CHAPTER 5

<u>SCHOOLS NEGLECT THEIR MAIN GOALS;</u>
<u>WORSE: THEY ARE SOCIALLY DYSFUNCTIONAL</u>

So far, we have seen that it is widely agreed that the main goals of education include fostering high-level competencies like initiative, the ability to communicate, and the ability and willingness to seek to understand and influence the way society works. We have seen that these opinions are correct. And we have learned enough about the psychological nature of such qualities to have a feel for the type of educational activity which is likely to be necessary if they are to be nurtured.

The next question is: how effectively do schools achieve these, their most important, goals?

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 give the percentages of teachers who said they tried "very hard" to achieve each objective with "more academic" pupils and the proportion who felt that schools were "very" or "moderately" successful in achieving each objective. (It was necessary to combine "very" and "moderately successful" categories in order to obtain even the relatively low levels of perceived success shown here).

The first thing to note is that "getting pupils through examinations" - which came 23rd in the teachers' "importance" ranking - has jumped into first position in terms of the attention it actually gets. It seems that pupils' and parents' desire for credentials, combined with teachers' need to be esteemed good teachers by this criterion, has markedly affected their behavior. Helping their pupils to get high achievement test scores is also the only objective which significantly more than half of them thought the educational system achieved even moderately well.
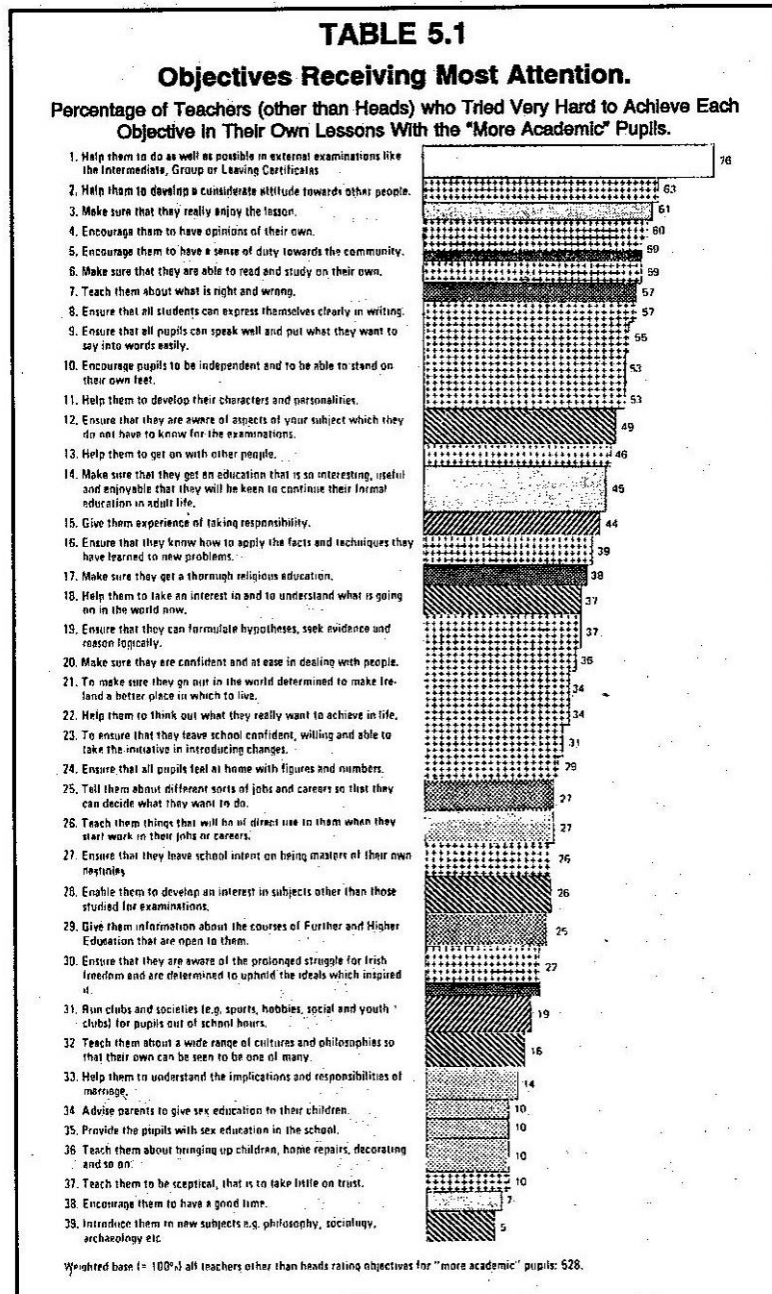
The other items at the top of teachers' rated behavioral priorities have to do with ensuring that pupils treat each other with a minimum of respect and do not disrupt each other's work. It seems that the need to do these basic things - perhaps even to socialize their pupils - has forced teachers to spend time doing things which did not figure among their top *educational* priorities. They even feel that they have to entertain their pupils instead of educating them.

