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The policy of **Perspectives in Education** is to promote rigorous critical discussion and debate about education, particularly in South Africa. At this stage of South Africa's educational development, the vigorous exchange of views is vital. The major purpose of **Perspectives of Education** is to clarify the issues at stake in the relation between education and South African society.

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Editorial

We may perhaps be forgiven for hoping that the papers by Penny Enslin and Michael Cross published in this issue of *Perspectives* are harbingers of a greater sophistication and subtlety in critical accounts of South Africa education. Enslin's starting premise is that certain tendencies in radical writing over approximately the last decade have been rather crude, indulging in some measure of over-generalisation, and that some of these writers have been insufficiently careful with their historical sources. In particular, she is concerned to show that the attribution of the category 'liberal' to 'dominant' accounts of South African education is open to question. By means of a careful re-reading of certain selected sources, Enslin shows that these accounts are not liberal at all; rather, they are more than a little conservative.

With the luxury of hindsight, it is easy to see how this situation came to pass. Despite often elaborate disclaimers to the contrary, a number of early radical accounts made unproblematic use of a base-superstructure model of social functioning that entailed that the world of ideas was to be read off rather directly from the domain of material interests. This meant the following: if the system was capitalist and therefore run by the bourgeoisie, then the ruling ideology also had to be bourgeois — that is, 'liberal'.

It would be ungenerous and misleading to see this over-simplification simply as one of bad scholarship. The priority for at least some of those early writers, embarking as they were with a new paradigm into uncharted terrain, was to be as lucid and unambiguous about the paradigm and its conclusions as possible, an aim of Christie and Collins[1] for instance, and successful at that. But the matter is not solely pedagogic.

One of the theoretical issues at stake is whether a person's consciousness and his or her class position necessarily have to correspond. Do ideological tenets (like liberalism) have a class base or a class belonging? If someone writes as a liberal, is the result always functional for the capitalist state? Or conversely, if someone writes what seems to be an apology for the state educational system, does this make him or her a liberal? The assumption that the two do go together informs Kallaway's position, and Enslin takes

him to task for this. She also takes issue with Crewe's more 'superstructural' account which links liberal quietism to the social apathy of the 'South African English'. Both Crewe and Kallaway make passing reference to the liberalism of Pells, Malherbe and others, and it is here that the consequences of Enslin's careful reading are most telling.

Cross takes issue with Enslin on a rather different point. He raises questions about how diagnoses of liberalism (or any other ideological formation for that matter) are arrived at. Enslin's 'criterion' method is too static and a-historical, he argues, to produce an historically sensitive understanding of consciousness in the light of specific historical conditions. To put that another way; we should, says Cross, see Malherbe not as a timeless liberal but as a writer moving through very different intellectual phases. Indeed, liberalism itself is a very different thing at different historical moments. To label any of the phases as liberal or not risks deflecting attention from the specificity of the moment.

And yet, as Cross himself admits, labels like 'liberal' and 'radical' do have a limited purpose, not to mention ubiquitousness. In the end, to paraphrase Houtondji, a liberal is someone whom others *suspect* is a liberal. Whether we should then use transcendental, historical or perhaps some other criteria to nail down the meaning of this liberalism is an issue by no means settled. Liberalism in South African education is a pervasive, contested and shifting appellation. It seems not unlikely that its use (or abuse) will continue to function as an indirect index of shifting social forces rather than as a cipher for some immutable truth.

The final article, by Mark Dorgan, constructs arguments about justice and equality in South African education. Using what Michael Cross would call a 'criterion approach', Dorgan detects a smooth continuity in the conception of (in)equality in educational thinking running from Plato through Dr Verwoerd and up to the recent White Paper. This allows him to reach the somewhat radical conclusion that the White Paper betokens no fundamental change in South African education, despite vigorous reform noises to the contrary. But then, as Penny Enslin would remind us, liberal analyses do not necessarily preclude radical conclusions. Or do they?

NOTES

1 All references are to be found in Enslin's paper

Is the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa a liberal one?

Penny Enslin

I

The growth of a radical literature on education in South Africa is an exciting and welcome development. South African work within this paradigm is in an embryonic state by comparison with the more extensive radical literature elsewhere, in Australia for example[1]. Peter Kallaway's collection, *Apartheid and Education*[2] is therefore a significant and overdue addition to published work on education in this country.

A clear tendency in the growing radical literature on South African education is its rejection of 'the whole "liberal" education tradition that is dominant in South African society at large'[3]. It is argued that 'the study of education in this country has to date been dominated by the liberal convention, and has in consequence taken place within the context of a set of unquestioned ideological presuppositions'[4].

In response to this position I intend to argue that the radical critics are mistaken in suggesting that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is a liberal one. In doing so I shall show that there is some confusion in radical circles about the use of the term 'liberal' and that the criteria of the liberal tradition implied in the radical criticisms of it are inadequate.

In examing the radical arguments against the 'dominant liberal tradition' I am going to take the arguments in question as suggesting three criteria of 'liberal' studies. Although the radicals are mistaken in thinking that these criteria can be used to characterise a *liberal* position, I shall for the sake of the argument adopt these criteria in investigating the arguments which reflect them. I shall also suggest, in section 2, that two additional more central criteria need to be considered and, in section 3, that the examples of writers cited by the radicals generally fail to satisfy these additional criteria. Section 4 will illustrate further the lack of rigour in the radical

attack on 'liberal' studies of education in South Africa by focussing on the alleged overemphasis by the 'liberals' on the significance for black education of the coming to power of the National Party in 1948. I do not in this paper attempt to take on the task of trying to adjudicate between what could be broadly described as a 'Marxist' and a 'liberal' paradigm. Nor do I wish to cast my argument as generally opposed to Marxist theory. My position is that there is no simple choice to be made between 'Marxism' and 'liberalism'.

II

Commenting on the standard texts on the history of South African education, Kallaway notes:

> . . . a picture of neglect and indifference regarding black education. E G Pells allocated the subject some 22 out of 152 pages (or 15 per cent of his text), Ruperti about 12 per cent and J C Coetzee 20 per cent. Behr represents some improvement with over 50 per cent of his book being devoted to black education (20 per cent to African education), and Brian Rose's collection of essays moves conclusively towards a more balanced presentation with more than 75 per cent of his section on South Africa being concerned with black education[5].

Kallaway comments further that published work in this field

> . . . has been almost exclusively descriptive and empiricist in conception. Liberal writers on the history of education in South Africa have tended to take education policy statements and statements of intent by politicians and officials at face value. For example, the citing of the notorious statements by Dr H F Verwoerd on the nature of Bantu Education have never been matched by detailed research into the nature of the schooling system to ascertain whether these policy statements really did reflect the practice in the schools during the 1950s[6].

Commenting similarly[7], Crewe writes that studies in this tradition are

> works which are predominantly descriptive, catalogues of disparities in education and information collecting rather than critical. Where they are analytical the analysis remains on an introverted level and doesn't yield proposals for alternatives.

> Further they are almost all oriented towards White education, emphasising the split between English and Afrikaans and referring to the other education systems in passing. Virtually no works exist which view the education systems in an interrelated way as part of South African society as an integrated whole[8].

Crewe identifies as works within the paradigm in question

> E G Malherbe, *Education in South Africa*, E G Pells, *Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa*, and more recently the works of a small group of writers such as A Behr and R Macmillan, B Rose, D A Duminy, R Tunmer, and . . . works from outside education faculties produced by Sprocas and the SAIRR[9].

A problem in setting out to evaluate the validity of the criticisms in question is that the critics of the dominant 'liberal paradigm' are clearly not unanimous in citing the works which they regard as part of this paradigm. It is worth noting, however, that Collins[10] also cites Pells as such an example, while Christie and Collins[11] also refer to Rose and Tunmer, and to Muriel Horrell who worked under the auspices of the SAIRR. But bearing in mind these problems of identifying examples, we can discern so far three common accusations against the dominant 'liberal' tradition of studying education: first, that the emphasis has been on white education, while black education has been neglected; second, that such studies have been largely descriptive and lacking analysis and critique; third, that their superficiality in analysis has resulted in a failure to see education as interrelated with other features of South African society[12]. There is a further criticism of 'liberal' studies of education which is of a different order, which I shall take up in section 4 below. In the absence of further specific attempts to identify the features of the 'liberal' tradition in question we shall have to take these three criticisms as implicitly reflecting also the alleged characteristics or criteria of the 'liberal' tradition.

I have argued elsewhere[13] that it is necessary when characterising the liberal position to differentiate between the *formal characteristics* which distinguish liberal ideas, and the *content* of particular expressions of liberal ideas. The formal characteristic, which is necessary and most fundamental to liberal ideas, is that they defend the principle of individual liberty or freedom. The content of particlar expressions of the liberal position depends on historical circumstances. While John Locke defended religious

toleration and opposed royal absolutism, John Stuart Mill was concerned about the threat to liberty which he perceived to be posed by the development of popular government, and by pressures to conform in the England of his time. The particular content of the liberal stance of each should not be taken as a timeless statement of the liberal position, which is characterisable in terms of its formal characteristic, the fundamental concern for individual freedom, which may at various times be expressed in terms of a set of related assumptions or associated principles, like individual rights, tolerance, equality and autonomy.

In the South African context liberal ideas have a complex history, reflecting a peculiar character of their own. I am now going to give a brief indication of the character of liberal ideas in this context but must emphasise that my intentions are modest, in that I do not propose to give the subject detailed treatment. I will indicate that while several organisations can be described as liberal, there is room for debate about which expressed more successfully the fundamental principle of individual freedom. Considering the record of liberalism in the decades following the National Party's election victory in 1948 (the period in which the 'liberal' studies in question were written), we find the peculiar character of South African liberalism reflected in the policies and actions of the United Party. The UP was cast, in the years following 1948, as the 'liberal' opposition to the National Party government. Robertson points out that 'The United Party stood for the preservation of principles and methods historically associated with the Western liberal tradition — minimum goverment interference with the rights of the individual, the rule of law, the inviolability of the constitution, and the independence of the judiciary'[14].

But while the United Party paid lip-service to the principles of the Western liberal tradition, its liberalism was corrupted by its wish to maintain white political control, and it was opposed to the extension of full equality to blacks in an integrated society. While it defended the existing privileges of the coloureds, it did not press for integration, or an extension of their rights. Its liberalism was thus highly ambiguous and largely a function of its opposition to the Government's methods of maintaining white supremacy. Robertson observes that

> . . . the ways by which the government proposed to enforce apartheid aroused non-Nationalist fears for the freedoms of whites in South Africa. And consequently the defence of liberal methods seemed as important to non-Nationalists as

> the pursuit of liberal aims. Thus, in the lengthy debates on apartheid legislation in the first term of Nationalist rule, non-Nationalists were encouraged to see the United Party, in contrast with the Nationalists, as the defenders of liberty[15].

Even the Liberal Party, although the general principles for which it stood were clearly liberal ones, eg human dignity, human rights and democratic participation, did not embrace universal adult suffrage until 1960. It adopted the principle of a qualified franchise at its first National Conference in 1953[16], thus calling into question its commitment to the liberal principle of equality. Indeed there are strong grounds for arguing that the most clearly liberal political organisation in South Africa in the mid-twentieth century was the African National Congress. This is reflected in the Bill of Rights of 1945, calling for, among other things, one man one vote, equal justice, freedom of residence and movement and the removal of discrimination against blacks[17]. Strong liberal tendencies are also reflected, perhaps more controversially so in the light of its socialist element, in the Freedom Charter of 1955, which calls for liberty, justice, equal rights and opportunities, and the removal of 'distinction of colour, race, sex or belief'[18].

To sum up the central points I want to make in the light of these brief observations, firstly, the liberal tradition in South Africa since at least 1948 defines itself partly by means of its opposition to the Apartheid policies of the Nationalist Government. Secondly, it is characteristic of the liberal tradition in this context that it expresses, as part of this oppositional role, certain principles like that of equality, a rejection of racist discrimination, and the defence of certain rights. Such expressions of liberal principles may take different forms, but these two general characteristics remain applicable to and definitive of the liberal tradition in South Africa.

III

Let us now examine the examples cited by the radical critics of works in the 'liberal' tradition. I shall focus in this section on the first three radical criticisms listed above, which I am taking as implied criteria of the 'liberal' tradition. The fourth criticism will be considered in section 4 below. I will be concerned here with whether the works cited by the radicals match the three criteria implied in their criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition. In addition I will raise the question of whether the works cited match the further two criteria of the liberal tradition in South Africa, which I have added to those suggested by the radical critics.

(a) Coetzee and Ruperti

While J C Coetzee's collection *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652 – 1960* (1963) may well be one of the standard texts on education, examination of this book and of Coetzee's own background make it quite clear that we do not have here a liberal text. While *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652 – 1960*, firstly as Kallaway points out, devotes only twenty per cent of its text to black education, secondly is indeed descriptive and lacks analysis and critique, and thirdly fails to relate education with other features of South African society, this should not be seen to establish that it is liberal in character.

