"Learning To Sell Yourself": A Qualitative Critique

of Neo-vocationalism

as a School-business Partnership.

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Dedicated to:

my mother, Jeannie and my late father, Alfred
To the Readers of Margaret Bradford’s Doctoral Thesis

This thesis was submitted by Margaret Bradford while she was very ill with terminal cancer. The examiners all agreed that the candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and noted that there were some minor corrections, additions and changes which needed doing before the final submission. However Dr Bradford died before it was possible for her to respond to those suggestions.

The University of Canterbury has awarded the degree posthumously, but advises readers of the thesis that they will find minor errors in the text.
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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers the extent to which the hegemonic, socially and economically hierarchical principles of private enterprise were channelled through school-business links. School-business links take many forms, and the one I have highlighted is a neovocationalist programme which was aimed at rendering low-achieving senior secondary students ‘employable’. In the process, the importance of private enterprise as generators of wealth is emphasised, while that of labour is overlooked. That is, the interests of employers are paramount in the programme, while those of the students are marginalised. In my discussion and conclusion, I find that the programme can be seen to be exploitative, because the rhetoric that legitimates it obscures the ways in which the interests of unequal social classes are met in an hierarchically differential fashion.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Influences on my choice of topic:

My choice of school-business links as a topic for study was made in 1997, when I engaged in a B.A. Honours research project (EDUC480 Research Project). My interest in the topic was sparked by an article in which Snook (1996) used terms and phrases such as 'propaganda'; 'indoctrination'; 'social engineering'; 'promote the interests of the rich and powerful'; 'schools...are factories for producing factory fodder', and 'business ideology is totally self-serving' to critique school-business links in New Zealand in the 1990s. I had previously considered school-business links only in terms of business donations to schools, and class visits to factories, and so on. I had not thought beyond the seemingly natural roles those links had in the daily organisation of schooling. After reading Snook's article, I wished to know more about school-business links, and to test the substance of Snook's criticism.

Accordingly, I hoped that my research project, which was a case study of a low-decile New Zealand state secondary school and its links with businesses, would allow me to answer such questions as: if social engineering was taking place through school-business links, how did that happen? In what ways were such processes manifested in the classroom? If school-business links served to obscure the propaganda of the rich and powerful, what was the substance and the nature of the interactions between the two sectors? Who took part, why, and in what ways? What were these students' experiences of school-business links? In particular, what were the effects of such links on the ways in which students from a low-income suburb made and interpreted connections between their experiences of schooling and school-business links; their lives, and their position within society? However, the time restrictions of the research project afforded only some, rather superficial, answers to my questions, and it generated more questions than answers for me. As a consequence, the project came to serve as a pilot study for this doctoral thesis.
The background to my choice of topic:

Snook’s article had captured my attention because its use of terms such as ‘social engineering’ and ‘indoctrination’ indicated that for him, the implications of school-business links were more far-reaching than the daily organisation of state schooling. Snook’s critique of the dominance of the interests of the rich and powerful served to indicate, and to outline, the far-reaching influence of capitalism per se, over the daily existence of those who live and work in contemporary Western economic systems. I found the terms used in the article to resonate with my own experiences of the ways in which the power of corporate private enterprise can be seen to impact upon the circumstances of individuals’ lives.

To illustrate: during the 1980s, I had built up a small soft furnishings business. However, in the early 1990s, in accordance with the newly-intensified influences of the free market on the state at that time, tariffs were removed from many imported goods, including household furnishings. The market for custom-made curtains, bedspreads, tablecloths, and so on, in which I had specialised, was flooded by ready-made goods in a range of fabrics, designs, colours and styles. An owner-operated cottage industry such as mine could not produce competitively-priced items in such an economic environment. At the time, although I was aware that many other small businesses of various types in the area were also closing down, I took full personal responsibility for the way in which my business folded. I felt that I should have done more to sustain its viability, and that I lacked the knowledge and/or the skills to do so.

I later found an office job with an established company, but, within a year, a multi-national corporation had bought and restructured the firm for which I worked. Mine was one of many positions that became redundant, and dozens of people, from all levels within the firm’s hierarchy, lost their jobs. Some were told that they might apply for one of a reduced number of casualised jobs, for wages that would be lower than the rate at which they had been paid by the previous owners of the firm. This was in 1992: as a euphemism of the free market in labour would have it, companies were ‘rationalising’, and the jobs of
millions of people around the world were being ‘downsized’. My experiences of relative economic powerlessness in the free markets of commodities and labour reinforced my growing concern about the impact of the shrinking job market on the future livelihood not only of my children, who were in a state secondary school at that time, but also of their contemporaries around the country.

Subsequently, as I studied in under-graduate courses in education and sociology and linguistics in the mid-1990s, I realised not only that my small business had been one of a multitude of casualties effected world-wide by trans-national trading practices, but also that my sense of personal responsibility for the loss of my business was due partly to ideological influences that promoted the efficacy of the free market. That is, the competitive, entrepreneurial tenets of the free market economy at the time were reinforcing the concept that rather than expecting the state to provide an economic ‘safety net’ in times of recession, each individual should take responsibility for her or his own opportunities in the labour market, and for personal financial security and future life chances.

**The personal becomes political:**

I thus came to recognise the degree to which capitalist private enterprise has the power to profoundly impact upon the material and affective conditions of people’s lives. As Bateson (1990:14) explains, the task in living had become “...an improvisatory art [in which] adjusting to discontinuity is not an idiosyncratic problem of my own, but the emerging problem of our time”. My concern for the adjustment of my children and their peers to that discontinuity in their future became the link between my own adverse experiences of corporate economic power; my fascination with Snook’s article; my drive to ascertain, as far as possible, young people’s understandings of their own place within the political economy of late twentieth century capitalism, and my growing wish to understand more about contemporary school-business links.

The resonance between the tenor of Snook’s article, and my understandings and concerns derived from my experiences, informed my approach firstly to my research project, and then to this doctoral study. Further, my approach to this
research study was partly influenced by the findings of my research project. The strongest influence arose as a result of my observations in an intensive, two-day lesson in economics for senior secondary students, held at a camp away from the school. While at the camp, the students were put into groups and asked to work through the various aspects of building up a business: designing a product, marketing, production and so on.

Through this economics lesson, the students learned that as business people, their organisation should be capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive, when profit begins to accumulate. They were taught, therefore, that to lay off workers in favour of purchasing more machinery is the most efficient means of production. I was struck by the way in which such ideas were taught without question. No mention was made of the rising numbers of unemployed at the time, or the effects of unemployment on people’s families, quality of life, and self-esteem. There was no question that perhaps employers should demonstrate a measure of loyalty to those who work for them, and from whom they expect conscientiousness and a commitment to work. And finally, I realised that given the low socio-economic community from which those students came, implicit in the lesson was the fact that they were likely to be those low-status, low-waged workers who would be laid off in the name of economic efficiency.

In that way, I became interested in making connections between the personal and the political: that is, between the macro- and the micro-dimensions of New Zealand’s capitalist society. More specifically, for my doctoral thesis, I wanted to know the extent to which private enterprise had the power to influence policy and practice in state secondary schools, and the ways in which youngsters’ daily lives were affected by that influence. I was particularly interested in such insights into business links with schools that serve low-income, working class, areas. Thus, for example, I wondered about possible connections between, on the one hand, contemporary state education-private enterprise links, and on the other, young individuals’ perceptions of themselves and their position in society, especially as potential entrants to the labour market.
The overarching questions with which I approached the research project, and which held for this thesis, were:

May contemporary school-business links be considered to be a mechanism for social engineering, and as a vehicle for the interests of the rich and powerful? If so, in what ways do such influences manifest in the classroom? What were the effects of school-business links on the ways in which students in a low-income suburb created their particular understandings of their schooling, their lives and their position within society?

An overview of remaining chapters in the thesis

In Chapter Two, I look at the societal context in which the phenomenon of school-business partnerships has operated in New Zealand since 1984. Because that context has been one of fundamental political, social and economic upheaval and change, I have framed the context of my study as one of change. I have described not only political and economic change, but also some of the ways in which the processes of commodity manufacturing and service provision have also been seen to differ from those of a previous era. Finally, I describe some of the ways in which the political, social, and economic change, and the ensuing changes in production, have impacted upon New Zealand’s education system.

Chapter Three contains a description and explanation of school-business partnerships, over time. In that chapter, I outline the role of the state in the influences and ideas that have informed and shaped such partnerships, the direction that many have taken, and present some of the most important participants in those partnerships.

Chapter Four draws on literature which discusses the new vocational education, and presents the sociological theory of neo-vocationalism.

Chapter Five sets out the approach I have taken to the study. In that chapter, I explain my choices of qualitative research methodology and methods, and describe the rigorous steps taken to arrive at each choice.
In Chapter Six, I follow the process through to my choice of the analytical tools of Foucault and Gramsci, and the practical methods of implementation.

Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine are the ones in which I set out the findings of my study. I have divided the findings into the three chapters according to the nature of the data that emerged from the research. That is, chapter seven has data related to becoming employable, while chapter eight relates to becoming employed, and chapter nine describes the pedagogy of neo-vocationalism.

In Chapter Ten, I set out my argument, in which I posit that the work-readiness programme of my study, as a manifestation of neo-vocationalism, serves to complete the selection and categorisation functions of state secondary education, while simultaneously legitimating the process as a social and economic good that benefits the majority of the population while it serves the purposes of the few. In order to do so, I maintain that neo-vocationalism has captured the pedagogical language of student-centred education, and has re-interpreted it to serve the training purposes of private enterprise.

I conclude that despite its emancipatory rhetoric, neo-vocationalism, as a manifestation of school-business partnerships, serves to maintain the inequitable social and economic status quo. I also suggest a way in which to envision a model of student-centred senior secondary education that does not focus on selection and categorisation, but rather provides congruence between students' interests, their personal aims and goals, and their secondary school studies.
CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY:
The Epistemological And Theoretical Perspectives Of This Study

We critically construct our epistemological compass which guides us through the morass of research conventionalism (Kincheloe, 1991:123).

In the introduction, I described the ways in which my experiences of contemporary socio-political and economic policies and conditions underpinned my interest in school-business links as a topic for study. I explained the background to my choice of topic because, as Taylor and Bogdan (1998) write, the conventions of contemporary research require that I clarify the ways in which my own knowledge and experiences have influenced my role as a researcher, and the decisions I have made at each stage from the beginning of the research. Such clarification is important because, as Crotty (1998), and sociological theorists of education such as Carspecken and Apple (1992), Hall (1999), and Kincheloe (1991) write, each dimension of the research process both informs, and is informed by, the other dimensions, and throughout the research, the researcher’s own understandings about the world set the parameters within which the process occurs. For Crotty (1998:66): “Different ways of viewing the world shape different ways of researching the world”.

It follows that during the initial stages, in which I began to formulate some questions about the topic, my prior experiences established the nature of those questions. That is, I wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of some of the ways in which the educational phenomenon of school-business links, given the ways in which wider social and economic circumstances influence those links, impact upon the schooling experiences of under- or working class, low-achieving secondary school students. Such a purpose determined that the research process would be, as Denzin and Lincoln (1994) and Jacob (1992) have articulated, best informed by, and carried out through qualitative research theories, practices, and tools. Thus, the nature of the questions with which I began this study clearly demonstrate that my interest was in the qualitative, rather than quantitative, aspects of school-business links.
In order to structure the qualitative methodology of this study in such a way as to take account of my own epistemological influences on the research process, I have drawn on Crotty's (1998) suggestion of a framework of four basic and interrelated elements which, he posits, are applicable to any research process. The first element, as contemporary research considerations require, is my theory of epistemology: that is, the ways in which I have come to understand and to know what I know about the world. The first element underpins the second, which is the theoretical perspective by which I approach the construction of knowledge through research. In turn, my theoretical perspective(s) of knowledge construction informs the theory of method, or methodology, through which I frame the particular body of knowledge gained through any given piece of research. Finally, my methodology sets the parameters within which I choose data-gathering methods.

The significance of the interrelationship between these dimensions of the research process lies in the rigour with which their congruence is monitored, from theory through to practice (Crotty, 1998; Hall, 1999; Kincheloe, 1991, Taylor and Bogdan, 1998; Wolcott, 1992). To maintain such congruence for this research, I chose the epistemological theory of social constructionism for the first element, as that which most clearly reflects my understandings of the ways in which people construct meaning from their interactions with the world. The theoretical perspective of critical enquiry, substantiated by the heuristic tools of hegemony and genealogy, account for the way in which I constructed knowledge throughout the research. The methodology of discourse analysis allowed me to frame the particular knowledge gained, which, in turn, was best suited by data-gathering methods of interviewing, observation, and document analysis. In this chapter, I outline some of the main arguments through which I have monitored the rigour of my use of those components in my research, and set out the decisions I made when aligning theory with method.

**Epistemological theory – the first element**

Crotty (1998) writes that, in broad terms, every researcher decides between the epistemological theories of objectivism, subjectivism and social constructionism. However, as mentioned above, a researcher's epistemological stance is informed
by the life experiences, knowledge, values and assumptions which he or she brings to the study (Carspecken and Apple, 1992; Crotty, 1998; Hall, 1999; Kincheloe, 1991; Wolcott, 1992). Therefore, one of the ways in which I accounted for rigour when making decisions about the components of my research process, as the following explanation will demonstrate, was to consider the extent to which objectivist, subjectivist and social constructionist epistemologies served to integrate my prior assumptions, experiences, values and beliefs into the research process.

I decided that objectivism, as an epistemological theory, was not suitable for this research, for two main reasons. Firstly, objectivist theory holds that knowledge about phenomena, objects and events exists somewhere ‘out there’, merely waiting to be collected and unquestioningly used (Crotty, 1998). If one believes that objects and events exist in the world, independently of a human mind to register their being and to give them meaning, it follows that objects and events contain meaning which is determined by, and essential to, their being (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). An objectivist researcher would therefore view school-business links as a neutral, functionalist phenomenon, and could not consider such links in a critical way. Secondly, the objective approach to making meaning would fail to account for the significance of the knowledge, values and beliefs that I bring to the study and which, in turn, inform the research process.

On the other hand, I rejected also the subjective epistemological view that phenomena, objects and events cannot exist independently from a mind which is conscious of them (Kincheloe, 1991), because, in that view, there is no meaning which can be said to be inherent in an object itself. Rather, total meaning is conferred by the observer, and therefore a phenomenon, object, or event is open to interpretation and re-interpretation by the observer (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). Such subjectivism lends itself to an approach to research in which no claim for meaning has priority over that of any other, and there are no ‘facts’ per se (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998; Lynch, 1998). In that model, it would appear that knowledge is relative, in that no claim to knowledge can be critiqued, or given privilege over any other (Shotter, 1993).
Subjectivism, as an epistemological theory, fails to serve my research on several counts. For example, in such a relativist epistemological stance, individuals interpret their worlds differently, depending upon such factors as their socio-economic status, which, in turn, is affected by their ontological position, or their way of being, in the world (Shotter, 1993). It would follow that if I chose to use the subjective approach, I could not assume that my participants share understandings about concepts vital to my study, such as ‘schooling’, ‘work’, ‘education’ and ‘society’, because the meaning of each term would be constantly and continuously contested. Nor could I present my participants’ experiences of school-business links as a potential influence on their understandings of themselves and their position within society. Thus, while subjectivism would fully account for my epistemological stance as a researcher, I would have to overlook my intention to analyse school-business links as a social phenomenon, and as a ‘fact’ of school life for a group of young people. Further, a subjective approach would have negated my capacity to form a critical hypothesis about the potential influence of school-business links on the understandings constructed by a group of secondary school students, because I could not claim to describe meaning in relation to those links for anyone but myself.

The epistemology of social constructionism

Many qualitative researchers (Crotty, 1998; Larochelle and Bednarz, 1998), as do I, hold epistemological beliefs which fall between the two extremes as described above. In that middle ground, knowledge and meaning are seen to be socially constructed (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998: Shakespeare, 1998). That is, meaning does not inhere exclusively in an object or an event, independently of the observer’s interpretation (Larochelle and Bednarz, 1998), nor is meaning derived only from, and for, such a consciousness (Burr, 1995; Harvey, 1996/1997). Rather, in social constructionist epistemology, knowledge is built up, sustained and altered through social interactions. “Knowledge is...not seen as something that a person has (or does not have), but as something that people do together” (Burr, 1995:8, italics in original). That which is regarded as ‘truth’, or ‘fact’, is seen as a product not of objective observation of the world, nor of subjective solipsism, but of the social processes and interactions in which people constantly

Accordingly, social constructionism was congruent with this study in that the epistemological approach allowed me, as a researcher, to negotiate between relativist and essentialist stances. On the one hand, social constructionism takes into account those elements which underpin, and in that sense, can be said to be of the essence of social interactions, as in, for example, social institutions, norms and mores. At the same time, however, social constructionism also recognises that social interactions and social institutions constantly undergo, as well as inform, change in both individuals’ interactions and those in wider society, and thus cannot be essentialised in any timeless, concrete sense.

It follows that the understandings and the knowledge that people build through social interactions also change, and social constructionism was of further use for this thesis in that, as Burr (1995) holds, the approach enables a description of the ways in which various forms of knowledge emerge through interactions. Social constructionism, as a theory, can be applied to the knowledge disseminated from the interactions generated by school-business partnerships, and is reinforced by Shotton’s (1993) social constructionist concept of education as a nexus of communicative processes. Thus, social constructionism was useful, for example, in accounting for the ways in which some senior secondary students were constructed and ‘labelled’ in various ways by other groups within education and within private enterprise, as well as the ways in which a particular body of knowledge was constructed and disseminated in the programme of my case study. Social constructionism was therefore in alignment with my wish to study school-business links primarily as interactions between groups of people from two distinct sectors in society: private enterprise and state schooling. The epistemological insights of social constructionism were also congruent with my perception of my role as a researcher, which was to describe and to critique the nature of contemporary school-business links, while taking into account the influence of my own approach to gathering data about the phenomenon.
Language and Social Constructionism

In social constructionist thought, people are seen to build understandings and knowledge through social interactions. Within those communicative processes, language is seen as the main mechanism "...through which humans create the reality they experience" (Morss, 1996:6; see also Young, 1979). Such a conceptualisation of language is of especial interest to me in this research, given that I wished to gain some understandings of influences on the ways in which my participants interpreted the reality of the programme in which they took part.

I found Shotter's identification of two main strands of social constructionism to be useful, in that the strands highlight different functions of language in the communicative processes of any given interaction (ibid). The strand of social constructionism that he has termed the 'representational-referential' strand describes established, objectivist modes of communication within a social group, in which the language studied has been detached from its context, and is seen to carry mainly pre-determined, conventionalised, linguistically-based meanings (ibid). The representational-referential strand of social constructionism, while not applicable to my own epistemological stance as explained above, was useful for exploring language as I understood its occurrence within school-business links. For example, as I shall demonstrate, the body of knowledge disseminated in the classroom of the case study can be seen to be built upon particular, decontextualised, pre-determined ideas expressed in objective, conventionalised language.

The second strand of social constructionism identified by Shotter is the 'rhetorical-responsive' strand, in which it is recognised that, rather than being limited by pre-determined use in any given environment, language may be both received and used creatively, according to the situations in which people find themselves (ibid). Shotter (1993) writes that because rhetorical-responsive social constructionism recognises that people use language to arrive at, and to share, their understandings of their environment, their social situation and their economic circumstances, the strand also supports the idea that educational and political criticism may be held in common across social groups. In that way, rhetorical-responsive social constructionism allowed me to place the language of
the programme into a social context: that of its influence on some of the different meanings and understandings (Shotter, 1993; Taylor and Bogdan, 1998) at which participants may arrive from such social interactions.

The rhetorical-responsive strand of social constructionism also assisted my negotiation between relativist and essentialist perceptions of society. For example, relativist thought posits that there is little basis for assuming the existence of shared understandings among members of a social group. On the other hand, essentialist theory turns on a recognition of shared, albeit fixed, understandings as the basis for common ground among various social groups. However, rhetorical-responsive social constructionism qualifies the essentialist notion of long-term, shared historical, cultural and social understandings by holding that such understandings have a contingent nature, in that they may be formed only as and when required (Shotter, 1993; Gunnell, 1998). Accordingly, rhetorical-responsive social constructionism avoids the essentialist presupposition that consensus and solidarity support an overall and permanent homogeneity in thought and action within any social group (Shotter, 1993; Burbules and Berk, 1999; Larochelle and Bednarz, 1998; Burr, 1995), and, at the same time, modifies the relativist concept that shared understandings are an impossibility. Thus, while I recognise, and as Burr (1995) writes, the knowledge generated by my study is historically and culturally specific, the contingent nature of rhetorical-responsive social constructionism allows me to draw on a set of terms with which to examine data and generate analysis while relating those terms to the educational experiences of one group of research participants (Shotter, 1993).

Further, the concept of the creative use of language in rhetorical-responsive social constructionism allowed me to resist the relativist notion that the human subject is completely socially constructed, to the point at which an individual’s autonomous identity is subsumed under external influences on his or her epistemology and ontology (Harvey, 1996). Rather, rhetorical-responsive social constructionism holds that people possess an a priori, ahistorical individual agency which is seen to both stem from, and contribute to, various forms of social collectivity such as social movements which resist the status quo. Such agency negates, to a degree, the possibility of a totally ‘colonising’ effect from
dominant ideologies, or instrumental and/or rational social norms and mores (Fendler, 1999).

Rhetorical-responsive social constructionism was useful for the purpose of critique also in that it illuminated for me the ways in which some modes of communication are differentially available to hierarchical social groups (Shotter, 1993; Kinchloe, 1991). Such differential access to modes of communication, in turn, illustrates one of the ways in which power can be seen to be distributed in society, and in education. As I shall demonstrate, rather than a top-down portrayal of power, the recognition of the use of contextualised language by the rhetorical-responsive strand of social constructionism allows power to be considered as working across and through society (Shotter, 1993). For example, as long as society is divided into classes, class-based concepts can be seen to impact differentially upon the ways in which individuals construct their understandings. Nevertheless, the understandings of all classes are affected, albeit in different ways, rather than only that of those who see themselves as experiencing the least power (Nemeth, 1980; Dewey, 1916).

The recognition within rhetorical-responsive social constructionism of differential constructions of meaning between unequal social groups was important also in that it enabled me to critique and to question representations of knowledge as definitive which underpin, and are generated through, education (Shotter, 1993). The theoretical perspective I chose to reinforce the element of critique within that strand of social constructionist epistemology was that of critical enquiry, in order to facilitate connections between my own experiences of contemporary capitalism, and my responsibility, as a critical researcher, to highlight and address unequal relationships of power in capitalist society (Fendler, 1999; Burbules and Berk, 1999; Ozga, 2000; Kanpol, 1994/1999).

The theoretical perspective of critical enquiry

Critical enquiry is congruent with the processes of my research in that the theory allows for research goals which are resonant with those of qualitative research in general, and social constructionist epistemological theory in particular. For example, because critical theory works to demystify the presence and influence
of ideologies within social interactions, as a critical researcher I am required to: suspend my own ideological assumptions about the nature of social reality, knowledge and explanations; reflect on the influence of my own epistemology, and take an anti-positivist approach to my study (Torres, 1999; Langman, 1991; Misgeld, 1985) of issues within education.

As indicated above, the epistemological concept of social constructionism supports the notion that people can work collectively, and therefore can work towards social and economic emancipation (Mayo, 1999). The theoretical research perspective of critical enquiry emerges from such an epistemology, and holds that people not only can, but should, work collectively towards that end. As Crotty (1998:157) writes: “critical forms of research call current ideology into question, and initiate action, in the cause of social justice”. Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) explain that in the perspective of critical research, people’s understandings about their lives and their position within society are seen to be derived partially from historical, and seemingly natural and inevitable, relationships of power between dominant and subordinate social groups. Those relationships are shaped, to a degree, by the language and concepts of dominant ideologies within capitalist society, through which, in turn, social values are mediated, and the oppression of dominated groups is often obscured. Thus, the theoretical perspective of critical enquiry supports the social constructionist notion of differential constructions of meaning between unequal social groups.

Critical theory complements the epistemology of social constructionism also because the opposition to positivism and objectivism inherent in the latter is also to be found in the former (Torres, 1999; Burr, 1995; Keyman, 1997). Indeed, one of the main tenets of critical theory, as derived from its origins in neo-Marxist thought (Fendler, 1999), is that the Enlightenment philosophy of popular emancipation through objective reason has become distorted, under the auspices of capitalism, into instrumental rationality (Torres, 1999). That is, critical theory contends that rather than alleviating or eliminating ignorance for everyone, and promoting individual autonomy, equality and democratic participation through learning and critical thought, the use of reason within the positivist logic of capitalism has become instrumental as a means of social control through which to deflect critical attention away from the inequalities inherent in capitalist
society (Fendler, 1999; Burbules and Berk, 1999). Further, as Misgeld (1985:85) contends, critical theory holds that under capitalism, education "...is a perversion of the intentions of the Enlightenment itself", in that education is seen to undermine people's capacity for critical thought and egalitarian social change, which, in turn, functions to perpetuate the social divisions (Misgeld, 1985; Hallin, 1985; Torres, 1999).

Accordingly, one of the main ways in which critical theory was useful for me, as a research tool, was the centrality it lent to the contrast "...between reason in its ideal sense and the actualities of social life..." (Misgeld, 1985:80). Critical enquiry thus allowed me to explore representations of political ideals within education, through a critique of instrumental rationality as it can be seen to work in practice through the knowledge-power nexus within educational institutions, to de-politicise people's views of their world (Torres, 1998). In that way, critical theory takes into account the wider context of the historical relationships and social conditions in which schooling is positioned under contemporary capitalism (Popkowitz, 1999), and allows for connections to be studied between the education system; the wider social, political and economic spheres of the country, and the daily lives of students and staff (Carspecken and Apple, 1992; Deyhle et al, 1992).

As a critical researcher, I am interested in that wider context of schooling, and in problematising social relationships within education in order to understand the relationships of power, and the accompanying conflict, within the institution. That is, my critique of school-business partnerships, and thus of the programme of my study, was facilitated by the critical premise that while capitalism appears to support a naturally logical society, the system obscures an inherently unequal, class-based society (Kanpol, 1994/1999; Apple, 1995; Poulantzas, 1982). Through a critical research perspective for this study, I wanted to explore, in an empirical sense, the ways in which, as Popkowitz, (1999) and (Callewaert, 1999) write, schools may perpetuate conditions of social inequality and injustice.

Critical theory was thus useful as a research philosophy for this study in that the perspective allowed me to question the principles of capitalism (Morrow, 1991), and to examine an educational phenomenon within the context of class-based
society. The utility of critical theory, for me, arose partly from the ways in which the perspective, as Torres (1999) writes, considers both the macro-level and the micro-levels of social institutions. Torres (1999:97) holds that: "Any study of education as public policy should deal with issues of organisational context in which power (as an expression of domination) is exercised". In this case, through the use of critical theory, the power and practices of state education policy- and decision-making have been juxtaposed with micro-level classroom interactions as a manifestation of school-business partnerships, to raise issues of social justice within education similar to those noted by Torres (1999), as above.

**Critique of critical theory**

However, critics of critical theory query its fundamental premises on the basis that any critique formulated within an unjust capitalist society cannot proffer a vision of a future based on principles of social justice (Fendler, 1999). That is, as all forms of critical educational thought continue to function within their context of normalising educative systems, the problems inherent in that context are sustained and perpetuated through those very systems, albeit unknowingly (Gu-Ze'ev, 1998; Miedema and Wardkeer, 1999). Therefore, critical thought may become, as Haskell (1984:219) writes: "...a capitalist remedy for the defects of capitalism", which detract attention away from problematic issues arising from the asymmetrical distribution of power in society, and in education.

Further, my attempt to highlight ways in which the interests and views of some social groups have historically dominated and repressed those of others can be seen to incorporate a view of power which Popkewitz (1999:5) has termed 'sovereignty'. Popkewitz posits that certain groups who are seen to possess power gain a form of sovereignty as they "...organise values through which decisions are made [which] produce a context of domination and subordination" (Popkewitz, 1999:5). However, the idea of such ideological power as sovereignty lends unwonted emphasis to the notion of established dichotomies in society, as in 'the oppressors' and 'the oppressed', which, in turn, tends to portray each social group as a unified, essentialist entity (Popkewitz, 1999). Popkewitz holds that the concept of such dichotomies obscures both "...how we reason and tell the truth about ourselves and the world", and "...generate overarching
essentialist principles through which social action and participation are constructed" (1999:6). To counter such obfuscation, Popkewitz (1999:6) suggests that attention be shifted from the identification of those who attempt to gain social control, to the identification of systems of ideas that "...normalise and construct the rules through which intent and purpose are constructed in action" within society.

To avoid essentialism through grounding my research in a critique of systems of ideas, however, raised a further potential problem for my use of critical theory. A critical study of prevailing ideas within education risks overlooking a social group which has dominated the formulation of public policy in education (Harvey, 1996). It follows that to base the study on relationships between systems of ideas, rather than on relationships that hold between social groups, detracts critical attention from dominant groups in society, and privileges, instead, prevailing modes of thought within education as a focus for study. Such a focus would undermine the concept of social class as a central theme for critical educational research, which, in turn, would detract from the study of individuals as social subjects, and from the marginalisation of their individual agency, in favour of studying social control through the imposition of ideas (Torres, 1999).

Nevertheless, as a social constructionist, I believe that various ideas and modes of thought both inform and reflect relationships that hold between social groups at any given time and place, and the research perspective of critical theory supports that contingent element of social constructionism. Indeed, as Keyman (1997) argues, critical theory can be used to provide an interpretation of an educational phenomenon, without reducing the explanatory potential of the perspective to either its essentialist or relativist strands. Similarly, Apple (1999:188) writes that the theoretical perspective of critical enquiry, based as it is in social constructionist epistemology, allows "... a little trespassing..." on the various conceptualisations of research by taking elements from diverse accounts of contemporary capitalist society. Thus, the usefulness of critical theory, for me, as for Popkewitz and Fender (1999), lay in its capacity to critically address not only interactions among individuals, but also wider interactions and relationships among schools, the education system, culture, society, the economy and politics.
Accordingly, as I attempted to find a middle course between essentialism and relativism when researching and analysing the education site and studying the interactions between the participants of my project, I made use of the critical potential of relativism by problematising some of the ways in which subjectivity, and shared understandings, may be constituted through institutional structures such as school-business links. Such problematisation allowed me to trace and critique some of the effects of institutionalised power on individuals and groups (Fendler, 1999), as I demonstrate in my discussion chapter, and in my exploration of the power-knowledge nexus in education (Ball, 1991; Davies, 1995).

At the same time, I retained the essentialist idea of realities which affect the daily lives of participants within the site of research, and which cannot be completely reduced to the social construction of meaning. That is, I would argue, as does Apple (1998), that although people construct their understandings of themselves in relation to such concepts as the economy, the state, and education according to the circumstances in which they live, those structures also represent realities which are, to some degree, beyond individuals’ control. Thus, as Burbules and Berk (1999) suggest, I justified my use of the critical theoretical research perspective by the degree to which it takes into account issues arising from social inequalities, and hence its relevance to social justice, in my attempt to further my understanding of one element of the research participants’ educational experience. In addition, I could consider and suggest potential actions that are not only meaningfully egalitarian, but are, above all, possible within the defects of contemporary capitalism (Harvey, 1996/1997).

The theory of hegemony

While critical theory can be used to problematise the ideas behind an educational phenomenon such as school-business links, a further interpretative device was needed to describe the ways in which those ideas reflect the differential distribution of power in education within contemporary capitalist society. I have chosen Gramsci’s critical heuristic device of hegemony, which he extrapolated from classical Marxism (Bocock, 1986; Coben, 1998; Mayo, 1999) to enable me to critique the concept of the unequal distribution of power within education as a force in people’s everyday lives (Burbules and Berk, 1999). Broadly, his use of
the term ‘hegemony’ encapsulated a theory about the ways in which capitalism has been sustained as the dominant social system in Western societies, in spite of problems stemming from capitalism’s inherently contradictory and conflictual political, economic and social policies (Bocock, 1986; Gramsci, 1971). The concept of hegemony posits that social domination is largely facilitated through particular forms of knowledge and a particular system of values (Fontana, 1993), such as those which, as I shall demonstrate, are disseminated through school-business links, and Gramsci saw hegemony as a vital factor in the maintenance of divisions between social classes (Bocock, 1986; Coben, 1998; Mayo, 1999).

The critical concept of hegemony attempts to explain the ways in which the social, economic, intellectual and moral leadership of dominated groups is achieved by ruling classes through persuasion and acquiescence, rather than coercion (Fontana, 1993). As Landy (1994) writes, the concept of hegemony can thus be used to address the relationship between the state, education and political changes in wider society, while avoiding reductive notions such as economic determinism, in which socio-economic history unfolds according to an apparent teleology that lends the circumstances of daily life its ‘natural’ veneer (Bocock, 1986; Femia, 1981).

In that way, the concept of hegemony encapsulated the critique with which I approached my research and analysis. That is, for Gramsci, and as in my own experience, the modes of reproduction of unequal power under capitalism are found in the minutiae of everyday life (Bocock, 1986). He saw capitalist logic as reified through day-to-day thoughts, judgements, actions and interactions that seem, superficially, to be mundane and ordinary. His conceptualisation illuminates the ways in which the routine nature of daily life obscures and mystifies the inherently inequalitarian nature of capitalist social structures of class, race, gender and so on (Langman, 1991). The ‘taken-for-granted’-ness of daily thoughts, actions and work mystifies the mechanisms of power through which the interests of the ruling class are portrayed as the common good (Langman, 1991; Fontana, 1993; Bocock, 1986) to inform individuals’ perceptions of their world, and their understandings of their position in society.
For Gramsci, hegemony is the discursive face of power (Fraser, 1991; Coben, 1998) as manifested in the subordination and control of a social group or groups by a dominant group (Femia, 1981). Gramsci believed that the extent to which a social group or class can be said to assume a dominant and hegemonic role can be demonstrated by the acceptance of the interests and ideas of that dominant group as a discursive 'consensus' which meets the interests of all groups (Fontana, 1993; Bocock, 1986; Codd et al, 1990; Torres, 1999). The emphasis on discourse within the concept of hegemony (Bocock, 1986) thus provided me with a connection between the ways in which popular opinion is mediated towards acquiescence regarding prevailing political, social and economic inequalities, and the impact that such a form of social domination has on the understandings of both the subordinate and superordinate classes.

**Gramsci, Hegemony, Social Constructionism and Education**

The effectiveness of an hegemonic consensus turns on social interactions such as those of schooling in which social resources are allocated, and therefore on institutions such as education, in which decisions about such allocations are predetermined (Femia, 1981; Bocock, 1986), as I have noted in chapter six, where I have written of streaming and neo-vocationalism. Gramsci contended that such specificity would be deemed necessary by the dominant group, who, as did neo-liberal economists with their notion of bounded rationality, believed that ordinary people in a low economic class do not simply 'know' or 'understand' their material interests and needs. Rather, subordinate classes are seen to construct the nature of their interests through social interactions. However, their understandings are seen to be influenced by the discursive language of particular social interactions, which convey to subordinate classes the ideas and values and prevailing perceptions of the dominant group of the time, place and culture (Bocock, 1986).

Gramsci recognised that state education is one mode through which people's material, cultural and moral understandings are aligned in that way, to match the needs of production and the economy, and therefore the needs of the dominant classes (Gramsci, 1971; Bocock, 1986). In combination with other social institutions such as the law, the political system, mass media, the labour market,
hospitals, prisons, and the workplace, education can be seen to provide the conditions in which people become predisposed to accept the social status quo, with its inherent inequalities (Gramsci, 1971; Femia, 1981; Coben, 1998; Kanpol, 1994/1999; Bocock, 1986; Mayo, 1999; Illich, 1971).

Hegemony and Social Justice

Gramsci’s framework for critically analysing capitalist society is therefore based on notions of discursive language within society, through which the ideology of the dominant groups is conveyed. However, he perceived that the acquiescence of the dominated is secured not because people believe that the status quo is a universal expression of the interests of all, but because most people have not been taught to use critical language to understand, and to act on, their discontent in order to positively transform society (Femia, 1981; Burbules and Berk, 1999). In Gramsci’s model, every social interaction is necessarily an educational relationship, in that people ‘learn’ through social interactions to accept the status quo (Mayo, 1999; Kincheloe, 1998). It follows that every educational interaction can be considered to be political, because the teaching-learning interaction is partly informed by the ruling classes’ interests in reinforcing the class-based status quo (Fontana, 1993), including the pursuit and maintenance of profit (Torres, 1999; Mayo, 1999), and maintaining social order (Fontana, 1993).

Critique of the concept of hegemony

Some theorists critique the essentialism of the concept of hegemony, with its notion of an hegemonic ‘centre’, or dominant group (Bocock, 1986; Coben, 1998; Mayo, 1999). Such relativist queries hold that any connections between individuals have to be constantly constructed, articulated, and maintained, and cannot be viewed as arising automatically out of a commonly-held social position, or out of any other dimension of social life. However, others (Laclau and Mouffe, 1995) contend that the concept of hegemony is a useful critical tool. They hold that the concept can be diversified to the point at which it is no longer seen only as political, or contingent only to the basic, reductive tenets of Marxism. That is, for some relativists, the concept of hegemony can be extended to incorporate more than only the economic relationship between social classes,
and may be applied to wider social contingencies. In that case, some strands of relativist thought support the concept of hegemony, in its capacity to make available more than one discourse through which to explore contemporary social issues.

I would argue further that the concept of hegemony is a suitable tool for me to critically examine the knowledge-power nexus in the context of education, in ways which make use of both relativist and essentialist tools. That is, the diversity of purposes to which contemporary theorists may put the notion of hegemony reflects Gramsci’s claim that the concept was not an essentialising one, and was not intended to represent an unchanging and universally valid viewpoint for all times and places (Gramsci, 1971; Bocock, 1986). Rather, Gramsci held that human nature cannot be taken as a given, and that humans live in a milieu of constant change in their perceptions and beliefs (Fontana, 1993; Gramsci, 1971), and it follows that hegemonic arrangements have to be actively and consistently constructed and maintained (Hall, 1996; Mayo, 1999; Coben, 1998; Bocock, 1986). As Hall (1998:53-54) writes: “Hegemony is constructed, through a complex series of processes of struggle. It is not given, either in the existing structure of society or in the class structure...of production...[thus hegemony implies] a conception of the process of [capitalist] social reproduction as continuous and contradictory”. In that way, hegemony offers a way to study the world (Bocock, 1986), in which arenas of contestation are recognised, and in which social arrangements are continually renegotiated.

Hegemony lends itself also to qualitative, social constructionist critical enquiry, because it is not a positivist, seemingly value-neutral term. Rather, it facilitates a complex consideration of ways in which individuals construct their various viewpoints about the world (Bocock, 1986). Further, the concept of hegemony has retained over time its usefulness as a critical heuristic tool, for two main reasons. Firstly, politically and economically, contemporary capitalism is as strong, if not stronger in many societies, than was the case in Gramsci’s time (Bocock, 1986). Secondly, although concessions may be granted by dominant to subordinate groups over time, the vital interests of the dominant group are usually not adversely affected (Coben, 1998). Gramsci’s work on hegemony thus provides a useful point of departure for sociological educational research.
(Bocock, 1986) such as mine, because it illuminates the relationship between capitalism, power and domination, which, in turn, is vital for understanding education within contemporary industrial society (Femia, 1981).

**Discourse and hegemony**

The use of discourses to obscure and confuse social issues, rather than to articulate and clarify them, is an hegemonic tactic through which, as Gramsci indicates, entrenched positions of power are sustained (Harvey, 1996; Shotter, 1993). The main hegemonic tactic is to appropriate language and discourse to uphold the appearance of order and social cohesion, which, in turn, functions to perpetuate unequal social conditions and ways of life (Shotter, 1993). For example, within education, discourses incorporate the various social, technological, institutional and economic factors which determine educational practice by lending them an appearance of ‘naturalness’, unity and coherence (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982; Shotter, 1993). Such discourses thus promote the perception of educational policies and practices as being fair, authoritative and irrefutable.

As we have seen, Gramsci conceptualised hegemony as a discourse of power through which the social, economic, intellectual and moral leadership of dominated groups is achieved by ruling classes through persuasion and acquiescence, rather than coercion (Fraser, 1991, Coben, 1998). The heuristic critical tool of hegemony thus supports the use of discourse analysis as an element of the research design of this study, in order for me to explore the notion of discursive power within the practices of school-business links, while taking into account my epistemological approach of social constructionism. Indeed, I would argue that the concept of social engineering would not be a viable premiss for study if one did not take social constructionism into account. In the following chapter, I describe the research design used for this study, and clarify the connections I make between social constructionism, hegemony, discourse analysis, and the methods I have chosen to use in this research.
CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY:
Research Design And Methodological Procedures

In the previous chapter, I explained the theories behind the approach I have taken to this particular research, beginning with my epistemological theory, from which research theories are developed. In chapter three, I align those theories with the practicalities of research, and explain the ways in which I have put theory into practice. In that way, I set up the conditions in which the remainder of the thesis can be understood as a critical consideration of school-business links in general, and of neo-vocationalism in particular.

Research design: My use of the term ‘discourse’

As mentioned above, Gramsci perceived hegemony as a discourse of power. It follows that the critical concept of hegemony should be complemented by discourse analysis as a further heuristic research tool (Fraser, 1991; Coben, 1998). For this thesis, I refer to discourse as “...a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” (Burr, 1995:48). This is a view similar to that of Foucault, for whom discourse formed part of the context in which people build understandings of, and find meaning in, their daily lives and their position in the world (Burr, 1995; Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982).

Foucault and Discourse

Foucault’s concept of discourse is especially useful for this research, as a framework within which to consider not only the expression and communication, through speech, writing, images, clothing, buildings, situational contexts, and so on (Burr, 1995), of different versions of a social phenomenon such as school-business links, but also who may communicate, what may be communicated, when, and under what authority (Ball, 1991). My interest in drawing on the work of Foucault lay in the role he described for discourse within the various processes of social interaction through which people come to construct understandings of their knowledge and experiences (Fairclough, 1995; Young, 1979; Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000). My especial interest lies in the
ways in which discourses, as Femia (1981) describes, function to disseminate hegemonic influences in social interactions generated by school-business links.

From the viewpoint of social constructionism, in which meaning is constructed from social interactions, I wish to represent discourses not as abstractions which are detached from the real world, but rather as intimately connected to the ways in which society, and education, are organised and operated over time, as do Burr (1995) and Morrow (1991). More specifically, within the capitalist economy, as Burr (1995) argues, discourses may function to position people in a hierarchy of power and privilege. The discourses related to such positioning, in turn, influence people's understandings of concepts such as 'working class families', 'high-' or 'low-achievers' in education, 'the labour market', 'youth', 'employee', and so on.

Foucault's view was that discourses represent power (Harvey, 1996), because, and as was the case for Gramsci, many of the processes that inform, reinforce and perpetuate discourses are obscured within unequal social interactions under capitalism (Harvey, 1996; Langman, 1991). Indeed, for Foucault, discourses emerge directly from relationships of power within social institutions and practices (Harvey, 1996). Thus, his notion of discourse lent itself to my intention to explore the nexus of power and knowledge at the site of my study, through the investigation of discursive influences on ways in which people construct understandings through their daily interactions at school (Poynton, 2000; Burr, 1995; McKinlay and Starkey, 1998; Morrow, 1991; Woodilla, 1998; Fairclough, 1995). To illustrate, and, again, as did Gramsci, Foucault writes that hospitals, prisons and schools, and other technologies of social control generate discourses which have material and experiential significance for those involved in such institutions, and therefore profoundly influence individuals' lives, and the structure of society (Fillingham, 1993). For example, such institutions define the norm for constructing understanding of concepts such as 'educational (low)-achievement' and the 'work ethic'.

Foucault held that hegemonic discourses function to establish such norms, or universal 'truths', which obscure the influence and the vested interests of the ruling class within the lives and labour of the working class (Fairclough, 1995;
Shotter, 1993). The notion of such a mystification raises an issue about which both Foucault and Gramsci have written: the apparently willing participation of the mass of the population in systems of hierarchical power which often worked against their own interests (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998). Both Foucault and Gramsci posit that such apparent amenability is tentatively established through discourse as a version of ‘truth’, mediated through social institutions, including education, to interact with the population in differential relationships of power (Harvey, 1996; Foucault, 1980). Truth and knowledge, for Foucault, are “...weapons by which a society manages itself” (cited in McKinlay and Starkey, 1998:1). Such a view is useful for this thesis, in that Foucault points out that the discursive production of truth is neither an objective process, nor a subjective one. Rather, the discursive production of truth occurs when individuals’ self-reflexivity and understandings are socially constructed through their relationships with institutions and groups (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982; Fendler, 1999).

**Foucault, discourses and relationships of power**

It follows that while the discourses that impact upon people are closely tied to the practices and institutions of daily life, it is in the interest of powerful groups to promote some discourses, and some ‘truths’, as more truthful and/or viable than others (Burr, 1995). Accordingly, in this model, because discourses are not permanently fixed across society, numerous discourses are seen to be engaged in competition with others, and each may refer to different perceptions about social conditions (Burr, 1995). Foucauldian discourse analysis has allowed me to critically consider the ways in which language is used for negotiating such relationships of power (Wright, 2000; Shotter, 1993; Burr, 1995) within the context of education.

