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ON SCHOOLING FOR POLITICAL COMPLIANCE:

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY STUDIES AND THE HEGEMONIC POWER OF
ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNOLOGY IN LATE CAPITALISM

KENNETH G. RUSH ©

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

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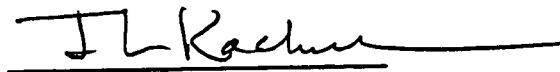
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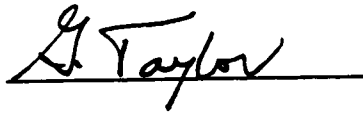
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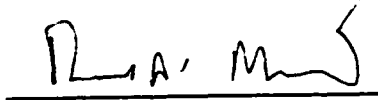
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance , a thesis en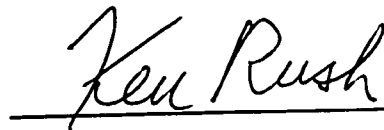titled *On Schooling for Political Compliance: Career and Technology Studies and the Hegemonic Power of Administrative Technology in Late Capitalism*, submitted by Kenneth Graham Rush in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in the Sociology of Education.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines institutionally-mediated processes of social control as instrumentalized through administrative technology, specifically as mediated through institutionalized schooling. Such processes of social control are designed to inculcate students with compliant dispositional attributes via the selective control of opinion-formation in attempting to engineer a "flexible" army of labourers ready and "willing" to be cycled and recycled through a contingent and uncertain labour market with little or no protest, even as assurances of upward mobility through schooling become progressively less credible. Alberta Education's Career and Technology Studies curricula are examined in this thesis as representative examples of such processes of sociotechnics (or social engineering).

This thesis is dedicated to Shelley in recognition of her patient tenure as the "widow" of a fanatical graduate student, and to my parents who, amidst this sea of intolerance, taught me to judge people not by what they are, but by who they are.

Many thanks to Dr. Jerrold Kachur for providing a sympathetic ear over the past four years and for convincing me of the wisdom of reining in at least some of my eclecticism.

Thanks as well to Dr. Gerald Taylor, who emphasized the "social" in social psychology and regularly punctured administrative pomposity with ironic barbs.

. . . and to Dr. Raj Pannu, who reminded me that it is sometimes more effective to launch a surprise attack through the scullery than to storm the front of the Bastille.

Finally, to paraphrase Antonio Gramsci, may the optimism of your will always temper the pessimism of your intellect.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL FRAGMENTATION

> Education was not an invention of the Age of Reason, neither was it an artefact of the intellectual revolution of which we so often read as the mother, or at least the midwife, of the modern, civilized age. Education was, rather, an afterthought, a response of the "crisis-management" type, a desperate attempt to regulate the deregulated, to introduce order into social reality which had been first dispossessed of its own self-ordering devices. With popular culture and its power bases in ruins, education was a necessity (Bauman, 1987: 69).

> . . . sociology originated as a discipline responsible for the problems that politics and economics pushed to one side on their way to becoming specialized sciences. Its theme was the changes in social integration brought about within the structure of old European societies by the rise of the modern system of national states and by the differentiation of a market-regulated economy. Sociology became the science of crisis par excellence; it concerned itself above all with the anomic aspects of the dissolution of traditional social systems and the development of modern ones . . . . Today, however, sociology, to a growing degree, is becoming an applied science in the service of administration. The technical translation of research results is not applied to analytic schemata, but instead to a social reality which has already been schematized (Habermas, 1984 [1981]: 4; 1973: 208).

Throughout the era of organized capitalism – roughly the last two-hundred and fifty years - restrictive techniques of social and political administration have been gradually applied to the public sphere to render popular movements for democratic participation more manageable. As a consequence of the application of such administrative techniques, movements for democratic participation have been forced to concede ground to limited forms of "representative" democracy (corporatist oligarchy), "polite" forms of quasi-totalitarian control, or "genteel fascism" (Orwell, 1962 [1937]). As limited forms of grassroots participation are further marginalized by the advance of ever more obtrusive structures of socio-political administration, limited forms of democratic process tend to atrophy as well. Such atrophy is not only sanctioned but

actively promoted by most professional administrators in entrenched social and political institutions, for it is easier to keep the gears of "governance" - whether in the legislative assembly or at the public school – running smoothly when the "messy" process of democracy (limited though it might be) is replaced with restrictive forms of administrative technology instrumentalized through corporatist steering-mechanisms. Such administrative techniques, designed to operationalize social control through institutional means (schools, child welfare agencies, juridico-political institutions, etc.), tend to "colonize" most aspects of human interaction in the complex and increasingly dislocated web of commodified social structures manufactured under the auspices of late monopoly capitalism. Rather than seeking to critically confront and at least *attempt* to alter the progress of injustices and inequalities in contemporary socio-economic structures, the administration of such institutional structures tends instead to focus upon the engineering of mass compliance and "cheerful" obedience to the instrumental dictates of an increasingly unjust and unequal social, economic, and political order which is only vestigially democratic. Operating behind a façade of instrumental neutrality, administrative technology offers the "perfection" of social administration as a "utopian" ideal which seeks to remove the variable of human "error," and thus human volition, from social planning.

This study examines technocratic ideology as it is manifested in the obsessive desire to impose administrative control imperatives on all aspects of the social order in late capitalist "democracies" of the monopolistic variety. Since the social order of such states is (and has been for some considerable time) becoming progressively more crisis-ridden,

crisis management initiatives (as opposed to crisis *resolution* initiatives) are also examined, especially as they are operationalized via commodification and manipulation through the institutional structures of schooling and mediatized political tutelage. A further analytical focus herein is an examination of how crisis management initiatives are operationalized via administrative technique through the engineering of compliant dispositional attributes in "educational" institutions, most specifically through career or vocational training programs. To this end, Alberta Education's Career and Technology Studies curricula (CTS) are critically examined. This examination proceeds as a textual analysis rather than as a field study.

As is emphasized in this thesis, a major argument utilized in the operationalization of crisis management "imperatives" - namely that prosperity and upward mobility awaits all who obtain "the proper technical training" through programs such as CTS – is scarcely credible given the structural inequities of labour markets under conditions dictated by monopoly capital. This thesis further proposes that the myth of technological prosperity for all who prepare for it in the "new knowledge economy" is, in actuality, no more credible than previous myths of imminent prosperity devised to engineer widespread compliance to the crisis-prone economic growth imperatives of monopoly capital. It is also noted herein that the myth of a prosperous new knowledge economy has been embraced as "simple common sense" even by many of those who have been most economically marginalized before, during, and after "previous periods" of "imminent" prosperity. Such "common sense" constitutes a formidable – although not insurmountable – hegemonic bloc.

The concept of hegemony will be discussed in detail in the coming pages, but a brief definition of the word, and three other concepts central to the arguments herein – reification, crisis management, and sociotechnics - is in order at this point. At the risk of being overly reductive concerning a term which encompasses a wide scope of meanings, *hegemony* denotes ideological co-optation or, more specifically, the *selective* co-optation of central aspects of often divergent ideological perspectives to render them more homogeneous and manageable. Although hegemony is often reductively defined as "leadership," it must be stressed that such "leadership" may frequently be characterized by not only the *presumed consent* of those to be led but by both overt and obscured elements of coercion as well. Such elements are discussed in Chapter One of this study.

Reification entails the representation of transitory historical phenomena as if they "were permanent, natural, outside of time" (Thompson, 1990: 293) and, therefore, impossible to change.

Crisis management involves the redefinition of crises out of *perceived* existence through such means as data and media manipulation. As an administrative "science," crisis management depends upon the continued presence of crises for its existence and, as such, it represents the antithesis of crisis *resolution*.

Sociotechnics (also known as social engineering) is closely related to crisis management and entails "engineering" the appearance of democratic process while actually managing opinion-formation via administrative technology in order to secure the "social order" or preserve the status-quo. Essentially, sociotechnics seeks to drape pre-

selected outcomes in democratic garb.

Such attempts to secure "the social order" through the application of administrative technology have their historical precedents in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century utilitarian pragmatism of the "Benthamites" (followers of social "reformer" Jeremy Bentham) and their proposed widespread use of devices such as the Panopticon, to observe the hidden activities of prisoners, schoolchildren, and workers without being seen by those observed in the course of such surveillance:

> The principle was this. A perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the centre of this, a tower, pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face of the ring. The outer building is divided into cells each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows, one opening on to the inside, facing the windows of the central tower, the other, outer one allowing daylight to pass through the whole cell. All that is then needed is to put an overseer in the tower and place in each of the cells a lunatic, a patient, a convict, a worker or a schoolboy. The back lighting enables one to pick out from the central tower the little captive silhouettes in the ring of cells. In short, the principle of the dungeon is reversed; daylight and the overseer's gaze capture the inmate more effectively than darkness, which afforded after all a sort of protection (Foucault, 1980: 147).

The Panopticon, referred to by Foucault (1980) as "the eye of power," has, of course, subsequently been supplanted by more sophisticated devices for monitoring and surveillance such as the closed-circuit camera, the video monitor, and the computer terminal. The computer terminal, in particular, brings monitoring to a state-of-the-art level of sophistication, for monitoring via such means can fully dispense with, if so desired, the need for observation by controlling subject behaviour through such means as instructional prompts and keystroke monitoring. When instruction is thus operationalized, behavioural control may be more effectively emphasized as a major focus of tutelage

than previously and, consequently, behavioural science may more effectively come into its own as a "Mecca" for the new breed of schooling "technicians" who aspire to institutional administration. For such technicians, predictability, efficiency, and accountability are the watchwords: they are schooled to exacting specifications in the "art" of turning out a better product, whether that product happens to be a student or a student teacher.

Indeed, this desire for a fixed standard of "product" specifications in tutelage is becoming ever-increasingly noticeable in teacher training programs, wherein compliance and predictability tends to be stressed over exploration and originality. In such programs the parameters allowing for individual expression are narrowing as control is increasingly stressed over autonomy in order to "ensure" the reinforcement of "desirable" perspectives in teacher training candidates. Increasingly, as with school-aged children, teacher candidate behaviour and responses which cannot be "harmonized" with the requisite control imperatives are labelled "dysfunctional." Such behaviour and responses must then be modified to fit into a more functional mold.

Not surprisingly, given the fact that such functional instrumentality prizes predictability above all else, much of the debate often heard in instructional circles regarding "individual teaching styles" must remain at a purely theoretical or hypothetical level. At the level of practice, therefore, such evidence of individuality is likely to be overstated. If the instrumental mandate for predictability allows little room for genuine or substantive individuality, the merest "quirk" may then be taken for a radical or subversive level of individuation. Like the social structure of which they are microcosms, institutions

such as schools are quite unlikely to tolerate levels of individuality such as might lead to participatory democratic activism, for such activism threatens and destabilizes institutional control and the massified and essentially uncritical acceptance of the "consumer culture" which so pervasively characterizes the present era of late capitalism. Indeed, movements for democratic participation tend to be increasingly marginalized in historical periods of cultural massification, mediatization, and homogenization such as the present period, a period in which much of what passes for "individuality" is imbibed through various media in the form of standardized commodities. Such commodification engenders a paradox inasmuch as people's individuality "is actually impaired by the fact that they read the same newspapers, see the same television programmes, eat the same foods, dress in the same fashions, worship the same shadowy creatures promoted by show business." This pallid "ideology of individualism not only denies the social and the collective (except insofar this can be manipulated in the interests of profit), but it also denies the individual" (Seabrook, 1991: 38).

As Habermas observes, such mediatization is paradigmatic of the erosion of the public sphere of communication "by administrative sub-systems" which disempower and desiccate possibilities for "spontaneous processes of opinion- and will-formation," "expand the scope for engineering mass loyalty and makes it easier to uncouple political decision-making from concrete, identity-forming contexts of life" (Habermas, 1987a [1981]: 325). However, administrative glue cannot hold fragmented social systems together indefinitely, for

> While organizational rationality spreads, cultural traditions are
> undermined and weakened. The residue of tradition must, however,
> escape the administrative grasp, for traditions important for legitimation
> cannot be regenerated administratively (Habermas, 1975 [1973]: 47).

Without public knowledge of "specialized" information, open debate of important issues cannot take place. The private monopoly of such information does far more damage to democratic participation than any presumed "foreign" threat possibly could, since "social solutions hardly can be expected to be formulated, much less implemented, when people have been systematically privatized in their physical, spiritual, spatial, and cultural lives" (Schiller, 1986: 42).

Such systematic privatization of the public sphere of communication turns the democratic potential for free expression in upon itself, leading in turn to an atmosphere where social fragmentation and social pathology may increase – in theory, exponentially if left to run their course. "Official" responses to the social fragmentation and pathology which tend to arise from the administrative constraint which accompanies the privatization of the public sphere of communication often advocate that more such constraint has become necessary. Such responses arise from a certitude that social fragmentation and pathology are "disciplinary" problems rather than structural problems, thus requiring behaviour modification rather than structural change; structural inequities are not addressed, but constraint is applied to the symptoms arising from structural inequities – fragmentation, sociopathology, economic austerity and/or destitution, fatalism, apathy, and political inaction. The permanent and degenerative state of social, economic, and political crisis spawned by monopoly capitalism is the disease such symptoms are a response to and, as with any disease, mere attempts to suppress

symptomology only serve to mask the root causes of such symptoms. Thus constrained, symptomatic human responses to administrative control "imperatives" that seek to make such responses more "manageable" are further denied an outlet through which the erosion of individual personality structures might be circumvented. What is surprising about such constraint is not that it tends to produce sociopathology and fragmentation, but that the incidence of sociopathology has not yet become more widespread.

Perhaps the fragmenting or "colonizing" effect which the "imperatives" of administrative technology tend to have on social structures is deflected to some extent by the fact that, although such imperatives are reified, they are also historically constructed and do not come to control social reality in an uncontested manner. The extent to which such administrative power becomes concentrated at specific sites in specific historical epochs is thus directly related to the level of resistance within socially contested power struggles. At present the extent to which such power relations are reified, due to technological and administrative imperatives which have global implications, is considerable. This "intricately interlocking network or system of technologies appears value-free but in fact inducts us into a normative framework as we adapt it into our daily activities" (Feenberg, 1995: 228). However, the fact that such power relations have been systematically obscured through processes of normative adaptation also means that they can be just as systematically revealed via the process of counter-hegemonic movements in collective consciousness towards alternate normative frameworks.

In reviewing the main themes discussed in this introduction, one can gain further insight into the aforementioned processes of normative adaptation. For

example, a normative emphasis in schools upon prerogatives which correspond to a *limited degree of* elite consensus - or, as referred to by Raymond Williams (1976 [1973]), the "selective tradition" in schooling – tends to justify and thus reproduce unequal power relations throughout society. Consequently, rather than fulfilling its supposed mission (according to liberal democratic mythology) of providing the conditions by which societies might move closer to some degree of equality, schooling actually tends to maintain the already existent unequal status-quo by attempting to ensure that as many people as possible accept such inequality as natural and inevitable.

Of course, such acceptance is seldom advanced overtly or even acknowledged as an important functional element in schooling. A preponderance of educators are well-intentioned and some even manage to remain idealistic enough to believe that redressing socio-economic inequality is actually operationalized in a substantive manner through schooling. Such inequality is, however, *a structural feature of social relations under capitalism* and cannot therefore be altered by idealism – certainly not by idealism alone. Since such inequality is structurally-based, it can only be dealt with structurally, in a direct and material manner. However, since structural alterations in unequal socio-economic relations essentially represent diametric opposition to the principle of hierarchically-based elite accumulation in capitalism, popular agitation for structural change is transformed via deferral into the widespread acceptance of inequality.

Such acceptance is "engineered" via the precepts of human capital theory,

which seeks to present schooling as an investment that "must" eventually lead to

upward mobility. Despite the fact that serious doubt has been cast upon the

credibility of such theorizing, popular belief in the basic tenets of human capital or,

latterly, progressive competitiveness theories remains remarkably prevalent. Thus,

> . . . in spite of their common experience of a superficial connection
> between their formal educational attainments and the requirements
> of their current or recent jobs, both underqualified school dropouts
> and underemployed university graduates continue to believe and act
> as if more education is the personal solution to living in the
> education-jobs gap (Livingstone, 1998: 125).

Nonetheless, the contradiction arising between the myth of "equality through

education" constructed via human capital/progressive competiveness theory and the

concrete experience of structural inequalities which inevitably arise in the course of

capitalist competition is becoming ever more apparent as increasing numbers of

highly schooled people experience economic austerity. Such a contradictory set of

circumstances contains very real potentialities for social pathologies, especially

when such circumstances are reified as "normal" and/or inevitable.

Given that it is my contention in this thesis that the acceptance of unequal

socio-economic relations as natural and inevitable by as much of the population as

possible is engineered through institutional structures such as schooling through

selective ideological co-optation (hegemony), an examination of hegemonic processes

and their effect upon social systems will comprise the focus of Chapter One of this

study. Chapter Two will examine the role of Alberta Education's Career and

Technology Studies program (CTS) and programs similar to CTS in engineering

hegemonic compliance to unequal socio-economic relations. Chapter Three will

more closely examine the dissonance between the rhetoric of human capital, progressive competitiveness, and "skills-deficit" theories and the realities of a service-oriented labour market in which skills, education, and "human capital" in general are largely underutilized. Chapter Four will review the major arguments and evidence presented in this study and explore the possibility of alternate courses of action vis-à-vis the reversal of trends towards increased socio-economic stratification.

Chapter One

TOWARDS AN OUTLINE OF POWER RELATIONS IN TECHNO-ADMINISTRATIVE SOCIETIES

On The Administration of Monopoly Capitalism: An Historical Perspective

> Like a rider who uses reins, bridle, spurs, carrot, whip, and training
> from birth to impose his will, the capitalist strives, through
> management, to *control*. And control is indeed the central concept
> of all management systems, as has been recognized implicitly or
> explicitly by all theoreticians of management (Braverman, 1974: 68
> [emphasis in original text]).

> *Belief in the omnipotence of technology is the specific form of*
> *bourgeois ideology in late capitalism.* This ideology proclaims the
> ability of the existing social order gradually to eliminate all chance of
> crises, to find a 'technical' solution to all its contradictions, to integrate
> rebellious social classes and to avoid political explosions. The notion of
> 'post-industrial society', whose social structure is supposed to be
> dominated by norms of 'functional rationality', corresponds to the
> same ideological trend. In the 'higher' intellectual regions it finds
> expression in a static structuralism which has inherited the category
> of totality from Hegel, but not that of movement, and has adopted the
> category of the organic reproduction of all social formations from
> dialectical materialism, but not that of their inevitable decomposition
> (Mandel, 1975: 501 [emphasis in original text]).

> . . . critical philosophy implies above all historical criticism. It dissolves the
> rigid, unhistorical, natural appearance of social institutions; it reveals their
> historical origins and shows therefore that they are subject to history in
> every respect including historical decline (Lukacs, 1971 [1922]: 47).

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century in Britain, which saw the advent

and gradual decline of the Luddite revolts against the factory system, the technological

"gospel" of Owenite socialism, and the proto-technocratic philosophy of the Benthamites

(all of which have reappeared in one form or another in the late twentieth century),

capitalism had not yet been consolidated into forms of monopoly. It had first to absorb

the accumulated expert knowledge of labour and labour processes into machine

technology, a process which would subsequently be further consolidated by the application of electrical power and microelectronic technology to machinery. This process is often regarded as simply a natural or inevitable historical progression and has, as such, become reified:

> So comprehensive was the victory of science and technology in the bourgeois epoch that machine technology became a part of nature. The logic of industrial production, that is, the division of labor organized hierarchically and by means of coercion, was now an unquestioned aspect of the natural order. It was no longer regarded as a human product that had evolved historically under certain social conditions (Aronowitz, 1988: 129).