Clear evidence of this is the implicit endorsement, in the book, of the Christian National Education Policy[19] and Coetzee's own role as both an author and a virorous defender of the policy. The CNE Policy is more appropriately described as conservative, rather than liberal. Without wishing to suggest that conservatism is easily described, I am going to make as conservative in the context of this discussion a position which, by contrast with liberalism, endorses and regards as of fundamental importance certain traditional ideas which favour white domination and racial segregation, and is opposed to changes in traditional structures which could threaten them. Individual freedom is not a fundamental principle in the CNE Policy[20].

Ruperti's conservatism is not as explicit as Coetzee's but it is quite apparent from reading *The Educational System in Southern Africa* (1976) that this 'descriptive' and 'exploratory' work, as Ruperti describes it, is no liberal text either. Ruperti's heavy exphasis on 'culture' smacks strongly of the notion of life and world view espoused in the CNE Policy, and she explicitly rejects liberalism.

> . . . the confluence of cultures in an all-embracing world-wide oecumenical culture, as propagated by international liberal thought in our time, exaggerates the relative importance of cultural integration and emphasises it at the cost of differentiation and continuity[21].

Apart from Ruperti's implicit conservative stance and her explicit rejection of liberal ideas, she satisfies the three radical criteria of the 'liberal' tradition. Firstly, little space is devoted to black education. Secondly, the book is descriptive (it is expressly intended to be so) and lacking in analysis and critique. Thirdly, education is not seen as interrelated with other features of South African society. At no stage in the book does Ruperti hint

at the possibility that all is not well in schooling in South Africa. She implicitly endorses the status quo[22] by refusing to see it as problematic in anything but an organisational sense. This is reflected in her naive 'descriptive' view of the State, eg where she writes

> As a cultural community (a group sharing more or less the same culture) develops, so various societal relationships, such as state, church and school, come into separate being. Their functioning is interwoven; but each has its own separate characteristic duty to perform. It must not only fulfil its own duty, but must refrain from attempting to fulfil that of another. Each has its own field of competence in which it can and must operate and it may not trespass on another's sphere of competence . . .[23].

While Ruperti thus meets the three radical criteria of the 'liberal' tradition, she cannot be described as part of this if she also rejects liberal thought. That this is so reinforces my doubts about the adequacy of the three radical criteria, which do not enable us to distinguish between the liberal and conservative traditions.

Kallaway mentions both Coetzee and Ruperti as 'standard texts on the history of South Africa education'[24] but he does so ambiguously in association with a critique of 'liberal writers' on the history of South Africa education. That Kallaway does this reinforces the impression that, although he would probably not label Coetzee and Ruperti as 'liberal', he does not find the characterisation of liberal texts on South African education to be problematic.

(b) Pells

The following significant passages from *Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa* (1954) raise severe doubts as to whether Pells can be described as part of the liberal tradition of studies of education in South Africa.

Starting with the Bushmen:

> Living in caves along the lower slopes of the mountains was one of the most primitive peoples in the world. Their language consisted of a few clicks and clucks, rarely mastered by Europeans. They were utterly hostile and implacable. They

> stole, pillaged and killed at every opportunity. In consequence the colonists were compelled to seek them out in their mountain fastnesses and shoot them on sight, man, woman and child[25].

On the Bantu, Pells observes,

> The White man's contact with the strong-willed, physically powerful, proud, yet essentially simple-minded Bantu has been for him an education in itself[26].

And further

> In spite of the fact that the Bantu is unsuited by nature and custom to unremitting toil, his contact with European civilisation has steadily increased his wants. To satisfy these wants he has learned to submit himself to six months' labour underground, or to do the White man's ranch and farm chores[27].

There is much that could be said about this last passage in particular. Pells appears to be ignorant of the factors which forced blacks into mine or farm labour. But most strikingly, there is little suggestion of liberalism in the attitudes which Pells expresses on the subject of the Bushmen and the Bantu. Here are none of the liberal tendencies one might expect, like a concern for the dignity and rights of human beings, regardless of race, or of tolerance and a willingness to see things from the point of view of people different from oneself. And on the specific issue of 'Native Education', to which Pells devotes the final chapter of the book, there are also clear indications of an attitude to blacks which can hardly be described as liberal. Pells sees the vast majority of blacks as ruled by superstition and witchcraft and 'deficient in the higher ethical sanctions and moral standards associated with civilised religious'[28]. He sees it as essential that the Bantu be taught the essential elements of civilisation, 'if they are not to be an ever-present menace to society'[29].

> If Native education is to have a vocational basis, then the boys must be taught cookery, housewifery, and laundry-work, for many of them will go into domestic service in home or hotel, while the girls should be instructed in field and animal husbandry, for they remain in the kraals and till the fields! (sic)
>
> Maybe the missionaries were right and what is best for the

> Bantu is a schooling in higher ethical standards, a finer morality and better manners. In addition he should be given a knowledge of hygiene and a knowledge of how to use his leisure in organised sports and games and social gatherings. Above all he must be taught that while civilisation affords amenities and privileges, it demands a sense of duty and a spirit of service and responsibility[30].

To be fair to Pells, such illiberal remarks about the 'child-like Native'[31] are tempered by a concern that education should be extended to as many blacks as possible, and a feeling that not enough concern has been shown by the authorities for black education.

Pells does match the three radical criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition. He devotes a small proportion of his discussion to black education, his work is descriptive and lacks analysis and critique, and he fails to interrelate education with other features of society. But while Pells may satisfy the three radical criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition, his failure to meet the further criteria which I have suggested, the oppositional criterion and especially that of expressing liberal principles, must raise severe doubts as to the accuracy of describing *Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa* as a liberal text.

(c) Behr and Macmillan

Behr and Macmillan's *Education in South Africa* (1971) and Behr's *New Perspectives in South African Education* (1978) are works which fit most closely the criticisms of Kallaway and Crewe, outlined above.

The treatment of education in these books is accurately described as descriptive and lacking in analysis and critique, the emphasis being on giving an account of the administration, organisational structures, provision and extension of education, as well as on curricula. Careful attention is paid to various pieces of legislation.

The lack of analysis and critique is indeed striking. Even the most controversial topics are treated with an apparent attempt to avoid critical comment, which is startling. For example, Behr devoted one and a half pages to the unrest in black schools in 1976. Little attempt is made to analyse the causes of black resistance to Bantu education, beyond the suggestion that 'urban Africans' regarded the system of Bantu education 'as being inferior to that of other groups'[32]. Behr observes that there were 'legitimate complaints' concerning problems of finance, pupil-teacher

ratios, overcrowding, low qualifications among teachers and lack of equipment in schools. But he suggests that the dissatisfaction 'would seem to be largely politically motivated[33]' and is careful to point out that not only was it the case that both curricula and syllabuses and the pattern of education had developed 'on lines similar to those for Whites', but also that steps were being taken to alleviate the position 'within the framework of available and potential resources'[34]. By avoiding elaboration on his allusion to political motivation Behr is guilty of the failure to appreciate that education is not an issue to be seen as separate from other features of a society.

Behr and Macmillan do indeed commit all three of the 'liberal' errors suggested by the radical critics. Firstly, in Behr and Macmillan only one chapter in twelve (albeit a long chapter) is devoted to black education. And it must be observed that although, as Kallaway points out, Behr devotes twenty per cent of his book to black education, the emphasis is still strongly on white education. Secondly, their work is lacking in analysis and avoids critique. It will be noted here that while the radicals criticise 'liberal' work for lacking critique I have evaluated Behr and Macmillan in terms of whether they offer critical comment. I will take up this distinction later. Thirdly, interrelations between education and other aspects of South African society are not considered. Yet once again, I must point out that this is insufficient to establish that the work in question is of a liberal nature. There is little indication of an oppositional stance (where this might be in order the authors avoid it) and there is no attempt to annunciate those liberal principles which a liberal author would find pertinent in handling the issues in question.

(d) Rose and Tunmer

Both Christie and Collins, and Crewe, cite Rose and Tunmer's *Documents in South African Education* (1975) as in the 'liberal' category. Perhaps it could be said that this collection of documents, with some editorial comment, commits the first of the three 'liberal' errors criticised by the radicals by devoting just over a quarter of the book to black education, albeit in the longest chapter in the book. On the second of the radical criticisms, the position is less clear-cut, in that the editors do offer some analysis, eg of the development of the CNE movement and its central ideas[35], and in so far as attention is paid to critical responses to, for example, the CNE Policy. On the third radical criticism, there are stronger grounds

for attributing to Rose and Tunmer the failure to see interrelations between education and other features of South African society. This could also be said to be reflected in the selection of material and the atomistic way in which the editors arrange their material, eg, treating 'African Education' as a separate issue from, say, 'Religion and Education'. There are, however, no clear-cut grounds for attributing to this work the further two criteria of the liberal tradition which I have suggested, namely its oppositional nature and its defence of liberal principles.

Rose's *Education in South Africa* (1970) offers what Kallaway calls a 'more balanced presentation' in terms of attention paid to black education (as well as generally matching the other two radical criteria). But that this is so raises the very problem of classifying works in education as 'liberal' or not on the basis of their emphasis on white education at the expense of black education. One is left asking the question: if it is a common feature of 'liberal' studies of education in South Africa that they neglect black education, how can two books, one which largely neglects black education, and another which gives to it a great deal more attention, be classified together as part of the same paradigm? Here we see the confusion surrounding the identification of what is 'liberal' which arises from the assumption that the meaning of the term is given and uncontroversial. The complexities multiply on examination of a further example from this alleged paradigm, E G Malherbe.

(e) Malherbe

In a wide-ranging and detailed study of education in South Africa, Malherbe is more inclined than the other authors in question to take a stand which is critical of official policies, particularly more recent ones. He is uncompromisingly critical of many aspects of educational policy since 1948, although his criticisms are by no means confined to the post-1948 period. The Broederbond and the CNE Policy in particular come in for criticism as acting against the best interests of education. In his introduction to the first volume he makes the following clearly liberal comment:

> In general, it may be said of South Africa that whenever a particular system of education did not recognise the people's ingrained love of liberty, their deep religious sense, and their desire for self-government, it was doomed to failure[36].

Discussing the period of Batavian rule at the Cape from 1803 to 1806, Malherbe expresses approval for the liberal policies of De Mist. Discussing the subsequent period of English rule, he is critical of inefficient bureaucratic control, and of attempts to anglicise the Dutch.

> Owing . . . to the total disregard of the language of the majority of the people and to the injudicious tamperings with local institutions and ways by a tactless and injudicious Government, this period saw the unfortunate beginnings of an antagonism towards English rule and the English language which has retarded the progress in general, and that of education in particular, of the two white races in South Africa up to very recent times; and many of the educational problems that emerged subsequently can be traced to this very period[37].

He criticises, in the strongest terms, moves away from dual-medium education, which he sees as essential to the development of unity between English and Afrikaans-speakers. Malherbe acknowledges in volume one that he has confined his attention mainly to white education 'and mentioned Native Education only in passing'[38]. Here we appear to have one of the flaws of work in the 'liberal' paradigm. Yet, again, to accept this criticism as appropriate in discussing Malherbe's work leaves the position far from clear. For I have pointed out that the critics are not unambiguous in their use of this feature as a criterion of 'liberal' studies.

Can we classify Malherbe as located in the liberal tradition, in the light of the above features of his book, and the criteria in question? As far as the first radical criterion is concerned, it seems clear that Malherbe follows the alleged 'liberal' formula by paying little attention to black education. (I have raised doubts about the viability of this criterion of the liberal tradition.) Malherbe deviated from the second radical criterion by offering considerable critical comment of several aspects of official policy, at the same time appearing to satisfy the fourth, oppositional criterion which I have suggested as necessary to the liberal tradition in South Africa. But the limited nature of Malherbe's oppositional stance, which is restricted to the language issue, the role of the Broederbond and CNE Policy, and a concern for national unity among *whites* is of some consequence for the applicability of my fifth criterion. There is a lack of expression of liberal principles like equality, with regard to black educaion, which according to the fifth criterion is a prerequisite for a liberal position. Concerning the third radical criterion of the 'liberal' tradition, here indeed Malherbe does

match the radical formulation, in that he does not treat education as interrelated with other features of South African society. But, apart from satisfying this criterion, the accuracy of locating Malherbe's work in the liberal tradition is, at least, controversial.

(f) Horrell

Muriel Horrell's work for the South African Institute of Race Relations has been an invaluable source of information for scholars of black education in South Africa. Examination of *African Education: Some Origins and Developments until 1953* (1963), *A Decade of Bantu Education* (1964), *Bantu Education to 1968* (1968) and *The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa 1652 to 1970* (1970)[39], reveals certain features which, I will argue, make her work clearly classifiable as liberal, unlike the other examples discussed above.

On the question of the first characteristic of 'liberal' studies suggested by the radicals, that the emphasis in 'liberal' studies has been on white education while black education has been neglected, we have in Horrell a clear exception. Her work is specifically on black, and in one book coloured, education.

