**CHAPTER 3**

# BIG POLICIES/SMALL WORLD

## An introduction to international perspectives in education policy

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### Introduction

One of the tensions which runs through all varieties of policy analysis is that between the need to attend to the local particularities of policy making and policy enactment and the need to be aware of general patterns and apparent commonalities or convergence across localities (see Whitty and Edwards (1998) for further discussion). That tension is central to this paper and this special issue. In this paper my primary emphasis is upon the general and common elements in contemporary, international education policy but I will also address the processes of translation and recontextualisation involved in the realisation or enactment of policy in specific national and local settings. However, one immediate limitation upon the generality of my discussion is its focus upon Western and Northern developed economies, although a great deal of what I have to say has considerable relevance to countries such as Colombia, Chile, Portugal, Japan and some of the ex-Warsaw Pact nations of Eastern Europe. The paper has three main sections. The first sketches in a set of generic 'problems' which constitute the contemporary social, political and economic conditions for education and social policy making. The second discusses the idea of ideological and 'magical' solutions to these problems and the dissemination of these solutions. The third and last returns to the issue of recontextualisation.

### Post-modernity and the global economy

As Brown and Lauder (1996) explained, 'The significance of globalisation to questions of national educational and economic development can be summarised in terms of a change in the rules of eligibility, engagement and wealth creation' (p. 2). As regards eligibility, individual governments, even the apparently most powerful, have experienced a reduction in their ability to control or supervise the activities of multinational corporations (MNCs) and maintain the integrity of their economic borders. This results in the loss of 'Keynesian capacity', that is the ability to pursue independent reflationary policies. However, it is important not to overstate the case here and succumb to what Weiss (1997) called the 'myth of the powerless state'. She argued that within the processes of globalisation 'domestic state capacities differ' (Weiss 1997, 26) and that 'the proliferation of regional agreements suggest that we can expect to see more and more of a different kind of state taking

shape in the world arena, one that is reconstituting its power at the centre of alliances formed either within or outside the state' (Weiss 1997, 27) (see also Taylor *et al*. 1997, chapter 4). In other words, we need to be wary of what Harvey (1996) called 'globaloney'. The 'globalisation thesis' can be used to explain almost anything and everything and is ubiquitous in current policy documents and policy analysis.

We also need to acknowledge here the national changes in the form and scope of state activities in many Western economies. Contracting, deregulation and privatisation have reduced, in both practical and ideological terms, the capacity for direct state intervention. That is not to say that these devices do not provide new forms of state steering and regulation (see below). The rules of engagement describe the relationship between governments, employers and workers. The key change here, at least in the West, is from a Fordist, welfare corporatism to a 'market model' wherein 'the prosperity of workers will depend on an ability to trade their skills, knowledge and entrepreneurial acumen in an unfettered global market place' (Brown and Lauder 1996, 3). And the new rules of wealth creation are replacing the logic of Fordist mass production with new 'knowledge-based' systems of flexible production.

However, there are three crucial caveats to the last point. First, Fordist production systems in the West have not so much been replaced as 'exported', cheap labour and unregulated conditions of labour in some developing economies make the relocation of mass production an attractive proposition to MNCs. Furthermore, while MNCs are increasingly dominant, a great deal of capital activity remains 'nationalistic'. Second, even within the developed Western and Asian Tiger economies the new logic of flexible specialisation and 'just-in-time' production (Swynegedouw 1986) is not an inclusive one – low-skill, insecure jobs, particularly in the service sectors, are the main areas of expansion of work in all of these economies. And these 'new' jobs are also bringing about the feminisation of the labour market. Harvey (1989) made the key point that 'Under conditions of flexible accumulation, it seems as if alternative labour systems can exist side by side within the same space in such a way as to enable capitalist entrepreneurs to choose at will between them' (p. 187). Thus, thirdly, the polarisations of Fordist/post-Fordist – modernist/post-modernist economies are not so much alternative forms of capital and regulation as 'a complex of oppositions expressive of the cultural contradictions of capitalism' (Harvey 1989, 39).

The two general points then that I want to make here are (1) that things have changed but not absolutely and (2) that while these changes have produced new 'first-order' problems, in terms of the demand for new skills for example, they have also produced new 'second-order' problems, such as threats to the maintenance of political legitimacy and authority. Not everyone has an equal 'stake' in the success of the new economic order. The core–periphery structure of the global economy and global and national labour markets appears to be closely paralleled in the emerging 'star'/'sink' school polarisations within 'market-reformed' education systems.

There is no way that I can follow through properly all aspects of this account of the role of globalisation on education in the space available here (see Harvey 1989; Brown and Lauder 1996; Taylor *et al*. 1997; Jones 1998). And, indeed, I am not concerned with conveying the full complexity of these global changes but rather with isolating some of those aspects of change which might allow us to understand the struggles taking place over education policy. However, I do want to pick out two further specific and related aspects of global change which I will suggest have

particular significance in making sense of the current 'turn' in education and social policy making. They are, in short uncertainty and congestion.

Harvey (1989) suggested that the rhythm and content of daily life has become both more ephemeral and volatile. Commodity production increasingly emphasises 'the values and virtues of instantaneity and disposability' (p. 286) and is increasingly focused upon 'sign systems rather than with commodities themselves' (p. 287). The latter, among many other factors, has contributed to a 'crisis of representation' (Harvey 1989, 298). All of this provides a context for the 'crack-up of consensus' (Harvey 1989, 286). It constitutes, in part, what Pfeil (1988) called the 'postmodern structure of feeling' and forbears 'the terror of contingency from which all possibility of eventful significance has been drained' (p. 386).

> The central value system, to which capitalism has always appealed to validate and gauge its actions, is dematerialized and shifting, time horizons are collapsing, and it is hard to tell exactly what space we are in when it comes to assessing causes and effects, meanings or values.
>
> (Harvey 1989, 298)

In other words 'disorganised capitalism' (Lash and Urry 1987) may be beginning to dissolve the conditions of consensus and social cohesion upon which it depends in order to continue. One particular and very material aspect of the new politics of uncertainty is the very dramatic change in the trajectory of economic growth and patterns of employment which provided the basis for the massive post-war expansion in the middle classes and the creation of the so-called 'new middle class'. Their 'imagined futures' and those of their offspring are now under threat from the 'unmanaged congestion' in the old and new professions and in management positions (Jordon *et al.* 1994). One effect of this has been a loss of support among the new middle classes for efforts to democratise education and social policy. Education is being 'transformed back into an "oligarchic" good' (Jordon *et al.* 1994, 212) and progressive experimentation in educational methods is being replaced by a set of reinvented traditional pedagogies.

## Magical solutions?

If these various 'policyscapes' (Appadurai 1990) of global change adumbrate a set of 'problems' and challenges for education and social policy, what then are the 'solutions' in play from which makers of policy might 'choose' as modes of response? As I shall go on to suggest choose is an inappropriate word here. Brown and Lauder (1996) suggested two ideal types of response: neo-Fordism, which 'can be characterised in terms of creating greater market flexibility through a reduction in social overheads and the power of trade unions, the privatisation of public utilities and the welfare state, as well as the celebration of competitive individualism' (p. 5) and post-Fordism, which can 'be defined in terms of the development of the state as a "strategic trader" shaping the direction of the national economy through investment in key economic sectors and in the development of human capital' (p. 5). This latter is close to Hutton's (1995) Rhineland model of capitalism. In practice, as is ever the case, the differences between states or political parties in these terms often seem to be more a matter of emphasis than any 'clear blue water'. While superficially at least the neo-Fordist 'solution' seems to be in the ascendant in education policy making, aspects of the post-Fordist scenario are clearly in

evidence even in the practices of the most neoliberal of governments. Having said that, the differences between the positions are not insignificant.

This policy dualism is well represented in contemporary education policies which tie together individual, consumer choice in education markets with rhetorics and policies aimed at furthering national economic interests. Carter and O'Neill (1995) summarised evidence on the state of education policy making in their two-volume collection on international perspectives on educational reform by identifying what they called 'the new orthodoxy' – 'a shift is taking place' they said in the relationship between politics, government and education in complex Westernised post-industrialised countries at least (p. 9). They cited five main elements to this new orthodoxy.

1    Improving national economics by tightening the connection between schooling, employment, productivity and trade.
2    Enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competencies.
3    Attaining more direct control over curriculum content and assessment.
4    Reducing the costs to government of education.
5    Increasing community input to education by more direct involvement in school decision making and pressure of market choice.

I shall return to the substance of this reform package below. Avis *et al.* (1996) made a similar claim about post-compulsory education and training and what they call the 'new consensus'. Indeed, the European Union (1995) *White Paper on Education and Training: towards the learning society* announced 'The end of the debate on educational principles' (p. 22). Concepts such as the 'learning society', the 'knowledge-based economy', etc., are potent policy condensates within this consensus. They serve and symbolise the increasing colonisation of education policy by economic policy imperatives. Levin (1998) suggests that it is sometimes the politics of the sign rather than the substance of policies that moves across national borders.

It would be ridiculous to claim that there is one or even one set of key ideas or influences which underpin this package. However, it would be equally ridiculous to ignore the links and correspondences which run through it. Five elements or sets of influences are identifiable. I will adumbrate these very crudely. Some of these have an analytic status, while others are more substantive. One is neoliberalism or what might be called the ideologies of the market. These set the spontaneous and unplanned but innovative responses of the market form over and against the partisan, inefficient bureaucracy of planned change. This has been of particular importance in the UK in the formation of those policies often referred to as 'Thatcherism' (see Ball 1990) and the UK education reforms certainly provided a test-bed to which other governments at least attended when contemplating their own reforms (see Whitty and Edwards 1998).

A second is new institutional economics, 'which sought to explain the workings of social life and its various institutions, and the construction of relationships and co-ordination of individual and collective behaviour, in terms of the choices and actions of the rational actor' (Seddon 1997, 176). This involves the use of a combination of devolution, targets and incentives to bring about institutional redesign. It draws both on recent economic theory and various industrial practices, sometimes referred to as Mitsubishi-ism – the replacement of task specification by target setting (see below). In education the impact of such ideas is evident in the myriad of 'site-based management' initiatives in countries and states around the

world and the social psychology of institutional reinvention proselytised in texts on 'the self-managing school' and 'school improvement'. Chubb and Moe (1990) also articulated what they described as 'a theoretical perspective linking the organisation and performance of schools to their institutional environments' (p. 185).

A third influence, which interweaves with both of the above, is what Lyotard (1984) called performativity – 'be operational (that is, commensurable) or disappear' (p. xxiv). 'Performativity is a principle of governance which establishes strictly functional relations between a state and its inside and outside environments' (Yeatman 1994, 111). In other words performativity is a steering mechanism. A form of indirect steering or steering at a distance which replaces intervention and prescription with target setting, accountability and comparison. Furthermore, as part of the transformation of education and schooling and the expansion of the power of capital, performativity provides sign systems which 'represent' education in a self-referential and reified form for consumption. And, indeed, many of the specific technologies of performativity in education (total quality management, human resources management, etc.) are borrowed from commercial settings.

Number four, is public choice theory. This is a particularly important component of US attempts at education reform (see again Chubb and Moe 1990), but choice is a key aspect of Hayekian neoliberalism as well (see Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (1994) for a review of choice policies in six countries).

Fifth and finally, there is new managerialism, that is the insertion of the theories and techniques of business management and the 'cult of excellence' into public sector institutions. Managerialism is, in this sense, both a delivery system and a vehicle for change. This 'new' managerialism stresses constant attention to 'quality', being close to the customer and the value of innovation (Newman and Clarke 1994, 15). In the education sector the headteacher is the main 'carrier' and embodiment of new managerialism and is crucial to the transformation of the organisational regimes of schools (Grace 1995), that is the dismantling of bureau-professional organisational regimes and their replacement with market-entrepreneurial regimes (Clarke and Newman 1992).

New management also involves 'new' forms of employee involvement, in particular through the cultivation of 'corporate culture' by means of which managers 'seek to delineate, normalize and instrumentalize the conduct of persons in order to achieve the ends they postulate as desirable' (Du Gay 1996, 61). Such developments are deeply paradoxical. On the one hand, they represent a move away from Taylorist, 'low-trust' methods of employee control. Managerial responsibilities are delegated and initiative and problem solving are highly valued. On the other hand, new forms of surveillance and self-monitoring are put in place, e.g. appraisal systems, target-setting, and output comparisons (see Muller (1998) for a discussion of different forms of self-regulation – competence based and performance based). This is what Peters and Waterman (1982) referred to as 'simultaneously loose and tight' or what Du Gay (1996) called 'controlled de-control'.

The dissemination of these influences internationally can be understood in at least two ways. Firstly and most straightforwardly, there is a flow of ideas through social and political networks; the 'inter-national circulation of ideas' (Popkewitz 1996). For example, by processes of policy borrowing (Halpin and Troyna 1995) – both the UK and New Zealand have served as 'political laboratories' for reform – and the activities of groups such as the Heritage Foundation, the Mont Pelerin Society and the Institute of Economic Affairs, although the effects here should not be over estimated. The movement of graduates, in particular from US universities, is also important (see Vanegas and Ball 1996). In some contexts this movement 'carries'

ideas and creates a kind of cultural and political dependency which works to devalue or deny the feasibility of 'local' solutions. As Max-Neef *et al.* (1991) put it

> If as a Latin American economist I wish to become an expert in Latin American development problems, it is necessary to study in the United States or in Europe to be respectable in the eyes of both my Southern and Northern colleagues. It goes without saying that it is not only dangerous but absurd.
>
> (p. 98)

There is also the activity of various 'policy entrepreneurs', groups and individuals who 'sell' their solutions in the academic and political market-place – the 'self-managing school' and 'school effectiveness' and 'choice' are all current examples of such entrepreneurship which takes places through academic channels – journals, books, etc. – and via the performances of charismatic, travelling academics. (See Levin (1998) for an epidemiological account of the 'spread' of policy.)