However, Foucault’s idea was that power is not a pyramidal concept, with that of the state at the apex. Rather, he perceived power as extending throughout society, and as constantly in motion, because for him, power is transmitted rather than possessed, and it acts on individuals at the same time as it is mediated by them (Barker, 1993; Foucault, 1980). In that sense, his view does not represent power as static within society (Foucault, 1980; Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982) at
any given place and time. Rather, Foucault (1980:199) was unconcerned with centralised, regulated and legitimised forms of power:

If one tries to erect a theory of power one will always be obliged to view it as emerging at a given place and time and hence to deduce it, to reconstruct its genesis. But if power is in reality an open, more-or-less co-ordinated (in the event, no doubt, ill co-ordinated) cluster of relations, then the only problem is to provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of the relations of power.

I have found the idea of that grid to be useful for my analysis. For example, according to Foucault, conspiracy theory is ruled out as an analytical tool, because power is not to be seen only as a consciously-implemented force across society. Although there may be conscious decision-making, planning and co-ordination of activities, it does not follow that the wider social implications of decisions and activities are always understood by those who undertake such actions. When individuals make decisions, or groups work towards their own advantage, it does not necessarily follow that there is an inherent, ongoing direction which conspirators have plotted for wider society, and there can be no one person to whom the planning for such a direction can be attributed (Foucault, 1980). “When we analyse a political situation, the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them” (Foucault, 1980, cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982:187).

The use of Foucault’s ideas in my research design

In his non-conspiratorial approach, Foucault’s ideas were invaluable for my study, as was his concern with manifestations of power in all levels of all social institutions: “...in its more regional and local forms and institutions” (Foucault, 1980:96), rather than only those which appear in the offices of politicians, or directors, and so on. Foucault’s method of analysis allowed me to consider conditions under which power is subject not to overt regulation, but rather is to be found in people’s actions and words, as well as in their use of technologies (Foucault, 1980). For example, technologies of educational administrative
procedures, such as examinations, function partially to 'label' youngsters as educational low-achievers. As I explain in more depth later in this chapter, such technology may partially determine the parameters within which many young people come to understand their future in the labour market and in society, as effectively as other, more explicit, constraints on their achievement, such as poverty.

However, the research problem that is raised when the concept of deliberate, directive measures, such as those of conspiracy theory, are de-emphasised is that there appears to be no focus for study. But, as in Popkewitz's contention that researchers' attention should be shifted from the identification of those who attempt to gain control, to the identification of systems of ideas, Foucault posits that practices, rather than people, should be the subject of research. Foucault holds that the strategic objectives which inform the practices through which relations of power work have emerged historically, and have taken particular forms, while encountering specific obstacles, conditions and resistances. He writes that as a consequence, ad hoc remedies have been applied throughout the process, while the overall effects of those remedies were not taken into account. In other words, as Dreyfus and Rabinow (1992:187) put it: "[p]eople know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; what they don't know is what what they do does".

**Foucault and society**

Indeed, Foucault holds that there is no system per se (Hunter, 1996) except in the wider sense of generalised processes at work in everyday society. In his model, there is no inherent, logical stability, and no functionalist base, to society. Rather, personal and localised actions and conflicts have been shaped by political influences and techniques of power, and given ad hoc direction. According to Foucault, it follows that there is nothing to be theorised, and as a consequence, he focused on devising an analysis, rather than a theory, of the practice of power (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982). Foucault's analysis of the practice of power is an important heuristic tool for my study, because it recognises tactics of power inherent in various forms of discourse, as well as the role of knowledge within hierarchical relationships of power. He perceived power as being constantly
built and rebuilt within the disciplinary practice of institutions such as schools. For example, he writes that: "[d]iscipline, crucially, is conceptualised not as the expression of already existing power, but constitutive of it. Given the inherently contingent nature of power this is why knowledge of institutions becomes so vital" (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998:1). In that way, his approach to analysis is a practical tool which complements for me the critical concept of hegemony.

However, in envisioning power as disciplinary practice, Foucault refuses to present power only as a form of repression. He writes that to do so would narrow the conceptualisation of power to that of negative law enforcement (Foucault, 1980). Rather, in his genealogy of the power-knowledge nexus, Foucault regarded the exercise of power through the distribution of knowledge as occurring in a positive and constructive, rather than a negative and prohibitive, manner. As Foucault (1980:51) writes: "I have been trying to make visible the constant articulation I think there is of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power...the exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information". His idea was that new aspects of social life and disciplinary institutions were brought into being, and sustained, from new knowledge about a given population, which was generated by such mechanisms as school examinations, social surveys and statistical analysis (Hunter, 1996; Barker, 1993; Foucault, 1980).

Thus, his perception that power is productive, in that it generates a network of knowledge and techniques and discourses, albeit disciplinary, through which people can be simultaneously constituted, and become known (Foucault, 1980; Rouse, 1994; Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982) has congruence with my study. For example, social control through techniques of categorisation, normalisation, surveillance and individualisation, such as those used in educational criteria and examinations (Rouse, 1994) produces a form of knowledge not only about people's behaviour and abilities but also about their potential, which, in turn, informs the construction of educational and social norms. More specifically, as mentioned above, the use of the technology of examinations is a continuation of the process of educational selection of streaming and categorization, as mentioned above. That is, to categorise secondary school students as 'high-' or 'low-achieving' individuals functions to set the norms by which achievement is
measured, and to shape, to an extent, students’ aims for the future, and their position in the labour market.

The application, maintenance and perpetuation of such norms allows the exercise of power and control to reach and to discipline every person, and to circulate throughout all of society (Foucault, 1980; Bernauer, 1990; Merquior, 1985). Indeed, for Foucault, people understand themselves, and are constituted by others, as the result of relationships of power, because as power circulates and is exercised, it also sets parameters in which understanding and meaning are constructed in relation to individuals and events (Barker, 1993; Foucault, 1980; Prado, 1995), such as those who pass or fail compulsory examinations. It follows that while the repression of some individuals within society is real, that repression is an effect of power, because the people who are repressed are already a product of power (Merquior, 1985). That is, in Foucault’s analysis of power, individuals internalise the effects of discipline, and thus transform externally-imposed discipline into conformist self-surveillance, self-responsibility and self-blame (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998).

Nevertheless, Foucault’s analysis of the practice of power cannot be used to describe a process of unqualified social control, because he did not conceptualise power as a commodity which differentiates between those who possess it exclusively, and those who submit to it. Rather, power is seen to be a force, the use of which circulates among, and is exercised by, everyone (Barker, 1993; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). People are always “...in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power” (Foucault, 1980:98), in that they are concomitantly the target of power, and its articulation.

In Foucault’s analysis, therefore, although power circulates among groups and individuals throughout society over time (Morrow, 1991), and although specific tactics of both domination and resistance are localised and specific, those tactics are also integrated into the strategies of power in wider society at across time and place (Barker, 1993). Consequently, Foucault’s analysis (1980) of power in terms of relationships enabled me to consider both the historical nature of the relationship that exists between power and social struggles within education, and the contemporary struggle between socio-economic classes.
The use of Foucault's genealogical analysis of the practice of power in this thesis

Foucault's genealogical model allowed me to avoid essentialism in analysis, through its highly contingent representation of ad hoc events, as well as its historical approach. For example, his genealogical view of education does not support a notion of the system as being explicitly influenced by principles of either behaviourist or progressivist pedagogy (Hunter, 1996). Rather, he regarded education as a loose system of schools which were taken over, or 'colonised', over time, to meet specific, albeit contingent and localised, solutions to the problematic social circumstances of early capitalism. The problematic nature of those social circumstances was constituted by eighteenth-century Western civil authorities, as various groups within a given population came to be categorised objectively as criminal, and/or immoral, and/or alcoholic, and so on.

The civil authorities of the time linked those social problems to the ignorance and illiteracy of the working class. Foucault theorises that systemic state education was extended to the masses as an intervention, in order to inculcate popular adherence to newly-established and authoritative norms of social, economic and political life under industrial capitalism (Hunter, 1996; Foucault, 1980). That is, for Foucault, the education of the masses functioned as a disciplinary measure, to protect and conserve the property and wealth of capitalists from the labour force through whose hands that property and wealth must pass (Foucault, 1980; Hunter, 1996). As Popkewitz (1999:26) writes: "The construction of the school is [seen as] a device through which to 'govern the soul'" of the working class.

As mentioned above, such historical factors are seen by Foucault not as a result of principled and purposeful actions underlying the development of education systems, but as ad hoc, disciplinary measures used to resolve socially problematic circumstances as they arose. Thus, Foucault's concern was not with educational theories and principles per se, but with the social purposes of the school itself, as a mechanism through which to manage, monitor and supervise a population (Foucault, 1980; Hunter, 1996; Harvey, 1996). His argument was that a clear relationship exists between the formation of individuals as they pass through the education system; the social uses to which the control of people's morals, attitudes and behaviours can be put; and the origins and perpetuation of
schools as mass monitoring, disciplinary centres (Hunter, 1996). Foucault’s genealogical focus on the connection between the construction of knowledge within education and the distribution of power assisted my project, in that, as Audi (1995) writes, within that focus, bodies of knowledge are seen not as autonomous, pre-existing ideologies that happen to become utilised as instruments of power, but rather as constituted by, and thus intimately tied to, the systems of power themselves. As I will argue, the body of knowledge disseminated as a product of school-business partnerships is congruent with the notion of knowledge constituted by systems of power.

Foucault’s non-positivist genealogy was of further use to me in this study, in its attempt to give voice to “...local, discontinuous, disqualified, illegitimate knowledges against the claims of a unitary body of theory which would filter and hierarchically order them in the name of some true knowledge...” (Foucault, 1980:83). In other words, his method of genealogy sustains and reinforces those knowledges and understandings which have historically been marginalised as being naïve, insignificant, and insubstantial, such as those of the under- and uneducated working class. Further, the strengthening of such knowledge serves to inform and uphold social criticism which is concerned with highlighting class-based conflict and asymmetrical social struggles that have been disguised and obscured (Foucault, 1980).

Nevertheless, such marginalised knowledges, although particular and localised, cannot be seen to inform unified, universal views held by dominated social groups. However, the concept of schools as disciplinary centres presupposes that the marginalised knowledges of the working class indicates the potential for the resistance of labour as a marginalized group to the interests of capital (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998; Kinchloe, 1991). That is, in Foucault’s genealogical analysis, such resistance is represented as the critical strength derived from marginalised individuals’ and groups’ historic urge to be heard as they oppose those now long-established positivist and objectivist characterisations and categorisations of themselves (Foucault, 1980).
Resistance as a manifestation of individual agency

Theorists such as Foucault contend that each individual has little or no subjectivity, agency, or identity, except that which is imposed and internalised from historical social relationships (Harvey, 1996; Shumway, 1989/1992). However, although Foucault does not recognise autonomous agency, either as an ahistorical concept or as one which has remained the same throughout history (Foucault, 1980), he noted, as explained above, that resistance stems from the point at which relations of power are exercised (Simons, 1995). Indeed, for Foucault, there could be no relationship of power without resistances. Accordingly, for the purposes of this thesis, I suggest, as does Harvey (1996), and Rouse (1994), that a theory of individual agency can be supported by Foucault’s view of resistance to marginalisation. He delineated a ‘politics of ourselves’, which involves a struggle against the very forms of power that work to categorise an individual; distinguish her by her own behaviours and abilities; re-attach her to her own identity as the classified person, and impose a version of social and personal truth upon her through, for example, educational administration and processes.

In that way, each individual resists being both subjectified and objectified (Foucault, 1980; Simons, 1995), in situations in which the power of one group can be seen to attempt to induce responsibility for self-surveillance in the individuals of another, as, for example, when the neo-liberal state emphasises personal traits with which the individual is then influenced to identify. Resistance entails a refusal of such imposition of identity, as well as the invention, rather than discovery, of oneself by promoting new forms of subjectivity (Bernauer, 1990; Simons, 1995) to disrupt the seemingly constant and consistent reproduction of the hierarchical social order (Harvey, 1996). Foucault has located a dimension of agency, manifested as resistance to the regimes of disciplinary control that are applied to individuals through relationships of power. "...[T]here is always within each of us something that fights something else" (Foucault, 1980:208).

Thus, according to Foucault, we constitute and reconstitute our understandings of ourselves, albeit within already-established parameters derived from existing power-knowledge networks (Barker, 1993; Burr, 1995), as is recognised within
the epistemological thought of social constructionism. For the purposes of this study, I have drawn on that idea of the resistance of the marginalized as an indicator of agency, and have applied it to a group of secondary school students' experiences of a particular nexus of power and knowledge, as generated by the discourses of school-business links.

**Methodological Procedures**

Foucault (1980) asserts that discourses have a profound effect on the ways in which people think and act, as described above. It is important, therefore, to conduct research into the ways in which processes of power function to objectify people, and to potentially influence their thoughts and behaviours (Harvey, 1996). Foucault suggests, in a line of thought similar to that of Popkewitz, that research questions that investigate who has power, or why certain people want to use power to dominate others, are inconsequential, because discourses are inseparable from the people who disseminate them, and are indistinguishable from the exercise of power itself (Simons, 1995). Accordingly, for the purposes of this thesis, my research methods were intended to gain some understanding of the role of power and knowledge in interactions, events and ideas related to neo-vocationalism as a manifestation of school-business partnerships, rather than to focus only on the people involved.

**Case Study**

The method I chose to use for researching influences on the ways in which people may construct meaning from school-business partnerships was that of a case study. A case study is ideally suited to the collection and presentation of detailed information about interactions within, and influences on, a small group, in that the data is comprised of the accounts of the participants themselves. In addition, case studies follow the principles of qualitative interpretive research, in drawing conclusions only about that group, and only in that specific context. (Crotty, 1998). Thus, the case study method suited my purpose in that I was not interested in working towards the discovery of a universal, irrefutable and generalisable truth.

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As a social constructionist, I recognised that the construction of meaning, although a social process, is mediated by the agency of individuals. As a consequence, each individual may interpret the meaning of social interactions differently from others. My use of the case study method of research was intended to accommodate both the degree of detail in the data derived from the various participants, and individual participants' agency in negotiating the potential influences of school-business partnerships on their construction of meaning. In addition, the detail afforded by a case study was used to inform my ideas about alternative, more emancipatory educational conditions, as a way forward which takes into account issues of social justice arising from neovocationalism as a link between education and private enterprise.

Finding a site for research

As I explained in the introduction, this research was a continuation of a project I had carried out towards my B.A. Honours degree. The doctoral research was conducted in Twemlow High, which is a state secondary school in a main city in New Zealand. Before I began the doctoral research, I spoke with transition teachers other than the participant at Twemlow High. Two were from low-decile schools similar to Twemlow High. Another worked in a medium-decile school, while the other was from a high-decile, elite single-sex school. Neither of the two latter schools operated a course such as that provided by Twemlow High, and the role of those transition teachers was mainly to provide a consultation service with students about their future careers, and to arrange work experience placements.

Twemlow High was one of the lowest-decile state secondary schools in the city. At the time of the study, the roll was declining, and the school's finances were bolstered by the presence of foreign students.

Gatekeeping

The principal of Twemlow High, as one of the main gatekeepers (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998) at the research site, agreed to allow me to conduct on-going research into the preparation-for-employment programme held at his school. I
went also to a meeting of the Board of Trustees to explain my research, and to obtain their permission. Lois, the Transition teacher, who was the other main gatekeeper, agreed when I asked her if I might observe in her classes for several months, and interview both herself, and some or all of her students, at times convenient for them. Thus, I had the subject matter, the site, the participants and the long-term access that I needed for the study (Appendix Number 8).

The School as a Site of Research

The school was located in one of the low socio-economic suburbs of the city, in a heavily industrialised area. In my first interview with Lois, she explained that many of the large industrial plants had closed and/or moved away in recent years. Although a few factories remained in the area, the local businesses were mainly comprised of warehouses, small owner-operated workshops, shops, and fast-food outlets, with little capacity for offering students either work experience placements or visits to large industrial plants. However, as I noted during my observations at the school, employers from local workshops and factories approached the school on occasions, to offer jobs to potential school-leavers (Fieldnotes).

The school’s statement in the prospectus reads: “Mission Statement – to be a community school with a focus on quality. Twemlow High School, in partnership with its community, aims to establish a supportive environment which encourages students to work towards fulfilling their academic, social and physical potential as part of a continuing process of personal development” (Appendix Number 1).

The Transition Department

The Transition Department at Twemlow High consisted of a pre-fabricated school building with an office at one end for the teacher, the transition classroom in the middle, and, at the other end, a smaller room for the Maori and Pacific Islands Liaison Officer. The building was situated at the back of the school and at the edge of the playground, where the waste-removal bin was kept. It was approximately equi-distant from the school’s boundaries, and I noticed that
students could not absent themselves from the school via the transition classroom without being seen. That became significant when I noticed that a few of the students were regularly apprehended by Lois in the act of leaving either the class, or the school, early. However, the rear wall of the classroom was comprised of a large sliding door, through which students could gain access to the Maori and Pacific Island room, and thus to an alternative exit, and I had seen that it was common practice among those few students to use the alternative exit for leaving school early (Field notes).

The classroom had been refurbished with carpet and curtains and paint in the days immediately prior to my observations, and Lois told me that before the renovations had been done, the room was very drab, and the carpet was dangerously uneven and split. When I began my visits to the classroom, however, the wall areas close to the ceiling featured posters with various motivational messages, and the drawings and writing of students from previous years. There were advertising and enrolment leaflets from private training institutions and polytechnics, in stands which stood against one wall, under the posters, and a bookshelf which contained books, magazines and leaflets to do with careers stood by the door. The chairs on which students sat at their desks were made of plastic, the legs of which tended to buckle occasionally under unwary students, and researchers. There was a television set used for presenting videos to students, and a radio, both of which were at the front of the room and under the transition teacher’s control.

Participants in the Research

From the State Sector:

I spoke with a representative of Skill New Zealand, previously known as Education and Training Support Agency (ETSA), which was formed by the government to co-ordinate the vocational education and training activities of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) (Interview).
From the Business Sector:

I contacted the main employers' and manufacturers' collectives in the city, and was granted interviews with a representative from each one. One representative was an ex-teacher, and two were currently serving as members on school Boards of Trustees. I also interviewed another person who was self-employed as a co-ordinator of school-business partnerships. She also was an ex-teacher, who, at the time of our interview, worked nationwide to bring businesses and schools together, in affiliation with the local City Council. In addition, I interviewed the City Council employee who acted as a liaison for the school-business partnership co-ordinator. The final business person with whom I spoke was the branch manager of a world-wide human resource management agency.

The representative of the Transition Teachers' Association

I attended two meetings of the national association which served transition teachers, and I also interviewed the chair of the local association.

The Teacher at Twemlow High:

Lois, as the transition teacher at Twemlow High, was one of the main participants in my research. Lois's background included a previous period of secondary teaching, followed by raising a family, and working in the private sector, before taking the job at Twemlow High. As well as teaching two groups of transition students, Lois also taught social and life skills to another group of students with learning difficulties. She told me that she teaches transition in order to make a difference in the lives of the students, rather than for promotion or ambition (Interview).

At the time of my study she had been employed at the school for several years, after having taken the Careers' Advisors job from its inception. She explained to me that she had "built up a department from nothing, basically" (Interview) although, at the time of my study, her position had not been given permanent status by the Principal and her application for promotion on the basis of her long service had been turned down (Fieldnotes). Until that point, she had received feedback about her work only as "notes in her pigeon-hole", rather than as
interpersonal feedback (Interview). Although she appreciated any recognition of her input into the school she felt that she ‘stood alone’ (Interview), in that she was the only one teaching at the school in the field of transition. Her feeling of isolation within the staff was exacerbated by the way in which her position was funded separately from that of the other teachers at the school, from a careers’ education grant by the government (Fieldnotes).

As well as feeling isolated, Lois perceived her work to be undervalued at the school. She told me that not only had she not been consulted about the timetable arrangements for her classes, but also she had been reprimanded for not contributing enough to the organisation process (Fieldnotes). The administrators at Twemlow High, according to Lois, had forgotten their own experiences of teaching, and had lost the capacity to communicate with those still working at the ‘chalkface’ (Interview). Further, she believed that the other teachers and the administrators did not fully recognise the extent to which the work experience that she organised for her students could be extrapolated to other classes (Interview).

During my attendance in her classes, Lois’ perception of her own low-status position at the school was intensified when a teacher from another department was installed as her superior in transition and careers education. “They are using me as a scapegoat” she told me. “I’ve been told ‘hey, you’re not worth anything here. We’re going to give someone else your job’ ” (Interview). However, Lois protested to the Principal, and, three months later, was happy to be reinstated in charge of transition education. The teacher who was to have been promoted to be her superior, took on some of her workload instead (Field notes).

Her workload was prodigious, as I found. Her other roles, apart from that of transition teacher, involved: the organization of correspondence lessons; teaching the commerce section of the Year Ten technology class, in repetitive ten-week modules; forging connections with business through which to facilitate students’ work experience placements; working with students who have special needs; administrating a job club at the school, in which she co-ordinates work such as baby-sitting wanted by students, with work offered by people in the community;
facilitating full-time job offers for students; checking job vacancies in the newspaper for students; driving students to job interviews; NZQA. moderation; co-ordinating between the NZQA. and the school, meeting with new students about their course options, co-ordinating the criteria for marking students' appearance and presentation; and talking with students who have decided to leave school, or who are not conforming to school rules (Interviews and Field notes).

The Students:

Lois’s students were aged between sixteen and seventeen years. The group of 24 whom I followed as they went through the course were comprised of nearly equal numbers of girls and boys, and almost all were Pakeha1. Very few of them had achieved any qualifications during their secondary education. The two girls who had achieved well in their School Certificate examinations were biding their time in the transition class: one until her family’s imminent move overseas could take place, and the other until a problem with her Bursary application could be resolved. One of the boys in the class had passed School Certificate English and Mathematics (Interview and Field notes).

The two girls who had passed their School Certificate examinations sat silently at the front of the classroom, and worked on the programme’s activities. Their quiet presence was eclipsed by the other students, who ignored the two quiet ones, and consistently whispered, or talked and laughed amongst themselves. The noisy ones attempted to sit as far to the back of the room as possible, and would whisper amongst themselves when Lois was talking to the class. During the times when they were given written exercises or activities to do, they would do a little of the work, but would also colour in the pages of their workbooks, write over the covers, and their desks, and so on. At the same time, they would talk to their neighbour, or call out to others across the room. When Lois was not present, the girls would turn on the radio, and talk amongst themselves, and watch the boys, who were playing cards, or wrestling with each other, tripping their classmates as they passed, throwing missiles such as balls of paper, or erasers, at each other, and teasing and provoking the girls into confrontations
with them. On the occasions when relieving teachers were present, the card-playing, talking and so on was done openly, and was usually ignored by the relievers (Field notes).

The relieving teachers shared their opinions of the students with me, and although given at different times, their opinions were similar. To the relievers, the students were, for example, "bolshie", "disorganized"; "stupid"; and "apathetic" (Field notes). One commented that these students "don't care if they pass or not" (Field notes), and she compared their attitude to their lessons unfavourably with that of highly-achieving students at an elite all-girls' school, where she had also worked as a reliever.

Lois told me that:

fifty percent or more of the students entering the school should be in special needs classes. And they can't be in special needs classes, because there is room in the school for only one special needs class per year, per form. So these kids are going into mainstream education, when really their capabilities aren't up to it, so they're not getting the attention they need. The school still has a cream, there are still kids going through and achieving academically, very, very highly. But the number of kids who are coming into the school who are not achieving academically is increasing (Interview).

When Lois explained the backgrounds of the students to me, she said that many of the students' parents were solo parent or unemployment beneficiaries, or low-status employees in factories and warehouses. A number of the students came from backgrounds of long-term unemployment, which had lasted, in some cases, for three generations (Field notes). Nevertheless, she believed that, as a whole, these parents were only vaguely aware of the adverse factors affecting their children's entry into the labour market, and she felt that many neglected to adequately monitor the health and behaviour of their children (Interview).

1 A non-Maori, often used to describe a person of European descent.
Another aspect of these students' lives became evident, however, when Lois explained to me that she had conducted an informal survey of her class the previous year, from which she had found that 80% of her students were employed in paid work, for various numbers of hours outside school time (Field notes). Although she had not replicated her survey with the group of my study, on occasion, in class, she would raise the subject of paid work as a part of a classroom activity. I noted during my observations that a significant number of those students also were working after school and during weekends (Field notes). For example, three of the girls worked for ten hours a week at a fast-food restaurant, while another spent ten to twelve hours a week at a supermarket checkout counter. Two of the young women worked as office juniors after school, and two worked as waitresses at cafeterias. One of the boys worked as a merchandiser, which involved filling shelves at a department store for three hours per night (Field notes).

The Programme

Before 1984, as previously noted, the transition education measures that were taken by individual schools were of an ad hoc and needs-based nature, to provide for students who were deemed to be failing in an academic sense. From that year, the government began to provide gradually increasing amounts of funding and staffing to the schools involved. Simultaneously, a system of work exploration was developed in order for senior secondary students to experience work at first hand (Marshall, 1987; Houghton et al, 1994).

In 1996, the government introduced a pilot project entitled Skill Pathways, in order to facilitate a range of ways in which young people may gain access to learning about work. The programme promotes and supports partnership arrangements between schools, employers and tertiary providers, in which secondary students are involved in formal training and are assessed for Unit Standards, as they work towards the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Education Review Office, 1996).

According to my participant from Skill New Zealand, Skill Pathways was offered for tender to secondary schools concomitantly with the establishment of the NQF
for workplace training, and generic Unit Standards were being instituted that related to both education and to industry. *Skill Pathways* was thus intended to "...build a bridge for potential students to actually move from the school system into employment – sort of creating that seamless structure that was always talked about" (Interview). The purpose of the programme was to encourage schools to "...look at alternative approaches to offering non-conventional subject areas" (Interview), and to set up the conditions in which schools could apply to the NQF for accreditation to teach in new subject areas such as, for example, printing, or plastics or electronics manufacturing.

My participant from Skill New Zealand went on to explain that at the beginning, the programme was funded by tender, and there were two forms in which it could be implemented. In one, the school might wish to develop a niche training programme in an occupation such as, for example, horticulture. In that case, horticulture would be set up as a new subject, administered separately from other studies, and taught to a small group of students who would then be offered work placements.

The second form of the programme, which the Skills New Zealand representative noted was more successful² than the niche training outlined above, was to set up a training programme for individual students. Each student’s occupational goal would be aligned with relevant Unit Standards that could be achieved within the school system, and the student would also spend time during the year with an employer whose workplace includes the occupation of choice. At the end of the year, it was expected that the student would either become employed in that industry, or enrol in further training (Interview).

By the time of my study, *Skill Pathways* had evolved into a variety of courses, the provision of which could be funded upon any secondary school’s application to the Ministry of Education’s Secondary Tertiary Alliance Resource (STAR) (Interview). One of the aims for the programme was to offer alternative schooling arrangements to senior students on a voluntary basis, to encourage them to stay longer at school, by giving them the chance “...to do something if
the normal flow of subjects wasn’t suiting their requirements, give them other choices” (Interview). Another aim for the programme was to reduce, or to eliminate, the costs in time and finances to employers in training and assessing new employees in the workplace. Further, although the programme was initially designed to be offered to any senior student, the ones who enrolled in it were those who had gained few, or no, qualifications and who were therefore at risk of leaving school and becoming unemployed.

The form of the programme implemented at Twemlow High School

The programme was implemented at Twemlow High in 1996, and was funded by ETSA. The following year, the programme was funded by STAR, to provide flexibility for students by allowing them to attend courses outside the school (Interview). The programme ostensibly followed the second form of Skill Pathways as described above, as outlined in the report prepared by Lois in 1997. The report stated that:

[t]he concept of the course is to prepare students for the world of work by allowing them to choose a career pathway they would like to enter upon leaving school and during the year attain qualifications and/or skills to assist them in their career goal. To this end the course is made up of many practical modules of work – based on NZQ Unit Standards (Appendix Number 2).

The report goes on to say that “All students have compulsory units of work they must progress through and then have specific units based on their chosen pathway” (Appendix Number 2). As explained in the report, the compulsory units include: “Personal Presentation for the Workplace; Learner’s Licence and/or Restricted Licence; 16 Hour Comprehensive First Aid Certificate, and the Compilation of a Curriculum Vitae and folder of relevant documentation/data”. However, during my observations, I noted that although Unit Standards other than the compulsory ones were denoted as "...based on their chosen pathway" as

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2 My assumption is that he measured the ‘success’ of the programme by the number of students enrolled.
above, they were not optional for the students. Rather, all students in the programme were presented with all the components of which it was composed (Field notes).

That the Unit Standards were not chosen by students was confirmed when Lois explained to me during an interview that, when the school won a tender for the programme, she was given six months by the Principal to consult with employers, and to draw up a course of Unit Standards which reflected not students' requirements, but rather, employers' requirements of young, entry-level employees (Interview). Indeed, in the seven goals projected in 1997 for the programme in 1998, no mention was made of the students' notions of career goals. Rather, the focus had shifted to teaching generic personal characteristics such as "self-awareness" and "goal setting", as well as to efficient time-table management on the part of the school's administration, and liaison with business. Rather than assisting students to achieve their career goals, the report of 1997 noted that transition students were to be taught the processes through which to find a career goal, and/or to live as members of the unemployed: "Students are taught a range of skills to enable them make a realistic decision on prospective employment and to also teach them skills to use in other areas should they not attain permanent employment" (Appendix Number 2).

The programme started at Twemlow High in 1996 with 22 students. In 1997 the number had risen to 32, and 10 were turned away (Interview). However, the enrolments in the 1999 programme at Twemlow High were not voluntary. The school administration had enrolled students in the programme, and they were informed of their participation by letter during the summer break (Interview). Although one of the goals for the programme, as stated in Lois's report of 1997, was to maintain a maximum of thirty students, by the time of my study in 1999, the number of students had grown to 87 as a result of that unilateral enrolment procedure (Field notes, Interview).

The subject matter of the programme:

In 1998, the Unit Standards offered in the programme were:

56* Attend to Customer Enquiries face-to-face and on the telephone
62* Maintain Personal Presentation for the Workplace
497  Protect Health and Safety in the Workplace
525  Recognise sexual harassment and describe ways of responding to it
10780* Complete a work experience placement
10781  Produce a plan for own future directions
504  Produce a Curriculum Vitae
1293* Participate in a Predictable 1-1 Interview
1725  Negotiate an employment contract
3462* Learner Licence
6400* Manage First Aid (16 hours)
6402* CPR

* Unit Standards that were compulsory for the National Certificate in Employment Skills.

By the time of my observations in 2000, the programme was intended to qualify students to level one for the National Certificate in Employment Skills (NCES) (Appendix Number 3; Interview). The elements of the programme in that year consisted of Unit Standards:

497*  Protect Health and Safety in the Workplace
1978* Identify basic employment rights and responsibilities, and sources of information and assistance
3503* Participate in a team or group to complete routine tasks
4249* Demonstrate care and timeliness as an employee
10781* Produce a plan for own future directions
10792  Write letters
62  Personal Presentation for the Workplace
504  Produce a Curriculum Vitae
1293  Participate in a Predictable 1-1 Interview
4252  Produce a targeted CV
10780  Complete a work experience placement
3462  Learner's Licence
4248  Employer expectations in the workplace
4253  Obtain job-seeking skills
6400 Manage First Aid
6402 CPR
Thus, the programme was made up of those elements compulsory to level one of the NCES, and those required by the employers with whom consultation had been made.

Interviews

As mentioned above, I interviewed a number of people from various sectors, including the students in the programme. The semi-structured interviews were audio-taped with participants’ permission. I also obtained permission to take note of important points as they arose in the conversation, in order to pursue them further in the conversation (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). The conversations were usually about an hour in length. I transcribed each one as soon as possible on each occasion, and added line numbers in preparation for coding and categorising the raw data. I posted the transcription to the participant involved, with a written request to return it after noting any alterations the interviewee deemed necessary. Along with the request, I suggested a date about six weeks from the time of transcription, by which the participant might return the document to me. I advised that if I had not received the transcript by that date, and had received no other communication from the participant, I would take it as given that the participant viewed the transcription as a satisfactory representation of our interaction. Almost all participants returned their transcriptions with few or no changes.

Observations

Lois had divided the 87 students who were enrolled in the 1999 programme into three groups. There were 20 students in one class, 33 in another, and 34 in another. I began my observations in June 1999, and at first I attended the classes of all three groups. One group consisted of students with learning disabilities, and I chose not to continue to observe that group, because I found that their interactions with employers, and with workplace-based knowledge, were more limited than were those of the other two groups.
My decision to follow one of the remaining two groups through the programme was based on my initial impressions of the students themselves. I found the group of 33 to be more quiet, and more engaged with the class than was the group of 20 students. I chose the latter, more overtly non-conformist group as participants for my study, rather than the more quiet students, not only because it was the smaller of the two groups, but also because I believed those students to more clearly represent the 'at-risk youth' for whom the programme was intended. I thought that observing in the non-conformists' class would afford rich and varied data not only in terms of their relationship with both the teacher and the structure of the programme, but also, as I noted during my initial observations in their class, in their oppositional and fluctuating engagement with the content of the programme.

Classes in the 1999 work-readiness programme at Twemlow High were held four times a week, and each session lasted for one hour's duration. I attended almost all of the classes as I followed the class of 20 through the programme, from June until the end of the school year. I returned to the school in February and March 2000, to observe the initial components of the course that I had missed the previous year. During observations, I remained as unobtrusive as possible (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). In the first few days of my observations in the classroom, Lois explained to the students that I was from the University and that I was conducting research into the programme in which they were engaged. The students appeared to forget, or ignore, my presence almost as soon as it was explained.

I obtained Lois's permission to take brief notes during my observations in her classes, of events and circumstances that appeared to me to be particularly significant, and I also noted the work carried out on the whiteboard. In addition, on leaving the school, I recorded my impressions and memories of each class on a small tape recorder. As soon as possible after each occasion, I transcribed the notes taken in class, as well as the memoranda from the tape recorder, and added line numbers to the transcription. In that way, I was able to take detailed notes of many dimensions of the programme, such as the classroom environment; the nature of the material presented to students; the extent of students' engagement
with that material, and Lois’s interactions with students, as well as her chats with, and asides to, me (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998).

Lois’s interactions with me were both a positive and a negative factor in the research process. Although they provided rich data for my research, such as, for example, her thoughts about various students and their families, and about her own status within the school, her attention to me during class time was, I believe, one of the main reasons for my failure to gain more than a superficial understanding of the ways in which the boys constructed meaning from their participant in the programme. While I found that many of the girls were open in their responses during interviews, the boys answered my questions only with the rhetoric from the programme itself, from which it might appear that they had no opinion of the programme other than their belief in its potential to assist them to find jobs after leaving school. Although I attempted to probe their replies, in a manner suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1998), the boys resisted with closed responses, or silence. One of the reasons for their closed responses may have been that they perceived me to be aligned with their teacher, by age and gender as well as through her interactions with me, and therefore as not to be trusted with such personal communications as their thoughts about the programme.

As mentioned above, I also observed at two of the local meetings of the national transition teachers’ association. In addition, I attended some of the workplaces in which the students were engaged in work experience, and was allowed to observe some of them at their tasks, and to chat with their temporary employer.

Document Analysis

The third method of data collection used in this study was to draw upon documentary sources. According to Bogdan & Biklen (1998:137), documents pertaining to the research site affords a researcher access "to the official perspective", and such documents can "serve as sources of rich descriptions of how the people who produced the materials think about their world" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998:133). I gathered documents relating to the content of the programme from the private provider of education and from Lois. In that way, I gained a copy of the workbook in which the students began their work for the
year, and I was also often given a copy of the written exercises the students were required to complete in class. In addition, I was provided with the content, and reports, of the programme, as mentioned above, as well as with a record of the students' achievements in unit standards, and the school prospectus, timetable, and so on.

Data Analysis

Coding

As Taylor & Bogdan (1984, p. 130) write: "You must learn to look for themes by examining your data in as many ways as possible". I read and reread the data, looking for different ways in which construct knowledge from them, before deciding on final categories, codes, sensitising concepts and themes as per the process of modified analytic induction (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). Bogdan and Biklen (1998:63) explain modified analytic induction as an approach for "collecting and analyzing data, as well as a way to develop and test a theory". The progressive steps involved in modified analytic induction are:

1. Early in the research, formulate a rough definition and explanation of the particular phenomenon;
2. Hold the definition and explanation up to the formulation as they are collected;
3. Modify the definition and/or explanation as data arise that do not fit that definition and explanation;
4. Actively seek cases that may not fit into the formulation.
5. Redefine the phenomenon, and reformulate the explanation, until a universal relationship is established, using each negative case to call for a redefinition or reformulation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 65).

My methodology was therefore not prescriptive, in that it was subject to modification during the analysis process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). My analysis entailed three distinct phases: discovery, coding and discounting, which overlapped during the process. When I reached the initial stages of organising the data, I noted sentences and phrases that related to similar concepts. I annotated each group of data according to the concept that rendered them similar, and ascribed a heading to them, which was cross-referenced to the line
numbers which identified the raw data. In that way, I generated 699 codes, under 51 headings.

For example, one participant indicated to me that in his opinion, school-business partnerships set up the conditions in which the two parties may learn more about the environment in which the other operates, which I coded as 'mutual learning'. Another believed that school-business partnerships function to break down long-standing barriers to communication between the two sectors, which I coded as 'breaking sectoral barriers'. Both of those codes were then subsumed under the heading of 'sectoral communication through school-business partnerships/neo-vocationalism'. Two other codes: 'students learn about the jobs available to them', and 'students learn to respect employers' were headed as 'the benefits of school-business partnerships/neo-vocationalism'. Negative cases, such as data about the organisational problems involved in school-business partnerships, and in liaisons with employers about the work-readiness programme, were also coded and placed under headings (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998).

When all the data was coded and subsumed under headings, I grouped the headings into sensitising concepts (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998), again according to the similarity of the concepts contained in the heading. The heading of 'sectoral communication through school-business partnerships' and that of 'perceived benefits of school-business partnerships for those involved', were put under the sensitising concept of 'justifications for school-business partnerships/neo-vocationalism'. In turn, that sensitising concept of 'justification' was grouped with that of 'reciprocity between the two sectors', to inform the theme of 'legitimation of school-business partnerships/neo-vocationalism'. In that way, five themes emerged from the data. They were: legitimation; human resource managerialism; discipline and surveillance; socialisation, and positivist pedagogy.

I then cut up the sentences and phrases of the coded raw data, and filed the cuttings in envelopes under their headings. The envelopes were grouped under the sensitising concepts to which they referred, and finally, the sensitising concepts were filed together according to their overarching theme. In that way,
the data were organised and prepared for documentation, as the findings of the research.

The limitations of the research

Originally, I had hoped to present students' accounts of their experiences of school-business links, to complete the study of that phenomenon as an influence on their construction of meaning about themselves, their schooling and their place in society. However, as I explain more fully in a later chapter, I found that although some of the senior secondary girls who participated in the study were amenable to describing their reactions to, and understandings of, connections between private enterprise and their school, many of the girls and all of the boys resisted such opportunities. As a result, I have considered only the potential of school-business links to influence students' construction of meaning, without attempting to draw any conclusions as to the nature of such construction of meaning.

In addition, my focus has been on issues of socio-economic class arising from concepts of school-business partnerships, and I have restricted myself to class-based interpretations of the data. Consequently, in this thesis, I have not pursued gender-related issues pertaining to school-business links. Also, because the composition of the school roll was such that nearly all of the students in the case study were pakeha, I have not explored issues of ethnicity. Further, the research took the form of a qualitative case study. Therefore, I do not claim that it may be generalisable to all other schools in New Zealand.

The findings are set out in Chapters Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten. Before describing the findings, however, it is necessary for me, as a social constructionist, to place them in context. Accordingly, Chapter Four sets out the wider political and economic context in which school-business partnerships, and the programme of my study, are organised and implemented, while Chapter Five describes the educational context more specifically. Chapter Six explains the main theories relating to programmes such as the one of my study, in order to position the programme within the field of critical educational thought.
CHAPTER FOUR - THE NEW ZEALAND POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

In this chapter, I describe the major restructuring that took place within New Zealand’s political arrangements in the second half of the twentieth century. As the politics of social democracy gave way to those of neo-liberalism over that time, the philosophies, principles and policies which framed New Zealand’s society and economy underwent far-reaching changes, and concomitant changes took place in the processes of production of goods and services. These changes have informed and shaped fundamental changes in New Zealand’s educational system over the last two decades, in both general and vocational education, and therefore form the wider context against which the work-readiness programme of my study must be considered. To place the programme in its wider context in this way is important for the thesis because the advocacy of more intensified school-business links under that political shift acted as a mechanism through which the interests of the dominant neo-liberal politicians and industrialists can be seen to become paramount.

The Rise of the Social Democratic State

New Zealand’s first left-wing, social democratic Labour government entered office in 1935, when the social and economic vicissitudes of the Great Depression were still evident. Welfare policies were implemented in an attempt to avoid another such economic and social crisis (Rudd, 1997). After World War II, Keynesian welfarism became the dominant social and economic ideology in New Zealand, as in most industrialised Western countries. One of the most socially significant principles underpinning Keynesian policies was the drive to meet the long-term needs of the disadvantaged. That is, the main role of a social democratic government in the Keynesian era was to establish and sustain a welfare state, by taking an overtly directive role in economic and social issues in society (Kelsey, 1999).
Social Democratic Notions of a Just Society

In New Zealand's version of the Keynesian welfare state, priority was given to raising the standard of living for the mass of the population through such measures as establishing full and secure, long-term employment (Rudd, 1997); state housing projects (Rudd, 1997; Vowles, 1987), and the provision of a national health system (Rudd, 1997). Social security was at the centre of such policies, which were intended to ensure that previously disadvantaged groups, such as children, the elderly, invalids, and the unemployed, received a secure and adequate income and/or care (Rudd, 1997). Thus, the ostensible role of the Labour Government of the time was to redistribute the resources of New Zealand society in a just and equitable fashion, according to Keynesianism (Vowles, 1987). The philosophy of social justice and equity that underpinned that model of the welfare state held that labour should be rewarded justly and fairly, while the right of individuals or corporations to engage in an unconstrained pursuit of high levels of profit was seen as working against society's best interests (Jesson, 1999; Vowles, 1987).

Social Democratic View of Human Nature

As can be seen, the social democratic ideal of human nature was one of altruism, shared responsibility for a just society in welfarist terms, and community-mindedness. Individual competitiveness in acquiring and keeping as much of society's resources as possible was anathema to social democrats. Social engineering under social democracy was therefore a very different concept from that of neo-liberalism. For example, education was organised so that many children at school during the social democratic era were less aware than are those who have been educated under neo-liberalism of differences of social class and status between schools, and between social groups, in order to strengthen the perceived egalitarian nature of New Zealand's citizens.

Social Democratic View of the Role of the State

Accordingly, between 1935 and 1949, successive Labour Governments implemented state control over New Zealand's economy, as in, for example,
taking a protectionist stance in matters of overseas trade, with measures such as import licensing and limited foreign exchange. In addition, these governments intervened in establishing domestic interest rates, commodity prices, and individuals' wages and incomes (Rudd, 1997). Subsequent National Party governments of the period also took a social democratic stance, and the period between 1945 and 1973 came to be known to economists and sociologists as the 'long boom', which denoted the period as one of sustained economic growth for New Zealand (Armstrong et al, 1984; Roper, 1997). It was also a period of relative social stability, derived from the purported resolution, over that era, of the historical conflict between labour, and capital and the state. That is, the interests of capital were sustained by heightened profitability, and enhanced opportunities for productive investment, while the interests of both labour and the state were met by the state's intervention in the labour market and the workplace, through such policies as trade union support, and occupational wage setting (Roper, 1997).

The Demise of the Social Democratic State, and the Rise of the New Right

However, ongoing points of conflict between labour, capital and the state, such as, for example, the power of trade unions in representing the rights of workers, had been obscured by the general prosperity of the long boom. Such areas of conflict gradually grew in significance during the late 1960s, and were exacerbated when, in 1973, a sudden increase in oil prices precipitated another incipient world-wide economic crisis (O'Reilly, 1994; Roper, 1997). The financial and social vicissitudes that followed were reminiscent of those of the Great Depression, in that they adversely affected the relative prosperity that had been enjoyed by most New Zealanders, and the populations of many Western countries, since 1945 (King, 1987; O'Reilly, 1994).

As levels of unemployment rose and the profitability of private enterprise began to fall, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, advocates of the right-wing political and economic theories of neo-liberalism claimed that welfarism had directly contributed to, and exacerbated, the latest recession (King, 1987; Soucek, 1993). In neo-liberal thought, the taxes levied to support the fiscal demands on the state inherent in Keynesian welfarism policies had been eroding the resources and the
profitability of private enterprise in Western economies since 1945. Consequently, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the social and economic theories of Keynesianism were effectively undermined by those of neo-liberalism, or the New Right, which rose to political and economic dominance in the previously social democratic countries of North America and Europe, as well as Australia and New Zealand (King, 1987). The welfarist approaches to, and solutions for, social and economic issues that had been put in place during the post-World War II period were re-examined and altered, and, in some cases, abandoned by neo-liberal governments during the 1980s and 1990s, in favour of laissez faire free market economic principles (Boston and Holland, 1987; Roper, 1997; Treasury, 2000).

In New Zealand, the catalyst for the restructuring of the state according to neo-liberal ideology was the election of the fourth Labour Government in 1984 (Boston and Holland, 1987; Treasury, 2000). The strength of the movement was derived from economists, heads of private enterprise and political advocates of neo-liberal and neo-conservative policies, who collectively held that their approach to the re-organisation of the state under the economic principles of the free market would resolve the failure of the post-War consensus between labour, capital and the state, revive capital’s profitability and the bases of productive investment, and restore the quality of life of the mass of the population (King, 1987).