Concerning the second of the suggested features of 'liberal' studies, Horrell does offer a great deal of descriptive information, eg on enrolment, expenditure and pass rates. Yet this descriptive content does not appear in the absence of critical comment. Unlike the other 'liberals' Horrell's critical opposition to Bantu Education in both principle and application emerges clearly and forcefully. This can be seen in the following examples.

Horrell gives a detailed account of critical responses, at the time, to the publication of the Report of the Eiselen Commission. This account focusses on the National Conference called by the Institute of Race Relations in 1952 to study the Report, as well as a variety of arguments opposed to the findings of the Eiselen Commission. These arguments emphasised that blacks were 'an integral part of South African society', and that 'since every child is the inheritor of world culture to the full extent of mankind's present attainments, he should have access to this common cultural heritage'[40]. Horrell is unambiguously critical of segrated schooling for blacks, and reports the strong opposition of the National Conference to the proposed abolition of missionary control over black schools[41].

In dealing with the Bantu Education Act of 1953 Horrell notes expressions of dissatisfaction by a number of bodies, particularly to the method of financing black education. In addition Horrell pays careful

attention to increased disturbances at black schools after 1953[42], attributing this to both the introduction of Bantu Education and to 'the mounting spirit of unrest among Africans in South Africa'. Her account includes discussion of ANC-organised boycotts in 1955, expulsions, boycotts and riots at schools during 1960 at the time of the State of Emergency, and demonstrations, closures of schools and expulsions in 1961, 1962 and 1963.

Horrell gives detailed accounts[43] of opposition and protests, again from a wide variety of quarters, to the Separate University Education Bill, introduced in 1957, and of reaction to the University College of Fort Hare Transfer Act (1959) and the Extension of University Education Act of 1959. These protests rested on a rejection of separate universities for different racial groups and on a defence of university autonomy against government interference. Repercussions at Fort Hare are also recounted, including dismissals and resignations of staff, student protests and demonstrations, non-readmission of students, and stringent regulations affecting student activities.

On the question of coloured education, Horrell cites evidence presented by the Institute of Race Relations to the Botha Commission in 1953 against the establishment of a separate Coloured Education Department. Reactions are described[44], again from a number of bodies, to the Coloured Persons' Education Act of 1963, vesting control of Coloured Education in the Department of Coloured Affairs. Attention is also given[45] to student unrest at the University College of the Western Cape in the 1960's.

We can see so far, in Horrell's studies, a considerable departure from the first two features of 'liberal' studies suggested by the radical critics. Firstly, she is specifically concerned with black education, and secondly her work is quite clearly critical of government policies. Before taking up the question of whether it is amenable to the third radical criticism (and here the issues are more complex), we ought to take note of how Horrell's work is clearly liberal in the two senses which I have added as necessary to the liberal tradition.

Horrell's treatment of black education in South Africa, in its critical stance against government policies, satisfies the criterion of being oppositional. And there is no doubt that Horrell expresses her criticisms of official policies from a point of view which rests on certain basic liberal principles. Some of these principles have already appeared, explicitly or implicitly, in the above account of Horrell's studies. These include the principle of equality in the financing of the education of all South African

children, the defence of the principle of university autonomy, and the implicit attempt to see the issues from the point of view of those on whom Bantu Education was imposed. This latter features emerges clearly in the following passages:

> The Government . . . has introduced increased separation in regard to political representation, places of residence, the provision of amenties and employment; has introduced race classification and job reservation; and has placed numerous deterrents in the way of inter-racial contact. Africans have been offered many new opportunities of advancement in their own areas, but their *rights* and *freedoms* in the "White" areas, have been very considerably curtailed. (My emphasis)[46].

> Most Africans, and a large proportion of the White population, are opposed to this concept of "apartheid" or "separate development", and, accordingly, object to a system of African education which has been developed within and for the promotion of such a concept. The system is based on the belief that Africans and Whites are inherently different and can never live together in peace. Very many people challenge this belief and are in any case convinced that the Government's policy is impossible of achievement[47].

The integrationist theme reflected here is repeated elsewhere:

> Many considered that . . . South African should aim at unity and eventual equality in its rich diversity. Economic integration was a reality that must be accepted . . . Political *rights* and *opportunities* at the level of central government must eventually be available *equally* to all citizens, for if not the system would inevitably be discriminatory. (My emphasis)[48].

This emphasis on the principles of rights, freedom, and equality of opportunity is a clear pointer to a liberal position. Based on these principles are Horrell's objections to the failure to consult black leaders and organisations about proposed changes in educational policy, and to the assumption of sole centralised control over black education by the Department of Bantu Education, with vast powers vested in the Minister[49].

> It is not only the centralised control of schools that is resented on many sides, but also the very strict regulations introduced for the control of teachers and students. Those with any

> independence of mind feel that their *intellectual freedom* is inhibited. (My emphasis)[50].

In the light of Horrell's critical opposition to Bantu Education, from the point of view of basic liberal principles, it is both simplistic and an injustice to lump her work together with the other examples of so-called 'liberal' studies cited by the radicals. But I have not yet taken up with reference to Horrell the radicals' third claim and criterion of 'liberal' studies of education in South Africa, namely that the superficiality in analysis in 'liberal' studies has resulted in a failure to see education as interrelated with other features of South African society. Here I must concede to the radicals that this criticism of Horrell is largely correct. Although she is more aware than any of the other so-called 'liberals' of the interrelationship between politics and education[51], she does not offer the depth of analysis which she could have had she taken into account the central interrelationship which has been the subject of analyses aided by Marxist concepts, ie, that between education and political economy. It can be said, referrring back to the related second radical criterion, that while Horrell offers *criticism* she fails to offer *critique*, in the sense of analysis using sophisticated tools of explanation. But one must be careful not to make too much of this concession. Horrell, after all, belonged to an earlier generation of opponents of Bantu Education and the system of which it has been a fundamental part. Furthermore, while critical work by liberals in the sixties may have been superficial in that it lacked the analytical tools now more popularly available, it does not follow that liberal analysis must necessarily be critically superficial and lacking in analytical depth. Nor, to reiterate the inadequacy of the radical criteria of 'liberal' studies, is lack of critique a definitive feature of *liberal* studies, since it is also a feature of the conservative studies typified in the work of Coetzee and Ruperti.

To sum up my argument in this section, I have shown that the radical view, that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa has been a liberal one, is open to question on several grounds. These are that many of the examples of 'liberal' texts cited by the radicals are to some degree conservative rather than liberal, and that the criteria indicated in criticsm of the 'liberal' tradition are not only incomplete, but also fail to match the supposed examples of 'liberal' works as closely as one would expect. I turn now to a further radical criticism of the 'liberal' tradition, of a different order to those already considered.

IV

While the radical criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition considered so far have been directed at its underlying presuppositions and formal features, we turn now to a criticism directed at the alleged content of studies in the 'liberal' tradition. This focusses on a suggested overemphasis on the part of the 'liberals' on the significance of the coming to power of the National Party in 1948 and an associated tendency to regard the introduction of Bantu Education in 1954 as a dramatically retrogressive development. This criticism could be seen as a symptom rather than a criterion of the 'liberal' view, exhibiting the error pointed to by the radicals in their third criterion of the 'liberal' tradition.

The radical argument in question is summed up by Kallaway:

> The state policy of Bantu Education was not an 'irrational' interlude in South Africa politics, as it is often presented in liberal literature, but a reflection of the state's attempt to secure the appropriate conditions for the reproduction of capital in general at a particular phase of South Africa's political development under the hegemony of Afrikaner Nationalist ideology in the 1950's and 1960's[52].

This argument receives a more detailed treatment by Collins and Christie in two papers already mentioned above. In 'Black Schooling in South Africa: notes towards a reinterpretation of the schooling of the indigenous peoples in South Africa' (1980), Collins argues that:

> In its most succinct form, the liberal history of African schooling sees the main event in such schools as being the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. In that year, it is alleged, the Nationalist government introduced this apartheid measure whereby Africans would be forced backwards into the tribal entities and into menial vocational education for the purposes of control and oppression, thus contradicting the integrationist and liberal/academic tenure of the previous owners of the African schools, namely the English-speaking missionaries[53].

Preferring to apply the radical paradigm to the history of indigenous schooling in South Africa before 1953, Collins argues that Bantu Education should not be seen as constituting a radical break from missionary schooling, but rather as part of the continuing process of labour

production, under different control. Summing up his argument in concluding his paper, he writes:

> The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was not a radical deviation from the enlightened liberal policies of the preceding generations, the pattern, changing according to the particular character of the ruling elites, in essence remains the same. Indigenous peoples are schooled to discipline them and make them better workers in the lower unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. A generalised academic schooling is given at a mainly rudimentary level; anything more would generate "cheeky kaffirs" with rising expectations that go beyond their station in life and society. Vocational schooling is mainly manual labour but increasingly becomes more sophisticated as manpower needs increase but only insofar as these improvements do not conflict with the work possibilities of the white colonists. And although the missionaries do not always agree with these policies, the effects of what they did were largely consonant with the interests of the colonists[54].

In their paper 'Bantu Education: apartheid ideology or labour reproduction?' (1982), Christie and Collins develop this argument further, concentrating their analysis on changing labour requirements from the 1950's, and emphasising continuities between the period before and after 1948.

Analysing what they see as the 'liberal' view, that from 1948 the new ideology of Bantu Education was introduced as part of the policy of apartheid, Christie and Collins attribute to 'liberal' historians the following view:

> On the one side is the Nationalist Party who represent, in the main, the Afrikaner people. Because of their frontier background, they are not only isolationist but also racially prejudiced against the blacks. The view that they have of themselves is that of a pure race which needs to maintain its purity by racial segregation. The policy of apartheid is geared towards establishing their own identity and removing other groups either geographically or culturally from themselves. To that effect, they need to control other groups. A reinforcing mechanism to the apartheid creed is the Calvinist religion in its most severe form, adding the divine touch of predestination of

> the Chosen People to Afrikaner cultural identify.
>
> With such a creed functioning, the liberal analysis goes, it is not surprising that the control of black schooling would be viewed as a main purveyor of ideology wherein, it is argued, the blacks would be taught not merely the value of their own tribal cultures but that such cultures were of a lower order and that, in general, the blacks should learn how to prepare themselves for a realistic place in white dominated society, namely (at that point in time) to be 'hewers of wood and carriers of water'. To this purpose, the Nationalist government set out what was allegedly the greatest piece of ideological manipulation of the young since Hitler[55].

The authors go on to suggest that, according to the 'liberal' account, English-speakers in general, and particularly English-speaking missionaries, opposed the introduction of Bantu Education. Christie and Collins attribute to teachers in the mission schools an integrationist view of society which emphasised the principles of equality of opportunity and treatment. According to the 'liberal' view of Bantu Education, they allege, the conflict around the Bantu Education Act was between apartheid followers, for whom Bantu Education was education for subservience in a white dominated society, and the liberal integrationist ideal, which included the principle of equality of opportunity.

Instead of subscribing to the view they attribute to the 'liberals', ie that racism explains white oppression of blacks, Christie and Collins want to emphasise that blacks are oppressed because they are needed as 'non-competitive cheap labour'. In terms of a class analysis the real contradiction is between white capitalists and black proletariat. The central continuing feature in black schooling is that it 'is in the main for the purpose of reproducing a certain kind of labour, as required by the particular form taken by the accumulation process at a particular time'[56].

While arguing that 'in content and style' there are not significant differences between missionary education prior to 1953 and Bantu Education, Christie and Collins do note the following differences which did occur: new centralised methods of control, new financing and curricula, an emphasis on primary schooling, and rural schooling in the homelands to move people out of urban areas, creating an elite in the homelands. Frank Molteno, also arguing that 'liberal' histories mistakenly see Bantu Education as a completely new system, makes a similar

argument:

> In brief the changes involved greatly increased numbers of black children in school although with minimal additional expenditure, removal of the black schools from church and other non-state hands and the centralisation of control in Pretoria, more rigid regimentation of the teachers, revision of the syllabi, and reorganisation of the schools on a fully sectionalist or 'tribal' basis[57].

Now although all these changes look far-reaching to me, I accept the general point that the underlying purpose of black schooling did not undergo a change after 1953, ie it continued to serve the needs of capital for certain kinds of labour. And I accept the argument that new patterns emerged at this time to advance the same purpose, and that the reason for these changes is not simply racist ideology. And it must be acknowledged that, to some extent, what is 'significant' depends on one's location with reference to both Marxist and liberal starting points. But this is not my main concern. My quarrel is not with the positive features of the account of black schooling in South Africa which Christie and Collins develop — I acknowledge its strength — but with their account of the 'liberal' view which they wish to discredit. My interest is in whether this attack on 'liberal' studies is successful, and how much further enlightened we now are on the question of the characterisation of the 'liberal' view which the radicals wish to attack.