As noted by Marx, the drive to absorb the accumulated knowledge of labour into machinery, or *fixed capital*, was from the outset purposefully conceived as a means through which the power to control labour could be more effectively administrated through centralization, constituting "the historical reshaping of the traditional, inherited means of labour into a form adequate to capital" (Marx, 1973 [1857]: 694). Thus, as celebrated by Andrew Ure in 1835, "when capital enlists science into her service, the refractory hand of labour will always be taught docility" (Marx, 1938 [1867], vol. 1: 437). While this debatable proposition has always been rather contingent upon the willingness of labour to accept such tutelage, it must be conceded that the power wielded by capital in the drive to control labour was certainly enhanced by the advances in machine and administrative technology which accompanied the rise of corporate monopoly in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. These advances were concurrent with

... the rapid completion of the colonization of the world . . . the division of the globe into spheres of economic influence or dominance . . . the internationalization of capital, the international division of labor, imperialism, the world market and the world movement of capital . . . changes in the structure of state power . . . and the scientific-technical revolution, based on the systematic use of science for the more rapid transformation of labor power into capital (Braverman, 1974: 252).

Thus, the late nineteenth to mid twentieth century witnessed the expansion and consolidation of the first long wave of economic and socio-cultural imperialist colonization of the globe which had its roots in late fifteenth century Europe, an expansion and consolidation which was hastened by the drive to monopolize capital forces. The fact that this wave of colonization has by no means followed a constant linear trajectory is a testament to the often bitter and concerted opposition to its "progress."

When the purely external "progress" of colonization encounters expansionary barriers based upon structural constraints, processes of colonization begin to contract. Thus, the "explosive" growth of monopoly capital, along with the often adverse influence of such growth upon socio-cultural cohesion, is transformed into a state of *implosion*, whereby the emphasis of capital begins to shift from the power of external control over the economic, social and cultural activities of subject peoples to power mediated via *internal* control of human motivations and desires. We may refer to this process as *internal colonization*.

This is not to say that external control has become obsolete, for such power is still exerted as the basis upon which internal control is constructed. This internal control is referred by Freire (1993 [1970]) as "the internalization of the oppressor" and by Habermas as "the colonization of the lifeworld":

> In place of "false consciousness" we today have a "fragmented consciousness" that blocks enlightenment by the mechanism of reification. It is only with this that the conditions for a *colonization of the lifeworld* are met. When stripped of their ideological veils, the imperatives of autonomous subsystems make their way into the lifeworld from the outside - like colonial masters coming into a tribal society - and force a process of assimilation upon it (Habermas, 1987a [1981]: 355 [emphasis in original text]).

As observed by Freire, such internalization of the "logic" of highly inegalitarian power structures often lead those oppressed by such power to fatalistically acquiesce to their oppression, an acquiescence often portrayed by those who wield political and/or economic power as proof that those who are "allegedly" oppressed in reality consent "actively" to the dominant hegemony. The internal mediation of power through the "active" consent of those marginalized by the administration of such power is frequently engineered through attempts to convince those constrained by administrative policy that the impetus for the instrumentalization of such policy originated with them (this proposition will be elaborated upon in the next section of this study: On the Hegemonic Internalization of Norms in Techno-Administrative Societies).

The notion of active consent, or internal accommodation, to external constraint assumes its most sustained "focus" when it is employed in the ideological rationalization of "free" market policies. As delineated by Desmond King (1987) in his analysis of "New Right liberalism" (or neo-liberalism), such policies valorize the "unfettered" or deregulated market in an attempt to revivify classical liberal conceptions of market economics which accompanied the first great wave of capitalist expansion in highly industrialized European states from about 1750-1850. This view of market economics casts the market as a reified "natural" force that cannot be regulated, rather than as an

artificial human construct with its own built-in constraints and contradictions. Thus,

human beings must adapt themselves continually to the "natural laws" of market forces.

According to this model the state sector must only serve the minimal purpose of guiding

(or gatekeeping) natural market forces towards their ultimate destiny, a "destiny" which

neo-liberals celebrate in their reactionary "revival of the nineteenth-century separation of

economy and politics" wherein "Key aspects of economic management are . . . to be

shielded from politics, that is to say, from popular pressures" (Cox, 1992: 32).

Ultimately, of course, this attempted separation is arbitrary in the extreme and

destined to founder on the shoals of its own innate contradictions, chief among which is

the fact that social relations, even in an era such as the present where socio-political

activism is suppressed and marginalized, are inherently political and the fact that

economies are nothing more or less than highly complex sets of socio-political relations.

Thus,

> Globalisation and neoliberalism are not simply imposed on us from
> outside. They are produced and stabilised by everyone through everyday
> practices, ways of living, modes of consumption, relations between the
> sexes and current value systems (Hirsch, 1999: 291).

Moreover, the concept of the "gatekeeper" state is itself undone by a basic

contradiction which emerges in the attempted application of this concept as policy: the

profound socio-economic dislocations which tend to arise from such laissez-faire

conceptions of market economics preclude minimal state intervention. As King (1987)

observes, "Liberalism accords a minimum role to the state in the operation of the

economy and social order. It assumes these latter will be largely self-regulating" (10).

However, this assumption becomes scarcely credible when one considers

> . . . the extent to which the political and economic arguments about a
> reduced state (and popular anti-statism) are contradicted in practice by the
> need for a strong state to maintain market forces. Linked to this is the
> influence of New Right conservatives who explicitly seek a strong state . . . .
> (for) the maintenance of authority and public order . . . (King, 1987: 21-22; 25)

Thus, neo-liberalism seeks to "harmonize" classical liberal economic policy with

conservative social policies of order and control that, as King observes, are essentially

pre-capitalist in their orientation and provide "a set of residual claims to cover the

consequences of pursing liberal policies" (25). Such consequences inevitably arise given

the lack of feasibility in pursuing classical free market policies in an era of monopoly

capitalism, an unholy alliance that "typically involves the subordination of small and

medium enterprises to new forms of monopolistic competition on a global scale" (Jessop,

1993: 30). Given the divisive and fragmentational consequences of such subordination,

neo-conservative initiatives that seek to maintain order and authority through

"responsible" government are increasingly at odds with the unfettered competitive drive

of supply-side economics, for

> . . . in order to create profit, capitalism by and large also requires that
> traditional values are subverted. Commodity purchasing and market
> relations become the norm and older values of community, 'sacred
> knowledge', and morality will need to be cast aside (Apple, 1993: 59).

Supposed free market expansion on a global scale not only undermines value

systems which have (at times) served to support capitalist expansion via legitimation

processes (Habermas, 1975; 1984 [1981]) but also subverts the gospel of free and

theoretically unlimited competition propounded by classical liberal economic theorists:

Even putting aside massive state intervention, increasing economic
concentration and market control offers endless devices to evade and
undermine market discipline ... some 40 per cent of "world trade" is
intrafirm, over 50 per cent for the US and Japan. This is not "trade" in
any meaningful sense; rather, operations internal to corporations,
centrally managed by a highly visible hand, with all sorts of mechanisms
for undermining markets in the interest of profit and power. In reality,
the quasi- mercantilist system of transnational corporate capitalism is
rife with the kinds of "conspiracies" of the masters against the public of
which Adam Smith famously warned, not to speak of the traditional
reliance on state power and public subsidy (Chomsky, 1996: 129).

Given the widespread disenchantment such institutionalized subterfuge within the

"sanctus sanctorum" of "organized" capitalism has frequently engendered against the

duopoly of the corporate state, one might reasonably ask how it has been possible to

avoid a greater fragmentation of the social order in the "advanced" capitalist states than

has thus far been the case. To a significant extent, such fragmentation has been postponed

through the cultivation of *an appearance of ordered consensus*. In the next section the

extent to which this hegemonic consensus has been internalized will be examined.

On the Hegemonic Internalization of Norms in Techno-Administrative Societies

... each new class which puts itself in the place of the one ruling before
it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its
interest as the common interest of all the members of society, put in an
ideal form; it will give its ideas the form of universality, and represent
them as the only rational, universally valid ones (Marx and Engels, 1940
[1846]: 40-41).

For a class to be ripe for hegemony means that its interests and
consciousness enable it to organise the whole of society in accordance
with those interests (Lukacs, 1971 [1922]: 52).

Bourgeois hegemony depends upon the inculcation, registration and
implantation of the conditions of rule in individual character structure.
Where this hegemony is established, rule .... colonizes the self and is
lived as a set of internal imperatives ... (Curtis, 1988: 378).

> Every relationship of "hegemony" is necessarily an educational
> relationship . . . (Gramsci, 1971 [1926]: 350)

In *The Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci refers to hegemony as the domination of antagonistic groups and the "leadership" of "kindred" groups (1971 [1926]: 57-58). This "leadership" may most usefully be characterized as tutelage or hegemonic education into the acceptance of one's own social status, whether ascendant or, more often, subordinant, via repeated assurances that this status is due to the "natural order" of things. Such tutelage has become known as "Social Darwinism," a philosophy which confuses that which is arbitrary or contingent with that which is fixed or immutable. In the realm of politics such tutelage results in what Gramsci referred to as "passive consensus," wherein the majority are "integrated through a system of absorption and neutralisation of their interests in such a way as to prevent them from opposing those of the hegemonic class" (Mouffe, 1979: 182). For instance, if the "hegemonic class" can represent its own vested interests as part of "a rising tide that lifts all ships," it may convince much of the majority that these are their interests as well (even though all evidence to the contrary may refute this contention), marginalizing most other interests in the process. At times when "consensus" cannot be secured through such subterfuge, Gramsci observes that, in parliamentary democracies, a combination of force and consent may be exercised upon the majority, with force *generally* remaining in the background and, when it is resorted to, made to appear "to be based on the consent of the majority" (1971 [1926]: 80n). The engineering of such an appearance of hegemonic consent can, however, be highly problematic, for, like the "machinery" of instrumental control, hegemony is complex and thus prone to instability when subjected to sufficient amounts of pressure by

countervailing forces. As Williams (1976 [1973]) observes, "hegemony is not singular ... its own internal structures ... have continually to be renewed, recreated and defended; and by the same token ... they can be continually challenged and in certain respects modified" (205).

Hegemony may best be understood as a process by which selective facets of ideology from otherwise competing and contradictory class locations are fused together into a semblance of consensus which remains mediated by unequal relations of power, a process by which "consensus" is "engineered" via selective ideological appropriation. The selective nature of such appropriation is illustrated by Sharp (1980) in her analysis of "Black Studies" programs in American post-secondary schooling. Such programs tended, in spite of concerted efforts by practitioners of radical emancipatory education, to absorb only those elements of black activism which were more moderate or less threatening to the prevailing power structure, culminating in "a successful process of incorporation in which the more radical, anti-capitalist elements of the movement became isolated" (152). As Kozol (1975) maintains, through such processes of incorporation schooling "exists to get its citizens prepared to make peace with the ethical imperfections of their rulers" (183). Such compromise leads people to adopt a noncommittal political relativism which facilitates the absorption of potential dissent into the prevailing hegemonic orthodoxy:

> As a result of the process of incorporation ... hegemonic ideology contains elements not simply from the bourgeois class, but also from the landed aristocracy, and reconstituted and incorporated elements from the ideology of subordinate classes .... What happens in schools is not the imposition of a middle class culture on other groups ... but a process of further ideological incorporation of the subordinate classes (Sharp, 1980: 133).

Another example of such incorporation is that of the "school choice debate" in

Australia, which reached its apex during the early 1980s. Kenway (1990) cites this

"debate" as "a classic instance of the discursive construction of hegemony" whereby

> The working class was divided and sections of it incorporated through
> a discourse that identified its interests with those of the ruling groups'.
> Disparate and contradictory interests were activated and welded into a
> common position. All other aspects of people's lives were relegated to
> the boundaries and private schooling became the means of mobilization,
> with 'choice' the unifying, hegemonic principle . . . . of a very effective
> slogan system characterized by key concepts that included choice,
> rights, excellence, standards, authority, self-reliance, and so on . . . . the
> Right and the private school lobby have demonstrated their facility for
> interdiscursive work as, through a process of disarticulation and
> rearticulation, they inserted these traditional themes into their own
> discourses and in the process achieved closure around the meanings
> that they chose to employ . . . . the crucial point in public educational
> polemics in Australia is that, with the prolonged and intense assistance
> of the media, the Right has come to define what 'choice', 'standards'
> and such like mean. It is now their discourse that has a significant and
> insistent truth effect, which inspires loyalties and cultivates demand.
> The Right's ideological labours have achieved their ends, and sectional
> interests have become universalized - defined as the interests of the
> majority. This is precisely the action of hegemony (200-201).

Nonetheless, even though the ideological orientation of dominant elites remains

ascendant within the hegemonic bloc, the tension between dominant and marginalized

ideological strands within this bloc can never be fully resolved because the process of

ideological co-optation must remain selective in order that the dominant ideology not be

undermined by too many "foreign" elements. Thus, processes of internal colonization

cannot be all-encompassing, for the selective nature of hegemonic absorption leaves

many aspects of the lifeworld unmediated and preserves spaces where the potential for

subversive and/or counter-hegemonic thought processes may take root. If, within a given

set of social circumstances, enough of the lifeworld remains unmediated by elements of

the dominant ideology, significant numbers of people within a social system may achieve

a level of intellectual autonomy sufficient for a perception of and rumination upon the

contradictions between the various ideological strands which constitute the "hegemonic

consensus."

The conventional or traditional definition of hegemony as "leadership" is wholly

insufficient as an analytical tool - *it explains nothing regarding the dynamics of power

relationships*. Specifically, the reduction of the concept of hegemony to "leadership"

fails to acknowledge that such leadership has more in common with coercion than

consent. A truly significant working definition of hegemony must go beyond the "what"

(leadership) to the "why" (the exercise of power and control over disparate social groups)

and the "how" (selective incorporation of divergent ideological orientations). It is the

"how" of hegemonic processes which is most fundamental to the examination of techno-

administrative power in these pages, power which constitutes an hegemonic "system"

which "is the central, effective and dominant system of meanings and values, which are

not merely abstract but which are organized and lived . . . . it is a set of meanings and

values which *as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming*"

(Williams, 1976 [1973]: 205 [emphasis added]). This appearance of reciprocity must be

augmented by the actual granting of minor concessions (often *very* minor) to groups

which are to be "administered to": "Undoubtedly the fact of hegemony presupposes that

account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony

is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed"

(Gramsci, 1971 [1926]: 161).

The fact that the dominant fractions of a social hierarchy can only grant a certain limited number of minor concessions to the majority before the power structure is compromised necessitates that the *appearance* of democratic process be cultivated further through mediatization, a process by which administrative technology is instrumentalized through a "communications infrastructure of polling and public relations" which "works tirelessly to frame positions, create messages, and elaborate definitions to accord with what the public *believes are its own ideas*" (Schiller, 1986: 120 [emphasis in original text). As J.M. Servan observed on the eve of the French Revolution:

> *A stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains; but a true*
> *politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own*
> *ideas; it is at the stable point of reason that he secures the end of the*
> *chain; this link is all the stronger in that we do not know of what it*
> *is made and we believe it to be our own work* . . . (Taft, 1997: 70
> [emphasis in original text]).

Attempts to engineer just such a network of credulity have been readily apparent in the familial use of the pronouns "we" and "our" in government "information" pamphlets mailed out to households in Alberta, pamphlets such as "Talk it up, Talk it out," which appeared in mailboxes throughout the province in the fall of 1998. Under the heading of "Straight talk about Alberta's financial picture," "we" were reminded that "We decided that we had to start living within our means." Of course, the debt and deficit "crisis" hysteria which had led "us" to this conclusion was carefully manufactured through a highly selective and painstakingly nuanced use of statistical data, a process which Premier Klein frequently decries when denouncing the "slanderous" misinformation campaigns of his critics. As pointed out by Robertson, Soucek, Pannu and Schugurensky (1995), governments such as Klein's put "in place *a set of procedures for engagement*

which gives an appearance of participative decision-making, while the policy outcomes

themselves are being shaped by a select group of business interests positioned beyond the

reach of such democratic processes" (83 [emphasis in original text]), while the

subsequent administration of such predetermined policy outcomes is predicated upon

" 'managing' consensus in order to appear publicly accountable" (83).

Indeed, one need look no further than the Klein government for examples of the

administrative engineering of ostensibly democratic forums. Such examples are analyzed

in depth by a number of observers like Lisac (1995) and Taft (1997). Taft reminds us that

when Klein became premier,

> Instead of assigning the Public Affairs Bureau to a cabinet minister as a
> secondary responsibility, he put himself in charge. With this stroke he
> became head of a network that reached throughout the civil service, but
> was parallel to it. This increased the ability of his office to control the
> government and influence the media and the public. While the Public
> Affairs Bureau retains its own managing director, in practice it is run
> from the Premier's Office (1997: 75-76).

Such "influence" over "the media and the public" has been a feature of the Klein

government's "round table" forums for "consultation," which are in actuality carefully

orchestrated efforts to engineer "consensus," for the *appearance* of participation and

consultation must be maintained if you purport to "listen" to and "care" about the

concerns of "ordinary" Albertans to the extent Premier Klein does. The orchestration of

these forums for "consultation" have ensured that

> Officials and cabinet ministers controlled invitation lists. They controlled
> the agenda. They controlled the information booklets normally sent out
> to participants. The people at the round tables always split into a dozen or
> more workshop groups so they never had direct knowledge of what most
> of the other participants were saying (Lisac, 1995: 144).

As Soucek (1996) points out,

> What was common to such sham attempts at portraying a pre-set agenda
> as a democratic debate was the careful orchestration of the procedures to
> guarantee that only ideologically "correct" claims were entered into the
> debate, and then presented as something everyone agreed on. Such
> pseudo-consensus was also guaranteed, to a large extent, by invitations
> going only to those social agents who shared the government's (and the
> international investment community's) point of view, or, to use
> Habermas' terms, who shared the "common" foreknowledge (136).

This "ideological correctness" tended to range from more subtle forms of consensus

engineering such as the incorporation of moderate viewpoints via hegemonic "discourse"

to the extremist rhetoric of "radical conservatives." For example, Margaret Duncan,

executive director of the Alberta Association of Social Workers, who had been a member

of the committee that drafted the final report of the 1992 "Toward 2000 Together" round

table conference in Calgary, discovered to what extent such extremism was a factor

among committee members after claiming that "the report formalized and legitimized a

business-dominated province where the poor and the damaged were expected to keep

quiet and go away" (Lisac, 1995: 55). Duncan was censured by one overly zealous

committee member who "called her a communist because she had used the phrase 'social

equity' during one of their talks". Another "told her Alberta would be a better place if it

were more like Mexico, where people either worked or starved" (Lisac, 1995: 55). Lisac

also notes the growing intolerance of the Klein regime in the "new insistence that people

not part of the system shut up about what they saw. More and more, when I had call to

write about 'the Conservative party', it felt instead that I should be writing about 'the

Party' " (157).

While such exercises in political manipulation as Klein's round table forums

may be scarcely credible as examples of representative, much less participatory,

democratic process, the illusion of public participation in political, economic, and

social issues in Alberta must be maintained since voter backlash is an ever-present

threat in systems of limited democracy. The illusion of public participation in Alberta,

as in limited systems of democracy elsewhere, is in part maintained through the

widespread use of public opinion polls, the results of which are often altered by means of

administrative engineering:

> Polls financed by the government, or just as likely by some private
> organization with a vested interest in the questions being asked, may seek
> to ascertain the population's sentiments, for example, toward the new
> information technologies . . . . The poll's findings become available to the
> financial underwriter of the survey. Then the information machine and
> whatever other instruments that are deemed useful, are set into motion or
> put at the service of either reshaping the views that have been provided,
> or, to make policies *appear* to correspond to the sentiments expressed
> (Schiller, 1986: 119 [emphasis in original text]).

This "reshaping" of viewpoints involves sociotechnic processes of crisis management as

instrumentalized by organizations like the Public Agenda Foundation in the United

States. As illustrated by Alexander and MacDonald (1996), the Public Agenda

Foundation

> . . . wants citizens to debate real policy alternatives and come to informed
> judgements *within the parameters it determines and describes* . . . . PAF
> must somehow break down public resistance to elite positions . . . . to
> exercise control over the public's premises rather than its conclusions . . . .
> Once the masses *come to accept the elites' understanding of the issues,*
> *then collective debate, choice and action will follow* (321-322 [emphasis
> added]).

