ABSTRACT

Control of School curriculum has been a dormant issue poked alive in recent years. Since Plato, a stock answer has been that relevant experts should have control. One novel and interesting argument against this is that curriculum decision making is simply not a sufficiently recondite area to warrant helmsmanship by theorists. This argument is presented and attacked. In its place is offered quite a different reason for rejecting control by experts.

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Experts and Control of the Curriculum**

Introduction

The neo-Platonic view, that the experts in any given field ought to have decision making control, goes virtually unchallenged in most professions. It would seem almost a preposterous suggestion that someone other than the various professional governing bodies of medicine, law, engineering and accounting should determine policies. However, this does not seem to be the case in education, and, more specifically, with regard to decisions about the content and structure of the curriculum. For in the past decade, claims to legitimate control have been, at various times, made on behalf of educational experts (such as are found in university faculties of education or in government), the state, the teaching profession, parents and even the students themselves. Should a situation exist in education, as in most other professions, in which policy control is in the hands of the upper echelons of the professional bodies instead of being determined at the grass roots level in the profession or even by the consumers of curriculum - the parents and their children? In other words, should experts control the curriuclum?

The usual (neo-Platonic) line of argument in favour of experts is that in any sphere where there is a clear-cut theory to guide practice, those who are capable of making authoritative pronouncements on the theory are deemed to be most competent to make practical judgments. Medicine and engineering would be examples of practical fields based on quite solid bodies of theory, and in which this is so.

In education there is certainly no shortage of individuals claiming to be experts. Oddly enough, though, the problem about experts and curriculum has focused rather more on the question of whether or not there is anything like a solid *theory* which could guide practice. There is, for instance, nowhere near the degree of consensus on obvious proposed theories, such as those developed by Skinner, Kohlberg and Piaget, as can be found in medicine and engineering. But more damaging still, than the lack of consensus on any one body of theory, is the argument, so common in the social sciences, that no educational theory is possible *in principle*.

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To some extent, I think a case can be convincingly made that educational theories *are* possible and that we have at least some pieces of useful theory. But I do not want to go into this now. What I do want to consider is yet a further attack against expert control which takes the very interesting and unusual view that schooling is not a sufficiently recondite activity to warrant the use of a sophisticated theory; hence experts are redundant.

In what follows I want to argue against this. My motive will not be anything in which supporters of expert control could take cheer. For I only want to show that this is the wrong reason to object. Towards the end will be presented what I believe are better reasons for not wanting experts to control curriculum. To get under way, though, something must be said about educational theories and educational experts.

Educational Theory

A working definition is all that is needed for present purposes, so to avoid the enormous philosophical controversies about 'theory', I will simply report a reasonably uncontroversial account as found in a long-standing debate on this topic between D. J. O'Connor and P. H. Hirst.[1]

Despite their considerable disagreement, both are (almost) willing to agree that an educational[2] theory must guide practice, be comprised of appropriate sciences and social sciences and meet the following conditions.

(1) be a logically interrelated set of hypotheses

(ii) be confirmable by observation (and reasons for actions given by agents)

(iii) be refutable

(iv) be explanatory

Educational Experts

A central feature of the concept of an expert is possession of exceptional knowledge, whether it be propositional knowledge as, say, an historian would have or procedural knowledge as would be possessed in greater abundance by a television repairman. It would be a further point that exceptional knowledge could be classed as either valued for its own sake or instrumental. On the basis of this distinction R. S. Peters labels as "authorities" those who have the former and as "experts", those who have the latter.[3] For my purposes this refinement will not be necessary and I will use the word "expert" to cover both.

Exceptional knowledge is one item on the list of criteria by which we actually judge someone an expert. I want to add two more items, both stemming from the *referring* sense in which we use the term "expert" in terms of curriculum.