As the free market was extended into areas in which it either had not existed in New Zealand, such as government departments, or had been restricted by social democratic policies such as trade protectionism, the organisation and administration of both the public and the private sectors became dominated by managerial practices based on knowledge of the general field of finance, rather than of a particular area of manufacturing or civil service (Jesson, 1999). The ensuing change in the culture of New Zealand’s economy, from one based firstly on long-term investment in production and civil service to one based on short-term, speculative finance and competition within the free market, had far-reaching implications for the country’s social institutions, including the labour market and the work force.
In particular, neo-liberal financial and/or managerial experts have an homogeneous view of commerce and industry, in which it is thought that the production of goods and services can be organised according to formulaic economic principles which can be applied equally effectively to any area of manufacturing or service provision. Further, members of the national and international labour force are also seen to be homogeneous, and equally as reducible to formulaic management as any other factor in production. One of the main implications for labour of this short-term, formulaic approach of speculative investment capitalism was that the status which workers had previously gained from their occupational skills was undermined after the rise of neo-liberalism, as was the long-term job security through which labour was organised under a social democratic state (Jesson, 1999).

Neo-liberal notions of a just society:

Neo-liberal officials believed that competition in the national free markets of labour, commodities and services, which they saw as necessary for the strength of the country’s economy, had been negated by welfarist and trade protectionist policies under social democracy (Treasury, 1987). Competition in the free market, according to neo-liberal principles, would not only restore the strength of New Zealand’s economy, but would also implement a more just and efficient means through which to distribute the resources of society than did welfarism (Treasury, 1987).

In the neo-liberal view, the problems and issues that arise within society are seen to be resolved primarily through such economic measures, while society is perceived to be comprised of individual consumers rather than of community-minded citizens. The economic and social efficiency of production is seen to be enhanced in a competitive economic environment because the owners of capital are encouraged to build up the profitability of their enterprise, which, in turn, provides them with an incentive to monitor the people and processes involved in production, with a view to minimising production problems and costs. As a result, society, as a group of individual consumers, is seen to gain socially and economically through increased productivity and competitive pricing (Treasury, 1987).
New Zealand Treasury (1987:4), for example, defined the concept of competitiveness in terms of efficiency, innovation and pricing and opportunity costs, as: "Competition is a discovery procedure: a continuous search to find better ways of meeting consumer needs or to use resources more efficiently...[while] customers...and suppliers...jointly strive to reduce costs". Indeed, according to advocates of neo-liberalism, a capitalist enterprise is a socially beneficial organisation on its own account, on the grounds that it advocates the efficient production of goods and services for consumers, while concomitantly building social cohesion through economic processes such as, for example, the production processes of team work (Treasury, 1987).

Neo-liberal perceptions of human nature and rationality:

Keynesian welfarist interventions in many economic and social issues were subsequently minimised or revoked under neo-liberalism. Rather than primarily advocating the resolution of social concerns, as in Keynesian economics, neo-liberalism subscribed to the non-interventionist notion that when motivated by incentives, individuals will be self-sufficient, and will "...pursue their own ends and interests, even if altruism exists" (Treasury, 1987:2). Along with competition in the marketplace, the motivation for people to pursue their own ends: that is, to work towards their own personal and financial goals, while at the same time maintaining the strength of the national economy (Treasury, 1987) had been negated by social democratic welfare policies, according to neo-liberal thought.

Thus, after 1984, the view of human nature as held by dominant political and economic groups was that of opportunistic, competitive individualism rather than one of altruistic, socially cohesive communities, as had been the case in social democratic thought. The perceived necessity to promote entrepreneurialism, and to find incentives to encourage New Zealand’s population to demonstrate ideals of competitive, self-sufficient individualism in their private and work lives, and to induce an intensified commitment to work both within the labour force and among the unemployed, gained significance in political and economic policies. In the 1990 Briefing to the Incoming Government, for example, Treasury (1990) attributed the ailing national economy to grants and benefits paid to the unemployed, which, according to officials, appropriated the
bulk of government expenditure, and maintained the conditions in which
individuals may choose not to work. In other words, the unemployed were
lacking the self-motivated attitude, and/or the incentive, to find work, and
grants and benefits should be "...redesigned...to stop [benefit] abuse and give
weight to incentives to work...", in order to reduce the financial burden of
welfare on the state Treasury, 1990:3).

Neo-liberal thought of the time attributed the perceived lack of the 'right'
attitude towards work on the part of the population partially to a non-
autonomous quality in the decision-making of the latter. That is, policy-makers
assumed that the population's capacity for rational thought was constrained to
the point at which each individual, although opportunistic, was inherently
unable to fully grasp the complexity of the society and economy in which she or
he lives. As neo-liberal officials (Treasury, 1987:11) articulated:

Uncertainty about the future and the consequences of certain
actions derives from what may be called the bounded rationality of
individuals: that is, the inability of humans to comprehend fully the
nature of their environment, to anticipate or devise strategies to
cope with change and to communicate effectively with each other.
If individuals could fully anticipate and understand the network of
causes and effects that exist...the future could be anticipated, and
shaped, or strategies to cope with inescapable occurrences devised.
Given the existence of bounded rationality, people must plan on
the basis of a largely uncertain future, and they are forced to adapt
to change and adopt strategies that minimise risks. Uncertainty
then becomes something to be managed, never eliminated.

Thus, rather than the economic and social restructuring of neo-liberalism, the
bounded rationality of the New Zealand public was presented as the cause of
uncertainty and change in their lives. People were purported to lack the capacity
to understand the need for the fundamental and far-reaching changes wrought
by neo-liberalism, which were promoted as inevitable, and for which there was
no possible alternative mooted. Further, people were assumed to be unwilling to
take risks, such as those involved in adopting the self-sufficient, self-maximising
neo-liberal approach to life and work. It was believed that individuals therefore engaged in ad hoc strategies in an effort to resist the changes happening around them. In other words, according to the neo-liberal model, while people retained the concepts of social democratic philosophy, with its emphasis on taking responsibility for the welfare and the rights of citizens and of labour, and resisted the devolvement of financial and community responsibility to themselves as individuals and/or workers, the profit-making interests of private enterprise, and the economic interests of the nation could not be fully realised. Workers and their unions would continue to wield power through their potential to subvert the processes of production to fulfil their own interests, through resistance strategies such as strikes. At the same time, the unemployed and other welfare beneficiaries would continue to take the 'safe' option of the social wage, which would be sustained partially through taxing the profits of private enterprise.

The Neo-liberal State's view of Inducements and Incentives and Intervention:

The increasing levels of political interest in incentives to encourage job-seeking, and/or an intensified commitment to work, had stemmed partly from the rise in the numbers of unemployed during the late 1970s, which continued into the 1980s and 1990s. As at June 1990, for example, over half of the 8.8% of the labour force, or 140,000 individuals, who were receiving unemployment benefits had been unemployed for six months or longer (Treasury, 1990:5). The neo-liberal view of the problem was that the unemployed were choosing to receive the unemployment benefit, and to avoid seeking work, while the national economy was further adversely affected by those who, although holding jobs, were working at less than their full capacity.

One of the tenets of neo-liberalism held that, with the implementation of policy-based incentives, people could be encouraged to eliminate such manifestations of bounded rationality, and their tendency to subvert the interests of private enterprise. The population could be persuaded to internalise the principles of, and the purported necessity for, the sweeping changes wrought by neo-liberalism in order to "...align their interests with those of others" (Treasury, 1987:5; 12). That is, individuals could be encouraged to align their interests with those of private enterprise, and thus with the neo-liberal state and the national
economy (Treasury, 1987). According to neo-liberal thought, one policy that would provide a significant incentive for the unemployed to find work, and for workers to raise both their levels of skill and their productive capacity, would be to reduce the social wage.

Such a policy was seen as socially just, because the resulting rise in productivity would lead to rising incomes, in real terms, over time (Treasury, 1990). That is, according to neo-liberal thought (1987a), the population should be managed in such a way as to simultaneously minimise opportunism and promote incentives, in order to minimise the effects of bounded rationality, and economic uncertainty. Officials asked: "How can people's incentives be aligned so that for instance shirking at the workplace, or unco-operative behaviour or white collar crime, or neglect of scarce resources, is reduced...in order to marshal the activities of individuals towards common or consistent ends?" (Treasury, 1987a:12).

Structural adjustments to the labour market were seen as one way in which to achieve strong productivity growth across the economy (Treasury, 1990), in order to monitor the activities of individuals within the labour market and the labour force. Unemployed individuals were to be encouraged to find, and keep, jobs for their own ends: that is, for economic gain, and to bolster their self-esteem (Treasury, 1990). Employed members of the labour force were also expected to intensify their commitment to their work, which would be necessary for social and economic order, because the aim of high employment would be achieved through wage restraints, and/or a decline in wages (Treasury, 1990). The costs of production would thus be reduced for private enterprise, and the costs of welfare would be reduced for the state, while individuals would become more self-sufficient, more productive, more highly skilled, and more competitive (Treasury, 1990). As a result, New Zealand would become more competitive in the international marketplace (Treasury, 1990).

**Neo-liberals' view of the role of the state:**

Structural adjustments to the labour market were achieved through setting up contractual conditions in which the management of private enterprise might create relationships with labour that would enhance productivity and
profitability. The state would assist in the negotiation and reconciliation of contractors’ issues, including problems arising from the perceived opportunism and bounded rationality of the population: in other words, problems, such as labour strikes, which had the potential to negate the profitability and the economic benefits that neo-liberals perceive to be inherent in free market capitalism (Treasury, 1987), would be pre-empted or circumvented by the conditions of work written into employment contracts.

Rights and Responsibilities

If called for in the negotiation and reconciliation of issues in the labour market and the workforce, employment contracts would allow the state to use its coercive power to "...enforce rights, or relations between individuals" (Treasury, 1987:24). The choices made by individual employers and employees would determine rights as "...a matter of reason, not a matter of political favours, or an arbitrary exercise of power" (Treasury, 1987:26-31). Thus, employment laws were to be organised in such a way as to "...create rights and responsibilities that enable employment contracts to be established at whatever level suits the parties" (Treasury, 1990:12). However, while self-interest was believed to be 'natural', rights were not: "People do not have rights like they have noses. Rights are relative, and are grounded on the need for mutual observance and accommodation. Rights are things we give to each other" (Treasury, 1987:26). Rights, therefore, in that model of neo-liberal thought, were not a matter of natural justice, but rather were to be defined through the political processes of the state.

Neo-liberalism's view of Social Justice:

The concept of rights therefore turned on notions of freedom, in this model of neo-liberalism. Socially just freedom was seen as protecting individuals' right to act in their own interest, towards the achievement of their goals, unconstrained by unacceptable interference by others, including interventions by the state (Treasury, 1987). Accordingly, the Labour Relations Act of 1987 began the initial process of dismantling the welfare state by deregulating the labour market, and more comprehensive deregulation was provided by the Employment Contracts
Act of 1991 (Treasury, 2000). Minimum workplace standards, and the tenets of contract law, were the only two recognised judicial constraints on the relationship between employers and employees under the Employment Contracts Act (Treasury, 2000). The notions of social justice subsumed under the Employment Contracts Act in general, and minimum workplace standards in particular, can be seen to have significantly shaped the content of the programme of my study, as I shall demonstrate.

The economic context of my study

During 1994 and 1995, those years immediately prior to the implementation of the programme of my study, New Zealand's economy began to recover from the vicissitudes of the late 1980s (Treasury, 1996). Neo-liberal advocates, however, saw no grounds for complacency, and continued to concentrate on strengthening the profitability of private enterprise. Officials claimed that, while New Zealand was seen to be competing successfully in the global marketplace, economic prospects had not yet been turned into real financial gains for individuals or for the country, and a consistently strong, on-going focus on the abilities and skills of New Zealanders was seen to be crucial for the country's continued success in the global marketplace (Treasury, 1996).

The significance of New Zealanders' skills for the country's success in the global marketplace was perceived to lie predominantly in small production batches, and niche marketing, rather than in primary agricultural goods and the mass production of commodities, as had been the case since the 1950s (Treasury, 1996). That shift in focus had implications not only for the labour market, but also for education. Both the more formal skills in mastering mathematics, literacy and language, and the personal skills to be drawn upon for working and living together, were seen by neo-liberals as the "...vital ingredients in the recipe" for successful change in production (Treasury, 1996:11). Thus, those 'vital ingredients' indicate that not only the occupational skills, but also the personal qualities, of the work force were seen as crucial for the successful and profitable production of goods and services, and for New Zealand's position in the global market.
The processes of production of goods and services:

As mentioned above, changes took place concomitantly in the political and economic structure of New Zealand, and in the processes of production of goods and services. One of the outcomes of these changes was that employers came to modify their expectations of their workers. For example, and as I detail more thoroughly later in this and other chapters, the personal qualities of workers have become increasingly significant for employers' successful pursuit of profit. Such is the case perhaps more particularly in the provision of services than in manufacturing industries. As the figures below demonstrate, service industries are becoming more and more significant for New Zealand, as for other Western countries, than was the case in the social democratic era of mass production.

By June 1999, manufacturing accounted for 17.4% of New Zealand's gross domestic product (Treasury, 2000:20). Although agricultural products had continued to provide the foundation for New Zealand's economy between 1984 and 2000, despite the droughts of 1997-1998, and 1998-1999 (Treasury, 2000:25), some agricultural commodities producers had engaged in the manufacturing of value-added commodities, in order to reach a wider customer base in the global marketplace. Thus, agricultural products such as meat and dairy products were undergoing value-added processing to a far greater extent than was the case in the mass production era of the 1950s and 1960s (Treasury, 2000:24).

However, it was the service sector that enjoyed the biggest growth after 1984, to account for approximately 60% of the economy and 70% of the workforce in March, 2000 (Treasury, 2000:27). Service industries underwent double the growth of the economy as a whole, in the year to September 1999 (Treasury, 2000:27). Within the service sector, while restaurants and hotels accounted for about 30% of the service sector activity, tourism became one of the major contributors to the economy (Treasury, 2000:28). In the year to December 1999, for example, the country's earnings from tourism increased by over 22%, as the sector generated almost four billion dollars of revenue from international visitors (Treasury, 2000:28). The rising dominance of these areas of the service sector were extremely significant for both education and the labour market, and thus for school-business links and the programme of my study, because employers'
expectations of schools include the production of school-leavers who are readied for available work, rather than for specific types of jobs, the nature of which are changing over time.

Theories pertaining to change in production processes:

The recent rise to dominance of such areas of service industries in New Zealand, and other industrialised Western countries, was seen by some economists and theorists as the main feature of Western economies in the late twentieth century, although there are debates as to the extent of that change (Carter, 1997; Field, 1999; Gleeson and Hodkinson, 1999; Kinchloe, 1995; O'Reilly, 1994). Some theorists argue that the mass production techniques of Fordism continue to be the dominant mode of enterprise organisation in Western countries. Others hold that neo-Fordist workplace practices, such as part-time and temporary work, job-sharing, and short-term contracts (O'Reilly, 1994) have become significant to the extent, for example, that they have undermined the Keynesian 'one-job-for-life' principle of full employment. Neo-Fordism, in its emphasis on the role of managers as overseers in the production processes, and the disempowerment of labour unions (Brown and Lauder, 1997), is seen also to have exacerbated the existing divisions, based on skill and status, within the labour force.

On the other hand, the notion of the post-Fordist workplace (Soucek, 1993), although it infers a consensus between labour, capital and the state which is reminiscent of that of the social democratic era, nevertheless relies on value-added production processes for which an innovative, committed workforce is essential (Brown and Lauder, 1997). The production processes under which that commitment is subsumed, as well as the stimulation of such a commitment in workers, are features of the change which is seen to be taking place in the contemporary production of goods and services. One of the key factors in the change to value-added manufacturing and service processes is employers' current requirement for flexibility on the part of the workforce.
The significance of interpretations of 'flexibility' for Fordism, post-Fordism and neo-Fordism:

The demand for flexibility in the labour market is thought, by post-Fordist theorists, to illustrate changing labour processes, in which the previous general division of labour into the primary and secondary sectors is evolving into core, peripheral and external workers (Sayers, 1993). At the top of the occupational hierarchy in this model are the core, multi-skilled production managers and workers. A casualised peripheral workforce is next, including service workers. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the workers in the older-style mass production or Fordist industries, many of whom have become external, or contracted, workers (Sayers, 1993).

While some employers take a numerically flexible approach, in that they engage enough manufacturing or service workers to cover the required competencies for production, albeit on a short-term, part-time or casual basis, others take a functionally flexible approach, and hire fewer, multi-skilled staff who can cover various functions in the workplace (O'Reilly, 1994). Regardless of the approach taken by employers, however, the concept of labour flexibility in general can be seen to subsume workers' tolerance of uncertain working conditions, such as fluctuating wages, and unstable, casual or short-term employment, wrought by the restructuring of the economy under neo-liberal economic policies (O'Reilly, 1994).

Such problematic aspects of numerical or functional flexibility, however, do not preclude an increasing interest, as shown by heads of corporations, in labour flexibility generally as an expression of commitment to production which can be required of workers (O'Reilly, 1994). Overall, employers' interest in the flexibility of the work force is concerned with the extent to which workers can adapt their competencies and their attitudes to changes in the production of goods and services, as described above, to meet the often rapidly-changing demands of consumers, and therefore of the market in goods and services (O'Reilly, 1994; Field, 1999).
At the same time, managerial structures also appear to be undergoing structural changes. The traditional, rigidly top-down hierarchical system of managerial control is seemingly being replaced, to a greater or lesser extent, by a flatter management structure. The latter is perceived to allow for more flexible managerial systems than is the case with the former (Gleeson and Hodkinson, 1999). Further, as well as structural changes, as described above, qualitative changes also appear to be influencing the traditional relationship between management and labour. That is, the drive to create an innovative and committed workforce appears to be disestablishing divisions between the mental labour of management and the manual labour of the shop floor, as line operatives and service personnel are encouraged to contribute their knowledge and expertise to facilitate the process of production (Gleeson and Hodkinson, 1999). In that way, changes in both managerial and shop-floor processes reinforce the requirement for commitment to work on the part of all workers.

Both neo-Fordist and post-Fordist elements of production, as described by Brown and Lauder (1997:175), are reflected in these changes in production. Neo-Fordist principles are highlighted, for example, in the drive to reduce the strength of labour unions, and to cut production costs, such as wages, through the Employment Contracts Act, as described above. On the other hand, however, a post-Fordist influence is evident in Treasury’s (1987) imperative for highly-waged, highly-skilled jobs, and in situations in which firms engage in production based on small batch and niche markets, and value-added processes.

Consequently, any attempt to categorise contemporary production processes as either/or neo-, post- or Fordist is not possible. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, I argue, as does O’Reilly (1994) that in general, Fordist systems of mass production; high-volume sales; labour regulation, and the processes of profit accumulation have been subjected to pressure for change in various ways, since the economic recession of the 1970s. Subsequently, especially since the 1980s, labour markets, including that of New Zealand (Treasury, 2000), have become oriented towards more flexible production and service organisation than was the case when mass production was the dominant technique (O’Reilly, 1994; Field, 1999). Further, bearing in mind Treasury’s (2000) description of the economy, as set out above, the way in which the service sector of the economy is
growing, while the manufacturing sector is being diminished to a corresponding degree (Gleeson and Hodkinson, 1999; Williams and Raggatt, 1999), gains significance for this study, as does the managerial drive to cultivate an innovative, flexible and committed labour force.

**Human Resource Management**

The principles which guide the management and supervision of employees (McInerney and LeFever, 2000), known collectively as human resource management, have been advocated as the main mechanism through which private profit, and national economic success, may be regained and maintained. As Holbeche (1999:7) writes: "Leveraging human resources has been widely accepted as the key to competitive advantage". Human resource managerialism functions on the assumption that the commodification of labour is both inevitable and natural, although, according to Wright (YEAR) there are two strands of such management. While one, the 'hard' approach, emphasises the quantitative, profit-seeking factors in workplace arrangements, the other, 'soft', version has its roots in the human relations school of management, and stresses communication, worker motivation, and leadership.

The human relations view of management was founded largely on a series of studies of work conducted by behaviourist psychologists in America during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The studies culminated in the theory that the key to productivity is to demonstrate concern for the circumstances and the conditions in which workers labour, so that they would be more satisfied with their occupational position, and would produce more as a result. Subsequently, in the 1940s, Maslow's theory of motivation was taken up by human resource management. Maslow's theory holds that people have a hierarchy of needs, starting from physiological needs such as food and warmth, to the physical need to be safe, to the emotive need for a sense of belonging and for esteem, to the highest need, that of self-actualisation. Maslow's theory of self-actualisation was incorporated into human resource management theory, with the idea that workers may be encouraged to think that they may reach their full personal potential through a commitment to workmanship in producing goods and services for private enterprise (Bartol et al, 1995/1996/1997).
In the 1960s, McGregor's dichotomous Theory X and Theory Y, relating to manager's perceptions of workers, also gained prominence in human resource management theory. McGregor's Theory X managers perceived workers to be lazy, unambitious, irresponsible, and work-shy. Accordingly, managers treated these workers as needing to be coerced, controlled, directed, or threatened with punishment, in order to make them work towards the firm's goals. Theory Y managers, on the other hand, were aligned with the human relations school of human resource management, as they felt that workers were capable of self-control and self-discipline, creativity, and innovation, while seeking to fulfil their own higher-level needs within the context of the workplace. The latter ideas appeal to managers who are interested in more efficient production through the reinforcement of workers' commitment to the production process, and are still in use (Bartol et al., 1995/1996/1997).

As McInerney and LeFever (2000) write, and as I have noted in the context chapter, the contemporary trend towards 'managing' people's attitudes to, skills in and knowledge about their work stems from business improvement strategies such as quality assurance, or quality management. Quality assurance techniques draw on the earlier theories of the human relations school of management. For example, some behaviourist elements of human resource management psychology, especially that of positive reinforcement, are clearly evident in notions of quality management. Rewards for work done, for instance: "...are critical to employee involvement, because employees need to see the link between their own behaviour and corporate performance" (Rao et al., 1996:465). Such rewards are therefore not limited to the exchange of money for labour. For example, under the scheme in which information to do with the production process appears to be shared with workers, employees are expected to recognise "the impact of their actions and their work" on the workplace (Rao et al., 1996:462). "As more and more organisations downsize to increase their productivity and reduce costs, involving employees in their work reaps organisational rewards. With fewer layers of management to supervise work ... organisations must have employees that [sic] can make decisions about their work" (Rao et al., 1996:464). One of the ways in which workers are thought to become committed to problem-free production is through the practice of seemingly autonomous work groupings, or team-work (Willis, 1977).
Team work is presented in quality management literature in terms of empowerment for workers, in that the teams in which they work are purportedly self-managing. The members of such teams are said to make decisions such as rates of pay for team members, and the setting of production schedules. To these ends, the teams are given some financial and performance data by management, and trained to interpret this information. Fewer management personnel are needed for worker supervision, because team-workers supervise and carry out surveillance of their fellow-workers. Fewer supervisory officials, workers' possession of financial and production information, and recognition of their input into production processes theoretically creates a sense of belonging to a less hierarchical workplace, which, in turn, purportedly motivates and empowers workers (Rao et al, 1996). As one human resource management text puts it: "Essentially, employees should be encouraged ... to control their destiny, and participate in the daily life and processes of the organisation" (Rao et al, 1996:462).

However, further examination of human resource management literature revealed a conflict with such claims. According to the literature, production data are managed by senior or high-level staff, who select the amount and type of information given to employees, and control the analyses they make. Seemingly empowered teams are overseen by senior managers "with authority and clout in the organisation" (Rao et al, 1996:507). Production is controlled by statistical processes rather than the input of workers, and quality benchmarks are settled by management. Thus, although employees are encouraged to think they are making decisions in quality assurance workplaces, "... not ... all decisions must go to all levels; rather it means only that each employee has the information, the perspective, the tools, and the power to make decisions that affect his or her performance" (Rao et al, 1996:462).

The managerial rhetoric of the workplace, such as, for example, job satisfaction and a personal input into one's labour, functions to foster the notion of workers as decision-makers (Bates, 1984). That rhetoric is congruent with the theories of human resource management, the practices of which are directed towards such aims as: assisting employees to recognise their inadequacies and ways to improve their work performance; motivating workers to anticipate the ways in
which the company may require new skills and knowledge from them, and enabling workers to acquire insights into the goals of the enterprise, so that workers may align their own financial aims and goals with those of the firm, and thus be motivated to meet the firm's expectations. Some of the means by which these aims are to be met are through demonstrating an understanding of employees' aptitudes and aspirations, providing constructive criticism and feedback, giving positively reinforced choices for workplace learning, and facilitating ways in which individuals become responsible for their own development as workers (Rastogi, 2000).

Ultimately, the objective of the capitalist enterprise is not to develop individuals' personal capacities, but to retain customers' loyalty, in order to maintain a customer base which, in turn, sustains competitive advantage and profitability (Murphy and Zandvakili, 2000; Willis, 1977). Accordingly, human resource management strategies are intended to ensure that while the internal requirements of the organisation's production needs are met, the focus remains mainly on the needs of the customers of the enterprise. For example, human resource strategies may prepare workers to anticipate customers who wish to experience qualitative, personalised service, and comprehensive product knowledge. Or, if customers are attracted by the ability of a company to undercut the prices of its competitors, human resources are directed towards cost-effective, quantitatively productive modes of production (Murphy and Zandvakili, 2000).

Contemporary employers, however, have further demands of their employees, in order to gain competitive advantage in the marketplace. For example, the economic rhetoric of downsizing, rationalization, and efficiency in meeting performance benchmarks subsumes rhetorical terms such as lean teams, and multi-tasking, which, in turn, obscure an intensification of work which has become more marked over the last two decades. That is, whether people are working in industry or in services, work intensification means that they are now being asked to work longer hours, under more pressure, than was the case during the 1950s and 1960s (Jamieson, 1995; Willis, 1977).
Strategies of quality assurance human resource managerialism can be seen to reflect such intensification of work. That is, as mentioned above, management personnel, rather than shop-floor workers, design the production process. Management therefore control the intensity of labour that is expended in production. The apparently greater 'responsible autonomy' of shop-floor workers is based on an organisational theory under which workers use their intelligence and their labour effort in willing co-operation with management and engineers, the ultimate purpose of which is to sustain the profitability of the company. To illustrate, team-work under 'just-in-time' management eliminates waste partially in the form of non-productive workers, while remaining workers intensify their labour to maintain production (Lipietz, 1997). Such methods of cutting the costs of production reflects that: "the overarching purpose of a company [with] a total quality management programme is to be more competitive" in the marketplace (Rao et al, 1996:vii). Towards that end, the economic performance quotient of the company is partly deduced from profit derived from the work of the value-added employee, for which 'value-added' was defined as: "...the difference between revenue received, and expenditures on purchased materials, components, and energy" (Rao et al, 1996:35).

The significance for private enterprise' profitability of expenditure on the energy of labour, and on adding 'value' to that energy, is important for this thesis. That is, as explained above, one aspect of human resource management, as in the purposive management of labour energy towards the increasingly intensified, but efficient and profitable, production of goods and services, is employers' attempts to motivate employees to understand work as the main means through which personal aims and goals may be realized, and workers' self-actualisation may be achieved. In that sense, contemporary human resource management theory takes into account not only the occupational skills of workers, but also their personalities and personal lives, in the pursuit of profit.

School-business partnerships are significant for this process of incorporating workers' personal lives and personalities into the workplace. That is, as Jamieson's (1985:24) theory holds: "The problems that employers have with young workers is at the heart of the schools-industry movement". Young working class employees are believed, by many employers, to be particularly
disinclined to see their own future interests in terms of the profitability of the firm at which they are employed. The intensification of the school-business partnership movement is seen to address the problem by attempting to eliminate the frequent absenteeism, lateness, disrespect, and similarly irresponsible attitudes which, employers claim, mark the behaviour of young employees (Jamieson, 1985; Ball, 1999).

At the same time, to compound the 'youth problem' as perceived by employers, the state has also become increasingly concerned about the behaviour of the young. For example, acts of vandalism and truancy by state school students in New Zealand, especially among those from working- or under-class backgrounds, are seen to be increasing. Wider social problems derived from youth crime and delinquency, such as that involved in the abuse of drugs, and conflict over ethnicity and social class, are also perceived to be increasing (Treasury, 1987b). In addition, as explained in the first chapter, young people have featured predominantly in the ranks of the unemployed over the last two decades. The high level of youth unemployment was ascribed to a lack of work ethic, motivation and so on, on the part of the young (Finn, 1985; Cohen, 1984; Ball, 1999) as well as to their perceived lack of employable skills (Lee, 1989). Thus, the working class young have come under close scrutiny from both employers and the state.

Further, schooling itself was seen, by neo-liberal advocates and by many employers, as failing to instil appropriate skills and attitudes into the working class (Dale, 1985; Ball, 1999), and thus to be ineffective in producing young people prepared for work and for society (Jamieson, 1985; Treasury, 1987b). For example, employers hold that many school-leavers are ignorant of, and show insufficient respect for, the importance of industry and commerce in the creation of national wealth (Dale, 1985; Ball, 1999). A Vocational Training Council survey found that eighty percent of employers believed that the education system, especially at secondary level, did not contribute to New Zealand's economic performance. Further, while employers are increasingly complaining about not only the attitudes, but also about the basic skills held by school leavers, neo-liberal economists purport that the economic and social integration functions of education are not being fulfilled (Treasury, 1987b:141).
Neo-liberal policy-makers held that state secondary education had failed to recognise that the jobs becoming predominant in the labour market required a higher level of skill than was the case in previous years, which, in turn, suggested that workers in the future must be increasingly more adaptable and trainable. For example, the nature of existing vocational courses, such as metal work and typing, were thought to be not only irrelevant to the labour market, but also to be failing to assist low-achieving students to find work (Treasury, 1987b). Neo-liberal policy-makers claim that a more effective education system would be characterised by school-leavers who are more socially responsible, which would, in turn, lower both workplace absenteeism and employee turnover. The result would be to increase productivity, and to contribute to the improved performance of firms through well-grounded, albeit average, students’ competencies in mathematics, science, and other aspects of education in general (Treasury, 1996). In that way, the state has taken from employers the responsibility for processes of work socialisation, which previously had been an integral part of leaving school and entering the work force, and placed that responsibility on the school as a part of its economic function (Finn, 1985).

School-business partnerships were seen as a mechanism through which to render schooling more efficient in fulfilling its economic functions, and thus as a remedy for the ‘problems’ of workplace behaviour, and unemployment, as presented by youth (Finn, 1985; Cohen, 1984; Ball, 1999; Jamieson, 1985). Accordingly, the measures taken in senior secondary schooling through school-business partnerships, such as vocational courses, work experience schemes and transition education, are those deemed necessary by educational policy-makers and employers to remedy such problems, and to prepare young working class people for entry into the labour market and the workplace (Castells et al, 1999). In other words, as a factor in human resource management that can be seen to set up the conditions in which increasingly adaptable and trainable employees are prepared for their entry into the labour market and the work force, the contemporary intensification of school-business partnerships has had an impact upon the nature of vocational education.
Total Quality Management: the exemplar

I have chosen Total Quality Management (TQM) to exemplify such changes in approaches to production in New Zealand, because since the mid-1980s, the principles of TQM have significantly influenced both manufacturing and service industries, in both the public and private sectors (Sullivan, 1994). TQM incorporates an approach to the production of goods and services which takes into account the personal characteristics and individual aims of workers at all levels of an organisation, in order to encourage workers to commit themselves to the production process more fully than employers have believed to be the case in the past. In turn, such a commitment is intended to strengthen the profitability of the firm. I will argue that the approach to production exemplified by TQM has implications for not only the nature and form of school-business partnerships, but also for the teaching and learning that takes place in New Zealand's education system, particularly for the content of vocational programmes such as that of my study.

Although TQM, as a term, covers several approaches to production, such as just-in-time manufacturing, and zero-inventory production, which focus on the economic efficiency of labour (Lederer, 1997), generally speaking, all are oriented to a view of production as a process, rather than as a series of juxtaposed but discrete areas of activity which are complete in themselves (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). The inter-related aims that various TQM systems share are to improve productivity along with the quality of the finished product, whether it be a commodity or a service (Lederer, 1997), and to meet customers' requirements as closely as possible (Rao et al, 1996).

TQM, as a system of commodity and service provision, has evolved from the necessity for managerial control over production processes, and especially over the labour involved. The system has developed the monitoring and management of product quality from the Fordist technique of quality control, as in the inspection of the finished product, to one of quality assurance. That is, rather than attempting to maintain quality by means of trial and error and the detection of defective units, TQM concentrates on monitoring a continuously improving production process, towards the goal of zero defects (Dasu, Erickson, and
Grahovac, 1997; Lederer, 1997; Rao et al, 1996). In this model, the production of any given commodity or service can be improved by incorporating an ongoing drive for excellence into the entire process (Rao et al, 1996). In order to do so effectively, employees at every level of an organisation must become committed to the concept of product excellence. Such a commitment, in turn, is seen by advocates of TQM to promote a non-hierarchical approach to the organisation of the workplace (Lederer, 1997; Wruck and Jensen, 1997), as employees at every level work together towards the attainment of zero defects, and thus towards profitable enterprises.

One of the reasons for the intensification of international interest in TQM as a system of production, on the part of commodity and service providers, stems from that inherent imperative of continuous improvement towards flawless products (Lederer, 1997; Peratec Limited, 1991/1994; Rao et al, 1996; Sullivan, 1994). Such a focus on quality is vital for a contemporary capitalist enterprise, because the global free market has generated a move towards standardised quality benchmarks. A focus on quality, and the securing of ISO 9000 certification, as set by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), have become important to producers for securing a competitive edge in the global marketplace and for maintaining profitability (Rao et al, 1996; Sullivan, 1994). Thus, issues of quality and quality assurance are seen as central to business planning, and incorporate inspection and standardisation, all of which depends upon reliable engineering, and a responsible, committed work force throughout the production process (Lederer, 1997). The preoccupation with quality thus permeates every sphere of employment within a TQM firm.

The meeting of customers' requirements is also fundamental to the practice of TQM, in the sense that all work is performed for a customer, and therefore the customer determines the value of products and services in the free marketplace (Rao et al, 1996). As customers' requirements change over time, the onus is on all employees to be aware of, and to understand, the needs of the customer, and to meet those needs (Rao et al, 1996). Successful TQM therefore relies on innovative employees, and on getting new ideas to the market as quickly as possible (Rao et al, 1996), which supports theories of post-Fordism in production.
As well as their commitment to the production of high quality commodities or services, employees' capacity to determine and to set goals, such as one- and five- year production plans, is integral to the TQM system, and it follows that the sum of employees' competencies is seen to define the competencies of the company (Rao et al, 1996). Accordingly, value in products and services is created and sustained by the efficient use of knowledge and skills by everyone, at all levels of the firm (Wruck and Jensen, 1997).

Thus, TQM turns on all employees' commitment to the goals of the firm, which, as well as the promise of financial reward, is seen to motivate them to co-operate with the requirements of quality assurance as they work. Consequently, the rewards and incentives which TQM provides for employees are based not only on pay and bonuses, but also on recognition for their direct contribution to the reduction of problems in the production process, and/or in maintaining the safety of the workplace, and so on (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). As well as employees' involvement in the operation of the firm, TQM processes also emphasise labour flexibility, communication, and teamwork, to reduce resistance that workers exhibit towards the currently uncertain nature of the conditions under which they are employed (Rao et al, 1996; Wruck and Jensen, 1997).

Quality assurance in the provision of services

As in the production of commodities, quality assurance in the provision of services is monitored on the basis of customer satisfaction (Apte, Karmarkar, and Pitbladdo, 1997). TQM tenets hold that high-quality, efficient service, and consequent customer satisfaction, determines both the firm's profitability, and its share of the customer base within the market. However, service industries represent a challenge to the processes of TQM, because the efficiency of the service provided by an employee depends, in large part, on the extent to which customers introduce unpredictable variables into the interaction. For example, customers' perceptions of the ways in which a service is provided render the output of the employee intangible and difficult to measure (Apte, Karmarkar, and Pitbladdo, 1997).
To counter such a difficulty in reviewing employees' performance, their participation in the process of excellence in service provision, rather than the end result of the process, is used as criteria against which to measure their performance. Standardised specifications for customer service are drawn up, to control the degree to which the delivered service corresponds to employers', and customers', expectations. Such specifications cover the service per se, the quality of the communication between the employee and the customer, and the degree to which the employee performed according to the customer's expectations (Apte, Karmarkar, and Pitbladdo, 1997).

Accordingly, rather than referring to the number of satisfied customers as a measure of an employee's performance over time, TQM monitors any given employee's performance by taking into account the degree to which she has drawn specifically on the precepts she has learned in her training, to meet each customer's requirements (Apte, Karmarkar, and Pitbladdo, 1997). Such criteria highlights the significance, for capital, of training programmes in aligning the goals of labour with those of private enterprise.

The place of Human Nature and Rationality in TQM:

Attempts to align workers' personal goals with those of capital brings to the fore the importance of workers' personal qualities, characteristics and values, which gain as much significance for employers as do employees' occupational skills. The significance of employees' personal qualities for quality assurance managerialism lies in the assumption that the constant quest for excellence in products and services is, or should be, equally valued by all concerned in the production process. Further, as the aim of excellence valorises the notion of constant improvement in work carried out, the TQM model of production assumes that any person's perspective of him- or herself, and his or her own way of life, albeit at their occupation, at home, or in wider society, can, and should, always be improved. Towards that end, in TQM's vision of 'improvement', the personal goals of workers, and those of the company, are presumed to be inter-related (Rao et al, 1996). As the dichotomous notion of capital and labour as 'us' and 'them' is seen to be displaced in that way, TQM advocates claim that the system promotes flexibility in the work force, by challenging Fordist 'rigidities',
such as the strength of unions, the implementation of strict work rules, and other sources of conflict between labour and management (Wruck and Jensen, 1997).

The rationale for such a managerial approach is two-fold. On the one hand, employees' belief that they have an ownership in the goals of the firm may eliminate the necessity for the supervision and control of low-level workers (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). On the other hand, all employees, including those whose work has traditionally been less supervised, are more likely to aim for the problem-free production of high-quality commodities or services if their own goals are aligned with those of the firm (Dasu, Erickson and Grahovac, 1997). While the output of any given organisation is shaped by the competencies of its workers, the culture of that organisation is shaped by the degree to which its workers commit to the company's codes of behaviour and attitude (Rao et al, 1996).

Accordingly, the TQM model draws on the behavioural approach to management, which is reminiscent of neo-liberalism's concept of bounded rationality, in its assumption that, if unguided, people will take actions in their lives and their work that are based on misinformed, untested and/or erroneous decisions. Therefore, in this model, individuals should be taught to engage in quasi-rational behaviour, to empower them to make decisions based on cost-benefit analyses of their options (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). In other words, employees should learn to make rational decisions about their work and their personal future which take into account the likely costs to themselves of a lack of commitment to the organisation for which they work.

TQM and incentives

Behavioural theorists claim to have noted a heightened commitment to, and motivation for, work on the part of employees who believe they are receiving more autonomy and power in their job (Dasu, Erickson, Grahovac, 1997), and the concept of incentives is as prominent in the tenets of TQM as in those of neo-liberalism. In the principles of quality assurance, employees must be motivated to create and use knowledge effectively in the specific pursuit of problem-free production and zero defects (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). Such increased
motivation, in turn, leads to higher productivity (Dasu, Erickson, Grahovac, 1997). Thus, as an incentive, employees are encouraged to feel a sense of participation in, and responsibility for, the production process (Dasu, Erickson and Grahovac, 1997; Rao et al, 1996).

According to TQM principles:

Employees should be encouraged, through culture, systems and practice, to control their destiny and participate in the daily life and processes of the organisation. In order to participate effectively, employees need power, information, knowledge and rewards that are relevant to business performance. Only then will employees be able to make decisions that affect productivity (Rao et al, 1996:462).

According to that model, when the theory of quasi-rational behaviour has been brought to bear on evaluations of employees' performance, one expected outcome is that employees' decision-making at work will bring into play the valuable knowledge they hold about their job, as they apply problem-solving approaches to production (Wruck and Jensen, 1997). All individuals are trained to use a scientific approach to decision-making at all times. That is, employees are expected to methodically and systematically investigate the nature and circumstances of problems that arise in production, and to decide on effective and efficient remedies which pre-empt a repetition of the problem, in an attempt to ensure trouble-free production processes in the future. In other words, TQM claims to use factual data and logic to "...discover the scientific underpinnings of quality, so that observed phenomena can be understood and future events can be predicted" (Lederer, 1997:2-4; see also Wruck and Jensen, 1997).

Towards that end, employees are trained to: identify production problems; create a flow-chart of processes associated with the problem; generate, in teams, possible hypotheses as to the cause of the problem; produce a cause-and-effect diagram to illustrate the problem; collect and analyse data related to the problem; draw up possible remedies, and focus organisational resources on the agreed remedy (Peratec Limited, 1991/1994; Rao et al, 1996; Wruck and Jensen, 1997).
Once those processes are in place, decision-making rights appear to be transferred, on a temporary basis, from management to production workers (Peratec Limited, 1991/1994; Rao et al, 1996; Wruck and Jensen, 1997). Nevertheless, in spite of the TQM rhetoric that holds that "...employees should be encouraged, through culture, systems and practice, to control their destiny..." (Rao et al, 1996:462) as outlined above, shared decision-making does not necessarily mean that machine operators have the same input into policies as do members of management. Rather, the autonomy of each employee is limited by having the information, the motivation, and the power to make decisions that affect only his or her own performance (Rao et al, 1996), while the quality assurance process is closely monitored by management (Wruck and Jensen, 1997).

**Learning in TQM**

Such aspects of a TQM workplace are taken into account in employee training (Rao et al, 1996). As in human resource management generally, the process of training in TQM is concerned with aligning the skills and commitment of employees with the pursuit of the firm's goals (Collins, 1995; Rao et al, 1996; Sullivan, 1994). Training is therefore an important component of the approach, in that it is seen as a way to influence employees' behaviours and attitudes, in order to increase the probability that they would learn to align their goals with those of private enterprise (Sullivan, 1994).

There are several aspects to training for a job in a TQM-driven workplace. In order to maintain the efficiency of production meetings, for example, working and communicating in the context of teams requires workers to learn efficient and effective ways to influence one another, manage the team's dynamics, and discuss matters with people who are higher than they in the management hierarchy. Employees should therefore be knowledgeable about the roles of management and teams. Training for TQM workplaces is intended also to raise workers' awareness of the TQM processes (Rao et al, 1996). Thus, as mentioned above, a pre-requisite for the implementation of TQM processes is to train employees in thorough and efficient methods of identifying and remedying problems in production (Wruck and Jensen, 1997) in a workplace environment.
devoted to the improvement of quality. Training also includes the management of employees' relationships with customers, the maintenance of customer satisfaction, and effective interactions with suppliers (Rao et al, 1996).

Learning is seen as the key to TQM's imperative of problem- and fault-free production. The rationale for TQM is that because production is a process, knowledge may be applied in order to control and improve it (Swersey, Ishii, and Takamori, 1997). When the parameters of production have been set, and the factors that may impact upon production are understood, the knowledge, the capabilities and the commitment of the machine operators and the line workers represent the remaining variables to be controlled and manipulated towards the aim of problem-free production and the delivery of excellent products or service to customers (Mukherjee and van Wassenhove, 1997). Therefore, the content, and extent, of employees' learning has come to be seen as vital to the production process (Swersey, Ishii, and Takamori, 1997).

The focus on problem-solving and technical creativity in workers' approach to their task, and on teamwork, with its attendant emphasis on skills of interpersonal communication, has served to frame the contemporary workplace as a learning organisation (Harris et al, 1995). Concomitantly, according to Harris et al (1995) and Jackson (1993), the economic rationalism of neo-liberalism has been applied to education, and has set up the conditions in which the parameters of educational decision- and policy-making are guided by economic, rather than by educational, forces. In that way, conditions have arisen in which state education and workplace training have the potential to become more conflated in senior secondary schooling than was the case in previous decades (Roper, 1992). In other words, training for certain aspects of work, and in workplace culture, that in the past have been a part of the process of becoming familiar with any given job may now be carried out in secondary school. Such a circumstance is important for this thesis, because it would alleviate the costs of training for employers, and would also eliminate, to a degree, the time spent in selecting employees. In the following chapter, I describe one of the ways in which that conflation may come about, as a manifestation of school-business partnerships.
CHAPTER FIVE: NEO-LIBERALISM AND NEW ZEALAND'S EDUCATION SYSTEM:

In this chapter, I relate some of the views of education as held in a predominantly neo-liberal state. I make connections between neo-liberal economic thought and contemporary forms of school-business links, and describe such links. I also consider both some of the theories held by advocates of current school-business links, and relate those theories to vocationalism as held and applied in education in New Zealand. I do so in order to clarify the ways in which the wider political and economic climate both influences, and is influenced by, the education system.

The neo-liberal view of the purposes of education, for example, are significant for this thesis. Human capital theory, which is explained in this chapter, underpins the purposes of education for neo-liberal officials, because it is education that is seen to support production processes and increase the profitability of private enterprise.

The implications of human capital theory for school-business partnerships are explained in this chapter, as are connections between the state, the Ministry of Education, and neo-vocationalism, as well as competency-based education, skills and qualifications. The chapter indicates one of the ways in which the influence of human resource managerialism, and employers' requirements of their workers, can be seen to have filtered through to state education.