If anything the issue of the nature of the 'liberal' position is now more confused than ever. A large part of the problem is the failure of the radicals to link their arguments convincingly to their sources. In his contribution to this argument, Kallaway offers no specific references, so we must assume that he has in mind those 'liberal' histories which he cites elsewhere (see section 2 above). Given the difficulties which I have exposed about which of these are indeed liberal texts (see section 3 above), we are left with only one example which in any way resembles the kind of study under attack from Kallaway. The example in question is that of Robert C Jones's paper in Rose's *Education in Southern Africa*, entitled 'The Education of the Bantu in South Africa'. There is evidence that Jones does indeed see the year 1948 as of considerable, though not unqualified[58], significance for black education in South Africa. But I do not find here the argument attributed to the 'liberals' that missionary education was considerably different, more enlightened and simply better than Bantu Education. Indeed, Jones is critical of missionary education, and includes a long quotation[59] exposing

the inadequacies of this system. Jones does offer a survey of the history of the Afrikaners which echoes some of the themes of the 'liberal' histories suggested by Christie and Collins, such as isolation and the frontier, racial prejudice and the spirit of Calvinism. But my point is that neither Jones nor, to greater but varying degrees, do any of the other studies cited by Kallaway, match the argument described as the 'liberal' account.

In his earlier paper Collins cites only the example of Pells in his discussion of the 'liberal' history of black schooling. But I do not find the argument which he appears to attribute to Pells in Pells's book. This is not altogether surprising, considering that Pells published *Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa* in 1954, the year of the introduction of Bantu Education. In giving their account of the 'liberal' view Christie and Collins, too, offer no specific references in describing the 'liberal' reaction to the introduction of Bantu Education, although they include Rose and Tunmer, and Horrell, in their bibliography. But I do not find, on reading Rose and Tunmer, the 'liberal' view on the significance of 1948 outlined here. Nor do I find it in the work by Horrell to which Christie and Collins refer, *Bantu Education to 1968*. Nor, indeed, is it present in Horrell's *A Decade of Bantu Education*. There could therefore be grounds for suggesting that Christie and Collins have, in their account of the 'liberal' view, set up an Aunt Sally. Such grounds would be strengthened by noting the critical comments made of missionary education by Horrell in *Africa Education: Some Origins and Developments until 1953*. These include comment on low standards, inadequate accommodation and equipment, lack of teaching materials, irregular attendance, the low pay, overloading and inadequate supply of teachers, many of whom were unqualified or underqualified, a curriculum which was 'bookish and unpractical', small government grants, a high drop-out rate, poor control and organisation, and interdenominational rivalry. Horrell does add that there were exceptions, like Lovedale. And not only does she point to the inadequacies of the mission schools; on the subject of the new system of Bantu Education introduced in 1954 she makes some positive comments in addition to her objections. For example, she suggests that the expansion in numbers from 1953 to 1962 'represents a very considerable achievement'[60], that new primary and secondary syllabuses 'are generally considered to be an improvement on the previous ones'[61], and comments favourably on the introduction of school boards and committees[62]. In the light of these considerations it comes as a surprise that this work is not mentioned by Christie and Collins, as it deals with precisely the topic so central to their

account of the 'liberal' view of the introduction of Bantu Education.

I suggest that, instead of being based on examination of the types of text in question, the radical argument here rests heavily on the particular use of the term 'liberal' in several well known papers by radical historicans[63] which attack 'liberal' history of South African in general, as against 'liberal' studies of education. The argument thus relies for its account of the supposed 'liberal' view in the history of education in South Africa on the general radical literature attacking 'liberal' history, centrally as exemplified in the *Oxford History of South Africa*[64]. The question not considered is whether it is correct to assume that because, during a certain period, the dominant tradition in *history* in South Africa was a 'liberal' one, the same is the case in *studies of education*. Of course I do not entertain the assumption that history and history of education are distinct and separate fields. That is not the point. My observation here is that the radicals have taken a particular critical argument from a certain context and applied it to another object of interest, without considering the extent of its applicability. They have assumed that a ready transfer can be made before checking the subject and its central texts as carefully as they ought.

V

In addition to exposing the inadequacies of the radical attack on the supposed 'liberal' tradition in studies of education in South Africa, I have shown, by considering the criticisms and criteria offered of the 'liberal' tradition by the radical critics as well as the additional criteria which I have suggested, that of the central examples they cite, only Muriel Horrell can be uncontroversially classified as a liberal writer. In the light of this to suggest that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is a 'liberal' one is simply wrong. I hasten to add that, considering the history of schooling in South Africa and the continuing crisis which it faces, I share the radicals' disquiet at the general quality of academic studies of education in this country. But I am concerned, in the light of the mistaken view which radicals in theory of education hold of the nature of liberal ideas, that the relevance of such ideas will be missed.

By holding a mistaken notion of the nature and relevance of liberal ideas we may miss their centrality to some crucial elements in the enterprise of theory of education. The example I have in mind is the enterprise of considering questions like the aims of education (as against schooling), or what sort of education we ought to envisage for a future South African society. Such questions call for consideration of issues of principle, like

freedom and equality, of the kind to which liberalism draws our attention. They cannot sensibly be excluded from either a characterisation of liberalism or from the study of education. It is time to reconsider the relevance of genuinely liberal ideas to the study of education in South Africa[65].

NOTES

1 See, for example: Kevin Harris *Education and Knowledge*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979. Michael R Matthews *The Marxist Theory of Schooling*, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980. Rachel Sharp *Knowledge, Ideology and the Politics of Schooling: Towards a marxist analysis of education*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980

2 Peter Kallaway (ed) *Apartheid and Education: The education of black South Africans*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984

3 'Editorial Comment' *Africa Perspective*,No 17 Spring 1980, p 2

4 *Ibid*

5 Kallaway 1984, p 3. Texts referred to here are: E G Pells *Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa*, Cape Town: Juta, 1954. R M Ruperti *The Educational System in Southern Africa*, Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1976. J C Coetzee *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652-1960*, Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1963. A L Behr *New Perspectives in South African Education*, Durban: Butterworths, 1978. Brian Rose (ed) *Education in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg: Collier Macmillan, 1970. In the discussion which follows reference will also be made to: A L Behr and R G Macmillan *Education in South Africa*, Pretoria: Van Schaik, 2nd edition, 1971. Brian Rose and Raymond Tunmer (eds) *Documents in South African Education*, Johannesburg: Ad Donker, 1975

6 *Ibid* p 4

7 While Crewe does not use the word 'liberal' she is concerned in this paper to criticise the English-medium university education departments, which are commonly described as 'liberal'. Johan Graaf and Michael Lawrence in their paper 'Twice Upon a Kenton: Methodological reflections on the liberal-radical education debate', *Kenton Conference*, 1982, P 30, discuss Crewe's paper as 'an analysis of liberal theory in South African education'

8 Mary Crewe 'Why Can't the English?', *Proceedings of the Kenton Conference*, 1981, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Town, p 139

9 *Ibid*

10 Colin Collins 'Black Schooling in South Africa: Notes towards a reinterpretation of the schooling of the indigenous peoples', in *Africa Perspective*, No 17 Spring 1980

11 Pam Christie and Colin Collins 'Bantu Education: Apartheid ideology or labour reproduction?' *Comparative Education*, Vol 18 No 1 1982. Republished in Kallaway (ed) 1984 *op cit*

12 Kallaway's further comments on the 'dominant tradition of educational research' on pages 4 and 5 can be seen as elaboration on the second and third points of criticism here. Kallaway suggests that this tradition 'seldom, if ever,

raises fundamental questions about what schools are for, whose interests they serve, what kinds of knowledge or skills they reproduce or what their relationship is to the labour market', that its work is invariably 'written from a standpoint *internal* to the policy-making process itself', sharing its assumptions, that it equates the provision of education with the expansion of schooling, ignoring the elements of historical struggle and conflict. I have no quarrel with these comments on the dominant tradition in general, although I would question the accuracy of Kallaway's comment on R S Peters.

13 See 'The Liberal Point of View', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol 16 No 2 October 1984

14 Janet Robertson *Liberalism in South Africa, 1948 – 1963* London: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp 15-16

15 *Ibid* p 45. Paul Rich makes a similar point in *White Power and the Liberal Conscience: Racial segregation and South African liberalism 1921 – 60*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984, p 123.

16 See Robertson 1971, pp 110-117

17 *Ibid* p 31

18 Reprinted in Eli Weinberg *Portrait of a People*, London: International Defence and Aid Fund, 1981, pp 122-124. Although, as Tom Lodge points out in *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, p 72, some liberals saw the Charter as the outcome of a communist conspiracy by the Congress of Democrats, liberal principles do emerge clearly in the document

19 Instituut vir Christelike-Nasionale Onderwys, Johannesburg, 1948. Reprinted in Brian Rose and Raymond Tunmer (eds) 1975, pp 120-128

20 For a fuller treatment of the distinction between 'liberal' and 'conservative' see Penny Enslin 'Are P H Hirst and R S Peters Liberal Philosophers of Education?', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Summer 1985 (forthcoming)

21 Ruperti 1976 p 8

22 Of course, there are conservatives, eg Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, who do not endorse the status quo but advocate radical policies aimed at changing it in some way. But what conservatives, radical or not, have in common is their claim that their goal is to preserve certain traditional values and institutions. Liberals, by contrast with conservatives, are not centrally concerned with the preservation of such traditions, although this does not mean that they necessarily discount altogether the relevance of traditions

23 Ruperti 1976, p 3

24 Kallaway 1984, p 3

25 Pells 1954, p 6

26 *Ibid*

27 *Ibid* p 136

28 *Ibid* p 149

29 *Ibid* p 152

30 *Ibid* p 151

31 *Ibid* p 152

32 Behr 1978, p 265

33 *Ibid*

34 *Ibid*

35 See Section Two in Rose and Tunmer (eds) 1975
36 E G Malherbe *Education in South Africa*, Vol I 1652 — 1922 (1922), Vol II 1923 (1976), Cape Town: Juta, Vol I, p 8
37 *Ibid* p 69
38 *Ibid* p 458
39 All published by the SAIRR, Johannesburg
40 Horrell 1964, p 7
41 *Ibid* p 10
42 *Ibid* p 104
43 Horrell 1964, pp 152-169 and 1968, pp 16-19 and 130-132
44 By the United Party and Natives' Representatives in Parliament, the open universities, NUSAS, the SAIRR, the Christian Council of South Africa, the National Council of Women, and the Black Sash
45 Horrell 1970, p 160
46 Horrell 1964, p 192
47 *Ibid*
48 Horrell 1968, pp 136-7
49 Horrell 1964, p 194
50 *Ibid* p 195
51 Horrell emphasises (1964 p 187) that 'One cannot appreciate the significance of developments in African education unless these are viewed against the political background of the time'. Compare this with Behr's comment, revealing in its naivety, that dissatisfaction leading to the SOWETO riots of 1976 'would seem to be politically motivated'
52 Kallaway 1984, p 18
53 Collins 1980, p 5
54 *Ibid* p 15
55 Christie and Collins 1982, p 59
56 *Ibid* p 74
57 Frank Molteno 'The Schooling of Black South Africans: An historical overview', unpublished paper presented at a graduate seminar, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Town, 31 March 1980, p 25
58 See p 41 in Rose (ed), 1970
59 *Ibid* p 50
60 Horrell 1964, p 199
61 *Ibid* p 200
62 *Ibid* p 203
63 M Legassick 'South Africa: Capital accumulation and violence', *Economy and Society*, Vol 3 No 3 1974, p 253. D O'Meara 'Class and Nationalism in African Resistance: Secondary industrialization and the development of a mass movement in South Africa 1930 — 50' unpublished M A thesis, Sussex University 1973. H Wolpe 'Capitalism and cheap labour power in South Africa: From segregation to apartheid' *Economy and Society*, Vol 1 No 4 1971, p 425
64 Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds) *Oxford History of South Africa*, Vol 1 1969, Vol 11 1971, Oxford University Press
65 I am grateful to Wally Morrow, Pam Christie and Mary Crewe for commenting on an earlier version of this paper

Open the parcels and check inside before you stick on the labels: a response to Penny Enslin

Michael Cross

Education is presently one of the most controversial fields in the social sciences in South Africa and a site of bitter struggles. The schools crisis manifested by the 1976-80 uprising and boycotts, and the ongoing 'manpower crisis', has led to the crystallization of three main positions amongst educationists.

First, there are those who seem to be committed to the prevailing values of the inherited South African educational system, and who are blinding themselves to the changing nature of South African society. In their demands, there is a strong appeal for the preservation of the fundamental structures, nature and character of the present educational system. There is little that they criticise in either the writings on the educational past or that past itself. Education in South Africa must continue to maintain its traditional role of providing appropriate education to different 'cultures'. If there is any perceived threat to this group, it comes from the daring attitude of those who try to change the beliefs, conceptions and values inherited from the past by using forms of thought completely divorced from the dominant educational tradition. Amongst these might be cited some 'traditional' Afrikaner academics committed to maintaining the CNE vision in South African education.

Second, there are those who believe that the South African reality today is not the same as it was 20 or 30 years ago. They think that South Africa, at the present stage, is a new reality with new social, economic and political needs and is under different pressures. Thus, as far as educational development is concerned, a 'moderate', 'responsible' and 'realistic' choice is required. What is at stake is to adjust the inherited educational apparatus to the requirements of the new economic and social reality. More money must be pumped into education for blacks. The demands of the economy are now considered stronger than the colour bar. Here one

has in mind the modernising educationists who have associated themselves with the de Lange initiative.