While this process of debate may not sound much like the democracy *preached* by

politicians, it is disturbingly similar to that which is *practiced.*

Such "debate" is also remarkably similar to much of the restructuring discourse surrounding "educational" programs such as Alberta Education's Career and Technology Studies. Indeed, when examining CTS curricula one is struck both by the presence of the rhetoric of progressive competitiveness and competitive austerity (it is suggested in the CTS curriculum guides that students are to become *more accepting of failure*) *and* of the presence of recycled and sanitized snippets of "radical" discourse geared towards the construction of hegemonic consensus. As noted by Schapiro (1995), when radical discourse thus veers towards "respectability," whatever transformational properties it may possess are turned against those it sought to emancipate:

> As consciousness-raising and popular education methodologies have proven effective in reaching and influencing the marginal and potentially disruptive sectors of society, their concepts and ideas have become recognized appropriated by dominant elites who, through either providing financial support for already existing community programmes, or by starting their own, can come to regulate and control radical social movements and bend them in the direction of "reform and stability" (33).

Such "change," which is "planned" in accordance with the "consensual" marginalization of a growing underclass, makes a mockery of the notion of democratic participation.

As emphasized in this chapter, if a significant degree of individual/collective accomodation (or "consent") to pre-selected policy outcomes can be engineered, such "consent" can be presented to the present and future electorate as "proof" that such policy outcomes correspond to their wishes even if this turns out not to be the case. Thus, internal accomodation to the prerogatives of those in positions of power and control may be instrumental in the engineering of active "consent" of the ruled to their rulers. The engineering of such consent is of central importance to the

process of political socialization in "liberal democracies." Schools are essential as sites wherein such consent is engineered, and curriculum documents like those prepared for the transmission of programs such as CTS seek to accommodate the future electorate to pre-selected policy outcomes – in this case those favoured in neo-liberal ideology. In this way the more or less passive acceptance of neo-liberal policy initiatives may be engineered – policy initiatives which sanction increasingly stratified economic conditions in liberal democratic states and those attempting a conversion to economic liberalism. Attempts to engineer such passive acceptance of inequitable policy initiatives tend to create a political culture which is the antithesis of the engaged political and social activism required in a truly participatory model of democracy.

The nearly collective internal accomodation to select elite prerogatives prevalent in contemporary liberal democracies is the major responsibility of those segments of the institutional structure entrusted with the transmission of information and misinformation, chief among these schooling and the media (broadcast and print). The transmission of information and misinformation in both schooling and the media functions via the selective appropriation and incorporation of divergent ideological orientations, facets of which are then fused together as hegemony, or "mass consensus." Such mass internal accomodation to select elite prerogatives in contemporary liberal "democracies" neccessitates that conflicts which arise between segments of the population that remain activist and the state/ corporate duopoly be relegated to the margins of the social order to as great an

extent as possible. If such conflict spills over into the "collective consciousness," it must be redirected as competition between "privatized" individuals in a "war of each against all" (Hobbes, 1952 [1651]: 75). In perusing CTS curriculum documents one becomes aware of ideological orientations which, when interpreted in a manner sympathetic to neo-liberal precepts, may serve to instrumentalize such a shift as "conflict management." In Chapter Two the role of schooling sympathetic to neo-liberal precepts in general and programs like CTS in particular in engineering accomodation to the competitive austerity which results from wars "of each against all" will be analyzed in detail.

Chapter Two

ON THE MODULARIZATION OF CLIENTS THROUGH SCHOOLING:
The Alberta Education Career and Technology Studies Curricula

On the Installation of CTS as a Means of Instrumental Control

> So pervasive has the professionalization of intellectual life become that
> the sense of vocation, as Julien Benda described it for the intellectual,
> has been almost swallowed up. Policy-oriented intellectuals have
> internalized the norms of the state, which when it understandably calls
> them to the capital, in effect becomes their patron. The critical sense is
> often conveniently jettisoned. As for intellectuals whose charge includes
> values and principles - literary, philosophical, historical specialists - the
> American university, with its munificence, utopian sanctuary, and
> Remarkable diversity, has defanged them. Jargons of an almost
> unimaginable rebarbativeness dominate their styles. Cults like post-
> modernism, discourse analysis, New Historicism, deconstruction, neo-
> pragmatism transport them into the country of the blue; an astonishing
> sense of weightlessness with regard to the gravity of history and
> individual responsibility fritters away attention to public matters, and to
> public discourse. The result is a kind of floundering about that is most
> dispiriting to witness, even as the society as a whole drifts without
> direction or coherence. Racism, poverty, ecological ravages, disease, and
> an appallingly widespread ignorance: these are left to the media and the
> odd political candidate during an election campaign (Said, 1993: 303).

In *Critical Theory and Education* (1986) Rex Gibson identifies instrumental

rationality as "the desire to control and to dominate," limiting itself to " 'how to do it'

questions rather than 'why do it' " (7). This instrumental desire for control is reflected in

Marline Poon's (1995) case study of attempts to implement Career and Technology

Studies curricula at a "flagship" high school in Calgary, Alberta. The supposed benefits

of CTS (a youth training scheme similar to ideology-driven programs implemented by

the Thatcher government in England during the 1980s) are scarcely addressed in Poon's

study; rather, the emphasis rests upon "Fullanesque" exhortations to "stay the course"

during unidimensional initiatives for "planned change." Substantive reasons for the

planning of such change are not addressed, much less analyzed. Nebulous rationalizations for "change" are offered on a few occasions, in the form of vague generalities. Poon (1995) offers a "definition" of restructuring as an "organizational structure" through which "teachers and schools, and school districts *become accountable for achieving certain yet-to-be-defined outcomes*" (29 [emphasis added]). Such "organizational structures" are to seek the implementation of "changes that may, *or may not*, alter future plans and designs" (31 [emphasis added]). Poon is essentially justifying CTS as change for the sake of change, a process which staff members are to embrace with minimal resistance, if any, even though such change is ultimately indefensible apart from its service in the name of instrumental control. Indeed, Michael Fullan, the "guru" of "planned change" theory, is quoted in Poon's 1995 study as an exemplar of such instrumental control, in, for instance, the following dictum that could likely be encountered in any representative manual of behavioural psychology: "Since change is a learning process, one can expect changes in behaviour to precede, rather than follow changes in belief" (89-90). In other words, behavioural changes will be engineered in whatever fashion is deemed most expedient *before any substantive debate of the issues at hand has taken place and/or irregardless of any valid objections raised*. The result of such initiatives for instrumental control is often the "dispiriting floundering about" observed by Edward Said (1993) in describing the effects of academic "cults." Indeed, as Poon (1995) admits, "After devoting time and effort into the implementation of change, teachers at Lester B. Pearson are no closer to prescribing the route that other schools should take in implementing CTS than they were five years ago" (78).

On the Instrumental Internalization of Hegemonic Norms Through Schooling

> To *know* an ethical norm is not sufficient; the norm must be physically experienced and practiced. In this sense, it is useless to offer courses on democratic citizenship within school structures which are essentially undemocratic (Soucek, 1996: 235 [emphasis in original text]).

> *Habituation*, it should be remembered, was to precede intellectual instruction and to form its basis. A normalizing power operated by turning social and political relations into character structures. It made power real by embodying power relations in students. These power relations would ideally disappear; they would be lived as a sense of self, as an identity (Curtis, 1988: 377 [emphasis in original text]).

In an era when contingent labour processes, often interrupted by long periods of unemployment, or no employment at all, seem to be becoming the reality facing many young people upon their graduation from high schools, technical institutes, colleges, and universities, it may seem odd that Alberta Education is so intent upon the close integration of all subject areas in Alberta high schools with its relatively new Career and Technology Studies curricula. This timing is, however, no mistake. The contingent labour market needs a compliant pool of potential labourers to choose from, "flexibility" being the new standard by which compliance is gauged. Flexibility denotes the possession of a wide range of generic "skills" that include acquiescent dispositional attributes, features that programs like CTS are carefully geared to inculcate in students as hegemonic norms, norms intended to produce potential workers "with no commitment and no point of view but with plenty of marketable skills" (Postman, 1992: 186).

Along with the inculcation of compliant flexibility in programs like CTS, students are encouraged not to entertain "unrealistic" expectations which would most likely go unfulfilled in the contingent labour market (Alberta Education, 1997b: B.1). Ideally, as a

corollary to the warehousing of students in high schools, or "immense teen-sitting organizations" (Braverman, 1974: 439), until needed in the labour market, programs like CTS seek to have high school graduates patiently *warehouse themselves*, in perpetuity if need be. Thus one notes the ubiquitous presence of directives for the development of "daily living skills" in CTS curricula, for the existence of the contingent worker is nothing if not a daily lateral drift.

To a significant degree, programs like CTS which stress "work force harmonization" are justified as responses to the presumed breakdown in youth discipline and efforts to reestablish the "cherished" traditions of an idealized past which have, in actuality, not been compromised due to a lack of discipline but due to administrative colonization. Moreover, as Kenway (1990) points out, the rhetoric of "common sense" surrounding such catchwords as "tradition," "standards," and "excellence" in reactionary assessments of schooling

> ... draws upon a nostalgic myth about the "golden age" of education. In this mythical era, families were all intact, children accepted the authority of parents and teachers, people were self-reliant and not dependent upon the state, and everyone could spell and use correct grammar (198).

Furthermore, as Bastian, Fruchter, Gittell, Greer and Haskins (1993 [1985, 1986]) observe:

> What conservatives attack as corrosive egalitarianism never took place and is not the root cause of persistent school failure. The best of the '60s reforms have had marginal influence on school practice. The implementation process has been a shadow of the legislative intent, which was itself a shadow of popular demands for school equality. While conservatives justify the reversal of such reforms by claiming the programs did not work, they ignore the pervasive failure to make them work and the underlying social forces that have blocked a genuine commitment to progressive school change (75).

Similarly, Schecter (1977) analyzes the official interest in "progressive education" during the 1930s, 1960s, and 1970s as a means by which the same objectives of the present "back-to-basics" movement in school administration might be instrumentalized - . differential character formation of a behavioural nature to suit market "imperatives" and the socialization of significant numbers of "students for eventual school failure and a job future in the surplus labour market" (401).

CTS: Career Transitions

> There is little reason to believe that the many descriptions from a decade and more ago asserting that schools in America are, for the most part, grim, joyless places dominated by "mindless" procedures and authoritarian practices, are any less accurate now than when written. Indeed, more recent work suggests that the opposite is the case. The renewed emphasis on "traditional values," "basics," and testing has, if anything, made most schools increasingly repressive environments. What continues to be crucial to successful schooling (and successful socialization) is the willingness to forego one's own concerns, interests, desires, for the ones determined by those in authority . . . . If, as Bell claims, "deferral" is the very essence of the production culture, then school surely is its quintessential expression. We do no more than admit this when we stress to students that, first and foremost, education ought to be seen as a future investment. Indeed, the present crisis of public education may be understood as related to its declining value as an investment; schooling no longer seems to pay off (Shapiro, 1990: 51).

> The "learning-earning" link is still valid at the individual level, although with diminishing marginal utility. But it is disintegrating at the aggregate or societal level and this disintegration is occurring beyond the margins of the market returns perspective of human capital theory . . . . while school enrolment rates have continued to increase since the early 1970s, average incomes have stagnated, unemployment rates have fluctuated upwards and underemployment of highly schooled people has been recognized as a social problem. The applicability of human capital theory's *aggregate* or societal-level "returns to learning" claims has been thrown into doubt (Livingstone, 1998: 134; 163 [emphasis in original text]).

The fact that "schooling no longer seems to pay off" may be apparent to many of those who were told that it would and put their faith in such pronouncements, but the notion that schooling may not pay off in the material fashion that "common sense" suggests seems virtually impossible to grasp for most school administrators, teachers and parents due to the extent to which the notion of schooling as an "investment" is reified. Cases in which schooling does not pay off are treated as instances of individual failure due to poor work habits, lack of discipline, or bad attitude, but rarely as evidence of structural constraints in the labour market which have little or nothing to do with individual effort. Thus, the effects of labour market restructuring throughout the 1980s and 1990s, restructuring aimed at restoring corporate profitability to the artificially inflated levels resulting from the post- World War II boom cycle of the late 1940s to early 1970s, often seem irrelevant to those who insist that schooling "must" pay off for those who "help themselves."

Similarly, widespread mystification surrounding the phenomenon of "jobless growth" during the 1990s resulted from a failure to grasp the obvious connection between job shedding, "labour redundancies," the growth in part-time and low-wage employment in the contingent labour force, labour intensification, and the consequent growth in corporate profit margins.

As the age group with the least amount of labour force experience, the youth labour force (aged 15-24 years old) in Canada has historically experienced the highest rates of unemployment and underemployment:

Unemployment rates for young people in Canada rose from about 5
percent in the mid- 1950s to about 12 per cent in the mid- 1970s to 25
percent in 1984. Unofficial estimates of youth unemployment place it
closer to 40 percent, and in some areas the rates are still higher. The
fact that there is little employment for young people leads to a good
deal of questioning of programmes that are supposed to prepare them
for employment (Gaskell, 1992: 105-106).

Nakamura and Wong (1998) place youth unemployment rates in Canada at 38% in

1989 and at 49% in 1997 and also observe that "The proportion of the youth labour force

with no job experience was 24.6 percent in December 1997, up from 9.8 percent in

December 1989" (8).

If the official administrative response to corporate restructuring in search of record

levels of profit (restructuring which exacerbates underemployment and unemployment in

all age brackets) was simply to celebrate such profit levels as the signs of a "healthy"

economy over the past decade rather than a concern with the marginalization of large

segments of the labour force by such restructuring, the response of Canadians in

aggregate was not so cavalier:

According to an Angus Reid poll early in 1996, more than three-
quarters of Canadians (77 percent) disapproved of large, profitable
corporations laying off workers, while 54 percent said that profitable
corporations who lay off workers should be punished through higher
taxes or other measures. In response, the Chretien regime tried to piece
together some sort of damage control strategy . . . . Using a soft stick
approach, the Chretien Liberals began to inveigle big business into
becoming key players in their "First Jobs Initiative," a modest program
targeted at unemployed youth. Conceived by a Boston consulting firm,
the program was initially designed to create 50,000 one-year internships
in Canadian businesses for new high school graduates who would be
paid close to the minimum wage . . . . Corporate Canada's reaction was
less than enthusiastic. When little more than 30 companies signed onto
First Jobs, the target number of internships had to be scaled back to a
mere 10,000, barely making a dent in the problem of unemployed or
underemployed youth, now numbering some 600,000 (Clarke, 1997: 89-90).

When such "efforts" to alleviate unemployment and underemployment predictably fail, the official response, both from state and corporate sectors, is to push for employment and "employability" training programs to train people for jobs that are not being created. Such training programs thus amount to little more than exhorting the structurally unemployed and underemployed to keep a "positive" attitude towards their lack of prospects. Whether they are funded from government coffers, from within corporations or, most commonly, offered by profitable "training institutes" in the private sector, such programs specialize in

> . . . the sort of attitude adjustment that instructs people to be ready for the chase and not to expect anything more than the chase. Attitude adjustment in the guise of training is largely unrecognized, but it is also offered to workers still employed in the good jobs sector. General Motors calls it "cultural training" (Swift, 1995: 191).

Presumably the compulsion business leaders feel for the provision of such beneficent "cultural training" programs springs from the supposed burden felt by these corporate philanthropists of "having to rectify the education system's poorer products" (Downey, 1990: 5). Yet another production model, aimed in this instance at the manufacture of ideological hegemony.

It is this perception that the role of education is to process a better "product" which has led political technocrats to impress upon their operatives within educational administration the "need" for training programs such as CTS, for it too, in common with a great deal of institutionalized schooling, is aimed at the manufacture of ideological hegemony through its advocacy of the selective tradition in schooling (see Williams [1976 {1973}] and page 47 of this text).

Since the current neo-liberal hegemony accepts Social Darwinism as inevitable,

individual competition is stressed in training programs such as CTS, just as it is in the

inner recesses of the contingent economy. This hegemony essentially sanctions attitudes

which both regard the casualties of economic conflagration as "collateral damage" and

encourage those thus damaged to internalize diminished expectations and self-blame in

adjusting to their marginalization. As Tsoukalas (1999) observes of this siege mentality:

> The obvious Hobbesian metaphor may be expressed in military terms:
> states are at "war," each to protect its national economy; the true enemy
> being, however, not other states, but each state's domestic subjects (i.e.
> its working class) (66).

Offe (1996) refers to efforts aimed at the economically marginalized to encourage

the acceptance of self-blame for their condition - efforts designed to justify and

rationalize drastic cuts in social assistance - as the "remoralization" of the welfare state

and cites the work of Lawrence M. Mead in the United States as typifying this

philosophy. As Mead (cited in Offe, 1996) asserts: " 'Government must persuade people

to blame themselves'; (and) the poor must be obligated to accept 'employment as a

duty'" (152). Soucek (1996) characterizes such remoralization

> . . . as an attempt at imbuing (at the language level) the subconscious
> paleosymbol of self-interest with a publicly accepted image of a society
> in which it is only natural that those who work hard are rich, and those
> who are poor are such because they are lazy, lack initiative, and so on.
> According to that view, it is then socially just to "help" the unemployed
> by putting them in a situation where they have to "get off their butt" and
> find work. This line of argument then allows the capitalist class, along
> with the petty bourgeoisie and the core workers to sit comfortably with
> extremes of poverty which might loom in all its destitution just around
> the corner (137).

This remoralization is the essence of administration as "moral technology," which

galvanizes a good deal of public opinion against those pushed to the wall by "free

market forces." However, as Aronowitz (1998) points out, the irony of "welfare state"

remoralization and the workfare arrangements which almost invariably accompany such

remoralization efforts lies in the fact that most of the poor denounced by punitive

reactionary ideologues such as Mead do, in fact, work.

The harmonization of schooling with the corporate "ethic" through such programs as

CTS instructs children in the philosophy of remoralization, hegemonically reinforcing

and reifying a punitive "culture of blame." In essence, this philosophy of remoralization

valorizes Social Darwinism and "the war of each against all," since

> Teaching students to compete prepares them for the dog-eat-dog
> environment of the global economy, in which they will compete against
> one another for scarce jobs . . . . In such an environment a student learns
> that when the boy seated next to her drops out of school, he is solely
> responsible for the decision. In the words of the Conference Board of
> Canada, he has "apparently ignored the tremendous cost to himself and
> society." What happens to him is of no concern to her. She is learning to
> blame the unemployed for their condition from the safety of a job. Her
> lack of concern is echoed by economists who describe the problems of an
> "overemployed economy," in their justification of a high rate of
> unemployment. She will believe, as she walks past the food banks, that
> "those people," like the boy in her class, simply made the wrong choices
> (Barlow and Robertson, 1994: 82-83).

Moreover, if Barlow and Robertson's student also becomes one of "those people," her

schooling in the precepts of competitive individualism through, for example, CTS, will

likely lead her to conclude that her "failure" is directly attributable to her inability to

make the "right" choices rather than to structural constraints within monopoly capitalism

which effectively remove "choice" from the equation.

In this emphasis on the individualization of responsibility for "failure," CTS is

similar to certain vocational training programs launched by Thatcher's "Tories" (actually

neo-liberals) in Britain during the early 1980s, programs such as the Further Education

Unit (FEU), the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), and the Technical and Vocational

Education Initiative. FEU, for example, stresses such core aims as "adaptability" and

"flexibility of attitude" and is "underpinned by the assumption that there is no difference

between education and training" (Avis, 1991: 135). The aims of FEU are

> . . . predicated on a number of disturbing themes. There is, for example,
> an implicit acceptance of the status quo, an attempt to encourage
> realism, an acceptance of one's place and a move towards self-blame
> for failure. There is a deep concern with the formation and assessment
> of an appropriate subjectivity, one that accords with a particular view
> of the needs of a capitalist society (Avis, 1991: 135).

Green (1991) notes that YTS is "concerned with inculcating work discipline,

lowering wage expectations and providing a social-skills training instrumentally designed

to control social attitudes" (24). As Aronowitz (1988) concludes in analyzing the work of

Paul Willis on British working class youths, "Those who will not imbibe what counts as

socially approved knowledge are consigned to definite and subordinate places in the

social order, places which entail performing labor that denies individuality" (132).

In the Career Transitions strand of the CTS program, students "are encouraged to set

realistic career goals and to increase their motivation to succeed in courses that are

related to these goals" (Alberta Education Curriculum Standards Branch, 1997b: B.1;

henceforth to be referred to as AECSB 1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, and 1997d).