As explained in the previous chapter, neo-liberalism has become the dominant political and economic philosophy in New Zealand, as in other Western countries. Neo-liberal advocates conceptualise four main functions for an education system, and categorise them according to individual, social, custodial and economic purposes. The individual function relates to the advancement of individuals' abilities and the fulfilment of their aspirations through schooling, while the social function is concerned with integrating individuals into the culture and mores of wider society, and preparing them for the roles and responsibilities that each may assume as an adult. The economic function of education is to prepare individuals for employment, either paid or unpaid.
(Treasury, 1987b). The custodial role of education has two aspects. One subsidises, for parents, the cost of raising children, while the other protects children from parental failure, such as neglect or ignorance (Treasury, 1987b).

The economic function of education is significant for this thesis in that, for neo-liberal policy-makers, that function subsumes the other three. It is through work, for example, that education in a neo-liberal state is purported to enhance individuals' chances for personal fulfilment, while, at the same time, society benefits from such fulfilled citizens whose abilities and capacities have been developed, and who are adaptable to changes in the circumstances of their lives (Treasury, 1987b:29). Society benefits during school hours, also, as education contains those young people who do not conform to the norms and mores of expected behaviour, while their parent(s) are relieved of their care-giving responsibilities, in order to work or to pursue other aims and goals (Treasury, 1987b:123).

The concept of education as intrinsically valuable, however, is rejected in this economics-related view. Indeed, in this model, those who do not intend to go on to tertiary education should not view learning as having intrinsic value, and thus as an end in itself, because such a perception would be "...disastrous..." for the economically efficient organisation of education (Treasury, 1987a:141). Rather, schooling is seen to be effective to the extent that new entrants into the labour market acquire information about their skills and abilities, certified in a form which is meaningful for employers (Treasury, 1987a). Accordingly, neo-liberal policy-makers advocated for educational assessments which, rather than expressing academic 'success' or 'failure', convey objective and relevant information about the work-related competencies that students have covered in their school careers, to better serve students themselves, their parents, and, especially, employers (Treasury, 1987a).

The significance of such policies for this thesis lies not only in the way in which they reflect the importance of economic factors in education since the late 1980s, and the growing influence of the global free market for policy-making in New Zealand. In addition, policies reflect an increase in political activism on the part of private enterprise (Treasury, 2000; Olssen, 1996; Rosenberg, 1993), and ways in
which connections between education and private enterprise, and businesses and state schools, have also been intensifying in New Zealand since the late 1980s. As Roper (1992) argues, business associations and collectives have increasingly exerted an influence over state policy-making, due to the way in which a significant proportion of state revenue comes from taxes levied on capital accumulation. In terms of education, employers and business people perceive themselves to be the end users of those who are products of the system. Accordingly, school-business links have implications in senior secondary school for the subject matter learned, in what way, and by whom.

**Human capital theory**

The economic rationale which underpins the intensification of school-business links in Western countries, and the increased interest in the economic effectiveness of education, is that of human capital theory. The economic rationale which underpins human capital theory holds that each individual, while working towards his or her own financial goals, will simultaneously contribute to the strength of the country’s economy. The assumption within human capital theory is that a highly skilled and more qualified work force would better sustain national economic prosperity than is the case at present. That is, young people who become better skilled and qualified are purportedly more able to acquire well-paid jobs, and to support the economy as both workers and consumers, than are their peers who leave school with little or no qualifications (Gleeson and Hodkinson, 1999:166).

The logic of such economic rationalism demands that economic factors become the predominant rationale for educational decision- and policy-making. For example, although Treasury’s explanation that the drive to achieve a national economic return from the state’s investment in education was not intended to promote vocational over general education, nevertheless, the state must make "...a more effective investment in workforce skills to secure a high-wage, high-employment economy" (Treasury, 1990; Treasury, 1996). The degree to which vocational and general education are relevant to work, and to life as an individual independent of state-funded financial support, become the criteria by which the effectiveness of an education system is judged (Harris et al, 1994).
Human capital theory is thus reflected in the drive to forge links between education and industry in New Zealand, with the aim of bolstering capital accumulation for private enterprise, and at the same time, redressing the country's economic problems (Dale et al, 1990).

School-Business Links

Types of school-business links

There have been various types of school-business links in New Zealand, over time. According to my participant Denise, who is a broker in school-business links, one of the most common form of school-business links occurred when an ad hoc donation of money, or sports equipment, or similar beneficence, was made by a business to a school or schools in the area (Interview). However, the qualitative nature of links between school and industry has changed since 1990 (New Zealand Education Business Partnership Trust, 1993). In recent years, businesses have also profited by the process in various ways, such as through using a school for advertising. For example, a trucking firm (Anon, 1998; Education Review Office, 1998) has supplied a decile one primary school in the North Island with an air-conditioned computer suite, while the school uniform carries the sponsor's logo. The school has subsequently been renamed Bairds Mainfreight Primary School (Education Review Office, 1998: 8). Similarly, Mount Albert Grammar School has sold the naming rights for its swimming pool to a multinational company for $300,000, in order to raise extra operating funds (Iosefa, 1999). Christchurch Boys' High School had an arrangement with Canterbury Apparel which brought $10,000 per year to the school, for three years, in return for which all the sports teams at the school were to wear Canterbury Apparel products (Ibbotson, 1999:15).

Other links between schools and businesses obtain when private enterprise provides courses external to school, in which secondary students may study towards their school qualifications. For example, Air New Zealand and Teltrac Communications, among other firms, have formed a partnership with Burnside High School to provide courses in which students may work towards Unit Standards while participating in the workplace. Air New Zealand had become involved in Burnside High in order to "...try to get more young people into the
[engineering] industry" (Iosefa, 1998:). Similarly, in the link between Karamu High School and J. Wattie Foods, the emphasis is on structured workplace training that enables students to work towards Unit Standards in such areas as food technology and laboratory work (The Careers Service Rapuara, 1996).

In some associations between schools and businesses, secondary school students are given more specific tasks to perform by private enterprise. Although such tasks are based on the needs of the company, they also contribute to students' academic grades. For example, Adis International, which publishes pharmaceutical and health information, has a link with Westlake Boys' High School. Six Westlake students work at Adis for a week, to "...produce an educational package for an imaginary pharmaceutical company client" (The Careers Service Rapuara, 1996:6) about topics such as asthma, diabetes and depression. In the link between Nelson College for Girls, and Honda New Zealand Limited, students carry out data analysis for the firm (The Careers Service Rapuara, 1996). Similarly, Central Southland College entered into a partnership with Solid Energy New Zealand Limited, which involved the students in a market survey, the aim of which was to ascertain the ways in which people heat their homes in rural areas (Ministry of Education, 1993/1999).

Some of the most well-known education-business partnerships of this type in New Zealand are the Young Enterprise Studies (YES), Technology New Zealand (TENZ) and the Royal Society's Creativity in Science and Technology (CREST) programme (Field notes). Staff at Massey University co-ordinate CREST, in which awards are intended to motivate secondary school students to engage in innovative projects. Industry provides mentors, consultants and assessment for the students' work, and students must demonstrate creativity, perseverance, and the ability to apply knowledge to real problems (New Zealand Education-Business Partnership Trust, 1993:7).

**The New Zealand Education-Business Partnership Trust**

The New Zealand Education-Business Partnership Trust (NZEBPT) was first established in 1993, to organise and further consolidate such partnerships between schools and local businesses. In October 1996, it was reformed and re-
named the Partners New Zealand Trust, and incorporated as a charitable trust, with an aim "...to promote closer working relationships between the business and education sectors in New Zealand" (web-site NZEBPT; Ibbotson, 1999:14). Thus, profitable businesses and non-profit and community organisations are under the Trust's purview, along with both primary and secondary schools, and some tertiary institutions.

The vision of the Partners New Zealand Trust (1993) was:

to create a climate of interdependence between businesses and educational institutions; to act as a catalyst for the emergence of this climate, by fostering nation-wide sustainable networks at local or regional level; to create a model for facilitation which would enable a nation-wide set of education business networks to operate, and which would normally include local government and their enterprise/development agencies; to pass leadership and operation of partnership networks on to the local community; to maintain quality assurance and control overview, and to encourage the networks to become self-funding with ongoing support from local government, community trusts, businesses and educational institutions.

Denise, the partnership broker connected to the Trust, explained to me that there are agencies, such as the Lion Nathan Education-Business Partnerships, who contribute to the Trust (Interview). In the example of Lion Nathan, employees of private enterprise in the main cities of New Zealand are encouraged to "...get involved with education. To upskill themselves by interacting with kids etcetera. And they run a programme called "The Lion Business Experience" where they take it into schools for three days, and it costs about ten thousand dollars, and they focus it at sixth formers" (Interview). The winning team of students become part of the Lion Nathan Achievers' Network, and the students are taken "...somewhere in New Zealand twice a year, to another three-day focus on self-development. It's just amazing" (Interview). When I asked Denise to elaborate on her use of the term 'self-development' in relation to secondary students, she explained it as learning "...self-improvement through team-work,...problem-solving,...personal presentation, and communication skills" (Interview).
Links versus Partnerships

According to Denise, a link is programme that is not developed jointly between private enterprise and schools, such as, for example, YES, TENZ, and CREST (Interview). In those cases, programmes have been set up by educationalists in which businesses work with schools. "I support them, but they're just not partnerships" (Interview). "A constructive partnership is where education and business sit down together, and start talking about what each other's needs are, and seeing how they can jointly develop projects which benefit both parties, in win-win situations" (Interview). Nevertheless, it is human capital theory and the interests of business that are paramount in these partnerships, according to Denise, as she explained that "employers are getting tired of giving, giving, giving" as in donations to schools (Interview).

Denise explained the order of priorities through which she approaches her task of liaison between schools and businesses, and explained to me that she was "...absolutely assured [by Partners New Zealand Trust] that right from the word 'go', the partnerships were not to be about transfer of money. I didn't want anyone paying anyone for any services, so there were no dollars involved" (Interview). In other words, businesses were not to act as funding donors to schools, while receiving nothing in return. Indeed, Denise advises schools who are forging contacts with businesses as follows: "And I say to them "don't ask for a thing. Say "how can I help you?" That's the key. It's customer service, that's what you're saying. You're trying to treat your partner as a customer, and how can you give them top-notch service?" (Interview).

Denise's constructive partnerships between schools and businesses often involved students in performing tasks for private enterprise, although, as she explained: "I'm not asking them to do anything that doesn't fit the curriculum" (Interview). Thus, one of the businesses with which she works designed its 1998 national retail strategic plan from information gathered by Bursary economic students. In another example, as well as gathering information, the students also served to solve public relations problems for the firm concerned. As Denise told me:

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I've got geography students in a rural, isolated secondary school, who gathered the information that a company needed for resource consent to do something in their area. Now, it was no good the firm going and doing it, because the neighbours next door were the ones who were worried about certain things. So, the factory worked with the HoD Geography, who brought in his sixth form Geography students, and they designed the questionnaires, went out and gathered the information, presented it back, and it fitted the curriculum. It gave that factory the information it needed for its resource consent to the local council (Interview).

The Role Of The State In School-Business Partnerships

Prior to the implementation of the New Zealand Education-Business Partnership Trust, in June 1992, the government had announced its Industry Skills Training strategy, the function of which was the promotion of school-industry partnerships. The strategy had three components: teacher development; the development of guidelines for educational co-operation between schools and businesses, and the communication of information between, and for, schools and businesses (Houghton et al, 1994). In 1993, the government introduced a pilot project called Skill Pathways, to facilitate a variety of ways in which young people could gain access to vocational learning. The programme promoted and supported partnership arrangements between schools, employers and tertiary providers through the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource, while students involved in formal education and/or training were to be assessed for Unit Standards, towards the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Careers Service Rapuara, 1996; Education Review Office, 1996).

"Skill Pathways" necessarily involved the Ministry of Education (MoE), which has been a strong advocate of school-business connections. For example, in Working Together - Building Partnerships between Schools and Enterprises (1993/1999:2), the Ministry writes:

The nature of work, and the workplace that students can expect to enter, are rapidly changing in response to technological developments and changes in trade relations and the economy. To respond to these changes, schools need to
develop in students the knowledge and skills that enable them to be self-reliant and adaptable participants in working life, whether paid or unpaid.

The Careers Service section of the Ministry of Education (MoE) echoes these comments in such publications as *Growing Partnerships - Practical examples of school-industry partnerships*, which extols the benefits, for business, of links with schools, as in, for example, increased industrial productivity through the employment of 'up-to-speed' school-leavers as workers (The Careers Service Rapuara, 1996:4). The booklet was accompanied by a press release from the Education Review Office, which stated that "School-industry partnerships have been encouraged by Government in order to strengthen the links between education and industry. Schools gain an overview of business, and, equally, businesses are more aware of what schools are trying to achieve for their students...More and more, industry leaders are seeing that partnerships today help create employees who are better trained and more adaptable for the demands of tomorrow" (Education Review Office, 1996a, in Careers Service, 1996:frontispiece).

The Education Review Office (ERO) published a review of school-industry connections in 1996, which is representative of ways in which closer relationships between state schools and private enterprise are promoted across organisations and institutions. For example, in the language of quality assurance, according to these government departments, school business links are essential for the growth of the national economy (Education Review Office, 1996:9), through assisting students to become "...adaptable...", "...flexible...", and"...effective..." members of the work force (Education Review Office, 1996:9; see also Ministry of Education, 19993/1999:2), and through matching human capabilities to labour market needs and opportunities (Education Review Office, 1996). Thus, education in general would become more "...responsive..." and "...relevant..." to both students and private enterprise (Ministry of Education, 1993/1999:2).

In a similar vein, in 1997, the Ministry of Education published *Career Information and Guidance in New Zealand Schools*. In the foreword, Secretary of Education Howard Fancy writes in a manner reminiscent of the theory of bounded rationality: "A key goal of the Government is to see that young people become
successful participants in the New Zealand economy and society once they complete their education and training. To achieve this students need to make appropriate decisions about their education, training and career paths" (Ministry of Education, 1997:5). Career Information and Guidance in New Zealand Schools (Ministry of Education, 1997) also contains a framework for career information and guidance entitled "Establishing a Balanced Course Structure". The framework was that used by Tawa College in 1996, where the recommended course for Years 11 to 13 is "...two six-month, optional modules covering career planning, job search skills, curriculum vitae extensions, health and safety in the workplace, industrial relations, employment contracts, stress, upskilling, and budgeting" (Ministry of Education, 1997:30).

However, such transition education has not been included in the New Zealand Curriculum Framework. As a transition teacher at a school other Twemlow High pointed out to me: "in the new curriculum, there are seven areas of learning towards Unit Standards. Now, there's nowhere in there for Transition education. There was no statement, there was no subject statement for Transition education at all" (Interview). The omission is perhaps due to the multiplicity of ideals which underpin the promotion of school-business links (Education Review Office, 1996). Some advocates argue that there should be input from a cross-section of society, in order to 'round out' people's education. Others believe that such links are the best means through which to break down barriers between two important but divergent social sectors. Yet others posit the neo-liberal ideal that schools should be more receptive to the requirements and expectations of the communities in which they function, including those of private enterprise. Treasury, for example, perceived a necessity for education to be more responsive to business interests, and to the needs of the economy (New Zealand Treasury, 1987, Vol II:27). Such economic rationales in favour of school-business links reflect the viewpoints of the 'new vocationalism'.

**The 'new' vocationalism**

One manifestation of the intensification of association between education and private enterprise has become known as the 'new' vocationalism (Williams and Raggatt, 1999:83), which I describe in more detail in a separate chapter. I include
the concept here, briefly, to illustrate the ways in which the tenets of the new vocationalism can be seen to be congruent with neo-liberal views of human nature, education and society, and with techniques of quality assurance production. According to one of the tenets of the new vocationalism, for example, the future success of private enterprise depends on the curiosity, innovation, analysis, critical thinking, design, and problem-solving capacities of the workforce, at all levels, because organisations must work as an extended team, to which everyone contributes (Stevenson, 1994). Similarly, for the economy to prosper, people must become more individually responsible for anticipating and effecting change in the workplace and in their lives, and for being personally prepared for the future (Stevenson, 1994). In this model, in terms of education, rather than learning specific educational content, it is necessary for everyone to learn how to learn, and also to become more autonomous, not only in their learning, but also in their decision-making.

As can be seen, human capital theory is evident within the new vocationalism, and the neo-liberal concept of bounded rationality is also reflected in that approach to education. For example, the OECD's (1998:377) directive to Western policy-makers to "...find the educational equivalent of the 'invisible hand' ..." exhorts policy-makers to create incentives for secondary students to choose school courses which will eventually enhance the labour force with competencies in service and production industries which, in turn, will serve the national economy. Thus, the new vocationalism and human capital theory can be seen to combine in a drive to influence students' subject choices, in order to ensure that school-leavers will serve the economic interests of society. One of the ways in which the influence of such an educational movement may be traced is through the pedagogical approach of competency-based education.

Competency-based Education

Competency-based education and training has been changing the shape and focus of education, internationally, since the late 1980s. Such education was seen by both private enterprise and the state to be the most promising remedy for three pressing and inter-related issues: recurring economic recessions; the ensuing drive to restructure the labour market and the workplace (Beever, 1993;
Jackson, 1993), and to restructure education (Harris et al, 1995). The key to averting economic recession was seen to be the ever-increasing production of high-value-added commodities and services to be traded in the international free market (Stevenson, 1994:43). The success of New Zealand's economy, and for the country's entry into, and sustained position in, the global marketplace would therefore depend on the competencies of the work force (Treasury, 1990). Consequently, measuring the development of the skills, abilities, and attitudes of the potential workforce as educational outcomes became significant in policies of education and training.

The combination of recurring recessions and neo-liberal economic restructuring have culminated in demands made on, and by, employers. Demands on employers have arisen from the impetus to meet specifications and standards generated by international trade, as mentioned above. On the other hand, demands by employers on education stem from their claims that the current levels of competence in the workforce are not only inadequate to meet their needs, but have also declined since the 1970s (Harris et al, 1995). Education based on measurable outcomes, or competencies, according to representatives of both private enterprise and education, had the potential to produce a highly skilled and adaptable workforce, and to provide clearer, more objective qualifications for students and employers; a more flexible delivery of subject matter; motivation for students towards setting and maintaining career goals, and thus enhancing the productivity of industry-education partnerships (Harris et al, 1995; Collins, 1995).

The conflation of schooling and post-compulsory training

The rise of competency-based education in educational policy in New Zealand since 1989 has assisted the conflation of dimensions of compulsory education and post-school elective training (Harris et al, 1995; Roper, 1992). Industry Training Organisations that were set up under the Industrial Training Act of 1992 to deliver post-school training programmes, and to set the standards for those programmes, were recognised by the Education Training and Support Agency (Harris et al, 1995), which was later subsumed by Skill New Zealand (Stevenson, 1994:44), in conjunction with the New Zealand Qualifications...
Authority (NZQA) which issues secondary school qualifications (Harris et al, 1995; Interview ETSA). In that way, the purviews of the organisations that were concerned with post-school training and with secondary education have overlapped, which has seen the two previously disparate sectors converge in some secondary education courses.

Thus, the theory of human capital has underpinned a right-wing, back-to-basics, instrumental movement in education, with a focus on observable and measurable outcomes (Harris et al, 1995; Stevenson, 1994; Borthwick, 1993). In particular, competency-based education has been driven by the imperative for continuous improvement in meeting standards in the production of goods and services (Carmichael, 1993; Stevenson, 1994; Borthwick, 1993). Through the experience of constantly working 'smarter', over time, it is expected not only that more people will be functioning at higher levels of competence, but also that the level of standards of competence must also rise (Carmichael, 1993). Competency-based education is intended to inculcate cognitive attributes that are given the highest priority in the workplace: critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to apply knowledge and skills to new situations (Harris et al, 1995). The pursuit of quality in competencies can be seen to translate into the pursuit of excellence (Carmichael, 1993), and the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on the nature and extent of an individual's progress towards performance requirements is ideally suited to techniques of quality management (Carmichael, 1993; Harris et al, 1995).

Competency-based education and TQM

There are four main imperatives, derived from employers' need for total quality control and assurance, and for communicative, innovative, accountable workers, that are driving the implementation of competency-based education. The imperatives are: the technological transformation of the workplace; the proliferation of globally competitive markets in high quality niche and just-in-time manufacturing; the necessity for all employees to be involved in, and committed to, the goals of private enterprise, and the intensified interest in teamwork as a component of the production process (Carmichael, 1993). The restructuring of management into flattened hierarchies; the devolution of the
responsibility for planning and decision-making, and the increased emphasis on teamwork through the various techniques and principles of quality management have lent significance to the personal, social and communicative skills of employees, as well as their technical skills, and, thus, to a focus on competency-based education (Beevers, 1993; Borthwick, 1993).

**Competency-based education and transferable skills**

Variations in competency-related terminology are now to be found in educational systems around the world (Stevenson, 1994; Collins, 1993). 'Training', as a term, covers education, growth and development. 'Competencies' is a generic term for knowledge, skills and attitudes. 'Skills' refers to actions with observable and measurable outcomes, and encompasses manual and motor skills, as well as intellectual skills. 'Adaptability', or 'multi-skilled', refers to a person's possession of multiple sets of skills, such as motor skills and the ability to 'work with others', which can be transferred from one situation to another. 'Working with others and in teams' subsumes all capacities for human relationships (Stevenson, 1994).

Thus, the skills that workers are now required to possess are known as 'soft' skills, such as those in areas of interpersonal relationships; communication; teamwork; marketing; computer literacy; health and safety; accountability, and conflict management (Ministry of Education, 1997a). These 'soft' skills account for 40% of post-school training, which indicates their significance for employers in the selection of staff. When many job applicants have technical qualifications, the possession of 'soft' skills determines personnel selection (Ministry of Education, 1997a:16).

**Transferable skills**

The competencies of interest to industry, although not specifically categorised as transition, or career education, as noted above, have been designated as essential skills in New Zealand curricular documents (Harris et al, 1995). The skills subsumed under that heading are variously known as 'transferable skills', 'core competencies', 'generic skills', and/or 'life skills' (Harris et al, 1995:96) or 'key
competencies' (Ducker, 1993:69). Generic or transferable skills subsume such competencies as information skills, communication skills, self-management skills, word and study skills, social skills, numeracy skills, and decision-making skills (Harris et al, 1995:97; OECD, 1998:53) which, in turn, underpin vocationally specific competencies (OECD, 1998:53).

The generic nature of the competencies derives from their application to work in the general sense, rather than to specific occupations or industries. These competencies are seen, by employers, as vital for workers' participation in the contemporary workplace. The competencies are thus seen, in turn, by the labour force, as essential, not only for work, but also for further education. Further, the rhetoric of private enterprise, and of education, presents these competencies as vital in adult life as a whole (Ducker, 1993). Competency-based education, however, in order to serve the purposes for which it was purportedly introduced, must be accompanied by a system of assessment which is congruent with the aims of such education.

The standards-based assessment of competencies:

Employers' demand for a clear representation of school-leavers' capabilities and achievements has led to a shift to the criterion-referenced assessment of competence, and in particular, to standards-based assessment (Barker, 1995; Tuck and Peddie, 1995). Just as the emergence of the competence-based qualifications system was, in part, an outcome of the new vocationalist drive to forge links between education and private enterprise more closely than had previously been the case (Williams and Raggatt, 1999), interest in standards-based assessment in Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, as well as many other industrial nations, has been intensified (Tuck and Peddie, 1995).

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the Curriculum Framework

Standards-based assessment within the New Zealand Curriculum Framework is central to the state's drive to raise the skill levels of the workforce, in order to ease New Zealand's economic anxieties. The focus on standards-based
assessment was based on a requirement for a realistic assessment of performance and a concern for the production of quality goods and services (Tuck and Peddie, 1995). The point of standards has therefore become the specification of knowledge and skill, and the application of that knowledge and skill to workplace performance (Beavers, 1993:91).

**Unit Standards**

Advocates of standards-based assessment claim that the approach lends clarity to descriptions of the competencies to be measured, as learners' performances are compared to specific standards, which are set prior to instruction. Thus, rather than comparing each student against his or her peers, the performance of each is measured against their own previous achievements (Tuck and Peddie, 1995). Further, as well as specified outcomes, standards are an attempt to capture personal qualities and characteristics, and the knowledge and understanding on which an individual's performance hinges. Taken collectively, these factors are perceived to represent competence (Carmichael, 1993; Harris et al, 1995).

Representatives of industry have been empowered by the state to increase the level of input they have into the provision of training, and the assessment of students' standards of competency (Barker, 1995; Harris et al, 1995; Carmichael, 1993; Soucek, 1993). Thus, the locus of control over the development of the competency standards has shifted, from vocational education bodies to those of industry (Beavers, 1993; Harris et al, 1995). New Zealand's Education Amendment Act of 1990 exemplifies these closer links between education and industry, in that the Act legitimated education's move towards standards-based assessment, through the constitution of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, which was underpinned by the requirement of private enterprise that employees bring a range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values with them, from school to work (Barker, 1995).

Unit standards, therefore, in assessing a person's competence, must attempt to capture some personal characteristics, as well as the knowledge and understanding that underpin a person's performance. However, the value of a unit standard lies not in its description of competence, because such a
description is impossible. Rather, a unit standard can set up only a framework of criteria by which people may examine the extent to which they believe themselves to be competent (Harris et al, 1995). Skill formation and competence are seen, in this positivist and behaviourist viewpoint, as value-free concepts, which can be easily categorised, measured and quantified (Beever, 1993). In the following chapter, I problematise the idea that skill formation and competence are neutral values, and consider theories which re-present school-business partnerships, and neo-vocationalist education, as flawed concepts in terms of socially just education.
CHAPTER SIX – THE NEW VOCATIONALISM AS A MANIFESTATION OF SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

"The new vocationalism ... represents little more than a crude attempt to colonise everyday life" (Gleeson, 1985:65).

In previous chapters, I have described the context and the nature of school-business partnerships. In this chapter, I describe theories of neo-vocationalist education, and place the concept within social, economic, and educational contexts as a manifestation of school-business partnerships. I also present theories that attempt to explain the presence of neo-vocationalism in contemporary education, and the implications, for specific groups of secondary students, of such an approach to education. These theories are important for this thesis in that they are critical in nature, and take into account the ways in which neo-vocational education can be seen to represent the nexus at which secondary schooling and workplace training meet and serve the interests of both private enterprise and the neo-liberal state.

Neo-vocationalism, as the term would imply, is an approach to education which emphasises a vocational, rather than academic, direction. As I will explain in more depth below, the 'new' dimensions of neo-vocationalism, in some ways, distinguish the concept from the traditional notion of work-centred education. At the same time, however, those same dimensions can be understood to be congruent with long-held critical theories of selection and preparation for work through state education.

Neo-vocationalism has arisen within the complex inter-relationship of social and economic circumstances that have underpinned the fundamental and far-reaching educational changes undergone in New Zealand, as in other Western countries, over the last two decades, as described in the context chapter. In this chapter, I deal more specifically with aspects of that complicated context which can be seen, in their inter-relationship, to have impacted significantly upon vocationalist education in particular, and to highlight neo-vocationalism as a manifestation of the contemporary intensification of school-business partnerships. Such aspects include: contemporary human resource management as it may be seen to be coloured by the recent predominance of service
industries, and the perceived changes to Fordism as an approach to manufacturing; the concerns of private enterprise regarding youth in the labour market and the work force, and problems with the education system as perceived by neo-liberal decision- and policy-makers, as well as private enterprise. In this chapter, I describe these factors, and present theories that attempt to explain the role of the 'new' vocationalism for private enterprise, for education, and for the state.

**Neo-vocationalism**

The focus of the state's investment in human capital that had been set in place in the 1950s and 1960s took on a new dimension, as the involvement in education of business and industry became more direct and more intense in the late 1980s (Finn, 1985). Thus, the 'new' vocationalism, according to Skilbeck et al (1994:22, cited in Education Review Office, 1996:8-9), is composed of: "...a variety of policies and programmes and diversity of action and actors. But it is guided...by a determination to establish closer and better inter-relationships between the experience of both formative education and preparatory training and the working world". Accordingly, the new vocationalism was presented to teachers as a means through which to increase young people's self-confidence and to prepare them for life. To businessmen, the idea was proposed as a way to counter 'archaic' labour practices, such as union membership and strikes, and to inculcate in youth an affinity for discipline, hard work, and respect for authority, such as that personified by business people themselves (Cohen, 1984).

However, the problems perceived by employers of young people, as outlined above, are not new. Young working class labour has always been characterised by employers as irresponsible, unreliable, and quick to change jobs (Finn, 1985). The newness of the new vocationalism stems from employers' expectations that school-leavers should arrive in the workplace with responsible and committed attitudes towards work, which, until that point, had been understood to be the result of experience in the workplace (Finn, 1985; Marshall, 1997).

Thus, one of the main concerns in New Zealand, as in other Western capitalist countries, which the new vocationalism is perceived to address, is that of
fostering a positive attitude towards industry and commerce, on the part of students and teachers (Hickox and Moore, 1990). By instilling motivation, and developing the 'right' attitude and habits in the young through a newly intensive vocational education, the theory was, and is, that economic recovery would be achieved and sustained (Ball, 1999). Towards that end, for advocates of the new vocationalist theory, education and training are seen not as dichotomies, but rather as synonymous (Boyles, 1998; Wirth, 1994). In that way, more overtly than ever before, educational emphasis has been placed on preparing people for the world of work (Marshall, 1997; Peters et al, 1994; Rudd and Roper, 1997; Kelsey, 1995/1997; Cohen, 1984; Moore and Hickox, 1999; Marshall, 1997; Seddon, 1994; Ball, 1999; Payne, 2000; Rees et al, 1989).

Contemporary vocationalists hold that academic and vocational education should converge, not only to encourage an holistic approach to education and work, but also to increase the employment options open to low educational achievers. The rationale for this new vocationalism holds that, to the extent that the changes in which Fordist techniques of production of goods and services have been superseded by contemporary production processes, flexible, multi-skilled, team-workers are now required, who are able to respond quickly and intelligently to the changing demands of customers (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry, 1997). The learning offered in the new vocationalism is thought to add such value to human capital, and, in accordance with raising the school-leaving age to sixteen years (MoE, 1997), young people are encouraged to stay at school for a longer time than was previously the case, in order to acquire such attributes before entering the labour market.

As can be seen, therefore, the new vocationalism has been derived from economic, rather than from pedagogical, theory (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry, 1997). Neo-vocationalism is thus characterised by an intensification of employer-education interactions, marked by employers' claim that significant numbers of secondary school-leavers are lacking in basic skills (Treasury, 1987b). Policy-makers held that Forms 5 to 7, or Years 11 to 13, are the ideal stage for introducing students to neo-vocational education, and especially for setting up link courses which allow students to experience training courses at Polytechnics (Treasury, 1987b). Other policies which have been proposed and/or
implemented, both internationally and in New Zealand, to meet the concerns which underpin the new vocationalism include: the raising of the school-leaving age to 17 years; limiting eligibility for the unemployment benefit to those over 18 years, while paying people to stay at school; the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework and curriculum statements associated with the Framework to relate to employers’ requirements; the greater transferability of qualifications and flexibility and mobility for learners through the National Qualifications Framework; a shift to competency-based assessment, and accordingly to records which "provide a descriptive assessment of what students have actually achieved" rather than the more broadly-based academic examinations (Education Review Office, 1996:12), strategies which enhance school-business partnerships; and the introduction of a range of programmes through which students may gain qualifications, to meet the needs of a range of students, "...including provisions for on-the-job training, as in, for example, the Skill Pathways pilot project" (Education Review Office, 1996:12-13). But in contemporary school-business partnerships, the constitution of 'skill' is not necessarily congruent with that of an earlier era.

**School-Business Partnerships, neo-vocationalism and the constitution of 'skills'**

According to Marshall (1997), there are three main elements to the intensified schools-industry movement: attitudes, knowledge and skills. Further, there have been noticeable changes in the constitution of workplace skill, which, as a result of intensified school-business partnerships, have been reflected particularly in the new vocationalism. That is, in the 1950s and 1960s, skills were seen to involve either professional qualifications and analytical capacities, or technical abilities, combined with dexterity and 'know-how'. However, the demand for technical skills was perceived to be rising, as the demand for unskilled labour was considered to be diminishing within increasingly technological workplaces. By the mid-1970s, employers were using the term 'basic skills' to refer to literacy and numeracy, and, in the new vocationalism, literacy skills have been extended to include such factors as the capacity for personal inter-communication (Payne, 2000).
The concept of skill functions to allow the managerial differentiation of the work force, in that employees can be categorised and selected based on their skill. A skill is, in effect, a socially constructed concept, and skills are as much ideological in nature as they are technical (Dale, 1985; Willis, 1977). The contemporary concept of skill, in moving beyond its traditional association with specific technical and manual aptitudes, has now absorbed a range of 'transferable' skills, otherwise known as generic, or social and life skills. They include communication skills, reasoning skills, survival skills, and problem solving skills (Payne, 2000). Employers' search for such 'core', 'generic', or 'transferable' skills, in order to substantiate labour force flexibility, became more intense in the 1990s (Payne, 2000), and they now expect that school-leavers will be equipped with such skills upon entry into the labour market (Dale, 1985; Jamieson, 1985). However, Jamieson (1985:27) theorises that these: "... are not skills, but either attitude or knowledge, in that school-leavers are being taught how to communicate effectively, how to maintain social relationships, how to be positive about themselves, how to manage negative emotions, how to cope with unemployment, how to cope with stress, and so on" (Cohen, 1984:124).

Such social or life-related skills stem from employers' notions of competent adult interaction in the workplace, and have been defined as 'those personal skills needed at work and in adult life generally'. They include getting on with workmates and working as a member of a team; and finding information and advice, as well as budgeting; familiarity with social services; finding and keeping a job, and devising leisure activities (Payne, 2000:355). Hence, skills such as: undergoing a job interview; listening to, and following, instructions; and utilising social and interpersonal skills in the workplace have been included in neo-vocationalism (Jamieson, 1985). Being clean, filling in forms, operating a bank account, budgeting, negotiating personal and social relationships, and the use of a telephone are also in the checklist of skills and knowledge taught under the neo-vocationalist umbrella (Gleeson, 1985).

Employers have thus reconstructed the notion of skill. In this context, however, the focus on transferable skills as a prerequisite for employment can be seen as a form of deskilling. First, skill is separated from notions of physical and technical dexterity, and from the intelligence applied by workers to the labour process. In
this way, skill comes to be seen as an abstraction with universal applicability. Workers are therefore perceived as interchangeable within the production process, and training for these 'transferable' skills, in this model, becomes training for generic, commodified abstract labour (Cohen, 1984). Willis' (1977) theory is that although the exploitation of labour is essential to this process of the abstraction of labour, the type of labour involved does not matter, as long as labour energy can be both controlled for waste, and switched from one product or service to another, in order to maintain profit.

The abstraction of labour thus functions, on the one hand, to increase the ways in which occupational categories can themselves be perceived by employers as interchangeable, which, in turn, underpins the managerial practice of numerical flexibility, as described in chapter four. On the other hand, the control held by skilled manual workers over entrance and training in their trades, and thence their bargaining power, is undermined by the abstraction of skill. Nevertheless, the deskilling process, which is underpinned in part by new technologies, is legitimated by its representation as the basis for the life-long retraining and reskilling of flexible, adaptable workers, and in its purported celebration of neo-liberal concepts of individualism and self-maximisation (Cohen, 1984).

In the context of that reconstitution of skill and its attendant reinforcement of neo-liberal individualism, the demands of employers have been drawn up as a relevant curriculum for senior secondary pupils. This new vocationalism features lessons about skills such as effective communication; how to make, keep and end relationships; how to make effective transitions; how to be positive about oneself; how to manage negative emotions; how to cope with unemployment; how to cope with stress, how to be an effective member of a group, and so on. As a part of this process, there has been a shift from external discipline and control, to intra-personal disciplinary processes, based on eliciting a form of self-surveillance. “Youth labour is now to be socialised in and through the discipline of impression management” (Cohen, 1984:114).

The impression of themselves created by young workers as they enter the labour market and the workplace has become vital for their participation in those spheres. To illustrate, one implication of such concepts of 'abstract labour' and
'transferability' and the re-construction of 'skills' is that workers' personal traits become re-constituted as work performance indicators. For example, the ability to get along with others is extrapolated into the capacity to deal with clients and customers, and to work well with employers and other employees. Such an ability is perceived to be transferable to most jobs across the service sector, such as those in tourism and hospitality (Cohen, 1984). Thus, the construction of personal traits as work performance indicators exemplifies the process of the socialisation of youth labour. Although, on the surface, the possession of transferable skills appears to be of benefit to both workers and employers, employers profit from workers who possess them to a greater degree than do the workers themselves (Willis, 1977).

Such changes in the social construction of skill, as in the social construction of education, reflect change in the wider political and social economy (Wirth, 1994). Several factors have combined to induce policy-makers to reconsider conceptions of skill, in an era of globalisation, and rapid structural, economic and technological change (Payne, 2000). As we have noted, some writers assert that production methods have undergone fundamental changes as the basis of the economy has changed from Keynesian, demand-led to neo-liberal, supply-led economics (Wirth, 1994). Many of today's advocates of post-Fordism argue that 'a complete mental revolution' is required for management to continue to control the production process. The theory holds that Fordism is defunct, and has been replaced by a new method of work organisation which is more aligned to the interests of managers, workers and consumers alike (Wright, 1997). Importantly for this thesis, much of the legitimation for the new vocationalism has been derived from theories of post-Fordism and 'smart' production methods, which require multi-tasking, highly educated, autonomous and problem-solving knowledge workers, enjoying new, liberating, forms of work (Payne, 2000).

Some manufacturing companies have indeed undertaken organisational restructuring to include such strategies as flexible specialization, which are resonant with theories of post-Fordism. However, to make generalisations from that situation obscures the way in which production strategies, work design, management systems and skill requirements across firms continue not only to be diverse, but also to polarize the labour market. That is, high-level analytical and
conceptual skills and knowledge are required by value-added, cutting-edge manufacturing companies. Employees in such companies are expected to have communication, problem-solving, team-working and creative skills, in order to underpin the firm's advantage in the marketplace (Payne, 2000).

On the other hand, there has also been a shift in economic focus from traditional manufacturing industries to the provision of services. That shift brings a requirement for employees with 'soft', relational skills for positive interactions with customers, either in person or on the telephone (Payne, 2000). Customer-friendly, reliable and keen employees who are pliant in the face of management hierarchies are needed by low-cost manufacturing and service sectors. In the latter, skill can be interpreted as punctuality, reliability, speed and submissiveness, coupled with the essential ability to always smile for the customer, in any situation (Payne, 2000). As can be seen, therefore, it is the low-cost manufacturing and service sectors that draw on transferable, and/or social and life skills, while cutting-edge manufacturing companies pay for high-level skills (Wirth, 1994; Cohen, 1984). Contemporary constructions of skills and knowledge thus give the impression of moving towards post-Fordism and high skills and high wages (Payne, 2000).

In that way, the new language of skill allows policy-makers to claim that everyone is being upskilled, while proponents of the new vocationalism further claim that occupations in service industries are a remedy for youth unemployment, although the viability of many of the individual service industries does not support such a claim (Cohen, 1984; Jesson, 1999; Willis, 1977). Further, little may be changing in terms of the quality of jobs that people do, as the reality for most people is the neo-Fordist scenario of low wages and low skills (Payne, 2000). The service sector, for example, continues to be characterized by low-waged, casualised jobs, for which people are required to have skill enough to fill selves, check out groceries, follow instructions, and smile pleasantly. But as Payne (2000) writes, skill without real job autonomy, or power in the labour market, amounts to little or no skill. His theory is that: "[w]e have reached the point, therefore, where 'skill' means whatever employers and policy-makers want it to mean" (Payne, 2000:361).
Thus, the contemporary construction of workplace skills, with its inclusion of a range of personal traits, behaviours, attitudes and physical characteristics raises long-standing issues of inequality and discrimination (Payne, 2000; Willis, 1977). For example, the terms brought to bear in the new vocationalism, such as ‘skill pathways’, ‘relevance to students’ lives’, ‘flexibility’ and ‘equity’ obscure the ways in which such construction of skill reinforces existing social divisions and inequalities (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry, 1997). Research suggests that sections of the upmarket service sector, such as trendy wine bars, hotels and boutiques, are looking for ‘aesthetic labour’. That is, people who have a marketable voice quality, demeanour, image and physical appearance are in demand. The smile has been found to be the defining twenty-first century skill (Payne, 2000). The new vocationalism, therefore, may have to branch out more comprehensively into speech training, and personal grooming (Payne, 2000), because the new dichotomy of skill, which has been informed by the new vocationalism, is about having the right voice, the right body shape, the right image, and the right smile, for the corporate sell on the one hand, and on the other, being punctual, reliable and willing to work without questioning management decisions (Payne, 2000).

The idea that individuals may be expected to have their personal, and class-based, identities re-engineered in this way raises ethical concerns, as well as the possibility of adverse psychological effects on the young, as their external, and internal, persona comes under close scrutiny. As skills become further blurred with personalities, behaviour, voice and appearance, the more the notion becomes integrated with concepts of traditional, white, middle-class criteria of appearance and behaviour, which, in turn, has serious implications for access, gate-keeping and/or closure in the labour market (Payne, 2000). Given the reality of service industries and the low-skill manufacturing sector, teaching students to be motivated, enthusiastic, and co-operative at work is merely repeating the old modes of socialisation into subordination. Further, as the material reality of people’s lives resembles that of a Fordist or pre-Fordist, rather than neo-Fordist or post-Fordist workplace, employers look for people with education enough only to do as they are told, and autonomous knowledge workers are very few (Payne, 2000). I believe that my findings, as related in
chapters seven and eight, which describe the nature of the knowledge transmitted to students in the programme of my study, replicate Payne's ideas.

Capelli (1995) has suggested that, if the term 'skills', as used in the labour market and the work force, denotes attitudes, pro-social behaviour and personality traits formed in childhood, rather than technical or occupational expertise, then the case for involving the education system in their development is made stronger. Thus, through neo-vocationalism, young people are being 'taught' ways in which to sell their labour power by monitoring the degree of their own conformity to the dominant, neo-conservative and neo-liberal interpretations of appearance and behaviour (Cohen, 1984). The rationale is instrumental: that is, to facilitate finding a job in a shrinking labour market. The reconceptualisation of skill has become a political and ideological exercise, in that this process of socialisation through education also functions both to prepare workers for the workplace, and to influence them to self-select as employees (Ball, 1999).

Taylor et al (1997) hold that the aim of the new vocationalism functions not only to train young people for jobs, but also to control for potential social unrest on the part of the working class. For example, because of high rates of youth unemployment, and the structural nature of unemployment in a neo-liberal state, the new vocationalism attempts to assist such young people to adjust to the notion of not working (Dale, 1985). That is, the impetus behind the new vocationalism is the need to defuse potential social crises connected with consistent unemployment (Payne, 2000). These elements of personal adjustment to such vicissitudes of contemporary capitalism highlight the socially constructed nature of skills, and of becoming employable. In today's labour market, that is, according to Payne (2000:356) the concept of skill cannot be distinguished from an "...attempt to construct a particular worker-subject replete with certain desirable values, attitudes, behaviours and dispositions".

Thus, in the new vocationalism, there is no encouragement for questions about the ways in which industry and commerce operate, how capitalists' wealth is accumulated, and how wages and skills are decided, legitimated and sustained, in this or in previous forms of vocationalism (Gleeson, 1985). The structural nature and causes of youth unemployment are not revealed. Rather, the notion
of the mismatch between young workers' characteristics and employers' requirements underpins neo-vocational approach to education (Finn, 1985; Cohen, 1984). By focusing on entrance into the labour market, the notion of social skills and motivation as prerequisites for work deflect attention from the structural problems of capitalism. Other kinds of curricular arrangements, as an alternative to the new vocationalism are not recognised, while compliance in the face of youth unemployment is one of the guiding objectives (Finn, 1985).

As can be seen, therefore, I would argue that the new vocationalism is ideological in nature. That is, rather than preparation for the workplace, the new vocationalism is informed by an idealised perception of how employer-employee relationships ought to function, under free market conditions in a neo-liberal state. Further, the ideological underpinnings stem from the assumption that the learner is a flexible unit of energy, which is capable of being deployed and redeployed in a variety of job situations. Thus the foundation of the movement is not vocational realism, but rather, vocational idealism (Gleeson, 1985). In the context of the new vocationalism, however, respect for authority, the work ethic and discipline do not hark back to earlier modes of social control of the masses, by external discipline and surveillance. Rather, the trend can be seen as an attempt to construct a different kind of discipline and control, the nature of which is individualist and self-enforcing (Cohen, 1984; Ball, 1999).

**Implications for Streaming**

Neo-vocationalism is aimed at those in the fourteen- to eighteen-year-old age group who are in the lower educational ability range, according to Dale (1985) and Jamieson (1985). Historically, in vocationalist education, the process of selecting those who are seen to require such measures begins in earlier school years when, in general terms, children are streamed into two basic groups: those who are slow learners, albeit good with their hands, and those who master school-based learning more easily than their slow-learning peers (Willis, 1977). At the same time, knowledge is also sorted into a hierarchy of subject matter and skills. Although those divisions are seen to be a meritocratic matter of individual choice, talent and ability (Henry et al, 1992), such a selection practice places students in a social and economic hierarchy while still at school. At secondary
school in particular, the knowledge disseminated to low-achievers who have been placed in vocational courses is perceived, by students, parents and teachers, to be low in the hierarchy of subject matter, and research has shown that those students who are placed in the lower streams lose their motivation to learn, and their self-esteem. They feel that they become powerless, once they are locked into the streaming system. In that way, streaming sets in motion a self-fulfilling prophecy, in which those who are categorised as low achievers tend to achieve minimally, or not at all, and studies have shown that working class students are most adversely affected by allocation to low streams (Henry et al, 1992).