Third, there are those who look at the present education situation with extreme feelings of dissatisfaction. They argue that the present educational system is geared to the preservation of a fundamentally unjust and unequal system based on huge disparities between black and white people. In their perspective, the crisis in education cannot be overcome by a simple adjustment of the education system to the needs of the economy, which they consider to be a technocratic view of the problem. The solution will only come with deeper changes at all levels of social life. This position is articulated by the emerging radical literature on South African education, which presents a challenge to all the traditional assumptions on education advocated in the first and second views. Within this context, new theoretical and methodological formulations have been proposed towards a redirection and reinterpretation of studies of education in the South African context. Strong criticisms have been made against the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa. This is considered to be dominated by liberal ideas. Some of these criticisms, however, have not been sufficiently grounded and have raised certain reactions, mainly in the liberal ranks. Within this trend, Enslin's paper has come as a welcome traffic sign. In this article, I will discuss Enslin's paper and try to place it within the context of the so-called 'radical-liberal' debate. Enslin is intent, in her paper, on showing that:

i 'the radical critics are mistaken in suggesting that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is a liberal one'[1]

ii 'the examples of liberal writers cited by the radicals are to some degree conservative rather then liberal'[2]

iii 'there is some confusion in radical circles about the use of the term "liberal"[3] and "the criteria of the liberal tradition implied in the radical criticisms of it are inadequate" and incomplete'[4]

iv 'a large part of the problem is the failure of the radicals to link their arguments convincingly to their sources'[5]

v 'the radicals have taken a particular critical argument from a certain context and applied it to another object of interest, without considering the extent of its applicability'[6].

In this article, some remarks will be addressed to the above-mentioned key propositions, the method (theory) implicitly suggested and the respective implications. It will be argued that the considerations on liberalism made by Enslin have done little to overcome the 'confusion' about the use of the term 'liberal', and that the proposed additional criteria, in the way they were used in her paper, can hardly provide a persuasive solution to the problem at stake. Any assessment of South African liberalism requires not only the identification of certain political values and general features of liberal 'scientific practice' but also an understanding of the way particular historical situations were confronted by the 'liberals'. Further, it will be argued that if Enslin has succeeded in pointing out that the 'radicals' have provided an incorrect critique by using a wrong approach, she has also herself failed to indicate a more adequate alternative method. Her traffic sign has remained a warning sign more than a guiding one. And this is, I think, the result of theoretical problems entailed by her approach. I shall discuss this point too. Let us start from the method which has led Enslin to her conclusions.

The criterion-based method

Enslin starts by listing the common accusations formulated by the radicals against the dominant historical tradition in education. These are: the emphasis on white education; the neglect of the study of black education; its descriptive, unanalytical and uncritical character; its superficiality in analysis and inability to show the relationships between education and other features of South African society. After criticising the validity of these criteria which she considers *inadequate* and *incomplete*, she suggests that two more fundamental criteria must be added for an adequate characterisation of the liberal tradition:

i the opposition to the Apartheid policies of the Nationalist Government;
ii the defence of certain principles like those of 'equality', 'rejection of racist discrimination' and 'defence of certain rights'[7].

Although she argues that these principles, drawn from Robertson's *Liberalism in South Africa* change in form, she stresses that 'they remain *applicable* to and *definitive*' of liberalism in South Africa[8]. She then examines whether the examples of the literature given by the 'radicals' (Coetzee, Pells, Ruperti, Behr, Macmillan, Rose and Tunmer, Malherbe

and Horrell) fit into the criteria framework. Obviously, for Enslin, only one, Horrell, could receive a green light as an uncontroversial liberal writer. All the others are kept behind the conservative wall. This conclusion raises some problems.

It seems to me irrelevant to adjudicate on who is right and who is wrong, the 'radicals' or the 'liberals'. This is not the place and the best way for this kind of judgement. Other questions, however, can be raised. From the sample of writers, Kallaway finds six 'liberals', while Enslin finds only one: the rest are conservative. How can perceptions of the same writers be so radically irreconcilable? Clearly, only if different meanings are attached to the notions of 'conservative' and 'liberal'. This bring us back to the question of the validity of the criteria used in each case. The 'radicals' armed, on the one hand, with these criteria and, on the other, with their new theoretically-informed perspective, should have been able to avoid the charge that they had not researched their subject matter adequately. But they failed to do so. As Enslin has pointed out, they have drawn conclusions before having carefully scrutinised as much as they ought the main sources.

The problem becomes larger when we come to Enslin's own position and conclusions. As I have already mentioned, if her criterion-based method is to be accepted, only one of those examples would receive a green light as a genuine liberal. I have no reason to agree or disagree with her conclusion at this stage, since there is no convincing argument in her paper about that. This is because the premisses used to draw the conclusion are also questionable. Before one can judge the veracity or validity of her conclusions, one must first discuss the validity of Enslin's criterion-based method. Let us look at this aspect in detail.

Put the problem another way and ask if Enslin's criterion framework or method is *adequate* and *complete* for an assessment of liberalism in South Africa. The answer could be both 'yes' and 'no'. *Yes* in the sense that her criteria reflect a combination of some of the basic universal values of *liberalism in general* with some particular forms of expression of South African liberalism. *No* in the sense that those 'definitive' criteria do not consider the notion of relativism determined by variables like time, place and social context. Inevitably, they lead to a confusing reductionism. The concepts are related to the use of words. The way in which a word is used varies or changes over the years and at any one time there are national, regional and individual variations. As John Wilson has pointed out, words 'do not have only one meaning: indeed, in a sense they do not have

meaning in their own right at all, but only in so far as people use them in different ways'[9]. More concretely, the concepts and notions of 'opposition', 'equality', 'racist discrimination', and so on, are subordinated to the relativism determined by social, economic, political and ideological conditions. Ask, for example, a 'liberal' black worker and a middle-class English-speaking white clerk what the main problem is that they face in their work place. They might both say: racist discrimination. We have the same word-expression, but, on the ground, we have, indeed, two different concepts of 'racist discrimination'. Similarly, so-called 'liberal opposition' was not the same during the segregation period and the Apartheid regime. Furthermore, 'equality' as such is a meaningless concept. Following some kind of philosophical reasoning one could ask: 'Equality? What do you mean, equality? Equality for what? Equality in what? Under what circumstances?' and so forth.

It is clear that to resort to that kind of abstractionism, to resort to the most common and 'definitive' features (criteria) of liberalism without looking at different and particular forms of liberal expression and practice, makes the problem too intricate to be clear. It makes it difficult to grasp the dialectical development of liberalism, its specific shape and particular forms of expression in each historical moment, amongst different communities and social strata.

An extreme alternative position would be a relativist one, that is, to forget about the generalisations and to rely on the particularities of each historical stage. Using Enslin's criterion-based method, the first would be, perhaps, to pinpoint the main historical phases of the development of educational literature. Of course this creates a difficulty. Which criteria would be acceptable for the definition of those stages? Suppose that we have the suitable criteria and we have defined the historical phases. The next step would be the determination of 'liberal criteria' for each phase. We would face another problem. It would be difficult to find terms of reference to evaluate our criteria. It would be difficult to get a consensus on the number and adequacy of our criteria. Undoubtedly, we could be accused, not without reason, of producing empirically-loaded conclusions. Besides, our research would become more difficult. Indeed, some social scientists would consider the possibility of a combination of both general and particular criteria.

Although this spirit is in some way present in Enslin's paper, this last alternative could provide the possibility of exploring many other criteria. One way would be to assume that there are different forms of expression of

liberalism: political liberalism, economic liberalism, and so on. Other criteria would be drawn from these different spheres. Why not the 'free market ideology' or the 'free enterprise ideology' present in current economic liberalism? But, here again, we could be trapped by the problem of evaluation and acceptability of our criteria. In addition, we would have to confront another difficulty. Who would benefit from our generosity and receive a green light? For example, adding these last criteria, Malherbe, as we shall see later, could receive the green light as an 'economic liberal' but we could be confused by his commitment to the CNE criterion introduced by Enslin.

What is questioned, in the three mentioned alternatives, is not the possibility of arriving at a more objective critique. This might eventually be possible but, using Enslin's method, only in a quasi-jackpot fashion. The search for a more suitable method is a fundamental component in the present debate. Thus, our discussion of criteria brings us back to the basic problem: the criterion-based method itself, as implicitly suggested by Enslin.

I shall argue that the problem with this method involves not only the difficulties raised by the use of criteria, but mainly the implications of the static character of the analysis it provides; in particular, the way it views the expression of liberalism in educational literature. But before I discuss this aspect I would like to make a point about the historical foundations of the criterion-based method itself. It seems to me that the criterion-based method is a reflection of the influence of 'analytical philosophy' as applied in education within the English tradition, specifically in its orthodox form, as formulated in the classic studies of Peters and others. To pick up one example, Peters in *Aims of Education-A Conceptual Inquiry* has suggested that a way handling the 'concept of education' would be to lay down 'criteria to which a family of activities must conform'. These criteria would be 'those that characterise the successful outcome of education in the form of an educated man; and those that characterise the processes by means of which people gradually become educated'[10]. On the basis of this framework he formulated his concept of education as 'the initiation of people into a worthwhile form of life'[11]. Although his concept of education did not pass uncontested, his form of conceptual inquiry or reasoning has had a considerable impact in philosophy of education.

Peters, however, after strong criticisms has been forced to recognize the weakness of this form of conceptual inquiry:

> '. . . the term *education* is used valuatively, but vaguely with lack of precision regarding its area of application. From this it might be mistakenly suggested that all that needs to be done is to pick out certain criteria that seem central to one's understanding of education and lay these down as a stipulatory preliminary to the issues to be discussed. *This, I think, would be a pretty pointless and presumptuous procedure*'[12].

This remark is also true if we substitute the term *education* by the terms *liberalism* or *conservatism*. Returning to the first point, the static character of the analysis, to list criteria drawn from a changing phenomenon in order to see whether the ideas formulated in different stages about such a phenomenon do or do not fit into those criteria, is easily conducive to errors. Although an individual as a subject of knowledge is not, epistemologically speaking, a passive reflector of outside stimuli we cannot ignore the complexity of human experience and its influence in the development of human thought. What is meant here by human experience is the whole complex totality constituted by factors such as the social environment in which man lives, the pressures exerted by generations, schools, the economy: a totality which is not *static* and *harmonious* but rather, dynamic, contradictory in nature and always in a changing process. The interaction of an individual with that totality changes and so his ideas change even if they seem to remain the same in their basic principles. The recent developments in educational literature prove that there has been a certain radicalisation of the so-called liberal positions in South Africa. The literature indicates that there has also been significant mobility between the three main ideological positions (conservative, liberal and radical). Some educationists who are associated with the de Lange initiative come from the so-called conservative ranks. Thus, it is possible to find a 'conservative' of the 1940s becoming a 'liberal' of the 1980s.

Towards a context-based method

The basic assumptions which underlie an alternative approach, to be suggested here, can be illustrated through the example of the Malherbe of the 1930s and of the 1960s. This is one of the extracts used by Enslin to show Malherbe's liberal view:

> 'In general, it may be said of South Africa that whenever a

> particular system of education did not recognise the people's ingrained love of liberty, their deep religious sense, and their desire for self- government, it was doomed to failure'[13].

This is an example which is difficult to judge without digging deeper into the social context in which it was expressed. The liberal connotation stressed by Enslin is misleading and it cannot be accepted as an inference from the extract.

There is no doubt that Professor Malherbe of the 1920s and 1930s was much concerned with the promotion of 'South Africanism', national development and the rationalisation of methods through the promotion of scientific research. His first volume, *Education in South Africa* (1925), was more concerned with this rationality than with liberal opposition to outmoded practices. Perhaps the well-known term of 'organic intellectual' might qualify to characterise Malherbe at that stage. To understand this point one must realise that the Malherbe of that time was not completely defined in the first volume of *Education in South Africa*. One must also look for him in the *Carnegie Inquiry on the Poor White Problem*, where he confidently started his career in the struggle for rationalisation of methods which were necessary to building white supremacy. One must look at his role in the *South African Council for Educational and Social Research*, which was an executive inspiration for the formulation of national policy at different levels but mainly at an educational and social one. For example, during the 1930s, when the influx of the black proletariat into the towns became a threatening problem, Malherbe was one of the men who relied on the rationality provided by social research as the first step for the formulation of suitable measures[14].

Then, new developments produced a new Malherbe in the 1960s. He became, indeed, more critical in relation to some practices which for him had become archaisms. He began to react against job reservation and other aspects of the restrictive legislation designed to protect the privileged section of the population. He also began to criticise this for having an uneconomic effect. Thereafter, for him, the expansion of education facilities to the 'non-white' groups and the removal of racial restrictions on employment became the conditions *sine qua non* to ensure economic growth[15].