When referring to educational experts we usually have in mind those not only possessed of theoretical knowledge superior to most classroom teachers, but who are usually professionally engaged in theoretical research and teaching or policy planning. Obvious examples are, of course, university academics and high ranking civil service personnel. One observation to be made is that such individuals are not in direct and constant contact with the great majority of schools which are affected by their decisions. They are *centralized*. Another observation is that the great majority of their decisions about curriculum will entail some form and degree of *standardization*. Perhaps this is because plans usually follow on the heels of

generalizations about human behavior. In any case, I am thinking of such decisions as the prescription of compulsory curricula, texts, and so on. Both centralization and standardization are taken to be defining characteristics of what I will call *institutional experts*. And, they are the two items which are further criteria in judging someone an expert in curriculum matters.

Against the Need for a Theory

Even if we overlook the difficulties of actually producing a satisfactory theory of education and of finding genuine experts in it, there remains a problem to which both D. J. Connor[4] and D. I. Lloyd[5] have pointed. They claim that a sophisticated theory, one in the context of which it would be appropriate to speak of experts, is simply not needed in education - certainly not as in medicine or engineering. Both make similar claims.

First, they contend that there have been many successful curriculum decisions which have not been preceeded by developments in educational theory. Teaching and learning, they claim, have gone on throughout the ages apparently without teachers giving too much thought to the underlying concerns of their art; and before any significant theoretical activities in education were begun.[6] O'Connor points out that this is quite in contrast with medicine or engineering. Development in both, and the logical possibility of it, was a *consequence* of progress in the natural sciences. In education, he says the theoretical investigations - largely a product of recent years - did not *preceed* practice but, rather, *followed* the enormous increase in the number of schools, teachers and students in this century.[7] Clearly, on this view, theoretical endeavours are just frills to the practices of schooling.

Second, it is claimed that social scientific (educational) theory is too recondite for practical needs. O'Connor draws a parallel between teaching and cooking, the point being that one no more needs to understand the complex psychological processes (etc.) in children in order to teach well or make practical decisions about it, than one needs to know the chemical reactions among conbined ingredients in cooking.[8]

Lloyd stresses the familiar view that common sense about human behavior and personal associations, born of one's life-long observations and common conceptual scheme, is sufficient to enable one to make judgments about educational activities without having to call upon theories spun out by social scientists. What is needed, he thinks, is 'reflection'. By that he means thinking about past situations - recalling the details, noting similarities and dissimilarities and considering the ethical dimension - all of which is done in an attempt to sort out what was done from what might have been done bearing in mind all of the relevant practical and ethical considerations. From this, presumably, one benefits the next time similar circumstances occur. One's reflections can be called upon for guidance in avoiding past mistakes and to suggest new avenues. The principal distinguishing feature between this and theorizing is that a rigidly set pattern for future action in similar circumstances has *not* been set as would be the case in adopting a theory. Rather, the essential items for making up new plans when the occasion arises have been generated. Through reflection of this sort, flexibility can be maintained.

In Support of Theory

On the first of these two points, it may be argued, as Hirst[9] does, that the practical activities of teaching done so successfully in the past, may not have been done in any *reasoned* way. Success, that is, may have been contingent upon favourable circumstances, e.g. unusually bright students, happy accidents on the part of the

teacher in choosing certain techniques or materials, etc. In other words, curriculum decision makers and teachers may not have had reasons for their actions, or even been aware of the importance of having reasons.

As to O'Connor's remark that educational theory has followed, not preceeded educational practice (unlike medicine and engineering), one might point out that even in the allegedly more recondite fields of medicine and engineering some form of primitive practice existed (logically and practically) prior to theoretical advances in the sciences.[10] Education may indeed be awaiting its Newton!

There is a certain seductiveness about the second O'Connor-Lloyd claim. For it seems plausible to suppose that teaching and cooking share the mundane quality of being more in need of technique than theory, save perhaps in certain troubled areas such as special education. Add to that Lloyd's notion of 'reflection' - recollection of past practice, common-sense and flexibility in future dealings - and the case looks quite reasonable indeed.