The new vocationalism in particular turns on the assumption that young people are themselves to blame if they cannot find a job, not only because their skills are inadequate and they do not look or behave in an acceptable manner, but also that their culture is at fault. That is, their family and/or community background does not instil in them the necessary motivation, discipline or skills necessary for them to find jobs. The structural nature of unemployment is again effectively obscured by such concepts, while the meritocratic notion that anyone can succeed in the labour market if they try hard enough is used to put the onus on individuals to improve themselves (Cohen, 1984), and to act in their own self-interest (Cohen, 1984).

In effect, the new vocationalism prepares young people for a new individualism, which requires more flexibility, and is based more on wish-fulfilment, or self-actualisation, than was the previous vocational model of education. The aim is to influence people to tolerate continual adaptation to positional changes due to market forces, while at the same time perpetuating for them an illusion of their own autonomy within those forces (Cohen, 1984). Accordingly, self-maximisation becomes a tool through which to sell oneself to prospective employers, as well as a source of the inner strength needed to deal with anxiety, anger or disappointment resulting from rejection in the labour market, and life among the unemployed (Cohen, 1984). Accordingly, the highest aspiration inculcated into working class students is to find a job: any job (Castells et al, 1999).

Preparation for life
Preparing the young for life, as well as labour, in neo-vocationalist terms, appears to serve the utilitarian approach to education, by providing the greatest good to the greatest number. At the same time, however, neo-vocationalism provides a means through which to shift social responsibility from capitalism and the state, on to young, unemployed individuals. Further, it places non-academic children in a double-deficit position. That is, the school they have attended has failed to teach them subjects which are 'relevant' to the world of work, while their own families have not provided them with the 'transferable' skills which employers now demand (Cohen, 1984).

The pedagogy of neo-vocationalism

As Willis (1977) writes, the new vocationalism appears to hinge on child-centred teaching, preparation for life, work experience and the encouragement of self-actualisation in relation to work. Thus, the pedagogical approach of education that terms itself as 'relevant' to students, as is the case with neo-vocationalism, appears to be one based on a student’s own learning needs and interests, rather than on subject-centred academic requirements (Willis, 1977). However, Willis' (1977) theory holds that the relevance of neo-vocationalism refers to the working-classes’ need to work, rather than from the learning needs of individual students. Further, it is the attitudes and mores of working life, rather than technical vocational skills, that permeate the culture of the neo-vocational classroom.

In that way, working-class students’ need to work translates less into an emphasis on learning and more into a measure of discipline for non-conforming students within the neo-vocationalist classroom. For example, neo-vocational programmes include a significant component of self-assessment of personal traits and qualities. However, the self-assessment exercises carried out by students in a neo-vocationalist programme highlight the social and/or cultural differences between students and the school more clearly than the personal qualities that such assessment is intended to tease out. Thus, when a student registers herself as ‘thoughtful’, a teacher may question the degree to which such a quality has been demonstrated in the classroom. However, the student sees herself as
'thoughtful' in situations that "really matter" (Willis, 1977:97), in terms of her friends or her family.

But those who do not demonstrate conformity to the values and norms represented in the neo-vocationalist classroom may be told that he or she will not be able to find a job until such behaviour is eliminated or moderated. As a consequence, the theme of 'preparation for work' subsumes students' cooperation, amenability and the adoption of the 'right' attitude (Willis, 1977). Under neo-vocationalism, interpretations of the culture of the young are framed by a neo-liberal ideology of individualism. In the process, some values, such as interpretations of honesty or conscientiousness, are taken from their cultural context and attributed to individuals. Other values, such as the ability to meet challenges, are also taken out of cultural context, and are represented as intrinsic to the workplace (Willis, 1977). Yet other working class cultural factors, those which are not congruent with the workplace and the labour market, are seen as impediments to communication with the students, or as predispositions which prevent students from recognising the full value of the advice and the information with which they are provided at school (Willis, 1977). In that way, such traits as deference and politeness, rather than knowledge and the potential to gain qualifications, become those which students are influenced strive for. Such qualities are presented as both desirable in their own right, regardless of the context in which they are manifested, and as negotiable currency in the labour market and in social life. The 'right attitude' is thus perceived to secure social and economic success, while academic achievement is discounted as irrelevant to such success (Willis, 1977).

The ideological power of neo-vocationalism is compounded by the proliferation of certificates that arises from competency-based education. Such proliferation, according to Willis (1977), deflects attention away from the meaningless nature of the work available to the low-achieving working class young, under human resource managerial systems that require flexibility and adaptability rather than technical knowledge and skill. Further, the competency-based system of qualifications reinforces workplace polarisation, and selects people for positioning within workforce hierarchies. Thus, although employers are purportedly asking for more and higher qualifications, the nature of the labour
involved in the jobs to which those qualifications apply reflects a de-skilling process under way (Willis, 1977). In addition, there is a tendency within human resource management to intensify the labour process, and to limit the control held over the process by workers. That circumstance leaves the workforce open to greater systemisation and standardisation by employers, in order to meet their production needs. That process, in turn, is substantiated by competency-based systems of assessment under neo-vocationalism (Willis, 1977), such as that of New Zealand’s unit standards.

In the following chapters, I outline the findings of my research, which, I believe, demonstrate that the programme of my study represents an example of neo-vocational education, the practice of which reflects the concepts described above. The first two of my findings chapters, chapters seven and eight, are based around the nature of the knowledge disseminated in the programme: that related to becoming employable, and to becoming an employee. Becoming employable concerns the image presented by job-seekers when they apply for jobs, while becoming an employee covers some of the norms and aspects of workplace culture in which employers believe school-leavers should be well-versed.

The final two of the findings chapters, Chapters Nine and Ten, cover the pedagogy of the programme. There are two aspects of pedagogy which have been dealt with here. The programme is first viewed as a nexus of knowledge and power, in which the pedagogy is shaped by the teaching and learning objectives of representatives of both private enterprise and the neo-liberal state. In the fourth findings chapter, chapter ten, I describe the ways the teaching and learning objectives of the teacher herself, and ways in which her objectives both diverge from, and are congruent with, those of private enterprise and the neo-liberal state.
CHAPTER SEVEN: KNOWLEDGE RELATED TO BECOMING EMPLOYABLE:

In this first findings chapter, I describe and consider the knowledge related to becoming employable and to job-seeking, as disseminated to students in the work-readiness programme. To recapitulate, these particular components of the programme were covered by such unit standards as maintaining personal presentation for the workplace; producing a curriculum vitae, and participating in a predictable 1–1 interview.

The information made available to the students in these modules covered various aspects of the image that they each would present, as a job applicant, to potential employers. The modules dealt with students' outward appearance, in terms of their personal tidiness, as well as their selection of clothes and cosmetic products. The programme also provided strategies through which students might present themselves as being confident, purposeful, reliable and so on. Further, the programme offered classes in the writing of curriculum vitae, and also placed each student in a simulated job interview with one of several employers who volunteered to help in that way. The programme was thus organised to fulfil its official purpose: to ease these students' transition into the labour market by allowing them some insight into the procedures and processes involved in applying for jobs, and to build up their effectiveness as job-seekers.

Image Management - "Knowing how to sell yourself is valuable for everyone"

Arguably, success in job-seeking is particularly imperative for young people in times of high unemployment, as were the 1990s. Personal effectiveness training purports to meet that imperative, by providing an opportunity for those who are disadvantaged in the labour market through, for example, a lack of qualifications, to familiarise themselves with the processes of seeking, and applying for, paid work. Thus, such training offers information about contacting employers, and engaging in interviews, in ways which may maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome for job applicants. For example, the personal appearance of job-seekers contributes to the impression they create with potential employers during interviews, and personal effectiveness training
includes classes in which people learn to assess, and improve, their appearance towards that end (Payne, 2000).

The apparent shift to neo-Fordism in New Zealand's economic focus has brought with it a further dimension to the importance of personal appearance for job-seekers. As we have seen, since the early 1990s in Western countries, including New Zealand, most of the occupations that have been available for young, low-or unqualified job-seekers are those in service industries, such as the food and hospitality trades; shop assistants; office workers, and so on (Wirth, 1994; Furlong and Cartmel, 1999). In entry-level jobs within service industries, young workers deal primarily with people rather than with products. Thus, although their social skills, as in their ability to interact well with customers, have become significant for their employability, the ways in which employees manage their personal appearance is also of prime consideration to employers. However, although it is believed that employees' appearance has an effect upon customers' choice to patronise the firm (Cohen, 1984; Payne, 2000), employers do not tend to view personal appearance as an aspect of employees that may be developed during enterprise-based training. Rather, employers select for the presentability of their employees during the initial interview (Ahier and Moore, 1999). The ways in which job applicants attend to their self-presentation is thus highly significant for both finding, and keeping, a job.

**Personal Presentation Classes**

The programme covered many aspects of self-presentation, in classes taken by a private provider, for whom I have used the pseudonym of Tiffany. Tiffany had been contracted by the school to offer seven hours of lessons in image management to the students (Interview). She believed that her classes, in "...basic deportment, how to stand, and do your hair and your makeup and keep in touch with fashion, and how to sell yourself...", should be held for all students, rather than only for the low-achievers (Interview). Tiffany thought that her classes would be valuable for all students at the school because, as she indicated in our interview conversation, she intended her lessons to fulfil several purposes. She taught concepts of hygiene and cleanliness as matters pertaining to students'
health, and attempted to build students' self-esteem through advising them about their appearance, while preparing them for the workplace (Interview).

Tiffany's perceptions of the students at the school appeared to be based on a set of implicit and interrelated assumptions. That is, her classes provided a particular body of knowledge for people whom she perceived to be both ignorant in matters of hygiene and of work, and lacking in self-esteem. She explained her impressions as follows:

I get the low stream people [who] are not achieving academically. By the fifth, sixth and seventh form, if they haven't succeeded academically, that's when you get the trouble. They're troublemakers. They get their attention by being bad (Interview).

Thus, her perception that the students lacked self-esteem was accompanied by a further assumption: that these students were trouble-makers. She extrapolated their apparent troublemaking to an indifference on their part to the demands of the labour market. Tiffany said that these students must realise that "...they are going for jobs, and, for them, their main objective is realising that you have to fit in with what other people want, if you're going to get a job" (Int 786). Thus, in the premise with which she approached her contribution to the programme, she assumed that her students would be reluctant to conform to employers' expectations regarding their appearance, in order to find work.

**Speech**

Within personal effectiveness training, the concept of self-presentation covers both non-verbal and verbal factors (Argyle, 1995). Accordingly, while Tiffany's stated intention was to assist the students to align their preferences in the matter of clothes and personal presentation with those of employers, and wider society (Interview), she began with the students' speech. She played an audio-tape to the class, on which a dozen people spoke for a minute or two each. Tiffany asked the class to note down the impressions they had formed, based on the voices of the speakers. The students, when asked, referred to the voices as, for
example, 'boring'; 'up himself'; 'intelligent'; 'knowledgeable', and 'caring' (Field notes).

Tiffany used their impressions of the taped voices to illustrate her point that the ways in which people use their voice contribute to the impression they create of their own personalities. The impressions formed by ways in which people speak include aspects of the use of language, as well as voice, as Tiffany indicated when she brought the students' attention to the vowel sounds of the speakers on the audio-tape. In particular, she focused on the short high front vowel [i], as in, for example, 'milk' and 'fish and chips', which is enunciated by some New Zealanders as 'mulk' and 'fush and chups' (Fromkin et al, 1990). She told the students that she had noted their use of that speech form, and that they should avoid speaking in that unacceptable way, explicitly because: "when you go for a job interview, you must watch your speech, if you want to create a favourable image of yourselves and get a job" (Field notes). Further, she told the students that in addition to failing to pronounce their words in an unacceptable accent, in her presence they mumbled, which made them appear "...underconfident and insecure" (Field notes). She added that when they apply for jobs, their mumbling will create an adverse impression of themselves as hesitant and timid, rather than as self-confident and assured.

In her approach to teaching the use of language in the speech module, I would argue that Tiffany was practising that which Bayard et al (2001:25) have termed 'dialect hegemony'. That is, from the beginning of European settlement until approximately the 1980s, the mode of speech which was considered to be the most acceptable in New Zealand was that of the English upper classes. Others' speech, including most of the various accents to be heard in New Zealand, were perceived to be inferior to that of the English upper class (Bayard, 2001). Further, the style of one's speech, as well as one's accent, can convey impressions of social class, personality, and so on (Argyle, 1995). The manner in which one speaks is thus as important as the content of one's speech, at times when creating an impression is a significant function of an interaction.

As well as the students' pronunciation and enunciation, Tiffany pointed out that their choice of phrase, as job-seekers, would also impact upon the impression
they create of their personalities. She asked one of the boys if he would say of himself, during an interview, that he would do a good job. The boy replied that he would say something to that effect, and that he would add "probably no better than anybody else" (Field notes). Tiffany repeated his words to the class and remarked that she is "...sick of that Kiwi modesty...", (Field notes) in which people say that they can do as well as, but probably no better than, anyone else. She told the students that they should get used to the idea of selling themselves in the workplace, which necessarily involves representing themselves as superior to other job applicants (Field notes).

They should monitor their phrasing, their accent and their speech-related mannerisms, Tiffany suggested, in order to increase the likelihood of their finding a job. To illustrate the students' speech faults for them, she asked them to read aloud, in pairs, while she audio-taped them doing so. She then played the audio-tape back to the class as a whole, commenting all the while on the unsuitability of their pronunciation and enunciation, in terms of their personal presentation when in a job interview situation (Field notes).

The ideas that Tiffany was presenting to the class reflect the ways in which employees' speech has become a commodity in the labour market. That is, the ways in which employees speak has become subsumed under the purview of a firm's image, which they are selling to their customers. It is not the case, however, that until the globalisation of trade fostered the expansion of service industries, service workers spoke as they pleased. Rather, according to Cameron (2000), employers in industrial countries have long sought to control the ways in which workers use their voice and language, but their desire to do so has become significantly intensified since the late 1980s and the deregulation of business competition in the free market.

Employees' use of voice and language has come to be perceived as a valuable commodity because it is seen, by private enterprise, as a source of potential advantage in the competition for business. As a result, employers wish to monitor their workers' speech in interactions with customers. It is in employers' interests to control for individual variety, or to create an homogeneity, in workers' use of speech. The quality of employees' voices, their consistent use of
polite speech, and so on, are therefore the subject of employers' scrutiny as the latter attempt to subordinate individual workers to their corporate norm (Cameron, 2000).

Employers' increasing tendency to regulate the ways in which their employees talk includes the trivia of such talk (Cameron, 2000). Such a degree of regulation manifested in another module of the programme. Lois had arranged for the class to receive copies of a major newspaper each Wednesday morning, for a newspaper-reading exercise (Field notes). She explained in an aside to me that the students would not necessarily be looking in the newspaper for jobs, but rather, they were to get "...the feel of what's in it, and have a read" (Field notes). They might be looking for news, or sports items. Lois told the students that when they go to work, they will be talking about things other than work, as in, for example, current sporting events (Field notes). She said to me that she wanted them to read the newspaper, and talk amongst themselves about the various pieces of information they found there, because when they go to work, "...this is what people do at morning tea-time: read and converse" (Field notes).

Thus, the students were introduced to the ways in which employees' speech, along with other aspects of their identities, is being monitored and subjected to critique, and is the target of attempts to impose top-down change in the ways in which people perceive themselves and their way of being in the world (Cameron, 2000). The situation can be seen to give rise to concern in several ways. Firstly, on an individual level, such scrutiny and criticism raises concerns about people's potentially diminished sense of agency as language-users (Cameron, 2000). Secondly, people's speech habits are acquired within their social and cultural context. To attempt to control others' habits of speech in that way serves to detach the speech of both the upper and lower classes from the social bases from which speech derives its meaning. Thirdly, the representation of 'ideal' speech mannerisms in such an abstract way functions to depict them as equally accessible to everyone, regardless of social class, cultural background, gender, age and so on (Payne, 2000). However, due to the hierarchical nature of dialect hegemony, the 'ideal' speech is more familiar, and accessible, to the middle and upper classes than to the lower classes (Payne, 2000).
Aesthetic Labour

Along with employees' speech, their physical appearance and their dress have increasingly been perceived as commodities in the workplace (Cameron, 2000). The intensification of employers' regulation of these aspects of their workers is, again, perhaps most clearly illustrated in the service sector of the labour market. Research has shown the degree to which individuals possess the 'right' voice quality, and appearance, and project a corresponding image, impact upon the occupation they will fill within the hierarchy of the service industries. Those who have the 'right' voice, appearance and image are predominantly white, middle-class and young, and are being actively recruited by the more elite echelons of the service industries, such as the fashionable wine bars, hotels and boutiques, to work as that which Payne (2000:363) has termed 'aesthetic labour'.

In the lower strata of the service industries, aestheticism has become concentrated in the smile. One of the most essential characteristics required of workers in the contemporary labour market is the ability to smile under all circumstances (Payne:2000). A manager of a clothing chain in the United States of America explained that for him, the decisive factor when interviewing prospective employees is their smile. "I tell my personnel managers, if they don't smile, don't hire 'em. I don't care how well educated they are, how well versed they are in retail, if they can't smile, they're not going to make the customer feel welcome. And we don't want 'em in our store" (Payne, 2000:362).

The importance of the smile was also raised as a significant matter for students' attention in Tiffany's classes. She explained that employers require those of their employees who deal with the public always to smile, whether during face-to-face interactions or over the telephone. Tiffany requested the students to put a pen across the inside of their mouths, in order to position their facial muscles in the manner of a smile. She explained that arranging their face in that way activates a chemical in their bodies, which serves to render their voices "...lighter and happier" (Field notes). Therefore, when answering a telephone or welcoming a customer, they will deliver a "...light and happy greeting" (Field notes). Thus, the aesthetics of the smile becomes an aspect of image management, even if the smile is to be heard rather than seen.
The commodification of bodily appearance

Tiffany’s lessons went on to reflect the notion of the aesthetic worker in several ways. One of the assignments that the students were required to do in her class was to complete a checklist entitled "You and Your Image" (Appendix Number 4). There were more than thirty questions to be answered, all of which related to image, clothes and body shapes. For example: "what sort of person do I want to portray?"; "What clothes fit this image?"; "Tick your best feature: hair, eyes, mouth, neck, waist, hips, hands, chest, thighs, knees, ankles, feet"; "How can I make myself look taller/shorter?"; "Are my shoulders broad, narrow or balanced?"; "Are my arms heavy or thin?"; "Is my chest large, low or small?"; "Does my stomach protrude?"; "Are my legs long or short in proportion to the rest of my body?"; "Are my ankles and legs thin or thick?"; "What style of clothes would I wear to flatter my shoulders?"; "What colours should I avoid?" and so on (Appendix Number 4).

The checklist thus reinforced a constructed norm of height and slenderness (Grogan, 1999), while conveying the notion of physical flaw, or lack, in each of the students’ body shapes when measured against such a norm. Arguably, the affective consequences for teenagers of comparing their bodies against a constructed norm in that way may be considerable. Tiffany, however, perceived her girls-only lessons as all-girls-together chat sessions: "...it's a lot more chatty and casual [than is the case when boys are present]. It's all females, and we go into big butts, big boobs, and all that sort of thing. And how to dress to get over their anxieties..." (Interview). Nevertheless, I would suggest that the nature of her lessons would tend to generate, or exacerbate, these young people’s anxiety about their body shape. As Grogan (1999) writes, most women are, or have been, unhappy about their body shape, and ‘butts and boobs and all that sort of thing’ are aspects of themselves about which young women in particular are most likely to feel dissatisfied.

That Tiffany failed to take such an adverse result into account became clear, as I learned from both Tiffany, and some of the girls, about the latter’s reaction to Tiffany’s ‘casual chats’. Tiffany told me that the students became "closed" when she attempted to tell them that their clothes, and the manner in which they wore
them, made them look, for example, "stocky" (Interview). The girls' reactions confirmed, for me, that their anxieties about their physical appearance were not allayed by Tiffany's classes. They were, indeed, 'closed', and I found them to be indignant, about some aspects of Tiffany's lessons, when I talked with some of them:

B Like, some of the stuff we had to write,
C That was a bit off.
MB What did you have to write?
B Like, if you've got big tits, small tits, big arse, and (laugh)
D You had to do, like, pick the three things, what you hate and what you like. And like, if you liked your face, you have to circle it, and if you liked your arse you got to circle it, and if you liked your boobs you got to circle it (laugh).
A ...it was real embarrassing, because I had to go up the front - she picks out stuff about you.
B About our hip size and all that. She went to lift up my jersey: I was like "ooooo" (Interview).

Arguably, Tiffany was not realizing her intention to bolster the self-esteem of these students. One reason for the discrepancy between her intention and the students' understandings of her lessons may be that the ideas upon which she based the content of her classes can be seen to contain contradictory concepts. As she explained to me:

My classes go right into body image, and making peace with your own shape. I believe that dieting's a terrible thing. You accept your shape for what it is, and learn how to make it look good. And anyone can do that. Big people, I draw images of big people and draw them how they can look fantastic (Interview).

Clearly, her assumption was that 'big' people cannot look fantastic without such intervention. Working from such an assumption, it follows that Tiffany has predetermined that students, particularly the less slim ones, will have negative perceptions of their own bodies, and believes that pointing out the flaws she
perceives in their physical appearance will be helpful for them. Her assumption thus requires her also to refer to the norm of the ideal body shape while drawing up her lessons, to inform her own perceptions of their bodies.

Having then informed the students' concepts of self in terms of their physical flaws, she went on to teach them about ways in which they may "make peace" with their body shape, by creating the optical illusion of height and slenderness, through their choice of clothes (Field notes). In that way, she first constructed the aesthetics of the students' bodies as lacking when compared to the norm, and then taught them of ways in which they could resemble a look which was closer to the norm in order to render their bodies as 'acceptable'. Yet the bodies which would have become 'acceptable' in that way were images only, which were supposedly to be created by the cut and the colour of garments. Thus, one of the main contradictions within her lessons arises from the conflicting ideas of students 'making peace' with their own corporeality, while dressing in a particular way to disguise it.

During Tiffany's interview with me, it became apparent that the labour market reinforces and perpetuates such conflicting concepts. For example, she explained to me that when going to work, "...you've got to look as if you're making an effort, to show that you're in charge, and you're in control. Proud of yourself" (Interview). She saw a relationship between 'making an effort' and being 'in control', and wearing cosmetics at work. Yet, during the interview it became clear that female employees are not 'in charge' or 'in control' when they 'make the effort' with their appearance in that way. That is, Tiffany also said that most employers, from those in banking firms to those in restaurants, expect their female workers to wear makeup (Interview), and many employment contracts enforce that expectation. As Tiffany explained: "You sign a contract if you get employed by them, saying 'thou shalt wear makeup'. And you do. As long as it's done well - it's become the social norm, it's expected, if you work and deal with people" (Interview).

Superficially, the notion of aesthetic labour can thus be seen, on the one hand, to afford employees who have the sought-after appearance, speech and manner a measure of control over their working lives. They appear to be in a stronger
position in the labour market than do those who, for example, do not measure up to the physical norm. However, I suggest that when one considers why 'the look' is sought-after, it becomes clear that the commodification of aesthetic labour is controlled not by workers but by employers, in two inter-related ways. On the one hand, the employee must 'sell' herself to the employer in order to find and keep the job. On the other hand, she must also ‘sell’ herself to the firm’s customers, in order to attract custom, or embody the ambience of the firm, or 'sell' the firm in some way, in order to sustain her employer's market base, and therefore justify her employment.

Mock Interviews

Although the self-presentation of workers has such significance for employers, the latter do not necessarily want to incur the costs of training new young employees in self-presentation, as noted above. Interviews can thus be most useful for an employer, in setting up the conditions in which, rather than assessing specific skills, he or she may assess the self-presentation, communication and interpersonal skills of the applicants (Baron and Kreps, 1999).

According to the tenets of human resource management, those interviewees who are best received by interviewers are those who express themselves clearly and well; who shake hands and use the interviewer's name; who maintain eye contact and an upright posture, and who dress appropriately (McLachlan, 1999; Rudman, 1997). Job applicants are more likely to be regarded with favour by an employer also if they prepare for the interview by deciding on, and noting, their favourite and best skills; their favourite and best subjects; the workplaces which include the job they want, and which of those can offer a job which matches the applicant's skills and abilities (Bolles, 1993; McLachlan, 1999).

The Purposes of Mock Interviews

To gain some experience of the processes involved in job interviews can therefore be seen to be invaluable for school-leavers, particularly those with few or no qualifications. During the course of the work-readiness programme, the students
were required to participate in mock job interviews with employers who volunteered to perform that service. The purpose of the mock interviews, as Lois explained to the class, was to acquaint the students with the nature of such an interaction, in order to alleviate the nervousness experienced by many school-leavers when approaching an employer. As an added inducement to students' interest, she said that on occasion, students have been offered paid employment after a mock interview (Field notes).

The mock interviews served at least two more purposes. They were the subject of a qualification in themselves, and were included in the programme as Unit Standard 1293: Participate in a Predictable 1:1 Interview (Field notes). In effect, students who met the criteria for successfully completing an interview with an employer would thus gain a Unit Standard that qualified them to go to job interviews. Secondly, the mock interviews also functioned as a form of assessment for Tiffany’s personal presentation module in the programme. The clothes worn to mock interviews were to be brought to class to be assessed by Tiffany, who would check the degree of formality and neatness of the clothing, as well as the current state of students’ fingernails, shoes, and so on (Field notes).

Most of the mock interviews were arranged by Lois, and the interviewer and the interviewee were to be unknown to each other (Field notes). The preparations for the mock interviews began in class with another consideration of students' use of speech and language, on the rationale that if they apply for job interviews over the telephone, their voice is significant as their first contact with the employer. Lois therefore required the students to write a paragraph which would inform a prospective employer about themselves, and then to record themselves speaking the content of their paragraph. When all the taping was completed, the tapes were to be played to the whole class. In that way, as Lois explained: “you will learn about each other, and you’ll also hear your own voice as others hear you” (Field notes).

The taping exercise was not only about the explicit use of voice, however. Social divisions were implicitly reinforced when Lois told the class to remember that they will speak differently when interacting with an employer, and with their families and friends (Field notes). That is, the terms and phrases they used with
people familiar to them, and who were of equal social standing with themselves, would be different from those used to address an employer.

**Monitoring the students’ appearance**

The students’ choice of clothing to wear to the mock interview were also included in the assessment exercise. Students were not permitted to wear their school uniform to the mock interviews. Rather, they were to wear their own clothes, but those clothes were to be of a certain standard. For example, the students were not to wear jeans, or baggy shorts (Field notes). The students protested at the idea of ‘dressing up’, to which Lois replied that of those students who do not get a passing grade for their mock interview, most fail because their personal presentation does not meet the criteria. When one student called out that he had no clothes that would be deemed acceptable, Lois again revealed her assumption about these students’ social backgrounds, as she said they should all refrain from buying new clothes for the interviews. She suggested that rather, they should purchase garments from second-hand clothing shops if they had no suitable clothes to wear (Field notes).

**Mock Interviews as assessment**

Their clothing was one criteria on which employers were also asked to grade each interviewee’s performance at the mock interview. Every employer who conducted a mock interview with a student was asked to complete a criteria sheet by grading aspects of the student’s performance during the interview, and to send it per facsimile to Lois (Field notes). The criteria sheet was based on Unit Standard 1293, which was written to assess a post-school trainee rather than a secondary student (Appendix Number 5). Thus, the way in which aspects of post-school workplace training informed the secondary school programme became evident. The students, as are those who are already in the labour market, were assessed on: the content and delivery of their questions; the greeting given to the interviewer; their appearance and behaviour; the degree to which they demonstrated self-confidence through such strategies as maintaining eye contact, and so on (Appendix Number 5). All these criteria were given equal importance, and students either passed or failed the assessment on that basis, as their performance was judged to be either ‘acceptable’ or ‘unacceptable’.

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Mock Interviews as self-surveillance

In addition to assessment by the interviewer, the students were required to assess their own performance during the mock interview. There were two aspects to this self-assessment. The first one was aligned with Unit Standard 1293, and required the students to assess their own preparedness, punctuality, appearance, and demonstration of self-confidence, and well as the nature of the questions they asked the 'employer', and so on (Appendix Number 5). The second self-assessment was an extension of the personal presentation module, and the criteria was provided by Tiffany.

The minutiae of this self-assessment was revealed in such questions as: do you have dandruff?; do you need to remove any eyebrow hair; are your lips dry?; should your armpits be hairless?; is your clothing wearing out?, and, for men only: have you hairy nostrils, and ears? These minutiae, as criteria, can be seen to reflect the nature of Tiffany’s personal presentation module, and to reinforce the degree to which 'selling yourself' furthers the commodification of labour, rather than to instruct students in effective ways through which to bolster their self-esteem and to manage their anxieties about their appearance.

As Tiffany remarked, learning how to sell oneself is important, and that is particularly the case in a job interview situation (McLachlan, 1999), given that the overarching purpose of an interview is to select employees (Rudman, 1999). Further, it appears that contemporary employers take more care in their selection of employees from interviews than was previously the case, possibly in order to construct a workforce which is more amenable to the managerial principles and practices of private enterprise than is the work force of the present (Storey, 1992).

Curriculum Vitae

Although a job interview thus serves employers in several ways, such interactions may also be seen to be of more benefit to job applicants than making initial contact by posting a curriculum vitae (CV). The posting of CVs is seen by some human resource theorists to be far less effective than are direct, face-to-face, visits to premises where an individual wants to be hired. Such a visit is
seen to be six times more effective than sending a CV (Bolles, 1993), because approximately 75% of CVs do not get past the screening stage of employee selection (McLachlan, 1999:81).

Nevertheless, CVs are an important factor in job-seeking, in that their purpose is to formally communicate to an employer, in writing, that an individual has the skills, aptitude, qualifications, and credentials to meet specific job requirements (Block and Betrus, 1997). The structure of a CV is also important, as McLachlan (1999: 81-82) advises that to engage an employer's attention, that a CV should have the following characteristics: "it should be brief and clearly expressed, while conveying the benefits to the employer of the applicant's skills and abilities; those skills and abilities must be on the first page, and highlighted; skills must be relevant to the needs of the employer; the CV must look professional and polished, and the covering letter must engage the employer's attention and motivate her to read the CV".

In teaching her students to engage an employer's attention in this way, Lois required them to write a targeted curriculum vitae¹, and a covering letter, with which students might apply in person for either full-time, or part-time, or holiday employment (Fieldnotes). Although the CVs were done as part of the programme, Lois chose the format for the students to follow (Field notes). She chose one which used an arrow, rather than a shotgun, approach. That is, in targeting a particular employer, Lois told me that her intention was to set up the conditions in which the employer's attention would be drawn firstly to the students' work experience, while the descriptions of the students' scholastic achievements were positioned as secondary (Field notes).

Targeting an employer did not mean that students were applying for a particular job with that employer, however. Lois suggested that the students target large retail outlets such as the Warehouse, or K-Mart, over Christmas, or large, upmarket hotels and restaurants, and to say that they will do anything: cleaning, kitchen work, and so on. The students were to include any available evidence of

¹ The concept of targeting refers to the practice of sending a CV to a specific employer, or a particular job within a workplace, or a training provider.
knowledge for which a particular employer may be looking. For example, students applying for office work should include a certificate or award which demonstrated their use of English, or if applying to a shop, a customer service certificate would be useful (Field notes).

The CVs as an exercise in constructing the students as achievers

The two models recommended for students’ CVs by Block and Betrus, (1997) suggest a sequence in which educational achievements are first, followed by skills and strengths, and experience, and then special achievements. The CV format that Lois required the students to use was as follows: first they were to set out their work history, and to include references from employers, and/or evidence of work-ready skills such as drivers’ licences, as well as Unit Standards in keyboarding, and training courses, such as that of First Aid, which they have attended. Their work history was to be followed by their educational history, including the subjects they were currently studying, and other Unit Standards they may have gained. The final feature of their CV was to be their sporting awards, which would indicate that they have performed well in a team (Field notes).

Lois told the class that employers cannot determine, from qualifications mentioned in CVs, the level to which people are capable or knowledgeable in the indicated area of competence (Field notes). That circumstance was seen as a positive one for the students, in that their lack of achievement at school may not be immediately evident to the reader. For example, although the students were to include two of their school reports, Lois suggested that if they have a “really ghastly” page in a report, they may omit it, and explain to the employer that they have done so because they believe that the missing page does not reflect their ability (Field notes). Lois explained that the employer would be impressed by the student’s honesty in admitting the omission, and the self-confidence shown in the explanation.

Clearly, the writing of CVs was not to be regarded as an exercise only. Rather, the finished CVs were intended for the students to use in job applications (Field notes). By recommending that the students use that particular format to
construct their CVs, and that they remove an unflattering page from their school report, Lois set up the conditions in which their most ‘marketable’ attributes were first in the sequence. Further, Lois told the students that she would update their CVs for them when they apply for jobs, for the first six months of the following year. She also suggested that she act as the contact person for any employers who may make enquiries about the students as a result of their CVs (Field notes).

Although writing a CV is, arguably, an exercise in self-commodification, a CV is also a way of preparing an employer to meet a school-leaver. The format of these particular CVs allowed the students an opportunity to position themselves as achievers, albeit in the workplace rather than in the classroom. In that way, I would argue that the CV exercise worked to partially subvert the construction of these students as ‘low-achievers’. Further, CVs constructed in that fashion adhere to the characteristics of documents which are likely to motivate employers to read and to remember them, as outlined by McLachlan (1999) above. However, the exercise could be seen to also reinforce their socio-economic position, both in putting their work experience first, and in the choice of service jobs at which the CVs were aimed.

The letter as an exercise in constructing the students

The covering letter was also designed to attract employers’ attention. As Lois said to the class, employers will see the level of both the English used in the letter, and the articulation of the students. Lois directed the students to “tell the good things about yourselves, to sell yourself” in their letter (Field notes). In order to overcome their reluctance to sell themselves, they were to compose a letter which presented their personal qualities as: “People tell me that I am …”, for example, pleasant to work with, and/or well-organised, and/or honest and reliable, and/or that I get on well with people of all ages (Field notes). Similarly, they were also to write: “I believe I can …” in the letter, to allow them to state their claims to competence while avoiding the self-promotion they found to be embarrassing (Field notes).
Jobs such as baby-sitting were to be mentioned, to indicate that the students had taken responsible work (Field notes). They were to include three positive statements about themselves in that way in the letter, to set out qualities that people have said they possess, or to reinforce a comment from their school reports, or from paid work. The students were also to explain the reasons behind their application for work, such as to earn money for a training course. Lois suggested that they refrain from explaining that they want money for the summer, because that statement would suggest to an employer that they would be unreliable as employees, and would not work hard (Field notes).

As mentioned above, the CVs and letters and personal presentation classes were not merely classroom exercises. Rather, they were intended for use in the labour market. The main workbook featured in the programme was also for direct application to job-seeking. Lois told the class that the Career Planit 3 workbook "is all to do with interviews for employment" (Field notes), because "one thing an employer often does, to relax you and to find out about you, is to say to you 'tell me about yourself'. And that tell-me-about-yourself information is based on the information you have written down in your workbooks". The previous week, Lois had told the class that they "are building information for their CVs, or for letters of application for work, and that they will be "returning to this book again and again" (Field notes). Thus, the personal information in the workbook functions to forge connections between the students' private lives and their work in the future.

**Students' work on CVs as an extra-ordinary module within the programme**

1999 was the first year that the students had been allowed to do the writing of their CVs, because there were so many students in the programme. In previous years, the students had drafted the information to be included in their CVs, and Lois's aide had typed them. The exercise was completed in about two weeks. However, that was not the case in 1999, and many of the students did not finish their CVs within the school year (Field notes). Lois knew that other transition teachers used their STAR funding to pay outside providers to teach CV preparation, and to write the CVs up, and she told me that in the following year, she would not allow the students to write their own CVs. Rather, an outside
provider would be called upon to transcribe them from data provided by the students (Interview).

In that way, the CV and the letter-writing modules may operate in ways similar to those of the other modules in the programme. However, the 1999 CV and letter-writing module can be seen to stem from a point of departure different from the personal presentation and the mock interview. As I have noted, the two latter activities appeared to take, as a given, the idea that the students lack the knowledge, the image and the attitude to succeed in the labour market. The CV and letter-writing exercises of 1999, on the other hand, while taking students' achievements into account first, can be seen to give them the opportunity to construct themselves as achievers while working on their CVs. To take the act of writing CVs out of their hands, I believe, would negate any sense of self-confidence they may gain for themselves, as a result of the exercise.

This chapter has outlined some of the ways in which the employability programme can be seen to place responsibility for finding work on the shoulders of job-seekers. Their self-presentation, their CVs and their interactions during interviews are all dimensions of ‘selling’ oneself to prospective employers. At the same time, however, notions of constant self-improvement and a search for excellence in the image of job-seekers that are apparent in the programme, and which have been included in order to satisfy the interests of the employer-as-customer, highlight parallels in nature, form and content that I would argue are present between TQM as human resource management for the production of goods and services, and employability programmes as the production of people for low-status work.

In Chapter Seven, I have thus described some of the ways in which the programme, while purportedly for the benefit of low-achieving students as well as for employers, works to support the interests of private enterprise, by encouraging job-seekers to fit themselves to the norms and culture of the labour market. In the next chapter, I outline ways in which the kind of knowledge related to being an employee that was disseminated to the students worked to constrain, rather than to extend, their potential sense of autonomy and understanding of workplace issues.
CHAPTER 8: KNOWING AND DOING AS AN EMPLOYEE:

In this chapter, I consider those modules from the work-readiness programme which were largely concerned with knowledge about that which was deemed to be pertinent to students' future participation in the workplace. The information presented to students in these modules pertained to that which they may know, and do, as an employee, and I explore that information within the context of political influences on the constitution of the workplace. This section of the programme was partially concerned with notions of rights and responsibilities that accompany participation in the work force, and therefore encompassed some of the legalities covering the employment relationship. The remainder related to employers' expectations of their workers, and thus drew on non-judicial codes of workplace behaviour. The modules which represented, to the students, some workplace-related legalities were entitled 'Identify Basic Employment Rights and Responsibilities and Sources of Information and Assistance'; 'Sexual Harassment', and 'Occupational Safety and Health'. The modules entitled 'Employers' Expectations' and 'Customer Service' imparted information about employers' expectations of employees. As I will explain, however, the knowledge imparted to the students constrained, rather than extended, their capacity to look after their own interests in the workplace.

The political and economic context of the modules

The Employment Contracts Act (ECA) (1991) was one the main mechanisms through which neo-liberal, neo-classical principles of politics and economics were implemented in New Zealand's labour market and workplace during the last two decades (Bertram, 1997; Douglas, 1993; Harbridge, 1993a; Walsh and Ryan, 1993). The ECA set the parameters in which individual workers and employers negotiated conditions of work in the newly-deregulated labour marketplace (Bertram, 1997). The Act was drawn up ostensibly as neutral legislation (Kelsey, 1995/1997; Sayers, 1993) for the mutual benefit of both parties (Savage and Cooling, 1996; Mears and Savage, 1997; Roper, 1997; Savage, 1996). However, as powerful business lobbies exerted their influence on the content and the economic philosophy of the ECA, their interests informed the consequent
restructuring of the labour market and of workplace relationships, and, ultimately, the part played by labour in the processes of capital accumulation (Bertram, 1997; Douglas, 1993; Harbridge, 1993a; Walsh and Ryan, 1993). The ECA was implemented with two main objectives: the deregulation of the labour market and the disestablishment of the labour unions. To deregulate the labour market was seen by policy-makers to enhance efficiency and equity in employment matters, in that an employment contract was perceived to function as did any contract of exchange between a buyer and a vendor. Towards that end, occupationally-based wage awards were superseded by enterprise-based pay. Secondly, the disestablishment of almost all of the unions in New Zealand served to undermine their bargaining power on behalf of workers (Douglas, 1993; Easton, 2001; Harbridge and Hince, 1993; Rosenberg, 1993; Walsh, 1997; Walsh and Ryan, 1993). Workers were subsequently discouraged from engaging in collective contracts, and employers could not be compelled, by law, to negotiate a collective contract with a job applicant (Harbridge, 1993a, 1993b; Kiely and Caisley, 1993; Kelsey, 1995/1997).

Accordingly, although the ECA was promoted as being a neutral mechanism on the 'level playing field' of the labour market, in some ways the Act's terms and conditions favoured the interests of employers over those of employees. In effect, the ECA undermined unions, and lowered wages, in a period in which the labour market operated through demand rather than supply, and unemployment was higher than 11% (Kelsey, 1995/1997:181-182). The fairness or appropriateness of the Act was not opened up to question (Kiely and Caisley, 1993). Rather, the ECA holds that an employer should "...pursue his (sic) own interests..." in the management of her or his workplace (Rosenberg, 1993:85). The Act operates on the assumption that the parties to a contract are equally able to decide whether he or she will act within or beyond the strictures of the ECA. The law provides little protection for employees and/or their bargaining agents, should an employer overlook those rules (Dannin, 1997; Kiely and Caisley, 1993).

**Representations of negotiating rights and responsibilities in an employment contract**

When considered against a labour market framed by the ECA, the programme
of my study can be seen to reflect the conflict of interests encapsulated by the Act. The module began with support for job-seekers in the form of a "Job Checklist", which spelled out for students some concepts that: "Before you accept a job, you need to know" (Unit 1978, Work & Study Skills). As job-seekers, the checklist would remind them to clarify, for example, not only the more obvious aspects of becoming employed, such as the hours and days of work; the rate of pay, and their future career prospects, but also information such as the availability of assistance for resolving problems at work (ibid). The list of points provided a frame of reference which could assist inexperienced young job-seekers to avoid signing an employment contract about which they were ill-informed, and which may be disadvantageous for them. The programme also included information about the ECA in the module entitled "Identify Basic Employment Rights and Responsibilities and Sources of Information and Assistance", which was related to Unit 1978 of the NZQA. The text of the module explained employees’ entitlements regarding pay; holidays, and sick leave, and basic clauses in both collective and individual contracts, and so on, as covered in the ECA (Field notes).

Thus, on one hand, it can be seen that some important aspects of employment negotiations were being made explicit, for the benefit of the students as future workers. The module contained useful points which would assist young or inexperienced entrants to the labour market to attend to their own interests, in a situation in which the ECA has tipped, towards employers, the fluctuations of power within the labour market. On the other hand, my data shows that the module did not go far enough in that direction, in that the limited nature of the information provided to students served to reflect and sustain the unequal distribution of power in the labour market. The knowledge to be gained from the information was in terms of the minimum that could be negotiated within an employment contract which, as previously noted, reflected the neo-liberal aim to have only minimum workplace standards, and the tenets of contract law, as the only two recognised judicial constraints on the relationship between employers and employees under the Employment Contracts Act (Treasury, 2000).

According to the text of the module, although the total number of hours of work
per week, and the rate of pay, were said to be set by an employer in consultation with an employee, the guidelines by which students were to inform themselves were taken from the Minimum Wages Act. Also, holidays would be granted according to the minimum stated in the Holidays Act (1991); health and safety guidelines to be followed would take into account the minimum contained in the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and disputes would be resolved according to the Employment Contracts Act (ibid).

In that way, employers were represented in this module as having the authority and the power, drawn from the ECA, to 'set' and 'grant' conditions of pay and work, while the legislation accorded to workers only the minimum of pay and conditions (ibid). Further, the ECA had set up the conditions in which employers may either adopt aggressive bargaining tactics in contract negotiations (Kellie and Caisley, 1993), or not engage in negotiation at all, especially in situations of high youth unemployment. Job applicants, on the other hand, were constructed by the module as those for whom the necessity, and the capacity, to negotiate would be vital.

In one activity, the students were required to role-play as pairs of employers and job-seekers who were negotiating, together, the terms of an employment contract, such as the rates of pay; hours of work, length of holidays, and so on (Field notes). During the course of the role-playing exercise, Lois instructed the job-seeking role-players to refuse to work for a trial period without pay. One of the girls remarked that she had worked for two days on trial, and had not been paid for that time. Lois's response was that job-seekers "...have to work out whether to make waves. For one or two days, maybe not. But for one week, you should expect to be paid" (Field notes). When one of the boys commented that he had been working for eighteen months without a holiday, Lois replied: "that will be because you haven't asked for it. Three weeks' holiday is the law" (Field notes).

Thus, Lois highlighted the advantage for school-leavers in possessing a comprehensive knowledge of their entitlements in the workplace. The obverse of the notion of knowledge possession, however, as presented in the instruction
of the module, was that a lack of such knowledge, or an incapacity to exercise such knowledge in one's own interests, was constructed as a personal deficit. In addition, for workers to claim their entitlements was seen to be confrontational, as in 'making waves', and to oversee their provision was constructed as the responsibility of the worker, rather than the employer.