Lastly, there is the sponsorship and, in some respects, enforcement of particular policy 'solutions' by multilateral agencies (see Jones 1998). The World Bank is particularly important here, as Jones (1998) puts it: 'The bank's preconditions for education can only be understood as an ideological stance, in promoting an integrated world system along market lines' (p. 152). However, it is equally important to understand a second aspect of the dissemination or institutionalisation of these influences upon reform; their establishment as the new orthodoxy, that is as a discursive framework within which and limited by which solutions are 'thought'. There is a concomitance if not a correspondence here between the logic of globalisation – as a world free-trading system – and the new terrain of thinking about social policy. Jones (1998) again notes that 'Notions of the public good shift in order to accommodate reduced expectations about accountability, regulation and taxation, which in turn lead to not only reduced but transformed expectations about what public services and infrastructure consist of' (p. 146). This concomitance is most obvious in what Brown and Lauder (1996) called neo-Fordism: 'the route to national salvation in the context of the global knowledge wars is through the survival of the fittest, based on an extension of parental choice in a market of competing schools, colleges and universities' (pp. 6–7). That is, 'education systems have been made objects of micro-economic reform with educational activities being turned into saleable or corporatised market products as part of a national efficiency drive' (Taylor *et al.* 1997, 77; (see Welch (1998) on 'efficiency'). Such reforms rest upon two starkly opposed chronotopics – the grey, slow bureaucracy and politically correct, committee, corridor grimness of the city hall welfare state as against the fast, adventurous, carefree, gung-ho, open-plan, computerised, individualism of choice, autonomous 'enterprises' and sudden opportunity.

This last point serves to remind us that policies are both systems of values and symbolic systems; ways of representing, accounting for and legitimating political decisions. Policies are articulated both to achieve material effects and to manufacture support for those effects. In particular, I want to suggest here that advocacy of the market or commercial form for educational reform as the 'solution' to educational problems is a form of 'policy magic' or what Stronach (1993) called 'witchcraft': 'a form of reassurance as well as a rational response to economic problems' (p. 6). One of the attractions here is the simplicity of the formula on which the magic is based.

> social markets/institutional devolution = raising standards (of educational performance) = increased international competitiveness

Such simplicities have a particular attraction when set within the 'conditions of uncertainty' or what Dror (1986) called 'adversity'. In Stronach's (1993) terms the repetitive circularities of 'the market solution' display 'the logics of witchcraft and the structures of ritual' (p. 26). It links individual (choice) and institutional (autonomy/responsiveness) transformation to universal salvation: a transformation from mundane citizen to archetype, from dependent subject to active consumer/ citizen, and from dull bureaucracy to innovative, entrepreneurial management (of course the policies of welfarism can be subjected to a similar sort of analysis). 'Ritual typically associates a personal with a cosmic pole, around which prosperity, morality and civilization are clustered' (Stronach 1993, 23). Minor personal and physical changes are linked to large scale transformation. Again then, all of this is founded upon the play of opposites, order against chaos and the redress of crisis. Employing a similar language, Hughes and Tight (1995) argued that concepts such as 'the stakeholder' and the 'learning society' represent powerful myths for projecting futuristic visions which determine the on going principles on which education policy and practice are based. And, as Newman (1984) put it, 'The libertarian revolt against the modern state is first and foremost a campaign for the hearts and minds of the American people' (p. 159).

For politicians the 'magic' of the market works in several senses. On the one hand, it is a 'hands off' reform, a non-interventionary intervention – a basic trope of the conjurer, now you see it now you don't!. It distances the reformer from the outcomes of reform. Blame and responsibility are also devolved or contracted out (see below). And yet, by use of target setting and performative techniques, 'steering at a distance' can be achieved, what Kikert (1991) called 'a new paradigm of public governance' (p. 1). On the other hand, these policies also carry with them political risks, in so far, as noted already, as they may disable direct forms of control and can leave the politician 'in office' but not 'in power'.

As indicated above, one key facet of the policy process and the formulation of new orthodoxies is critique. New policies feed off and gain legitimacy from the deriding and demolition of previous policies (see Ball 1990) which are thus rendered 'unthinkable'. The 'new' are marked out by and gain credence from their qualities of difference and contrast. In education in particular, part of the attraction of a new policy often rests on the specific allocation of 'blame' from which its logic derives. Blame may either be located in the malfunctions or heresies embedded in the policies it replaces and/or is redistributed by the new policy within the education system itself and is often personified – currently in the UK in the 'incompetent teacher' and 'failing school' (see Thrupp (1998) on the politics of blame).

Stated in more general terms, two complexly related policy agendas are discernible in all the heat and noise of reform. The first aims to tie education more closely to national economic interests, while the second involves a decoupling of education from direct state control. The first rests on a clear articulation and assertion by the state of its requirements of education, while the second gives at least the appearance of greater autonomy to educational institutions in the delivery of those requirements. The first involves a reaffirmation of the state functions of education as a 'public good', while the second subjects education to the disciplines of the market and the methods and values of business and redefines it as a competitive private good. In many respects educational institutions are now being expected to take on the qualities and characteristics of 'fast capitalism' (Gee and Lankshear 1995) and this involves not only changes in organisational practices and methods but also the adoption of new social relationships, values and ethical principles.

We can see these two political agendas being played out in a variety of countries in terms of an ensemble of generic policies – parental choice and institutional competition, site-based autonomy, managerialism, performative steering and curricula fundamentalism – which nonetheless have local variations, twists and nuances – hybridity – and different degrees of application – intensity. The purest and most intense versions of this ensemble are evident in places such as England, New Zealand and Alberta (Canada). Mixed and low-intensity versions are evident in places such as France, Colombia and many US and Australian states. Places such as Portugal and Sweden display hybrid but low-intensity versions. (See the discussion of recontextualisation below.)

While previous regimes of unthinkability derived rhetorical energy from the critique of élitism, one of the mechanisms involved in the establishment of the new orthodoxy in education has been a critique of the press for equity and social justice as part of the diagnosis of the existing 'inadequacies' of education – what I have elsewhere called 'the discourse of derision' (Ball 1990; see also below). The World Bank sees equity as one of the residual concerns of governments in marketised education systems. However, as a part of the logic of the new orthodoxy the social and welfare purposes of education are systematically played down directly (as in the World Bank) or, in effect, education is increasingly subject to exchange value criteria. That is, education is not simply modelled on the methods and values of capital, it is itself drawn into the commodity form. Within all this equity issues do not so much disappear entirely as become 'framed and reframed'; 'competing discourses are "stitched together" in the new policies' (Taylor 1995, 9). The meanings of equity are refracted, reworked and realised in new ways 'glossing over the different perspectives of key players' (Taylor 1995, 10).

In effect, in education and social policy generally the new orthodoxy, the market solution, is a new master narrative, a deeply fissured but primary discourse encompassing 'the very nature of economics and therefore the potential range and scope of policies themselves' (Cerny 1990, 205). The discourse constructs the topic and, as with any discourse, it appears across a range of texts, forms of conduct and at a number of different sites at any one time. Discursive events 'refer to the one and the same object…there is a regular style and…constancy of concepts…and "strategy" and a common institutional, administrative or political drift and pattern' (Cousins and Hussain 1984, 84–5). This discourse can be seen at work as much in the 1980s Hollywood 'male-rampage' movies (Pfeil 1995), part of what Ross (1990) described as 'the desperate attempts, under Reagan, to reconstruct the institution of national heroism, more often than not in the form of white male rogue outlaws for whom the liberal solution of "soft" state-regulated law enforcement was presented as having failed' (p. 33). Equally it can be seen in the UK in the commodification of academic research, in the celebration of the parent–chooser–hero of so many market policy texts in education, in the refurbished, customer-friendly, competitive school, the 'quality-guru' educational consultants and quick-fix policy entrepreneurs, Channel One television in US schools and 'designer-label' uniforms in Japanese high schools, 'early-learning' educational games shops and niche marketing, 'hot-house', nursery schools. 'Educational democracy is redefined as consumer democracy in the educational marketplace. *Buying* an education becomes a substitute for *getting* an education' (Kenway *et al.* 1993, 116). It is not simply that publicly provided school systems are being inducted into quasi-market practices but that education in its various forms, at many points, and in a variety of ways is inducted into the market episteme – a non-unified, multiple and complex field of play which

realises a dispersion of relationships, subjectivities, values, objects, operations and concepts.

## Localism and recontextualisation

While it may well be possible to discern a set of principles or a theoretical model underlying policy – neoliberalism, new institutional economics, public choice theory or whatever – these rarely if ever translate into policy texts or practice in direct or pristine form. National policy making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice (Ball 1994).

Policy ideas are also received and interpreted differently within different political architectures (Cerny 1990), national infrastructures (Hall 1986) and national ideologies – a national ideology is 'a set of values and beliefs that frames the practical thinking and action of agents of the main institutions of a nation-state at a given point in time' (van Zanten 1997, 352) and business cultures (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1994). The latter conducted research on 15000 business managers in seven different countries and identified distinct contrasts in the mind-sets and ideologies of their respondents. Unfortunately, comparative educational research on the formation, reception and interpretation of policy in these terms is thin on the ground (see Dale and Ozga (1993) on the new right in the UK and New Zealand and van Zanten (1997) on the education of immigrants in France).

In our attempts to understand education policies comparatively and globally the complex relationships between ideas, the dissemination of ideas and the recontextualisation (see Bernstein 1996) of ideas remain a central task. As Bernstein (1996) put it, 'Every time a discourse moves, there is space for ideology to play' (p. 24). Recontextualisation takes place within and between both 'official' and 'pedagogic' fields, the former 'created and dominated by the state' and the latter consisting of 'pedagogues in schools and colleges, and departments of education, specialised journals, private research foundations' (Bernstein 1996, 48). These fields are constituted differently in different societies. The new orthodoxies of education policy are grafted onto and realised within very different national and cultural contexts and are affected, inflected and deflected by them. See, for example, Taylor *et al*.'s (1997) case studies of Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and Australia. They concluded that 'there is no essential determinacy to the ways in which globalisation pressures work, since for various globalisation pressures there are also sites of resistance and counter movements' (Taylor *et al*. 1997, 72). (See Colclough and Lewin (1993, 256) for a similar argument.)

The fields of recontextualisation are, as Muller (1998) puts it, 'fields of contest' involving 'various social fractions with different degrees of social power sponsoring' different 'pedagogic regimes' (p. 190). The five generic policies adumbrated above are polyvalent; they are translated into particular interactive and sustainable practices in complex ways. They interact with, interrupt or conflict with other policies in play and long-standing indigenous policy traditions. They enter rather than simply change existing power relations and cultural practices. We can generalise

here from Offe's (1984) comment that

> … the real social effects ('impact') of a law or institutional service are not determined by the wording of the laws and statutes ('policy out'), but instead are generated primarily as a consequence of social disputes and conflicts, for which state policy merely establishes the location and timing of the contest, its subject matters and 'the rules of the game'.

(p. 186)

Such disputes and conflicts take place at a number of levels – national, local and institutional. Policy analysis requires an understanding that is based not on the generic or local, macro- or micro-constraint or agency but on the changing relationships between them and their inter-penetration.

## Conclusion

What I have tried to do in this paper is to take several things seriously, but also take them together.

1   To recognise the 'problems' of globalisation which frame and 'produce' the contemporary 'problems' of education.
2   To identify a set of generic 'solutions' to these problems and acknowledge their effects in educational reform and restructuring.
3   However, to suggest that these 'solutions' also have a magical form and ritual function.
4   That they become an inescapable form of reassurance; they discursively constrain the possibilities of response and are borrowed, enforced and adopted through various patterns of social contact, political and cultural deference and supranational agency requirements.
5   Finally, to register nonetheless the importance of local politics and culture and tradition and the processes of interpretation and struggle involved in translating these generic solutions into practical policies and institutional practices.

I want to end by returning to the side of my argument which is concerned with the generic aspects of education policy rather than its specifics and to Offe's (1984) 'real social effects'. My point is that careful investigation of local variations, exceptions and hybridity should not divert attention from the general patterns of practical and ideological, first-and second-order effects achieved by the ensemble of influences and policy mechanisms outlined above. That is to say, even in their different realisations, this ensemble changes the way that education is organised and delivered but also changes the meaning of education and what it means to be educated and what it means to learn. One key aspect of the reworking of meanings here is the increasing commodification of knowledge (which again parallels changes in the role of knowledge in the economy). Educational provision is itself increasingly made susceptible to profit and educational processes play their part in the creation of the enterprise culture and the cultivation of enterprising subjects (see Kenway *et al.* 1993). The framework of possibilities, the vocabularies of motives and the bases of legitimation (including values and ethics) within which educational decisions are made are all discursively reformed. But crucially these mechanisms and influences are also not just about new organisational forms or 'worker incentives' or rearticulated professional ethics; they are about access to

and the distribution of educational opportunity in terms of race, class, gender and physical ability. The diversi-fication and re-hierarchisation of schooling in various educational market-places display an uncanny concomitance with widespread middle-class concerns about maintaining social advantage in the face of national and international labour market congestion. Thus, both in relation to patterns of convergence in education policy and the recontexualisation of policy, we need to be asking the question, 'whose interests are served?'.