I would not want to say that such a view is anti-intellectualist - indeed it is probably conceived as being a realistic admonishment to those who would over-intellectualise. But it certainly is needlessly pessimistic and lacking in foresight. It is an attitude no doubt similar to that taken in the past to a great host of practical human activities which have at one stage been moribound and later transformed by developments in the natural and social sciences. Open heart surgery, space exploration and psychoanalysis would be examples. The O'Connor-Lloyd position, it seems to me, is typical of that held by skeptics in the early days of any theoretical venture.

There is, too, an objection which can be raised to Lloyd's concept of reflection. The thrust of his programme is antithetical to *theorizing*. But he has not, I am convinced, presented us with an alternative. Instead of doing away with theorizing and its application to practice he has simply redescribed the act of theorizing and given it a different label.

Bearing in mind the account given earlier of a 'theory' (i.e. a theory is (i) a logically interrelated set of hypotheses, (ii) confirmable by observation, etc., (iii) refutable, (iv) explanatory), consider this example of what I take Lloyd to mean by a typical case of reflection. A classroom teacher, mentally reviewing his last term experiences with a disruptive child, decides that his approach has been wrong. The child is known to be neglected and mistreated by his parents, and not particularly well liked by his fellow students; so it has been supposed that the child's disruptiveness has been an attempt, at once, to rebel and to draw attention. Gentle and loving treatment by the teacher to remove the sense of neglect and the motive for rebellion has been the teacher's reason for various things done in the classroom towards this end, e.g. extra personal attention and appointment to positions of responsibility in class, such as monitor. The teacher's reflective assessment is that this has failed; that the child has seen these kindnesses as signs of weakness and taken advantage. It is now felt by the teacher that much firmer, yet scrupulously fair, treatment would at least contain the misbehavior.

This piece of reflection, I contend, is simply a layman's contribution to educational theory. It has all the ingredients. The conclusion is, in some sense, a guide to a certain range of classroom actions. The hypothesis about human behavior in respect of a child's reactions to loose and tight discipline would presumably to consistent and compatible with other theories and beliefs (e.g. about learning, motivation and ethics) in an *interconnected* network comprising what could be construed

as the teacher's own theory of education [condition (i)]. The teacher evidently rejected the earlier hypothesis on the basis of observations about its lack of success, so presumably the present hypothesis could be rejected if it proves unsuccessful, or kept if it works. The hypothesis, therefore, can be *confirmed* by observation (etc.) and is *refutable* [conditions (ii) and (iii)]. Finally, the hypothesis when added to other beliefs *explains* this sort of behavior [condition (iv)]. In short, what constitutes the theorizing, constitutes Lloyd's "reflection".

The second flaw in Lloyd's invective against application of theory is in supposing that the correct application of theory necessarily forces the details of the situation to which it is being applied into the mould of the standard conditions, or assumed circumstances, when the theory was constructed. Granted, some details must be forced. Since no two situations are ever *exactly* alike any application of a theory would have to accommodate some difference of detail. What is important though (and I am sure Lloyd would agree with this) is the extent to which situations differ. If significantly, then of course the theory cannot be applied - at least not in the given form. Perhaps when called for, the theory, or the plans and policies developed from it, could be amended. If not that, then dropped altogether. A behaviorist token reward system, for example, might be amended in respect of its reward system or eliminated entirely if unsuccessful. Flexibility can be maintained; indeed must be! Lloyd's criticism of inflexibility seems to be a rather better objection to unwise applications of theory than to applications *per se*.

Now one could go on to claim that if all rational curriculum decision making involves at least the assumption of theories, if not the construction of theory itself, then conceivably expertise, *qua* the rigorous and erudite investigations of institutional experts, is desirable. I would oppose this. It is not that I am in the least antagonistic towards "theoretical" examination of curriculum matters; quite the contrary. It is, however, something to do with the class of individuals we are calling institutional experts which makes me think they are not particularly desirable decision makers in the practical spheres of curriculum.