The extent to which job applicants may negotiate in order to further their own interests was thus diminished by the juxtaposition, within the module, of those discourses which, as (Dannin, 1997) has noted, depicted employers as having the power and the judicial support to set the parameters of workplace relationships. Employee's agency in looking after their own interests was further reconstructed in the module as the extent to which they could use knowledge, not to help themselves so much, as to find assistance. That is, one of the requirements of the Unit Standard was to demonstrate an ability to find, and to contact, sources of assistance. In order to meet the requirements of the Unit Standard, the students were directed to find three employment contract consultancies in the telephone directory, and to telephone those agencies in order to ascertain their fees (Field notes). However, the programme did not address either the ways in which employee representation had been complicated by the disestablishment of the unions (Boxall, 1993), or that employers were under no statutory obligation to negotiate with either employees or their agents (Kiely and Caisley, 1993; McAndrew, 1993).

Rights and Responsibilities in the Workplace

Rights and responsibilities, as represented in the programme, were equally lightly touched upon. Employers' and workers' general responsibilities were stated in the module as to be a "good employer" and a "diligent and honest employee" respectively (Field notes). The legal responsibilities of an employer, as given, were: to pay wages; to provide a safe place to work; to refrain from discrimination against workers; to treat workers fairly, and to provide all the conditions of the minimum code of employment (ibid.). The legal responsibilities of the employee were: to obey all lawful and reasonable commands of an employer; to display care and competence in completing tasks, and to behave in
a responsible, safe and appropriate manner (ibid).

Arguably, given the relative power bestowed on employers through the ECA, rights and responsibilities in the workplace, as described in this section of the module, are open to interpretation more by employers than by employees. That is, of the two parties in the contract, the employer is in the position of most power when judging the degree to which he or she is a 'good' employer, and whether the employee is 'diligent' and 'honest'. Similarly, the responsibility of employers to pay wages, to refrain from discrimination, to ensure workers' safety, and so on, is described in law, as are the minimum entitlements of employees described above. The legal responsibilities of an employee, on the other hand, are to 'obey' the employer's 'fair' commands, to 'display' care for safety, and to 'behave' responsibly. Again, judgement as to whether an employee has fulfilled her legal responsibilities depend upon the degree to which employers recognise degrees of fairness in the working conditions they organise, as well as the extent to which an employer's interests are met in deciding whether an employee has obeyed, or behaved, as required. That is especially the case in times of high unemployment, during which, for example, an employer may find fault in currently-employed labour in order to hire other, cheaper labour.

According to Harbridge (1993a), employees' rights, especially for those with little or no skills, endow them with little power in comparison with those of employers, under the conditions of the ECA. Further disparities in power occur across workplaces, as Harbridge (1993b) writes, as advantageous employment conditions won by workers whose skills allow them a strong bargaining position are not replicated for those less skilled and therefore less powerful. Given that these students had gained few, or no, school qualifications with which to claim the possession of skills, one of Lois's objectives was to heighten their awareness of their rights and entitlements in employment. That she wanted to enable them to protect, and to further, their own interests in the future was illustrated by the following anecdote and metaphor that she recounted to the class:

I know someone who applied for a job as a waitress in a restaurant, and the boss
offered her one week's holiday a year. She thought something was up, and went and got advice from a lawyer friend of hers. The friend told her that she is entitled to three weeks' paid holiday per year. So I want you to remember that there are sharks out there, and they are going to rip you off if they can. You should all screw for everything you can get [in the labour market] (Field notes).

Lois was clearly attempting to warn her students about the consequences of entering the labour market without the benefit of knowledge about their minimum entitlements as employees. During my observations in the classroom, I found that notions of asymmetrical power in the employment relationship could be traced in other modules also, in combination with attempts to empower students, albeit in different ways. Such was the case in the module about sexual harassment in the workplace.

Representations of knowledge about sexual harassment:

The term 'sexual harassment' was originally coined to refer to unwanted sexual attention in the workplace. Initial attempts to legislate for solutions to the problems raised by sexual harassment also stemmed from the workplace (Brant and Too, 1994). Such policies of constraint on problematic personal interactions in the workplace function to prevent extremes of behaviour. However, the premises which underpin such policies are not always due to employers' altruistic concern for workers. Such premises also serve corporate ideologies and goals which focus on the accumulation of profit. Sexual harassment is perceived by management as a waste of employees' personal resources, which would be more productive if directed towards their work (Brant and Too, 1994).

The capacity for employees to look after their own interests in such matters is hampered by the way in which employment contracts provide no legislature which specifically covers issues of sexual harassment. Rather, under the ECA, an employee who wishes to bring a charge of sexual harassment must do so as a personal grievance against their employer, regardless of the hierarchical occupational position held by the perpetrator (International Labour Office, 1991; Ryan and Oldfield, 1991). The personal grievance procedure is therefore
problematic for employees, in several ways. First, individual employment contracts contain procedures for settling personal grievances only if both the employer and the employee negotiate their inclusion (Hughes, 1993). A job applicant should therefore know of that contingency, in order to argue for such an inclusion.

In addition, the difficulties inherent in labour market conditions of high unemployment, as in New Zealand since the late 1980s, exacerbate a worker's reluctance to start personal grievance procedures against her or his employer (Hughes, 1993). Also, in cases in which women pursue policies to deal with sexual harassment, they often must face situations in which they are constructed as having invited the harassment, by their clothing and/or their behaviour (Brant and Too, 1994). Finally, the future availability of personal grievance procedures is uncertain. New Zealand Treasury, the New Zealand Employers' Federation and the New Zealand Business Roundtable have lobbied for the abolition of the personal grievance procedures of the ECA. Their rationale is the 'at-will' doctrine which holds that employees are 'free' to leave their job if they are unhappy with aspects of it (Hughes, 1993).

The business lobby advocates the 'at-will' doctrine because some employees have launched personal grievance proceedings against their employers, who incur costs of various types, especially if they have not put in place a specific policy and procedures for dealing with incidents of sexual harassment. One type of cost arises through absenteeism; poor work performance and motivation, and decreased production on the part of harassed employees, and/or the loss of trained employees. Other costs for employers arise through lost time as management investigates and defends claims of sexual harassment, as well as those of any litigation and compensation that may be awarded to the harassed (International Labour Office, 1992). Overall, the ways in which information about issues of sexual harassment were represented to the students through the programme can be seen to reflect employers' concerns about such consequences for themselves of personal grievance procedures of sexual harassment through the ECA.
For example, the programme largely reflected the notion of 'blame-the-victim', as in denigrating the behaviour and/or the clothing of the target of sexual harassment. The 'causes' of sexual harassment, according to the module, were: the social behaviour of the targets, including the wearing of revealing clothing; a lack of communication between workers and management which prevents discussion about the problem; provocative images in the media, and a reluctance on the part of the targets to complain, with a resultant lack of consequences for the harasser (Field notes). The only instance in which sexual harassment was presented to students as stemming from a position within management was the mention of a dearth of company policy through which procedures to deal with such a situation may be implemented (Field notes).

It may be that many companies do not have policies to deal with instances of sexual harassment because, as mentioned above, it is the legal responsibility of employees to behave responsibly. If the responsibility for eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace is seen to lie with workers, then workers are seen primarily as potential perpetrators, and only secondarily as targets. I would argue that the programme took the students into account as potential perpetrators, as well as potential targets of sexual harassment. That is, the module which was concerned with sexual harassment began with an activity entitled "loaded language", in which the students were asked for both the complimentary, and the pejorative, terms they used to refer to the opposite sex. On the whiteboard, the class composed a list of terms such as 'honey'; 'bitch'; 'cow'; 'slut'; 'pansy'; 'wanker', and 'dude'. The text of the module explained that such derogatory forms of address may invoke a charge of sexual harassment or verbal assault, for which the speaker may be fined (Field notes; Appendix Number 6). Students were advised to note the derogatory aspects of the terms they had contributed to the list, and, generally speaking, to remember to carefully adapt their terms of address according to whom they were speaking. Lois added that they must be careful if, in the future, they became involved in a fight in a pub, because if a male hits a female, "...sexual intention is presumed in the eyes of the law" (Field notes).

Thus, while students' attention was drawn to the consequences of engaging in
illegally offensive behaviour, the exercise, arguably, also served two parallel functions. That is, the students were implicitly positioned, on the one hand, as potential perpetrators of sexual harassment in the workplace through their expression of language, although they had been required to use such language explicitly for the exercise. On the other hand, they were also positioned as people who were likely to become involved in situations of harassment external to the workplace, such as at a pub. Thus, a lesson about sexual harassment in the workplace had also raised a further issue relating to social norms, based on an assumption on Lois’s part that these students would be likely to be involved in an illegal fight in a public place.

When the subject turned to the impact of sexual harassment on the recipient, the students were again re-constructed as potentially blameworthy victims of harassment. An example was given of students in the school whose demeanour lent them an air of unhappiness, or of under-confidence, or defencelessness. Such a person was described as "...a victim waiting to happen" (Field notes), which construed such students as responsible for their own victimisation. Subsequently, the students were required to enter, in their booklet, some indications of suffering due to sexual harassment, and some possible implications for those who find themselves to be a target of such harassment. For example, while a student’s falling grades may indicate anxiety due to sexual harassment, a worker who is suffering such attention may lose concentration, and may absent her- or himself from the workplace, which may lead to the loss of the job, and, possibly, unemployment (Field notes). The focus of this part of the programme was on the disadvantages of allowing oneself to become a target of sexual harassment in the workplace. At the same time, such a lesson could also be applied to students who may be deemed likely to perpetrate sexual harassment, in order to inform them of the consequences of such harassment for their victims.

The module then changed tack, to again represent students as potential perpetrators of harassing behaviour. A booklet activity posed a question to students, asking whether it was possible for students to sexually harass teachers. It was explained that young teachers sometimes dress in such a way as to attract
attention, and/or their body language may imply attraction to a student. The reverse does not obtain, however, according to the book, because school uniforms represent a barrier to the sexual harassment of students by staff (Field notes). Thus, the students were informed that while teachers are apparently unlikely to harass students, the reverse is not necessarily true. In these ways, the person in the position of least power, that is, the student or worker, were construed as responsible for sexual harassment, whether they be victim or perpetrator.

The module did not problematise the perpetration of sexual harassment by those in positions of power. Indeed, the text held that sexual harassment, when perpetrated by employers, is the action of men who gain power through their occupation and status in a firm and who may be influenced, by that power, to engage in such behaviour (Appendix Number 6). In that situation, sexual harassment is an unconscious behaviour on the part of people who do not realise the full implications of their actions (Field notes).

Sexual harassment was thus constructed as a 'cause-and-effect' process, in which the 'causes' were represented as provocative clothing and media images, as well as conditions that obtained, such as a lack of consequences for harassers, and a lack of policy through which to deal with the problem. The module was silent regarding the responsibility of employers in situations of sexual harassment. Rather, the approach taken was one of outcomes for the harassed, rather than of accountability for those who harass. Thus, the module functions on a deficit model of the students, and one in which students are potentially responsible for sexual harassment in the workplace, either as targets or as perpetrators. I would further argue that the more employment becomes a process which draws on all attributes of an employee, from their skills to their personalities, the more essential for the accumulation of profit it becomes to locate responsibility and blame for sexual harassment in the workplace on workers themselves, to reduce the costs to employers of personal grievance procedures.
Occupational Safety And Health

As was arguably the case with the module about sexual harassment, the one about occupational safety and health also represented workers as bearing the major proportion of responsibility for their conditions of work, as a reflection of such situations in the workplace. That is, in spite of the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Act (ARCIA) (1992), and the Health and Safety in Employment Act (HSE Act) (1992) which placed the primary responsibility for health and safety on employers and those in control of the workplace (Thompson, 1995:1; 11), 51% of companies in 1994 had no health and safety provisions in place (Calvert, 1995:5). For 58% of companies, safety had never been on the agenda of board, management or team meetings (Calvert, 1995:5). A significant number of companies operate under the notion that 90% of all workplace accidents are caused by the unsafe acts of employees and the unsafe conditions they create for themselves, rather than the mismanagement of those in charge. Those managers who attempt to reduce accidents often resort only to exhortation of employees, competition among workers, disciplinary action or behavioural modification, with little success (Calvert, 1995). To be effective, safety and health procedures in the workplace must be the responsibility of management (Calvert, 1995).

Within the programme, however, just as the students were constructed as potentially responsible, in various ways, for the perpetration of sexual harassment in the workplace, the knowledge which was disseminated in the occupational safety and health module can be seen to be conducive to setting up the conditions in which workers, rather than employers, take responsibility for identifying and addressing workplace hazards. The exercises in which the students engaged for this module were directed at enabling students to identify and address workplace hazards. The students were asked to write about two duties, and three rights, for workers in relation to health and safety in the workplace. They were also to outline three ways both to identify potential hazards in the workplace, and to reduce or eliminate such hazards (Field notes). Further, the students were required to inspect the school tuckshop in order to identify possible hazards for those who work there, and to ascertain the cost of
safety equipment in local shops (Interview).

The HSE Act requires employers to "actively seek out the hazards", and to ensure the employees are not exposed to hazards, as well as to eliminate, isolate or minimise hazards (Thompson, 1995:2-7). As can be seen, however, the focus of the knowledge contained in the occupational safety and health module was on students' capacity to detect hazards in the workplace; to act in order to minimalise or eliminate such hazards, and to recognise the necessity for protective clothing in the workplace. The accountability of employers in the provision of safe workplaces was thus overlooked, although, as mentioned above, a significant number of employers hold that employees create their own unsafe environments, and choose to work in hazardous conditions.

Given that the priority of private enterprise is to make a profit, the costs to employers of incidents of sexual harassment and accidents in the workplace should ideally be kept to a minimum to meet that imperative. One way in which to safeguard profit is to construct a workforce in which members do not intimidate or harass each other, and who do not react negatively when harassed by a member of the company hierarchy, or when injured at work. Another way to keep costs down is to set up the conditions in which such incidents do not give rise to legal proceedings. Accordingly, the students were encouraged, by the tenor of the programme, to believe themselves accountable for workplace hazards and problems.

**What Employers Want, Or: "Colour Us 'Flexible'".**

One of the objectives of the ECA was to render employees more responsive to the economic needs of business, and of specific employers, in such ways, as well as to enhance the flexibility of labour, as mentioned above (Harbridge, 1993a). There are three key factors in labour market flexibility. As well as functional flexibility, which refers to the degree to which the existing workforce may be used across different jobs and/or over longer hours to meet production, or other, work requirements, and numerical flexibility, or the ease with which an employer may alter the number of workers on the payroll, to suit fluctuating
work demands (Harbridge, 1993b), employers want to be able to arrange workers' pay and conditions more closely around the imperatives of profit for the business (Boxall, 1993).

The term 'flexibility' is used in employment terminology as if it is universally desirable, and neutral (Sayers, 1993). However, while demands are made by employers for cuts in wages and conditions, in order to maintain the profitability of their business, many workers concede to such demands in order to keep their jobs (Webster, 1993). The service sector is particularly demanding in terms of employee flexibility, in that job intensification (Sayers, 1993) and the four-day working week is now common in the hotel, retail, restaurant and finance sectors (Harbridge, 1993b).

What Employers Want

The concept of flexibility was included in the module entitled "What Employers Want", the purpose of which was to bring to students' attention the traits and attitudes which employers value in employees. There were two main activities involved in the exercise, the headings of which were "What Employers are Looking For", and "Have you Got What They Are Looking For?". As Lois had explained, the activities were based on the results of a survey of employers' requirements of employees, which had been completed by "...a lot of employers, a few years ago" (Field notes).

The survey generated a graph of preferred attributes, such as 'a good attitude'; 'honesty'; 'a tidy appearance', and 'flexibility', as specified by the employers surveyed, and which held at the time of my study (Appendix Number 7; Field notes). Each attribute was positioned in the graph according to the level at which the employers had reached a consensus on its importance. For example, about 37% of those surveyed agreed that 'the right attitude' is an important quality in an employee, while 5% had agreed that 'qualifications' are important. Lois informed the students that 'attitude' and 'presentation' are invariably at the top of an employers' list, while 'qualifications' are always at the bottom (Field notes). She went on to say that: "if you have a good attitude, then regardless of
qualifications, if you want a job, you will get it” (Field notes). Her statement can be seen to be significant, in that, within an institution which reifies qualifications, she had constructed as unimportant those qualifications that these students had been marginalised for failing to achieve, while simultaneously placing the responsibility for students’ success or failure in the labour market on their attitudes.

Self-assessment

As we have seen, employers also lend significance to the attitudes of their young workers in the process of capital accumulation. According to the principles of quality management, quality in production and services can be achieved only by taking account of the attitude to work of employees at all levels. As Collard (1991:34) writes: “Quality is about the attitude of mind of all the individuals within organisations”. The attention to workers’ attitude was reflected in the programme in several ways. For example, the students were to indicate the qualities that they saw in themselves with different colours on the employee attribute graph. Lois instructed the class: "[i]f you think you have a good attitude, colour it. If you know you are honest, colour it" (Field notes).

Students’ own qualities were not the only personal factor involved in the exercise. While the students were thus engaged in colouring in, Lois drew their attention to the term ‘stability’, which was near the bottom of the list of required attributes. She told the class that some employers enquire at the school about school-leavers’ families’ backgrounds. Lois said that on those occasions, she refers to the student’s file, to "...find out if they flit around the country, staying with Uncle in the North and Cousin in the South..." (Field notes). In that way, students’ home backgrounds also became a part of the employment commodification process, although such ‘flitting around’ was not construed as flexibility, but rather, as an indication of unreliability or instability.

Nevertheless, school timetables were seen to inculcate flexibility. As the students continued to colour in the bar graph, Lois encouraged them to indicate that they were ‘flexible’, by saying that the ways in which they go to different teachers
every hour, and have a variety of subjects to think about over the school day, highlights the degree to which they are flexible and adaptable. Lois explained that those qualities are important to the students, in that they can be extrapolated to "...do a job and then move to another job and do that, without taking hours in between to make the transition between jobs..." (Field notes). In that way, Lois was encouraging the students to claim as their own those qualities on the graph which would represent them to employers as having the “right attitude” for which the latter are searching.

She continued to do so in the second part of the exercise, in which the students were required to colour the qualities or attributes that they intended to acquire over the year. Ideally, Lois said, they should be aiming for all the attributes on the list. However, if they were aiming for only some of the attributes, they should bear in mind the job-seeking process when selecting which bars of the graph to colour in (Field notes). The exercise thus took into account that these students’ personalities would change over time. However, the exercise aimed not only to align students’ current traits to the workplace, but also the traits they may develop in the future.

**Have You Got What They Are Looking For?**

To reinforce the requirements of employers, the third phase of the exercise asked the students to examine their own understandings of the instruction they were given about employers’ requirements. Nevertheless, the students’ understandings were not the focus of the exercise. The instructions for the exercise entitled: "Have You Got What They are Looking For?" (Appendix Number 7) called for the students to: "...write down what you think employers mean by 'the right attitude', 'tidy appearance', and the 'importance of getting on with others'". (Field notes). Other questions asked: "why are things like a good education, and qualifications, so far down the list? Aren't they important?"; "Why is it important to get on with others at work?"; and "what is a tidy appearance? Isn't the word 'tidy' subjective?". The remainder of the questions concerned the importance or the meaning of good communication; punctuality; experience; being a fast learner, and flexibility, in the workplace. Employers’
understandings, rather than those of the students, were the point of departure for the exercise.

This segment of the activity was the only one to be assessed by the teacher, which underlined the importance of students' understanding of the significance placed by employers on various attributes, such as the right attitude, tidiness and flexibility required of employees in the workplace. I would argue that importance was placed on the extent to which students ‘understood’ the imperative to align themselves and their lives to the needs of private enterprise. However, a short time later, Lois told me that only three of the students had passed the assessment for “Have You Got What They Are Looking For?”. She said that most of them had simply written synonyms to answer the questions. For example, those who failed had written 'positive attitude' as the meaning that employers attach to 'the right attitude', whereas she had expected them to explain, in depth, the meaning that employers attach to such terms. From these results, Lois assumed that the students had not fully understood employers’ requirements of them (Field notes).

Customer Service

The processes of customer service were presented in such a way as to leave little room for misunderstanding employers' requirements. The customer service module was a part of Unit Standard 56, which consisted of three sections in total: customer service; communications, and personal presentation. Unit Standard 56, as a whole, allowed entry to many training courses and subsequent jobs, such as those of hairdressing, building, and business studies, and 'customer service' was an option within the Unit Standard. However, customer service was compulsory within the programme, Lois said, because a major proportion of jobs in the contemporary labour market entail dealing with customers (Field notes).

Lois wished the students to understand the module as the 'moral code' of their future 'professionalism'. "It doesn't matter if you work at [a fast-food outlet] or if you're a cleaner, you have your own moral code" (Field notes). In the code, 'the customer' was defined as: "the person who pays your wages". Lois
explained: "the customer is always right. If there are no customers for the boss, his business will fold, and there will be no pay for the workers" (Field notes). The primary objectives of employers in customer service industries are to retain current consumers, and to compete with other service providers in attracting potential customers (Field notes). As in principles of quality management, the knowledge of service workers was seen as essential in the drive to achieve those objectives.

The service workers of the future were depicted as well-versed in specifically detailed information, as well as in generic workplace knowledge. For example, workers will need a comprehensive knowledge of the products or service being sold; the administration of enquiries, refunds and so on, and the organisation of the company itself, in order to be of as much service to customers as possible. Service workers should also have knowledge about the area in which their work is located, in order to help customers with such information as directions, should they require such help (Field notes). Future service workers should have a broad base of knowledge available for customers, from the characteristics of the service provided to the location of the nearest Post Office, the timetable for the local bus service, and so on.

Customer service knowledge in the module was represented to the students, metaphorically, as an iceberg, of which the presence of the customer was only the tip. Unseen, under the tip, is the knowledge that customers may demand, explicitly or implicitly, of service workers (Field notes). Just as customers' requirements are not static, neither is the customer base of an organisation (Collard, 1991). Successful profit maintenance and extension therefore pivots on helpful, problem-free communication with existing and with new customers.

The main resource for that component of the module was a video-tape compiled by a human resource management company. The video-tape reiterated that customers should be perceived and prized as the providers of wages, and emphasised the importance, for new employees, of interpersonal and communication skills. Such concepts as ways in which to maintain eye contact with customers, and placate those who become irate, were featured on the video-tape (Field notes). Thus, the lowest-level future workers were asked for a
commitment to their job in which they become secondary to the requirements of the customer.

The narrator on the video-tape suggested that workers must always adapt their personality to that of the customer, and must listen, be helpful, and solve problems, because "the customer is always right", and "a successful company depends on employees in difficult situations" (Field notes). In order to do so, they must not take offence, and: "Don't argue, don't fight back, do listen - the first rule in effective communication is to listen". A successful employee is one who 'wins over' the customer (Field notes). Success, in those terms, was defined as the ability to attract, maintain and extend a firm's customer base.

The tenets of customer service were presented to students as generic workplace rules to be followed, to ensure that customers' experience of any service is as unproblematic as possible. For example, in order to refrain from getting too 'familiar' with a customer, the students were instructed to 'measure' the extent of each customer's personal space by the proximity required to shake her or his hand (Field notes). As service workers, they would also be expected to conceal, with a smile, such personal problems as tiredness, or worry, whether the customer be present or on the telephone (Field notes). In that way, the aesthetics of service labour were reflected in the programme, in order that school-leavers understand the process of attracting and retaining a firm's customer base, while their personal traits are to be subsumed under the assumed character of the service worker.

Quality management practices increasingly require workers to make no distinction between a working identity and a leisure personality, in order that employees should bring to the service of employers those skills which they use creatively for themselves out of hours (Brant and Too, 1994). However, while workers are influenced to transfer their private personalities to the workplace, employers wish to select those traits. As Lois told the class: "you still have your identity, but it's hidden. At home, and with your friends, you can be yourself" (Field notes). The students were assured also by the video narrator that although it may appear as though they will lose their individuality in the workplace, such is not the case. "You may think you are losing your identity,
when adopting company clothes and expected behaviours. But you're not. You are just part of a company - you should save your creativity for your friends” (Field notes).

Lois asked the class whether they saw themselves as servants, to which the answer was a resounding "no" (Field notes). Nevertheless, the requirement to subsume identity seemed to me to highlight the post-Fordist notion of the division of labour into core, peripheral and external employees. I think that those who are encouraged into homogeneity in manner and appearance, to subsume their personality to that of the employer and the customer, and to repress their creativity, are the antithesis of the innovative, risk-seeking employee required in the higher echelons of private enterprise. In that way, the programme highlights the selective functions that have been attributed to schooling, in that the homogeneous employee, as framed by the programme, has no input into the processes of production except that of compliance with employers’ requirements of her appearance and her behaviour.

For sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds to be influenced to subsume their personality in that way calls for a particular approach to teaching and learning. As I explain in the next two chapters, while other school subjects were intended to develop young people intellectually, the programme can be seen as an exercise in containing and delimiting the development of both their intellect and their autonomy through transmissive, subject-centred teaching and an attempt at the socialisation of youth.
CHAPTER NINE: PEDAGOGY – THE POWER-KNOWLEDGE NEXUS

In the previous two chapters, I have outlined the ways in which the knowledge disseminated in the programme of my study can be seen to constrain, rather than to extend, the autonomy of the students in various ways. In the modules concerned with becoming employable, the students were encouraged to look and to behave in ways which employers could perceive as being advantageous for maintaining their business, and therefore their profit. In the modules concerned with becoming employed, the knowledge disseminated, although purported to raise students’ awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace, can be seen to limit the degree to which school-leavers may have expectations beyond the minimum conditions of the workplace, and to raise their sense of responsibility for the smoothness of the production process. In that way, the interests of private enterprise are met by employing school-leavers who are amenable to minimum workplace conditions and support, and to taking responsibility for the processes of production.

In the following two chapters, I consider some of the influences on students’ construction of meaning that stem from the pedagogy of school-business partnerships and the new vocationalism, as manifested in the work-readiness programme. For the purposes of this thesis, the term ‘pedagogy’ refers to the underlying philosophy, as well as the principles and practices of teaching. The data has shown that the experiences of teaching and learning that obtained for these students as they participated in the programme were underpinned by the needs of private enterprise, rather than on a particular philosophy of teaching. Arguably, the epistemology which underpinned the programme was that of neo-liberal, neo-classical economics. In that model, that which is known is framed by ideals of one’s right to choose and to pursue one’s goals, unhindered except for the right of others to do the same, through competitive individualism within the free market as the primary mechanism of distribution of social resources.

The policy of the programme was ostensibly to assist each student to choose, and reach towards, his or her goals. Thus, the epistemology modelled in the
programme can be seen to highlight an assumption that everyone has an equal capacity to act upon choice. In such a functionalist approach, the knowledge of private enterprise held by economists, heads of business, and human resource managers is privileged over that held by secondary school students in a poor suburb, for whom unemployment was as much a reality as was employment. Under such conditions, the teaching and learning that stems from school-business partnerships and the new vocationalism cannot take account of, and build on, students’ prior experiences and knowledge in an attempt to engage them in learning.

Rather, as Keyman (1997) writes, the power-knowledge nexus that derives from business-education partnerships can be seen to be dominated by private enterprise, and school-business links function partly to sustain the inequalitarian and political nature of epistemology and of knowledge. Freire and Shor (1987:137) elaborate further:

... domination is more than... the social relations of discourse in the transfer-of-knowledge pedagogy. Domination is also in the very structure of knowing: concepts are presented irrelevant to reality... critical thought is separated from living. This dichotomy... disempowers students politically and psychologically.

The importance of taking into account the prior knowledge and experiences of students

According to Ignelzi (2000), there are three key dimensions to the ways in which people experience, and learn from their experiences. Firstly, people construct their own reality, in that they construct meaning for themselves, and they do so differently from one another. Secondly, the construction of meaning develops over time and with experience. Thus, the process of making meaning develops throughout a person’s life. Thirdly, the process of teaching and learning is therefore heavily influenced by the ways in which students construct meaning. As Ignelzi (2000: 6) writes, “education must construct a ‘bridge’ ” between
students' current ways of understanding their way of being in the world, and the new ways of understanding as presented by the teacher.

Arguably, therefore, the understandings and the experiences brought to the classroom by the student should be given significance in the process of teaching and learning (Paulsen, 2001). In other words, to engage the learner as fully as possible in his or her learning, it is vital to include the background, abilities, learning needs and prior experiences of each student in teaching and learning interactions (Scott, 1999). Ideally, although the learning process may begin with input which relates to the overall content of the course, from either the teacher or the student, the most important factor to be taken into account, in any pedagogical situation, is the student's understanding (Rowland, 1993).

The pedagogy of the workbook

At first sight, the workbook that the students encountered in the initial stages of the programme appeared to take their prior knowledge, understanding and experiences thoroughly into account. However, the workbook was organised in such a way as to set out, for employers, aspects of the students' personalities, to assist the former in the selection process. For the purposes of this thesis, I have considered the workbook as a process: that is, as a series of exercises in which students are encouraged to consider their personal qualities and aspects of their private lives more and more closely in relation to the labour market and the workplace.

The first exercise in Career Planit 3 required the students to note down such idiosyncratic concepts as their concerns in life, where they want to live, and areas of training and work in which they have an interest (Career Services Rapuara, 1997). The second exercise involved the students in choosing descriptors of their own personal qualities from a list of 54 options, such as: honest, tactful, loyal, cooperative, tolerant, dependable, punctual, and so on, and using those terms to write a few sentences about themselves (Career Services Rapuara, 1997).
The workbook went on to ask students to identify the values they considered to be important. Headed with the question: “What do you value most in life?” (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:6-7) the exercise consisted of putting ticks in boxes to indicate the relative importance the students ascribed to a predetermined list of ‘values’. On a scale of one to five, as in ‘not important’ to ‘very important’ respectively, students were asked to rank the importance they attributed to such concepts as communication, challenge, creativity, independence, learning, persuasion, peace, pressure, and promotion. Each concept was accompanied by an explanatory annotation.

The explanatory annotations framed the interpretations to be made of the terms used in the exercise. For example, ‘challenge’ was explained as ‘you enjoy being challenged and given new problems to solve’; ‘peace’ was interpreted as ‘you prefer not to have pressure or challenging demands’; ‘pressure’ meant ‘you like working to deadlines’, and ‘persuasion’ was defined as ‘you enjoy persuading people to buy something or change their minds’ (Careers Service Rapauara, 1997:6-7). The exercise, although ostensibly allowing for the personal input of each individual student, thus introduced an on-going influence on their construction of meaning about both themselves and the workplace.

In the next section of the workbook, the students’ interests and hobbies were brought into play, and cast in terms of work: “Things you do in your leisure time may increase your chances of getting a job...List your interests and hobbies and describe how these may enhance your future training and career prospects” (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:9). A subsidiary workbook, entitled Making Your Own Way – Career planning for senior students (2000) which was used to supplement Career Planit 3 in the classroom, also brought economic considerations of opportunity cost into students’ private lives, as follows:

You are part of a network of family and friends. You work, play, socialise and enjoy life with lots of different people. Some of these people help you, support you and teach you about life. In turn, you give support and friendship to your friends and members of your family. We are all part of a network of people with whom
we have two-way relationships. Some people are acquaintances that (sic) we know through one of our interests like (sic) sport. The people we have the closest relationships with are a small group of close friends and some members of our family (Career Services Rapauara, 2000:15).

The students were to illustrate the two-way relationship they had with the people closest to them. The example given in the exercise depicted a relationship between an uncle and nephew, in which Uncle Jim takes ‘me’ fishing, and ‘I’ mow his lawns. In that way, the notions of incentive and reward were lent congruence to matters of personal relationships.

*Career Planit 3* then made direct connections between the students’ leisure activities and the labour market: “A skill is something you are able to do well – like skateboarding, organising a party or playing an instrument...It is useful to identify these and put them into groups so that you can present yourself effectively when you apply for courses or jobs. It also helps you identify other skills you may need to acquire” (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:11). In the accompanying exercise, the students were directed to group their leisure-related personal skills under typologies related to work skills, such as organisation/management and information processing, as well as physical/practical, creative/artistic and communication/interpersonal (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:11).

The next exercise served to highlight links between the workplace, and students’ personal skills such as ‘using words’, ‘using your senses, and ‘using intuition’. Labelling these capacities as ‘Transferable Skills’, the workbook explained that: “Transferable skills are skills which you can take into work when you leave school...Most of the examples relate to home life...Think of examples from your own home life” (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:12-15). To illustrate, ‘using analytical thinking or logic’ was related to ‘organising a CD collection’; ‘using your senses’ was related to ‘checking signs of sickness’, and ‘using intuition’ was described as ‘deciding to trust someone’ (Career Services Rapauara, 1997:12-15). With the introduction of the notion of ‘transferable skills’, it can be seen that the
seemingly ‘natural’ and unquestioned links made so far between personal life 
and work began to develop into the more complex concept of successful 
competition in the labour market: that is, the nature of an individual’s personal 
characteristics began to be directly linked to the extent to which he or she would 
be successful in finding, and keeping, a job.

In the following pages, the students’ family background was drawn into 
preparing students for the competitiveness of the youth labour market. In the 
exercise entitled “Career Probe”, the text explained that: “Families have strong 
influences on career decision making” (Career Services Rapaura, 1997:16-17). 
The students were asked to determine the nature of the influences of their 
family, friends and experiences on their career decisions. The workbook then 
involved the students in working out their career options; relating their personal 
qualities to those options (Career Services Rapuara, 1997:18-23); and linking their 
work options to school subject choices (Careers Service Rapuara, 1997:24-25). 
Direct connections were being made, in that way, between students’ families and 
the occupational choices that may be available to them in the future. Further, the 
students’ choice of school subjects was drawn into play, and linked not to their 
personal interest, but rather to the degree to which they may be successful in the 
labour market.

All the dimensions of the students’ lives were brought together in the final set of 
exercises, which brought the students to goal-setting. They were asked to plan, 
for the following year, their school subjects, sports and hobbies, and their work, 
and also their personal relationships (Career Services Rapuara, 1997 ). In 
planning personal relationships, the workbook Making Your Own Way – Career 
planning for senior students took their personal life further into the realm of 
human resource management, a general tendency within neo-vocational 
education, as noted by Apple (1995). For example, in one exercise, students were 
asked to make a contract with themselves, about various aspects of their private 
lives. For example, “I commit to: ring/visit my grandmother at least once a 
month”; and “I commit to: reading at least one book a month” (Bright Prospects 
Publications, 2000:21). Career Planit 3 then took the students from planning the 
following year to considering ways in which to find funding to implement those
plans (Career Services Rapuara, 1997), and to setting long-term goals (Career Services Rapuara, 1997).

The work-readiness programme as student-centred in pedagogy

As mentioned above, when viewed as a process, the workbook can be seen to take the students through a highly structured series of steps in which they were encouraged to align their personal qualities and their private lives with the labour market and the workplace. The written tasks that they performed along the way served another function, also: that of defining and describing the extent to which they would be useful as employees to any given employer. As Lois pointed out to the class, their written entries in the workbook were to be done neatly, and the book as a whole was to treated as a bona fide document for job-interview purposes (Field notes). Thus, the students were performing a part of the selective function that has, in the past, been carried out by employers. They were writing a profile about themselves, in a process of self-evaluation for selection in the labour market.

The students' prior knowledge and experience were indeed taken into account in the workbook’s tasks, but not, as would be the case in a student-centred teaching and learning situation, for the ultimate purpose of extending the knowledge and the understanding of the learner. Rather, in these circumstances, pedagogical principles of student-centredness have been subverted not only to serve economic principles of cost- and time-effectiveness for employers in their selection of employees, but also to encourage students to adapt themselves and their lives to the requirements of the generic workplace. Their social relationships, their leisure pursuits, their choice of school subjects, and their personal goals, were all aligned with the contingent needs and requirements of employers.

Pre-suppositions and assumptions that informed the workbook

Another way in which the workbook failed to meet pedagogically sound principles of student-centred teaching and learning was to be found in the
assumptions inherent in the terms used in the various tasks. Although students were asked to describe themselves, that construction of self was constrained by the interpretive framework provided by the workbook. For example, in the second exercise, although students were asked to list the 10 personal qualities that best described themselves, the qualities to be chosen were provided for them in a pre-determined list.

I would argue that the nature of the qualities listed fulfilled two inter-related functions. Apart from providing students with descriptors through which to describe themselves, the list of qualities served to inform students of some of the main attributes required of employees. Thus, the list indicated a pre-supposition that the students who would be engaging with the workbook were ignorant of the way in which such characteristics as honesty, punctuality, reliability, discretion, efficiency, co-operativeness, and so on, were requisite in the workplace. In that way, the task served to reinforce, in students’ minds, employers’ requirements of employees, and to signal that the opposite of those qualities would not be tolerated.

The workbook itself presupposed that students such as these would need, or use, such structured direction in planning for their future. Accordingly, students who fail to find and keep a job may be constructed as having neglected to follow the process thoroughly enough. Indeed, as they worked through the book, students were reminded frequently that the type of people they were, the activities in which they engaged, their family background and the efficiency of their planning were the main determining factors in finding employment. No mention was made of the part that structural unemployment and the free market in labour played in their job-seeking success or failure.

The model of teaching and learning inherent within the programme

One problematic aspect of the programme, of which the workbook was a part, arose from the nature of the teaching and learning interactions it afforded. There was no allowance made for exchanges of understandings or knowledge from which both the teacher and the students may learn (Boud, 1995). Rather,
instruction was one-way only, from the teacher to the student. That model does not allow for learning through social interaction. Teaching took place in an objectivist way, in which the authority of the content was taken as a given, and information was transmitted as a collection of self-evident 'facts' which students were expected to 'receive' as correct and irrefutable (Andresen, 2000). For example, students were told of their broad rights and responsibilities in the workplace, but not of any of the more subtle nuances of the ECA, nor were they encouraged to question the material.

Transmission teaching, by its very nature, does not encourage learners to engage deeply with the subject matter being disseminated (Boud, 1995, Martin and Balla, 1991). Rather, a surface approach to learning serves the purpose of both the learner and the teacher. That is, students who use a surface approach to learning focus on the words used by the teacher and in the materials, and attempt to remember them for regurgitation in examinations. Students who take a deep approach to learning, on the other hand, relate the material to their own experiences and understandings, as they try to make sense of it, rather than merely trying to remember it (Boud, 1995).

Enquiry-based learning is one model in which student-centredness is paramount, and on first consideration, the programme could appear to be underpinned by an enquiry-based approach (Andresen, 2000). For example, questions were posed in a systematic, structured way, and guided students through a process of building up a body of information about occupational areas. Ostensibly, a problem-solving approach to teaching (Boud, 1995) could also be seen to underpin the programme, as in, for example, the activity in which students were to resolve the negotiation of an employment contract. However, the questions were pre-determined and stemmed from a source external to the students themselves, while the problems to be solved required only a little, if any, research, and had pre-determined answers. I argue that, taken as a whole, the programme intimated that the students themselves were the subject of inquiry and the 'problem', for which the programme had come up with a solution. The opportunity to engage the students in deeper learning experiences, such as those
of experiential learning which focus on the experiences of the learners themselves (Boud, 1995; Martin and Balla, 1991), was overlooked.

The pedagogical implications of prepackaged materials

Prepackaged materials, such as the workbook and other material used in the various modules, has implications for the pedagogy of the programme. Such resources represent a form of ‘teacher-proof’ technical control over teaching and learning, in the standardisation of the materials, pre-specified teacher actions and pre-determined student responses. Decisions about the goals, the process, the outcome, and the assessment have been defined as precisely as possible by people external to the teaching and learning situation (Apple, 1995).

In that sense, there was no recognition, within the programme, of ways in which teaching and learning could have been done differently, as a communicative social interaction. Rather, the programme was an exercise in student control and classroom management strategies. Specified outcomes and procedures were built into the material, and it was ‘individualised’ only in the sense that students could engage in the work themselves, with little help from the teacher (Apple, 1995).

The pre-packaged approach to teaching and learning as manifested in the workbooks used formed only a part of the pedagogical milieu of the programme. In addition, I have considered the pedagogical approach of the school, as well as the teacher and her aide, which also had an impact upon the students’ experience of the programme, and formed an influence on their construction of meaning.

The Pedagogical Stance of the School

As the school’s mission statement reads: “to be a community school with a focus on quality. Twemlow High School, in partnership with its community, aims to establish a supportive environment which encourages students to work towards fulfilling their academic, social and physical potential as part of a continuing
process of personal development” (Appendix Number 1). The school has clearly taken an individualist, humanist stance towards teaching and learning, in which the premiss of equity within liberal social justice is evident. That is, the school claims not to set up the conditions in which students may fulfil their potential, but rather, to set up the conditions in which students are supported and encouraged as they work towards the fulfilment of their own potential.

The way in which the school’s prospectus refers to the work-readiness programme reflects the stance of the mission statement. Although the work-readiness programme was not included by name in the subjects listed in the school’s 1999 prospectus, there was a paragraph about the programme near the end of the document. Under the heading: “How will Twemlow help my child make career decisions?” the paragraph reads as follows:

The Transition Education Programme is a strong feature of the school. It is our aim that all students who leave Twemlow High School go either to employment or tertiary study, and we have a well-resourced department to provide information and opportunities for all students. Special courses and work exploration programmes are organised to give students career information, skills in applying for jobs, interview techniques and practical experience (Appendix Number 8).

In the 2001 Prospectus, the paragraph, although again near the end of the document, had been changed to read:

The Transition Education Programme is a strong feature of the school. We have a well resourced department to provide information and opportunities for all students. All students develop an Individual Plan to help them develop goals and focus their learning. All junior students are given career guidance in their social studies programme, and all students are given careful guidance when choosing subjects. Special courses and work exploration programmes are available to give students career information, skills
in applying for jobs, interview techniques and practical experience (Appendix Number 8).

The phrase that was included in the 1999 prospectus: "It is our aim that all students who leave Twemlow High School go either to employment or tertiary study..." had been omitted in the 2001 prospectus. However, the sentences: "All students develop an Individual Plan to help them develop goals and focus their learning. All junior students are given career guidance in their social studies programme, and all students are given careful guidance when choosing subjects", which were not present in the 1999 prospectus, have been added to that of 2001.

The two paragraphs are significant for this thesis, in that they present a clear picture of a shift in thinking on the part of the Transition Department at Twemlow High School over that time. On one hand, the omission mentioned above can be seen to indicate that the school has chosen not to appear to claim responsibility for the outcome of the work-readiness programme, in terms of students' employment. On the other hand, in the addition of the two new sentences, the responsibility for becoming work-ready has been shifted to the students themselves. In the revised paragraph, as is implicated in the mission statement, the role of the transition department is to guide the students, as they develop their own ability to set goals, focus their learning, and choose the 'right' subjects.

In that way, the two prospectii have reflected a shift in pedagogical thought in terms of the work-readiness programme, from one in which the transition department provides, organises and gives instruction, to one in which students' development is seen as a matter of individual choice. The intention became to provide information for students, should they choose to take advantage of it, rather than to take responsibility for 'teaching' skills and interview techniques. Thus, the prospectii also support the ideology of the neo-liberal state, in that they reflect the rise of neo-liberal individualism and the pursuit of choice within the education system.
Meeting students' learning needs:

On the other hand, Lois saw herself as teaching the transferable skills, but with a focus on social interactions. She said that she perceived her role as a "social job - not necessarily a social worker, but it's the social skills. Teaching them the social skills, the etiquette, that's required when they go out to places" (Interview). In her opinion, schools were not really aware of the needs of low-achieving school-leavers until the late 1980s: "There were lots of things hit home to me, what we’re doing wrong in the secondary [system], at that stage. But I think that’s been addressed more now. Especially in the last five years, schools are really addressing that need. There’s more liaison between employers and schools, and the communities and schools, and it’s been very positive. Twelve years ago, that wasn't really there” (Interview).

As Lois put it, she wanted to:

...bring some of the knowledge that I'd got from out in the working world and the environment, and bring it back and try and share it, so I was employed as a full-time Transition teacher" (1-25). "I could see Transition as being more one-to-one with the students, and maybe more knowledge as to what they want to know out there, and need to know" (Interview).

The pedagogical aims of the transition teacher

In that way, although the pedagogy of the transition department had changed to one in which students were to be in control of the extent to which they learned, Lois’s pedagogical approach can be seen to stem from professional concern for her students’ future, and particularly for the ways in which the students develop their approach to the labour market. She wanted her students to be consistently motivated, enthusiastic, conscientious and, above all, successful job-seekers. As she told her class, she “...does not want to see them on the streets, with nothing to do” (Interview). She wanted them to avoid unemployment, because that situation brings its own difficulties: "Employers say that getting up in the
morning becomes a problem when young people get out of the work ethic. It is difficult to get young people out of bed in the morning, as they used to do when they went to school”. Accordingly, Lois perceived a part of her job to be to “push them” towards areas of study, which would be aligned with their future employment (Interview).

**Individualised pedagogical approach of the programme**

In the report Lois prepared in 1997, on Twemlow High's transition programme, the discourse of individual choice is again evident:

> The concept of the course is to prepare students for the world of work by allowing them to choose a career pathway they would like to enter upon leaving school and during the year attain qualifications and/or skills to assist them in their career goal. To this end the course is made up of many practical modules of work – based on NZQ Unit Standards” (Appendix Number 8).

This report, written by the teacher in the second year of the programme's operation, gives an account of the educational philosophy which ostensibly underpinned the introduction of the programme. The report indicates that the programme was aligned with the second form of Skill Pathways, as introduced by the government and described above, in which students' career goals are taken as the point of departure for individualised teaching and learning within the programme. However, as I shall show, the interpretation made of that philosophy has led to a conflict between the purported pedagogical principles and the practice of the programme.