These verbal reports by teachers on what they devote their time to have been confirmed by classroom observation studies conducted on both sides of the Atlantic[5.1].

In the course of his vast study of 8,624 parents, 1,350 teachers, 17,163 students, and 1,000 classrooms, Goodlad[5.2], like Flanagan[5.3] and Johnston[5.4] before him, found that American elementary and high school students spend most of their time in boring, non-cumulative, routine activities - largely being talked at in classes on language, spelling, and arithmetic. Drill and practice predominate. The "academic" and "intellectual" activities which are undertaken barely deserve the name: they rarely involve analysing, evaluating, hypothesising, interpreting, judging, reconciling different points of view, or re-conceptualising problems, let alone identifying and understanding new problems. There is little enquiry-oriented activity, still less sensitive, respectful facilitation of the development of students' particular talents. "Teachers did not respond to students because students rarely initiated anything". There is little opportunity for students to practice doing such things as thinking, planning, inventing, communicating, re-assuring, leading, working with others, or developing their own understanding of how society works and taking the initiative to influence it. They are therefore unable to experience the satisfactions which come from doing these things, develop the motivation to do them, or develop the abilities required to do them successfully.
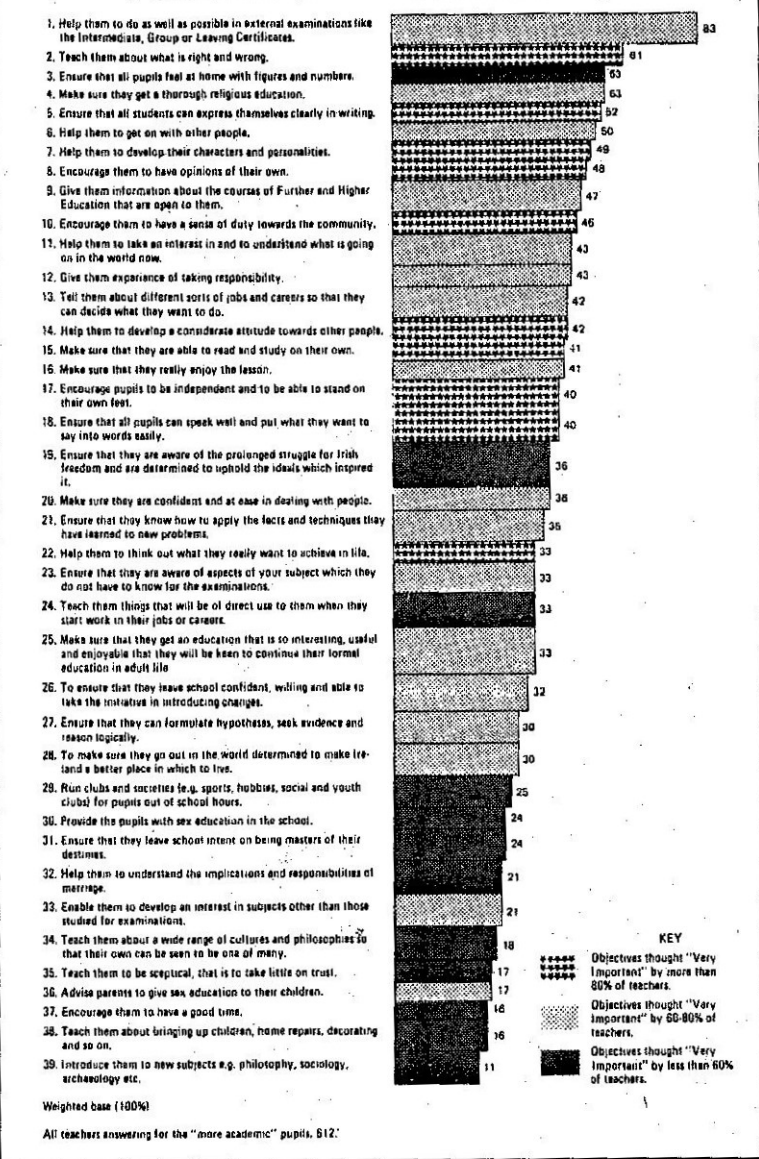
Instead of being expected to develop self-direction and self-discipline, pupils are generally goaded to work. They get little help with their problems.

Little is done to capitalize on potential sources of motivation - to, for example, encourage students to develop communication skills by first ensuring that they have something that they <u>want</u> to communicate, and are therefore in a frame of mind to seek feed-back. Instead, most of the time is devoted to communicating teacher-generated "rules" for "effective communication", and to such things as students underlining verbs and adverbs in sentences in the belief that this will lead them to write "correctly".

TABLE 5.1

Objectives Receiving Most Attention.

Percentage of Teachers (other than Heads) who Tried Very Hard to Achieve Each Objective in Their Own Lessons With the "More Academic" Pupils.

