicated that French, art and craft, home economics, secretarial and culturally oriented subjects were predominantly the domain of girls; manual arts, technological and scientific options were the domain of boys.\textsuperscript{78} A major consequence was that boys and girls tended to develop at an early age the attitudes and skills appropriate to sex-based occupational choices. The following statistics illustrate the sex-based nature of option subject choices:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|l|c|}
\hline
\multicolumn{2}{|c|}{Males} & \multicolumn{2}{|c|}{Females} \\
\hline
Subject & Number & Subject & Number \\
\hline
Woodwork & 4381 & * Food and Nutrition & 4193 \\
Metalwork & 3760 & Typewriting & 3448 \\
Transport & 2976 & Clothing and Fabric & 3099 \\
Technical Drawing & 2656 & Business Principles & 2100 \\
Home Handyman & 2595 & Typewriting Personal & 1951 \\
* Art/Crafts & 2417 & Grooming and Deportment & 1860 \\
* Food and Nutrition & 2094 & * Arts/Crafts & 1818 \\
Woodwork Applied & 1650 & * Outdoor Education & 1465 \\
* Photography & 1530 & Homemaking & 1253 \\
General Metal & 1267 & Drama & 1102 \\
Woodwork Freeform & 1028 & * Photography & 791 \\
* Outdoor Education & 1015 & French & 646 \\
\hline
\multicolumn{2}{|c|}{* Subjects common to both lists} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p.153.
\textsuperscript{78} Education Department of W.A. (1981), p.8.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., p.10.
Chapter six of this thesis explained how the 1970s and 1980s world wide recession and rising youth unemployment forced an increasing number of students to stay on to Year 11 and 12. In response, Western Australian secondary schools developed Year 11 Vocational Business Studies classes to cater for the growing number of girls staying on at upper secondary level. These courses provided girls with the skills relevant to clerical work. Girls usually enrolled in either the stenography or receptionist stream where they studied subjects such as typing, English, business mathematics, general bookkeeping, office practice and machines and optional studies such as commercial law and economics. In 1980, 50 Western Australian senior secondary schools offered Vocational Business Studies courses with a total of 1,190 females and only 33 males. Most schools actively encouraged girls in business studies courses to take up employment opportunities as soon as they became available. As a result, only about two-thirds to three-quarters of the students formally completed the course.

In contrast, Alternative Courses catered for non-tertiary bound male students. A study by Lankester in 1981 showed that 39 secondary schools offered Alternative Courses with a total enrolment of 925 students of whom 75 per cent were male. These courses emphasised the development of personal qualities, trade and general employment skills and the upgrading of Achievement Certificate results.

At the tertiary oriented upper secondary school level the sex differentiated pattern of subject choice continued. The number of girls and boys who sat for the various 1986 Tertiary Entrance Examination subjects showed some clear sex differences in subject choices:

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81 Ibid., p.13.
82 Ibid., p.13.
The above statistics indicate that whereas boys tended to enrol in physics, maths II and III, chemistry and economics, girls tended to enrol in English literature, maths I, art, history, human biology, languages and music. At the upper secondary school level most subject enrolments were predominantly male or female orientated. Boys usually enrolled in the advanced mathematics and physical sciences and girls in the cultural, linguistic, general science and less advanced mathematics subject areas. The extent to which girls are under-represented in mathematics and science is significant because these subjects act as a filter to more prestigious forms of knowledge and a wide variety of jobs. As a result, subject choice perpetuates existing social inequalities of wealth, status and power between men and women.

Yates, in reviewing the recent literature on girls participation and achievement in mathematics and science concluded that it was not so much that girls were not taking mathematics and science subjects, but that they

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were less represented in physics and the most difficult mathematics subjects. Willis has summarised the findings of research on sex differences in mathematics achievement as follows:

On the evidence now available we should be able to dispose of the myth that all girls or even a large proportion of girls in Australia are performing poorly in mathematics by comparison with boys. It is now generally regarded that fewer girls than boys exhibit extreme giftedness or achieve in the very highest achievement levels in upper secondary mathematics (upper 1%), but that other differences in mathematics achievement typically are exaggerated and, in any case, favour girls as often as boys ... Regardless of the explanation offered, these differences are so limited in extent that they cannot explain the level of under-representation of girls in mathematics and mathematics related occupations.84