Defining "realistic career goals" in an objective manner is problematic. Who but the

individual who had been pre-groomed to set her or his sights low could be encouraged or

motivated to succeed in courses related to the goal of securing a "career" in a labour

market that is increasingly contingent and austere, with a paucity of quality entry-level opportunities? This directive invites many, if not most, students to either accept varying degrees of non-fulfillment, lack of respect in the workplace, disappointment, and "failure" as the natural measure of "success" (surely a schizoid state of affairs) or to blame themselves for failing to translate their successful completion of the Career Transitions strand into a successful career.

The *Career Transitions Guide to Standards and Implementation* states that "Career Transitions helps students determine what employers and others expect of prospective Employees" (AECSB, 1997b: B.1). The emphasis here is on "employer expectations." Nothing is said about the rights of employees. Given the range and frequency of employee rights infractions to be expected in a contingent service economy where people are "commodities" and employer rights rule workplaces due to declining unionization, compromised appeals procedures and an ever-ready supply of unemployed or underemployed workers, this is an unacceptable oversight. Of course, from the perspective of training for compliant flexibility, no oversight would be conceded here. As Avis (1991) points out in his analysis of YTS core skills, trainees are to reflect on their training, *not on the nature of their work*. However,

> . . . if occasions arise when the trainees reflect on their position, a
> contradiction emerges. Reflection is encouraged in core skills; the
> trainees are to reflect on their training, on their own skills, on the
> generality of the skills they possess. However, if reflection transcends
> the employment nexus, if trainees start to question the authority
> relations in which they are placed, and if they start to contemplate the
> exploitativeness and meaninglessness of much that passes for work,
> they will be seen as having failed to develop the appropriate core skills
> (Avis, 1991: 131).

The Career Transitions guide further states that "Career development helps students to develop the knowledge, skills *and positive attitudes* that will help to enhance their marketability in the community and the workplace" (AECSB, 1997b: B.3 [emphasis added]). As befits its emphasis on instrumental imperatives, the guide stresses the "positive attitudes" required by employment trainees rather than the critical attitude of active inquiry required for any *true learning* that transcends the bounds of institutionalized norms. A narrowly conceived positive attitude encourages passive and deferential behaviour in the presence of authority, irregardless of whether that authority is predicated upon the abuse of power or not. Moreover, such "career development" seeks only to "enhance" the "marketability" of "trainees" as commodities to be bartered in the market economy, not to develop active citizens for a democratic public sphere of free debate on critical issues. Such commodification is well-suited to the instrumentalization of a variety of workfare arrangements, or as an encouragement for unemployed young people to draw attention to themselves by offering their labour free of charge, as human "loss-leaders." In fact, a recent study produced by the Canadian Council on Social Development reports that one third of the youth labour force are "offering free labour to gain work experience; in 1987, it was 18%" (Duffy, *Edmonton Journal*, January 19, 1999: A3).

The instructional material in CTS strands is divided into computer modules which are then divided into four subsections: "Module Learner Expectations," "Assessment Criteria and Conditions," "Concepts," and "Specific Learner Expectations." Module CTR2010 of the Career Transitions strand is entitled "Job Maintenance," intermediate

level, "addressing" the "Theme" of "Career Readiness." In this module, students are to

examine the concept of "employability skills." "Specific learner expectations" require

that "the student should identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes most valued by

employers" (AECSB, 1997b: E.4). The knowledge and skills "most valued by

employers," even in a contingent labour market will, however, vary so widely and change

so often as to defy generalizability. As Bauman (1995) notes, "there is little sense in

accumulating skills for which tomorrow there may be no demand . . . . the minute young

men and women enter the game of life, none can tell what the rules of the game will be

like as time goes by" (265).

This leaves "attitudes," which, as Lowe and Krahn (1997: 61) have found, is a far

more important employment criterion than knowledge and skills. In their survey of

employers in Alberta, Lowe and Krahn discovered that the most frequently cited attribute

such employers looked for when hiring a high school graduate was "attitudes and

behaviour" (38%), followed by "personal characteristics" (14%), and "educational

qualifications" (13%). Further down the list were "ability and intelligence" (7%), and

specific skills and knowledge" (6%). Evidently, a "flexible" and compliant work force is

much more sought after than a skilled one, refuting the thesis that if only the work force

had the skills required by employers the problems of unemployment and

underemployment would be solved. This is why training programs like FEU, YTS, and

CTS are aimed at attitude adjustment over and above any other considerations. In fact, as

Soucek (1996) surmises, citing an hypothesis of Hargreaves and Reynolds, "teachers'

personalities might even be re-shaped to fit in with the functionally corresponding student

outcomes, especially in the low SES schools, in order to promote attitudinal adjustment in students" (133). In this spirit, the Career Transitions curriculum guide decrees that students are to demonstrate "personal management skills," "positive attitudes and behaviours," and "adaptability" (AECSB, 1997b: E.4).

Thus, while the cognitive component of training programs such as CTS may often be vague, "the framing becomes strong when it comes to imparting dispositional attitudes . . . . In this way, more of the pupil is available for control" (Soucek, 1996: 217). This is especially so in the use of computer-assisted learning programs like CTS, which instrumentalize classroom management in the monitoring capability of the machinery, an instrumentalization which also inculcates a predilection for the submission to external control in students, a predilection which is useful both in the classroom and in the computer "assisted" workplace (more on this in the next section). Therefore, although the specialized focus of computer-assisted learning changes on an almost yearly basis due to software development and marketing (see Molnar, 1996: 75-76), the control function remains constant.

In connection with the concept of "expectations, rights and responsibilities," "specific learner expectations" in the Career Transitions curriculum guide dictate that students are to "identify strategies to deal with conflict in the workplace" (AECSB, 1997b: E.4). Note that conflict is to be "dealt with" as an exclusively negative or unwarranted aspect of workplace relations, rather than ever possibly being the result of warranted or justifiable grievances that require discussion or negotiation. Multilateral communication is to be superseded by unilateral instrumental strategies that identify

human relations as a problem to be solved, such strategies as emerge from the "laws" of

"scientific management" to control "the refractory hand of labour," strategies that begin

and end with the assumption that labour forces are, have always been, and will always be

"refractory," no matter what "concessions" are granted by management. As Braverman

(1974) observes, such "scientific" management

> . . . starts, despite occasional protestations to the contrary, not from the
> human point of view but from the capitalist point of view, from the point
> of view of the management of a refractory work force in a setting of
> antagonistic social relations. It does not attempt to discover and confront
> the cause of this condition, but accepts it as an inexorable given, a
> "natural" condition. It investigates not labor in general, but the
> adaptation of labor to the needs of capital. It enters the workplace not as
> the representative of science, but as the representative of management
> masquerading in the trappings of science (86).

Underpinning the assumption that conflict must be "dealt with" in the workplace

(and, by extension, in schooling) is the functionalist assumption that conflict is by

definition "counterproductive" and that those who are conflictual are behaving in a

"dysfunctional" manner; such behaviour is individualized as "aberrant," to be dealt with

as such to restore the "natural" order of harmony and compliant industriousness. This

behavioural model of human relations assumes

> . . . that conflict among groups of people is *inherently* and fundamentally
> bad and we should strive to eliminate it *within* the established framework
> of institutions, rather than seeing conflict and contradiction as the basic
> "driving forces" in society . . . . It posits a network of assumptions that,
> when internalized by students, establishes the boundaries of legitimacy
> . . . . Students in most schools and in urban areas in particular are
> presented with a view that serves to legitimate the existing social order
> (Apple, 1979: 87, 102).

The thoroughly ahistorical viewpoint that conflict is inimical to the evolution of

human social relations gives rise to a "selective tradition" within the historical analysis of

social systems, a "tradition" which dictates that

> ... educational institutions are usually the main agencies of the
> transmission of an effective dominant culture, and this is now a major
> economic as well as cultural activity; indeed it is both in the same
> moment. Moreover, at a philosophical level, at the true level of theory
> and at the level of the history of various practices, there is a process
> which I call the *selective tradition*: that which, within the terms of an
> effective dominant culture, is always passed off as "the tradition," "*the
> significant past.*" But always the selectivity is the point; the way in
> which from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings
> and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and
> practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, some of
> these meanings and practices are reinterpreted, diluted, or put into
> forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements
> within the effective dominant culture (Williams, 1976 [1973]: 205
> [emphasis in original text]).

This selective tradition infers that unequal power relations that come to dominate social

systems have been arrived at through mass "consensus" (or through a supposed mass

consensus within dominating cultures) that accepts inequality as part of "the natural order

of things."

Thus, "consensus seeking," "conflict management" and "leadership behaviours" are

the "criteria and conditions" by which CTS teachers are to assess students' "ability to

lead others" in accordance with the "module learner expectations" of Career Transitions

Module CTR2020 ("Taking the Lead") (AECSB, 1997b: E7). The trouble with such

attempts at the "unproblematic" engineering of consensus is that societies, workplaces,

schools, and classrooms "are tension systems, not harmonious, consensual unities," and

that such "tension systems" "comprise a multiplicity of conflicting interest-pursuing

groups" (Gibson, 1986: 173). Of course, as Soucek (1996) points out, the legitimating

function of consensus engineering gradually becomes less necessary as "democratic

structures" - with their *potential* as public forums to debate alternatives to "the tyranny of markets" - are partially or fully privatized due to the continued expansion of market power:

> This is not to argue that social tension and class conflict have disappeared. On the contrary, the growing economic, social, and political inequality will keep causing fundamental problems for the new world order . . . . in this regard, the most important role schools will play will be that of social control (Soucek, 1996: 225).

In those instances where it becomes necessary to garner consensus, such "consensus"

> . . . is reached because people submit to the will of a leader. They avoid asking the hard questions and bury their own strong beliefs. The problem with this approach is that it inevitably leads to alienation, resentment, and domination. It is based upon *power over* rather than *power with* (Kreisberg, 1992: 129 [emphasis in original text]).

Under these conditions of "consensus" formation, the term "democratic process" loses much, if not all, of its credibility due to the fact that "the permissible range of disagreement" has been institutionalized ahead of time and, therefore, decisions are made within the parameters of "values, norms, perceptions, and beliefs that support and define the structures of central authority" (Femia, 1981: 39).

In Module CTR2030 of the Career Transitions strand of CTS ("Governance and Leadership") students are to explore the concept of "team building," specifically to "describe" and "demonstrate" methods to "decrease disruptive behaviour" and "minimize stalling behaviour" (AECSB, 1997b: E.10). Such narrowly focused functional instrumentality as this obscures the fact that the parameters of "disruptive and stalling behaviours" can easily be broadened to encompass any "behaviour" related to the critical

examination of contentious issues rather than the dutiful and well-behaved compliance of those disciplined to respond favourably to pre-selected outcomes.

In Module CTR3030 of Career Transitions ("Leading for Change") students are to explore the concept of "decision making," specifically to "compare the decision-making roles and impacts" of various "leaders," "decision makers (primary, secondary, and tertiary)," "interest groups," and "opinion leaders" (AECSB, 1997b: F.10). This hierarchical directive follows the oligarchical or corporatist model of "representative democracy" rather than a more participatory model. Indeed, "Leading for Change" is only a "change" model in the narrowly circumscribed manner conceived within instrumental rationality. This "change" model is virtually indistinguishable from the "consensus building" stratagems of Louis and Miles cited by Poon (1995: 41), stratagems of differentiated "power sharing" in which all actors are to be "leaders" but are also to be differentially rewarded and cannot, in the final analysis, *all* be "leaders" since only those "identified as having leadership potential" may lead. Such are the gordian knots of "change" in the name of instrumentalized power. For those with a taste for such power

> A recent advertisement appeals for new recruits to teaching in bold black print: "REACH FOR THE POWER: TEACH." The text of the ad is somewhat ambiguous; it calls on people to "wake up young minds, wake up the world" (there are many ways to "wake people up"), but the picture in the ad leaves no confusion as to the nature of the power appeal. A white male in shirt and tie, arm raised to the blackboard, "Odyssey" and "Iliad" written on the blackboard (calling up images of Greek warrior heroes), stands over blurred and barely visible students - masculinity, the hero, control, and status are all entwined in this representation of power. The advertisers' recruitment strategy is clear, and their use of the predominant notion of power in this culture is revealing (Kreisberg, 1992: 48).

CTS: Management and Marketing

> In the process of marketization, an understanding of society as a
> collection of possessive individuals is revivified and any serious sense
> of the common good is marginalized. The ideological effects of this
> have been damaging. Our very idea of democracy has been altered so
> that democracy is no longer seen as a political concept, but an
> *economic* one. Democracy is reduced to stimulating the conditions of
> "free consumer choice" in an unfettered market (Apple, 1995: xvii
> [emphasis in original text]).

> Education which makes you need the product is included in the price
> of the product. School is the advertising agency which makes you
> believe that you need the society as it is (Illich, 1971: 113).

In Module MAM1020 of the Management and Marketing strand of CTS ("Quality

Customer Service"), under the "concept" heading of "buying motives," students are

expected to "describe Maslow's hierarchy of needs and identify purchases made at each

level," needs including "self-fulfillment," "esteem," "belonging," and "safety." Students

are also expected to "identify and give examples of emotional buying motives" such as

"pride"and "fear" (AECSB, 1997d: D.11). Students are, in other words, to embrace the

"market logic" of preying upon human insecurities and the least defensible motivations

valorized in capitalist social relations. After all, "buying motives" based on "pride" and

"fear" often occupy the same territory as buying motives based on envy and hatred.

In Module MAM2010 of Management and Marketing, pertaining to the "concept" of

"strategies for leading," students are expected to "compare controlling with empowering"

(AECSB, 1997d: E.6). This distinction is largely irrelevant as instrumentalized in the

functionalist context of programs like CTS, for, in restructured schools and workplaces,

and restructured schools *as* workplaces, the concept of "empowerment" has been co-

opted from emancipatory discourse, separated from its democratic subtext of liberation,

and bastardized as a euphemism for the institutionalization of instrumental control:

> Not surprisingly, as the theme of empowerment has begun to enter into mainstream discourses of educational change, it has begun to be drained of its critical edge . . . . empowerment retains its participatory meaning but loses its connection to critiques of domination and oppression. Deprived of this social/historical context, empowerment is transformed from a generative theme for democratic and liberatory change into a technique for the "effective" delivery of educational services (Kriesberg, 1992: 20-21).

Pertaining to the concept of "strategies for monitoring," students are to "research *monitoring* as a basic management role," and to "explain the use of monitoring technology" in assessing "organizational activities" (AECSB, 1997d: E.6). Since this section deals with strategies *for* monitoring, *not* a discussion of arguments for *and against* monitoring, it would seem that research into monitoring as a "useful" activity is likely to take precedence over a third "learner expectation" mentioned - that students "describe ethical issues of monitoring and control of employees."

This "strategic" approach to the exploration of monitoring technology, delivered via technology with the same monitoring capacity, could easily lead students to the belief that this particular use of technology is "natural," unproblematic, and inevitable, thus reifying monitoring as a use value and delegitimating critical analysis of issues pertaining to the social use of technology in general. Ultimately, as R.D. White (1987 [1985]) notes,

> The passive relationship between student and machine is particularly well-suited to the dual tasks of the school in preparing students for their respective future social positions. In the case of those children who are selected to continue on toward a career in a high technology field, the "value-free" nature of computer aided teaching plus the individualistic learning format guarantees a degree of technical skills without a wider interpretive and critical understanding. The corporate demand for "smart" labour power can be met in this case by the shaping of compliance in those most suitable for the tasks of flexible-system production (109).

It is in the arena of social relations that are obscured and marginalized by the instrumental rationality of administrative technology that the hegemony of late capitalist commodity fetishism and lifeworld colonization becomes reified. In the absence of substantive critical debate over the social application of technology due to the comprehensive administration of the "public" sphere through technocratic expertise, debates concerning technology are reduced to discussions of the relative instrumental merits of the latest gadgetry. This narrow perspective is readily discernible in "the content of the social component of computer-literacy curricula" which

> . . . serves to depoliticize debate by defining the parameters of acceptable discussion. The establishment of a carefully delineated, "safe" arena for discussions of social impact - always understood as a "break" from the real, that is, technical, focus - renders any attempt at genuine, sustained criticism illegitimate, even irrational . . . . as the form and the content of the campaign for computer literacy encourage support for the computer age while discouraging dissent, the population is steadily being "retooled" to fit the ideological needs of a retooled economy . . . . most educators, business men, and technologists promoting computer literacy are merely unwitting participants in such ideological designs . . . . there are others, however, on the national level, whose motives seem more consciously ideological. The fact that the diverse pedagogical intentions of the former fit so nicely within the ideological designs of the latter suggests that computer-literacy ideology is more hegemonic than conscious. This is confirmed by the observation that excitement over the use of the new tool is almost always accompanied by fantastical predictions of social transformation (Noble, 1986 [1984]: 89-90).

As Besser (1993) observes in analyzing computer literacy courses:

> What is learned here is not unlike the socialization process taught in early public education. Just as 19th-century students learned to adapt to the new industrial technology workplace environment by attending school at scheduled hours, by learning to follow orders, and by being away from home during daylight hours - so today's students are learning to think in a structured yes-no, multiple-choice way to prepare them for interaction with computers in the workplace, banks, or in the home (65).

This method of "thinking," which allows no purchase for the insights and ambiguities which arise from critical reflection, is mediated by "the language of computer technology, particularly the terms *command* and *menu*," language which "indicates the degree to which the self-management of the learning process is constrained from without. The computer's binary structure (yes, no) provides few opportunities for 'maybe' yes and no" (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994: 135 [emphasis in original text]). Such constraints on self-management fit those students deemed "most suitable for the tasks of flexible-system production" (White, 1987 [1985]: 109) to the "ideal-type competency profile of a post-Fordist worker" delineated by Soucek (1996). In contrast to the "Fordist" worker who is merely an interchangeable cog on an assembly line, the post-Fordist worker is ostensibly an integral team member within consultative labour-management production processes. Soucek's profile of the "post-Fordist" worker presents a view of such "consultative" processes in which "work autonomy" is actually integrated "with increased *control* and *monitoring*", a contradictory set of circumstances wherein the worker must be led to "believe he/she is performing the work task autonomously, even though every step the person takes is *visible* and monitored by the supervising agency" (Soucek, 1996: 165-166 [emphasis in original text]). Such contradictory work processes are reminiscent of many work processes in formal schooling, most notably those in computer-aided instruction programs like CTS.

Another flexi-worker "competency" mentioned by Soucek as integral to post-Fordist consultation processes in the workplace is the "capacity to interpret *coercion* as consultation," a post-Fordist "work process" in which the worker

> . . . will need to live with the contradiction that he/she is listened to, even though his/her voice might be a *mute* voice . . . . management might "consult" the workers about structural changes, but the net effect of such consultations might be that they simply inform workers about what is going to happen anyway (Soucek, 1996: 166 [emphasis in original text]).

This infantalization of workers through "post-Fordist" labour processes is

Instrumentalized via the internalization of attitudinal dispositions through which the

"Ego is systematically fragmented and commodified . . . . Desirable attitudes include:

respect for authority, optimistic conformism" and "political neutrality" (Soucek, 1996:

167).

Pertaining to the concept of "applying quality management systems and strategies"

as dictated in Module MAM2010 ("Managing for Quality") in the Management and

Marketing strand of CTS, students are to "evaluate current management systems and

strategies used by managers to increase quality," "strategies" for "managing change"

such as "restructuring, downsizing" and "re-engineering." Even though the term

"increase quality" is used here in a framework which borrows the rhetoric of "post-

Fordist empowerment," *this is more precisely a model which seeks to increase*

control over workers and workplaces. This is scarcely surprising given that

> From the vantage point of most North American workers, the vast majority of work organizations, including most high performance ones, actually continue to operate on principles of hierarchical control of technical design and planning knowledge as well as strategic investment and management decisions by small numbers of executives and experts. There is a strictly limited capacity to plan or design the technical division of labor by most subordinates just as in older mass production forms . . . . surveillance and constraint over most workers' worksite practices has often increased rather than decreased through the centrally controlled manner in which microelectronic technologies usually have been introduced (Livingstone, 1998: 150).