## Acknowledgements

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**CHAPTER 5**

# GLOBALISATION, EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

### Jenny Ozga and Bob Lingard

## Introduction

In this chapter we want to focus on some of the key features of the new landscape of education policy making evident in many countries across the globe, and, in particular, to consider their effects on the politics of education. Our argument covers three main topics: (1) a consideration of the effects of globalisation on state education policies, with specific consideration of the balance of transnational/ international forces and vernacular or indigenous capacities and responses: this relationship between the global and the local in education is a core preoccupation and relates directly to the possibilities for a politics of education; (2) consideration of the role of new technologies of governance, especially data and measurement in policy, and as a form of governing education, what might be termed 'policy as numbers' (Rose 1999), and their effects on educational politics: such considerations are located within an argument about the emergence of a globalised education policy field between global pressures and local effects and (3) discussion of the relationship between research and policy making in education, with particular emphasis on the ways in which evidence-based/informed policy making acts on and selectively steers research, and thus affects the production of independent analysis and critique of policy.

Of course an understanding of globalisation and its multiple effects frames all of this discussion. This entails challenging the political use of globalisation in the performative sense, where it is read only as neo-liberal economics and politics (Bourdieu 2003), by offering a critical social science account of globalisation and of the effects of such a discursive politics. Globalisation is understood as blurring distinctions between the international and the domestic, the global and the local and in so doing affects a new spatiality to politics. Its effects are evidenced in core economic activities (where multinationals operate across continents and capital flows across nation states) and in media and electronic communications (which make the flows of capital possible), in financial markets, the internationalisation of corporate strategies/management, the ecumenical spread of management structures and modes of policy steering across private and public sectors, the spread of worldwide patterns of consumption, the internationalisation of nation states and the diminished capacity of national governments. In recognising these effects and considering their impacts on education, we are attempting to argue for more attention to the dynamics of the relationship between globalising, economising forces and technologies of education governance, and mediating, vernacular forces and

resources that affect the ways in which these play out and are made real in people's lives in schools, communities, universities and education systems. It is this struggle over meaning, resources and power that we understand as education politics and that creates the framework or conditions in which public policy, including education policy, is produced. In exploring that dynamic, and the energies that feed it, we believe that we can establish a more accurate and less pessimistic account of the educational politics and policy than that available from, for example, those who utilise 'world polity theory' (Meyer *et al.* 1997). Roger Dale (2001) characterises this as the 'Common World Educational Culture approach', which proffers an account close to Americanisation and in so doing appears to almost close down politics.

We acknowledge, nonetheless, that state capacity to make policy and to manage economic, political and social life within national boundaries is considerably affected by globalisation (Held 1995), and we see that, as a consequence, policy looks increasingly homogenous in education systems around the world. Universalising policy trends in education have been summarised by Taylor *et al.* (1997, 61), who draw attention to the ways in which political structures operating beyond nations are framing national policy options, how a global education policy community is emerging across the policy elites of international agencies (for example the OECD) and national education systems and how related globalising education policy discourses now affect policy making within nations. However we want to avoid over-privileging globalisation, or regarding it as a black box. Instead, we want to attend to context, to capture the possibilities of simultaneously 'local' and global development, and reflect the influence of historically embedded assumptions and beliefs on the mediation and translation of global policy pressures (Alexiadou and Jones 2001; Lingard 2000; Ozga 2005). We also reject the 'powerless state' argument that features in some globalisation accounts; rather we think that the state remains important, but now works in different ways beyond old bureaucratic, hierarchical structures and forms of accountability (Dale 1997), embracing the so-called new public management. We believe that context really matters, and that understanding of the resources available in specific conditions and circumstances is essential in assessing the possibilities for productive politics in the face of globalising trends and forces. As Giddens puts it in his well-known definition, which captures the interplay of global and local:

> Globalisation can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa. This is a dialectical process because such local happenings may move in an obverse direction from the very distanciated relations that shape them. **Local transformation is as much a part of globalisation as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space.**
>
> <div align="right">(Giddens 1990, 64; emphasis in original)</div>

We need to say something more at this point about our orientations towards this topic and the resources that we are drawing on to construct this approach to education politics. We understand education, including education policy, to be contradictory in its effects and possibilities: education is simultaneously a means of improving life chances and enriching life, as well as a process that maintains inequality and sustains conservative social formations. It has the potential to be both conservative and progressive, reproductive and transgressive. The possibilities for progressive development lie in particular in the ways that education

produces what Connell (1995) calls 'the capacity for social practice' or what Sen (1999) has called 'capabilities'. Connell emphasises the ways in which people's capacities for negotiation, dialogue and cooperation – for practical politics – may be developed through education, and the fact that the potential for such development is always there, even in the most inhospitable environments. Education policy can help frame the likelihood of these possibilities, but it is teacher pedagogies and curricular frameworks which put them into practice. The contrasting logics of practice inherent in processes of education policy production and teacher classroom practices possibly explain what is sometimes referred to as the infidelity to policy in its implementation. Agnès Van Zanten (2005), writing about Bourdieu as an education policy analyst, suggests that in his early work on education he saw unmediated relationships between unequal social arrangements and the reproduction of inequality through schooling. In contrast, his later, more overtly political work, which strongly critiqued neo-liberal globalisation, saw education policy as a possible mediator of such social inequalities, and recognised teachers as victims of the meaner, leaner neo-liberal state, rather than as agents who misrecognised their role in social reproduction.

In this chapter, these political orientations and possibilities of education policy connect to, and are sustained by, Anna Yeatman's (1990, 1998) work on public policy approaches and processes of policy production. She points out that most academic approaches to policy making seem to accept, without comment, its profoundly undemocratic and gendered nature. She argues that policy should be conceived as a *process* that is negotiated and struggled over, and thus it follows that policy making and the work of policy makers should be understood in relation to the extent to which they recognise and reflect democratic principles. This opens policy up to the appropriate participation of all those involved all the way through points of conception, operational formulation, implementation, delivery on the ground, consumption and evaluation, rather than separating policy from politics, which has the effect of protecting and sustaining bureaucratic logics of practice from democratic possibilities.

Such conceptualisations may appear idealistic, but there are strong arguments that support this redefinition of policy if the volatile and fissiparous issues confronting society in the context of globalisation are to be appropriately and fully considered and addressed (Sen 1999). Neo-liberal globalisation has witnessed growing inequalities within and across nations and added new dimensions of inequality, for example, around issues of mobility/immobility (Bauman 1998). Within some nations, policies on social inclusion have replaced older Keynesian welfare state concerns for equality of opportunity and even outcomes such as social exclusion has become more prevalent. Even for those in work there is a new culture of insecurity. As Rose (1999, 158) notes: 'work itself has become a vulnerable zone, one in which continued employment must ceaselessly be earned, the employment of each individual constantly assessed in the light of evaluations, appraisals, achievement of targets and so forth'.

Yet current globalised education policy seems unable to respond to these challenges in ways that go beyond preoccupation with raising attainment and improving national economic performance and competitiveness globally. Phil Brown and his colleagues (1997, 7–8) have called this the human capital development policy consensus, which has accompanied neo-liberal globalisation, describing it in the following fashion:

> The new consensus is based on the idea that as the 'walled' economies in mid-century have given way to an increasingly global economy, the power of

national government to control the outcome of economic competition has
been weakened....Indeed the competitive advantage of nations is frequently
redefined in terms of the quality of national education and training systems
judged according to international standards.

There is clearly something missing from this dominant conception of education
policy as human capital development – the all pervasive globalised educational
policy discourse today, around which national education polices appear to con-
verge. The absent element seems to be a normative vision about what educated
individuals and active citizens might look like in this new globalised world and
about the kinds of societies we might wish to sustain. As Allan Luke (2003, 91)
puts it, current education policy agendas around the globe are

> All dressed up with multiple outcomes, voluminous curriculum documents,
> national testing, and so on, but without a strong normative vision of what
> might count as just and powerful educational systems in new economic
> and social conditions, in increasingly complex, risky and unjust transnational
> contexts.

For the most part policy makers remain heavily dependent on neo-liberal princi-
ples of system redesign that at the very least fail to provide a coherent agenda for
education. They rely on a restricted form of evidence, promote reliance on
performance measurement and management, and make only superficial and
contradictory acknowledgement of difference and diversity. The observation from
Brown and his colleagues cited above refers to comparisons with international
standards. This is policy as numbers through international education indicators,
such as the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS), which
taken together with similar national level developments constitute a central aspect
of the new technologies of governance and which globally contribute to the
emergent global education policy field (Lingard *et al.* 2005). The alignment of
statistical collection approaches by the OECD, Eurostat, the statistical agency
of the EU, and UNESCO, is also indicative of this emergent global education
policy field (Lawn and Lingard 2001). Such performance data is also at times
used within national systems of education to provide the basis for parental
(consumer) choice of schools, perhaps most evident in the paradigm case of
marketisation – England.

There is also ample evidence of shared organisational forms and processes in
education: including devolution and deregulation; the redesign of education
(including governance, management and institutions) that leads commentators
to talk about the 'new production rules' of policy formation/implementation,
reflecting strengthened corporate interests and the influence of international
and supranational forces and agents on national systems (Lindblad *et al.* 2002).
While these forms and rules are shared, they enter distinctive national terrains
with their own education politics that continue to affect the translation of those
apparently shared forms and processes into indigenous practices. This is the effect
which Appadurai (1996) calls 'vernacular globalisation' to capture the complex
interplay of global and local forces. Of course, different nations have varying
capacities to mediate and ameliorate the effects of global pressures and globalised
education policy discourses produced by agencies such as the Word Bank and
OECD. As Bourdieu (1999) puts it, such discourses circulate without their context

and their effects are mediated to a lesser or greater extent by what he terms, in later writing, 'national capital' (Bourdieu 2003).

To summarise the discussion so far, we draw three broad conclusions about contemporary education policy.

1   That at international level a coherent set of policy themes and processes (globalised policy discourses) has emerged, through which policy makers (at national, international and transnational levels) seek to reshape education systems.
2   That there has emerged a globalised education policy field situated between global pressures and local vernacular education policy responses.
3   That these globalised policy agendas and processes interact with traditions, ideologies, institutions and politics that have developed on national terrains, resulting in vernacular education policy outcomes.

Furthermore, as Alexiadou and Jones (2001) argue, the relationship between points (1) and (3) requires scrutiny in relation to the extent of embeddedness of 'travelling policy' within national policy elites, and differing degrees of local 'policy inflection' in which various forces (local policy communities, trade unions, social movements) are able to achieve adaptation of global agendas, or in which local policy elites integrate travelling policy with national agendas (Alexiadou and Jones 2001, 2). There is, of course, a good deal of uncertainty about how the conduits of travelling policy operate from the global through to the national (Dale 1999; Rizvi 2004; Tikly 2001) and a need for further enquiry into exactly how the design and delivery of national policy agendas responds to pressure from supranational organisations and agencies as examples of vernacular globalisation in education policy (Lingard 2000).

As we suggest earlier, there also appears to have emerged at a level beyond the nation what might be called a 'global education policy field' (Lingard *et al*. 2005), as well as other education policy spaces above the nation, such as the emergent European education policy field (Lawn and Lingard 2001). This is part of the new spatial politics associated with globalisation (Massey 1994). Often these fields are constituted in and around numbers and comparative statistical indicators of various kinds. As Henry *et al*. (2001, 95–6) observe in respect of the OECD indicators project and the annual publication of *Education at a Glance*, 'the very process of drawing in an expanding number of countries into a single comparative field is significant in itself'. They also comment that this project has ensured an epistemological consensus among OECD policy people and policy elites within and beyond member nations around the 'new and powerful paradigm of policy as numbers'. We consider this development in more detail in the Governing by Numbers section below.

Alexiadou and Jones' (2001) discussion of *travelling* and *embedded* policy takes travelling policy to refer to supra- and transnational agency activity, as well as to common agendas (for example for the reshaping of educational purposes to develop human capital for the information age and national economic competitiveness). Embedded policy is to be found in *local* spaces (which may be national, regional or local), where global policy agendas come up against existing priorities and practices. In the remainder of the chapter, we will be considering the interaction between travelling and embedded policy and the effects of that interaction on education politics and we will comment briefly on the emergent global education policy field.

## Globalising/economising education policy

Globalisation foregrounds education, while at the same time challenging the traditional capacity of education systems to construct national identities. The creation of mass systems of schooling in the nineteenth century in many Western countries was linked to the creation of the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) of the nation through the establishment of universal literacy. New technologies challenge such spaces of containment and at the same time constitute possibilities for alternative forms of cosmopolitan citizenship linked to an emergent postnational order (Appadurai 1996). However, such progressive cosmopolitan citizenship possibilities are usually elided in the contemporary education policy consensus, which is more reductive in approach. Globalisation foregrounds education in specific ways that attempt to harness education systems to the rapid and competitive growth and transmission of technologies and knowledge linked to the national competitiveness of nations within the global economy. For example the World Bank identifies the human capital requirements of adaptability, creativity, flexibility and innovation as those to be delivered by education and asserts that such qualities are best delivered in deregulated education systems in which competition is maximised, business is embedded and an entrepreneurial habitus developed (World Bank 2002). It achieves compliance with this redesign through connecting financial assistance to particular agendas and processes (Syachaba 2006). Education policy makers promote the attractiveness of their local products in the global marketplace; attempting to tie roving capital into long-term relationships based on the satisfaction of the needs of the new knowledge economy. Those needs require that public institutions, as well as business, become attuned to continuous change; as UK Prime Minister Tony Blair argues, we must have constant improvement to cope with change.