Objective	%
1. Help them to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Group or Leaving Certificates	78
2. Help them to develop a considerate attitude towards other people.	63
3. Make sure that they really enjoy the lesson.	61
4. Encourage them to have opinions of their own.	60
5. Encourage them to have a sense of duty towards the community.	59
6. Make sure that they are able to read and study on their own.	59
7. Teach them about what is right and wrong.	57
8. Ensure that all students can express themselves clearly in writing.	57
9. Ensure that all pupils can speak well and put what they want to say into words easily.	55
10. Encourage pupils to be independent and to be able to stand on their own feet.	53
11. Help them to develop their characters and personalities.	53
12. Ensure that they are aware of aspects of your subject which they do not have to know for the examinations.	49
13. Help them to get on with other people.	46
14. Make sure that they get an education that is so interesting, useful and enjoyable that they will be keen to continue their formal education in adult life.	45
15. Give them experience of taking responsibility.	44
16. Ensure that they know how to apply the facts and techniques they have learned to new problems.	39
17. Make sure they get a thorough religious education.	38
18. Help them to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now.	37
19. Ensure that they can formulate hypotheses, seek evidence and reason logically.	37
20. Make sure they are confident and at ease in dealing with people.	36
21. To make sure they go out in the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live.	34
22. Help them to think out what they really want to achieve in life.	34
23. To ensure that they leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes.	31
24. Ensure that all pupils feel at home with figures and numbers.	29
25. Tell them about different sorts of jobs and careers so that they can decide what they want to do.	27
26. Teach them things that will be of direct use to them when they start work in their jobs or careers.	27
27. Ensure that they leave school intent on being masters of their own destinies.	26
28. Enable them to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations.	26
29. Give them information about the courses of Further and Higher Education that are open to them.	25
30. Ensure that they are aware of the prolonged struggle for Irish freedom and are determined to uphold the ideals which inspired it.	22
31. Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours.	19
32. Teach them about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that their own can be seen to be one of many.	16
33. Help them to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage.	14
34. Advise parents to give sex education to their children.	10
35. Provide the pupils with sex education in the school.	10
36. Teach them about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on.	10
37. Teach them to be sceptical, that is to take little on trust.	10
38. Encourage them to have a good time.	7
39. Introduce them to new subjects e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc.	5

Weighted base (= 100%) all teachers other than heads rating objectives for "more academic" pupils: 528.

TABLE 5.2

Success with which Educational Objectives are Attained.

Percentage of Teachers Saying Education "Very Successful" or "Moderately Successful" in Achieving Each Objective with the "More Academic" Pupils.

Objective	%
1. Help them to do as well as possible in external examinations like the Intermediate, Group or Leaving Certificates.	83
2. Teach them about what is right and wrong.	61
3. Ensure that all pupils feel at home with figures and numbers.	63
4. Make sure they get a thorough religious education.	63
5. Ensure that all students can express themselves clearly in writing.	52
6. Help them to get on with other people.	50
7. Help them to develop their characters and personalities.	49
8. Encourage them to have opinions of their own.	48
9. Give them information about the courses of Further and Higher Education that are open to them.	47
10. Encourage them to have a sense of duty towards the community.	46
11. Help them to take an interest in and to understand what is going on in the world now.	43
12. Give them experience of taking responsibility.	43
13. Tell them about different sorts of jobs and careers so that they can decide what they want to do.	42
14. Help them to develop a considerate attitude towards other people.	42
15. Make sure that they are able to read and study on their own.	41
16. Make sure that they really enjoy the lesson.	41
17. Encourage pupils to be independent and to be able to stand on their own feet.	40
18. Ensure that all pupils can speak well and put what they want to say into words easily.	40
19. Ensure that they are aware of the prolonged struggle for Irish freedom and are determined to uphold the ideals which inspired it.	36
20. Make sure they are confident and at ease in dealing with people.	36
21. Ensure that they know how to apply the facts and techniques they have learned to new problems.	35
22. Help them to think out what they really want to achieve in life.	33
23. Ensure that they are aware of aspects of your subject which they do not have to know for the examinations.	33
24. Teach them things that will be of direct use to them when they start work in their jobs or careers.	33
25. Make sure that they get an education that is so interesting, useful and enjoyable that they will be keen to continue their formal education in adult life.	33
26. To ensure that they leave school confident, willing and able to take the initiative in introducing changes.	32
27. Ensure that they can formulate hypotheses, seek evidence and reason logically.	30
28. To make sure they go out in the world determined to make Ireland a better place in which to live.	30
29. Run clubs and societies (e.g. sports, hobbies, social and youth clubs) for pupils out of school hours.	25
30. Provide the pupils with sex education in the school.	24
31. Ensure that they leave school intent on being masters of their destinies.	24
32. Help them to understand the implications and responsibilities of marriage.	21
33. Enable them to develop an interest in subjects other than those studied for examinations.	21
34. Teach them about a wide range of cultures and philosophies so that their own can be seen to be one of many.	18
35. Teach them to be sceptical, that is to take little on trust.	17
36. Advise parents to give sex education to their children.	17
37. Encourage them to have a good time.	16
38. Teach them about bringing up children, home repairs, decorating and so on.	16
39. Introduce them to new subjects e.g. philosophy, sociology, archaeology etc.	11

KEY

- Objectives thought "Very Important" by more than 80% of teachers.
- Objectives thought "Very Important" by 60-80% of teachers.
- Objectives thought "Very Important" by less than 60% of teachers.