A recent National statement on *Girls and Mathematics* (1990) produced by the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers (AAMT) provides a useful summary of the major reasons why girls are not attracted to mathematics. These factors include:

- Female students are more likely than males to choose school subjects on the basis of interest and perceived social relevance.
- Fewer females than males perceive mathematics as important in their future lives.
- Both females and males perceive mathematics in the adult world as more important for males than females.
- Both females and males express the view that the main purpose of studying secondary mathematics is to obtain credentials and that the subject is not related to life and work.
- Females are less likely than males to be concerned about mathematics as a credential for future education and occupations.
- The competitive nature of school mathematics is seen by many as reflecting more closely the work environment of males.
- Females are more likely than equally achieving males to express uncertainty about their mathematical ability.
- While males are more likely to overrate their achievement levels across all areas of school work, females are more likely to underrate their achievements.

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• There is some evidence that females tend to be less content to work with concepts they have not fully understood.\textsuperscript{85}

Willis believes that most explanations of girls under-representation and lack of success in the male dominated areas of mathematics and science fall back on individualistic assumptions about girls low self-esteem. She presented the 'facts' about girls and mathematics in the following way:

that girls underachieve and under participate in mathematics,
that girls have lower self-esteem than boys,
that self-esteem and achievement are correlated,
that mathematics is stereotyped as a male domain, and
that self-esteem, sex stereotyping and occupational aspirations are related,
are taken together as establishing low self-esteem as one cause of girls' lower productivity in mathematics and as justifying programs to raise girls' self-esteem.\textsuperscript{86}

In a Western Australian study, Waugh (1980) found that the formation of aspirations was different for boys and girls. He concluded that aspirations are strongly influenced by occupational aspirations, school achievement, the social status of the family, the determination to achieve academically and the student's academic self-concept. From Waugh's study it seems that on the whole these influences remain strong for boys as they climb the educational ladder but for girls, they tend to decrease.\textsuperscript{87} Therefore, it was assumed that girls needed self-esteem programs to enable them to compete better against boys.

Willis has criticised the assumptions underlying self-esteem explanations of girls participation in the high powered mathematics and sciences for three major reasons. First, she argued that it was wrong to assume that the 'problem' resides in the individual and that changing girls was the appropriate mechanism for changing their participation and achievement in mathematics. Second, it was naive to believe that simply by having high self-esteem we would all necessarily achieve high status careers. Finally, it accepted without question the mathematics curriculum and the way in

\textsuperscript{86} S. Willis (1990), pp.195-196.
\textsuperscript{87} R.F. Waugh (1980), 'Determinants of the vocational aspirations of adolescents', M.Ed.Thesis, University of W.A.
which mathematics functioned as a selective gateway. For Willis, any successful reform strategy must confront the broader social and political functions of mathematics. This meant unmasking why mathematics operated to disadvantage oppressed groups like women, racial minorities and working class people.

Foster also claimed that attempts to improve girls self-esteem and achieve equality of opportunity was misguided because it simply extended men's education to women. She believed that women were forced "to adapt or accommodate to the values, structures and systems created by men". Foster quoted Brittain and Maynard on the implications of the masculine paradigm for women:

Those who are objectified, who are dominated, come to see the world through male eyes. The 'male epistemological stance' becomes everybody's stance. Women and other objectified groups define their own realities through the perspective of their oppressors.

The problem, according to Foster, is that liberal strategies do not take account of the public/private dichotomy. So despite a measure of formal equality in the public domain, women continue to be relegated to the private sphere. As noted in chapter two, the ideal of gender neutrality cannot work in a patriarchal society deeply divided between the public and private spheres. The evidence examined here indicates that the Western Australian secondary school curriculum primarily prepares young boys for the male-centred public world and its associated values - competition, profit, private property, production and science while girls are initiated into the private domain characterised by domesticity, reproduction, service and submissiveness.

VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

With the emergence of capitalism and industrialisation came a new sexual division of labour between the private (domestic) and public world of production. Under the capitalist market economy there occurred a

88 Ibid., p.199.
89 Ibid., p.206.
91 Ibid., p.63.
92 Ibid., p.58.
separation of home and family from the workplace. Women's work remained in the home and family where their primary responsibility was bearing and rearing children, preparing food, cleaning and attending to the needs of their husband. However, men's primary responsibility moved outside the home into factories where they received wages for their labour power. Theobold has described the socio-historical construction of the idea of separate spheres for men and women:

It was no coincidence that, with the new industrial order, there emerged a powerful ideology of separate spheres for men and women. Woman, it was increasingly asserted, was by nature fitted for the private sphere of home and family. She was by nature physically and mentally delicate, dependent, submissive, nurturant and selfless. Man on the other hand was physically and mentally strong, courageous, energetic and enterprising, attributes which fitted him for the public sphere and made him the natural breadwinner for his family. These 'natural' attributes of femininity and masculinity, and the 'natural' division of labor based upon them, ensured that political, economic and personal power remained in the hands of men. As the new industrial order depended increasingly upon the rational/scientific mode of thought, this ideology of separate spheres was accompanied by an insistent discourse upon the intellectual capacity of the female. Whereas the male was by nature a rational thinker, tough, logical and able to make practical and moral judgements in unfamiliar situations (the public world of men), the female was by nature an intuitive thinker, dependent upon her emotions, more suited to the known world of home and family.93

As noted in the previous section, the sex role division of labour was not solely confined to the private versus public spheres because women have increasingly worked outside the home for wage labour. However, women have in most cases been segregated into occupations related to community service and poorly paid and unskilled wholesale and retail work. The majority of women are at the bottom end of the occupational hierarchy with little prospect of social mobility. They have a higher unemployment rate than men and are more vulnerable to poverty and dependence on government welfare payments.94 According to Kelly and Nihlen, inequality between the sexes can be seen "as the double job wherein women work two

full-time loads, while men do not.\textsuperscript{95} The purpose in this part is to examine the extent to which state secondary schooling constructs the distinction between the public and private domains and prepares girls for the world of work.

In Western Australia, the \textit{Box Report} (1954) claimed that choosing a vocation that suited one's sex, ability and interest was a major part of constructing one's sense of 'manhood' or 'womanhood'.\textsuperscript{96} As noted in chapter three, the \textit{Wolff Report} (1938) recommended that women's work should be confined to those areas of employment that suited their 'adaptability' and 'temperament'. For women, this meant 'tedious' and 'monotonous' jobs such as machine work, shorthand and typing.\textsuperscript{97} In 1936, the Western Australian Education Department produced a booklet titled \textit{A Guide to Occupations For Boys and Girls} (1936). Its purpose was to assist students in making appropriate career choices.\textsuperscript{98} Porter collated the following table to illustrate the sex-differentiated nature of job opportunities available to boys and girl in 1936:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
Level of Schooling & Boys & Girls \\
\hline
Primary School & Shops and warehouse assistants; factory employment; agricultural and pastoral work; Railway Department; Navy. & Shops and warehouse assistants; laundry work, waitresses; cooks; domestic service; factory employment \\
\hline
Junior Technical Course & Building trades; bricklaying, stone-masonry, plastering, carpentry and joinery, plumbing, sheet-metal working, painting and decorating Engineering trades: fitting and turning, pattern making, machining, welding, electrical trades, boiler-making, moulding, coach-building, government railway apprentices, junior mechanics in the postal service. Household supplies, food and clothing: baking, and pastry cooking, butchering, tailoring. Furniture trades: cabinet making. & Skilled trades: factory tailoring, order tailoring, dress making and millinery, printing and book binding, photography, beauty parlour work. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{96} The \textit{Box Report} (1954), p.1.
\textsuperscript{97} A.A. Wolff (1938), p.xii.
\textsuperscript{98} Education Department of Western Australia (1936), \textit{A guide to occupations for boys and girls}, Government Printer, Perth.
\textsuperscript{99} Collated by P. Porter (1986), \textit{Gender and education}, Deakin University Press; Geelong, pp.28-29
It has already been shown in chapter six how secondary schooling prepared children for the world of work. In brief, this meant socialising, screening and segmenting children in the interest of capitalist social relations. In Western Australia, work experience programs played a key ideological role in bringing children into contact with capitalist work culture. In summary, work experience programs helped students to develop occupational goals, understand the workings of the 'real world', develop values and behaviours appropriate to the workplace and encourage personal desires supportive of the established social order. This sort of 'structured imposition' reinforced the 'separateness' of girls' education as well as producing unequal educational outcomes. In most secondary schools girls' work opportunities were limited compared to boys. In the case of students studying for the High School Certificate at Belmont Senior High School in 1968 the jobs available reflected a distinct sexual division of labour:
## Jobs Available to Boys and Girls, 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet making - furniture factory</td>
<td>General office work - steel distributor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storeman/ dispatch - plywood distributor</td>
<td>General office work - cement tile manufacturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory hand / delivery - laundry service</td>
<td>General office work - machinery firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fettling - diecasting factory</td>
<td>Book-binding - printing firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal machining - general engineering works</td>
<td>Shop assistant - chemists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowser attendant / lube attendant - service station</td>
<td>Shop assistant - drapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor body building - body works</td>
<td>Shop assistant - chain store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheetmetal working - sheet metal fabricator</td>
<td>Telephonist/receptionist - vehicle distributor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery building - battery factory</td>
<td>Factory hand - chicken hatchery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher - retail butcher shop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical maintenance - industrial electrical service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storeman - paint manufacturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process worker/storeman - aluminium extrusion plant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor mechanic - station engine distributor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The report *Males and Females in the State Education System of Western Australia* (1976) argued that vocational guidance played a significant part in reinforcing the cultural image of sex-specific occupational aptitudes and interests. It identified out-dated stereotypes regarding suitable employment for males and females as a major problem. For instance, enrolment patterns in technical education in 1975 showed that of 14,121 students in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship courses less than six per cent were girls, nine-tenths of who enrolled in apprenticeship ladies' hairdressers courses. Many students, once they had finished compulsory schooling in the year they turned 15, decided to enter apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship training at technical schools. As already noted, technical education was the domain of boys. In 1979, 4,587 14 and 15 year old students enrolled full-time or part-time in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses of which only 37 per cent were girls. According to the report *Girls, Boys and Subject Choice* (1981), apprenticeship training in Western Australia was clearly "the province of young males although there are no formal restrictions against females".