> The modern world is swept by change. New technologies emerge constantly, new markets are opening up. There are new competitors but also great new opportunities....This world challenges business to be innovative and creative, to improve performance continuously, to build new alliances and ventures.... In government, in business, in our universities and throughout society we must do more to foster a new entrepreneurial spirit: equipping ourselves for the long-term, prepared to seize opportunities, committed to constant innovation and improved performance.
>
> (Rt Hon Tony Blair in Department for Trade and Industry 1998, foreword)

This is a policy trajectory that is preoccupied with the construction of a 'knowledge economy' and 'learning society'. Within this trajectory schooling/education/ training systems are acknowledged to be significant instruments for economic and social change: for building intellectual capital and capacity for innovation; for enhancing workforce development in ways that realise economic and, to a considerably lesser extent, social and civic outcomes; and for managing communities in ways that seek to minimise alienation and exclusion and that promote self-reliance and resourcefulness. Enterprising selves are promoted (in all senses of the word), in school, work and life. Rose (1999) has well encapsulated this new self-responsibilising individual and highlighted the link to the development of lifelong learning and need for constant reskilling across the life cycle.

> Education is no longer confined to 'schooling', with its specialized institutional sites and discrete biographical locus. The disciplinary individualization and

normalization of the school sought to install, once and for all, the capacities and competencies for social citizenship. But a new set of educational obligations are emerging that are not confined in space and time in the same ways. The new citizen is required to engage in a ceaseless work of training and retraining, skilling and reskilling, enhancement of credentials and preparation for a life of incessant job seeking: life is to become a continuous economic capitalization of the self.

(Rose 1999, 160–1)

The constituent nations of the EU all declare that they are attempting to become *knowledge economies* (KE). The OECD and the World Bank stress that education and training provide the entry requirements to participation in the new KE. Education policies linked to knowledge economies constitute a central globalised education policy discourse of the current moment, a discourse which at times circulates without reference to context, particularly in its circulation and take-up in many nations of the global south. Within this discourse, Education and Training dominate policy agendas, focussed on upskilling new knowledge workers and developing research and thus the knowledge that will secure success. Productive knowledge is believed to be the basis of national competitive advantage within the international marketplace. This policy discourse promotes a wide range of activity and justifies major shifts in national, institutional and individual practices and processes, yet remains, for the most part, decontextualised, unexamined and unspecific.

From this global discourse shared policy agendas emerge, and include national programmes of curriculum standardisation, target setting and testing, school self-management, parental choice and inter-school competition, teacher accountability, quality assurance (through inspection), performance-related pay and curricula centred on lifelong learning, preparation for work and citizenship. Policy makers at national, local and institutional levels may be understood as subscribing to these key principles in educational restructuring: a focus on education to meet economic needs, an insistence on rapid change that penetrates teacher cultures, an insistence on international competitiveness in education, so that each nation state achieves 'world-class status' as measured by international league tables of test success (e.g. by PISA and TIMSS), the privileging of business as a model for modernisation and a shift from equality of opportunity or outcome to diversity and differentiation as organising principles of provision with responsibility individualised rather than a collective state concern.

This last point illustrates the challenges to education politics in the shift to what Castells (2000) has called an informational politics in a crisis of democracy. Ideological differences (such as those shaping positions on comprehensive or selective education) are dismissed by policy makers as archaic, an action that is itself an ideological manoeuvre. Common-sense assumptions about effective management and modernisation produce 'hollowed out' terms – like client, consumer, stakeholder, excellence, leadership and entrepreneurship – that apparently require no further elaboration or scrutiny. Concepts that were once central to the organisation of public life – for example equality, justice, professionalism – are removed from use on the basis that they indicate ideological positions, while modernisation's vocabulary of economy, efficiency and entrepreneurship is advocated as if these terms represented agreed values. In some sites teachers' work is reconstituted and controlled through technised formulations of pedagogies (Alexander 2004; Hartley 2003), which disaffect the soul of the teacher in their inauthenticity (Ball 2003). Policy as numbers may also gather force in the absence of meaning as

part of the performative emphasis on what works (Yeatman 1994). This is part of the process of challenging education politics, in which words are stripped of meaning, and there is inauthentic exchange that is, in Offe's terms 'cleansed of political participation' (Offe 1984, 32).

## Speaking back in the vernacular

Given these homogenising forces and processes, is there any evidence of active adaptation or indigenisation of 'travelling' policy? As noted above, Appadurai argues that it is possible to identify *vernacular globalisation* in which there is change and reconfiguration in global, national and local interrelationships, but mediated by local and national history and politics (Appadurai 1996). As one of us has argued elsewhere (Lingard 2000, 81):

> Vernacular globalisation in this sense carries resonances with the idea of 'glocalisation': the way local, national, and global interrelationships are being reconstituted, but mediated by the history of the local and the national and by politics, as well as by hybridisation, an important resulting cultural feature of the multidirectional flows of cultural globalisation and the tension between homogenisation and heterogenisation.

Old notions of 'centre' and 'periphery' are collapsed in communities that are overlapping, complex and disjunctive. There are now multiple centres and with flows of people from the global south to the global north, the south is in the metropolitan centres of the north and the elites of the global south perhaps have more in common with the elites of the global north, than with their own compatriots. Globalisation produces rebalancing of national and global functions. That process of rebalancing is unsettled and fluid: it offers possibilities for transnational connections and strategies among those receiving as well as those 'making' policy: it may re-energise dormant forms of thinking and action and clarify purposes and values across varied populations and groups beyond policy elites. Different nations and different policy elites have varying capacities to respond, and different sources of 'national capital' to access (Tikly 2001).

These cultural and social effects of globalisation may foreground and render explicit *local* assumptions and beliefs that were previously hidden or inexplicit. This can have profound consequences for politics, including education politics. As globalisation encourages diverse and varied discourses that may dispute the authority of nation states, so the position and space of the nation state as the 'natural' scale of politics is disrupted (Ozga *et al.* 2006). The national scale may seek to provide a particular set of authoritative cultural scripts, but they exist alongside other scripts of greater or lesser power that have their origins in other discursive contexts operating in different scales ( Djelic and Quack 2003; Prakash and Hart 1999). These alternative 'interpretive frames' provide other ways of understanding the relations of power–knowledge–organisation within different spatial registers – global, regional, local (Gibson-Graham 2003). Some theorists, including, Castells (2000, 458–9) argue that indeed power now resides in the 'networked, ahistorical' flows of globalisation, while most people still live in the 'space of places', and that a 'structural schizophrenia' between these two logics of place precipitates a breakdown in communications, which carries important political consequences.

The distinctive ways in which education is embedded in national cultures needs to be considered here in thinking about how the 'vernacular' may speak back to the global. For example, within the UK, which at one level is a nation state that is very receptive to globalising influences in economic and social policy, there are fractures and fissures that are explained and sustained by internal differences. There is what we interpret as a productive tension between education's centrality as a policy site for the Westminster (UK) government, and its simultaneous status as a location of cultural and political identity and practice in Scotland. Changing education governance and the pursuit of globalised modernising agendas in the UK take place against a background both of long-established patterns of internal variation and of new institutional arrangements and actors who are not uniformly compliant with the direction of change (Alexiadou and Ozga 2002; Ozga 2005; Paterson 2000). The modernisation process may, indeed, produce self-conscious revisiting of models and myths of governance and education that appear threatened by the market-focused radicalism of the UK centre.

Comparative research on Scotland and England carried out for the Educational Governance and Social Inclusion and Exclusion (EGSIE) project (Lindblad *et al*. 2002; Lindblad and Popkewitz 2000; Ozga 1999) suggests that there were embedded differences in assumptions about education: and that in Scotland, in contrast with England, there is a continuing adherence to education as a public good that should be supported by public institutions. These differences connect to different policy outcomes, for example in the role and influence of business interests, and in policy for social inclusion. Whereas in England government appears to offer social inclusion to its citizens on the basis of exchange (i.e. evidence of good citizenship through responsible self-management and engagement in waged work), in Scotland social inclusion is offered on the basis of entitlement (inclusion as a citizenship right) (Ozga 1999).

Such approaches to policy and politics draw on ideas about cultural identities in different national systems (Lindblad and Strandberg 1999; Popkewitz *et al*. 2000) and the relationships between those identities and assumptions about what is appropriate or desirable for education to *do*. New forms of governance must map against, overlap or conflict with existing policy patterns and processes: these may be understood as the *'collective narrative'* that relates policy to cultural identities in different national systems (Popkewitz *et al*. 1999). That collective narrative, whatever its complex cultural and social origins, was most coherently articulated by national and local policy makers, who used it to moderate and mediate travelling policy.

Where does this distinctive 'collective narrative' originate, and how might it be summarised? If we stay with the example of Scotland within the UK, its distinctiveness in education is often asserted, but its nature or extent is debated. In 1969 James Scotland identified a number of key components of that distinctiveness and pointed out that none of them were entirely for the good of the people (Scotland 1969, 7, vol. 2: quoted in Humes and Bryce 2003). He reduced these components to the following six propositions that encapsulated Scottish attitudes to education:

- Education is, and always has been, of paramount importance in any community;
- Every child should have the right to all the education of which he [*sic*] is capable;
- Such education should be provided as economically and as systematically as possible;

- The training of the intellect should take priority over all other facets of the pupil's personality;
- Experiment is to be attempted only with the greatest caution;
- The most important person in the school, no matter what theorists say, is not the pupil but the (inadequately rewarded) teacher.

(Scotland 1969, 275, vol. 2)

Humes and Bryce, in their recent review of distinctiveness from which the quotation above is taken (Humes and Bryce 2003, 108), suggest that while much has changed there is still evidence of endorsement of some of these principles, in particular the first three. They argue that education is a strong element in national consciousness and belief in education's worth and purpose is linked to a sense of national identity (p. 109). The *collective narrative* identified earlier relates to what they describe (following McPherson and Raab 1988) as a 'shaping myth' in Scotland of an egalitarian and meritocratic society, where ability and achievement rather than class or status command recognition and where provision in pursuit of improvement and the common good is made through public rather than private institutions (Humes and Bryce 2003, 109).

Since devolution, these aspects of the collective narrative could be said to have found expression in such areas as the designation of the National Priorities for Education, following widespread consultation and public debate that showed strong support for the comprehensive principle, support that remains strong at a time when the UK government is seeking to legislate for much increased diversity of school provision in England, with a plethora of Academies, Trust, Foundation and Faith Schools. The National Priorities stress the need for improvement within a framework of enhanced equality and inclusiveness: they enable central steering of the system towards goals that are debated and largely endorsed by the public; interpreted and implemented by schools and local authorities. For the most part, devolution seems to have enabled the continuation of Scottish distinctiveness in education, while simultaneously beginning to open up some of its more traditional aspects, including, perhaps, the academic bias and the caution about experimentation in the list of principles quoted above. It may also have enabled change in the traditionally rather hierarchical nature of schools and of the teaching profession, and promoted a more extended, self-directed and developmental version of professionalism. Indeed policy for the teaching profession offers another area in which distinctiveness may be discerned (Ozga 2005).

There are many other examples of what we interpret as evidence of vernacular globalisation and of *local* collective narratives modulating globalised policy discourses in education and their homogenising effects. Singapore, for example, has utilised a strong and interventionist state to respond to and instantiate globalised educational policy discourses (Brown and Lauder 2000). However, such discourses are inflected by specific Singaporean national concerns and education traditions. The influential *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation* policy is a response to globalisation, but one built on attempts to change Singaporean traditions of tight teacher control around highly structured curricula and pedagogies towards the production of new creative and adaptable Singaporean citizens and workers suitable for the globalised knowledge economy. All of this is being pursued through an interventionist state strategy, rather than a neo-liberal approach, and built upon a tradition of emphasising science and maths in schools (Brown and Lauder 2000; Koh 2004).

The small Caribbean island nation of St Lucia has developed a long-term educational strategy around the globalised educational policy discourse of lifelong

learning (Jn Pierre 2006). Research indicates that the development of the policy through exhaustive consultation and its long-term, all encompassing cross-sector focus were specific strategies to seek to strengthen *national capital* (Bourdieu 2003). This attempt at strengthening national capital was a postcolonial political aspiration in an attempt to mediate some of the policy and policy implementation pressures resulting from funding from significant international donor agencies such as the World Bank. This was in some senses about creating policy space to allow a more vernacular expression of lifelong learning. At the same time, the policy dealt with a decontextualised policy discourse and gave most emphasis to human rather than social and cultural capital development. In so doing, the policy also denied various forms of indigenous knowledges, including creole language forms. The political location in the global south and a particular colonial history framed the possibilities here for vernacular globalisation. Nonetheless, we can see here again the mix of history, politics, global pressures and local aspirations, resulting in vernacular globalisation. Similar accounts emerge from research on globalisation's effects on the education of girls in Zambia, where significant contradictions are created between the economically driven modernisation agendas of the World Bank, transferred by policy elites into local cultural contexts that are energised to resist such pressures, with serious consequences for gender equality (Syachaba 2006).