Weighted base (100%)

All teachers answering for the "more academic" pupils. 612.

Traditional frontal teaching predominates. Few teachers succeed in catering for the wide variety of talents and abilities which are present in every classroom. Nor do they vary their teaching methods or the content they teach so as to engage the attention of all of the students for at least some of the time[5.5].

These results have been confirmed in virtually every detail by research carried out in England and Scotland[5.6].

The IEA Civics study[5.7] enquired whether teachers made use of the educational methods which would have been likely to lead to the development of the competencies, understandings, and knowledge which would be required to exercise different forms of citizenship. Few were doing so. Indeed few even understood the objectives or nature of the curriculum processes which would have enabled them to foster any of the forms of civic competence identified by the authors of the study.

3

It will, of course, be claimed that schools have changed since these data were collected. Certainly numerous papers have been generated and endless administrators' and teachers' time has, as in the past, been devoted to talking about change. But there are a number of reasons for remaining skeptical about the actual impact. My previous experience[5.8] suggests that talk is (relatively) cheap and that it is very difficult to introduce significant change. Secondly, the barriers to change that have been identified in the course of our work (see Chapter 7) are so deep-rooted that it is extremely difficult to believe that there has been much change behind classroom doors. Thirdly, colleagues who are actively engaged in schools - whether as researchers or as school psychologists - as well as my own children and their friends - tell me that little has happened on the ground. Fourthly, there are a number of publications[5.9] which confirm the impression. It would therefore seem that, until firm evidence to the contrary is produced, we must assume that schools remain much as they were when the research summarized above was carried out - which also means that they are much as they were when we were at school.

Students' Reactions to their Education

In Goodlad's study, only English and Mathematics were considered <u>important</u> by more than two-thirds of high school students - and that for the future, not the present. Unfortunately, students will forget much of what they have been taught within two years, so even their hope that their studies will one day be of value to them is ill-founded. School subjects are boring: only Arts, P.E., and Languages were rated as interesting by more than one-third of those taking them. These results again correspond to the results of studies which have been carried out in the UK[5.10], Belgium[5.11], Ireland[5.12] and Scotland[5.13]. More than half of the adolescents interviewed rated more than half of their subjects <u>both</u> boring and useless. More than half wanted schools to do more to achieve more than 90% of the objectives we asked them about. Bill *et al.*[5.14] found that 98% of a random sample of high school students felt they were failures at school.

It would seem to follow from these results that the climates which characterize school classrooms cannot be conducive to well-being and development. Still less can the students be getting opportunities to practice and develop the patterns of thought and behavior which we all associate with adventurous, enterprising, innovative activity. Nor can they be being offered opportunities to engage in the kinds of individualized, self-motivated, activities which would be required if they are to undertake activities they care about and in the process develop a range of high-level competencies.

The explanation of pupils' bleak comments cannot be that young people have unduly high expectations or are negativistic. What they say about their schools compares very unfavourably with what their older peers say about work and with what they themselves will say about it a few years later. In our surveys, 80% of ex-pupils who had left school at the first opportunity said - after they had been at work for five years, and in response to three separate questions - that they liked their jobs, liked their employers, and found their jobs interesting. This was largely because - in contrast to the circumstances which prevailed at school - they were able to move themselves into positions in which they were able to do things they liked doing and were good at instead of being forced to do many things they did not like and were not good at. But it was also because they were able to take initiative and because making the most of themselves was appreciated. Grannis[5.15], Bachman[5.16], Flanagan[5.17] and Robinson[5.18] obtained similar results in the United States. It is not, of course, true that all jobs are so satisfying. But even in the "worst" jobs - jobs in large manufacturing plants and large offices such as insurance companies - the levels of satisfaction only fell to around 60% ... still much higher than those obtained from pupils whilst at school.

It emerges, therefore, that school work is actually the worst and least developmental work in our society ... and that school environments are the least conducive to feelings of well-being. (Of course, this does not show they are socially dysfunctional at least in the short term: Marxists have long maintained that one of the functions of schools is to lead students to tolerate otherwise intolerable working conditions).