Currie's research confirmed that females often aspired to higher status occupations but expected to enter lower status jobs. She showed that the most frequently chosen occupations for females were: teacher, nurse, therapist, social worker, creative artist, typist, librarian, salesperson and veterinarian. In contrast, males nominated: accountant,

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administrative/office assistant, farm manager, doctor, self-employed manager, lawyer, psychologist, biologist, architect and pharmacist. Currie also examined the different characteristics of occupations which influenced student choices. Female students ranked highly work that: involved helping others, working with other people, combined career and family life, was exciting, and involved working with hands. In contrast, male students believed that occupations should be free from close scrutiny, have high prestige, provide a stable secure future, and have the prospect of high income. In short, one of the major differences between men and women is the importance that domestic life continues to play in decisions made by women.

After the Second World War the Western Australian state secondary education system faced the contradictory dilemma of encouraging all children irrespective of class, race and gender to achieve their individual potential but at the same time, reproducing a differentiated labour force reflecting deeper social divisions. As already discussed in chapter two, schools are charged with promoting both the democratic rights vested in persons and, reproducing unequal social relations characteristic of capitalism. According to Shapiro, schools immerse students in the dominant class world view (hegemony) by reproducing a respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the economic order established by class domination. At the same time, schools are responsible for representing the social demands of democracy and equality of opportunity.

This sort of analysis opened the way for a less deterministic account of schooling and gender formation. Importantly, it showed that subjectivity results from an ongoing struggle produced in social practice. As a result, subjectivity is constantly articulated/rearticulated and hence open to social change. Connell captured the contradictory nature of social relations when he argued that patriarchy reflects "a seething mass of internal differentiations, complexities and contradictions". For him, gender categories are the product of "conflict, incoherence and contradiction".

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The structuring of girls secondary education in Western Australia in the post-war period reflected the same sorts of tension and contradiction. Porter summed up the nature of the competing ideologies in girls education:

Girls should be trained for efficiency in the home, yet they should develop their individual potential. Girls should do domestic courses to prepare for their inevitable destiny as wives and mothers, yet the commercial and professional courses were open to them and they took advantage of them. Girls would only end up in the home, yet secondary schooling should be compulsory for them and the content of that schooling should be primarily academic. Girls would be financially dependent upon husbands, yet training for remunerative work was important. Girls of high academic ability should do tertiary study where possible, yet they should eventually retire from the work force to be good homemakers. Girls should aspire to marriage, yet once this was achieved they should forfeit their right to paid employment, or if not, should accept there would be no concessions for family life.\(^{106}\)

In conclusion, the policy of co-educational, comprehensive state secondary schooling in Western Australia did little to change the hierarchical and sex-differentiated nature of secondary education. Despite the rhetoric of individual ability and equality of opportunity, sex-based differentiation continues to operate through the curriculum, subject choice, stereotypes and pedagogical practices all of which reinforce the 'natural' view of women's subordinate position in society.

CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

This thesis began by arguing that historiography draws on different theoretical perspectives, ideas and methodologies that lead to competing interpretations and conclusions. Previous liberal democratic accounts of the history of Western Australian state secondary schooling tend to interpret the universalisation of secondary education as an egalitarian move designed to open up opportunities for the disadvantaged. The social democratic ideology of the post-war period guaranteed the right of every child to a free education suited to their ability and interests. As a consequence, liberal democratic histories perpetuate the myth that the provision of state secondary schooling in Western Australia offered a 'way out' for the working class, girls and Aborigines. This thesis argues that such accounts are theoretically flawed because they fail to acknowledge the relationship of state secondary schooling to broader economic and social inequalities characteristic of capitalism.

In contrast to liberal democratic histories, this thesis establishes a closer working relationship with social theory to illuminate an alternative explanation of the history of Western Australian state secondary schooling. The analysis offered consciously drew on social theory to expose the social democratic rhetoric associated with the universalisation of state secondary schooling. It aimed to demystify the role of education in the reproduction of social and economic inequalities. The basic proposition developed is that state secondary schooling is an important hegemonic apparatus in maintaining social and economic inequalities characteristic of capitalist social relations. In this sense, secondary schooling is a powerful institution in regulating particular world views that benefit some individuals and groups over others. Thus, state secondary schooling rather than creating greater equality between all citizens perpetuated existing class, gender and racial inequalities.

Throughout this thesis the evidence shows that class, gender and race are major determinants of success or failure in Western Australian secondary schools. Compared to middle class students, working class children drop out of school earlier and feel a greater sense of alienation. Unfortunately, most working class children do not have the necessary 'cultural capital' required to succeed in the education system. In the case of girls, secondary schooling perpetuates the 'naturalness' of women's subordinate position in society.
Evidence presented indicates that gender is a major determinant of subject choice, academic success and post school opportunities. Finally, Aboriginal children find that secondary schooling is at best irrelevant. Aboriginal students remain well below the attendance levels, retention rates and academic success of the non-Aboriginal school population. The education system categorises Aboriginal students as intellectually and culturally inferior to their white counterparts. As a consequence, Aboriginal children find themselves in less academically orientated courses that guarantee a limited range of dead-end jobs.

Liberal democratic histories usually explain educational inequality in terms of individual weaknesses. Unfortunately, the principle of meritocracy tends to legitimise the belief that students succeed or fail because of personal qualities. Common sense tells us that some students lack the necessary motivation, ability and desire to perform well in school. Underlying the secondary education system is the belief that everybody is treated fairly and without discrimination. Thus, educational performance based on intelligence and application continues to validate social difference and educational inequality.

The first two chapters set out the conceptual framework of the thesis. Chapter one explained the usefulness of Karl Marx's dialectic approach to history. It argued that the primary purpose of history is to demystify common sense perceptions of social reality in order to expose the real interests that lie behind established educational ideologies and practices. Marxist history emphasises the linkage between the forces of production, social institutions and everyday life. Primarily, it is interested in the daily lives of those people subjected to various forms of exploitation and oppression. This thesis adopted Marx's sense of critique to challenge the dominant liberal democratic explanations of Western Australian state secondary schooling. In this sense, the thesis is a political statement that seeks to intervene in the ideological struggle over the nature, purpose and content of education.

Essential to this task was a critical understanding of the idea of the state. This thesis used the idea of the state to provide an alternative 'way of seeing' the history of Western Australian state secondary schooling. It offered a chance to raise some alternative questions, problems and silences absent from traditional liberal democratic histories of state secondary
schooling. A key argument is that state secondary schooling is a significant hegemonic site in producing consent to dominant ideologies and practices. Chapter two developed the view that the state is more than a structure or 'thing' in the hands of the ruling class. Rather, the state is a social force that shapes the nature and processes of secondary education. As a consequence, secondary schooling plays an important ideological role in defining children as objects and subjects of state power. In so doing, state secondary schooling is a major site in organising and producing the cultural form of bourgeois hegemony.