Experts and Educational Decisions

Why, then, should institutional experts not be the decision makers? The reason is not that theory is redundant to curriculum decisions as O'Connor and Lloyd believe. Nor is it because an educational theory is impossible in principle or practice (though we have not had occasion to discuss this here). Rather, despite the desirable level of rigor and erudition that experts bring to theory construction, institutional experts, and I stress the adjective "institutional", are not usually in a good position to assess the *contextual details* necessary in decision making. The nature and importance of contextual details requires explanation. This I want to do by considering, for a moment, what it is that 'educational decision making' involves.

Educational decisions of the sort we are concerned with are, first, practical decisions; and as such are about *actions* - what should be done, when and how. For example, whether or not to make history compulsory, what topics to deal with and in what order, and what methods to use, are decisions whose statement is prescribed action. Second, these decisions are *rational choices* between or among *alternatives*. It makes little sense to say that someone decided to do something if he either did not make any choice or if his choice only amounted to arbitrarily opting for some course of action. Nor does it make much sense to maintain that someone decided to do something if he had, literally, no option but to do what he did.

Granted, we sometimes say that 'A decided to do X because he had no alternative'. But such a sentence construction is usually employed to emphasize the fact that A had compelling reasons for selecting the alternative he did, as when he hands over his money to the thief at gun-point. In point of fact, he had the alternative of refusing; needless to say it was not a particularly inviting option! Third, in order to select between or among alternatives there must be what I will call a *justifying principle* that ultimately inclines us to favour one of the alternatives. This could refer to a rule, convention, past precedent, or abstract principle. A teacher's decision, for example, to reprimand rather than corporally punish a student might be based on such things as (1) a belief that the former is a more effective means of dealing with such a problem, i.e. the principle of expediency, (2) the principle that corporal punishment is morally wrong, or perhaps (3) simply because it is against the school rules to corporally punish students. In any case, no matter what the principle, rule, etc. turns out to be, such an entity is needed to rationally select one of the alternatives.

There is, yet, something more to be said about alternatives. It is that when one considers an alternative course of action one has in mind not only the description of the action itself, but the consequences if *it* is selected. Furthermore, consequences might be further divided as between standard, or usual, outcomes and outcomes in the particular case at hand. Think back to the case of deciding the appropriate punishment for a misbehaving student. If there were, for the sake of simplicity, only two alternatives, a reprimand and the strap, one would identify the alternative by its description, i.e. the particulars about reprimanding and strapping, consider the usual consequences, e.g. the effects of a reprimand on students of the age in question (and the teacher!), and of inflicting pain with the strap; and one would further bear in mind what is likely to happen with this *particular* student. With regard to consequences in the case at hand, there is, after all, the matter of the student's immediate and long term reactions, the effect on other members of the class when they learn about the decision, the reaction of the parents, and much else besides. In short, part of considering an alternative before the selection is made, is a questioning of the form: 'If I do this, what will happen?'. And what must be made clear is what the "this" is; what consequences *usually* follow; and what is likely to happen in *this* case.

Now before going on to consider how being clear about practical decision making *per se* can assist in making a case against institutional experts as having control of curriculum, I want to make some observations about the *context* in which curriculum decisions are made. Contexts, which are general circumstances, can, for our purposes, be divided into *conceptual context* and *material context*.

The *conceptual context* in any decision making situation which involves others is the shared framework or web of concepts through which those individuals filter and interpret experience. Telephones, typewriters, tables, coats and hats would simply be inscrutable objects when perceived for some or all of us were it not for the fact that our possessing the relevant concepts enables us to see them *as* telephones, typewriters, and so on. Equally, instances of democracy, rights and education are only seen as 'instances' because we have the notions of democracy, etc. So, the first point is that we understand our experiences *as* experiences of one type or another; and this, only because we possess the relevant concepts. The second point is that a necessary condition of shared experiences (e.g. telephones and democracy) is shared concepts. Third, in a decision making situation, the aggregate of individual conceptual schemes is the conceptual context.