This change, which makes Malherbe uncontestedly a member of the 'new liberalism' in South Africa, is well substantiated in his paper delivered to the 1966 National Congress of the Progressive Party, in which, with a high

sense of humour, he compares the situation and conceptions of the 1930s with the present and future reality. I do not mean that he proposes a radical change in education or any other field. Of course he reacts within the same parameters in which the so-called dominant liberal tradition has functioned, that is, against what is seen as outmoded practices or archaisms:

> '. . . the demands of the economy of South Africa are stronger than the colour bar with plenty of evidence out of the past to support and indeed to prove this view'[16].

Malherbe is only one example amongst others. But these considerations show that the characterisation of human thought cannot be done in a static way as in Enslin's criterion method, but must be related to its social, economic and political context. For example, a teacher of European literature in a high school could say: 'before you go to the text, first read the biography, if you really want to understand the ideas of the author'. So, the students could spend some time discussing the 'life of the author' in its social, political, ideological and psychological aspects, which, in many cases, could be found reflected in the author's texts, ideas and concepts. The students could learn that a word like 'liberty' would mean different things, depending upon the context both of the author and the text on the one hand, and their context on the other. This means that our own theory has to be confronted with the environment of the author and his own theory produced in that environment, in order to understand what he has written in his texts. This means that the text he writes during his adolescence or schooling would be marked by an aspect other than that dominating his mature literature. The conditions in which he wrote the first text have changed and so his ideas were determined or at least conditioned by his new social environment.

In summary, one could say that in the process of characterisation of any educational study, the way one understands the ideas formulated in those studies depend on many factors:

i the author's theoretical framework determined by his social existence;

ii the social environment of the author and his own conception of that social environment;

iii the changing nature of all these factors. This means that any study of education or any criticism of such a study is basically an expression of 'the way particular historical situations are confronted'. So, without

falling into an historicist approach, any thought or assessment about those studies must be historically conducted. The study of education must be periodized and related to the specific developments of each period as well as to contradictions of the previous periods. In doing so, we will be able to locate the development of thought within its context and formulate judgements accordingly. This idea is present in Paul Rich when he points out that:

> '... the overall assessment of South African liberalism must not be guided by, as many liberal historians have imagined, the simple ability to keep certain political values intact, but by the way particular historical situations are confronted. As Eric Voegelin has warned, (liberalism) is not a body of timeless valid scientific propositions about political reality, but rather a series of political opinions and attitudes which motivates them, and are then overtaken by history and required to do justice to new situations'[17].

Finally, let me end my remarks on Enslin's article with two supplementary points. The 'radicals', perhaps with the aim of strengthening their arguments about the importance of their message-the application of political economy/historical materialism to the educational field-launched the argument that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is a liberal one. Unfortunately, they gave no reasons to support this assertion. This is their main weakness. Enslin, exploiting this weakness, gave a determined direction to the debate which has an echo in this paper, although here a new dimension has been introduced. The debate is being conducted in a very misleading way. The main question raised by the 'radicals', the applicability of political economy/historical materialism to the educational field still remains. Many articles and some books have been published in this direction but the results have not been scrutinised.

Furthermore, it is not clear that there is any advantage in labelling different social scientists, whatever the labels (conservative, liberal, radical, marxist, neo-marxist, right-wing liberal, left-wing liberal, extreme-right-wing liberal or radical, or conservative, etc., etc.). Like many other labels, they probably conceal as much as they reveal. *They tend to obscure the fundamental differences between those dialectical, and those whose thinking is criterion-based or categorical.* Rather, it seems that what is important for a social scientist is his ability to *critically* discern, select,

develop or use the theoretical tools provided by the different schools of thought which can, more easily and safely, lead to the intelligibility of the social reality, without being arrested by unnecessary scholarly apartheid. To conceive scientific praxis as an art of labelling the product of social research, especially when it assumes the form of expression of the present debate would be a short-sighted view of what has to be done, not only in terms of priorities but also in terms of safeguarding scientific rigour and discipline. There is a risk of transforming education into a field of academic recreation.

However, there are some labels which are conventionally accepted as terms of reference of the different schools of thought. In this sense, the terms 'liberal', 'radical' or 'conservative' and others have a place. But before we stick on the labels why not open the parcels and check what sort of commodities are inside?

Enslin has made an important contribution in demonstrating that the 'radical' writers have come to conclusions without 'checking the subject and its central texts as carefully as they ought'[18]. However, relying too much on her criterion-based method, she has 'thrown out the baby with the bathwater'.

NOTES

1 P Enslin 'Is the Dominant Tradition in Studies of Education in South Africa a Liberal One' *Perspectives in Education*, Vol 8 No 3, p 130
2 *Ibid* p 145
3 *Ibid* p 130
4 *Ibid*
5 *Ibid* p 149
6 *Ibid* p 151
7 *Ibid* p 134
8 *Ibid*
9 John Wilson *Thinking with Concepts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, p 10
10 R S Peters (ed) *The Philosophy of Education*, Oxford University Press, 1980, p 15
11 *Ibid* p 16
12 R S Peters *Essays on Educators*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981, p 33
13 E G Malherbe *Education in South Africa*, Vol I, 1652-1922, Juta, p 8
14 E G Melherbe *Education and Social Research in South Africa*, 1939, pp 40-41
15 E G Malherbe *Education and the Development of South Africa's Human Resources*. Paper delivered to the 1966 National Congress of the Progressive Party of South Africa, pp 23-39
16 *Ibid* p66
17 Paul Rich *White Power and the Liberal Conscience: Racial Segregation and South African Liberalism 1921-1960*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984, p 123
18 P Enslin *op cit* p 151

Justice and education in South Africa: Plato, Verwoerd and the White Paper

Mark Dorgan

Central to the debate surrounding the recently published White Paper[1], is the moral question of whether a more just system of education is being proposed or not. It is as a contribution to this debate that I would like, in this paper, to consider the close similarities in the notion of justice in the following: Plato's *Republic*[2], Dr H F Verwoerd's educational policy in South Africa in the 1950s and the official response to the De Lange Report[3] (the White Paper).

I will begin by analysing the notion of justice Plato advances in the *Republic*, arguing that it involves anything but justice because of Plato's omission of the notion of equality from his account[4]. I will then argue that the same notion of justice is implicit in the education policy of Dr H F Verwoerd and, finally, that in the White Paper, a misunderstanding of the full implications of the notion of equality leads to the same Platonic notion of justice being adopted. In the White Paper, this results in a kind of 'horizontal hierarchy' being proposed — a contradictory position. I will conclude by pointing out that the Platonic notion of justice as adopted implicity by both Dr Verwoerd and the authors of the White Paper, can only perpetuate injustice.

The Republic of Plato

In Ancient Greece there was a tradition which linked justice and equality. This is evident, for example, in the following quote from Pericles, 'Our laws afford equal justice for all alike in their private disputes, but we do not ignore the claims of excellence. When a citizen distinguishes himself, then he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as a reward for merit; poverty is not a bar . . .'[5]. Plato himself, in one dialogue, talks about the Greek notion of justice by saying, 'justice is equality'[6]. And yet, in the *Republic*, the work in which Plato claims to be explaining justice,

we see a totalitarian and unequal political policy set out[7]. Could this be what later led Aristotle to say, 'Equality for equals, inequality for unequals'[8]?

Plato proceeds in the following way in the *Republic*[9]: he begins his enquiry into the nature of justice by searching of this Idea in the State. For Plato, the State is founded upon human nature, its needs and its limitations. He saw each person as best fitted to a particular occupation and role in the State and concluded that this was the occupation or role that person *should* fill. He continues by saying that if anyone were to attempt to leave his 'rightful' place in the State and aspire to another position or role, this would lead to the downfall of the State. In other words, if each class and each individual within each class were to mind its own business, this would facilitate justice, according to Plato.

Karl Popper[10] suggests that Plato's inclusion of the notion of justice in the *Republic* was merely a bit of propaganda designed to promote the totalitarian system he favoured. I think that a more sympathetic account can be given. The reason for Plato's particular account of justice seems to me to be twofold. Firstly, I think it arises out of the methodology he employs, and secondly, I think his equation of justice with political stability is partly to blame.

Plato's starting point — searching for the Idea of Justice in the State — I believe, leads him to give a normative account of justice. In other words, in the State as it existed, to treat a slave justly, for example, meant to treat him *as a slave*, in terms of the *norms* seen as applicable to slaves. Plato seems to have extrapolated from this to say that this is the way they *should* be treated (an example of the Naturalistic Fallacy[11]).

Secondly, as I have noted, Plato seems to equate justice with political stability. If the present situation is stable, then any change will mean decay. In the *Republic* then, Plato seems to be attempting to formulate an ideal model of stability from which all change would lead to instability. Instability, and thus change, is then bad and so justice can only be realised within the context of stability.

The central problem with Plato's account of justice is the exclusion of the notion of equality. The adoption of a moral principle, it seems to me, must include the adoption of the procedural principle proposed by Kant[12] — that adoption of the moral principle must be compatible with the desire to apply that principle universally. In other words, to say that we are going to adopt the moral principle of justice implies that it should be universally applied — justice for all *equally*. If this were not so it would be an

expression of self or group interest, rather than truly a moral principle.

But if we accept that any account of justice must include the principle of equality, then we are forced to ignore *irrelevant* considerations in ensuring equal justice and to take into account the equal *rights* which must be considered. For example, that one man is poor and another rich should be considered irrelevant in determing how it would be just for them to be treated as men. And that one man's gluttony infringes on another man's rights by causing him to starve precludes calling the former's gluttony justifiable. Plato's consideration of political stability is relevant here, but as one factor, not the *only* determining factor.

Popper proposes the following as a more humanitarian account of justice[13]. It will mean a) equal distribution of the burden of citizenship, i.e. of those limitations of freedom which are necessary in social life; b) equal treatment of citizens before the law, provided that; c) the laws show neither favour nor disfavour towards individual citizens, groups or classes; d) impartiality of the courts of justice; and e) an equal share in the advantages which membership of the state may offer its citizens.

Having looked briefly at Plato's account of justice in the *Republic*, its problems and a possible alternative, let us turn now to the education policy of Dr Verwoerd to see what parallels can be drawn.

Dr H F Verwoerd's education policy for South Africa in the 1950s

The following quote from a speech given by Dr Verwoerd during the House of Assembly debates in 1953 will give us an idea of his separatist educational policy:

> Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live . . .[14].

This can be supplemented by the following quote. J N le Roux, in the House of Assembly, 1945, said:

> We should not give the Natives an academic education, as some people are so prone to do. If we do this we shall later be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and Non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in the country? I am in thorough agreement with the view that we should so conduct our schools that the Native who attends

> those schools will know that to a great extent he must be a labourer in the country[15].

Clearly, it is on this premise that Verwoerd based his education policy.

In the quote given from J N le Roux, the idea of political stability can be seen to underpin the position adopted. The argument can be reconstructed as follows: the country needs both academically trained people and people who will perform the manual labour in order to function adequately; it is the place of the 'Native' to do the manual labour; therefore the schooling of the 'Native' must prepare him for manual labour. At the time the statement was made, it was generally the case that Blacks performed the manual labour — the norm. Based on this, le Roux argues that this *should* be the case. This parallels Plato's argument in the *Republic*.

Similarly, Verwoerd speaks of the 'opportunities in life' and the 'sphere in which they live' as though these are somehow fixed or given. He too assumes that the existing norm is constitutive of what *should* be the case. Again, this parallels Plato's position; the norm is seen as determining the desirable.

This position persists throughout Verwoerd's education policy of the 1950s. It has implicit in it the notion of justice as constitued by stability — each person or group fulfils its 'rightful' place in South Africa society. As in the case of Plato's position, the crucial problem is the exclusion of the notion of equality from the account. Can we say that, as in the case of Plato's *Republic*, it serves to disguise a totalitarian and unjust system of government?

If we compare the political reality of the 1950s in South Africa to the account of justice put forward by Popper (as mentioned under 1), it becomes clear that few, if any, of the requirements were fulfilled. There was neither equal distribution of the burden of citizenship, nor equal share in the advantages of citizenship. The laws were not impartial, though it is arguable whether the courts were partial or not.

The point that I am trying to make here is the following: in the 1950s there was an unjust political system operating in South Africa, according to Popper's account of justice. This injustice can be seen in the education policy of Verwoerd to arise out of a mistaken (normative) notion of justice. This notion is the same notion of justice that can be found in Plato's *Republic*. It must thus be rejected on the same grounds — that it does not take cognisance of the necessity for an adequate account of equality in

giving an account of justice.

The White Paper

Many people would agree with me when I say that the education policy of Verwoerd was unjust, but what needs to be done is to look at the more recent education policy in South Africa to determine whether or not a significant change has taken place. In other words, has an adequate account of justice been incorporated into the education policy? That is, has an adequate account of *equality* been incorporated?

The main guiding policy adopted in the White Paper[16] can be stated in the form of the following formula: 'Separate, but equal'. The government claims to be committed to equality of educational provision for all South Africans, but only within the context of separate education systems for different 'population groups'. In other words, *some sort of* account of equality has been introduced, but is it an adequate account? Does it facilitate a truly just education system?