Ex-pupils' Reactions

Bachman *et al.*[5.19] found that whereas only 13% of adolescents at school said they had had opportunities to identify and develop their talents, the proportion of young adults who said they had

been able to do this at work was 80%. Leona Tyler[5.20], commenting (with Gagne, Scriven, Ralph Tyler and others) on the implications of what Flanagan's respondents - the Project Talent Sample - had, at 30 years of age, to say about the connection between education and work, noted that that the most logical conclusion was that schools should be closed down. (She, of course, recognised that this could not be done since the main function of schools is the sociological one of keeping young adults out of the labour market). Most of the employed adults we interviewed said that at school they had not learned things which were useful in their jobs or in their leisure[5.21]. Although a significant proportion of those in middle class occupations said that their education had helped them to get a good job, working class people did not even derive this benefit from their education.

In two of our own studies[5.22], and in Flanagan's[5.23] study, ex-pupils were asked to identify the benefits they had derived from their education. Only a small proportion were able to report any benefits - but those they did report involved the development of qualities like those which came at the top of the pupils' list of priorities as reported in Chapter 2. Where these qualities had been developed, it was chiefly whilst they held positions of responsibility as prefects or in clubs and societies. A similar conclusion emerges from the work of Collins[5.24] and that of the Centre for Educational Sociology in Edinburgh[5.25].

Teachers' Knowledge of Pupils' Values

The observation that most schools cannot be doing much to foster high-level competencies is supported by the following observations.

As we have seen, if teachers are to foster high-level competencies they need to create activities which build on the pupils' values. But the available data[5.26] show that many teachers hardly know their pupils - still less their values: indeed they (like Goodlad[5.27]) systematically underestimate their pupils' serious mindedness. Most teachers feel obliged to pressurize their pupils, in an autocratic manner, to work toward attainment tests in which they themselves do not believe and which they think confer few benefits on their pupils. This tendency is exacerbated by the fact that they know that many of their pupils are bored and disinterested, and they believe that the pupils themselves do not wish to acquire the credentials. They therefore cannot trust their pupils to work on their own or set about creating developmental environments in which pupils would individually be encouraged to do things they cared about. They are therefore in no position to find out what their pupils' individual interests and values are, let alone work toward different goals with different pupils. Unfortunately, we have seen that, if the main goals of education are to be achieved, educational programs must be individualized so that pupils can do things they care about.

It is not only the certification system which prevents teachers getting to know and respect their pupils. When teachers were asked to say what the main goals of education should be for different groups of pupils, it emerged that they thought that the same goals *should* be pursued by *all* pupils[5.28]. Not only were the same goals appropriate for all, they themselves felt that they were at the time of the study offering courses directed toward the same goals for all pupils - indeed that the goals were equally well (or, more correctly, equally badly) achieved by all pupils. Once again, one may ask: how could schools possibly be effectively nurturing individual talents in such a climate?

Finally, although, as we have seen, if high-level competencies are to be fostered it is necessary for different pupils to do different things, two-thirds of the teachers we interviewed defined less academic pupils as "less intelligent, less able, and no good at anything". Only one-third described them as pupils with other abilities. This single-factor model of the intellect is inimical to diversified provision and, once again, supports the conclusion that schools *cannot* be reaching the - widely agreed - mainfest goals of education.

More Direct Evidence that Schools are not Achieving their Wider Goals

So far, we have suggested that schools cannot be achieving their main goals very effectively because classroom environments are not conducive to the exercise and development of high-level competencies, because teachers do not know, and are rarely in a position to find out, what their pupils' values are, and because many teachers are unable, and often unwilling, to individualize provision. While convincing, this evidence is necessarily indirect. We have made two attempts to

collect more direct evidence about whether high-level competencies are developed. One of these was the IEA `Civics' study[5.29]. This showed that most pupils had not developed initiative, the ability to work with others, respect for people with other values and talents, or a willingness to play an active part in society.

The other study involved a more general evaluation of primary school classrooms[5.30]. One finding was that the role models to whom most pupils were exposed in their teachers were unlikely to be conducive to the development of self-confidence, adventurousness, and initiative. Teachers emerged as the most down-trodden, lacking in self-confidence, and least confident of their ability to gain control of their destinies of any of the occupational groups we studied. It is difficult to see how people who lack self-confidence - and particularly confidence in their ability to manage self-starting others - are going to be able to nurture self-confidence in others. A second observation was that the classroom processes present in most classrooms were unlikely to lead to the development of high-level qualities. A third finding, derived from a study of what pupils in different types of classroom thought the consequences would be if they were to try to do something about problems they cared about, was that pupils in most classrooms felt that they would not know where to begin any attempt to tackle the problems and that the exercise would end up being a disastrous mess. (In the next chapter we will summarize the results of our studies of the more effective of these classrooms).

The Value of Present School Activities

So far, we have seen that schools neither attend to, nor achieve, their main goals. But is what they do teach of much value?

Clearly, what schools teach is of great use to some pupils because, as a result of passing examinations, they are able to enter protected occupations which afford security and successfully deter competitors. However, as we have seen, pupils discriminate sharply between the importance they attach to obtaining grades or credentials and the importance they attach to the _content_ of their studies. It is the latter we are concerned with here.