It bears pointing out as a qualification that we can be said to share a concept so long as we have *roughly* the same notion. For, clearly, a child may share a concept with an adult (e.g. the concept of family) though the former's concept is not as well developed as the latter's. And, some adults have vastly more sophisticated concepts than others, yet still roughly share the concepts in question with those others.

Now the reason for going on about conceptual context is that when we make decisions, bearing in mind that part of the consideration of alternatives involves predicting the reactions of others, it is presumed that the latter must *understand* the alternative more or less as we do. That understanding rests upon a shared conceptual scheme, or at least sharing of the concepts relevant to the decision. In other words, within the conceptual context both the decision maker and those affected must have the relevant concepts in common.

Consider, as an example, a teacher who wants to introduce his young history class to late 19th century architecture and has as alternatives, A: an in-class description of its central characteristics, and B: a field trip to several Victorian houses. When setting out the alternatives fully it would surely be important to consider among other things whether the children would (1) have the conceptual prerequisites to understand what they would see on the field trip, (2) understand the relationship between the buildings and the study of history which they have been undertaking, (3) understand the very idea of a field trip - that it is not a pleasant holiday from study, but is part of study. These would be concerns about the extent of concept sharing (between teacher and students) in the conceptual context. So, to repeat the point, what we decide is contingent upon how others will understand the decision, which in turn is dependent upon the level and content of their conceptual schemes. And, to be concerned about this is to recognize the importance of conceptual sharing within the conceptual context.

The *material context* focusses on the human element as well. For decisions about action involve not only human understanding but other factors of human psychology, sociology and economics. Relevant are such psychological factors as motivation, inclination, ability to withstand stress, etc. If suchandsuch a course of action is decided upon, will those concerned be inclined to carry out the decision? Will they be motivated? Will they have sufficient 'strength of character' to endure if pressured? And so on. Various sociological matters can have a bearing on proposed alternatives, the like of: How will this or that social class, religious group, ethnic community, business community, political group, party, or body react? Think of the social ramifications of deciding to include sex-education in the schools; of adding, deleting or altering religious education; and of teaching Marxist interpretations of history. Economic factors include space, time and resources. Would there be sufficient classroom space if a particular alternative were chosen? Would there be time enough to complete a proposed curriculum unit, field trip or project? Would there be enough teachers, texts and materials to do X or Y and would they be of sufficient quality? Would the parents have to contribute financially to a field trip and would they be able to afford it?

My claim is, therefore, that curriculum decisions are (rational) decisions and as such are action prescriptions. They involve making rational choices between or among alternatives based on some justifying principle. Furthermore, part of the assessment of alternatives entails not only being clear about the description of the proposed course of action, but giving consideration to the usual consequences and those anticipated in the case at hand. It is my further contention that both concep-

tual and material contexts have a bearing on the consequences of alternatives and hence ought to be considered.

A final point about context. Since educational decisions such as those to do with compulsory curricula and prescribed course content and texts can affect a great many schools throughout a province (or even country) it is conceivable, indeed quite likely, that conceptual and material contexts may differ from place to place. One can imagine the *plurality* of context, as I will call it, among affluent suburban schools, inner-city schools in financially disadvantaged areas and rural schools: different ways of thinking and different material conditions. And, in addition to contextual plurality, it is possible for *contextual shift* to occur over time in any single location, as when social values change or an affluent area becomes poor. The implications for decision making are surely quite visible. Where there is contextual plurality the consequences of proposed alternatives can be difficult to judge. And if the context shifts, a once feasible alternative may become less so, or altogether inappropriate.

What importance, then, has this for the case against institutional experts?

The fundamental problem with experts hinges on the relation between, on the one hand, the two features which I described some time ago as being characteristic of *institutional* experts, namely the tendencies to centralize decision making and to standardize plans, and, on the other, the importance of contextual knowledge to the full understanding of a decision making alternative.