All policy developments in education, even in the context of globalisation, result in vernacular manifestations; homogenising pressures result in heterogenising outcomes. As Taylor *et al.* (1997, 16) argue in respect of policy development in education, 'There is always a prior history of significant events, a particular ideological and political climate, a social and economic context.' Of course, different nations and different education systems have varying capacities to speak back in the vernacular, varying capacities to strengthen national capital, while differing political parties holding state power vary in their desire to speak back to or to accomodate globalised education policy discourses. As Tikly (2001, 152) notes, a shortcoming of much of the literature on globalisation and education is that 'the specific *contexts* to which the theory is assumed to be applicable have not been specified'. Our idea of speaking back in the vernacular is an attempt to recognise such specificities and histories, including, for the postcolonial world, a colonial past.

## Governing by numbers and the new global education policy field

A focus on numbers at first glance sustains understandings of policy making that emphasise the idea of 'big' policies in the small world (Ball 1998), or the policy virus that infects and spreads across systems, and redefines education politics as the politics of education. However although the policy push for the use of indicators may be read as part of a policy agenda that seeks congruence and promotes similarity in policy making, as students of policy we need to acknowledge the idiosyncratic ways in which numbers have worked in specific education systems, and appreciate that the globalised policy push through educational indicators is read in different national and local contexts differently (Lingard and Ozga 2004). Recognition of context as significant, not incidental, requires culturally and historically informed approaches to understanding comparison that challenge some recent modes of comparative education which have become adjuncts of governance (Novoa and Yariv-Mashal 2003). International educational indicators are inherently decontextualising in their policy effects.

This is not to deny the power of numbers and the interrelationship of data production and governing strategies. As data production has increased so have new forms of governance involving a range of public and private partnerships and delivering systems and services (Kooiman 1993). The rise of the production and evaluation of data, linked to policy, also sustains the growing self-governance of active subjects (teachers, pupils, managers), both producing and using data. In a de-centred society, this process or governmentality extends governance into a system of self-regulation (Ball 1998; Rose 1992, 1996, 1999). Data collection relates to and possibly constitutes a form of governing (Desrosieres 2002; Porter 1996; Rose 1999), and connects to changing education governance and shared agendas and governing practices across Europe and beyond in pursuit of the new knowledge economy and society (see e.g. Ball 1998; Henry *et al.* 2001; Lawn and Lingard 2001). Trends towards deregulation and devolution and the steering of systems through evaluation (Lindbald and Popkewitz 2000; Lindblad *et al.* 2002) produce an increased need for information expressed as indicators, targets and benchmarks (European Commission 1998; OECD 1998). Attempts to create quasi-markets in schooling within national systems also require such performance data so as to give effect to parental choice. The emergence of the knowledge society/knowledge economy as an organising principle for education systems has also accentuated the need for information on performance, has increased the influence of transnational organisations and has given prominence to the data collection and analyses produced by CERI, OECD and UNESCO (Henry *et al.* 2001) and resulted in the alignment of statistical data collection categories which work together to effect a 'magistrature of influence' above national education policy making (Lawn and Lingard 2001).

International programmes of comparison in mathematics and literacy (OECD 2001) allow national evaluations to be compared internationally, with, some commentators argue, undesirable side effects and distortions of national systems (Goldstein 2004). Following the Lisbon European Council in 2003 and the adoption of the open method of coordination, benchmarking and indicators of progress are essential monitoring tools for European education and training systems. In the UK there is a strong movement towards evidence-based or evidence-informed policy making to drive improvement in education (Lauder *et al.* 2004; Thomas and Pring 2004). Furthermore, there is evidence that such processes do, indeed, constitute policy and alter politics. For example, there has been reshaping of the national statistical systems of OECD member countries (OECD/CERI 1995, 4), alignment of OECD, UNESCO and Eurostat statistical collections and a recent Welsh Assembly Report on Assessment (Daugherty 2004) recommended that Wales must enter the international programmes of comparison in order to make its educational standards comparable. Research on emergent European education policy showed how the collection of European educational statistics substantially affected data collection categories and policies in a range of net-benefactor EU member nations such as Portugal and Greece, which when combined with the effects of European and OECD policy reports was referred to as a *magistrature of influence*, working to reframe national educational policies (Lawn and Lingard 2001).

Numbers then have become a central element of the move from government to governance within neo-liberal policy agendas. There is, however, another effect of policy as numbers when considered globally. As mentioned already, the OECD and other international agencies have collected national data and pulled it into a single global field of comparison in a decontextualised way. The national strategies of reframed education policy as the creation of particular forms of human capital

necessary for the knowledge economy and for ensuring the global competitiveness of the putatively national economy also demand global comparative data on education performance. The OECD indicators are perhaps the best case in point (Henry *et al.* 2001), including PISA, which in 2006 will cover the thirty member nations of the Organisation and twenty-eight other nations; indeed the aspirational reach here is global. It is our argument that rankings on PISA and other measures such as TIMSS together constitute an emergent global education policy field existing as an imaginary above nations (Lingard *et al.* 2005). As Rose (1999, 198) notes, numbers, like any inscription device, constitute what they appear to represent. Further, rankings on these indicator league tables demonstrate the power of a single figure, which as Rose (1999, 208) also argues is 'a rhetorical technique for "black boxing" – that is to say, rendering invisible and hence incontestable – the complex array of judgements and decisions that go into a measurement, a scale, a number'. In respect of the OECD's PISA, this amounts to a decontextualisation of national cultures and the constitution of calculable or 'irreal' spaces (Rose 1999, 212–3) within a globalised education policy field, part of the new scalar and spatial politics of globalisation.

The narrative concerning the establishment of the OECD's indicators project provided by Henry *et al.* (2001) also demonstrates the powerful influence of the USA in the creation of the project against some considerable philosophical opposition from within the OECD itself. This is a demonstration of the asymmetrical relations between nations and the power of the US in the context of globalisation and in the post-Cold War era. The OECD's Indicators work also demonstrates how the OECD, in addition to its work as think tank and as a site for the ventilation of policy options and research, has become more of a policy actor in the context of globalisation and now prioritises social efficiency over social equity concerns in its policy work (Rizvi and Lingard 2006). The OECD has been important to the constitution of the global economic field framed by neo-liberalism and to the development of the related global education policy field. However, hierarchies and power relations within the latter are not homologous with those in the former. At the current policy moment, Singapore and Finland have iconic status within the global education field because of their high-ranking performances on TIMSS and PISA respectively. Policy as numbers works as part of globalised education policy discourses, as part of the new policy settlement within nations and new forms of governance, and as argued here, as central to the emergent global education policy field.

## Education research, policy and politics

This brings us to the relationship between research and policy in the globalised, economised agenda for education. Research policy has been reframed by the desire of governments for clear and reliable evidence that can inform and support policy. Education research, which has been weakened by global criticism from powerful sources close to governments and is not securely positioned within the academy, is very vulnerable to reconfiguration in this mode, as a price of survival.

While education research is particularly insecure, all research is fundamentally affected by the Knowledge Economy and related discourses. Research is, after all, the production of knowledge and is understood in KE terms as central to economic growth. Knowledge here is *internal* to, that is, part of – rather than *external* to and distinct from – economic processes, and growth is dependent on maximising the outputs of knowledge workers and the productivity of knowledge resources.

National systems seek to ensure competitive advantage through the commercial exploitation and application of knowledge. Knowledge production is brought into close relationship with economic policy; what matters is what works for the economy. Universities and their research are significant players in this policy frame. This seems to hold across the globe (Ozga *et al.* 2006). Research is both implicated within, and mediates the trajectory towards a *knowledge economy* and *learning society* through enhanced research steering practices evident in different national systems, and through the effects of supranational agencies and pressures (for example the World Bank, OECD and the American-dominated citation indices), and the impacts of emergent regional blocs (for example the European Research Area).

Across the globe there is a trend towards prioritising techno-scientific research and its modes of operation and organisation – concentrated in centres of excellence, working in teams characterised by differences in conditions of work and employment rights. These modes of work are shaping all research. A substantial study of changing research cultures in Australia (Bullen *et al.* 2004) suggests that intellectual autonomy is challenged by the need to meet industry/funder needs and that science is becoming 'less a public good than a tradable commodity'. Bullen and her colleagues quote the World Bank publication 'Building Knowledge Economies' (World Bank 2002, 21) which asserts that

> Continuous, market-driven innovation is the key to competitiveness, and thus to economic growth, in the knowledge economy. This requires not only a strong science and technology base, but, just as importantly, the capacity to link fundamental and applied research, to convert the results of that research to new products, services, processes or materials and to bring these innovations quickly to market.

However, despite shared trends in the steering of education research, and common pressures to commercialise knowledge gained from research, there are differences, within Europe and within and across national boundaries, in indigenous or vernacular education research practices and processes of research that provide different kinds of resource for informing or sustaining a politics of education. Again, we see that the rapid development and spread of processes designed to construct measurable research outcomes, to provide evidence of impact, and to focus on useful knowledge production has a double effect. On the one hand it contributes to performativity, but on the other it foregrounds questions about research purposes and embedded practices that continue to have meaning and thus may sustain a revived politics. We should remember that part of the reason that there is so much attention to steering processes in research in education is that research in education produces knowledge that is potentially extremely valuable and productive for the new knowledge economies, and this creates a particularly contested terrain of research development and practice in which specific contradictory challenges are confronted.

Education research is important because it informs, enables and sustains learning. In so doing, it may produce knowledge that is useful to and supportive of government policy. But that is not all that it does, and it cannot, by its very nature, be reduced to totally instrumental activity. Pressures for research steering in education are very high because of the instability and fluidity of the knowledges that it produces, and because less 'managed' research activities may, indeed, have considerable value in the creation of active, independent and creative thinkers and

learners. There is, thus a considerable contradiction at the heart of the research steering process, and this opens up spaces for research to rediscover and render explicit its national capital, in terms that are not entirely set by globalising pressures and practices. It is possible that the processes of research steering, and the growth of competitive and selective funding, of emphasis on outputs and on impact, and on the translation of research into professional and policy communities (Ozga and Jones 2006) has in fact sharpened the focus on research purposes, on the role and nature of knowledge within and beyond the academy, and on epistemological and methodological issues that are critical of 'traditional' research practices, while cautioning against some of the trends documented here.

It could be argued that it is in the resources available to and in civil society – including, importantly, in education politics – that globalising agendas may be recontextualised and remodelled according to local and national histories, traditions and social relations. As education is now the centrally important policy area for governments in the context of globalisation, it follows that the intellectual resources available from education research to support such a politics are of increased importance.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to present a discussion of the key features of the new, globalised landscape of education policy and politics. Throughout we have attempted to develop an argument about the significance of the relationship between global and local in understanding policy and politics in education. We suggest that there is a tendency to read globalisation in education as neo-liberal politics and economics, and argue that this conceals the extent to which local, vernacular globalisation is called forth and energised in response to homogenising tendencies and trends. In particular, we attempt to stress the extent to which the performative readings of education politics and policy are dependent on selective assessments of the global condition in education, that see the world from a particular and somewhat distorted Anglo-American angle. Our core concern is to underline the significance of context, in all its complexity, not just as a location for globalising activity, but as an active element in the framing of education policy and politics.

One of the fundamental characteristics of globalisation is that it can revitalise local institutions and formations. Faced with homogenising travelling policy, particular groups or societies can be encouraged to revisit and reconstruct the value bases of their organisations and generate new energy in their production, including in schools, universities and other sites of learning.

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# GLOBALIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL POLICYMAKING

## A case study

### Sandra Taylor and Miriam Henry

## Introduction

While there has been a burgeoning literature on globalization in recent years, the impact of globalization on education policymaking remains relatively unexplored theoretical territory. This essay seeks to contribute to this area of inquiry, drawing on research conducted on the influence of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in shaping education policy in Australia over the past two decades or so, within the context of globalization.[1] This terrain is explored here through an examination of vocational education and training policy, chosen in recognition of Roger Dale's point that some policy arenas in education are more highly charged than others with respect to globalization given their explicit links with the economy.[2] Vocational education and training is used somewhat loosely as an umbrella term for a number of cognate strands that have surfaced at different times and in different countries: for example, transition education, vocational and technical education, technical and further education, post-compulsory education and training, and lifelong learning.

Vocational education and training has been a recurring policy focus in many OECD countries over the past two decades. Hence this theme provides a useful focal point for exploring the seeming convergence of policy ideas and the implications of this for national policymaking. Such an exploration, we suggest, may help to illuminate ways in which globalization pressures are influencing the policymaking machinery of the nation-state, and the role of international organizations – specifically in this instance the OECD as a 'globalizing agency' – in mediating such pressures. Australia has been selected as the starting point for this discussion not only because it is familiar terrain for us, but also because vocational education and training has been an arena in which there has been a particularly vigorous interplay between the OECD and successive Australian governments over the past three decades. In turn, then, the OECD was chosen because this has been an international organization in which Australia has been an active participant. Not all OECD countries have such an 'organic' relationship with the Organization: increasingly, for example, the European Union has more salience for the policy stances of many European countries than does the OECD; and while the United States could be categorized as the OECD's superpower, exerting influence on the organization at the highest level, many within the United States regard the OECD's educational work as of marginal relevance and influence. Nevertheless, the

argument here is that international organizations are integral to the processes of educational globalization.