Given the directive in "Managing for Quality" that students are to evaluate

management systems that increase control over labour processes through restructuring,

downsizing, and re-engineering, they need look no further than their own schools to

conduct such an evaluation. For instance, in their schools students might discover

examples of management practices applied as a "Foucauldian" "micro-physics of power."

Such "micro-power structures" are mediated as "practical applications of power" through

"a hierarchy of continuous and functional surveillance" (Ball, 1990: 165), which, in

essence, would entail

> . . . an interrogation without end, an investigation that would be extended
> without limit to a meticulous and ever more analytical observation, a
> judgement that would at the same time be the constitution of a file that
> was never closed, the calculated leniency of a penalty that would be
> interlaced with the ruthless curiosity of an examination, a procedure that
> would be at the same time the permanent measure of a gap in relation to
> an inaccessible norm and the asymptotic movement that strives to meet
> in infinity. The public execution was the logical culmination of a
> procedure governed by the Inquisition. The practice of placing
> individuals under "observation" is a natural extension of a justice imbued
> with disciplinary methods and examination procedures. Is it surprising
> that the cellular prison, with its regular chronologies, forced labour, its
> authorities of surveillance and registration, its experts in normality, who
> continue and multiply the functions of the judge, should have become the
> modern instrument of penalty? Is it surprising that prisons resemble
> factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?
> (Foucault, 1977: 227-228)

To deal with students (and teachers) who question the application of a "micro-

physics of power," a "pathological analysis" may be applied, whereby "the difficulties

students face are perceived and described as existing within and caused primarily by

'deficits' or 'diseases' in the students themselves" (Apple, 1996: 69). Given the

narrowly conceived scope of such reasoning, any activist intent demonstrated by

either students or teachers is as likely as not liable to be interpreted as disciplinary

transgressions to be dealt with in a punitive manner by school authorities.

The individual "deficit" or "dysfunction" rationalization analyzed by Apple (1996)

can be applied in cases where teachers question or resist instrumental processes of

"planned change" as well. Thus, the ends of institutional control, disguised as

"empowerment", justify the means employed to operationalize such ends: "convincing"

teachers of "the urgent need to change" (Poon, 1995: 26). Those who perceive such

rationalizations for the extension of a "micro-physics of power" in institutional settings

clearly must be persuaded that they are mistaken and portrayed as such to others. Thus,

> As a counsel of perfection and as an epitome of efficient form,
> management stands in tension with its imperfect servants . . . .
> Psychoanalytic or psychological analyses are frequently mobilized in
> response to individual resistance . . . . Collective opposition is
> systematically misrecognized. Solutions are offered in terms of personal
> counselling or one-off adaptations of the system. The resister is cast as
> social deviant, and is normalized through coercive or therapeutic
> procedures (Ball, 1990: 158).

Such "coercive or therapeutic procedures" need not be applied to "resisters" if they

can be weeded out or transformed through "ideological proletarianization" before they

become a problem. The accommodation of the individual to such proletarianization or

"co-optation" encourages the "identification of self with moral purposes defined by

others" and the perception that institutional imperatives are "committed to" the

professional worker's "own underlying values and purposes," leading to "a routine

acceptance and growing identification with organization ends" (Derber, 1982: 185).

Derber maintains that even under circumstances which encourage the ideological

proletarianization of professionals, such professionals retain relative autonomy in

choosing the means by which institutional mandates are to be implemented. However, in conceding the possibility that this relative autonomy could ultimately come to be eroded by the increasing technical/administrative instrumentalization of such means - leading to the "mechanization or routinization of professional work and the undermining of professional monopolies of knowledge" - Derber insists that such "rapid technical proletarianization would almost certainly undermine the existing ideological accommodations and produce explosive dissent" (189).

In his critical analysis of Derber's contention that ideological accommodation is partially ameliorated by relative autonomy, Soucek (1996) argues that such relative autonomy is undermined by post-Fordist technical relations of production which "transform teachers' technical knowledge and hence their technical capacity to choose the means for delivering agreed outcomes" (191). Nonetheless, given the hegemonic implications of co-optation through ideological accommodation, the perception that predetermined means of securing "agreed upon" outcomes originate with or correspond to professional workers' "own underlying values or purposes" can remain an effective method of leading these workers to retain their illusions of relative autonomy.

In order to further "manage" whatever dissent may arise from the technical/ administrative re-engineering of professions such as teaching

> ... regulatory mechanisms are sought which significantly increase the degree of control over teachers, thereby limiting the space available for reflection, critique and contestation. Given that teachers are to implement the new reforms, what is required is greater control over the margin of discretion in their work (Robertson, 1996: 39).

Such management of dissent through "limiting the space available for reflection, critique

and contestation" is a normative feature of the type of teacher education programs which seek to "harmonize" the beliefs and attitudes of prospective teachers with the micro-management of power relations that takes place in schools. Essentially, these prospective teachers are to be inculcated with attitudinal perspectives (often *selected* attitudinal perspectives already present which are then reinforced) which mould them into effective conduits for institutional power relations between administrative structures and students. Thus, classroom practices which seek to reduce "dysfunctional behaviour patterns" are presented as "proactive" measures of conflict resolution that are to be instrumentalized through classroom management and disciplinary action. Such processes of teacher "education" are predicated upon the hegemonic implantation of functional/behavioural approaches to professional practice in prospective teachers' value systems to the extent that they assume the status of reified attitudinal norms. These approaches to professional practice are often hammered into teacher trainees in "teacher training programs (which) tend to be practical, experiential, short, and intensive, with no time for reflection" (Soucek, 1996: 16).

Those trainees who most successfully internalize such instrumental norms (or at least give the impression of successful internalization) tend to benefit the most from the differential reward structures advocated by Louis and Miles (see Poon, 1995: 41), structures which favour teachers who display the preferred dispositional profile for "leadership," while tending to marginalize those who question such instrumentality (or who simply cannot conform to it or give the impression of such conformity), those who, implicitly or explicitly, "refuse to embrace change." Such divisions effectively undermine

already compromised possibilities of collective resistance to the instrumental

rationalization of labour processes in the teaching profession, a circumstance likely to be

exacerbated by "promotional procedures in post-Fordist education (which) tend to

promote interests of those teachers concerned primarily with advancing their own careers

rather than with the educational issues themselves" (Soucek, 1996: 226). The

instrumental rationalization of teaching seldom fails to result in intensification and, as

noted by Robertson (1996), "The intensification of teachers' work inevitably leads to the

prioritizing of those activities which are rewarded over those that are not." Therefore,

student/teacher "interaction" "takes on all of the characteristics of the commodity

form . . . . the logic of the market . . . . which has penetrated deep inside the schools"

(Robertson, 1996: 45).

In Module MAM3010 of Management and Marketing ("The Business

Organization") students are to explore the concept of "organizational structures,"

specifically to "diagram a firm's organization for each type of structure (top-level, mid-

level, and supervisory)" and to "research the levels of management in the managerial

hierarchy for each structure" (AECSB, 1997d: F.5). This conceptual framework leaves no

room for the possible analysis of organizational structures not based upon the strictly

hierarchical model, a model that corresponds to reified social norms which ensure that

"Implicit in the modern ideology of technological progress is the belief that the process of

technological development is analogous to that of natural selection" (Noble, 1984: 144).

This implication is readily apparent in certain Alberta Education science curriculum

documents which are, presumably, to be "integrated" with CTS (according to Poon

[1995], *all* other programs are to be integrated with CTS). For instance, in the *Science 10*

Course of Studies, under the heading of "skills," it is suggested that "students should be

able to demonstrate the skills and thinking processes associated with the practice of

science *by drawing analogies between the evidence for division of labour between cells*

to services in communities" (AECSB, 1995a: 19 [emphasis added]). Similarly, in the

Science 20-30 Program of Studies it is decreed that "students should be able to

demonstrate *the interrelationships among science, technology and society, by*

understanding the role and influence of variation, fitness, natural selection and

population growth on the adaptation of organisms to their environments " (AECSB,

1995b: 31 [emphasis added]). In the same document, biotechnological engineering - or

"the *production* of new life forms" - is equated with "*natural selection* in the biosphere"

(31 [emphasis added]).

In Module MAM3030 of Management and Marketing ("Business in the Global

Marketplace") students are to explore the concept of "strategies for operating in the

global marketplace," specifically to "describe the concept of "profit with principles"

when doing business with developing nations" (AECSB, 1997d: F.16). While certain

limited examples of companies displaying such "principles" can be cited, they are most

decidedly the exception, *not the rule*. In the same Module, students are expected to

explore the concept of "constraints and conditions," specifically to "research and assess

managerial considerations in a foreign country," "considerations" such as "social,

political, and environmental conditions" (F.17). Furthermore, students are to "contrast

risks/challenges to opportunities" (F.17). As befits the instrumental/functional approach

of CTS, this section of Module MAM3030 *cannot* be misconstrued as anything approaching a critical inquiry into the ethics or morality of the frequently questionable or even criminal behaviour of companies exploiting workers and biosystems in foreign countries. It is, rather, an instrumental assessment of "constraints" that might *hinder* capital interests in their quest to exploit the " 'favorable business environment', a euphemism that signifies the foreign government is prepared to intimidate, jail, or even kill recalcitrant workers" (Aronowitz, 1998: 217). However, one can be relatively certain that examples of transnational business practices such as the following are not offered for the consideration of students in the Management and Marketing strand of CTS:

> In 1987, in the midst of a bitter two-month strike in Mexico, Ford Motor Company tore up its union contract, fired 3,400 workers, and cut wages by 45 per cent. When the workers rallied around dissident labor leaders, gunmen hired by the official government - dominated union shot workers at random in the factory (Korten, 1995: 129).

The level of concern at the corporate level over such incidents and other abuses is convincingly demonstrated by the experience of former Liberal cabinet minister Warren Allmand, now president of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. Allmand, in relating the efforts of the Centre to plan and conduct a conference "on business and social responsibility" which was to be held in January, 1999, recalled that 2,500 invitations were sent out to businesses and that "Two months later, only 11 had registered. We cancelled the conference" (Davies, *Edmonton Journal*, November 28, 1998: A4).

However, although business "leaders," politicians currently in office, and many other "mature" adults set such a shining example of ethical behaviour in their disregard

for human rights and other issues of critical concern, it would be mistaken to conclude

that all students share a similar absence of critical consciousness, as illustrated in this

example from "the leader of the free world" to our south:

> Not all Americans suffer from the inability to separate myths from reality
> and to read the world critically. For example, David Spritzler, a 12-year-
> old student at Boston Latin School, faced disciplinary action for his
> refusal to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, which he considers "a
> hypocritical exhortation to patriotism" in that there is not "liberty and
> justice for all." (Macedo, 1995: 72)

The American Civil Liberties Union had to intervene on Spritzler's behalf.

CTS: Enterprise and Innovation

> The students of Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, take note of the world the
> adults are bequeathing them. So do the students of Alberta. They are
> learning their lessons from their elders: what counts are individualism,
> competitiveness, adaptability, self-reliance, survival. The state is removing
> itself from their lives; in its place is the private sector, whose primary
> function is to sort winners from losers in the most effective way possible.
> Says one, "I feel like I'm entering a war zone. I sure know I'm on my
> own" (Barlow and Campbell, 1995: 235).

In *Enterprise and Innovation: Guide to Standards and Implementation* (AECSB,

1997c), it is announced that strand "learner expectations comprise the competencies to

help students become more sophisticated consumers of business services." These

prospective "consumers" are to become "more accepting of both success *and failure* as

learning opportunities" during this process of "sophistication" (B.2 [emphasis added]). It

is here that the "business-friendliness" of CTS emerges in all its glory, although one must

ask, given the increasingly austere entry-level labour market and the highly contingent

and uncertain opportunities within the "entrepreneurial" sector of the mythic "self-

regulating" market economy, whether failure will come to be a much more common

"learning opportunity" than success if the present hyper-monopolistic economic trends intensify.

Success or failure aside, it is expected that students *will* play the zero-sum game CTS seeks to entrench them in hegemonically since CTS is, like all curricula in the present era of "market-friendly" schooling, outcomes-based. Given this emphasis on performativity, it is a matter of conjecture as to just how much failure the "sophisticated consumers of business services" churned out by CTS might be expected to "accept" before they drift into the "underground economy" to seek alternative forms of employment.

Learner Outcomes in Information and Communication Technology (AECSB, 1997a) provides some insight into what possible items "sophisticated consumers of business services" might be expected to purchase. For instance, it is decreed that "the student will be able to demonstrate the consumer knowledge necessary to make purchases such as a computer, modem, VCR and video camera" (9). Potential "sophisticates" from the lower end of the socio-economic scale will likely also have it impressed upon them that they *must* consider making such purchases if they are to remain economically "viable," although the capital "flow" required for these purchases will likely be beyond their means, even if bought "on time." As Menzies (1996) reports "A 1994 Angus Reid poll found that found that 60 percent of households with incomes above $60,000 had personal computers, compared to only 25 percent of those with incomes between $10,000 and $30,000" (10). Obviously, those students from households that do not possess the requisite level of disposable income are at a disadvantage when they are expected to

display their "competence" as "sophisticated consumers of business services."

The corporate presence in schools is now more overt than in any time in the past. School/business partnerships like that between IBM, Maritime Telephone & Telegraph and Cole Harbour High School in Nova Scotia are becoming ubiquitous, often thinly disguised as "consumer education programs." Barlow and Campbell (1995) report that during a conference "on school-corporate partnerships" held at Cole Harbour High, students were "advised" by "business leaders" that "there are no more jobs, only opportunities" and that "it is up to them to be entrepreneurial and create work" (210). Barlow and Robertson (1994) note that such schools "are rushing to create partnerships with the same corporations that won't be hiring their students" (92). When business interests infiltrate schools in this manner, it is not merely an old-fashioned careers day - it is more a mission to forge pro-business hegemony with as little ambiguity as possible.

This "mission" is apparent in Module ENT2020 of Enterprise and Innovation ("Financing Ventures"), where students are to explore the concept of "equity capital" (E.9), specifically "personal capital" obtained from "self," "family," and "friends," as well as "venture capital" obtained from "venture capitalists," "business angels" and "loan sharks."

Given the ever-present possibilities of *venture failure* in the present high-stakes "game" of risk capitalism, it is fitting that the "concept" heading of "debt financing"(E.9) follows directly upon that of "equity capital." In their exploration of sources of debt financing, students are directed to "analyze various sources of debt financing," from "personal savings" to "family and friends" and "financial institutions." Given the unlikely

prospect that any significant "personal savings" will survive the process of venture failure intact, as well as the likelihood that requests for debt-financing loans from family and friends could be problematic and/or estranging, these capital sources may not be either feasible or desirable. Moreover, since "financial institutions" are likely to be reticent in propping up failing ventures - unless, of course, these "venture loans" are tied in with government-sponsored corporate welfare initiatives for "big players" - this "source" of debt financing could be problematic for fledgling "venture capitalists" as well, irregardless of their "sophistication" as "consumers of business services." Given such constraints, such individuals will likely be encouraged to "accept" failure by blaming themselves for it, and not the exigencies of a monopoly sector encouraged by state-sponsored largesse, a monopoly sector comprised of transnational corporations which further undercut the viability of your "venture" via the "competitive edge" gained by using cheap, readily exploitable labour in global "free trade zones."

In Module ENT2030 of Enterprise and Innovation ("Marketing the Venture") students are to explore the concept of "marketing strategies," specifically to "identify various marketing strategies for their applicability in terms of marketing mix for a target market" (E.13). In the adjacent "notes," it is suggested that students explore such "target markets" by selling popcorn to other students and teachers outside the school cafeteria. A more likely scenario is that they will be recruited to sell long-distance telephoning packages, or some such equivalent, door-to-door on a commission basis in an effort to offset the effects of government cutbacks in education. While this activity, which could be rationalized as a series of "field trips" or as "homework," may not be as "glamorous"

or "lucrative" as "venture capitalism" is purported to be, at least it will teach students

their "proper" station in life as future workers in the contingent labour force, rather than

setting their expectations "unrealistically" high.

In Module ENT2040 of Enterprise and Innovation ("Implementing the Venture"), in

relation to the concept of "managing the venture," students are expected to "analyze why

businesses fail, and illustrate the consequences of poor and/or inadequate planning"

(E.17). To thus imply that business failure is predominantly due to "poor and/or

inadequate planning," rather than more accurately admitting that such failure is due *at*

least as often to a whole range of other variables and contingencies within a monopoly-

dominated market structure, is to once again personalize the blame for failure.

In Module ENT3010 ("Managing the Venture") students are to explore the concept

of "making decisions," specifically to "describe ethical and unethical business practices"

(F.5). As discussed in my analysis (pp. 74-76) of Module MAM3030 of the Management

and Marketing strand of CTS ("Business in the Global Marketplace"), such a distinction

is likely to be blurred in practice. Module ENT3010 of Enterprise and Innovation also

directs students to explore the concept of "monitoring," specifically to "describe

circumstances when it may be appropriate to downsize or terminate the venture" and to

"devise a plan addressing the requirements and responsibilities involved in downsizing or

terminating a venture" (F.7). Again, such "rights and responsibilities" are often blurred or

avoided in practice, avoidance which is quite easy to engineer if you are a big enough

"player," such as Neil Vinet, president and sole shareholder of Mac Timber Ltd., who

walked away with his creditors' funds after the company was declared bankrupt

subsequent to the receipt of a $540,000 federal government bailout package (Marck, *Edmonton Journal*, March 5, 1999: G8).

In restating the main points of Chapter Two it becomes evident that if mass accomodation to service-oriented labour markets is to be successfully engineered, programs like CTS will at least theoretically be instrumental in the administrative management of such engineering. The growth of service-oriented labour markets requires the "product" that programs like CTS seek to manufacture: high school graduates who possess both a basic-level generic skill-set and allegiance to a normative structure based upon the cultivation of acquiescent dispositional attributes, a normative structure wherein passive and deferential behaviour in the presence of authority is emphasized. As such, training programs like CTS tend to stress behavioural compliance as an "attribute" which has a greater market value than specific skills which may become redundant through technological innovation. Such behavioural compliance is integral to Soucek's (1996) "ideal-type competency of a post-Fordist worker," a profile in which desirable dispositions include "respect for authority," "optimistic conformism," and "political neutrality." Contrary to "post-Fordist" rhetoric, this is *not* a consultative model of work organization; it is, rather, a hierarchical model falsely presented as a consultative model.

The "optimistic conformism" mentioned in Soucek's "competency profile" is an "attribute" that CTS and similar programs seek to have students adopt uncritically as they patiently warehouse themselves in pools of reserve labour, even as underemployment escalates. Such underemployment, however, is often

overlooked as a negative aspect of the contingent labour market due to the fact that

it is not *unemployment*. Furthermore, even when underemployment *is* statistically

investigated,

> These figures underestimate the actual number of part-time jobs
> because growing numbers of people, now about six percent of the
> labor force in both Canada and the U.S. (Advisory Group on
> Working Time and the Distribution of Work 1994, 31; Mishel et al.
> 1997, 263), are combining part-time jobs to become full-time
> workers (Livingstone, 1998: 70).

The same "logic" which celebrates optimistic conformism as a desirable

attribute of human behaviour dictates a culture of compliance in which any blame

for underemployment or other lack of advancement in the labour market is to be

personalized as an attitudinal deficit rather than recognized as the structural

underperformance of capitalist labour markets. The directive in CTS curriculum

guides that students are to "become more accepting of both success and failure" is

representative of such "logic" and suggests the desirability of a "cooling out" of

expectations (Shor, 1980) whereby the blame for failure is to be personalized.

Schooled to accept the blame for "their failure" in this fashion, students are to

become flexible or pliant to such an extent that they come to regard competitive

austerity in the service economy as a natural and inevitable existence. When such

"failure" is successfully rationalized as individual "skills deficits," human capital/

progressive competitiveness theorists salvage a certain amount of credibility even

though the increasing *lack* of credibility of such theories is becoming painfully

obvious.

Given that the CTS program seeks to produce "flexible" workers for the "new

knowledge economy", the focus of this inquiry will now proceed with an examination of

the labour market presumably "ready to welcome" the budding entrepreneurs, venture

capitalists, and contingent workers who will emerge, freshly scrubbed, from the modular

womb of CTS.