The report goes on to say that “All students have compulsory units of work they must progress through and then have specific units based on their chosen pathway” (Appendix Number 2). The above sentence encapsulates one of the main pedagogical contradictions inherent in Twemlow High's work-readiness programme. The contradiction lies in the interpretation made of the concept of individualised education for work. In the two previous findings chapters, we
have seen that, although individualised in the sense that the students’ personal qualities and aims are purportedly the object of study, the approach to teaching and learning taken in the work-readiness programme stemmed more from an imperative to encourage each student to adapt their person and their personality to the contingencies of the labour market and the workplace, than from the drive to take account of each student’s particular goals.

Further, as explained in the report, the compulsory units include: “Personal Presentation for the Workplace; Learner’s Licence and/or Restricted Licence; 16 Hour Comprehensive First Aid Certificate, and the Compilation of a Curriculum Vitae and folder of relevant documentation/data” (Appendix Number 2). These are Unit Standards that apply to the labour market in general, and to a generic ‘workplace’, rather than to individual students’ career goals. In addition, during my observations I noted that although other Unit Standards provided in the programme were denoted as "...based on their chosen pathway" as mentioned above, those Unit Standards were not optional for the students. Rather, optional or elective Unit Standards were chosen by the school, to make up the content of the programme.

That 'optional' Unit Standards were not chosen by students was confirmed by Lois, during an interview. She explained to me that when the school won a tender for the programme, she was given six months by the Principal to consult with employers, and to draw up a course of Unit Standards which reflected their requirements of young, entry-level employees (Interview). As she explained to her students: "I'm not teaching whatever I want to teach. Employers have said what they want taught, and I'm teaching what employers want" (Field notes). As can be seen, the focus of the programme from its inception was not on students' individual learning needs, but rather, on the learning required by employers.

In the seven goals projected in 1997 for the programme in 1998, no mention was made of the students' notions of career goals. Rather, the focus was on teaching generic personal characteristics such as “self-awareness” and “goal setting”, and on fitting the programme efficiently to the timetable, as well as on liaison with
business (Appendix Number 2). Rather than assisting students to work towards their career goals, the report of 1997 noted that transition students were to be taught the process through which to find a career goal: "Students are taught a range of skills to enable them make a realistic decision on prospective employment and to also teach them skills to use in other areas should they not attain permanent employment" (Appendix Number 2). Thus, the role of the school, according to the Report, was to set up the conditions in which the students made choices. However, there are two concepts contained in the above excerpt from the Report, which indicate significant constraints on the choices made by these students. The first was 'realistic' decision-making, about which I elaborate further in the chapter. The second was the mention of the prospect of unemployment, which, as the literature reveals, underpinned the implementation of the new vocationalism.

**Taking the students into account in her teaching**

When the students began the course, Lois required them to record the other classes in which they were participating, and the level they had reached in those classes. She wanted "a whole picture" of each student in order to help her to ascertain "the level [to which] I should pitch my classes" (Field notes). She also asked for their date of birth, an indication as to whether they were working, and their hours of work. She explained to the class that those factors related to her teaching and their participation in the programme, because they were learning at work, as well as at school (Field notes). In addition, as Lois explained, she drew on other teachers' knowledge of her students, both to ascertain the degree of expectation she herself should have of them, and to encourage those students whom she believed were under-achieving in her course. In that way, Lois attempted to create a situation in which she took a student-centred approach to her teaching, approximate that of previous years, in which the smaller class numbers had allowed her to provide students with one-on-one attention (Field notes).

However, the number of students participating in her course, and the time taken by the contingencies of administrating such activities as work experience
placements, had increased to the point at which she could no longer provide such
direct interactions. In order to find another way provide optimal learning
experiences for the increased number of students, she had tried, during 1999, to
be a "supervisor of learning, rather than a teacher" (Field notes). That did not
mean, however, that students took control of the content of their own learning.
Rather, she had decided to allow the students to monitor their own behaviour,
language and the extent to which they learned.

The transition teacher's perception of the purpose of the programme

Accordingly, as Lois told me, she sometimes left the class to work unsupervised,
because she was "putting them in the situation of being non-supervised in the
workplace. In a job, they're expected to carry on and do whatever it is they're
supposed to do, and I'm getting them ready for that sort of environment". Lois
perceived the course to serve students by: "teaching them what an employer
would expect [of them]" (Field notes). Similarly, if students failed to hand in
assignments by the due time:

"it's fine with me, they'll just fail it. I'm not going to actually chase them up and
say 'hey, where is it?'. If I say something has to be done by a time, well, I'm
their employer, and I'm saying 'that's got to be in by -', so they've got to be
motivated, they've got to be wanting to do it, and they've got to have that
attitude, to do it. So overall, I'm sort of trying to instil this idea that 'well, hey,
it's up to you to do it. If you've got problems, you come and ask me, you come
and find out about it. They've got to learn to communicate with people. And it's
their choice. If they want to not do it, fine. That's your choice, but you're going
to get a 'not competent' on your report' (Field notes).

Lois attempted to instruct her students in the ways of the workplace, through
setting up conditions she held to be similar to those of work. However, the
problem with that strategy, for Lois, was that many of the students resisted the
processes of the programme, such as in, for example, neglecting to finish
assignments. As a result, the grades they received were low, and for Lois, the
students' achievements were as important as the viability of the programme. In
the following chapter, I describe ways in which Lois attempted to engage students' interest in the subject matter of the programme, while, at the same time, she tried to inculcate some of the societal norms and values which she believed them to lack, in order to heighten their chances of finding work.

In this chapter, I have outlined the ways in which the origins, the purpose and the nature of the programme have functioned to reinforce the type of knowledge presented within it. As a nexus of knowledge and power, the programme prescribes the kind of teaching and learning that takes place in such a neo-vocational classroom. That is, educational and entrepreneurial policymakers who have had no direct contact with the students have drawn up a body of objective information which is intended to transmit to these low-achievers the norms and values of the workplace in a positivist manner. Decisions about the information to be included, I would argue, were therefore based on socially constructed assumptions about working-class educational low-achievers, as held by employers and by the neo-liberal state. In the final chapter about pedagogy, I describe some of the ways in which the teacher's attempts at moral socialisation, as briefly mentioned above, support the distribution of power within the power/knowledge nexus of neo-vocationalism.
CHAPTER TEN – PEDAGOGY – THE PROFESSIONAL IN LOCO PARENTIS

In the preceding chapter, I described that which I believe to be a pedagogy that fulfils the neo-vocational drive towards the socialisation of youth labour, as explained in theory chapter six. In this chapter, I first disprove some of the assumptions generally held about the students in the programme, especially those assumptions pertaining to their ‘unemployability’ without the intervention of such classes. I then go on to outline some of the ways in which the teacher, who arguably saw herself in loco parentis and acted according to her own norms and beliefs, attempted to inculcate some of the values she taught to her own children, in her students.

The problem of student-workers

As mentioned in the methodological design chapter, many of Lois’s students were in paid employment as well as attending school. That circumstance highlights one of the main contradictions of the programme, in that students who are working are clearly knowledgeable about finding, and keeping, work. However, the situation was important to Lois, for two main reasons. The students’ rate of achievement was important to Lois as a professional, which was revealed, for example, on several occasions during my observations in her class, when Lois voiced to the students her disapproval of those who work in paid employment in addition to attending school. In her 1997 report, Lois noted, and specifically highlighted, that a problem that she perceived to be significant with her work in the course was derived from such extra-curricular activities on the part of students:

One negative aspect of the course is the outside commitments by students such as part time employment and sport involvement which interferes with this programme, especially block courses and work placement. Many student (sic) have permanent part time positions which severely impinge on the programme. One student currently works 4 nights a week at Carter Holt on the 5 pm – 11 pm shift. It is no wonder many of our students (including students in this class) are
not attaining the results the community expect of them! (Appendix Number 2), exclamation mark in original.

From Lois's comments, it can be seen that one of the main problems she perceived in teaching these students to be "work ready" (ibid) was that many were in paid employment, and some were working full-time, which, in turn, had implications for the level of their achievement both within the programme, and at school in general.

In both 1999 and 2000, Lois told her class that if any of them are working for 36 hours per week, they have the equivalent of a full-time job. Lois told the class that they must ask themselves "what's important? The money from the job, or their schooling? Do you want to stay in the same job, or get a higher position?". One of the girls replied that the manager of the workplace at which she had a job was paid only $15.00 per hour, thus refuting Lois's assumption that working towards high-status positions in the workplace would significantly increase her income. She could only agree that $15.00 was not a good rate of pay, but added that, in order to succeed at school, secondary students should not work for more than two hours a day (Field notes). She explained that many students do not hand in their internal assessments during the year, because they are working for long hours. In effect, these students are failing by half-way through the school year, and they should choose either to work or to achieve at school (Field notes).

In instances such as that, the knowledge of the workplace held by students as a result of their working experience was construed by the teacher as inferior to that offered in the programme. In effect, as Osborne (1991) writes of other low-achieving students, they were seen as ignorant of the circumstances of their own lives. For example, Lois remarked in an aside to me that "they don't seem to see work as something that stops them from succeeding at school" (Field notes). Arguably, however, the above student had demonstrated her awareness of one of the paradoxes of the free market in labour and the contemporary workplace, and one of the problems with human capital theory. That is, these students are expected to work towards qualifications at school which indicate their work-
readiness, in order to equip them, as soon as possible, to move up from entry-level positions in the occupational hierarchy (Field notes).

At the same time, they would ostensibly be bolstering the country's economy through both their productive and their buying power. However, in a low-wage post-Fordist economy such as that of New Zealand, a higher position in the occupational hierarchy does not guarantee a corresponding increase in income. Some of these students were clearly aware that the effort required for educational achievement would not necessarily be recompensed in the workplace, especially in service and low-level manufacturing jobs, as Bernhardt (1999) has noted. The motivation for these students to learn for the sake of future upward mobility was nullified by the contradictory processes of the free market in labour.

Lois had an additional objection to students' attendance in both paid work and school. As well as her concern that working was detrimental to students' learning and to their achievements at school, especially in the case of those whose working hours represented a full-time job, Lois objected to the practice on moral grounds. On one occasion she expressed her concern as: "I want to know - why are you still at school? You are in full-time employment, so why are you mucking around and wasting time at school?" (Field notes). She told the class that those students who are simultaneously working and attending school should not be 'double-dipping'. She had arranged for the cancellation of two students' allowances because, in her opinion, they should not be in receipt of both sources of income (Field notes).

Historically, as Jones (1991) has noted, the public nature of the position of teachers, especially women teachers, has been imbued with the notion of moral exemplitude. They have been perceived as taking on the role of exemplars of morality. As can be seen by the above observation, Lois attempted to fulfill that role for her students, and she did so in several ways. For example, on one occasion, during the workbook exercise on personal values, she explained to the class that a person's values determine his or her behaviour (Field notes). Her

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1 Double-dipping is the practice of receiving income from both a social and a private wage simultaneously.

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values concerning personal relationships were probably different from theirs, she said, because last year's class had laughed at her suggestion to refrain from becoming sexually active until they had each met their 'special person'. On another occasion, when the students' conversation consisted of particularly expletive vernacular, Lois told them that she would not tolerate swearing in the classroom, just as she did not tolerate such language at home. (Field notes). During such interactions, Lois inferred to the students her expectations that their values were not of the same high standard as her own.

According to Henry et al (1992) teachers' expectations are often constructed around the social background of students, and their attitude is transmitted to students in their classroom practice. That Lois suspected these students of reprehensible behaviour became clear later in the year, when, after a long weekend, she took a one-off, unscheduled unit based on recent news. The news items she mentioned were all concerned with constructions of extreme anti-social behaviour on the part of teenagers, which had occurred elsewhere in New Zealand. One item described the way in which a 17-year-old boy had dragged a policeman under his car for 50 metres, and another recounted a violent home invasion perpetrated by teenagers (Field notes).

To begin the unit, Lois wrote 'consequences' on the whiteboard as a heading, and handed out sheets of paper to the class. She instructed them to write about the immediate implications for the young man who injured the policeman in that way, and also those that may affect his life "five years down the track". The students were to write also about the consequences for the policeman and his family, because "you do not think of the consequences of what you do" (Field notes). In this, and other instances of her use of the personal pronoun, Lois categorised these students in the same league as the violent offenders who were mentioned in the news.

Arguably, in such 'lessons' as these, Lois fulfilled the role of the moral teacher in loco parentis, who, as Jones (1991) write, works to compensate for the inadequate upbringing that students were perceived to receive in their homes. Lois's moral approach to her teaching manifested in other, more pragmatic forms also, in
which she clearly drew on her own values as a parent. For example, she suggested that the students should become independent of their parents' financial support as soon as possible. She explained that although parents are responsible for the financial support of their children during education and/or training, until the age of 25, and that students' eligibility for a student allowance turns on their parents' income, she firmly believed that paying for post-compulsory education is the responsibility of each individual, rather than of their parents (Field notes).

She often substantiated such instruction with domestic anecdotes, such as the one which related that she had insisted to her own children that they must pay for their own post-compulsory education, so that they would seriously and completely engage with it. She also described arguments in which issues such as the allocation of cooking and washing jobs were settled between herself, her children and her partner. On another occasion, Lois told the students that they should neither ask their parents for money, nor spend their own, on clothes. They would not need expensive clothes for work, she told them, and related a story about one young man of her acquaintance who, although he had insisted on his parents providing expensive clothes for him while at school, had become thrifty on starting work, and from then on had bought his clothes only at sales (Field notes). Her anecdotes always contained value-laden homilies, through which to instruct the students in her perceptions of appropriate conduct and behaviour.

**Remedying the Influence of the family**

Her moral stance may have been influenced by her belief that these students' backgrounds have a disadvantageous effect on their learning: "you think 'yes, you're battling home attitudes and you're battling for what you want the kids to do', so they're actually getting confused messages all round the place. It's hard for some of them" (Field notes). She perceived students' home life to be adverse also for their aims for the future, especially those whose parent(s) obtain income from a social wage. In her words:
"We're starting to see the long-term unemployment coming through, from some families. And you've got families that have got heavy unemployment in them, like big brother or whatever, sits at home on the dole, and yes, it has a very negative effect on the kids, as to 'oh well, so-and-so couldn't get a job, so how am I going to get one?' So you're constantly battling that sort of negativity, with a set group. And it's the lower socio-economic ones, and it's the ones that Dad's been made redundant, and is finding it very very difficult to get a full-time job. So, yes, there is that coming through [in the students]" (Interview).

Local parents, in Lois's opinion, were not effective in advising or controlling their children. She told me that if parents want their children to achieve highly at school, they should "get their kids to study harder". Parents should also intervene, according to Lois, to stop their children from spending long hours in paid employment during their time at school. On the other hand, she wondered if some parents "let their kids work such long hours so that they themselves won't have to support them". Although the community is a poor one, Lois assumed that the students' motivation to take up paid work stemmed from their wish to pay for their weekend activities and sport, rather than for their own clothes and food and school books and so on (Field notes).

**Remedial Learning in a Restaurant**

Lois's assumptions about the limited social backgrounds of her students had led her to organise a trip each year to a "really flash" and "upmarket" restaurant, on the grounds that the students may not have been to such a place. The trip would allow them to "experience sitting down to a meal, and dealing with waiters and waitresses and menus and so on" (Interview). According to Lois, the students "need to experience this, because they may have to go to an upmarket restaurant with their employer, and they need to know what to expect, and what forks to use and so on" (Interview). Lois remarked to me that the restaurant experience will "show them how the other half live" (Interview).

During our first interview, Lois had talked about her plans to take the class to the restaurant, and explained that:
It's the etiquette thing. I can always remember the first time I ever did it, someone walked in and said 'oh, they've got tablecloths'. They didn't even have a tablecloth in their house. And it's because they might have to go out with their employer for a meal...somewhere, and they need to know how to fit the etiquette. They get all these knives and forks and they say 'oh, what do we do?' (Interview).

Her perception of the limited social lives of the students were not quite accurate, however. The reaction of one young woman, when the class learned that they would be dining at such a place, belied the teacher's assumption. The young woman asked whether the meals would consist of "tiny amounts of food on large plates", to which Lois replied that they would get enough to eat. The girl remarked to her neighbour: "she thinks I have never been to an upmarket restaurant before, but I have, and they suck" (Field notes). The notion of "flash" and "upmarket" dining in which Lois believed she was instructing the students were evidently open to other, and different, interpretations by the students themselves, based on their own experiences. I accompanied the class to the restaurant and dined with them, and, to my mind, the students were clearly aware of the processes of ordering and eating at such a place. They displayed no sign of nervousness, they ordered their food clearly and with decision, and were talkative but quiet.

Nevertheless, the meal at the restaurant was not merely an exercise in social etiquette. The outing was also to serve as a form of assessment for the content of the programme. Accordingly, Lois referred to the meal as a 'business function' (Field notes). Personal presentation was to be assessed, and the students were to dress as if they were indeed going to a business function, and/or a job interview (Field notes).

**Future Work as a source of discipline at school**

Lois used the notion of students' future employment to also substantiate the school rules concerning students' behaviour and appearance in other ways. For
example, at the beginning of the 2000 school year, she explained to the students that she will be "dribbling" them for the state of their school uniform, and for the ways in which they present themselves when wearing their uniform (Field notes). The purpose of uniform supervision, as Lois explained, was to train them, over the year, to present themselves "with an edge" which will help them get into a job or a course. She then inspected the manner in which they each wore their school uniform, and insisted that they comply with the school’s dress criteria, on the grounds that an employer would refuse to see any of them if they presented themselves for a job interview in their current state (Field notes).

On other occasions, during particularly noisy classes, Lois told the students that they must learn to "moderate" themselves for employment, because: "working people converse quietly" (Field notes). In a similar vein, the structured activities of the school’s day out at the beach was an exercise in work-readiness, funded by STAR. The objective was to give students some experience of team-building and communication, which justified the funding (Field notes). Accordingly, while at the beach, the students built sand-castles in teams. One built the walls; another dug the moat, another filled the moat with water, another decorated the castle with shells, and so on. The goal was to attempt to build a record number of castles, under conditions in which competitive team work, and communication with team members, were required. Lois felt that the exercise had been successful, in that, as she later commented, all of the students had worked well in teams, to build the castles (Field notes).

**Work experience:**

Work experience placements, in addition to their overt function as a component of the programme, were also used in an attempt to influence the students' attitudes and behaviour. Lois's criteria for matching students with work experience placements was related to the students' personalities as well as their abilities. For example, Lois tried to instil a sense of their potentially low positioning in the occupational hierarchy into those students she perceived to be over-confident:
Some students I prefer getting into an owner-operator place, where they've got the one-on-one help. Others, I like them experiencing the larger firms, so they get to know that 'hey, I'm not really going to be the kingpin when I go out to work'. So there's a method in my madness there (Interview).

She explained the situation to the students as: "'hey, you are going to be just, maybe, a number. Your big boss may not even know he's got you as an employee. But you're going to still have to do a job'" (Interview).

Hierarchically-based expectations of job-seeking

While reinforcing their low status in the workplace in that way, she also saw work experience as a way in which to overcome the influence of unemployment in their background, and to motivate them for job-seeking. Lois and her aide initially asked the students to organise their own work experience placements, and suggested that they go 'cold-calling' for that purpose. She offered to provide them with a covering letter for the task (Field notes). Practice in cold-calling would be good for them, for two reasons, Lois told me. Firstly, the students should not expect her and/or her aide to do the work of setting up the placements, and secondly, unemployed people "have two feet, and they can use them to go door-knocking in search of jobs" (Field notes).

I was intrigued by the way in which her notion of work experience and job-seeking included the reinforcement of such socially hierarchical concepts. Accordingly, I asked Lois for her thoughts about the ways in which the advertising of situations vacant on the Internet may disadvantage those whose resources do not include access to such technology. Her reply was as follows:

I get cross sometimes, because they have access to their two feet, and they can go knocking on doors. If they get told 'no' in a couple of places, perhaps one of the companies will say "no, but try so-and-so down the road - they may have a job for you (Field notes).
'Cold-calling' was further represented to the students as a taken-for-granted aspect of finding work, through her whiteboard diagram which outlined the job-hunting process, as follows: "Investigating a career; preparing a CV; making telephone contact; obtaining and completing application forms, and cold calling" (Field notes).

Work Experience as surveillance

Cold-calling for work experience was thus seen as a character-building exercise, as well as a necessary dimension in job-seeking for the lower classes. Work experience placements also fulfilled functions in addition to that of direct workplace experience. Work experience placements, which took place in fast food outlets; mechanics' garages, offices and factories (Field notes), also functioned as a monitoring, surveillance and self-surveillance device. The school issued work experience students with a card, on which their employers were to mark off the jobs the students performed. The employers were also to mark off the students' attendance, their reliability, their ability to carry out instructions, and their interactions with work-mates and customers. The students themselves were to be asked to complete a diary of work done while on work experience placement (Field notes). In that way, the students' self-assessment could be checked against the content of the assessment carried out by employers.

Framing the students' aspirations: being realistic

Contemporary Human Resource Management holds that the worker of the future will need to be better educated. Yet people with higher levels of education have higher level expectations about the challenge, interest and satisfaction available from their work. In most surveys of employee attitudes, 'challenging and interesting work' ranks high in people's preferences, and it ranks higher according to respondents' education level. If they are to retain and encourage staff, employers need to ensure that employees are able to use their skills and talents, that their work provides sufficient challenge, and that they can see opportunities for personal development or advancement (Rudman, 1997).

2 Cold-calling denotes the practice of going in person to business premises, without an appointment and
Arguably, the pedagogy of the new vocationalism, as manifested within the programme, fails to fulfil such criteria for several reasons, one of which is the construction of students' expectations.

As mentioned above, the 1997 Report on the programme included a reference to realistic employment goals: "Students are taught a range of skills to enable them make a realistic decision on prospective employment and to also teach them skills to use in other areas should they not attain permanent employment" (ibid). One of the significant ways in which Lois's assumptions about the students' future could be seen to underpin her teaching was through her concept of realism in conjunction with the students' future work. Examples of her conceptualisations of realism in terms of the students' future emerged during activities and written exercises in which they were required to think about the type of work they may do. On the one hand, she introduced the workbook as a way in which to look at "where you're at, and where you're going". The next day, Lois reiterated: "we will be looking at you, at where you're going this year, where you want to be next year, and in 2005, and how to get there". On the other hand, when giving instructions for one of the exercises in Career Planit 3, in which they were to write down their goals for the present year, she told the students to "be realistic", and that they "shouldn't dream for the moon" (Field notes).

Almost all of Lois's suggestions for the students' future involved jobs such as factory line work; service work such as check-out operation, cleaning, waiting, shop work, kitchen work; military service, nannying, and so on (Field notes). Some of the students had aspirations higher than those suggested by Lois. For example, one girl wanted to be a counsellor, one of the boys wanted to study law, and another wanted to be a pilot (Field notes). Lois remarked to me in class one day that the expectations of such students are too high, and later, at one of the meetings of the national association of transition teachers, she remarked that: "reality is a thud for the student and the parents" (Field notes).

knowing no-one on the staff, to ask for work.
Her emphasis on realistic expectations stemmed from the students' failing grades in their School Certificate examination results. However, their past performance was seen to form the parameters of their future efforts, and the students were not encouraged to attempt to achieve more highly. When the class was working on the exercise in the workbook entitled "School Subjects", Lois said that the students should enter the grades that they believe they will attain for each subject, bearing in mind their past performance at school. Thus: "if you got 38% in English last year, don't think that you will get 60% this year" (Field notes).

Lois added that she had read through last year's examination results, and: "it can be seen that students who don't pass their first SC attempt, do not do exceptionally well the next time. They don't make huge gains in marks". Rather, according to Lois, if students achieved 38% last year, they should aim for 48% this year, which is a grade high enough to be acceptable to a training course at Polytech (Field notes). She reiterated that the students should enter the grade they would like to achieve, but they should "be realistic" (Field notes). The students would be able to monitor their own progress towards their modified goals, Lois said to them, by aiming for half-way grades in the internal tests and examinations during the year. These grades would not affect their job-seeking, the students were often told by Lois, because employers give primary consideration to their personal qualities, to which their academic achievements at school would be only secondary (Field notes). Lois's expectations of the students were thus quantified, and any low expectations they had of themselves were framed as 'realistic'.

During my observations in 1999, I wondered whether Lois had discussed, with the students, the possibility of attending university, given that after the age of 20 years they may enrol as mature students. When I returned to the site in 2000, I asked her whether she had considered suggesting such a course of action to her students. Lois replied that on one hand, she had contemplated informing the students of alternative means through which to reach their higher aspirations, such as attending university after the age of twenty. On the other hand, she said that she does "not want to make it seem too easy for them, either, so that they don't aim for anything at all until after they have become old enough to enrol at
university as adult students" (Field notes). Arguably, however, in avoiding 'making it seem too easy' she had confirmed the low expectations held of these students by those at the school.

Outside Courses

The aspirations of some of the students were further curtailed, I believe, by the STAR-funded course they attended at a local Polytechnic. Eleven girls and one boy, all of whom attended the Office Academy at the school, attended a two-day course entitled Unit Standard 121, Levels two and three - Introduction to Office Systems and Business Procedures (13-9/11), as one component of their work experience. I also attended, as an observer. At Polytechnic, I found that the students were met with assumptions similar to those they encountered in the programme at school. For example, on the first morning, the tutor remarked to me that because students are so "spoon-fed" at school, many of them cannot think for themselves, and she expected this group to be similarly ignorant (Field notes).

Nevertheless, the students engaged with the initial, more complicated aspects of the course with alacrity. The course thus began well, as the students responded with interest to such questions as 'how do you remember names, when answering the telephone?', 'what are potential barriers to communication over the telephone?', and so on. At the end of the course, the tutor commented to me that she was pleasantly surprised with the speed at which they learned, and that they had performed better than had others she had recently taught (Field notes).

After their initial engagement with the course, however, the students told me that they found most of the two-day course to be extremely easy, and basic, and boring (Field notes). Evidently, their interest was not sustained by being taught how to operate 'office systems': that is, a hole-punch; a franking machine; a photocopier; a facsimile; a telephone, and calculators. They were also instructed in methods of time management, and filing. In spite of being told twice by the tutor that filing, or 'records management' as she termed it, is too important to be

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3 Background noise, distractions caused by other people nearby, and so on.
left to office juniors (Field notes) they performed the task correctly, easily and quickly.

When the course was over, I asked them to talk with me about the concepts they had learned. They replied that they had prior knowledge of most of the content, because they had worked as office juniors after school (Field notes). Once back at school, I remarked to Lois about the ease with which the students had worked through the components of the basic course. She replied that in her experience, although they may say that they know what to do, many of these students do not know the proper way in which to carry paper without wrinkling some of the pages, and the use of a hole punch is not always immediately obvious (Field notes). The negative assumptions which had underpinned the teaching and learning interactions at the Polytechnic were replications of those held by Tiffany, and by Lois throughout the course. The students' experiences of teaching and learning were thus consistent across the course, whether at school or with an outside provider.

"Dumbing Down": Life skills - learning to Fill in Forms

In preparation for their future lives, the programme involved the students in an exercise in completing a number of forms. According to Lois, the students must learn to complete forms, because they must apply for Inland Revenue Department numbers when they start work, and also in the future they will need to obtain their full birth certificates, passports, and driving licences. The other forms they were given to complete, however, further exemplified the negative expectations held of the students' future. The other basic forms which the students were likely to encounter in their lives, Lois said, were applications for a dog licence, a driving licence, a birth certificate, club membership, and a log book (Field notes). The forms completion exercise consisted of completing a sheaf of 20 such forms (Appendix Number 2), and, during my observation, the students treated the forms-completion exercise as a game. Some of the girls were laughing as they named themselves as 'Felicity Shagwell' on one form (Field notes). One young woman remarked twice that: "this is the most work I've done for a long time in this class" (Field notes).
To counter the students' casual approach to form completion, Lois told me that she had organised a part of the exercise as a test, and: "they are more worried about it now" (Field notes). There were six forms in the test, which were concerned with such activities as: banking; ordering clothes; placing a newspaper advertisement; writing an invoice; registering computer software, and, interestingly, applying for a firearms licence (Appendix Number 2). By placing the forms-completion exercise in a test format, Lois altered the point of the activity from an in-class exercise to one of assessment. I had noticed on several occasions that these students took the assessment of the programme seriously, in that they were interested to know the grades they were given, and expressed disappointment if they had not been given a high grade. My impression was confirmed by the way in which their attitude to forms-completion altered from that of hilarity during the initial exercise, to one of concentration during the test.

However, Lois commented to me on several separate occasions about her worry that she found the students to be unmotivated, negative, and displaying little sense of direction. She explained to me that she did not know what to do about the students' uncaring attitudes towards their own future. One day, she remarked that she thought she "had prepared this great lesson, and it went down like a lead balloon. What do I have to do to get them motivated?" (Field notes). Near the end of the year, a significant number of students became truants. They were described as the 'borderline' students, who may or may not have passed their internal examinations, but according to Lois, they believed that they would fail, and "so they just don't come to school" (Field notes).

If the students held such a belief, the reason may have been the vocalised assumptions of the staff. For example, the students were occasionally confronted with the opinions of Lois's aide, who predicted the students' future within their hearing. For example, while on a trip in the school van, we passed a dishevelled man sitting at the side of the road. The aide said to me, although the students also heard, that "that's where these kids will end up. On the street". One of the boys said, determinedly: "no, I won't". At the end of the trip, as the students were dispersing, the aide told me that her own children would not be as
these students are. She added: "these kids are hopeless, aren't they? They're just not interested in planning for their futures. What can you do?" (Field notes).

The good, the bad and the unmotivated

Arguably, the extent to which students showed motivation, rather than their behaviour in class, underpinned the process through which Lois also constructed her notion of the students' personal merits. She saw boisterousness as usual behaviour. "They're a noisy bunch", she said, "and boisterous", but "this is quite normal behaviour for these students" (Field notes). Nevertheless, a quiet student was not necessarily perceived by Lois as a 'good' student. Lois described one girl as so quiet that she was "...almost a non-entity. She has no personality, no character" (Field notes). The students of whom Lois spoke most approvingly were those who demonstrated motivation in moving towards their future. For example, when speaking of one: "He's got the qualifications - he's got the basic School Cert Maths and English, and everything that's required for an apprenticeship. He's a lovely boy" (Interview). She said of another: "He knows what he wants to do, and is using all his resources to help himself get there" (Field notes), and yet another: "He's a nice boy, what I would call a 'typical Kiwi bloke'. He knows what he wants to be" (Field notes).

Assessment as a pedagogical check and balance

Clearly, Lois's preferred students were those who were self-motivated and were planning for the future, and her professional concern lay in motivating all her students through her teaching. However, she appeared to be unaware that, as Ellsworth (1997) has noted, the interpretations that both students and teachers make of the knowledge disseminated at school are filtered through conceptual frameworks based on social class, gender and ethnicity. The difference between that which is taught and students' response is a social phenomenon, which is formed and informed by historical relationships of power (Ellsworth, 1997). There is a difference between the perceptions that a teacher or a curricular text holds of the audience, and the audience's perceptions of themselves, and therefore the terms in which a teacher, and the curriculum, address students has
implications for the ways in which the latter experience their construction of meaning through their learning. Teachers teach, therefore, without knowing the effects of their actions, but all pedagogical addresses miss their audiences in one way or another (Ellsworth, 1997).

Lois attempted to find the answer to her professional concerns by ascertaining the strengths and weaknesses of her teaching methods and style. In order to do so, in 1999, she instituted the first end-of-year examination since the inception of the programme (Field notes). She explained that as well as to ascertain the degree to which the students were learning the material, her purpose for the examination was to gauge whether she should be more authoritarian, and/or more focussed as a teacher in 2000 (Field notes).

The teacher's pedagogical shift

The teaching of transferable, or social, or life skills, as perceived in the neo-vocationalist model, can be carried out along lines similar to that of woodwork or metalwork (Cohen, 1984). But, as Payne (2000:363) asks: "are attributes such as motivation, conscientiousness, or the capacity for team-work able to be taught?" The question is a moot one for this thesis, because after the results of the examination became known, Lois found that the students had not achieved high grades in the examination, and some had failed. She told me that perceived those low grades to reflect unfavourably on the course, on her teaching, and on the students as learners (Interview).

In that way, Lois came to believe that her students were not yet ready to be responsible for their own affairs, and that she had been premature in putting them in charge of their own learning. She felt that she was "perhaps two years ahead" of them, and, as a consequence, she planned to "go back to being more of a disciplinarian" (Field notes). In the following year, she would be giving them more "practical, hands-on" activities to do. "These kids don't do well on theory", she elaborated. "They need to do, to learn" (Field notes). Lois told me that in 2000, she would be organising the classes differently from the previous year.
The students would be given notes, and they will be writing during class time. Finally, they would be given the unit standards to do (Field notes).

Lois’s disappointment in the results of the examination thus caused her to rethink her approach to teaching the programme, and brought significant changes for the ways in which future students would experience their participation in the course. Lois’s situation reflects that which Ellsworth (1997) has noted: when considering the complex ways in which power and social positioning work in pedagogical relationships, even in those with good intentions, the pedagogic relationship has the power not only to discourage or encourage learning, but also to shape the wider social conditions within which learners learn.

This chapter has set out for consideration some of the ways in which wider social mores and values were brought to bear within the work-readiness programme. The professionalism of the teacher became, at times, conflated with her imperative to instil her own moral code into her students. Thus, the potential influence of this aspect of the students’ pedagogical environment on their construction of meaning about themselves and their position in society can be seen to be one of an attempt at socialisation.

When read in juxtaposition with the previous chapter, which outlines the ways in which the teaching of the content of the programme itself can be seen to illustrate the distribution of power in neo-vocationalist courses, the complexity of power relationships in a neo-vocationalist classroom is highlighted. The power of the programme designers to disseminate information is, in some ways, compounded by the power of the teacher to underscore and to reinforce the socialising influences of the programme.
CHAPTER 11: EXPLORING THE SCHOOL-BUSINESS LINKS: A DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I consider the programme of my study in the light of the political, economic and social context in which it has manifested as an educational experience for particular senior secondary students. I critically examine the rationale for the implementation and administration of the programme, as an example of neo-vocationalist theory in practice, and as a manifestation of school-business partnerships. I then critique the content and the pedagogical nature of the programme from the viewpoint of social constructionist epistemology, in terms of the genealogical process from which, I would argue, it has emerged, and the hegemonic purposes with which it can be seen to resonate.

The programme in context

As we have seen, the employability programme which formed the basis of my study was implemented after the process of destabilising the social, political and economic philosophy and principles of Keynesian social democracy had begun, in earnest, in 1987. As the oppositional philosophy and principles of neoliberalism rose to dominate the political and economic arena, I would argue, one of the most noteworthy shifts in economic philosophy for society and for individuals that occurred over that time concerned the levels of profit pursued by private enterprise, as described by Jesson (1999) and Vowles (1987) and set out in Chapter Four, and centres around notions of that which constitutes both human nature and a just society. That is, under Keynesian welfarism, the unconstrained pursuit of profit was seen to be detrimental to the equilibrium of social and economic life. Under Keynesianism, a society based on unfettered capitalism was characterised by social injustice, such as the disadvantage and suffering that stems from extremes of social and economic inequality, as in the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s. In neo-liberal thought in the 1980s, however, the profitability of any organisation is seen to be of paramount importance for both the continued existence of the organization itself, and for the economic health of the nation, as well as for the benefit of individuals within the population. Social justice is seen to be served when individuals are pursuing their own aims and goals, while not interfering with the right of others to do the same.
The contrast in principles led, in turn, to a contrast in practice. Social justice in Keynesian welfarism had embraced an ideal in which the needs of the disadvantaged, such as health care, housing and education, were given primary importance in concerns of state, in order to create a social ethos of cohesive, stable communities. Neo-liberal principles, however, aimed to devolve the onus for people's health, education, welfare and so on from the purview of the state, to individuals themselves. In the neo-liberal ideal of individualism, rather than dependants on the state, people are seen to be self-actualising, self-sufficient and self-maximising individuals who, while working towards their own financial aims and goals, will contribute to the economic health of private enterprise organisations, and thus to that of the country.

The fundamental shift in popular perceptions of human nature and of social justice, from those based on an ideal of altruistic social beings to those of self-interested individuals, were incorporated in an attempt to re-align New Zealand's social institutions, including education, with neo-liberal philosophy and principles of competitive individualism, choice, and so on, according to Kelsey (1995/1997) as outlined in chapter four. One of many ways in which such a change was attempted within education involved an intensification of school-business partnerships, which, in turn, functioned to intensify the influence of business interests within education (Treasury, 1987b). The philosophy, principles, aims and goals of private enterprise are congruent with those of neo-liberal economics. For example, neo-liberal individualism is complemented by both the profit imperative of business, and competition in the free market of goods and services (Kelsey, 1995/1997).

Various rationales were given for the intensification of school-business partnerships. On the part of the state, for example, as Cohen (1984), Willis (1977) and Treasury (1987b) have contended, schooling was seen to fail to provide many students with the appropriate skills and knowledge with which to bolster the national economy, a situation which would be remedied through closer communications between industry and schools. Employers also posited that many school-leavers do not possess the skills, knowledge and personal qualities necessary for them to be selected from the labour market. The solution at which
decision- and policy-makers, from education and private enterprise, arrived was to render education ‘relevant’ to working class students, in order to increase their chances of finding, and keeping, employment in a competitive youth labour market.

Education that is relevant to work is, by definition, vocational education, and, as explained in theory Chapter Six, vocational education has undergone a shift in emphasis that is congruent with the wider shifts in economic, social and political philosophy, as well as changes in approaches to the production of goods and services on the part of private enterprise. Accordingly, vocationalism under neo-liberalism, or neo-vocationalism, purports to impart to low-achieving senior secondary students the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes required of workers by employers, but, while doing so, constructs those students in a particular way, as explained by Marshall (1997). The programme of my study, I would argue, represents an example of neo-vocationalism, and the contemporary intensification of school-business partnerships.

Legitimation

The legitimating rhetoric that, I would argue, applies to the work-readiness programme stemmed from its context: the political and economic organization of the neo-liberal state, at the level of educational policy- and decision-making, and partnerships with heads of enterprise. Such legitimation was in general rather than in specific terms, as it was couched, for example, in terms of advocating relevant education that was responsive to the needs of both students and industry. Students, teachers, and employers were all seen to benefit from a form of education that encouraged communication between the two previous disparate sectors, which, in turn, had the added potential to strengthen the position of New Zealand’s industries in the global marketplace through the production of a more appropriately-skilled workforce than was the case in the past. Education-enterprise partnerships were promoted, by government departments, industries, partnership brokers and schools, as setting up the conditions for ‘win-win’ situations to benefit everyone involved.
In terms of the work-readiness programme itself, however, very little legitimating rhetoric was generated at the school. The programme received only a passing mention in the school’s prospectus, for example, and the students who participated in it during the time of my observations had not been persuaded to choose to enrol themselves as a result of any promotion of the programme at the school. Rather, they had been enrolled by the school’s administration without their knowledge. The existence of the programme was initially justified, rather, by the way in which it attracted funding to the school, and the opportunity it offered to provide a place in the timetable for those students whose low academic achievements and non-conformist behaviour had rendered them a problem for the school’s management.

Having gained the funding and instigated such a programme, however, the kind of instruction it offered did indeed carry its own legitimation, as can be seen in the school’s prospectus (Appendix Number 1). Ostensibly, its purpose was to guide young people who would otherwise be disadvantaged in the labour market, through some of the pitfalls of job-seeking, such as choosing and applying for jobs, preparing curriculum vitae, undergoing interviews, and so on. In addition to preparing young people for the labour market, the programme also functioned to prepare them to be members of the workforce. Thus, students were given access to knowledge about their rights, as well as their responsibilities, in the workplace. In addition, they were tutored in concepts, a familiarity with which may be required of them as employees, such as, for example, those of thinking and planning ahead, and setting and achieving goals. They were also instructed in recognising, and aligning, their personal attributes, values and qualities with the contingencies of various occupational areas, in order to help them find work that suits their individual traits. Further, the students were given some experience of modes of personal communication in the workplace, with both work colleagues and customers.

At the same time, much of the information imparted was clearly applicable in their personal, as well as in their work lives, and the programme also claimed to bolster their self-confidence and self-esteem as they make the transition to life after school. Awareness of one’s personal strengths and weaknesses, and learning about communicative techniques, and goal-setting, for example, are
useful in both one’s private and one’s public life. The knowledge with which to write letters and to complete various types of forms correctly, and to conduct oneself confidently and appropriately at a restaurant, can also be seen to be useful in both personal and work life. Upon considering the work-readiness programme in the light of preparation for the future under neo-liberal capitalism, therefore, the content of the programme can be seen to be relevant to these working class students’ lives, and to be helpful in preparing such low-achieving teenagers for life after school, in society as well as in the workplace.

Such relevance, in turn, works to rationalise the programme as an exemplar of school-business partnerships, in that as the programme meets school-leavers’ needs as described above, it simultaneously addresses some of the concerns expressed by employers. Thus, while the information conveyed to these students via the programme is intended to help them find work in a competitive youth labour market, that information also brings to students’ attention employers’ requirements of their employees in the contemporary, competitive global free market of products and services.

In my view, the acceptance of such a functionalist viewpoint would be based upon a positivist epistemology in which objects, events and circumstances exist independently of their wider context, and thus have meaning in and of themselves, as explained in chapter two. When the programme is considered in the economic, political, social and educational context of contemporary capitalism, however, and viewed through the epistemology of social constructionism, its function is opened up for questioning. Rather than accepting the programme at face value, a social constructionist approach holds that the programme does not have meaning in and of itself. Rather, meaning is constructed by those involved, through their participation in the social interactions generated by the programme in its guise as a manifestation of intensified school-business partnerships.

**Discipline**

The findings indicate that the interactions that arose within the programme were significantly disciplinary in nature. As Willis (1977) has also noted from his
research, my study shows that while school-based discipline was maintained in ways which were unique to the programme, the workplace discipline of the students' future was drawn upon to augment that of the school. Thus, while students' attendance at classes, and the ways in which they presented themselves in their school uniform, for example, were monitored on the cards they were required to carry with them, clear links were made between such disciplinary concepts and those of the workplace. For example, when these students went to their work experience placements, their 'employers' were asked to monitor their attendance, appearance and attitude in a similar manner, and to report back to the school. In addition, during their participation in the programme, the students were told that their attitudes as demonstrated at school would be detrimental to their success in the labour market and the workplace.

It is at this point that Foucault's (1980) idea of genealogy is helpful to me as a means through which to consider the various social interactions generated by the programme. I use that notion to indicate that the programme can be seen to be a point at which the education system has been 'colonised' by the interests of private enterprise. To begin, the education system has worked to categorise and group these students as low-achievers, and, therefore, as uninterested in, and/or incapable of, learning at school. The genealogical 'new knowledge' that arose about these students as a group, from their experiences of secondary school technologies of identification and categorisation, was that they were also either potentially unemployable, or potentially disruptive to the processes of production.

Given that these students are old enough to enter the labour market, while yet remaining at school but not successfully engaging in academic study, the discourse of school-business partnership sets up the conditions in which concepts relating to the labour market and the workplace may be more intensively merged with those of state education, in the name of relevant education. That is, education that is considered to be relevant to these students' learning needs is congruent with training to meet employers' requirements for labour. In that way, state education provides an opportunity for private enterprise to promote its own interests within the system, through programmes such as that of my study, and the disciplinary nature of the interactions
generated by the programme functions to prepare students for the requirements of the workplace.

Issues of colonisation and genealogy thus raise questions of power, and as Foucault (1980) has noted, the knowledge/power nexus in education is an ideal site at which to study the ways in which power is distributed in society. The concept of discipline informs questions about the distribution of power within the programme, beginning with a consideration of the consultation process on which the programme was based. As my findings show, consultation took place between the teacher, as a representative of the school, and representatives of private enterprise. The latter were thus given the opportunity to present their concerns about school-leavers entering the labour market and the workplace. The students who were to participate in the programme, on the other hand, were not consulted about its form or its content. Rather, not only were they unbeknowingly placed in the programme, but also they were presented with the content as a fait accompli, about which they had no choice of subjects for study.

**Human Resource Managerialism**

As my research has shown, therefore, the programme was composed of units of study which were instigated by representatives of private enterprise, in order to alleviate the problems they experience in managing and disciplining human resources in the workplace. A relationship between the disciplinary nature of the social interactions generated by the programme, and the ideas and information that are disseminated through the programme, when viewed in the genealogical light of educational colonisation by private enterprise, can thus be seen to be based in concepts of quality assurance within the field of human resource management.

Towards that end, students have been introduced to the idea of aligning their own aims and goals with those of private enterprise. Beginning with their hopes for the future, students were guided through a process in which their individual aims, and their personal traits, were isolated and identified in terms of their application to the workplace. Dimensions of their background and leisure interests that could be extrapolated to conditions of work were also isolated and
identified, thus framing a relationship between their unique and personal lives as members of families, clubs, social networks and communities, and the extent to which they would be successful in finding, and keeping, a job. In that way, the economic aspects of these individuals’ lives were given priority over other, more personal and far-reaching social interactions and relationships on which their understandings, and their constructions of meaning, have been based. Indeed, those familial and social relationships were reduced to economic relationships in themselves, as in, for example, mowing lawns in exchange for a fishing trip, or drawing up a contract for visiting a grandparent.

Having subsumed in such ways the importance of family and society under economic considerations, the programme drew parallels between the processes of profitable business conditions for private enterprise and those of successful job-hunting and -keeping for individuals. Thus, the exercises in setting goals and planning towards them can be seen to emulate the ways in which the production of goods and services has to be planned and organised in order to minimise the potential for disruption, and a consequent loss of profit for the firm.