Thus the case study seeks to do two things. First, it attempts to illuminate the processes of globalization in a particular policy domain (vocational education and training), drawing on the relation between one nation-state (Australia) and one international organization (the OECD). Second, it attempts to contribute to more theoretical understandings of the nature of educational globalization and the implications of this for national policymaking. The study argues that educational globalization does not necessarily imply policy homogenization, but rather that there are tensions within globalization processes that serve both to concentrate and to differentiate the policy agenda. Nor is it argued that globalization implies the surrendering of national sovereignty. However, the increasingly polycentric nature of governance and hence of policymaking is recognized.

In order to ground this discussion, we first provide a brief comment about the OECD as an international organization.

## The OECD and educational policymaking

The OECD was formed in 1961 out of the prior Organization for European Economic Cooperation, established after the Second World War to assist with the economic reconstruction of Europe. Its policy agendas are framed by a 'commitment to a market economy and a pluralistic democracy' (and more recently, a respect for human rights) and a concern to foster a 'post-industrial age in which…OECD economies [can be woven] into a yet more prosperous and increasingly service-oriented world economy.'[3] Education as an activity within the OECD has been broadly legitimated on the basis of its contribution to economic growth, though such a role has not necessarily been narrowly interpreted. Indeed, the range of policy interests and stances in relation to education have been broader and more contested than the OECD's economic mission might indicate.

The OECD is essentially an intergovernmental organization, comprising twenty-nine predominantly wealthy Western countries though, since the mid-1990s, the trajectory has changed to include countries such as Mexico, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Korea, and Poland. While there are significant ideological differences among OECD countries, in particular between social democratic and market liberal orientations, decisionmaking is essentially consensual. This means that policy positions tend to be sufficiently flexible to enable individual member countries to develop their own policy stances. Unlike, say, the World Bank, the OECD has no prescriptive mandate over its member countries. Rather, it describes itself as a place for reflection, discussion, research, and analysis 'that may often help governments shape policy', exerting influence through processes of 'mutual examination by governments, multilateral surveillance and peer pressure to conform or reform'.[4]

The OECD has been variously characterized as an 'international think-tank', a 'Rich Man's Club', or 'a club of like-minded countries'.[5] Perhaps in relation to education the most apt characterization is as a catalyst for reform and change. As George Papadopoulos explains in his authoritative account of the OECD's work in education:

> The starting point is the identification of major new policy issues which emerge on the educational horizon, and which might call for priority attention in the countries…. These issues are then put together within a structured

framework, leading to a number of questions which arise for policymaking. Arriving at a convincing statement of such issues and questions, of how and why they arise, and of their implications, is already half the work done. It involves a dialectical process of Secretariat and country thinking and exchange, including a strong dose of advice from experts, and provides the basis for subsequent program planning and implementation.[6]

The OECD is also part of a growing network of international organizations which Connie McNeely and Y. K. Cha suggest may collectively serve as world-level agencies in educational policy convergence and change. They argue that international organizations influence the incorporation and diffusion of educational ideologies and practices within and among nation-states, and suggest that international organizations 'have been an important catalyst in spreading world cultural themes and accounts, and research conceptualizing them as institutionalizing mechanisms can provide important insights in the area of comparative education'.[7]

Such a description begs a number of questions that we attempt to address here. For example: How do these mechanisms of institutionalization take place? How does the dialectical relation between OECD secretariat and member country referred to by Papadopoulos work? Some of the complexity involved in thinking about these issues is usefully captured in Archer's more general conceptualization of international organizations as policy instruments of governments, policy arenas for debate, and independent policy actors. As instruments, they may serve formal diplomatic purposes while at the same time becoming 'the battleground for individual members or groups vying for influence over and control of the organization'. As policy arenas, they provide a 'meeting place where members can discuss matters of common interest' and 'a platform from which members can espouse views and...confront each other'. And as independent actors, they become an identifiable 'it,' 'distinguishable from [their] member states'.[8]

With such questions and this framework in mind, we turn to our study of vocational education and training, beginning first with policy developments in Australia.

## Changing discourses of vocational education and training Australian approaches to vocational education and training: 1970s–1990s

For the purposes of this discussion, three phases of policy development in Australia are discernible: an early phase of transition education drawing on distinctly Australian traditions of reform; a middle phase dominated by concerns with youth unemployment and an acknowledgement of the underlying structural changes occurring worldwide underpinning youth unemployment; and a third phase plugging into more universal agendas of training reform in the context of Australia attempting to position itself in the global, knowledge-based economy. As will be seen, these three phases are marked by somewhat different relationships with the OECD.

*Phase 1: Transition Education Policy Within Australia in the 1970s.* Australia joined the OECD in 1971, ten years after the establishment of the Organization and only after the retirement of John McEwan, Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Country Party, then a minor partner in the federal Coalition government. A staunch protectionist, McEwan vigorously opposed Australia's entry because of

the OECD's free-market stance. Initially, with respect to education, links with the Organization were low key. According to some interviewees in our study, if anything the influence flowed from Australia to the OECD rather than vice versa, particularly in the schools sector around the Australian Schools Commission's innovative Disadvantaged Schools Program. The latter, which funded schools focusing on whole school change rather than individual students, 'had a very big effect on the thinking of the OECD.... The Schools Commission was regarded as a place to look to by the OECD'.[9] It was argued that education policy at that time was driven by the internal dynamics of Australian politics and an Australian tradition of reform drawing on ideas 'going back into antiquity': 'schooling was seen as a redemptive exercise, that it could make a difference for kids – that was the driving force. That's not OECD stuff, that's a hundred years of educational philosophical developments.... They go back a long way in the literature'.[10]

The Whitlam government's commissioning of an OECD educational policy review on the theme 'the transition from school to work and further education' in 1974 marked the beginning of a more active engagement with the OECD. The notion of transition education was a term that in the 1970s became associated with programs focusing on links between school and work. 'Transed' was often decried in educational circles as narrowly vocational and as a band-aid for keeping reluctant school stayers out of trouble during periods of high youth unemployment. Initially however, when the OECD review of transition education was commissioned, youth unemployment was not perceived as a significant factor. Rather, the topic was selected because 'the Australian education authorities had been conscious not only of their own shortcomings in this area but of the increasing attention that their OECD partners were paying to this subject'.[11] The topic, then, was broadly framed and the background report prepared by the Australian authorities to inform the review reflected this broad framing: 'The vocational development of an individual has to be seen as part of his total human development.... the emphasis should be on orientation to the world of work or vocational preparation generally, rather than training for a particular job'.[12]

The review itself occurred within the context of a change in government in Australia – from Labor to the Liberal/National Party Coalition – and a growing concern with youth unemployment. The OECD report noted the 'increasing unease' about the social role of education compared with the 'heady optimism' of the 1960s. However, it attempted to retain a broad focus and sought to study the linkages between education and employment systems, noting,

> It is obvious that coherent policies to facilitate the transition from school to work call for an adequate degree of coordination between education and employment policies. The examiners came to the conclusion that, as in many other countries, such coordination needs to be reinforced. That the Australian authorities share this view is shown by the fact that a national 'Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training' has now been appointed.[13]

The inquiry into education and training (the Williams Inquiry) was set up by the new Coalition government to consider the relation between education and employment. The Williams report, *Education, Training and Employment*, made only a brief reference to the OECD review's recommendations for better coordination, and was silent on matters pertaining to educational structures or policy integration (for example of education and labor market policies), by and large adopting a relatively narrow approach to the question of transition.[14] In general, it was seen in educational circles as a highly conservative document. However, it did resonate

with the times, providing the impetus for the establishment of a commonwealth Transition Education Program which funded initiatives in work experience and the provision of 'alternative' vocationally oriented subjects in the largely academically oriented secondary schools.

*Phase 2: Youth Policy Development in Australia, Late 1970s to Mid-1980s.* By 1977 youth unemployment had become a major concern in many OECD countries, prompting bodies such as the Manpower Services Commission in the United Kingdom, the Australian Education Council, and the OECD itself to become interested in the notion of training as a means of responding to the long-term, structural nature of youth unemployment. As Margaret Vickers's discussion of the OECD influence on Australian education policy shows, the new approach was evident in the various reports surrounding Australia's second OECD country review on youth policy initiated by Peter Wilenski, Secretary to the Department of Youth Affairs in the new Hawke Labor government in 1983.[15]

The previous year, Vickers notes, Wilenski had been invited to work at the OECD in Paris to develop a comprehensive paper on youth policy. Among other things, his paper recommended an integrated approach to youth policy in areas of education, training, employment, and income support – ideas that were reflected in Australia's background report for the OECD review.[16] The background report referred to problems with the transition education approach flowing from the Williams Report, and asserted the goal of increasing participation and equity as 'a key element in the new framework of youth policies'.[17] The OECD review was consistent with this broad-based approach. It recommended a 'youth entitlement' and the development of comprehensive policies for youth, with emphasis being placed on the long-term needs of young people rather than on short-term concerns of high unemployment.[18] After 1983, Wilenski began to implement new policy directions consistent with those recommended in his OECD paper. He set up an Office of Youth Affairs, established a review of income support arrangements for young people which led to the AUS-TUDY (a student support scheme), and helped to initiate the important Kirby Review of the Labour Market, which recommended mainstream education and training to replace earlier labor market programs. Vickers suggests that the OECD, helped youth policies to be framed in a new way. She argues that Wilenksi's experiences at the OECD, plus 'the combined weight of the OECD review, together with the confluence of views expressed in the Kirby report and the income support review created a climate in which the government's plans could be enacted'.[19]

At that period there was something of an ideological tussle within the Labor government between old-style 'wets' associated with the former Whitlam era and economic 'dries'. In 1987, with the ascendance of the economic dries, traditionally separate policy areas were combined in a mega-Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) with John Dawkins as Minister. The amalgamation aimed 'to achieve a new coherence and consistency between our various education and labour market policies and programs' and was part of what Dawkins described as a 'vigorous programme of micro-economic reform' in Australia.[20]

Such directions had been increasingly promoted in various OECD reports.[21] However, as Dawkins himself commented, the creation of a single portfolio was a first among OECD countries and the formation of DEET was seen as 'a milestone in relations with the OECD'.[22] The new DEET structures, it was observed, 'led to a greater policy focus and interest in the OECD' and to 'a tighter control over education agendas for the OECD…compared to the old Education Department'.[23] In the words of one consultant: 'After Dawkins, the OECD links were cranked up – DEET was more active in seeking information. The riding instructions from Dawkins were stronger'.[24]

Thus from about this time onward, the OECD seems to have played a more visible role in Australian policymaking in education. This was particularly evident in relation to the government's restructuring agenda, so that Vickers, for example, argues that during this period Canberra's education bureaucrats selectively focused on aspects of the OECD agenda that emphasized the economic functions of education.[25] As one consultant observed of that time, 'Their [DEET's] key players had graced the OECD and saw in the OECD a conceptual, ideological framework of organization which could legitimate its work'.[26] Dawkins himself used the forums of the OECD to propound his own policy stances, in particular the role of education and training in skills development for the global economy, the need for educational restructuring to achieve this end, and the complementarity of economic and social purposes of education.

In 1988 Dawkins chaired a major OECD conference in Paris, 'Education and the Economy in a Changing Society'. The conference took as its theme the convergence of education and economic functions in the new global context premised on what was becoming an increasingly familiar argument about workers' skills and qualifications 'as critical determinants of effective performance of enterprises and economies'.[27] While these were also Dawkins's own ideas, on his return from Paris he was able to use the conference to legitimate and promote his educational restructuring agenda more strongly in Australia.[28]

*Phase 3: Vocational Education and Training Policy Development, Late 1980s and 1990s.* Arising out of the 1988 conference, the OECD initiated a three-year activity, 'The Changing Role of Vocational Education and Training' (VOTEC), aimed at examining approaches and programs in school-linked vocational education, including links to workplace training and relations between general and vocational education. Australia, having made vocational education and training a policy priority under the rubric of the national training reform agenda, was an active participant in the VOTEC activity.

In both the OECD and Australia, the equity-enhancing aspects of vocational education and training were stressed and in both places there was concern to avoid a narrow interpretation of vocationalism. In Australia, a number of reports on vocational education and training were produced emphasizing the need to bring together general and vocational education so that general education was seen as relevant to work and vocational education as broader than specific work-based skills.[29] The reports also stressed the importance of creating flexible educational pathways between school, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), higher education, and work in order to broaden young people's participation in education and training. Although the reforms were criticized for a symbolic and somewhat simplistic attention to disadvantaged groups, the essential argument was that they would lead to more generally equitable outcomes than previously because of their more inclusive education and training provisions.[30]

Similar ideas underpinned the OECD's VOTEC activity. So, for example, the final publication arising out of that activity noted that 'there should not be complete separation between general education and vocational training, and that as far as possible general education should continue during vocational training'.[31] Also noted was the underlying assumption that

> in a democratic society, policy makers have an interest in participation in VOTEC…there may be economic reasons for this policy interest…. There may also be social reasons: for example, the perception that participation in VOTEC may prevent failure and exclusion, especially among disadvantaged groups.[32]

The extent to which equity objectives and broadly defined vocational education and training goals were realizable or realized is of course another matter. In Australia, for example, equity objectives, while strongly expressed, were in fact resisted and poorly implemented given a lack of vigilance in the monitoring processes and the establishment of a more deregulatory training climate which helped to reduce monitoring capacity.[33]

Following on from the VOTEC activity, the OECD launched another project, 'Improving School-to-Work Transition'.[34] As part of this project, a thematic review of 'the transition from initial education to working life' was initiated.[35] Australia was the first country to be reviewed, in some sense completing the circle begun in 1976 when it was seen as having 'pointed the way' in taking the transition from school to work as the focus of its first OECD review.[36]

But of course, a circle is not really the appropriate metaphor to describe the policy developments that have been described here. Rather, what is evident is a chain of policy developments reflecting a mix of national, international, and global elements and an interplay of political, ideological, economic, and labor market factors impinging both on national policymaking as well as on the work of the OECD itself. This *mélange* is highlighted in the three phases of Australian policy development just recounted.