Chapter Three

SCHOOLING AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY:
Building the Flexible Worker for a Contingent Utopia - Austerity, Crisis, and the
Myth of Progressive Competitiveness

An increasing proportion of the population has an ever-decreasing
expectation of the possibility of securing a livelihood through permanent
employment and is being forced into part-time and/or discontinuous
and/or undervalued and/or unprotected employment. The division of the
workforce into full-time or "normal" workers, on the one hand, and
those in multiple forms of marginal employment, on the other, a process
developing during the phase of full employment, is now more clearly
established. There is much to suggest that the social division between the
shrinking group of those in permanent well-qualified, professional work,
and that of those pursuing all manner of strategies for earning an income,
or "escaping with an income," will sharpen in the future (Offe, 1996: 203).

The *truly fundamental social cleavages of the Information Age* are: first,
the internal fragmentation of labor between informational producers and
replaceable generic labor. Secondly, the social exclusion of a significant
segment of society made up of discarded individuals whose value as
workers/consumers is used up, and whose relevance as people is ignored.
And, thirdly, the separation between the market logic of global networks
of capital flows and the human experience of workers' lives (Castells,
1998: 346 [emphasis in original text]).

In terms of class-specific differences, since the main criterion for
entry into ownership positions is the possession of capital assets,
knowledge credentials are generally a secondary consideration and
rarely enforceable versus the power of wealth . . . (Livingstone, 1998:
213)

Kingston's Employment Services Branch is housed in a 150-year-old
limestone building just down the shore from the old Kingston Pen. In the
waiting room of the city job office there is a corkboard with the notice,
"To Our Clients: Please Read," and a handful of clippings pinned to it.
One piece quotes a management consultant: "People are commodities
now. When you become useless, you're out the door" (Swift, 1995: 157).

Policy experts within university economics departments, state apparatuses, and the

corporate sector are fond of repeating the popular mantra of progressive competitiveness

theory, policy theory - originally emanating from the "socialist" perspective within the

hegemonic constellation of neo-liberalism - which basically emerges from the highly

questionable thesis that a well-trained work force will "naturally" attract employment that

will utilize all the resources of such a labour force. Thus, studies like the "green" book on

jobs and growth are released, containing many dubious assertions such as the following:

> . . . provincial data indicate that 45 percent of heads of households
> receiving social assistance were "employable" in March, 1993. This
> group would be more employable if they had greater access to basic
> skills development and job training. Then as more jobs become available,
> they would be ready to take them (Human Resources Development
> Canada, 1994: 20).

Such "logic" simply assumes that "more jobs" will magically "become available" if those

on social assistance have "greater access to basic skills development and job training." As

is amply demonstrated by the indifferent response of the business "community" to federal

Liberal employment programs like the "First Jobs Initiative," this assumption presumes a

level of cooperation (on social issues) between the state and the corporate sector which

plainly does not exist. To assume that such a spirit of cooperation *does* exist is to

underestimate the self-interest of powerful individual capitalists and their ability to

pursue their own agenda in increasingly unregulated global markets:

> If capitalist competition is left unregulated, individual capitalists, driven
> by self-interest, might make decisions contradictory to the general interest
> of capital, which, in turn, could jeopardize the survival of the social
> formation itself. What has happened in Australia under the Accord
> between the ACTU (Australian Council of Trade Unions) and the Labour
> government illustrates the point. Under the Accord in the 1980s, the
> unions made key concessions. Real wages were reduced by 10%, while
> profits climbed significantly. The assumption was that the profits would
> be reinvested in Australia to generate jobs. Such reinvestment never took
> place. The profits went into speculative capital markets and off-shore.
> The gradual disinvestment in manufacturing resulted in shrinking

consumer power, and, consequently, in shrinking opportunities for
investment. In this sense, the general interest of the capitalist class was
not served (Soucek, 1996: 85).

Private sector businesses have demonstrated that they are more than willing to

accept "corporate welfare" from the state, but as soon as the state sector - cap in hand -

suggests that private sector businesses reciprocate such largesse through domestic

expansion to create a modicum of employment opportunities, the state is accused of

burdening the private sector with unfair regulatory mechanisms. Highly publicized state

sector "expectations" of private sector cooperation in job creation must either be regarded

as extremely naive, unrealistically optimistic, or as administrative efforts to engineer the

appearance of government action. As Meiksins-Wood (1995) observes,

> . . . there is perhaps no surer sign of desperation than this faith in a
> solution which is so weakly supported by evidence. In a context of mass
> unemployment, the logic of a theory that places the supply of skilled
> workers before the demand is at best illusive. Is it reasonable to suppose
> that jobs that do not exist for structural reasons will suddenly be created
> to absorb a newly skilled workforce (286)?

Some apostles of progressive competitiveness theory such as James Downey go so

far as to claim that "as marginal jobs disappear, those without basic educational skills are

becoming unemployable" (Bloom, 1990: 5). Elementary logic exposes the flaws in such

"reasoning." Since "organized" capitalism - which, thus far, shows few signs of

relinquishing its power to any alternate economic system - has always concentrated its

administrative efforts upon the development, control, and exploitation of core industries

and their labour forces, and since such control and exploitation depends upon the

existence of a marginalized reserve labour force to "discipline" core workers' behaviour,

Downey's statement is foolish. By definition, the existence of core workers presupposes

the existence of marginal or "peripheral" workers.

The theory of progressive competitiveness - in essence merely warmed-over human capital theory - and the education/skills deficit thesis by which it is legitimated, seeks to rationalize increasing labour market inequities away by claiming that workers are somehow deficient in skills and knowledge. Since "young people in the 1990s have more education than earlier generations had" and they are "more educated than earlier generations who had lower unemployment rates" (Blanchflower and Freeman, 1998: 4), high unemployment rates amongst the youth labour force cannot be blamed on a dearth of education as an aggregate commodity. Therefore, the "quality" of education comes under attack and education is recast as labour force preparation in programs such as CTS. If, even after this re-engineering, unemployment and underemployment remain high, potential workers are branded "lazy" or "too choosy," or what qualifies as "knowledge" or "skill" undergoes a selective process of redefinition, a process by which unemployment and underemployment may be more effectively be blamed on the unemployed or underemployed who, perversely, simply refuse to obtain the skills supposedly in demand. Such "logic" as this leads corporate lions such as Frank Doyle, CEO of General Electric, to propose that the American economy is producing more skilled jobs than candidates to fill them. However,

> Many recent college graduates learned otherwise when they went out to begin their careers and were compelled to take work below their educational levels. The shortage they encountered was not one of well-trained workers, but of good jobs (Greider, 1992: 344).

In fact,

> The oversupply of educationally qualified people on the job market
> has been disguised by employers' inflation of credential requirements,
> as well as by scantily based imputations of persistent specific skill
> shortages and general expressions of dissatisfaction with the quality
> of job entrants (Livingstone, 1998: 5).

The notion that the steady rise in unemployment and underemployment in the past

fifteen to twenty years is directly attributable to a pervasive shortage of skilled workers

is derived largely from the rationalizations of crisis management and the techniques of

administrative engineering. Such rationalizations and techniques serve as effective means

to obscure the structural basis of and actual precipitating factors behind crises like

unemployment and underemployment via the administrated manufacture and mediatized

dissemination of alternate "crises" as diversionary measures. Thus, although once

regarded skeptically, the "skills deficit crisis" has become increasingly hegemonic in its

influence upon policy initiatives which drive restructuring in schooling and the labour

market. Such policy initiatives have mobilized the forces of crisis management to

"export" the fallout of economic re-engineering for the sake of profit maximization and

administrative control over the labour force to the public education sector of the state

apparatus. The public education sector has presumably not been producing enough highly

skilled graduates to supply an "expanding high technology labour market" even though,

as noted by Barlow and Robertson (1994), 27% of all Canadian post-secondary graduates

in 1993 held degrees in engineering and applied sciences and irregardless of the fact that

"the World Economic Forum and the Institute for Management's *World Competitiveness*

Report puts Canada in the top five when measuring workers' skills" (47). Barlow and

Robertson also note that "each year Canada produces nearly three times as many science

and engineering graduates per capita as does Germany, and 50% more than Japan" (48).

Calvert and Kuehn (1993) observe that the participation rate of Canadian Grade 12 students in the study of mathematics is two and one half times as high as their counterparts in Japan and five times as high as their counterparts in England (97). Moreover, the participation rate of Canadian students in biology, chemistry and physics is more than one and a half times higher than in Japan (98).

In observing that the Canadian skills-deficit myth has, to a significant degree, its genesis in the skills-deficit myth exported from the United States, Barlow and Robertson cite projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics which indicate that between 1990 and 2005, of the ten occupational categories projecting the highest level of aggregate job growth "only two qualify as highly skilled" (51), and that in 1990 "the National Center's Commission on Workforce Skills found that 95% of America's employers still use methods of production that require less than an eighth-grade education and minimal training of most workers" (53). Plotkin and Scheuerman (1994) note that "a fifth of today's college graduates now work in low-skill jobs, up from 11% in 1968" (11). Subtracting the approximately 30% of this group with no employment of any kind, of the remainder some 75% were employed as retail sales clerks, not a high tech occupation. Plotkin and Scheuerman also note that "the government's own commission on the skills of the American workforce recently reported that 80% of U.S. employers are satisfied with the skills of their workers and only 5% expect future increases in skill requirements" (11). As for corresponding data for Canada, Barlow and Robertson cite a 1994 Statistics Canada quarterly survey of 5,000 manufacturers which found that "only 2% of (these)

manufacturers complained of a shortage of skilled labour" (48-49). And yet, the "skill"

levels presumably required for semi-skilled or de-skilled labour continue to be ratcheted

up to legitimate the rhetoric of restructuring, ensuring a concomitant increase in the

unfulfilled expectations of graduates and "trainees" as "increasing numbers of students

exit from school only to find their occupational expectations unmet as capitalist

economics and democratic promises become more and more dissonant" (Shapiro, 1990:

117-118).

Statistics Canada, in a report released in August, 1998, confirms the extent of the

mismatch between levels of schooling and skill levels required in the Canadian labour

force in noting that "more than 2.5 million workers have literacy skills that exceed their

job demands" (Ross, *Edmonton Journal*, August 20, 1999: B3). Emblematic of this

mismatch is the experience of Karen Thiell, a 22-year-old University of Alberta

commerce graduate who

> . . . works in sales at Oasis, a handmade soap market in Eaton Centre.
> She had to read, write and do complex math equations every day in
> university. At work, the till does most of the calculations and the only
> thing she has to read is the occasional pamphlet about a new product
> (Ross, *Edmonton Journal*, August 20, 1999: B3).

Lowe and Krahn (1997) found that in Alberta in 1996, although 60% of high school

graduates had used a home computer for word processing in the 12 months prior to their

survey ". . . only 6 percent had done word processing in their paid jobs. Data entry or

record-keeping was the most likely computer use in the workplace, but even it was

reported by only 10 percent of the total sample" (57).

The ever-increasing surfeit of credentialled labourers produced in late capitalist

states ensures that, just as screening requirements were previously raised by employers

for job applicants "because of the mass availability of high school graduates"

(Braverman, 1974: 438), the same is increasingly becoming the case for college and

university graduates. The marginalizing potential of this proletarianization of a highly

schooled labour force could precipitate unprecedented levels of social instability. As Ira

Shor (1980) observes: "A system which educates people for more than it can deliver is

dangerously de-legitimizing itself. By encouraging people to deserve what they can never

have, the society and its colleges are educating their own gravediggers" (10). Therefore,

such "unrealistic" aspirations must be "cooled out":

> The process of "cooling out" is sophisticated thought-control. It transfers
> the locus of failure from the institution to the individual. At issue is the
> student's setting of goals and the student's perception of who is
> responsible for the place he or she reaches in society . . . . It is the ironic
> counter-point in a schizoid system which stands you up only to knock
> you down, which needs you to believe in a dream that won't come true.
> When "cooling out" works, the student feels that she or he blew the
> chance to make it . . . . The ideological trick is to change thought from
> "my unmet needs" to "my unrealistic aspirations" (Shor, 1987: 17).

The central premise driving progressive competitiveness theory, that if the skills are

there high value-added jobs will follow, is no more valid now than at any other time

during "the high tech revolution." For example, as noted by Schecter (1977), "the gap

between supply and demand for university graduates in the early seventies may be as

high as one third the annual production, perhaps more if unemployment is considered"

(404). Moreover, while Shapiro (1990) claims that "80 percent of college graduates are

currently underemployed" (125), Korten (1995) notes that

The U.S. Labor Department reports that 20 percent of graduates from U.S. universities in the 1984-90 period took jobs in which they were "underutilized" and predicts that 30 percent of those graduating between 1994 and 2005 will join the ranks of the unemployed or underemployed (246).

According to Statistics Canada data on educational levels amongst the unemployed in Alberta (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1995), university graduates comprised 6.4% of the *total unemployed* in 1991 and 10.1% in 1994. Moreover, while 4% of Alberta university graduates were unemployed in 1991, 5.3% of this group were unemployed in 1994. Those with a post-secondary certificate or diploma comprised 21.8% of the *total unemployed* in 1991 and 27.1% in 1994, while 6.6% of this group were unemployed in 1991, 7.7% in 1994. Somewhat smaller increases were reported for those with "some post-secondary" schooling, while levels of unemployment and percentage of overall unemployed (while still at unprecedented levels) dropped for high school graduates and those who had not graduated from high school. In fact, recent trends in Alberta indicate that as levels of schooling rise so do levels of unemployment. Evidently, the bounty of high value-added jobs going unfilled due to a lack of well-educated workers is a mythical cornucopia thus far, casting further doubt upon the already questionable "logic" of progressive competitiveness theory. There may well be no pot of gold at the end of this rainbow but, rather, quantities of Alberta mud. As Harvey Krahn notes in analyzing recent opportunities in the Canadian labour force: "The largest job growth hasn't been in the higher-end jobs, it's been in tourism, retail and food and beverage industries" (Ross, *Edmonton Journal*, August 20, 1999: B3). If this "trend" continues, those who pursue further education will have to adjust their expectations downward accordingly, left to express their frustration in the same manner as University

of Alberta graduate Sue McCoy, who remarks that she is "skeptical of the worthiness of the years spent at this institution" (McCoy, *Edmonton Journal*, January 31, 1999: A11).

Sarah Brooks, a 23-year-old bachelor of science graduate (University of Waterloo) and Erin Lawless, a 26-year-old information technology graduate from Halifax report that "their only job offers came from American companies" (Morris, *Edmonton Journal*, March 8, 1999: B4). Brooks, an organic chemist now working at a pharmaceutical company in New Jersey, reports that she "couldn't even get an interview in Canada," while Lawless, presently working in North Carolina, notes that "If not for this U.S. job, I probably would have defaulted on my loans because no Canadian company was willing to hire me." Indeed, as Sandy Ferguson, vice-president of product management at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, confirms, "between 45 and 50 percent of students default on their loans" (Ayed, *Edmonton Journal*, July 31, 1998: B5), not due to "criminal intent," but because "they have difficulty repaying them." The response of the federal government to this escalating crisis has, predictably, been punitive, protecting the vested interests of their counterparts in the private sector against those of former students who fail to secure a decent living in the "booming" new economy: it has "amended the Bankruptcy Act to make it impossible for graduates with student loans to declare bankruptcy until 10 years after finishing their studies" (*Edmonton Journal*, October 13, 1998: A13).

Information technology (IT) workers like Erin Lawless who received their training in Canada have discovered that a green card is at least as important as their diploma in finding non-contingent employment in their field due to the foreign-owned subsidiary

status of the Canadian IT sector. For example, Northern Telecom, the largest "Canadian" IT manufacturer, a subsidiary of Bell Canada, which is in turn controlled by the U.S.-Based transnational giant A.T.&T., has transferred an estimated 15,000 jobs from Canada to "free trade zones" abroad in recent years (Barlow, 1991: 62). Most of these free trade zones are located in regions where unionization is disorganized, non-existent or controlled by corporate interests, promising lower wage scales than elsewhere and few, if any, substantive benefits for most IT workers. Popular mythology has it that such free trade zones, which are geared to the "lower end" production of standardized items on a "just-in-time" basis, are invariably located in Asian countries or in the southern or southwestern "sunbelt" of the United States. However, many such zones are also located in the U.S. northeast close to the largest Canadian markets, where land prices and labour costs are "adjusted" to the austere market logic of monopoly capitalism (Barlow, 1991: 56). Companies like Northern Telecom "outsource" much of their production operations to such zones and Nortel also pursues a long-range strategy of "regular purges to make itself leaner regardless of the current economic conditions" (Marotte, *Edmonton Journal*, September 24, 1998: E3). Those Nortel operations that remain domestic are based upon economies of scope, providing expensive "customized" goods and services. This small but very lucrative market requires a small, specialized and skilled corps of IT workers that represents only a small percentage of qualified Canadian IT graduates for operational purposes. And yet, advisory councils such as the Software Human Resources Council persist in claiming that there is a shortage of skilled IT workers in Canada. Such claims are greeted with surprise and anger by highly trained graduates of computing sciences

and computer engineering programs like Harry Fletcher and John Kril, both Toronto-based IT workers. Between September, 1995 and February, 1996, Kril applied for over 300 IT positions in the Toronto area without success. Fletcher's "success story" was similar, prompting him to turn his employment search to the United States (Parsons, *Edmonton Journal*, March 19, 1996: F3).

In essence, Canada is producing a surfeit of IT workers for a global IT labour force based elsewhere, a labour force with its own built-in structural limits which will likely be encountered at some point not too far into the coming century. Most of these workers will either be constrained to accept low-end work in the production of IT commodities or the provision of basic IT services (in "call centres," for example), or will have to seek employment, underemployment, or unemployment in other sectors, most likely those which thrive on exploiting the "service proletariat." That this "service proletariat" includes those providing basic IT services is illustrated by Menzies (1996), who reports that

> In New Brunswick, where building the information highway infrastructure
> has been the McKenna government's industrial strategy, most of the "high-
> technology" jobs have been in call centres: in silicon work-cells, where
> people are employed part-time and at close to minimum wage to supply
> rote responses to 1-800 calls (6).

The skills/employment mismatch in the Canadian labour force will undoubtedly escalate in, at least, the near future given the as yet unabated growth in numbers of those pursuing credentials beyond the high school level. For instance, 1991 figures for Alberta show that 62% of high school graduates intended to continue their schooling, projected to reach 80% to 85% by 2007 (Thomson, *Edmonton Journal*, May 19, 1996: F1). Given the

continuing high level of de-skilling in the workplace and presuming that this situation

continues into the 21st century, such projected levels of overqualification could presage

unprecedentedly high levels of unemployment, contingent employment, job

dissatisfaction, and social disaffection. Driven by the fear that they will otherwise be "left

behind," ever-increasing numbers of students pursuing post-secondary schooling at

technical institutes, colleges, and universities promise an overabundant supply of

"qualified" workers in the absence of demand. However,

> Those living in the education-jobs gap give no serious indication of
> giving up on the faith that more education should get them a better
> job. Indeed, their current situation seems to have provoked in many
> at least a quiet sense of desperation that somehow they must continue
> to get more and still more education, training or knowledge in order
> to achieve any economic security. These sentiments resonate through
> most of our interviews. Such increasingly common learning efforts
> among the unemployed and underemployed underline just how wide
> the gulf between the knowledge base of the general population and the
> limited knowledge required in most jobs has become. The conviction
> of these marginalized people that our current economic system can
> produce the jobs to which they continue to feel at least ambiguously
> entitled has definitely been shaken severely. But, in the absence of any
> economic alternative that seems plausible, most of those living on both
> sides of the education-jobs gap are actively engaged in trying to revise
> rather than reject this conviction. As in the 1930s, the waste of human
> potential is immense and gut-wrenching. Just as during the "dirty
> thirties," the economic polarization between the haves and have-nots
> has also increased greatly (Livingstone, 1998: 132).