At the same time, as has been explained in the findings, the terms of reference of the information disseminated through the programme were those of the minimum: minimum wages, minimum conditions, minimum leave entitlements, and so on. In addition, I would argue, the information itself failed to convey a sense of self-advancement or self-sufficiency to students as they considered their rights and responsibilities in the workplace. That is, having established that their expectations of workplace terms and conditions should be of the minimum, and that the onus will be on each of them, as workers, to negotiate for better if that should be possible, the information and the exercises they were given served to constrain their sense of agency in such negotiations.

To illustrate, while the rights of these students in the workplace were of the minimum, their responsibilities were presented as more far-reaching: to conform to the norms, and the conditions, of the workplace as framed by the employer. The responsibilities of the employers, on the other hand, were less defined, and open to individual interpretation. For example, the employer has a responsibility to be a ‘good’ employer, while the employee is seen to be responsible for such
concerns as detecting and eliminating workplace hazards, dealing with sexual harassment from work colleagues, and so on. The sense of agency lent to school-leavers through the programme was further delimited by the parameters of assistance the students were given to consider. Rather than being given access to further information about their rights in the labour market and the workplace, these students were given exercises in which they applied to others for assistance in looking after their own interests.

In that way, while minimal information renders them unaware of that which they do not know, they are directed to apply to ‘experts’ for assistance in negotiating their way through the labour market and the workplace, which, in turn, highlights their reliance on the knowledge of others in looking after their own interests. At the same time, their limited knowledge constrains their expectations of employers and of workplace conditions, which, as we have seen, is a tactic of quality assurance management that reduces the likelihood of disruptive work practices on the part of providers of labour, and encourages workers to align their own interests with those of private enterprise.

Socialisation

The programme is, therefore, giving rise to particular kinds of knowledge. The knowledge disseminated about finding work, and becoming an employee, gives these students a particular view of the labour market and the workplace, and their place in those institutions. For example, the youth labour market was presented as a competitive one, and their chances of finding success in that milieu limited by their lack of academic qualifications, unless they aimed for the casualised, low-status, low-paid positions in service or manufacturing work. In that case, the students were told, their lack of qualifications would not be a hindrance to them, as long as they adapt themselves to the requirements, norms and values of employers, as well as those of wider society.

In other words, their non-conformist approach to their school-work, and the attitudes and behaviours they displayed at school, were depicted as potentially unacceptable in workplace situations. The knowledge disseminated to these young people, therefore, was that they must create changes in themselves, in
order to become ‘acceptable’. They must undertake to ‘improve’ themselves, and to constantly strive for excellence in their appearance, attitude and behaviour. Arguably, the discourse of quality assurance management has here been adapted to apply to individuals, in order to socialise them in the norms and values of the workplace.

The quality assurance approach of constant improvement in products or services, in striving for excellence and thus for customer satisfaction, a share of the market, and profit, permeated the programme. The students became a product of their own making, which must be constantly improved, self-monitored and adapted to meet the demands of their employers as the customer of their labour power, as well as the contingencies of the labour market and the workplace. However, the distribution of power was such that the criteria for excellence was established by employers rather than by the students themselves. In that way, a process of socialisation was taking place, in which the knowledge presented to the young people was framed by the pre-determined requirements of those who hold power in the labour market and the workforce.

**Standardisation**

At the same time, I would argue, another process was taking place: that of homogenisation. It would seem that as well as the standardisation of technical skill, the contemporary requirement of employers for flexibility and adaptability in their workers has produced another kind of standardisation: that of the capacity to demonstrate homogeneous transferable, or social, skills. As we have seen, the lessons and the exercises were not individualised, as had been the intention when the programme was instituted. Rather, all the students who participated in the programme received the same compulsory classes.

As explained in chapter four, the global world market has given rise to international standards of goods and services, adherence to which is necessary if firms are to compete for a profitable position in the local, as well as the global, market. At the same time, however, post-Fordist approaches to production require many firms to change their production or service processes at short notice. Thus, one of the most effectual points within production at which
standardisation may be effected is that of the human labour power expended in production. Such a standardisation would entail not only technical skill, but also an amenability towards, and commitment to, constant improvement in the search for zero defects in production, regardless of the product or service in question. Hence, as we have seen, the capacity to smile through a difficult interaction with a customer is a standard requirement in service industries, just as the capacity to identify and rectify a problem in production is a standard requirement of manufacturing workers.

Pedagogy

The pedagogy of the programme supports such a process of standardisation. The understandings that may be constructed by the students involved in the interactions of the programme were framed by the assumptions of policy- and decision-makers about the students as an abstract group, as well as by the assumptions of the teacher.

In their functionalist, positivist approach to the construction of the programme, it is my view that employers have based that programme upon their pre-determined notion of young working class school-leavers as potentially risky employees in the production of goods and services. The lessons were aimed at immersing the young people in the requirements and values of the workplace. In other words, the programme represents an exercise in compensatory education, intended to remedy the perceived failure of the working, or the non-working, class family to pass on such knowledge. Thus, the meaning that may be constructed by these students as a result of the interactions with the programme may be that they were in deficit, in terms of their personal qualities, self-motivation, and family background, as well as in terms of their academic achievement.

The pedagogical approach I observed in the programme substantiated the functionalist, positivist nature of the knowledge disseminated within it. The students were seen as resistant to learning the content of the programme, which, in turn, was presented as that which they needed to know, and without which they would be unemployable. As noted previously, there was no attempt to
make connections between students' prior knowledge, their individual aims and goals and interests, and advancement in the labour market. Rather, the knowledge disseminated was pre-determined, pre-packaged, and transmitted to students as to empty vessels, rather than constructed in teaching and learning interactions.

Such a pedagogical approach highlighted for me the functionalist nature of the knowledge presented in the programme. That is, had the students’ prior knowledge been drawn upon in order to build up mutually beneficial teaching and learning interactions with the teacher, the programme would have been forced to take into account one major factor which was ignored except for that which the teacher saw as a disadvantage: the fact that many of these students were in the work force. Some of them had been so for some time, and were working as many, or more, hours than they spent at school.

Clearly, the majority of these students already knew that which it was the programme’s express intention to teach them. For example, they knew how to undergo a job interview, and to adapt their appearance and their behaviour to the requirements of the labour market and the workplace. That of which they may have been unaware, however, and which employers could not take for granted, was the idea of aligning their personal aims and goals with those of the firm for whom they work. Thus, the more obscure function of the programme remained: to socialise these young people in the idea that it is in their interests to work towards the profitability of private enterprise, although their low wages and insecure job mean that they probably will not share in that profit.

In addition to the notion of themselves as in deficit, the meaning that the students may take from the programme is that they are solely responsible for their success or failure in the labour market and the workplace. The underlying pedagogy of the programme was one of self-maximisation and self-promotion in a milieu of tight competition with other young people in a similar situation. In that way, the structural nature of unemployment, and the profitability for employers of the casualisation of service and manufacturing work, remained unexamined. In their stead, the students were encouraged to believe that only if they embark on a course closely related to training in TQM: that is, one of
constant self-improvement, in search of zero defects in themselves as employees, in order to sell themselves to their employer as the customer of their labour and to beat other competitors with the same aim, will they succeed in finding and keeping a job.

The economic discourses that were disseminated through the programme, as a manifestation of the knowledge-power nexus of neo-vocationalism, supported such concepts. The students were constantly reminded that they must ‘sell themselves’, and that their image, or their self-presentation, as well as their attitude, were significant factors in that selling. On the other hand, if they failed to sell themselves, and thus failed to find a job, they must look to a lack in themselves as individuals, and find ways to improve upon themselves in order to become acceptable in the job market.

**Hegemony**

Arguably, the programme can be seen to represent neo-vocationalism, as a manifestation of school-business partnerships, and, further, as an hegemonic device. That is, the discourses of relevant education serve to represent the interests of the capitalist class as also those of the working class. The discourses of relevance are compounded by those which encourage an alignment of interests between labour and private enterprise. In that way, the interests of the powerful within private enterprise were represented within the power/knowledge nexus of the programme as the interests of everyone, and engagement in the work force was tantamount to meeting national, as well as personal, aims and goals.

On the other hand, the idea that adaptability and flexibility are qualities that suit employers but are disadvantageous for those workers who are required to demonstrate them; that transferable skills are a form of deskillling, rather than re-skilling or up-skilling; and that autonomy in the labour market is a matter of selling oneself, rather than of struggling against structural unemployment and casualised labour practices, are not covered in such a neo-vocational programme.
Exploitation

In conclusion I would argue, therefore, that the programme represented an exercise in the exploitation of the under- and the working class. It represented exploitation in the sense that these young people were not given the opportunity to critically examine the material with which they interacted. Indeed, the knowledge they were given, while purportedly promoting their agency as job-seekers and workers, actually constrained the extent to which they may perceive themselves as autonomous within the labour market and the work force. In terms of social justice, to withhold knowledge which advances the interests of a disadvantaged group in order to retain the social and economic status quo, is to exploit that group.

Social justice is equally ill-served by the ways in which the programme drew on neo-liberal notions of bounded rationality, and the accompanying directive for incentives and motivation to influence the population to act in a rational way. That is, the assumptions about these students, on which the programme was based, were clearly that they were ignorant of, and uninterested in, ways in which to successfully manage the social interactions of the labour market and the workplace. Thus, in order to encourage the students to engage with such concepts, the incentive of gaining unit standards was offered, which, in turn, were represented as easing the students’ transition into the labour market. As we have seen, however, the employment status of many of these young people belies that notion of their bounded rationality, and at the same time testifies to their self-motivation, and their ability to find their own incentives for their actions.

In the final chapter, I outline a pedagogical and practical approach to teaching such content material, which I believe may extend, rather than constrain, students’ interest in learning about aspects of life after school and about working. In turn, such an alternative approach may produce school-leavers who are knowledgeable about the value of the contribution that workers, managers and owners of the means of production alike make to the country’s economy. Rather than being treated as dispensable units of labour energy, as were the
students who participated in the economics camp of my honours’ research, those who participated in such an alternative vocationalist programme may perhaps be seen as contributing at least equally as well to the country’s economy as private enterprise is seen to do. That is, rather than lauding the efforts of managers and heads of private enterprise, and neglecting the contribution of labour to the national economy, the efforts of all would be recognised and acknowledged, and exploitative principles and practices may be much reduced in the workplace and in neo-vocational courses.
CHAPTER 12: CONCLUSION – THE WAY FORWARD

The potential of education

To me, vocational education at its best would not be a separate component of people’s education. Rather, I think that a well-rounded education would support a society of informed, democratic and community-minded citizens. However, as Maguire and Ball (1994) have noted, social justice has given way to competitive advantage and self-interest on the educational agenda. That phenomenon is perhaps understandable when one recognises that competitive individualism in the free market has become the dominant perception of social justice among policy-makers in Western countries (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry, 1997). The institution of education does not stand autonomous and alone from other social institutions, and is therefore not impervious to the impact of hegemonic political and economic discourses. By the same token, education alone cannot be thought to have the power to solve social problems such as youth unemployment (Henry et al, 1988/1992).

Nevertheless, schools cannot be seen as only, or wholly repressive. They are contested sites, in which education for democratic social justice is still possible (Osborne, 1991). Education could provide young people with a thorough and critical understanding of their current position in the world, and of possibilities in the future, in order to afford them the opportunity to tip the fluctuations of power a little more in their own direction (Henry et al, 1988/1992). When aligning schools with principles of social justice, the focus of change should be equally on discourse, structures and practices (Rizvi and Kemmis, 1987, cited in Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry, 1997:171).

The potential of alternative pedagogical discourses

One way in which to begin to build an alternative pedagogy to that of the programme is to consider the notion that teacher-student relationships could be more equal. That is, as Osborne (1991) has written, rather than perceiving themselves as being employed to educate students for their own good, teachers
may operate from the concept that their job is to help students to grow and develop. For example, teachers who wish to redress the social differences inherent in the pedagogical relationship may learn to recognise the difference between that which is taught and that which is learned. From that point, teachers may question the relationships of power within schools, disrupt their taken-for-granted assumptions about students, and consider alternative approaches to their classes, in order to afford students alternative constructions of meaning (Ellsworth, 1997; Henry et al, 1992).

Maybe some pedagogies and curricula work with their students not because of the ‘what’ they are teaching or how they are teaching it. Maybe they are hits because of the ‘who’ that they are offering students to imagine themselves as being and enacting. Maybe they are hits because of the meanings students give to the difference between who a pedagogy’s attitude or tone of address thinks they are or wants them to be, and all the other whos that are circulating through power and knowledge at the moment, competing for those students’ attention, pleasure, desire and enactment (Ellsworth, 1997:40).

I would agree with Fraser (1997) that an alternative would not stigmatis e non-conforming students as inherently deficient, unstable and in need of assistance to organise their own lives.

To recognise that people’s construction of meaning is affected by all spheres of life: individual, insti tutional, and social (Fraser, 1997) is to recognise that pedagogy is not politically neutral. Rather, it casts teachers and learners into particular roles, and is shaped and informed by particular conceptions of power (Osborne, 1991). It follows that one way in which to challenge the notions of ‘school-as-factory’ and ‘teacher-as-technician’ is to re-present schooling as an experiment in establishing democracy. That is, schools would operate around a commitment to helping all students to develop the values, skills, and knowledge they will need to succeed in democratic society. Teachers working towards such a goal would be willing to confront the effects of social class inequality on
students' achievement. That is, they would be willing both to reconsider, and
develop, their relationships with students, and reframe curricula to encourage
students with high expectations, to facilitate co-operative teaching and learning
situations, and further students' initiative (Levine, 1995). For example, there may
be on-going debates and reflection among students and staff about social,
political and economic concepts and issues, based on the idea that constant and
positive evolution through challenge is the sign of a democratic institution
(Levine, 1995).

According to Fraser (1997), and in my own view also, in order to change
everyone's sense of self, secondary schools should be restructured to engage
students, rather than to alienate them. Interesting and engaging learning
experiences can take place only in contexts in which teachers are encouraged to
consistently examine, discuss and improve their work. In turn, such a context
can be created only by taking a comprehensive look at the underlying
philosophies and the practices that characterise school curricula, and by being
willing to explore fundamentally different ideas about the structure and function
of schools (Levine, 1995).

Engaging students' interest

In the democratic model, schools would turn on student-centredness. Such an
approach would judge the knowledge to be included in the curriculum against
the issues, experiences and contradictions each child confronts in his or her own
life. That criterion would involve much more than using a fragment of personal
relevance to build a pre-determined curriculum, as did the work-readiness
programme of my study. It would mean conceptualising the curriculum as a
means through which students are enabled to make sense of their own
experience, as well as to encounter the world beyond their immediate lives, and
to put these two elements of reality together into a meaningful whole (Levine,
1995). For example, a teacher might draw out what students know about crime,
drug use, and police-community relations in their own neighbourhood, and use
that knowledge to explore questions concerning how the criminal justice system
works and the conflicting rights of the individual and society. In addition to
perhaps reading, discussion, and research projects, such an approach would extend students’ understandings, and encourage them to integrate their new knowledge with the understandings they bring to the classroom.

A rhetoric of caring is insufficient in itself: that is, without pedagogical theory and practice to substantiate such rhetoric (Bigelow, 1995). For example, a student-centred teacher starts from the premise that each child brings to the classroom a unique set of ideas and abilities that can be cultivated to expand their understanding, sharpen their thinking skills, and increase their motivation to learn. A student-centred class encourages students to explore their own interests, and to perceive school as not the imposition of an agenda external to their own interests, but rather, as an organised means to articulate their own. A student-centred approach treats students with respect, and celebrates the knowledge and culture that each child brings to the classroom (Levine, 1995). The classroom environment should be encouraging, and all students should know that their potential is respected, within a community of learners.

In the student-centred model, interactions between teachers and learners are based on the epistemological concepts of social constructionism. That is, learning is a social process, which, to be effectively accomplished, needs the active participation of the learner. A classroom in which the teacher is the dominant speaker tends to stifle the capacity, and the motivation, of students to be active learners. On the other hand, dialogue, performance, experimentation, debate, questioning and collaboration all tend to encourage students to participate in the learning process (Levine, 1995).

The potential of alternative policy structures

If, as I believe, a democratic society is one in which education supports disadvantaged children, the professional concerns and integrity of teachers should be enhanced within society. Teachers should work in conditions which facilitate reflection, professionalism, and democratic student-centredness on their part (Maguire and Ball, 1994). The significance for social justice and democracy of teachers’ working conditions as professionals lies in the effect those conditions
have on the ways in which students are taught. The ways in which students are taught, in turn, influences both their reaction to the subject matter of teaching, and the degree to which they succeed and fail at school. Moreover, the ways in which students are taught, as well as the content of lessons, has significant influence on the kinds of citizens they become. That is, teaching has a purpose other than helping students to pass examinations and finish high school, to get a job, or become a better person. Teaching may be also for citizenship, and teaching for democratic citizenship is more than teaching for obedience and conformity for the majority, while an academic few are encouraged to think for themselves (Osbourne, 1991).

To turn schools into democratic institutions, according to Levine (1995), there should be a clear and substantiated delineation of the ways in which teaching can and cannot be ‘scientific’. That is, teaching can be scientific, in the sense that the practice can be informed and guided by knowledge or appropriate learning research, and teachers can form hypotheses about how students learn, try out their ideas based on those hypotheses, and evaluate the results. Teaching should not be seen as scientific in the sense that pre-determined, exact and quantitatively verifiable assumptions about students can be made. Nor should teaching be seen as scientific in the manner of industrial scientific management: that is, based on the idea that a precise and unvarying technique for producing the most efficient results can confidently be established for all teaching and learning situations. Since teaching is neither a science, nor a precise technical procedure, curricula should be rigorous, but not too narrowly and prescriptively formulaic.

The potential of alternative practices

If curricula are not prescriptive, and school provides the conditions in which students perceive that a given subject will develop over time, their interest in the development of the subject will retain their attention, according to Dewey (1916). “Activity carried on under conditions of external pressure or coercion is not carried on for any significance attached to the doing. The course of action is not intrinsically satisfying; it is a mere means for avoiding some penalty, or for gaining some reward at its conclusion” (Dewey, 1916, p. 204).
A rigorous but non-prescriptive approach would allow teachers a clear vision of democratic education, as outlined above. Accordingly, students would be taught to think, rather than to absorb facts, because the material would be clearly connected with their lives, their knowledge and experiences. In that way, students' prior knowledge would not be ignored as inferior or inconsequential, which, in turn, would encourage them to become active in their own learning (Osborne, 1991).

School work that extends the intellectual capacities of students is based on rigorous decision-making in the choice of subject matter, as well as the depth of knowledge presented, and the extent to which the content has intrinsic meaning for each student. For example, rather than marginalising the students' lives outside school, the content would enable students to relate their work, as closely as possible, to activities that take place in the world outside school. Activities that integrate several skills into a co-ordinated exercise may be more meaningful and valuable than others. For example, an activity which entailed answering questions at the end of a module, or a unit, could be replaced by one in which students conduct, and explain, their own projects. Multiple-choice and short-answer tests could be replaced by students conducting their own interviews and writing up their own research papers (Levine, 1995).

Although the workbook called for students to interview people from various occupations, the students did not carry out that activity. Thus, the programme had some of the basic requisites for student-centred learning, but those had been subverted by the focus on expeditious outcomes. In addition, learning could have been structured around questions that have been the subject of debate among theorists and practitioners such as sociologists, economists and employers (Levine, 1995). For example, the subject of rights and responsibilities in the workplace could have been presented to the students as a series of questions into which they could have inquired, such as 'what are the bases on which the concepts of rights and responsibilities are founded?', or 'is work a 'natural' activity?'.
To me, if schools are to cultivate a democratic society, policy- and decision-makers should acknowledge the value-laden nature of education, and set up the conditions in which conflict is rendered visible, and responsible discussion is inherent, in classroom work. The second strand of social constructionism identified by Shotter (1993), the ‘rhetorical-responsive’ strand, would support such an alternative approach to education, in that the strand recognises that, rather than being limited by pre-determined use in any given environment, language may be both received and used creatively, according to the situations in which people find themselves (Shotter, 1993). Students could thus reflect critically on their feelings about issues which are significant for the conditions of their lives, such as the distribution of wealth, the constitution of violence in society, and so on. The curriculum should constantly draw on students’ lives as a way of delving into broader social themes (Bigelow, 1995). In that context, teachers could share their own opinions with students, but not as the presentation or transmission of ‘truth’. Rather, teachers and learners would share, and co-construct, knowledge (Levine, 1995).

The approach to teaching and learning outlined in Biggs’ (1999:25-31) model of constructive alignment sets up the conditions in which all the elements of a teaching and learning interaction are aligned with premises designed to encourage students to engage in deep learning. That is, the curriculum, the teaching methods, the assessment procedures, the pedagogical approach, and the institutional climate are all seen as interconnected, and as working towards the aim of deep learning. Clear objectives privilege the level of understanding to be reached over topics to be covered. Within this model, according to Biggs, (1999), the conditions are set up in which students cannot help but engage in learning. The model allows for differential levels of learning according to the needs of the students, while, at the same time, rather than being ‘fed’ information, students do the ‘work’ of learning (Biggs, 1999).

An example

By using Biggs’ model of constructive alignment, I believe that the programme could set up the conditions in which the processes of students’ construction of
meaning may privilege, rather than marginalise, their families, their communities, and their own experiences. For example, upon ascertaining students’ future occupational interests, they could be sent to conduct secondary research about their chosen occupations. As well as the history of the occupations, the technical skills involved, the products or services generated, and so on, the students would be expected to find out as much as possible, from the literature, about the relationship between such occupations and the nation’s economy. Thus, such information as: the number of people employed in such occupations; the range, nature and source of materials used in production; current export and/or import ratios, and the proportion of gross domestic product represented by the product or service would be sought. The social and ecological effects of the occupation would also be relevant, and students would perhaps research the social groups who work in the occupation; those who consume the product or service, and those who do not; the effect of its production on the environment, and so on. Concepts of social justice and democratic citizenship would be built into their research activities and analysis.

I think that the students may then build on the secondary research by talking with people involved in the occupations of their interest, to ascertain such information as the high and low points of the work for various individuals; the ways in which these people came to be working in the area; the relationships of production that hold for that occupation, such as, for example, between designers and marketers, and so on. Having gained a thorough knowledge of the social, economic, cultural and ecological dimensions of any given occupation, the students may then be asked to describe: their interest in the job; the ways in which they believe that they will be personally suited to work in such an area; the achievements they hope to attain through such work; the effects of such work on society, and their own family and community, and so on. They may be asked to talk through their project to others in the class, or the school, and/or to parents, and to conduct a discussion about it.

Biggs (1999) has noted that clear objectives state the level of understanding to be reached. Thus, depending upon the teaching and learning purpose of each component of the exercise, students may be asked to describe, or to compare, or
to critique, or to synthesise various bodies of knowledge. The main points are that constructive alignment begins with the students’ prior knowledge and experiences, and builds on that knowledge. Each component of the exercise has a clear purpose for teaching and learning, rather than to occupy students’ time, to quieten them or to force them to engage. Teachers and learners co-construct knowledge, and assessment is seen as a teaching and learning tool, and thus as a dimension of the students’ learning experience, rather than as an end in itself. Such a learning experience would be in contrast to that presented by the programme, in that the students would be constantly encouraged to ask ‘why’, rather than only ‘what’ and ‘how’.

In other words, they would be encouraged to seek knowledge, and to know why they seek it, rather than have information imposed upon them for the hegemonic purposes of others. The positive ways in which such an educational experience would influence their construction of meaning would stem from the inclusion of their own interests, knowledge and experiences; the degree to which they had been guided to engage in the learning process, and assessment which was not an end in itself, but a means through which they may learn about themselves and their own potential, as well as about the subject of research.

**The power/knowledge nexus and social justice**

Because the content of such learning is not imposed on students, they are empowered in many ways. Their abilities and talents are accounted for and recognised; their prior knowledge is favoured rather than marginalised; they have achieved a learning objective; motivation is built into the experience, rather than imposed from external sources, and they are in control of their own learning. A genealogical analysis of such an educational exercise would reveal a power/knowledge nexus in which students are categorised as learners and as achievers, rather than as ‘problems’ to be managed and contained. There would be no communicative channels to privilege hegemonic processes, because students would be continuously asking ‘why’, and would be encouraged to consider hegemonic acts and discourses during their project.
In that way, the hegemonic basis of deficit theory may be undermined. The educational practice of social exclusion would be ameliorated, and education for democratic citizenship would be enhanced. Positivist approaches to teaching and learning may give way to student-centred pedagogies, and outcomes that are exploitative for students may be replaced by those that are democratic, and community-minded. Further, the influences of such a programme on students' construction of meaning about themselves and their families, and about their experiences of learning through school-business partnerships, may be fundamentally changed, to become empowering and enlightening. And finally, the interests of all may be met, rather than mainly those of the state, and of the rich and powerful.
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APPENDICES

Appendix Number 1: Twemlow High School Prospectus
Appendix Number 2: Transition Report 1997
Appendix Number 3: National Certificate In Employment Skills (NCES)
Appendix Number 4: "You and Your Image"
Appendix Number 5: Unit 1293 1:1 Interviews
Appendix Number 6: Sexual Harassment
Appendix Number 7: What Employers are Looking For?
Appendix Number 8: Doctoral Information Package
Twemlow High School

PROSPECTUS

1999

WELCOME

MISSION STATEMENT

TO BE A COMMUNITY SCHOOL WITH A FOCUS ON QUALITY

in partnership with its community, aims to establish a supportive environment which encourages students to work towards fulfilling their academic, social and physical potential as part of a continuing process of personal development.

Appendix Number 1: Twemlow High School Prospectus
1997
TRANSITION DEPARTMENT
REPORT

presented by

Transition Coordinator

November 1997

Appendix Number 2: Transition Report 1997
BUDGET ALLOCATION

Funding for the Transition Department is via STAR funding as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Pathways</th>
<th>$18,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>$22,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are also charged a nominal fee of $25 to pay for workbooks, computer disks and other stationary which they retain at the end of the course.

In 1997 funding allocation via STAR was approved for Transition and Skill Pathways, but funding has been given to alternatively approved courses, e.g., Hospitality, Mathematics (4 students attending Stage 1 Canterbury University), and Horticulture via Open Polytechnic.
## PROGRAMMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timetabled</th>
<th>Skill Pathways</th>
<th>Years 12/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td></td>
<td>Years 11/12 Alternative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Extension Programmes:

- Driver Education
  - On-going every 2nd module

### Individual Programmes:

- Job Search
  - Years 12/13
- Work Placement
  - Years 11-13
- Tertiary Education - Application
- Assistance/Counselling
  - Years 12/13
- Career Planning
  - Years 10+

### Year Level Programmes:

- Careers Expo
  - Years 12/13
- Actionworks (NZ Youth Employment)
  - Year 12

### Computer Database:

- Student Job Club
  - All levels
SKILL PATHWAYS

Skill Pathways is now in its second year at . It was introduced in 1996 via funding by ETSA (Education Training Support Agency) and was totally funded by same.

This year Skill Pathways is totally funded by STAR, which allows students flexibility in their programme by allowing them to attend courses with outside providers.

The concept of the course is to prepare students for the world of work by allowing them to choose a career pathway they would like to enter upon leaving school and during the year attain qualifications and/or skills to assist them in their career goal. To this end the course is made up of many practical modules of work - based on NZQ Unit Standards.

All students have compulsory units of work they must progress through and then have specific units based on their chosen pathway.

The compulsory units of work include:

Personal Presentation for the Workplace
Learner’s Licence and/or Restricted Licence
16 Hour Comprehensive First Aid Certificate
Compilation of a Curriculum Vitae and folder of relevant documentation/data

Pathway units can be done in class, but invariably are done via Training Providers. For example, this year a student is attending Christchurch Polytechnic every Tuesday morning studying the National Certificate in Retailing. Other students have attended block courses in Carpentry, Travel and Tourism, Graphic Design, Computer Database/Spreadsheeting, Kiwi Host - to name a few.

All students are expected to complete at least two blocks of work placement, preferably with the same employer. One student has recently completed a five week block with a local hairdresser at the same time having been assessed on the introductory unit standards for the National Certificate in Hairdressing. From this the student has successfully attained an apprenticeship.

Two students attended a one week live-in course at New Plymouth in the September holidays at the International Hotel Management School, where they received intensive hospitality training and with other students actually "ran" the training hotel for two days.

Other students have done work placement in a wide range of areas - offices, retailing, Orana Park, veterinary clinics.

1996/97 Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although numbers were restricted at the beginning of the year to 25 students the demand was such that numbers were increased to 32. Another 10 students were turned away.

This course was designed for students who wished to gain practical work based skills to enable them to enter directly into the work force. An interesting statistic from 1996 was the number of students who
Initially were adamant they were not going to go on to further training. This changed drastically after consultation/advice from their work placement employers! Three students returned to School and one to it all.

1996 Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cadetship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Work based training/Full time employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Part time employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tertiary training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Returned to secondary school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive feedback has been received from parents of students who have/are doing this course.

One negative aspect of the course is the outside commitments by students such as part time employment and sport involvement which interferes with this programme, especially block courses and work placement. Many student have permanent part time positions which severely impinge on the programme. One student currently works 4 nights a week at Carter Holt on the 5 pm - 11 pm shift... it is no wonder many of our students (including students in this class) are not attaining the results the community expect of them.

GOALS FOR 1998:

1. To continue with this course for a maximum of 30 students
2. To include a module of self-awareness and goal setting within the first month via a Motivational Camp run with the assistance of outside trainers. A booking has been made for students to attend a live-in camp at Living Springs 9 - 12 February with NZ Army Officers running a team building/leadership programme. Other invited tutors will also present programmes in motivational/goal setting. Students will test their motivation/goal setting by cycling to and from the camp!
3. To “team teach” with Hospitality and Civics in certain modules of work, e.g., Tourism and First Aid
4. To ensure that Skill Pathways, Hospitality and Civics are timetabled on the same line.
5. To encourage “Academy” students to join this course for the compulsory unit standards.
6. To liaise with the business community and place students early in the first term with employers on a regular basis, e.g., one day/one half day a week throughout the year.
7. To liaise regularly with employment agencies and register students as they become “work ready”.
   (This has proved highly successful this year with students in office systems pathway)
The Transition Programme at senior level is taught to students of the Alternative Department. Students are taught a range of skills to enable them to make a realistic decision on prospective employment and to also teach them skills to use in other areas should they not attain permanent employment.

The programme is funded by STAR and is based on NZQ Unit Standards, level 1 and many aspects of this course are also part of their Practical English Certificate prescription, so students realise it is not a "stand alone" subject, but is integrated into other areas of their schooling.

Work Placement is encouraged, but is not compulsory as many of the students are not "work ready" until their second year of this programme. Students in this programme are from both Years 11 and 12. Consultation about which students go on work placement is made with HOD Alternative Programmes and parents.

A general concern for 1997 has been that this programme has only been available for one period a week throughout the year, which makes it very hard for students to have a feeling of continuity. When I first started teaching this programme I had these students for one whole day every 7 days. As the timetable has changed in format this has gone from 4 periods a week to now only 1. It is an impossibility to maintain a continuity with these students when one only sees them for one hour a week.

GOALS FOR 1998:

1. To have this programme recognised as an essential course for these students - not just to fill in the hours at the end of the timetabling sequence.
2. To have Year 11 students and Year 12 students timetabled separately (at present time both these year levels are placed in the same class, resulting in Year 12 students repeating some aspects of the course! These students are not able enough to be put on correspondence - they need teacher assistance at all times.
3. To have Year 11 students timetabled out of class on work placement one half day a week from module 4 onwards. Transition teacher also needs to have this time timetabled accordingly to enable work visits to take place.
4. To have Year 12 students timetabled out of class on work placement one week a module from module 4 onwards.
LONG TERM GOALS

1. To implement an ongoing programme starting at level 1 (Year 11) for the National Certificate in Employment Skills for students who are not ideally suited to a full course of academic study. In their second year students would then progress on to the Skill Pathways programme studying NZQ unit standards at Level 2 and 3.

As Transition Coordinator at . . . . . . I feel there is a huge gap between the programmes the Alternative Department offers to students in the senior school and what "mainstreamed" students are offered. These latter students are the ones missing out on specific programmes which they are actually asking for. Not all students are suited to a full academic programme and through Government policy we are retaining more senior students right through to Year 13/14. This will become more apparent in 1998 when students who would normally leave to go onto TOP's programmes will be unable to do so due to change in funding policy to the TOP's providers.

An introduction of an "Academy" will enable a small group of students to benefit, but the concept should be widened out to include such things as Performing Arts and Hospitality. Students participating in these would also attend Transition/Skill Pathway modules.

2. To personally interview every senior student and monitor that their programme they have chosen to study meets both their short and long term goals.

3. To retain the module of "Choices and Decision Making" which has been placed within the Year 10 Health programme after Social Studies cut it from their prescription.

4. To implement the new "Learning Portfolio" as recommended by the Ministry (takes over from the Leavers Profile (which will come into Number 2 above) - implemented from Year 9 and updated yearly until student leaves school.

5. To work closely with the Industry/Links Liaison Officer to maintain a database of local industry and their requirements/expectations.

6. To extend the Transition programmes to the outer community by offering day release classes in Unit Standards for Work Based Trainees/Apprentices. (This is currently happening with First Aid)

7. To work alongside the Employment Officer working with the Academy students and offer services/course modules where appropriate to their individual needs.

8. To have a designated area (presently P Block) housing the Transition Coordinator, the Academy Employment Officer and the Industry/Links Officer so students can see that all areas combine to work for the same outcomes. It will also mean students know exactly where to go and who is available to see them. This would be "sold" to students via Dean Assemblies/Form meetings and to parents via Parent evenings. Students would use this area similar to services provided on the outside, e.g., NZ Employment and Income Support - interview times would be made as well as students using it as a "drop in" centre for information. Staff would also be able to utilise the services of these people to assist them in their programmes. When appropriate students would be referred on to outside agencies.

9. To have a full time ancillary worker to enable 8 above to work satisfactorily - would work for all three people. (funded via STAR!)
The following are the unit standards which are part of the

**National Certificate in Employment Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Assessors Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Develop and use keyboarding skills to enter text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mrs Climo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>497</td>
<td>Protect Health &amp; Safety in the workplace</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Skills Path</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1299</td>
<td>Be assertive in a range of specified situations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1304</td>
<td>Communicate with people from other cultures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mrs Coburn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Identify basic employment rights and responsibilities, and sources of information and assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Skills Path</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3503</td>
<td>Participate in a team or group to complete routine tasks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Skills/Academy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4249</td>
<td>Demonstrate care and timeliness: as an employee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Skills Path</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7123</td>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of problem solving and apply a problem solving technique to a problem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8489</td>
<td>Solve problems which require calculation with whole numbers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8490</td>
<td>Solve problems using calculations with numbers expressed in different forms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8491</td>
<td>Read and interpret information presented in tables and graphs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8492</td>
<td>Use standard units of measurement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10781</td>
<td>Produce a plan for own future directions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Skills Path</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix Number 3: National Certificate In Employment Skills (NCES)
## Career Plans - Skill Pathways

### Elective 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Subject(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1277</td>
<td>Communicate information in a specified workplace</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2977</td>
<td>Read texts for practical purposes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eng/Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Read an inclusive range of written texts and record the reading experience</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2989</td>
<td>Read and assess texts to gain knowledge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Collect information using a range of oral, written, and visual sources and methods</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3501</td>
<td>Apply listening techniques</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Listen attentively during and interact in discussion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10792</td>
<td>Write letters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Skills Path</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Elective 2

Skills Pathways offers:

- **Personal Presentation for the Workplace**
  - Nikki Lay (SP)
- **Produce a CV**
  - Skills Path
- **Participate in a Predictable 1-1 interview**
  - Skills Path
- **Produce a Targeted CV**
  - Skills Path
- **Complete a work experience placement**
  - Skills Path
- **Learner’s Licence**
  - Skills Path
- **Employer expectations in the workplace**
  - Skills Path
- **Obtain Job Seeking Skills**
  - Skills Path
- **Manage First Aid**
  - NZ Red Cross
- **CPR**
  - NZ Red Cross

### Academy Students:

Additional unit standards studying for National Certificate in ______ are:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 2
# Top to Toe Grooming Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAIR</th>
<th>FACIAL HAIR</th>
<th>FACE</th>
<th>TEETH</th>
<th>PERSONAL HYGIENE</th>
<th>BODY</th>
<th>HANDS</th>
<th>CLOTHING</th>
<th>SHOES</th>
<th>ACCESSORIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Is it clean and tidy?  
Is it cut or trimmed regularly?  
For Dyed Hair only | Is it off your Face?  
Is your hairstyle appropriate?  
Is the colour suitable? | Is there any dandruff?  
Do you have unsightly roots? | Do you need to remove any hair?  
Have you hairy Nostrils?  
Is your Beard trimmed? | Are your lips dry?  
Are you better with Make Up?  
Are the colours you use suitable?  
Is your Lipstick fresh? | or without Make Up?  
Is your Foundation the best colour? | Are your Teeth clean?  
For Women only  
Is your Make Up appropriate?  
Is your Mascara smudged? | Is your Breath fresh?  
Is there Lipstick on your Teeth? | Do you have food on your teeth? | Do you have Body Odour?  
Is your Perfume/Aftershave too powerful? | Are you feeling Healthy?  
For Women only | Are you feeling Fit?  
Should your Legs be hairless? | Is your Posture correct?  
Should your Armpits be hairless? | Are you serious Wounds covered? | Are they well Pressed?  
Do they have Lint bobbles? | Are your Nails an appropriate style? | Are they in Good Condition? | Are they clean and free of hairs? | Are they an appropriate Style? |
| Are your hands clean and tidy? | Are you hands clean and tidy? | Are your Hat fit your Image? | Is your Bag in Good Condition?  
Does your Belt fit your Image? | Does your Jewellery fit your Image? |

Appendix Number 4: "You and Your Image"
UNIT 1293
PARTICIPATE IN A PREDICTABLE 1:1 INTERVIEW
MARKING SCHEDULE

Trainee Name ______________________ Date and Time ______________________
Job Designation ____________________
Interviewer _________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Appropriate questions are asked (short and direct) (1.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Name is given (1.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Address &amp; Phone number are given (1.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Greets the Interviewer in an appropriate and positive manner using appropriate language and body language (1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Greets with a handshake (1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Answers to the questions are relevant (1.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Is dressed appropriately for the interview (1.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Behaviour is appropriate for the interview (1.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Speaks confidently throughout the interview (1.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Appropriate body language is used (1.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Greets with a handshake (1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Uses Eye Contact (1.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Arrives on time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Points out strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Keep good posture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Brought CV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Thanks and handshake at the end (1.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewer’s signature ______________________

HHS/98/SP

Appendix Number 5: Unit 1293 1:1 Interviews
1) Tell me about yourself or, could you introduce yourself to me?

2) Tell me about your education and what subjects you liked the best.

3) Tell me what you do on the weekends/spare time.

4) Have you ever done this kind of work before? Or, What work experience has prepared you for this job?

5) What do you feel is necessary to be successful in the job?
20) What are your weaknesses?

21) Tell me about a situation where you have failed or made mistakes. How did you cope and what did you learn?

22) What five words or short phrases would you say describe you best?

23) What was your last employer's opinion of you?

24) What are your long range goals, your long term work plans or where do you see yourself in five years?

25) If we were to employ you, how long can we expect you to stay?
26) Tell me why you would be happy in this job?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

27) What do you know about our company?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

28) What kind of machines or equipment have you worked with?
What kind of equipment can you operate?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

29) Can you work under pressure or tight deadlines? Give examples.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

30) Do you work well with people? What kind of people would you prefer to work with? What kind of people do you find difficult?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

31) Are you thinking of going back to school, university or college?

________________________________________________________________________

Permission to copy only granted with the purchase of The Perfect Career Trainer's Manual
Appendix Number 6: Sexual Harassment
Assumption (noun) Something that is taken for granted; something that is accepted as true, even if there is no real proof
Assume (verb)

Coerce (verb) To use force, threats, or intimidation to make a person act a certain way
Coercion (noun)
Coercive (adjective)

Discrimination (noun) Treating someone differently because of his/her gender, race, religion, disability, etc.; not treating the person as an individual; prejudice
Discriminate (verb)

Employee (noun) Someone who works for another person or company (an employer) for pay

Explicit (adjective) Clear, direct, straightforward

Exploit (verb) To use someone or something unfairly, for your own purposes, profit, or advantage
Exploitation (noun)
Exploitative (adjective)

Gender (noun) One’s sex, male or female

Harass (verb) To annoy, intimidate, frighten, threaten, or bully another person
Harasser (noun)
Harassment (noun)

Implicit (adjective) Not clear, direct, or straightforward; implied or hinted at

Intent (noun) A person’s reason for saying or doing something

Legal (adjective) Having to do with the law

Liability (noun) Legal responsibility, legal obligation
Liable (adjective)

Myth (noun) A popular belief, story, or tradition that is used to explain something
Perceive (verb) To become aware of through your senses
Perception (noun)

Physical sexual conduct (noun) Touching another person in a sexual way, usually to show affection; in the case of sexual harassment or sexual violence, this touch is inappropriate and unwanted
Reject (verb) To refuse someone or something
Rejection (noun)

Respect (noun) A special feeling of high regard for someone or something; esteem, consideration, courtesy
Respect (verb)
Respectful (adjective)

Sex object (noun) Someone who is seen only as an object of sexual interest, not as a person

Sex role stereotyping (noun) Expecting men and women to be and act a certain way because of their gender
Sexism (noun) Discrimination or prejudice based on gender; stereotyping people by gender
Sexist (adjective)

Sexual advances (noun) Come-ons; attempts to lure someone into a sexual act

Sexual discrimination (noun) Discrimination based on gender

Sexual favors (noun) Sexual acts performed in return for a reward, such as a promotion or a higher grade

Sexual harassment (noun) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Sexual violence (noun) Sexual acts meant to hurt or harm another person physically and emotionally; rape is an act of sexual violence

Stereotype (noun) A mental picture that people in one group have of people in another group; a stereotype assumes that people will have certain abilities, characteristics, behaviors, and values just because they belong to a certain race, gender, religion, social class, family, etc.

Submit (verb) To go along with something because you have to, not because you want to
Submission (noun)

Verbal sexual conduct (noun) Sexual comments about a person's body, clothing, gender, etc.; in the case of sexual harassment or sexual violence, these comments are inappropriate and unwanted

Victim (noun) A person who is injured or otherwise harmed by the actions of another; someone who is oppressed, mistreated, or tricked
Victimize (verb)
WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR

| Qualities or attributes I already have |colour|
| Qualities or attributes I can develop |
| Qualities or attributes I may have difficulty developing |

Appendix Number 7: What Employers are Looking For?
HAVE YOU GOT WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR?

Study the graph on the previous page and discuss the following points.

- What do you think employers' mean by the right attitude?

- What is a tidy appearance? Isn't the word tidy subjective?

- Why is it important to get on with others at work?

- Why is good communication so important? What jobs might not need good communication skills?

- What might happen if I am not punctual in the workplace? What happens if I am not punctual at school?

- If experience is so important, how can I get a job without experience?

- What does being flexible mean in the workplace?

- Why do I need to be a fast learner? Surely I've learnt everything there is to know before I get the job. Anyway, learning stops when I finish school.

- Why are things like a good education, and qualifications so far down the list? Aren't they important?
23 December 1998

Margaret Bradford  
C/o Dr John Davies/Dr Elody Rathgen  
Department of Education  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Margaret

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal “School-Business Links: A Qualitative Study” has been considered and approved subject to receipt of a revised copy of each of the consent forms showing that the participants consent to the publication of the results.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

[Name]

Appendix Number 8: Doctoral Information Package
27th May 1999

Dear

You are invited to participate in the study currently entitled 'School-Business Links: A Qualitative Study', which is to be carried out by myself, Margaret Bradford, as a Ph.D. thesis for the Education Department of the University of Canterbury. The aim of the research is to look at links between a high school(s) and businesses.

Your participation in this research will involve granting permission for me to attend and audio-tape a meeting(s) or other interaction(s) between yourself, secondary students and school staff, and perhaps other business representatives, and to view documents relevant to such interactions. I will also ask permission to audio-tape an interview(s) with you. I estimate that each interview will take between half-an-hour and an hour, and will occur occasionally throughout 1999, as is convenient for you. At present, the completion date for the thesis is April 2001, and there may also be occasional times after 1999 when I would request a short, additional interview(s).

I will provide you with a transcription as soon as possible after each interview, and you may approve, alter, add to, or cancel any part of each interview transcription.

The results of the research will be kept in the archives of the University of Canterbury, and all or parts of the thesis may also be published. You may be assured of the complete confidentiality of the data gathered. The identity of participants will not be made public without their consent. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used where necessary, or required by participants. Any identifying material on audio-tapes will be omitted from transcriptions, and after transcribing, the tapes will be erased.
This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Margaret Bradford,
Ph.D. Candidate,
Education Department,
University of Canterbury.
CONSENT FORM

concerning participation in research towards a Ph.D. thesis, on the subject of links between schools and businesses, currently entitled:-

'School-Business Links: A Qualitative Study'

I have read and understood the description of the above research. On this basis, I agree to participate in the study, and I consent to the existence, and possible publication, of the results of the research with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand also that I may, at any time, withdraw from the study, including the withdrawal of any information I have provided.

Signed .................................................................

(N. Jones)

Date .................................................................