On apriori grounds it seems unlikely that schooling can be of great intrinsic value. Once they move beyond the "3Rs" schools focus on conveying _knowledge_ to their pupils instead of fostering competencies. Unfortunately knowledge has a half-life of one year. Thus, pupils forget 50% of what they have been taught after one year, 75% after two years, $87^1/_2$% after three years and so on. Furthermore, as is well known, most of the information taught to pupils in schools is already ten or more years out of date. It rarely matches the pupils' needs: the knowledge explosion means that the probability that pupils will at school be introduced to a significant amount of the knowledge they will later require is extremely small. There is so much to select from and much of what they will actually need to know does not yet exist. This means that the chances of them actually requiring much of what they have to "master" to obtain high grades is extremely small. To do their jobs well they will require unique combinations of up-to-date specialist knowledge, not what they have retained of the smatterings of low-level, out of date, bodies of knowledge that are often referred to as "disciplines".

As has already been reported, a study we conducted in Edinburgh, Scotland showed that most adults do not think that their education has been very useful at work, in their lives outside work, or even in getting a job. However, about half of the middle class group did feel that their education had been useful in obtaining a job, but rather fewer felt it had been useful in their jobs.

Schools' failure to confer many useful benefits on their students is more fully documented in the studies reported by Berg[5.31], Jencks _et al_.[5.32], Flanagan[5.33], Bachman _et al_.[5.34] and Collins[5.35]. If - and Flanagan's[5.36] and Schon's[5.37] data show that it is a big if - academic knowledge is required in later life it is either necessary to find it for oneself or to take specialist courses.

Do Schools do Actual Harm?

Many authors (e.g. Reimer[5.38]; Holt[5.39]; Goodman[5.40]; Freire[5.41]) have asserted that schools _stunt_ the growth of competence. Few careful studies exist, but those that do (e.g. Winter and McClelland[5.42]; Freedman and Berg[5.43]; Bill _et al_.[5.44]; Collins[5.45]; Raven[5.46]) generally support the thesis. Pupils develop feelings of _in_competence, trained incapacity, and failure. They come to call for

courses and information instead of developing the competencies and the confidence required to forge and find their own information. They learn to call on someone else to tackle their problems.

There are actually two distinct ways in which schools do harm. On the one hand, they stunt the growth of the pupils and instill dysfunctional beliefs and attitudes. On the other, they select and promote a disproportionate number of the wrong people into influential positions in society. The second of these may be part of a wider process whereby, as we will see in Chapter 7, the educational system appears to operate as fraudulently as the marketplace itself and functions in such a way as to create jobs and the kind of discriminations which act to compel participation in both education and the marketplace. It also operates in such a way as to result in laying the blame for the ills of society at the door of the disadvantaged and those who are compelled to fail at school (and who are thus in no position from which to do anything about the problems of society) rather than at the door of those who do well in the system and who therefore end up in the positions from which they are best placed to do something about the problems. While these processes are (at least in the longer term) socially dysfunctional, the processes are primarily sociological rather than educational. For this reason, and because these processes mainly operate to drive any form of multiple-talent education out of schools (because these would fail to produce the kinds of discriminations which are required to compel participation in the educational system and the institutions of modern society) these topics will not be discussed here.

Willis[5.47] demonstrated that some pupils reacted to the demeaning environments provided by schools by learning how to analyse and see through middle class rhetoric, how to appease authority, how to give the impression of working whilst not in fact doing so, and how maintain a supportive peer group and thus preserve their self-respect. He concluded that schools teach at least some pupils how to cope with the workplace, that is, how to "labour" in ways which were personally functional in the conditions which prevail in many workplaces - although perhaps not achieving the goals of employers. Somewhat oddly, however, he failed to note that schools may teach very many more pupils to labour in exactly those ways that are required in many "white collar" occupations. Thus he failed to note that, as Tomlinson and Tenhouten[5.48] observed, pupils can not only be expected to learn, but actually do learn, how to secure their own advancement by working out what those above them want to hear and then saying whatever is necessary to secure their preferment *without* doing the work which is ostensibly necessary for that advancement.

Although the development of this competence should be highly functional from the point of view of the individuals concerned, given the environmental, financial, and organizational crises facing our society, the promotion of pupils with such pre-occupations and skills into influential positions could, (and Hope[5.49] has observed that it actually is), be highly dysfunctional from the point of view of society. Although, in the short term, people with such concerns seem to be ideally suited to manning the fraudulent[5.50] organizations of which our society is so largely composed, in the longer term, double talk and the substitution of high-sounding words and inappropriate action (based, for example, on social and economic theories which do not withstand any careful scrutiny) for public-spirited action to tackle the crucial problems which face us cannot be other than disastrous.