Central to the 'separate, but equal' formula is the justification given for the adoption of separateness as a necessary feature of the proposed system. It is assumed that there are four distinct 'population groups' (White, Coloured, Indian and Black), each forming a community of people with common interests, norms, practices and so on. It is further assumed that this *should* be the case; that it is in the interests of the survival of South African society that this situation should be preserved. In other words, while the principle of equality is accepted this can legitimately be realised within the context of separation which facilitates political stability.

It is immediately apparent that there are close parallels between this argument and those of Plato and the Verwoerdian educational policy. The argument proceeds from what is the case to the conclusion that this should be the case — a normative account. Further, implicit in the position is the assumption that it is only this alternative which will preserve political stability.

There are a number of problems here. Firstly, a normative account cannot be justified except by reference to *relevant* reasons. To argue that the colour of one's skin determines one's community, one's values, one's educational requirements and so on is to appeal to an irrelevant reason. An American negro may be a member of a quite typical American community, share their values and so on, *in spite of* the colour of his skin.

Secondly, to assume that this kind of separation is the only alternative which will preserve political stability is also mistaken. It is to confuse

political stability with the status quo. Again, if one is to argue for one alternative as the only alternative which will preserve political stability, one is required to put forward relevant reasons. This also involves showing that other alternatives will lead to instability. This has not been done. Also, as I mentioned earlier, political stability is not the only consideration.

Thirdly, is the appeal to equality compatible with the notion of separation? To speak of equality of educational provision only makes sense within the context of a discussion of equality within the political context that that education takes place. Using Popper's account of political justice, the present South African political dispensation involves injustice, just as in the Verwoerdian era.

An adequate account of equality involves a consideration, as already mentioned, of both relevant reasons and equal rights. To say that skin colour is the reason for separate education is to appeal to an irrelevant reason, as already shown. The crucial issue seems to me however to be the issue of equal rights.

Equal rights involve the linked notions of freedom and responsibility. If a community is to cooperate constructively in their communal life, there must be the allocation by agreement of both freedoms and responsibilities. If justice is to operate, these freedoms and responsibilities must be equally allocated. The core criterion in the allocation of freedom and responsibility is that of whether the exercise of one's freedom will infringe on the rightful freedom of others[17].

The central question in deciding if separate education can also be equal, is the question of whether this separation infringes on the equal rights of the members of the society. Is there some freedom, which, if exercised, would not infringe on the rights of others, but which is precluded by separation of educational provision? My answer is yes, — separation precludes the right to a freedom of *choice*.

Freedom of choice seems to me to be fundamental to justice in at least the following cases: deciding with whom one will associate, deciding one's values, religion etc., choosing a job, etc. If these do not infringe the similar or related rights of others, then they are necessary for facilitating justice.

But the proposed 'separate, but equal' system of education will remove from the members of South African society at least the choices about with whom to associate, one's values, the school one sends one's children to, and where and what one may study. As Professor Ranchod of the University of Durban-Westville said on television recently in reply to the question, 'Does the Indian community want its own schools or does it want

schools integrated with other groups?' — That is not the issue, the issue is whether the individuals in the Indian and other sectors of South African society will be given the choice as to which schools (Indian or otherwise) they will send their children to and the choice of which universities will best prepare them for their chosen career[18].

It seems to me then that the White Paper's 'separate, but equal' formula for South African education does not include an adequate consideration of the notion of equality and that instead of a just educational system, it proposes something very similar to Plato and Verwoerd — what I call a 'horizontal hierarchy' — it appears to promote equality, but perpetuates inequality. These are incompatible and thus, the 'horizontal hierarchy' proposed by the White Paper is a contradictory position and an unacceptable one.

Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to show that, like Plato in the *Republic*, the educational policy of the Verwoerdian era relied on a mistaken notion of justice and that the attempt to reform South African education as put forward in the White Paper still falls short of an adequate account of justice.

The reasons for this are complex, but I think that the main stumbling block in the way of a just education system in South Africa is the present division of power and the state of political justice in the greater context of South African society. It is only positive and constructive political reform, real reform, that can facilitate the realisation of a just education system.

NOTES

1 *White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa 1983*, 23 November 1983, Government Printer, Pretoria
2 I rely in this paper on the account of Plato's position as given by K R Popper *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol 1, Fifth Edition (revised), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, esp Ch 6
3 *Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa: Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation into Education*, 1981, HSRC, Pretoria
4 *White Paper, op cit*
5 *Thucydides*, II 37ff
6 Plato in the dialogue *Gorgias*
7 For a full treatment of this, see Ch 6, K Popper *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol 1
8 Aristotle, *Politics*, III 9 1 1280a
9 K R Popper, *op cit* p 90
10 *Ibid* p 92
11 See for example G E Moore, *Principia Ethica*, Cambridge University Press 1903

12 S I Benn and R S Peters *Social Principles and the Democratic State*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1959, p 47
13 K R Popper, *op cit* p 89
14 H F Verwoerd, Speech in the House of Assembly Debates, Hansard, Vol 83 17 September 1953 Col 3575
15 J N le Roux, Speech in the House of Assembly Debates, Hansard, Vol 52 2 April 1945 Col 4527
17 See for example J S Mill's *On Liberty* in by M Warnock, Glasgow: *Utilitarianism*, Fontana, 1962, p 205
18 My paraphrase of the Afrikaans statement of Professor Ranchod on the SABC TV Afrikaans Service programme, 'Om die waarheid te sê', 1984

DISCUSSION
Education for non-conformity: some critical comments

Leon Benadé

I should like to formulate certain critical comments in response to Joe Sherman's address, published in the September issue of *Transvaal Education News*[1]. Initially however, I would like to lend support for part of what he had to say.

His central concern is that we as teachers are failing to achieve what he sees to be an integral aim of education, namely the development of individual autonomy. This is not the place for an explication of this aim, suffice it is to say that school fails to generate non-conformity precisely because it does not educate. This is so for a number of reasons[2] not least of which is the particular teaching philosophy to which so many teachers adhere.

This philosophy is to some extent captured by what is variously known as the 'empty vessel theory', the 'dark room theory' or the 'blank slate theory'. Essentially, the child is conceived of as being born with a mind which is likened to a blank slate on which society (of which teachers are seen to be important representatives) 'writes' a host of information which will lead the child to mature adulthood, at which point the child is regarded as being 'educated'. Accordingly, the teacher is seen as a lamplighter, gardener or bucket-filler[3]. Peculiar to the thinking of many South African teachers is the mystifying dogma known as Fundamental Pedagogics, which vests the lamplighter image with an overdose of authority. This authority is to be used by the teacher to coerce, if necessary, the child into following the 'correct' trajectory to 'adulthood', which includes, presumably, an obsequious devotion to authority:

> Compulsion . . . is pedagogically justified. Who else but the educator must finally decide on the choices the child makes and the direction he follows?[4].

My guess is that it is the penetration into schools of this kind of philosophy which troubles Joe Sherman, and prompts him to conclude that school generates conformity.

Certainly the aims of such a philosophy is well-served by its handmaiden, the examination, and more especially, the public examination. Without fail, teachers are loath to deviate from 'the syllabus' as they prepare scores of frantic matriculants for 'the exam'. Slavish adherence to musty syllabi constricts thought, and bores young minds. At all levels, the examination system serves as a screening mechanism which sorts out youngsters, ensuring that industry is well-stocked with workers of all types and aptitudes. The political and economic aims of schooling need not be repeated here. It is clear that Joe Sherman is well aware of these old philosophical and sociological chestnuts. However, his move from the classroom to the sportsfield has the faint odour of illegitimacy, and I am uncertain that the comments he makes at this level are all theoretically and practically sound.

Firstly, all of Sherman's initial comments centre on a specific learning theory, and have to do with what happens in the classroom. Recall that he suggests that this theory is what generates conformity. He then goes on to suggest that this process is upheld by 'two systems', namely exams and team sport. Now while I have tried myself to give an account of what seems to be a dominant approach to teaching in South Africa, and while I have shown that exams bolster this deeply conservative approach, I feel certain that Sherman has mistakenly seen in team sport the same restrictive philosophy.

It is not clear to me how it is that team sport and participation therein inhibit the development of liberal thought. Indeed, it never occured to me that the development of autonomous choice could have anything to do with what happens on a rugby field. I do think, however, that part of using school to develop individual autonomy — to the extent that this far-off aim might ever be achieved within school — includes giving youngsters the choice of participating or not, and should they choose to participate, a choice of activities from which to choose.

Which brings me to my next point, which concerns the psychology of choice. If teachers are to operate as Joe Sherman would have, then they need at all levels to encourage in children the ability to become critical thinkers and discerning choosers. There is however a thorny caveat. Human nature being what it is, children are notorious at choosing not to choose, or plumping for the soft option. In other words, left to their own

devices, children are often quite likely to fade into apathy. Alternatively, their choices will guide them along lines of weakest resistance in the sense that children will often opt for the alternative which requires least effort or which suits them best. What I am saying then is that educating children to be non-conformists and discerning choosers will fail unless they are taught self-discipline.

Out of this self-discipline will emerge such outcomes as commitment, dedication and perserverance. I think that Joe Sherman makes a crucial error by overlooking this point. The prefect who was selected for the 1st XV and who chose to swim instead exercised the first part of the formula: he made a discerning choice autonomously. However, he failed on the second part of the formula: once he had made himself available to be selected for the rugby team, he should have had the self-discipline to abide by this choice and see his commitment through. He failed to do so, and I am afraid that Joe Sherman's account allows this type of vacillating behaviour to prevail. In other words, Sherman's vision lacks the morality of selflessness.

This is so partly because Sherman equates selflessness with conformity and acceptance of the status-quo. This is indeed an error, as selflessness is possibly the most supreme form of self-discipline, and without a measure of self-discipline, no individual can be expected to make coherent choices. Free thought and autonomous choice is not anarchy and lawlessness — this is why I stress self-discipline, and my point is that to commit the self to the common good of the team enhances self-discipline. Herein lies the efficacy of team sport — indeed, even individualistic sport types involve the suppression of the self to longer-term goals. And Sherman makes an error if he thinks participation in sport is conceptually linked to mediocrity. It is precisely within the bounds of team participation that a seemingly mediocre individual can shine, and it is possible for the combined talents of the team to overcome the deficiencies of the less talented in the team.

While I have certain reservations about the necessity for wearing uniform, it needs to be pointed out that on this issue Sherman lurches into a contradiction. He rejects that justification for the wearing of uniform as a vehicle to . . . display the rewards of conformity as an incentive to others'[5]. Sherman rejects team sport because it tends to stifle the individual self, and, in turn, individual talent. However, it is precisely the point of awarding sporting (and other) colours to make public the *excellence* of certain players, which contradicts Sherman's denial that team players could display excellence.

Joe Sherman correctly diagnoses certain ills which are currently crippling schooling, and which are making the possibilities for education to occur most remote indeed. There is no doubt that we have a 'human duty' to teach independence and individuality. And being independent and individual presuppose freedom. But freedom requires the temperance of self-discipline, lest freedom degenerate into anarchy. It is my point that we have in team sport the ideal vehicle for the teaching of such self-discipline.

NOTES

1 Joseph Sherman 'Education for Non-Conformity' in *Transvaal Education News*, Vol LXXXII No 8 September 1984
2 See for example, Trevor Pateman 'Can Schools Educate?' in *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol 14 No 2, 1980
3 Postman, N & Weingartner, C *Teaching As A Subversive Activity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969
4 Viljoen, T & Pienaar, J *Fundamental Pedagogics*, Durban: Butterworths, 1971 p 102
5 Joseph Sherman, *op cit*, p 19

Access to university

Michael Gering and Aletta Zietsman

Introduction

In 1985 the University of the Witwatersrand appears to face several crucial decisions with regard to its admission policy. On the one hand the University has in recent years faced an annual growth rate of about seven percent, a growth rate which it is unwilling to sustain. On the other hand the University recognises that vast sections of our society have been prejudiced by an inferior education and is equally unwilling to abrogate its perceived social role.

The problem in restricting student intake is the possibility of eliminating potentially successful candidates, candidates who are talented but through no fault of their own have an inferior academic background. Conventional methods most frequently used to identify talented students include the following:

The student's performance in his final school examination is generally regarded as the best single predictor of success at university[1], probably because '... the same qualities of ability and application are tested by both ...'[2]. Matriculation results are therefore the most widely used criterion for entry into a university.

A second approach is the attempt to measure talent directly. Standard intelligence tests have been shown in numerous studies to be worse predictors of performance at university than secondary school examination results. This result is not surprising. Standard intelligence tests and ability tests are measures of those specific knowledge and problem-solving skills which have been acquired by the student during the years prior to the test situation. The validity of test scores as a measure of ability depends upon the assumption of equal exposure to and practice with the kinds of knowledge and skills that the tests call upon[3].

Another approach is to try and measure socio-economic status using a sophisticated index analysis in order to identify students who are talented

but disadvantaged. Social variables such as the father's occupation, family size and parental education have shown consistent relationships with academic success at school level, but in higher education the situation is less clear. Studies have reported that low social class could in fact be associated with high academic performance[4].