Centralization of decision making may have many advantages, such as gathering together highly competent individuals who can be provided with the stimulus, time, and research facilities to look more deeply into school problems than would otherwise be possible. But if adequate consideration of alternatives is dependent upon anticipated consequences, both standard and particular outcomes, one wonders just how well the centralized decision maker will fare in gleaning contextual details. Probable consequences can be predicted to some extent in the light of generalizations from the social sciences and upon past experience with similar situations. But this really only provides information about usual or standard consequences; and as we have seen this is often not enough. There must be some way of ascertaining the likely outcomes in the particular case at hand. This of course rests upon familiarity with the conceptual and material contexts. Simply physical detachment can make this difficult even when contexts are homogeneous and stable. But in recent years with the encouragement given to social, ethnic and religious minorities, changing material conditions from redistribution of wealth, population movements and decline, and increases in the quality and quantity of teachers and general educational resources, and the additional fact that education is now available to so much wider a clientele than in past generations, details of local contexts seem more important to decision making and yet less available to the centralized decision maker, now than ever before. To put it more succinctly, ours is a generation of shift and plurality in both conceptual and material context. These are details often requiring first hand observation. So each step that the centralized education expert takes away from direct view of the local context, the less likely he is to gather the information necessary to assessing the consequences of alternatives and hence to making competent decisions. This situation worsens as the expert becomes increasingly centralized and as the two contexts become more and more diverse.

Now of course one must be fair here to educational theory. Even from a central

vantage point a good deal can be said about, for example, human learning, which deals with the logical structure of learning and hence does not depend upon local contingencies. Much of the work of Piaget, Kohlberg, Bruner and, perhaps, Skinner, would seem to fall within this category. But insofar as a complete educational theory must guide practice there are difficulties even with this. For even if we agree that, say, children must pass through an invariant sequence of psychological stages to reach maturity, there is still the matter of how to bring this about which does depend upon other factors such as motivation, available stimuli, and so on, which are contingent upon conceptual and material contexts.

With *standardization* the problem is not the inability to gain access to contextual data, for by this stage in decision making assumptions about standard conditions, or conjectures about local variations, have already been made. The difficulty is now that practical decisions, such as those to do with compulsory curricula, prescribed lesson content, standard text books and appropriate teaching methods, will be rigid and fixed.[11] In consequence, if there is significant contextual plurality (either conceptual or material) among the different schools to which these standardized policies apply, then even with flexible applications, they may be inadequate. Equally, if over time contexts shift, there is the same result. In short, standardized policy decisions are applicable only to a roughly homogeneous population. So is it is true that institutional experts usually standardize policies and other decisions; and if it is true that there is not contextual homogeneity; it is doubtful that institutional experts should control the curriculum.

Before closing the door completely on institutional experts I want to consider a final rescue attempt. One might argue that the cases made against experts so far have been too narrow in their attack: they have concentrated on expertise only as it pertains to a theory of instruction but have ignored, the application of expertise to decisions about the *disciplines* to be taught, i.e. decisions about which subjects are worthwhile and what are the principles and theories internal to the disciplines themselves. Presumably, matters of context would not be applicable here.

There is no question that experts are best able to make judgements about the internal standards, principles and theories of the disciplines. But this matters very little since in schools we are not dealing with the frontiers of knowledge. The standards of, say, historical interpretation and literary criticism at the level taught in the schools do not require the scholarly knowledge that they do in the university. Remember, children who attend schools are between five and eighteen years of age and it is only in the last two or three years that anything like a high level of scholarship is approached, and even then only in some cases. For the most part, competent not erudite knowledge is required.

Furthermore, since our concern is predominantly with practical judgments, assessments about the worthwhileness of subjects to be taught must always be weighted against the likelihood of success in teaching them. For it is pointless to teach integral calculus, Shakespeare, or Latin if students think it is not 'relevant' and greet it with hostility or complacency.

In short, the outcome is all important; and it depends heavily upon facts about the teacher, students, available resources, and so on. This is contextual information and it is the weak spot in the expert's case for entitlement to control of curriculum.