While the analysis offered accepts the basic proposition that secondary schooling is an apparatus of social reproduction, it does not accept the deterministic view that people are helpless bystanders in a predetermined historical process. This thesis emphasises the central role of human agency in constructing social institutions and practices. Historically, secondary schooling served to reinforce the social privileges of the rich at the expense of the poor. The extension of state secondary schooling after the Second World War reflected the ongoing struggle of the working class, women and Aborigines to gain access to the privileges associated with secondary education. The breaking down of the barriers to full participation highlights the ongoing tension between the demands of subordinate groups for democratic reform and at the same time, the ruling elites desire for social efficiency.

Increased levels of state intervention in secondary education brought with it contradictions, tension and conflict. Chapter three explained how state secondary schooling reflects the wider struggle between the forces of democracy for greater equality and the ruling elite's desire to further differentiate the school population in the interest of social efficiency. Anxious to avoid any potential class conflict the ruling elite showed a willingness to negotiate demands for greater equality of opportunity. The forging of the social democratic settlement of the post-war decades illustrates the desire of the ruling elite to achieve internal peace in order to guarantee its profits. With the breaking down of barriers to access, increased retention rates, increased Federal funding and the increasing focus on equality of opportunity, social democracy appeared to win the day over the selective and hierarchically differentiated secondary education system that existed before the war. Subsequent interpretations of these developments
tend to reinforce the progressive and egalitarian nature of the extension of state secondary schooling.

Usually such settlements between labour and capital are exposed in harsh economic times. With shrinking profit margins the ruling elite is forced to restructure the economy so as to guarantee its international competitiveness. In difficult economic times, conservative forces attempt to reassert their ideological ascendancy over the nature, purpose and content of secondary schooling. The publication of the Williams Report in 1979 marked a significant turning point in the ideological struggle over the direction of secondary education in Australia. Hereafter, the discourse of major Federal and State educational reports effectively articulated the discourse of social efficiency to meet the needs of capital.

The ideology of intelligence played a key role in sifting and sorting the huge number of children entering the state secondary education system during the post-war era. Chapter four explained how the idea of intelligence served to maintain and legitimise social differences. Official educational discourse played a major part in articulating the view that children were born with particular amounts of ability that largely determined their fate in life. As a result, the ideology of individual merit was used to legitimise different educational experiences for different classes of children.

With the extension of state secondary schooling the wealthy could no longer guarantee their social privilege by excluding the poor. Instead, social inequalities based on class, gender and race were the result of individual merit and effort. Western Australian secondary schools bombarded incoming students with a barrage of tests to identify a range of abilities and interests. The brighter children usually followed an academic course while the dull students' studied practical things. Girls studied home science and matters relevant to running the home. Aborigines because of their well known intellectual and cultural inferiority were confined to a 'different, more practical' schooling. Unfortunately, children who did not have the appropriate cultural capital were all but excluded from the university orientated competitive academic curricula. In this context, the universalisation of state secondary schooling did little except polish up and legitimise existing social and economic inequalities.
Western Australian state secondary schooling also played a major role in constituting and regulating the child as a desired object of the state. This meant inculcating certain values, knowledge and behaviour supportive of the status quo. With large numbers of children entering secondary schooling in the 1950s, more efficient pedagogical practices and technologies of control found their way into secondary schools. In the interests of social harmony, state schooling increasingly intruded into individual lives in order to produce morally correct citizens who desired an appreciation of their duties and responsibilities to society. Western Australian state secondary schooling placed a high priority on producing the self-regulatory child who desired to be a good worker and citizen. A major part of this task involved establishing the child's loyalty to the illusionary nation state. In the period under consideration the social rituals connected with royal visits, patriotic songs, orderliness, respect for authority, punctuality, obedience and hard work all aimed to reinforce a sense of social order. School knowledge was a powerful ideological weapon in shaping and forming children as democratic citizens. We have seen how various versions of the social studies curriculum emphasised the importance of responsibility, law abiding behaviour and good citizenship. The primary purpose of secondary schooling was to domesticate future citizens so that they desired a particular set of social arrangements that advantaged the rich over the poor, whites over blacks and men over women.

Chapter six argued that the hegemonic function of state secondary schooling largely rested on producing a differentiated labour force conducive to the smooth functioning of the economy. Secondary schooling is an important site in defining the interrelationship of the labour market, class, gender and race. In preparing students for the world of work, secondary schooling defines the social value of particular forms of knowledge, values and abilities. Despite the increasing efforts of the secondary education system to cater for a wider range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds, the hegemonic competitive academic curriculum continues to favour white, professional middle class students attending the elite private secondary schools and a few select state secondary schools.