Scholastic drivenness will likely intensify the level of emigration from Canada

and the already existent downward pressure on wage levels as these are "harmonized"

with those in free trade zones. As James Goldsmith (1996) notes in analyzing the effects

of such "harmonization" in Great Britain:

> We seem to have forgotten the purpose of the economy. The present
> British government is proud of the fact that labor costs less in Britain
> than in other European countries. But it does not yet understand that in
> a system of global free trade its competitors will no longer be in Europe
> but in the countries that supply labor at an even lower cost. Compared to
> those countries, Britain's labor will remain uncompetitive, no matter how
> deeply the British government decides to impoverish its people (179).

As academic/vocational credentials inevitably become less of an asset under such

conditions, the engineering of ideological/hegemonic compliance through "cooling-out"

will become increasingly paramount.

When growth in the ratio of high value-added employment to overall labour market

growth is subtracted from the theory of progressive competitiveness

> . . . the progressive competitiveness strategy is forced to accept, as social
> democratic parties have been willing to do, the same "competitive
> austerity" as neo-liberalism . . . . under these conditions national (or
> regional) employment is increased only to the extent somebody else (or
> some other region) is bested and put out of work. The distribution of
> work, but not its aggregate volume, is altered: the result is better-skilled
> workers but unemployed in the same number (or higher if all countries
> pursue cost-cutting to improve export competitiveness and take demand
> out of the system). Indeed, the rationalisation of production from the new
> work processes has not meant higher world growth rates so that
> productivity gains have largely been at the expense of employment
> causing the "jobless growth" phenomenon. The productivity growth from
> the new technologies has consequently been profoundly inegalitarian . . . .
> The danger in the present situation - and it is already a feature of current
> international conditions – is to push every country, and even the most
> dynamic firms embracing the new work processes, toward competitive
> austerity (Albo, 1994: 157-158).

In such a situation, where all individual economies hope "that others will absorb their

trade surpluses" (Soucek, 1996: 86), the danger of international demand-side crises can

increase exponentially, especially when exacerbated by such structurally-induced

downturns as the recent "Asian" financial crisis. As Soucek (1996) points out, no one

will be capable of absorbing surplus goods "if all countries hope to resolve their economic crises through rising exports" (171). During the aftermath of the "Asian" crisis not even the United States, so-called "leader of the free world," has demonstrated such capability, with the U.S. trade deficit widening to 19.4 billion in February, 1999, "a 15.6 percent increase from the previous record in January," with February marking the fourth consecutive month of shrinking U.S. exports (*Edmonton Journal*, April 21, 1999: E3). As such, export-led recovery shows itself to be the zero-sum game it truly is not just for medium-sized and smaller countries, but for "world leaders" as well.

Demand-side crises such as the recent downturn are further exacerbated when competing players on a company to company basis downsize through attrition in order to maintain the unequal distribution of profits within their corporate hierarchies, sacrificing longer-term growth through consumer demand by compromising purchasing power across entire economies to augment executive privilege. However, since the bigger players are much more able to undertake such "re-engineering" without compromising their operational structures than smaller players, large corporations can afford to play a waiting game in which their smaller competitors fail, at which point large enterprises can absorb either the resulting increase in market share, the operations of smaller competitors or, increasingly, both. As demonstrated by James Laxer (1996), it is the labour force which has the most to lose in this zero-sum game, the rules of which dictate that many companies

> . . . are laying workers off at the same time as their profits are increasing,
> as the following cases from 1995 illustrate: General Motors Canada,
> profits up 36 percent, decrease in employees 2,500; Inco, profits up 3,281
> percent, decrease in employees 1,963; CP Rail, profits up 75 percent,

> decrease in employees 1,500; Bank of Montreal, profits up 20 percent, decrease in employees 1,428; Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, profits up 14 percent, decrease in employees 1,289; Shell Canada, profits up 63 percent, decrease in employees 471; Imperial Oil, profits up 43 percent, decrease in employees 452; and Toronto-Dominion Bank, profits up 16 percent, decrease in employees 354 (186).

While such "re-engineering" benefits the corporate bottom line of companies with the resources to play, it represents an unacceptable monetary cost to the Canadian economy in aggregate: in 1994, for example, $77 billion in lost productivity "and $14 billion in health, crime and other social costs" attributable to joblessness, underemployment, and poorly remunerated employment (Bronskill, *Edmonton Journal*, December 9, 1996: A1, A11).

Of course, contentious data which may reflect negatively on the public image of the corporate/state duopoly might, with the judicious application of administrative expertise, be quite readily redefined out of existence. A particularly blatant example of such administrative redefinition is cited by Ian Stronach (1991) concerning the official policy of the Thatcher government in Britain towards youth unemployment near the end of its second term:

> . . . it has come to pass: a recent newspaper report confirmed the end of youth unemployment as an official concern: "The official unemployment count will be reduced by about 100,000 this autumn because a change in Government rules effectively disbars anyone under 18 from being counted as jobless" (*Guardian*, 16.7.88) (165).

As demonstrated by Joan Smith (1995), this tricky administrative re-jigging of unemployment statistics in Britain was quite modest given the "drastic reductions" in unemployment *statistics* - but not actual joblessness or underemployment - under the Major regime's renewed emphasis on "Personal independence planning and youth

training schemes (which neither train nor lead to permanent jobs)" (201).

In addition to such administrative re-engineering of data, official *aggregate* unemployment and/or employment rates must also be carefully examined for signs of administrative "doctoring." An official aggregate *employment* rate of 95% percent reveals nothing concerning the nature of such employment, providing no data on whether the employment in question is full-time, part-time, or even adequate to cover the cost of living. By not acknowledging that a great proportion of such jobs are likely to be part-time, self-employed, low-paying, insecure, or otherwise contingent, official sources, by intent or not, may give the impression that all who are employed work at jobs that are full-time, high-paying, and secure (Clarke, 1997: 89). This latter set of circumstances is becoming the exception, *not* the rule. Indeed, "official" employment and unemployment rates are brought sharply into perspective when, and only when, their lack of explanatory power vis-a-vis the pursuit of critical social inquiry into labour force issues is exposed by factoring in qualitative data on hidden forms of unemployment and underemployment. In this case it is quantitative data, in its "raw" form, that obscures the true state of the labour market. In rendering such quantitative data on the labour market meaningful by breaking it down qualitatively, it is demonstrated that

> The official unemployment rate does not measure the true degree of
> unemployment and underemployment in the economy, for two main
> reasons. First, the employed in the labour force survey are defined as
> those at work in the reference week, even if they only work one hour.
> No distinction is made between part-time and full-time workers. Part-
> time work does not constitute a form of underemployment when it
> reflects a voluntary choice, but it does when it is involuntary. The
> proportion of part-time workers who would prefer full-time employment
> rose from 11.0 percent in 1975 to 18.5 percent in 1981, and to a peak of
> 30.1 percent in 1984. By 1986, despite the recovery, 28.4 percent of part-

time workers would still have preferred full-time work if it had been available. Moreover, the growth of part-time employment has been substantially greater than that of full-time employment - 71.0 percent versus 12.2 percent - between 1975 and 1986, with part-time jobs rising from 10.6 to 15.6 percent of total employment. From 1981 to 1986, full-time employment grew only 3.2 percent, from 9,519,000 to 9,824,000, while part-time employment rose 21.7 percent, from 1,487,000 to 1,810,000. The official definition of the unemployed also excludes discouraged workers who have stopped actively looking for work and left the labour force because they believe no work is available, and individuals outside the labour force who do not seek employment because of limited opportunities (Sharpe, Voyer and Cameron, 1988: 19-21).

Furthermore, to be officially registered as unemployed in the OECD countries

> . . . you have to be actively seeking full-time employment and frequently registering with a government employment office. Many people who desperately want jobs have given up such active pursuit because of the perceived futility in conditions of extensive structural unemployment . . . . official unemployment rates underestimate the actual extent of unemployment by between 30 percent and 225 percent. In Canada . . . the responsible federal agency has recently admitted that it has been arbitrarily omitting discouraged workers who had not actively searched for a job in the prior six months and economists at a leading bank have indicated that this exclusion alone has led to underestimating the jobless rate by 40 percent (Livingstone, 1998: 64-65).

Such levels of "hidden" unemployment are, unfortunately, merely the crest of a wave of *underemployment* which is threatening to reach proportions not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s. For instance, in Alberta, between 1975 and 1994, part-time employment increased by 55.9%, but this increase had much less to do with choice than with labour market contingency: 7% of part-time employment was involuntary in 1975, as compared with 31.4% in 1994 (Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, 1995: 18). Future projections for Alberta suggest that further short term to mid-term labour market growth will likely be seen predominantly in the form of part-time, self-employed, contracted-out, or otherwise contingent employment,

encompassing large numbers of workers in occupations considered to be *both "non-professional" and professional* (Kernow Enterprises, 1996). Such contingent labour, or "temporary work," is now widespread throughout the Canadian labour market:

> Temporary workers are found in all industries and occupations, and have a broad range of socio-economic characteristics. Temporary work is not limited to students employed in service sector "McJobs," nor is it predominantly filled by women. Older and younger workers, professionals and tradespeople, heads of families and teenagers, university graduates and high school dropouts – all are facing a labour market characterized by changing types of employment and greater instability than in the past (Schellenberg and Clark, 1996: 11).

Across the country, Statistics Canada reports that in 1998 "part-time ranks swelled by 5.3 percent compared with a 2.7 percent growth in full-time work" (Cordon, *Edmonton Journal*, January 13, 1999: A6), while Beauchesne (*Edmonton Journal*, October 10, 1998: A16) notes that the surge in employment growth reported by Statistics Canada for September, 1998 was, according to analysts of the "mini-boom," "less impressive than it looks . . . . most of the 73,000 new jobs were part-time and many of the rest were self-employment, while 53,000 factory jobs disappeared."

In another Statistics Canada report released late in 1998, employment growth in Canada was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively for the 1989-1996 period and then compared to U.S. job creation for the same period, revealing that "the United States had outstripped Canada in creating jobs between 1989 and 1996 by an almost two-to-one margin," and that "while many of the jobs created in the U.S. were well-paying, full-time jobs, in Canada the growth was almost exclusively in the less lucrative self-employed or part-time categories" (Beltrame, *Edmonton Journal*, November 26, 1998: A10). However, exactly *how many* of the jobs created in the United States during this period

were full-time and well-paying and, for that matter, what constitutes "well-paying," must

be considered a matter of conjecture when one ponders the following data furnished by

Rifkin (1995):

> . . . in August 1993 the federal government announced that nearly
> 1,230,000 jobs had been created in the United States in the first half of
> 1993. What they failed to say was that 728,000 of them - nearly 60
> percent - were part-time, for the most part in low-wage service industries.
> In February 1993 alone, 90 percent of the 365,000 jobs created in the
> United States were part-time, and most of them went to people who were
> in search of full-time employment (167).

If data such as the foregoing indicate a labour market in the United States that is

performing twice as well as its counterpart in Canada, we are in a sorry situation indeed.

The degree to which the Canadian labour market has in fact become contingent is

demonstrated by Gord Laxer (as quoted in MacLean, *Edmonton Journal*, February 6,

1999: H1), who observes that, during the 1990s, "80 percent of new jobs in Canada have

been in self-employment, compared to 10 percent in the U.S." Given this ratio, Barlow

and Robertson's (1994) contention that "if present trends continue, by the year 2000 half

of Canadians will be 'contingency' workers" (70) is quite credible.

Such contingent labour practices are by no means confined to the ranks of "non-

professional" workers:

> In large cities where colleges and universities have turned to adjuncts to
> teach as many as half the classes, there are thousands of people with
> advanced degrees, including Ph.D.s, each of whom teaches a full load for
> $15,000 to $20,000 a year, about half the pay of a full-time assistant
> professor. These people are hired course by course, semester by semester;
> they have no continuity or job security and few, if any, benefits
> (Aronowitz, 1998: 179).

Moreover,

Even scientists, who, by virtue of their expertise, are widely thought to
be immune to job insecurity in the high-tech knowledge economy are
being reduced to temp work. On Assignment Inc., a temporary agency
specializing in leasing scientists to companies from Johnson & Johnson to
Miller Brewing Company, has more than 1,100 chemists, microbiologists,
and lab technicians ready to lease around the country (Rifkin, 1995: 193).

In fact, by the late 1960s and early 1970s there was already an oversupply of technical

professionals in the United States given that "Taken together, the technical engineers,

chemists, scientists, architects, draftsmen, designers, and technicians represented not

much more than 3 percent of the total labor force in 1970" (Braverman, 1974: 241).

Rumberger and Levin (1984) observe that "In the electronic components industry . . . .

only about 15 percent of workers were employed in engineering, science, and computer

occupations in 1980. The majority were assigned to low-wage assembly work" (18). The

nebulous "new knowledge economy" has simply not absorbed the surplus technical

professionals who are being "milled" at a greater rate in Canada and the United States

than anywhere else on the planet. Indeed, as Arizona State University education professor

David Berliner observes, even "With no increase in the rate of supply of scientists and

engineers, we will accumulate a surplus of about 1 million such individuals by the year

2010" (Barlow and Robertson, 1994: 54). Barlow (1991) confirms that such redundancies

are *at least* as prevalent in Canada as in the United States:

The Technical Service Council, which was established to stem the drain
of skilled professionals from Canada to the United States, reports that in
1990 there were 53 percent fewer job vacancies for engineers, scientists,
executives, and other professionals than in 1989. Companies are
overwhelmed by the number of job applicants for advertised openings;
some report that they have stopped answering them (vi-vii).

This increasing contingency and proletarianization of professional workers leads one

to a re-examination - certainly in terms of universal applicability - of Derber's contention that the forces of capitalist management, "by allocating highly visible symbolic and material rewards and privileges to its postindustrial workers . . . . segregates professionals from other workers and dramatically highlights their differences" (1982: 208). In actuality, this "privileged" strata of technical professionals is continually shrinking due to the advance of hierarchical bifurcation which highlights the "differences" within their ranks, a set of circumstances which increases the likelihood that "low- and middle-range scientists and engineers may not look forward to occupying a privileged place in the corporate order" (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994: 38). The effects of such hierarchical bifurcation of technical professionals like engineers are well illustrated in Aronowitz and DiFazio's sharply etched analysis of the operational structure of the General Electric aircraft engine plant in Cincinnati. Aronowitz and DiFazio (1994) report that they were told by the plant's employment relations manager "that much of the research work" being conducted at the plant "was dedicated to finding ways to further cut the labor force, not only manual labor in the factory but engineers as well" (107).

Given the extent to which technical professionals are becoming bifurcated, with a small elite securing ascendancy "up the ladder" of success and an increasingly marginalized majority heading in the other direction, one must question the contention that any *substantial* stratum of this "knowledge class" will come to attain a monopoly on political and/or economic power. After all, as Mills (1956 [1951]) pointed out, to contend that such a monopoly is likely to develop is to confuse "technical and managerial indispensability with the facts of power struggle" (298).

In considering the present, and with little doubt, future oversupply of "potential" workers with professional-technical training, Calvert and Kuehn (1993) observe that "demands for high-tech workers are greatly exaggerated . . . . The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported 'that although 23.4 to 28.6 million new jobs will have been created between 1982 and 1995, only 1 million to 4.6 million will be in high-tech industries' " (56). Even the high-end figure cited by Calvert and Kuehn hardly constitutes incontrovertible signs of a "booming" new knowledge economy. These (U.S.) figures also scarcely bode well for the growth of a "knowledge economy" in Canada since, as Drache (1989) notes, the Canadian high technology sector employs only half as many workers, as a percentage ratio of the total workforce, as does the U.S. high technology sector (19). Drache's data goes a long way in accounting for the growing exodus of IT workers from Canada to the United States in the last ten years, although the U.S. market for such workers is in the process of becoming contingent as well.

In fact, there is a dearth of credible evidence (that is, beyond hearsay) to support official pronouncements and hegemonic assertions that a "boom" in IT employment is imminent in the Canadian, American, or, for that matter, any other labour market, domestic or "global." What hard evidence of such a boom that may be found is scarcely conclusive. Take, for instance, the following example cited from a January, 1999 survey of 34 information technology companies employing some 80,000 workers, triumphantly forecasting "7, 848 job openings over the next two years" (*Edmonton Journal*, February 10, 1999). While this would be cause for celebration in, say, Greenland, or a similarly sparsely inhabited region, it is hardly momentous news given both the size of Canada's

labour force and the number of IT workers who will be seeking employment over the

next two years. Indeed, this bountiful forecast is rather mystifying when one considers

that one of the more well-known respondents surveyed for the forecast, Compaq Canada,

announced last year that some 1,200 workers at the company will be laid off. World-

wide, Compaq plans to "release" some 17,000 workers, or 20% of its workforce (Gwyn,

Toronto Star, July 5, 1998: F3). Some other recent notable job cuts announced in the

"burgeoning" high-tech labour market include NEC Corporation: 15,000, or 10% of its

workforce (*Edmonton Journal*, February 20, 1999: H3); Sony Corporation: 17,000, or

10% of its workforce (*Edmonton Journal*, March 9, 1999: F7); the French

telecommunications company Alcatel: 12,000, or 10% of its workforce (*Edmonton

Journal*, March 12, 1999: G3); and Mitsubishi: 17,000, or almost 12% of its workforce

(*Edmonton Journal*, April 1, 1999: F3). As reported by Gwyn (*Toronto Star*, July 5,

1998: F3), American economic commentators Joel Kotkin and David Friedman describe

such instances of the free corporate hand blithely smiting down its workers as practical

applications of what they term "the yuppie consensus," which "holds that whatever's

good for business is good for everyone, even when, as in lost jobs, lost employee loyalty,

lost sense of belonging, it in fact is far from good for everyone."

In recent stock market "tumbles," high-tech stocks have tumbled harder and faster

than any others, even with the concerted drive towards "re-engineering" within the

industry. Conspicuous in its absence from such woes is Microsoft, which is in the process

of cornering the high-tech market and is attempting to drive all other players, big and

small alike, to the wall. Microsoft's most recent quarterly profit (fiscal third quarter

ending March 31, 1999) jumped 43 percent from a year earlier, $1.92 billion for the

quarter (*Edmonton Journal*, April 21, 1999: E3).

However, even as Bill Gates attempts his digital colonization of the entire globe,

the level of labour market redundancy amongst professionals "with lots of computer

skills" was such that, in 1994, the "clients" of Toronto's Daily Bread Food Bank,

"feeding an average of 150,000 people" per month, "included professionals (14 percent)

as well as office workers (19 percent)" (Menzies, 1996: 5). Barlow and Campbell (1995)

note that "Welfare advocates and food-bank volunteers can attest that their ranks are full

of educated people who have trained, got counselling, and moved - and are still

unemployed" (178). Thus, as is readily becoming apparent,

> The labor market of the future cannot be pictured as a bell-shaped curve,
> but rather as a bottom-heavy hourglass. The emerging top will include a
> small, elite strata of well-paid professional-technical employees, who
> themselves will face growing problems of skill devaluation and intense
> competition (Bastian, Fruchter, Gittell, Greer, and Haskins, 1993 [1985,
> 1986]: 78).

As Castells (1996) notes, although this set of circumstances is contingent upon deliberate

policy choices and is, therefore, by no means inevitable, "left to themselves, the forces of

unfettered competition in the informational paradigm will push employment and social

structure towards dualization" (264). There are, thus far, no signs that such dualization is

not already well on the way.

Hastening this process of dualization is neo-liberal economic policy which, among

other things, concentrates on safeguarding the vested interests of those with the capital

resources to invest in transnational money markets while ignoring the needs of a much

larger percentage of the electorate who do not command such resources. Such policies are

precipitating the growth of an increasingly stratified socio-economic structure in Canada.

In tracking such stratification, the Canadian Centre for Social Justice reports that "Between 1973 and 1996, Canadian families earning $14,000 a year or less rose from 10 percent to more than 16 percent. In the same period, families earning more than $80, 448 rose from 10 percent to almost 18 percent" (Bailey, *Edmonton Journal*, February 25, 1999: A3). During the same period "the proportion of middle-range income families with children - families earning between $24,000 and $65,000 - fell to 44 percent of the population from 60 percent" (Lindgren, *Edmonton Journal*, October 22, 1998: A12). Statscan analyst Garnett Picot observes that the decline in wages which is driving poverty levels up dramatically in Canada "is happening regardless of education . . . . for those who are university educated as well as those with no skills" (Gadd, *Globe and Mail*, July 29, 1998: A3), while the Canadian Council on Social Development reports that, in 1994, 450,000 Canadian families fell below the poverty line

> . . . although one adult in the family had worked the entire year. Another 100,000 families were poor although both adults worked all year. Quite simply, many jobs do not pay high enough wages to provide even full-time workers with sufficient income to adequately support their families (Logan, *Edmonton Journal*, March 17, 1997: A12).