Conclusion

Rather than ending with a summary it might be more interesting to look briefly at the alternatives to institutional experts.

The liberal 60's spawned the cafeteria curriculum, which in consequence made students and their parents more or less responsible for a range of curriculum decisions. Neither, however, could be reasonably said to know enough about the subjects on offer to choose wisely. The state could, of course, determine curriculum, but there is no reason to suppose the minister of education is any more competent than the civil service experts who back him up, since all are centralized and would likely standardize. Alternatively one could agree that at least the state is the democratic representative of us all (assuming it is) and that all citizens have a legitimate interest in the content of curriculum which could be seen to if the state organized things. I am not so concerned about the dangers of totalitarian control as some are, but I fail to see that society's interest in curriculum is greater than that of each individual student's. That is, I feel that individual liberty takes a beating each time the state controls an additional facet of social life; and I have yet to be convinced that it is essential for education to be considered part of the political domain - hence to be governed by the state.[12]

Among the remaining plausible alternatives is the teaching in groups and as individuals. Some would shudder at the thought of the teaching profession in complete control; and with good reason in some cases. But I believe that, at least in potential, they are the best bet. For teachers as professionals, if well trained, have sufficient knowledge of the appropriate sorts to make informed judgments and to work out new alternatives by theorizing (or "reflecting", if you prefer Lloyd's term). As individuals, or in small units (e.g. teachers in a school) they are close enough to the local context to acquire the details so essential to effective decision making, which the institutional experts are not. In short, were the teaching profession as we would like to help it become, I would prefer that it have control of curriculum.

Should institutional experts, therefore, be left out of curriculum decisions? By no means. It is they, after all, who, through their research, can explore and develop alternatives and justifications. And, equally as important, they can function as watchdogs on practitioners.

My feeling is that curriculum *control* should be kept from experts; not that they should be altogether excluded from the decision making process.

Resume

Le réglementation du curriculum scolaire, question négligée pendant des années, suscite actuellement un intérêt renouvelé. Depuis Platon, la réponse habituelle à cette question a été que less experts appropriés devraient regler le curriculum. Une objection originale et provocatrice à cette position prétend que prendre des décisions curriculaires n'est pas une activité suffisamment absconse pour exiger la participation de theoristes. Cet argument est présenté et mis en question. A sa place on offre une tout autre justification pour refuser aux experts la réglementaion du curriculum.

Notes

[1]See D. J. O'Connor, "The Nature and Scope of Educational Theory (1)" and P. H. Hirst, "The Nature and Scope of Educational Theory (2)" in *New Essays in the Philosophy of Education,* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973). These are amended versions of an earlier debate which appeared in *The Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain,* Vol. VI (January, 1972).

[2]See the O'Connor-Hirst debate just cited.

[3]*Ethics and Education,* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), p. 240.

[4]O'Connor, *op. cit.*

[5]D. I. Lloyd, "Theory and Practice" in *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain,* Vol. X, (1976).

[6]*Ibid.,* p. 101.

[7]O'Connor, *op. cit.,* pp. 60,62.

[8]*Ibid.,* p. 64.

[9]Hirst, *op. cit.,* p. 73.

[10]Hirst also makes this point on p. 73.

[11]Perhaps this is true, not only because details of local context are unavailable, but because 'policy' making often has a *political* element, which forces changes for non-educational reasons, sometimes resulting in standardizations that were not originally intended. By that I mean policies often must be approved and ratified by various administrative and representative bodies. Unlike the creation of a theory and extrapolation of practical offshoots, policies of certain kinds must be marketed. A government research body, for instance, must make it acceptable to the government minister who in turn has party politics to consider, not to mention pressures from constituents and supporters who might include book or curriculum materials publishers. The result can sometimes be a very much different policy than was submitted.

[12]See my "John White on State Control of the Curriculum" in *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* Vol. 12 (1978).