As a first step towards implementing positive action, we have proposed that the university use two entrance criteria. This approach is suggested by the observation that a typical matric class is a statistically significant sample, say n=100, and therefore avoids the need to measure either academic background or academic aptitude directly. The approach has been placed on a sound theoretical basis[5] and one of its predictions is tested empirically in the study reported here. The paper presents some preliminary findings of a study examining the effect of academic background on university performance. It also makes some policy suggestions based on the study and on the authors' experience with the slow stream physics courses at the University of the Witwatersrand. Being preliminary, the findings of the study should be treated with due scientific caution.

Academic aptitude as a measure of success at university

The original proposal provided a measure of academic aptitude. In this context academic aptitude means not only the ability to manipulate and memorise, but also the ability to sustain motivation, to learn over an extended time-scale and to handle occasional acute academic pressures.

Since each school provides a relatively uniform environment, a student's percentile is an ordinal measure of aptitude, the most significant uncertainty being the random statistical fluctuations in the choice of sample. These fluctuations are estimated theoretically and are smaller than the observed inter-school fluctuations. Preliminary results indicate that while the annual intra-school fluctuations of the fraction of students receiving matric exemption are about the size statistically expected, the inter-school fluctuations are significantly larger.

Since the matric exam is a good indicator of current knowledge, the student's performance measured against that of his matric class enables us to identify a student as academically talented although his current academic functioning is below that expected of people with the same ability. An important cross-check is available in that the matric class also provides a pragmatic measure of the student's academic background. These two measures are of course strongly inter-related.

The City University of New York (CUNY) has been accepting students to university since 1970 using similar admission criteria: entrance to a senior college (university level) was assured if the student had attained a high school average of at least 80 in academic, college preparatory courses, or had graduated in the top half of the high school class. The use of either high school average or rank to admit a student was designed to increase minority enrollment in senior colleges, since students with low averages in predominantly minority high schools could still qualify on the rank criterion. Since its inception in 1970 some changes have been made in the admission criteria: rank in the top 35% is now required. CUNY's admission policy has been criticised as a threat to academic standards, but Lavin et al provided evidence of no decline in academic standards and definite success in reducing educational inequality[6].

Design of the study

Sample

The study was based on student performance in a first year ancillary course in physics at the University of the Witwatersrand. The sample consisted of 425 students from the 1981, 1982 and 1983 ancillary physics classes. This sample was chosen due to the large number of students involved and because the records extend over several years. The classes are subdivided randomly and are taught by a number of different lecturers, demonstrators and tutors. The students take the course for reasons ranging from purely cultural to the hope of entering medical school. Their matric ratings range from 64, corresponding to straight A's, to 32, corresponding to straight E's. In addition to this main sample, the 1983 slow stream physics class was analysed in the same way. This sample was much smaller (70 students) and the results are therefore less significant.

The feeder schools have matric exemption rates ranging from below 5% to above 95%, in other words, some schools may have 100% of their students entering university, whilst only 2% of the students from another school would have obtained the minimum requirement for entrance into a university. The schools fall under nine education departments. This implies different examinations and could therefore influence the findings of the study. However, noting the overlap in results between the departments, it was decided to ignore the possible effects. As a precaution, the matric results of students from schools in one education department were used in the analysis described below, and the findings were not significantly

different from those obtained with the total sample.

Mature age students and students who were repeating the year, even though they were registered for physics for the first time, were excluded from the sample.

Private correspondence colleges were considered to be significantly different from a school from any of the nine education departments and did not fit the original assumptions of the model. They were therefore excluded from the sample of schools.

Method

Our study aims at distinguishing those students with academic potential but a poor matric background, and hence relatively poor matric results. We have proposed that a student's rank in his matric class would be an important indicator of academic aptitude. The assumption that a typical matric class ($N = 100$) is a statistically significant sample, provides a measure of both academic background and academic aptitude. Since the student's percentile was not readily available, it was decided to focus on the student's background, the hypothesis being that given two students from different backgrounds but with the same matric rating, the student from the worse background (now receiving similar attention to the student from the good background) should perform better. In view of the predictive ability of the matric rating and the inability to estimate a *priori* the time scale over which this improvement takes place, the background was correlated against the difference from the predicted mark.

The 'experimental' procedure is as follows:

1 The students' matric ratings are correlated against their final year mark. At this stage all students are considered together. We note that a student from a poor background can have a good matric rating while some students from good backgrounds have poor ratings. In this way a predicted mark, thus how a student with a certain rating is expected to perform, is determined by the entire student population and the students act as their own control group. A quadratic fit is used where appropriate to determine the curve to the desired accuracy.

2 The student's background is assessed by using the fraction of students from his/her matric class obtaining matric exemption; thus a student from a school where 95% of its students obtained matric exemption will have a background of 95, while a student from a school with a 4% pass rate will similarly have a background of 4. This indicator covers almost the entire range from zero to a hundred and it is noted that it

includes the effects of cumulative causation that no statistical index, however accurate, could.

3 The students' improvement, that is the difference between their actual final marks in Physics I and their predicted marks, are then correlated against their respective backgrounds in order to test the hypothesis above.

4 This correlation had been obtained for each class separately, thus improvement-background correlations for the 1981, 1982 and 1983 ancillary physics courses, as well as the 1983 slow stream physics class were calculated.

5 Finally, the total sample of ancillary physics students is used in a calculation of the correlation between improvement and background. The predicted mark is calculated using results from a recent study by van Wyk and Crawford[7]. Their study investigated the success of the matric rating system as an admission criterion and ran over five years of the first year physics ancillary course, involving 2200 students. It found the correlation between matric rating and the final first year mark to be greater than 0.6, confirming again that matric is by far the best predictor of results at a first year level.

Results

The correlation coefficient between the students' improvement and their school background obtained from the sample of all the ancillary physics students (N =425), is

$$r = -0.25$$

and the slope is given by

$$m = -0.15 +/- 0.03$$

The null-hypothesis is thus about five standard deviations from being true.

Several comments are appropriate:

1 A statistical noise is unavoidable — both the examiners and the students are human. In particular it is not possible to set a perfectly reproducible exam. The clear trend is that, despite the noise, the students who deserve the extra chance on moral grounds are those who most benefit from it.

2 The assumption that the students are now all in the same environment is too strong. Students from Soweto, Laudium and Lenasia, for example, still have to travel over an hour to and from the University, and then go back to study under often not ideal circumstances.

Furthermore: an environment can be hostile in more subtle ways. Even within the white community some students will have visited the University before and have had siblings and parents graduate from Wits; while to other students the place will be foreign, the people will talk in funny accents and behave in a peculiar fashion. Very important is whether the student's family and friends can empathise, sympathise and advise when necessary. These features are expected to be less important after the first year; the student has friends at Wits and starts talking and behaving funny too.

3 The study suggests that the students from poor schools (lower half of the scale) improve over the time scale of one year, on average roughly ten marks over students from good schools. It is not unreasonable to expect this trend to continue in second and third year, since the students become more accustomed to the particular academic environment. It could well be that some of these disadvantaged students go on to distinguish themselves and their university in various fields of academic achievement.

4 Given the expected fluctuations in the students' marks, the correlation reported above is considered high. Combining these results with other variables, such as aptitude tests, could provide a stronger predictor[8].

3 A more appropriate correlation would be students' actual percentiles and the differences from predicted marks, but even with the present information, all the correlation coefficients between students' improvement on their predicted marks and their school background indicate the same trend. Correlations varied between —0.35 and —0.22, indicating that the admission policy suggested, although at this stage a rough and ready one should, for want of anything better, be implemented[9]. It is also interesting to note that the results above argue against the continuation of the slow stream physics program as it exists at present.

Discussion

No one can guarantee that any one student will pass or will fail. However, we would like to make the following loosely connected recommendations.

Restricting admittance to university is not in itself bad. Clearly no-one gains from including people who have no chance of passing. Furthermore, the argument that it is worth including any student with a chance of passing

is spurious and it ignores the cost in subsidy, the cost to the student who is probably under a misapprehension and the marginal costs to other students in terms of facilities and demonstrators. With the facilities stretched as they are, this is of particular importance to the disadvantaged students and even more critically related to the success of a remedial program. This is confirmed by remarks from students of the low stream physics courses[10].

Below some minimum level the University no longer has the obligation to accept a student and the onus shifts to the student to show he/she is deserving of a place. We suggest three criteria:

> Firstly, only students with a chance of passing should be accepted, thus avoiding wasting their time and demoralising the rest of a support programme.
>
> Secondly, as a course measure, the student's background should be examined and weak students from superior schools must be eliminated. The minimum level of acceptance into the University must depend in part on how many remaining places are available. Aspects such as probable improvement, which can be read off directly from our results, should be considered favourably.
>
> Thirdly, the final selection could involve tests and must rest ultimately on the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty concerned. We recommend the student's percentile as one of these criteria. In our model this represents academic aptitude, while it has been used elsewhere on the grounds that it '. . . captures at least some aspects of motivation . . .'[11].

Academic support

Lavin[12] recorded CUNY's intention to provide '. . . equality of educational opportunity encompassing not only access but also outcome . . . by introducing remedial programs, counselling and other services . . .'. The situation concerning the academically disadvantaged students in universities in this country requires a similar attitude, for we are also facing the problem of '. . . educating *really* raw material — those who need help — rather than those who only need a little polish and certification . . .'[13].

Drawing from our involvement in academic support programmes at Wits, the following observations are considered important:

It is important not to underestimate the effect of non-academic factors on student achievement; for example, the stigma of second rate should not become attached to students in a support programme and the high expectation of the admission criteria should be known. In other words, the student in the support programme has not been admitted as a result of his or her being disadvantaged, but because he was considered to be academically talented.

Even more important — the student from a poor background is unlikely to get the moral support traditionally expected from a middle class environment. A long term study conducted at RAU in which similar first generation students were given continual non-academic support shows this has a very real beneficial effect[14]. This support should be provided at least on a weekly basis. It could be monitored by M Ed students, probably until the final year.

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

1 N J Entwistle and J D Wilson, *Degrees of excellence: The academic achievement game*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977 for a succint summary of international studies in this regard
2 *Ibid* p 18
3 A B Wilson 'Social class and equal educational opportunity' in *Harvard Educational Review*, 38, 1968, pp 77-84
4 N J Entwistle and J D Wilson *op cit*
5 M Gering and A Zietsman 'University entrance in a non-homogeneous society' in *South African Journal of Education*, 3, 1983, pp 181-184
6 D E Lavin, R D Alba and R A Silberstein 'Open admissions and equal access: A study of ethnic groups in the City University of New York' in *Harvard Educational Review*, 49, 1979
7 J A van Wyk and J L Crawford 'Correlation between matric symbols and marks obtained in a first year ancillary physics course at the University of the Witwatersrand' in *South African Journal of Science*, 80, 1984, pp 8-9

8 See N J Entwistle and J D Wilson, *op cit*, p 116 on the effects of combining variables weighted in such a way as to obtain the highest possible multiple correlation with a criterion variable

10 Discussions with administrators in various education departments confirm that the matriculants' results are grouped according to school on magnetic tape and that in principle the batch numbers are available. It is in this way that the education departments are able to provide the schools separately with their results. Negotiations to obtain this information should be conducted at the Vice-Chancellor's level. That the percentiles could be extracted with a few lines of programme was again confirmed in discussions with members of the Management and Information Services Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand

10 A few second year slow stream students (Physics I K2) have made unsolicited remarks on the difference in learning and teaching experiences in the J1 class (+/— 150 students), and in the K2 class (+/— 50 students) to one of us as class parent. Since then many solicited comments have confirmed these students' viewpoints

11 Q W Ayres 'Racial desegregation, higher education and student achievement' in *Journal of Politics*, 44, 1982, p 356

12 D E Lavin et al *op cit*

13 G S Rothbart 'The legitimation of inequality: Objective scholarship vs black militance' in *Sociology of Education*, 43, 1970, pp 174-95

14 F A J Marais 'Oorgang van skool na universiteit' *Bulletin vir Dosente*, 1982

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CONTRIBUTIONS

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Contributions should not ordinarily exceed 3 000 words in length, and should be typewritten on one side of A 4 paper, double spaced, with ample margins. Three complete copies should be submitted. Proofs will not be sent to authors for correction.

There is to be no separate 'Bibliography'. References should be kept to a minimum. All notes (which includes 'footnotes' and references) are to be numbered consecutively in the text (in Arabic numerals, in parenthesis, on the line of the text), and should be listed at the end of the article, as 'Notes'. Titles of papers or chapters cited are to be enclosed in quotation marks; titles of books are to be underlined. Examples:

NOTES

1 Carole Pateman *Participation and Democratic Theory,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
2 PF Strawson 'Freedom and Resentment' in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays,* London: Methuen, 1974, pp 15-23.
3 L Althusser 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in BJ Cosin (ed) *Education, Structure and Society,* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977, see p 81.

Substantial quotations (more than about 3 lines) should be indented, shorter quotations should be enclosed in single quotation marks. Omissions from a quotation should be indicated by three dots.

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