Moreover, Goyette (*Edmonton Journal*, March 22, 1997: G1) points out that the drop in weekly earnings after inflation in Alberta between 1983 and 1996 was more than three times higher than the Canadian average during this period, while the corresponding drop in hourly wages *was five times higher in Alberta* than that for Canada. Goyette also notes that the Alberta Federation of Labour - the source of these statistics - anticipating government accusations of "biased" data, was able to deflect such accusations by citing

data from the government's own report, *Measuring Up*,

> . . . which documents the decline in family income in the province.
> Household income for a two-parent family with one child dropped 10.4
> percent between 1981 and 1993, after adjusting for inflation. Average
> income for individuals dropped by 22.6 percent in the same period.
> (Goyette, *Edmonton Journal*, March 22, 1997: G1).

If this decline in income is indicative of the fabled "Alberta advantage" that CTS is

presumably training "sophisticated consumers of business services" for, the suppliers of

such services may be in for a very bumpy ride.

As Jim Stanford of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives confirms in his

provincial economic growth index, "Alberta has the worst job equality and security in all

of Canada" (Farrell and Kowal, *Edmonton Journal*, January 15, 1999: A5). This is hardly

a prescription for consumer confidence, but, rather, is indicative of the short-sighted

"logic" of competitive austerity which, in its drive to reduce the cost of labour to a bare-

subsistence level to become viable in the "global marketplace," undermines "its own

foundations as it subtracts consumers from the market" (Meiksins-Wood, 1995: 293). As

Nicholas Chamie (1995) observes in a Conference Board of Canada report:

> Five years of weak disposable income growth for Canadian consumers
> has resulted in consumer expenditures not exceeding 1.6 percent growth
> previous to 1994. Consequently, retail sales have languished for many
> years, saddling retailers with low volumes and thin margins (1).

Betcherman and Lowe (1997) add that although "we have not technically been in a

recession since 1992 the recovery, however tenuous," has had "almost no effect on

consumer spending, which has not really recovered since 1992 . . . . throughout this

decade, confidence has remained at recessionary levels" (5).

As has been stressed in this chapter, human capital/progressive competitive

theory posits that a skilled work force cannot fail to attract high value-added employment which utilizes its skills and provides the commensurate remuneration. Actual evidence tends, to an increasing degree, to refute this connection.

When employment which fails to utilize the high level of skills possessed by present-day work forces - especially those in core capitalist states and in countries now in competition with these core capitalist states – becomes the "norm," as it has been for many years, "human capitalists" invariably claim that such work forces are skills-deficient. According to the available data, such claims are plainly not credible. The problem is not a lack of skilled labour, but the underutilization of skills in workplaces.

The, as yet, mythical "new knowledge economy" has not, nor is it likely to, absorb the surplus technical professionals now being processed by post-secondary institutions at an unprecedented rate. Large numbers of these technical professionals, as well as those with lower levels of qualification, face varying levels of underemployment in or – just as likely – outside of their field of expertise in the contingent labour force. Many workers at all levels of qualification face the increasing prospect of outright unemployment as the "logic" of the "self-regulating market economy" renders them irrelevant:

> More and more workers have become surplus people for whom job markets no longer exist. In a real sense, people have now been discharged from what Marx called capital's reserve army of labor. Indeed, the whole concept of the reserve army becomes suspect in a world economy bent on shattering the very need for labor. The fact is corporate capital is now generating a surplus of unwanted free time for tens of millions of workers. It is forcing labor into a status of terrifying freedom from work - and wages. Because jobs are the only legitimate way to gain an income in this

society, indeed, because jobs are the very anchor of social status in this
society, involuntarily "liberated" workers stand to lose not only their
economic security, but their very dignity and rank as contributing citizens.
Without alternative means of earning a living, without access to the key
economic role that confers standing as full-fledged citizens. without
alternative outlets for absorbing their energy and creativity in socially
useful activity, superfluous workers face life as economic refuse. Their
new levels of free time are enjoyed not as "freedom," but as a soul-
numbing threat to economic security and psychic self-worth
(Plotkin and Schuerman, 1994: 12).

However, it must be stressed that this sombre scenario is probable *only if the trend
towards labour contingency follows its present course unimpeded by alternate policy
choices*. Significant changes in socio-economic policy and work organization may
provide viable alternative choices. Full employment of the diverse skills of workers
towards the development of the potential for a just and enlightened socio-economic
reality should be the objective. This objective is always a *possibility*, but is not very
probable under current conditions of increasing economic stratification and the
social fragmentation which accompanies such stratification.

Nonetheless, *since current conditions are always subject to potential change*, the
possibilities and probability of actualizing alternate policy initiatives and counter-
hegemonic movements in response to competitive austerity will be examined in the
concluding pages of this document.

Chapter Four

ON COUNTER-HEGEMONIC PROSPECTS: SCHOOLING FOR PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY OR "GENTEEL" FASCISM?

> Sooner or later, the growing gap between the ample rewards and
> secure lives of executives and top experts, and the wasted education
> and withered work of most of the population could provoke profound
> social upheaval. The result may be either the growth of versions of
> economic democracy, or a more authoritarian shareholder capitalist
> society run by a technocratic elite, or some other historic compromise
> (Livingstone, 1998: 275).

> . . . to remain viable, democratic politics must engage people creatively,
> directly and actively in decision making. By definition, democracy can't
> work as a passively consumed product. That is why it's in grave danger
> of being remaindered in our market-dominated society (Robert Bragg,
> *Edmonton Journal*, October 27, 1998: A17).

> A society which unjustly inflicts the distress of exclusion or deprivation
> cannot wholly succeed in assimilating into its affirmative consensus
> those whom it mistreats (Femia, 1984: 45).

> In a process of enlightenment there can only be participants (Habermas,
> 1973: 40).

Despite ongoing assurances to the contrary by those who control and benefit

from "capital flows," the much celebrated "triumph" of capitalism which purports

to be ushering in a new millennium of general prosperity is clearly of benefit only to

a select few: those who already possess the resources to play the monopoly capital

game. No amount of schooling will alter this geometry of privilege; only a globally-

oriented commitment to the principle of economic redistribution can reverse the

ongoing and intensifying process of stratification we are presently mired in. Given

this proposition, nebulous pronouncements of faith in the "self-regulating" powers

of capital markets represent a level of denial regarding the increasingly austere

socio-economic position of a growing global multitude which is delusional, unconscionable, and potentially catastrophic.

As I have attempted to demonstrate in this thesis, the basic tenet of human capital (or progressive competitiveness) theory - which posits a "seamless" link between schooling, economic prosperity, and upward social mobility – is scarcely credible given the structural inequities of labour markets under the conditions dictated by global monopoly capital. Given the persistence of such structural inequities, the notion of schooling for prosperity in the "new knowledge economy" may simply represent the latest in a long history of false promises engineered to forge hegemonic compliance to capitalist growth imperatives of little benefit to those without the means to "play the game."

As noted in the Introduction of this thesis, the widespread lack of awareness or failure to acknowledge the growing socio-economic inequality endemic to late capitalism (especially where monopoly is well entrenched) must be, to some considerable extent, normatively reified through institutionalized denials of the possibility of such inequality. Since the "reasoning" behind such denials displays a slavish adherence to the tenets of human capital/progressive competitiveness theory, suggestions that schooling *might not* lead to upward mobility are considered heretical by many of the more zealous proponents of the schooling industry. The greater the level of vested interest among such proponents, whether these proponents are "business leaders" concerned about the quality of "product" being manufactured by the schooling industry or school administrators responsible for

"quality control," the greater is their insistence that schooling *must* pay off, even if evidence fails to support this contention. Where such evidence instead reveals increasing instances of inequality *regardless of levels of formal schooling*, "remoralization" initiatives are applied, whereby failure to prosper in the "new knowledge economy" is rationalized as due to "poor work habits," "lack of discipline," or "bad attitude," rather than more accurately recognized as due to structural constraints in an increasingly contingent labour market. Not surprisingly, the contradictions arising from such a "culture of blame" eventually tend to result in increasing social pathologies as people internalize the rationalizations of remoralization as self-criticism or self-loathing. In instances where such pathologies are experienced *and recognized as collective ills*, rather than dismissed as unrelated "individual dysfunctions," counter-hegemonic forms of consciousness may take root. However, as noted in Chapter One, the recognition of structurally-induced collective pathologies as such is obscured by collective internal accomodation to dominant elite prerogatives via the selective hegemonic incorporation of divergent ideological orientations into dominant ideational strands through, for example, schooling. Thus, class-based conflict is crudely reconfigured as a Social Darwinist struggle for personal survival.

Such conflict reconfiguration is, consciously or not, engineered via reactionary elements in documentation such as CTS curricula and in the curricula of glorified training programs similar to CTS. By policing - or attempting to police – the anarchic undercurrents which have, not surprisingly, begun to percolate in reaction

to the Social Darwinist atavism of late capitalism, institutional structures such as schools tend to legitimate and reify widespread social and economic retrogression as an unavoidable "alternative" to trends towards anarchic fragmentation caused, in the first place, by such retrogression. Thus does the dragon devour itself by legitimating "tooth and nail" competitive "individualism" as the only normative structure worth pursuing in the present period of late capitalism.

As discussed in Chapter Two, allegiance to the dictates of such Social Darwinism as a normative structure is often administratively engineered by inculcating people with acquiescent dispositional attributes which emphasize deferential behaviour in the presence of authority, cheerful conformity, and political neutrality. "Armed" with such dispositional attributes, students and workers are expected to adopt an attitude of optimistic fatalism in accepting competitive austerity as natural and inevitable.

However, it must be conceded that no matter what intense levels of behaviour modification people are subjected to, schooling them to have expectations, even modest expectations, which may not or cannot be fulfilled under the conditions of competitive austerity is likely to result in *some increase* in disillusion and cynicism, perhaps quite a widespread increase. It is this point that one must ask whether there may be a "saturation point" where contradictory processes of "competitive austerity" and "controlled anarchy"precipitates a substantive collapse of social structure. The question then arises as to whether or not – as posited in Chapter Three – the increasing dissonance between human capital/progressive

competitiveness theory and advances in economic austerity via stratification among

increasingly large segments of the human race will precipitate a counter-hegemonic

reaction against the stratified austerity faced by escalating multitudes as capitalism

threatens to "eat its own." Observers such as Immanuel Wallerstein (1992) would

argue that such levels of disillusion are rapidly being reached due to the fact that the

liberal hegemony which spread with the expansion of "the capitalist world economy" is

rapidly crumbling as organized capitalism becomes increasingly anarchic, unstable, and

crisis-ridden. As Wallerstein observes, the spread of liberal consensus in capitalism,

dependent upon the ability and inclination of those controlling monopoly capital to grant

limited monetary concessions to those subjugated by the monopoly sector, started to

break down "after 1968" due to the fact that

> . . . the politics of liberalism – the taming of the world's working classes
> via suffrage/sovereignty and welfare state/national development – had
> reached its limits. Further increases of political rights and economic
> reallocation would threaten the system of accumulation itself. But it had
> reached its limits before all sectors of the world's working classes had in
> fact been tamed by being included into a small but significant part of the
> benefits (Wallerstein, 1992: 103).

As Wallerstein further points out, "The hero of liberalism, the individual, has no

significant role to play amidst a disintegrating structure, since no individual can survive

very long in such a structure acting alone" (1992: 107). In practical terms, structural

crises which set limits on capital expansion render the competititive individualism

celebrated in CTS rhetoric dysfunctional, just as the notion of progressive

competitiveness between nation-states ultimately leads to a greater or lesser degree of

competitive austerity for all such states. Thus, even though unemployment rates may

stabilize or even decline to an extent, crises in capital accumulation virtually guarantee that, barring some unexpected return to limited economic reallocation, earnings will continue to fall in relation to the cost of living, swelling the ranks of the working poor in core capitalist states and contributing to the abject destitution of stagnant reserves of labour elsewhere.

The logical extension of such crises of accumulation in monopoly capitalism is the "importation" of such destitution "back" to the core capitalist states. Indeed, as Burbach (1992) observes,

> U.S. capital over the past decade has driven down the standard of living of working people in the United States as part of its global effort to maintain its own profits and wealth. The term 'Latin Americanisation' can be used to describe many regions and cities of the United States, not simply because of the increased importance of Latin immigrants, but because of the growth of poverty, homelessness, petty street merchants and beggars . . . . This brutalising phase of US capitalism has one salient characteristic that distinguishes it from the earlier era of the robber barons – it is rooted in the decline rather than the ascent of the US economic system (247-248).

In assessing this decline, Kovel (1992) notes that, as economic disparities in the United States become increasingly severe, class differences, which had receeded somewhat during the modest period of reallocation and liberal hegemony in the US, are beginning to re-emerge in dramatic fashion. As economic polarization grows more pronounced all across the globe among the ranks of the "underclass," including the working poor (comprising both the "uneducated" *and* the educated), an exclusive emphasis upon glorified training and "employability skills" programs like CTS must be regarded as unecessarily short-sighted. Educators who believe (or are led to believe) that programs like CTS constitute an integral aspect of the so-called "rising tide" that will "lift all ships"

are subject to an old delusion bolstered by new "high-tech" rhetoric, that widespread

upward mobility in states dominated by the interests of monopoly capital can be achieved

without conscious and deliberate efforts at economic redistribution. The uncritical

acceptance of such "cozy" delusions will only aggravate social fragmentation and anomie

when it becomes apparent to increasing numbers of "highly qualified" reserve and

otherwise contingent workers spewed forth by the schooling industry that their expertise

may only qualify them for a slot in the "service proletariat."

If present trends continue, the broad spectrum of Canadian workers (including

those processed via CTS) are likely to spend more and more time among the growing

ranks of this contingent and poorly remunerated service proletariat, since the

manufacture and processing sector in Canada continues to shrink due to capital flight. As

a resource hinterland drawn into the downward spiral of American economic hegemony,

Canada shares the dependent status of many other American trading "partners," with the

ruling factions - economic and political - in Canada functioning in much the same manner

as a comprador elite. As Hirsch (1999) demonstrates, the struggle against such dependent

status must be waged on many fronts because, although the crisis tendencies of capitalism

render it vulnerable to counter-hegemonic forces,

> . . . taking advantage of this vulnerability will require overcoming
> capital's cultural hegemony. Today, people appear less able than ever to
> look beyond their everyday bread-and-butter social obligations, to
> develop a sense of the opportunities of which they are continually
> stripped and to perceive the affront to human dignity experienced every
> day within the lives they are forced to lead. The ideological hegemony
> of the capitalist way of life has probably never been so anchored in our
> group consciousness as it is today. Increasing social fragmentation
> combined with growing inequalities at the national and international
> level do not necessarily act to counter this hegemony. Indeed, these

> factors can actually consolidate its power in direct proportion to the
> level of general acceptance that there is no alternative to current social
> relations. A real revolution must therefore encompass more than social
> and political transformation: it must be a cultural revolution as well.
> This cannot mean the same thing everywhere, but at the same time,
> much can be learned from the traditions and experiences of others (292).

Such "cultural revolutions" have occurred throughout history, 'arising from the

ruins of the old order.' It is the rule of such historical change that processes by

which change becomes hegemonic are often exceedingly protracted. Livingstone

(1998) emphasizes this point in discussing the very gradual progress of movements

towards "economic democracy" in late capitalism via such means as producer

cooperatives, noting that

> The general situation is analogous to the formative period of
> capitalism when it was largely limited to a small number of city-
> states within feudal Europe . . . . The transition from feudalism to
> capitalism in Western Europe occurred slowly over a period of
> several centuries with capitalism gradually taking over feudal forms
> of work organization as it found them. A transition from capitalism
> to any future mode of production is likely to be similarly incremental,
> however much advocates of the new economics wish for rapid
> transformation. Any such transition within the liberal democracies
> of advanced capitalism is likely to be contingent on mobilizing
> popular support for change among the majority of citizens (256-257).

As it is currently organized, schooling seeks to adapt and fit students to an

increasingly stratified and austere socio-economic order. Under such conditions of

stratification, the "bounty" promised by capitalism is highly unlikely to be shared in

a just and equitable manner. No amount of schooling will alter such stratification.

Under such circumstances, in carrying out its mission of normative socialization in

an increasingly unjust socio-economic order, schooling must seek to convince people

that to rebel against this order is pointless and/or anti-social. Such capitulation is

obviously unacceptable to anyone who seeks to uphold the principles of social justice and democratic activism, but without action to turn theory *and* practice into *praxis*, such principles become empty slogans symbolizing the loss of activist intent in "democratic" states.

Given the current crisis conditions thrown up by the forces of monopoly capitalism as they attempt to consolidate their gains at the expense of the remnants of "civil society," counter-hegemonic forces – which are, at present, nascent - will likely become embroiled in a protracted and bitterly contested "war of position" with the vested interests of capital, vested interests likely to request assistance based upon the more repressive forms of state power. Police actions at the APEC conference in Vancouver late in 1997 and during recent World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle demonstrate the willingness of democratically elected governments to rescind the civil rights of their constituents in protecting the vested interests of global capital and the dictators who impose conditions favourable to such interests. However, while it is certainly possible that nascent counter-hegemonic forces will gather strength in the not too distant future in response to current vested interests, there are no guarantees that such counter-hegemonic forces will be any more enlightened than those they oppose. An increasingly oppressive, inegalitarian, and repressive material reality within the social "order" is unlikely to produce a counter-hegemonic ideational constellation expressing tolerance and good will. Thus, counter-hegemonic philosophical enlightenment (or the maturation of the human species) will prove highly problematic without addressing both material injustice and socio-cultural intolerance.

Material injustice cannot be addressed without deliberate and substantive efforts at economic redistribution. I would therefore join numerous other observers in advocating movement towards forms of work organization based upon work-sharing and the guaranteed annual income. Schooling predicated upon such "economic democracy" would stress the collective good rather than competitive individualism and the intolerance for differences such "individualism" breeds. Any such progress towards economic democracy and socio-cultural tolerance is likely to be *very* gradual at first and subject to bitter and protracted contestation and resistance by not only the minority of those who are "well-to-do," but by many within the "disappearing middle" and among the working poor as well. In noting the generally low level of popular support for work-sharing/guaranteed annual income proposals *at present*, Livingstone (1998: 264) accurately surmises that "In a tight labor market with diminishing numbers of good jobs, nobody wants to give up whatever competitive edge they think they might have on job security." Indeed, given the erosion in recent years of whatever tenuous – often very tenuous – trust workers have in their employers and in the general state of labour markets, it is foolish to expect widespread support for work-sharing schemes *at the present time*. Trust can only be built in an atmosphere of open and honest dialogue characterized by genuinely participatory democracy. Such trust is unlikely to be forged in the atmosphere of administrative deception surrounding the corporatist decision-making structures of "representative" democracy, structures which seek to "manage" dissent rather than acknowledge it as vital to healthy democratic process.

Rather than managing dissent by limiting the space for reflection, democratically oriented counter-hegemonic education would actively pursue opportunities for the creative channeling of dissent in a dynamic and participatory political process of agitation for structural change. In other words, rather than enduring *schooling* as genteel fascism, *education* would be practiced as the art of enlightened democratic activism. This democratic activism would radiate out from the local to the national to the global level through revivified educational structures that would be flexible in *actuality*, not just in name. However, in concluding this study I must once again emphasize that education can be devoted to democratic enlightenment as an ideal only with some progress towards such enlightenment at a "macro-social" level and towards a truly global enlightenment which seeks once and for all to transcend the present narrow focus of global *exploitation*. Exploitation and repression are not ends towards which schooling – most notably in its more reactionary forms in programs like CTS - should provide the means of accommodation. Nonetheless, those who seek to battle such exploitation and repression must be prepared to wage a war of position which is likely to continue well after they are gone, a war in which the outcome is by no means assured.

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