With these reflections in mind, it is interesting to reconsider Bernstein's[5.51] claim that the substitution of "multiple and implicit" goals for the traditional 3Rs in elementary schools - ostensibly designed to enable more pupils to develop more of their talents - may be more correctly viewed as creating conditions in which some pupils can be trained to work out for themselves what to do to obtain preferment in a situation of limited opportunities and then get on and do it.

Is the Social Allotment Performed by Schools Functional?

Whether we like it or not, schools <u>do</u> allocate pupils' future occupational position and status. The extent of the relationship in Ireland is illustrated in the following table.

TABLE 5.3
Relative Social Status of Persons Completing Secondary School but then Terminating Their Education

	Father's Status	Son's Status (%)		
		Higher	*Same*	*Lower*
1.	Professional and high administration	-	28	72
3.	Inspectional, supervisory, etc.	18	25	57
5.	Skilled manual, routine non-manual	52	36	12
7.	Unskilled	94	6	-

Jencks suggests that the relationship is not so striking in America. However, Hope[5.52] has shown that, by age 40, the association between IQ (for which years of education is a surrogate) and social mobility - both upward and downward - is the same in the USA and Scotland (and Ireland may be much the same). The question we now have to consider is the extent to which the social allocative role performed by schools is functional and dysfunctional - bearing in mind that what is functional for the individual may be dysfunctional for society.

Although it is widely believed that the social placement functions which schools perform for society, while not desirable, at least result in the `more able' pupils being selected for influential positions in society, that assumption has been questioned by such authors as Berg[5.53], Goodman[5.54], Tomlinson and Tenhouten[5.55], Nuttgens[5.56], Bernstein[5.57], Dore[5.58] and even by Hope[5.59] (after he had demonstrated that 60% of social mobility can be explained by IQ). More generally, one whole strand of the Progressive Education movement has been based on some teachers' observation that the kinds of pupil that are favoured by the educational system are not those who possess the talents and concerns which are required to contribute to society.

Given Hope's data on the relationship between IQ and occupational status finally attained, the answer to the question obviously depends on what one means by "more able". Hope's challenge is very obviously based on querying whether the *values* of those whom the educational system selects for, and places in, influential positions are appropriate. The same question lies behind the challenges of several of the other authors mentioned, including the "anti-academic" wing of the Progressive Education movement.

In the course of our own work we were able to analyse adolescents' educational values, work values, and family and social values by both their social origins and the socio-economic status - indeed the detailed occupational categories - of the jobs they expected to enter. What we found was that many of the attitudes and values which are known to be associated with socio-economic status were more closely related to where pupils were *going to* than where they came from. Thus, we found that pupils who expected to enter high status jobs were much more concerned than others to develop independence, the abilities required to make their own observations, and those required to take responsibility. Pupils bound for low status positions, whatever their origins, were more concerned than others to be given strict rules to guide their lives and were much less keen to develop originality, independence, or initiative. Instead, these pupils stressed obedience, sex education, religious education and developing toughness and strength. Thus, it would seem that Kohn's[5.60] original (and widely cited) claim that such values and attitudes are acquired as a result of experience in different occupational roles is open to question - as, indeed, Kohn himself now recognises. People seem to be sorted according to their attitudes and beliefs in such a way that they end up in occupational groups who possess similar concerns and attitudes. Kinsey[5.61] had much earlier noted the same thing in relation to sexual beliefs and attitudes - and in this case there is little possibility of adolescents having

learned the relevant attitudes and behaviors through explicit tuition or by observation. More recently, Bouchard[5.62], Lykken[5.63] and others have shown from twin studies that experience in the home contributes very little to the documented variance in personality and attitudes - including religious beliefs.

So far, so good. Although the results lead us to question the desirability of enrichment programs in which pupils from all backgrounds are encouraged to strive to do well in the school system, they do appear to suggest that the allocative process is functional. However, the picture is not quite so simple. The highly upwardly mobile pupils in our survey were much more anxious than anyone else to obtain high test scores and to cut out the "frills" of education - such as developing the ability to work with others, the desire to work for the good of the community, and initiative. Promotion of such self-interested individuals into high status positions could be extremely damaging for the organizations in which they will work and the society in which they will live. That this is more than a mere possibility is confirmed in our studies of employees in a wide variety of organizations. There, we found, as did Berg[5.64], that such ambitious individuals tended to do such things as get rid of the time and the arrangements that Kanter[5.65] has shown are essential to future development and innovation - ie they vandalized those workplaces - for the sake of short term "efficiency" and their personal promotion prospects.

A final - and, from the point of view of examining the functional significance of the social allocative processes currently operating in society, very important - finding from our survey was that those who were *most* anxious to work for the long term good of society and the communities in which they lived were those who both came from, and were bound for, high status positions. Background socialization *does* play a role and it may be important to build some of the relevant experiences into educational programs.