## Australian policies and the OECD

In the initial phase, the OECD appeared to be a less significant source of policy ideas though the Labor government clearly regarded the Organization as sufficiently useful to commission an education policy review. Rather, the Schools Commission's work on educational disadvantage was arguably the most significant and innovative policy legacy of that time. While that work acknowledged ideas drawn from OECD reports, it drew more substantively on a long 'Australian' tradition of thinking as well as the experiences in the United States and the United Kingdom. The OECD review of transition education may have assisted Australian authorities 'by articulating problems and developing something of a national perspective', and it may have had a catalytic effect in the sense of 'establishing a basis for and encouraging further investigations and discussion'.[37] But its policy prescriptions were broadly couched, enabling differing interpretations of transition education. Given changing economic and political circumstances, a narrower version than may have been initially intended was taken up. Indeed, it would seem that in this phase the Williams Report – a creature of the conservative Coalition government then in power – had greater salience for educational policy directions than did the OECD review.

During the middle phase, links between Australia and the OECD were more closely intertwined, and the structural nature of youth unemployment was beginning to be better understood. This period marked the shift to an economically drier climate, and following 1987 and the formation of DEET, policy priorities pointed more directly toward the imperatives of a globalizing economy. The final phase marked a high point of Australia's involvement with the Organization's educational work – a long distance traveled since McEwan's protectionist opposition to the OECD. Dawkins, as education minister and then treasurer, used the forums of the OECD to promote and legitimate his policy prescriptions for educational restructuring and microeconomic reform – prescriptions that fitted the OECD liberal economic template like a glove, particularly the emphasis on human capital formation. Indeed, Dawkins helped to shape the template. Under this 'drier' Labor

regime, notions of equity were harnessed to economic rationalist goals of efficiency, reflecting a similar grafting of liberal democratic ideas onto market liberal principles in the OECD.

By the 1990s, however, party political commonalities rather than differences around the new policy paradigm of human resource development framed by market liberal ideology were increasingly evident. Hence both sides of politics agreed on such matters as the necessity of a diminished role for the state in education, a market-driven system of provision, and what Bienefeld refers to as a 'cargo cult' faith in vocational education and training as the solution to the volatile demands of global labor markets.[38] Beyond this, there were relatively minor differences over how vocational education and training should be funded and how questions of access and equity should be conceptualized. In conforming to this general trend, then, Australia has been but one of many countries following a similar policy path, albeit each with its own distinctive characteristics.[39]

From where does such a path derive? It is difficult to argue that it springs entirely from an Australian tradition of reform, though there are undoubtedly particular indigenous elements in the way the ingredients are mixed. For example, the national training reform agenda drew upon on a series of local documents that collectively framed a distinctively Australian policy framework for vocational education and training. At the same time, there are elements of policy adaptation, in that the training reform agenda had its genesis in a mix of Swedish and U.K. models of vocational education and training. However, there is more at stake here than cross-national comparisons and adaptations. Rather, we suggest, the convergence of policy ideas emanates from the machinations of increasingly interlinked policy networks operating in part via international organizations – emergent global policy communities – mobilizing around key agendas. Vocational education and training, because of its explicit links with the economy, is one of these agendas.

## Converging policy agendas in vocational education and training: the example of lifelong learning

Human resource development as the key to a competitive economy has become policy orthodoxy across first and third world countries alike and among international organizations as divergent as the European Union, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the OECD. For example: 'learning, expertise, and human resources – the 'human factor' as it is sometimes called – are critical elements of the well-being of our economies and society'.[40] 'The level of the competence of a country's skilled workers and technicians is centrally important to the flexibility and productivity of its labor force'.[41] And 'higher education is moving towards a mass enrollment system as modern economies become increasingly knowledge-intensive and therefore depend more on graduates of higher education, who constitute a 'thinking workforce'.[42] Of course, the significance of convergent rhetoric should not be overstated given the different reference points and constituencies of these organizations. Nevertheless, as one of our interviewees noted,

> you'll find the approach is very similar, not because there's a deliberate attempt to do that but because people working in the same field with the same knowledge basis, as it were, the same linkages, the same connections, and often consultants from countries will work for more than one of those organizations. So there's an increasing commonality of those policy interests.[43]

One example of the commonality of policy interests can be found in the notion of lifelong learning or lifelong education – a mobilizing slogan for UNESCO, the European Union, and the OECD alike and a policy mantra in many countries.[44] The emphases may of course differ:

> UNESCO's talk is more about core humanistic values....it's more utopian... It's not that we don't have our dreams, it's simply that a document like that would *never* go down in the Education Committee. Our paymaster simply expects something different. We're not in the same street as UNESCO.[45]

Nevertheless, there is considerable rhetorical convergence around notions of a 'learning society', and about flexible pathways encouraging equitable access and participation in education, now understood as extending beyond formal institutions.[46] Underpinning such rhetoric is the faith in education as a means – perhaps the prime means – of not only providing the changing skills required for an information-based economy but, more broadly, of promoting social cohesion and equity as well as personal development. Thus the stakes are high:

> A new focus for education and training policies is needed now, to develop capacities to realize the potential of the 'global information economy' and to contribute to employment, culture, democracy and, above all, social cohesion. Such policies will need to support the transition to 'learning societies' in which equal opportunities are available to all, access is open, and all individuals are encouraged and motivated to learn, in formal education as well as throughout life.... There is a need to rethink and broaden the notion of lifelong education. Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole human beings – their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and the ability to act.[47]

Of course, such rhetoric is not implemented or taken up uniformly in the member countries of these organizations. But the question remains as to why such convergence has come about and of the implications of policy convergence for national policymaking. These issues are explored in more theoretical terms in the next section.

## Discussion: educational globalization and national policymaking

John Prunty's definition of policy as the 'authoritative allocation of values' provides a useful starting point for this discussion.[48] At issue are two questions: Where does this authority come from? and, Whose/which values are being allocated? The most obvious answer would appear to be that authority derives from the nation-state or a subnational political unit within the nation-state, given that it is at these levels that educational policy is made and funded for implementation, and that the values enshrined in policy are those reflecting the dominant discourses – and the political compromises – within nation-states at any given time. The discussion here thus focuses, first, on issues relating to the locus of policymaking and, second, on the values underpinning education policy.

Processes of economic, cultural, and political globalization have served to reconfigure significantly the nation-state – never a stable geopolitical entity – with implications for its capacity to 'allocate values authoritatively'. Globalization

theorists argue that the nation-state is of necessity becoming more porous given the expanded polity now involved in the processes of governance characteristic of political globalization.[49] Bob Deacon *et al.*, for example, in their discussion of the globalization of social policy refer to a 'new paradigm of political science [in which] tiers of government in effect give way to spheres of influence of complementary and contending local, national, supranational and global political forums'.[50] They go on to argue that 'social policy is increasingly being shaped by the politics of supranational agencies and nongovernment organizations which are increasingly the locus of future ideological and political struggles'.[51] They note that these agencies work in contradictory directions – hence, they suggest, the struggle for better global and national social policies is a struggle of values and ideas, occurring within major international organizations.[52] Thus, they conclude, 'It is no longer a matter of being 'in and against' the state but of being 'in and against' international organizations'.[53] This dichotomy seems overdrawn. More accurately, we would argue, international organizations along with those other spheres of influence operating above and below the nation-state need to be seen, analytically, as part of a reconfigured relation among state, civil society, and the economy.[54] Thus, as Paul Hirst and Graham Thompson put it, 'politics is becoming more polycentric, with states as merely one level in a complex system of overlapping and often competing agencies of governance'.[55] From this perspective, national policy directions can be seen as increasingly mediated by the stances of, on the one hand, supranational, international, and multinational bodies operating 'above' the nation-state and, on the other hand, a melange of locally based community groups, nongovernment organizations, and private enterprises operating below the level of the nation-state.

Given the accelerating pace of globalization, both materially and ideologically, making policy 'in the national interest' has therefore become, analytically and politically, a complex issue. However, we would argue that in such a context the nation-state's authority to allocate values has not ceased, but rather increasingly sits alongside other value-allocating authorities. It is possible, therefore, to argue for a strategic space for policymaking 'in the national interest' in ways that both recognize the complexities involved in conceptualizing the national/global interface and guard against what Hirst and Thomson refer to as 'the pathology of diminished expectations' of the state.[56] As Simon Marginson reminds us, the nation-state still retains an impressive portfolio of policy responsibilities – is still, in other words, a significant allocator of values, albeit within new political configurations.[57]

Now, one way of viewing the relation between the national and the global is to see globalization as a context for a relatively autonomous nation-state. Fowler, for example, suggests that, while nation-states are influenced by global forces, these are filtered through the prism of national characteristics such as economic resources, policymaking processes, and national values.[58] This is very much the OECD's stated approach. In Papadopoulos's words,

> A basic precept in the whole approach [of the OECD] is recognition of the fact that education policies are par excellence national policies reflecting the particular circumstances, traditions, and cultures of individual countries. The notion of an international education policy – even if such a thing existed, which has not been the case at least so far – is altogether foreign to this concept.[59]

From this perspective, countries are seen to engage in problems which, in light of globalization pressures, may be driven by increasingly common imperatives.

Viewed this way, the OECD as an international think-tank operates, and exerts influence, essentially as a comparative forum, enabling both a sense of national autonomy as well as a sense of commonality among the likeminded. The process of comparison may also contribute to policy borrowing or adaptation across the boundaries of nation-states, leading to 'universalizing tendencies in educational reform'.[60]

There is another way, however, of thinking about the genesis of universalizing tendencies, hinted at in this comment by Hirsch in reference to the 'strengthened international dimension' to the knowledge-base needed for policymaking. He suggests that

> Whereas policymakers in the past may have drawn from international experience sporadically, in future they may have to do so more as a matter of routine. This development raises the question of how to strengthen regular channels for disseminating all forms of educational knowledge across international frontiers. The role of 'Institutional International Mediators' of knowledge like CERI [the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation within the OECD] itself becomes interesting to evaluate in this context.[61]

Conceptualizing international organizations as 'international mediators of knowledge' suggests a different relation among the national, the international, and the global, illustrated too in the OECD's influential work on comparative educational indicators, published annually in the best-selling *Education at a Glance* series.[62] While at one level the indicators project is about comparison of national education systems, at another, normative level, it brings into play what could be called a global politics of comparison that has to do with supranational forms of agenda-setting. We do not wish to elaborate on the indicators example now, but certainly in terms of the study presented here, it could be argued that convergence around the vocational education and training agenda is explained, not simply as a result of policy-borrowing in the face of common problems, but rather by the emergence of new normative spheres of policymaking themselves a by-product of globalization.[63] We would argue, for example, that in its thematic reviews such as the one on the transition from education to work and further education, the OECD is acting as an international mediator of knowledge – an independent policy actor – rather than, simply, a comparative forum.

In this context, Kogan's evaluation in 1979 of the OECD's reviews of national education systems is apposite. In his report, Kogan noted that the idea had surfaced of conducting thematic examinations over more than one country in a way that differed from the normal 'exchange of views' on themes of common interest. The proposal for thematic reviews, he observed, 'invites the OECD to select sharp and focussed issues arising from major current policy matters that countries in common need to settle rather than simply to discuss'. This idea he firmly rejected: 'First, it will reduce the national motivation. There can be a healthy narcissism in the examination approach. Secondly, it might produce facile comparison.' [64] In Kogan's view, educational reviews should 'continue to be rooted firmly in the experiences and problems of the country examined. National histories and educational policies should not be blended into generalized metahistory'.[65] By contrast, he argued, focusing on country particularities 'would put the OECD in a strong position to give leadership to the development of policy studies that are reflexive, because empathetic to perceived needs, and not derived from the rhetoric of externally imposed change, or from the narrow imperatives of economic analysis'.[66]

Nevertheless, the OECD did move to establish thematic reviews in the 1990s – in other words to 'select sharp and focused issues...that countries *in common* need to settle' (our emphasis); put another way, its role as a policy actor, rather than simply a forum for discussion, was enhanced. Of course, thematic reviews constitute only one element of the Organization's work, but similar processes operate, we would argue, in its increasingly influential work on educational indicators.[67] The key issue here is the strengthening of the OECD's normative role in policy-making and, more broadly, of the significance of the policy stances of international organizations in the framing of national policies. At this point, we come to the 'values' side of the policy equation.