After the Second World War, the instrumental logic of human capital theory drove the push for an expanded secondary education system. Human capital theory effectively forged a link between industrialisation, progress and schooling. Interconnected with the argument of national efficiency was the
principle of selection by merit. The threat of international competition led to the belief in the value of providing educational opportunity for all children irrespective of social background. With the deepening of the 1980s recession, Federal and State level educational reports adopted the discourse of the 'new right' to redefine the role of secondary schooling in the interests of capital. The 'new right' has effectively moved to realign the education system with the needs of the economy. In reality, this means producing students with the appropriate knowledge and skills (competencies) desired by employers. Essential to restructuring secondary education is the push toward greater curriculum differentiation through Pathways and course specialisation. Thus, secondary schooling is a complex site of struggle between the dominant ideology of social efficiency and subordinate groups wanting greater equality and participation in the political process.

Chapter seven explained the role of Western Australian state secondary schooling in actively constructing the social identity of the Aboriginal child as the 'other'. Official state ideologies and policies produced a set of racist practices that condemned Aboriginal people to a life of poverty and alienation. During the period of Western Australia's colonisation European settlers ignored the Aborigines relationship to the land. As a consequence, Aboriginal people experienced exploitation, oppression and cultural genocide as a part of their every day life. State apparatuses of surveillance such as the Western Australian Native Welfare Department and Education Department played a major role in constructing the social, economic and psychological meaning of 'being Aboriginal'. These hegemonic apparatuses were instrumental in shaping and regulating the personal and social development of Aboriginal children. European schooling constituted the Aboriginal child as culturally and intellectually inferior to other children. As a consequence, Aboriginal children received an education that emphasised 'low status', practical knowledge in preparation for jobs at the bottom end of the labour market, if at all.

Chapter eight focused on the role of secondary schooling in constituting children as gendered subjects. The dominant ideology of women in Western Australian society emphasised a rigid sexual division of labour within the home and workplace. Secondary schooling reinforced the 'natural' role of women as full-time home makers performing unpaid domestic duties to support the male breadwinner. Despite the rhetoric of equality of opportunity, the underlying assumption guiding the education
of girls' rested on the ideology of biological determinism. Western Australian educational reports in the post-war period espoused the view that girls' education should be separate and different to boys'. Common sense dictated that girls' abilities and interests warranted different educational experiences. As a consequence, girls' education reflected the dominant ideology of women's subordinate position in society. Girls' education focused on their future role as mothers and wives. In Western Australian secondary schools sex-based differentiation operated primarily through the organisation of the curriculum, subject choice, teacher stereotypes and pedagogical practices.

In summary, this thesis explains the major mechanisms via which Western Australian state secondary schooling produced unequal outcomes for the working class, girls and Aboriginal students. It showed the hegemonic function of state secondary schooling in producing consent to the established social order. In attempting to demystify the rhetoric of egalitarianism this thesis has sought to deconstruct those common sense meanings and practices that were silently built into the day-to-day practices of state secondary schooling in Western Australia. Failure to unmask the hidden interests that lie behind particular educational discourses and their relationship to wider social processes causes inadvertent subscription to the seemingly 'natural order' of society.

If we are going to build a truly democratic society it is essential that educators develop a form of oppositional thinking to bring about fundamental social change. That people produce social circumstances just as circumstances 'make' people creates the opportunity of new forms of consciousness and living. According to Lather, the feminist writer, the task of education is to build "counter-institutions, ideologies, and cultures that provide an ethical alternative to the dominant hegemony, a lived experience of how the world can be different". Essential to building social democracy is the development of socially-critical practice. According to Tripp, socially-critical practice is:

... informed by principles of social justice, both in terms of its own ways of working and in terms of its outcomes and orientation to the community. It involves strategic pedagogic action ... aimed at emancipation from overt and covert forms of domination. In practical terms it is not only

a matter of challenging the existing practices of the system, but of seeking to understand what makes the system the way it is, and challenging that, whilst remaining conscious that one's own sense of justice and equality are themselves open to question.\textsuperscript{108}

Hopefully, the re-reading of Western Australian state secondary schooling offered in this thesis might stimulate more detailed investigation of a relatively ignored field of study in Western Australian educational history with a view to building a more just and democratic society.

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