The rhetoric of human capital investment, skills formation, and lifelong learning has become so pervasive that it could be seen as constituting a global discourse, shaping the parameters of policymaking in most countries and among organizations as ideologically disparate as UNESCO, the OECD, and the World Bank.[68] These ideas circulate via what could be viewed as emergent global policy communities constituted by an overlapping membership of senior public servants, policymakers, and advisers – part of the group referred to by Lesley Sklair as 'globalizing bureaucrats' who are 'active in powerful international organizations, notably the World Bank, IMF, and the OECD, and they also work politically through what have been termed 'corporatist' agencies that combine representatives of the state, business and labour'.[69] Sklair argues that the culture of this group, and the ideology it promotes, is a mixture of neoliberalism and global nationalism – 'the view that the best interests of the country lie in its rapid integration with the global capitalist system while maintaining its national identity'.[70] Viewed in this way, OECD policy agendas, and the very processes of comparison on which much of its reputation stands, may be seen as serving to establish a universal (Western) norm against which the policy values of individual countries are, to use Roland Robertson's term, relativized.[71] This was the stance adopted by senior UNESCO personnel we interviewed, who commented critically on the tendency for OECD norms to become filtered into developing countries via the World Bank, and the OECD's destructive – to developing nations – propagation of globalization ideology.

However, the formation of global policy discourses does not imply, first, that policy necessarily becomes homogenized. Globalization theorists argue that globalization exerts simultaneous impulses for convergence and fragmentation, for universalism and localism. Certainly in the Australian case study presented here, it can be seen that while national and global discourses became increasingly intertwined, distinctly Australian policy stances around vocational education and training continued to exist alongside, while also becoming enfolded into, the global policy paradigm of human resource development. This relates to the earlier point about the continuing strategic space for national policy development.

Second, given the inherently contested nature of policymaking, even hegemonic global policy discourses may be challenged. With respect to vocational education and training policy, the mantras of market liberalism and human capital investment are certainly powerful. But a growing body of critical research and literature casts doubt on some of the assumptions underpinning that policy paradigm. David Ashton and Francis Green, for example, suggest that links between training and profitability or economic growth 'are still largely in the realm of theoretical belief or just plain hope'.[72] Similarly, on the basis of a review of some of the research evidence, Marginson suggests that the 'popular narrative of investment in education' is one of the 'great modern myths, transcending the need for empirical verification'.[73] Further, the socially destructive fallout of economic globalization is beginning to

generate a new politics around discourses of social inclusion and exclusion aimed at confronting what Sophie Bessis refers to as 'the dictatorship of the economy' and 'the reign of the *pensée unique* – a single acceptable way of viewing things – in the area of economics'.[74] Bessis's policy paper summarizes the outcomes of an international symposium hosted by UNESCO, the World Health Organization, the Commission of the European Union, and several research institutes – an indication of the heterogeneity of emergent global policy communities giving effect to challenges to policy orthodoxy. The popularization of so-called Third Way politics may represent another kind of challenge, despite criticisms that in many respects the Third Way (particularly Tony Blair's version) represents little more than face-lifted neoliberalism.

The emergence of such counterhegemonic discourses points to the possibilities for a different framing for educational policy goals, one that focuses more centrally on building social as well as economic capital – the twin rationales, as noted earlier, underpinning vocational education and training policy. Whether it is possible to marry the two impulses is of course arguable. But to conclude by broadening this discussion beyond the specifics of vocational education and training policy, the point here is that new discursive struggles are emerging within and across national and global policy communities, giving some hope as to what can be achieved at national and sub-national levels. As indicated, our belief is that the nation-state remains a prime site of policymaking. Relevant then is the issue of what kind of nation-state we are arguing for. Not all nations deliver equally. There are differences, for example, between market liberal, liberal democratic, and social democratic states; certainly we would not support the strident calls for various forms of state chauvinism. But those calls come largely from the losers of globalization and they have helped to propel, within national arenas, new policy framings. Thus we would like to think that there is the possibility of a politics of policymaking that recognizes the force of global change while challenging the ideological determinism of globalization rhetoric. Ironically, such a project aimed, at one level, at the assertion of a national interest, is increasingly likely to involve a politics transcending national borders.

## Notes

1 A research project funded by the Australian Research Council, 'Globalization and Education Policy: An Exploration of the Role of the OECD in Shaping Australian Education (1984-present)', was conducted by Miriam Henry, Bob Lingard, Fazal Rizvi, and Sandra Taylor over the period 1995–98. As part of the project, interviews were carried out with bureaucrats, policy analysts, and consultants, past and present, from the OECD and relevant Australian commonwealth and state departments, and with members of other international organizations. Interview material cited in this essay is taken from notes or transcripts of those interviews. The outcomes of that research are reported in Miriam Henry, Bob Lingard, Fazal Rizvi, and Sandra Taylor (2001) *The OECD, Globalization and Policy Making in Education* (Oxford: Elsevier Science).
2 Roger Dale (1999) 'Specifying Globalization Effects on National Policy: A Focus on the Mechanisms', *Journal of Education Policy*, 14(1): 1–18.
3 OECD Brochure outlining the structure and functions of the OECD (Paris: OECD, undated, circa 1997), p. 6.
4 Ibid, 10.
5 Margaret Vickers (1996) '"Cross-national Exchange, the OECD and Australian Education: Education at the Chateau de la Muette", Review of G. S. Papadopoulos, *Education 1960–90: The OECD Perspective', Oxford Review of Education* 22 (1): 91–96 and OECD Brochure Outlining the Structure and Functions of the Organization (Paris: OECD, undated circa 1997), p. 4.

6  George Papadopoulos, *Education 1960–1990: The OECD Perspective* (Paris: OECD), p. 13. Papadopoulos was deputy director for education within the OECD until his retirement in 1990.

7  Connie McNeely and Y. K. Cha (1994) 'Worldwide Educational Convergence through International Organizations: Avenues for Research', *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 2(4).

8  Clive Archer (1994) *Organizing Europe: The Institutions of Integration* 2nd ed. (London: Edward Arnold), pp. 9–12.

9  Interview transcript #45 (bureaucrat, 1996).

10  Ibid.

11  OECD, *Australia (1977): Transition from School to Work or Further Study* (Paris: OECD), p. 85.

12  Commonwealth Department of Education Report of the Working Party on the Transition from Secondary Education to Employment (1976) (Canberra: AGPS), pp. 91, 118.

13  OECD, *Australia*, pp. 5–6.

14  Bruce Williams (1979) *Education, Training and Employment, Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training* (Canberra: AGPS).

15  Vickers, 'Cross-national Exchange.'

16  Department of Education and Youth Affairs (1983) *Youth Policies, Programs, and Issues* (Canberra: AGPS), p. xxxii.

17  Ibid., 25.

18  OECD (1986) *Youth and Work in Australia* (Paris: OECD).

19  Vickers, 'Cross-national Exchange', p. 41.

20  Chairman's address, (1989) *Education and the Economy in a Changing Society* (Paris: OECD), p. 10.

21  See for example, *Education in Modern Society* (1985) (Paris: OECD), *Structural Adjustment and Economic Performance* (1987) (Paris: OECD) and OECD, *Education and the Economy in a Changing Society*.

22  Interview notes #65 (bureaucrat, 1996).

23  Interview notes #44 (bureaucrat, 1996) and Interview notes #31 (consultant, 1996).

24  Interview notes #35 (consultant, 1996).

25  Vickers, 'Cross-national Exchange'.

26  Interview notes #43 (consultant, 1996).

27  OECD, *Education and the Economy in a Changing Society*, p. 18.

28  Vickers, 'Cross-national Exchange', p. 43.

29  For example, Australian Education Council Review Committee, (1991) *Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training* (Canberra: AGPS); Australian Education Council/Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment, and Training *Putting General Education to Work. The Key Competencies Report* Canberra, (1992) AGPS and Employment And Skills Formation Council, National Board Of Employment, Education, And Training (1992) *Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* (Canberra: AGPS).

30  Sandra Taylor and Miriam Henry (1994) 'Equity and the New Post-compulsory Education and Training Policies in Australia: A Progressive or Regressive Agenda?' *Journal of Education Policy*, 9(2): 105–27.

31  Claude Pair, 'Synthesis of Country Reports', in OECD, *Pathways and Participation in Vocational And Technical Education and Training* (Paris: OECD), p. 23.

32  David Raffe (1998) 'Does Learning Begin at Home? The Use of "Home International" Comparisons in UK Policymaking', *Journal of Education Policy*, 13(5), p. 376–7.

33  Miriam Henry and Sandra Taylor (1995) 'Equity and the AVC pilots in Queensland: A Study in Policy Refraction', *Australian Educational Researcher*, 22: 85–106; and Sandra Taylor and Miriam Henry (1996), 'Reframing Equity in the Training Reform Agenda: Implications for Social Change', *Australian Vocational Education Review*, 3(2): 46–55.

34  OECD (1996) *Lifelong Learning For All* (Paris: OECD).

35  One of the major functions of the OECD is its reviews of national education systems and policies. In 1995, to supplement these traditional reviews, thematic reviews were introduced 'to give a horizontal rather than a vertical view' of key policy issues across countries or units within countries (Interview notes #2, OECD secretariat, 1995). The first thematic review was on higher education, the second on vocational education and training.

36 Papadopoulos, *Education 1960–90*, p. 148.
37 Maurice Kogan (1979) *Education Policies in Perspective: An Appraisal* (Paris: OECD).
38 Manfred Bienefeld (1996) 'Is a Strong National Economy a Utopian Goal at the End of the Twentieth Century?' in Robert Boyer and Daniel Drache (eds), *States Against Markets: The Limits of Globalization* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 429.
39 Andy Green (1999) 'Education and Globalization in Europe and East Asia: Convergent and Divergent Trends', *Journal of Education Policy*, 14(1): 55–72.
40 OECD (1992) *High-Quality Education and Training For All* (Paris: OECD), p. 14.
41 World Bank (1991) *Vocational and Technical Education and Training: A World Bank Policy Paper* (Washington: World Bank), p. 7.
42 UNESCO (1994) *Policy Paper for Change and Development in Higher Education* (Paris: UNESCO), p. 24.
43 Interview transcript # 56 (OECD secretariat, 1995).
44 In 1994, Lifelong Education for All became a major term of reference for the UNESCO Mid-term Strategy for the period 1996–2001; in 1996 the OECD Ministerial conference on education adopted 'Making Lifelong Learning a Reality for All' as the theme of its new mandate 1997–2001; and in 1995 the European Parliament declared 1996 the 'European Year for Lifelong Learning'.
45 Interview transcript # 17 (OECD secretariat, 1997).
46 See for example OECD *Lifelong Learning For All*, pp. 15–19 and UNESCO (1996) *Medium-Term Strategy 1996–2001* (Paris: UNESCO), pp. 17–19.
47 OECD, *Lifelong Learning For All*, pp. 15, 19.
48 John Prunty (1984) *A Critical Reformulation of Educational Policy Analysis* (Geelong: Deakin University Press).
49 For example, David Held, 'Democracy and the Global System', in *Political Theory Today*, ed. David (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), pp. 207–9 and Malcolm Waters, *Globalization* (London: Routledge).
50 Bob Deacon with Michele Hulse and Paul Stubbs (1997) *Global Social Policy: International Organizations and the Future of Welfare* (London: Sage Publications), p. 6.
51 Ibid., 10.
52 Ibid., 201.
53 Ibid., 6.
54 This position is argued more cogently in Henry *et al.*, 'Globalization and Education Policy', chap. 8. The case study presented in this article focuses on the national/global interface.
55 Paul Hirst and Graham Thompson (1999) *Globalization in Question* (Cambridge: Polity Press), p. 183.
56 Ibid., 2.
57 Simon Marginson (1999) 'After Globalization: Emerging Politics of Education', *Journal of Education Policy*, 14(1): 19–32.
58 Frances Fowler, 'The International Arena: The Global Village', *Journal of Education Policy*, 9(5/6): 94.
59 Papadopoulos, *Education 1960–90*, p. 13.
60 David Halpin (1994) 'Practice and Prospects in Education Policy Research', in David Halpin and Barry Troyner (eds), *Researching Education Policy: Ethical and Methodological Issues* (London: Falmer), p. 204.
61 David Hirsch (1996) 'Report of the Maastricht Conference', in OECD, *Knowledge Bases for Education Policies* (Paris: OECD), p. 31.
62 OECD (1997) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* (Paris: OECD, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation).
63 Guy Neave (1991) 'On Programmes, Universities, and Jacobins: Or, 1992 Vision and Reality for European Higher Education', *Higher Education Policy*, 4(4): 37–41 develops a similar argument with respect to the European Union's remit over higher education policy.
64 Kogan, *Education Policies in Perspective*, p. 71.
65 Ibid., 75.
66 Ibid.
67 This point is elaborated in Henry *et al.*, 'Globalization and Education Policy', chap. 5.

68  David Atchoarena, (ed.) (1994), *Policy and Planning for Vocation Education and Training: Report of a Subregional Training Workshop* (Paris: IIEP/UNESCO); OECD (1994) *Vocational Education and Training for Youth: Towards Coherent Policy and Practice* (Paris: OECD); and World Bank (1994) *Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience* (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ World Bank).
69  Lesley Sklair (1996) 'Conceptualizing and Researching the Transnational Capitalist Class in Australia', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, 32(2): 5.
70  Ibid.
71  Quoted in Waters, *Globalization*, pp. 3–4.
72  David Ashton and Francis Green (1996) *Education, Training and the Global Economy* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar), p. 3.
73  Simon Marginson (1997) *Markets in Education* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin), pp. 117–18.
74  Sophie Bessis (1995) *From Social Exclusion to Social Cohesion: A Policy Agenda*, Management of Social Transformations Policy Papers, no. 2 (Paris: UNESCO), pp. 26, 13.