In summing up our own work, it is fair to say that, not only does our IEA data[5.66] show that pupils at school have developed some highly dysfunctional overall attitudes, expectations, and values, the social placement functions performed by the educational system currently operate in ways which have some seriously socially dysfunctional components. Academic success confers marked benefits on some pupils, but the context in which it is used renders a marked dis-service to other individuals and, in some instances, to society.

Other problems have been documented by Schon[5.67] and Nuttgens[5.68].

As a result of trying - ineffectively - to change the type of education offered to students of management, Schon became acutely aware of some of the barriers to introducing effective (competency-oriented) education. One of these derives from the intrusive, and deeply entrenched, claims of what Schon calls the *technical-rational* model of competence. This he contrasts with a *professional* model of competence. Professional competence, he argues, enables people to cope with unique, complex, uncertain, messy, and changing situations like those which occur in everyday life. It is because educational activities conducted in the tradition of the technical-rational model of competence – i.e. that which is most characteristic of modern society - do not foster the competencies that are required to do this that they produce graduates who are incompetent.

What actually happened was that Schon first studied the way in which certain professional groups (architects, town planners, musicians, psycho-analysts) helped their students to develop the competencies they needed to deal with the kinds of problems they typically encounter at work. He and Argyris then tried - for no less than 15 years - to introduce similar activities into management education and other nominally "applied" college programs. Schon attributes their inability to introduce these changes to the claims[5.69] of the dominant technico-rational model of competence. These claims include the belief that competence in modern society is based on a knowledge of content - a belief which contributes to the emphasis which educational institutions place on knowing *that* (things are true) instead of on knowing *how* (to do things). Thus educational institutions place a premium on being articulate and disparage those who are able to do without being able to say why. They emphasise knowledge *of* action rather than (often unverbalized and intuitive) knowledge *in* action. But this is not the only reason why the technical-rational model competence has such a pervasive influence. The model also contributes to, and is reinforced by, the "discipline"-based departmental structure of educational institutions. Whereas (as the arguments about integrated studies show)

professional competence is cross-disciplinary, academics gain their significance and are able to advance themselves in their careers almost entirely only by working within "disciplinary" boundaries. They gain the publications on which their careers depend by contributing to the "knowledge"-base of the field rather than by action in the field. They and their students are held accountable for displaying knowledge of content rather than for their ability to tackle any of the problems on which their discipline impinges.

These last observations do not, however, fully explain why the *students* of Schon and Argyris were quite so reluctant to change. Of course, there was a conflict between the competencies they were now being expected to develop and those they had been selected and rewarded for displaying in the past and, indeed, those on which they would probably be graded on at the end of their courses. But it is also entirely possible that their reluctance to engage in these programs is partly explained by their having noted that advancement outside the educational system as much as within it is achieved, not by possessing and displaying any kind of useful competence, but by demonstrating familiarity and facility with fashionable ideas and jargon.

Hogan[5.70] has in fact demonstrated that, while most managers are poised, socially-skilled, extraverted, and intelligent, about a third do actual harm to their organizations as a result of trying to secure their own promotion by doing such things as destroying the developmental potential of their organizations by cutting out the time and the contacts which are required for the network-based activity required to undertake innovative activity, discrediting good people who are potential threats to their own advancement, and failing to tackle organizational problems because doing so would mean that they would have to take unpopular decisions.

Nuttgens[5.71] has developed further the argument that advancement in Western societies (an observation which may, significantly, be less true in Japan) is typically achieved, not by displaying any form of organizational or socially useful competence, but by intoning words and phrases which endear one to one's superiors - and perhaps the public in general. His dominant impression from a lifetime devoted to trying to promote educational change is that the educational system promotes and advances those who are least willing and able to do anything useful and squeezes out those who are willing and able to do so. This comes about because those who are most anxious to be useful are precisely those who can most clearly see that the educational system's claims to convey useful knowledge and foster useful competencies are bogus. (The students squeezed out in this way are not preoccupied with securing prestige and status, so they do not even notice that the system *is* primarily concerned with legitimising the allocation of these scarce commodities and thus maintaining them in short supply.) The students who remain are those who are least interested in developing, and least able to develop, competencies which are useful for anything other than securing their advancement. He, like Hope[5.72], notes that they are the ones who are most adept at picking up fashionable words and arranging them up in impressive ways. What he fails to notice is that the main engines of modern economies - their "defence" systems, their "insurance" systems, their "market" systems, and - that largest single industry - their "education and research" systems are equally bogus and depend for their continued operation on being manned by the kinds of people who gain preferment in the "educational" system. The process is, therefore, extremely functional in the short term: our society needs a large number of gullible, double-talking, and/or cynical people who, like priests in the medieval church, mouth high-sounding, but meaningless, phrases either because they naively believe them or because they are cynical enough to secure their own advancement by so doing.

Chomsky[5.73] makes a similar claim. His position is that the educational system promotes intellectuals who perform the function of medieval court jesters. They talk about issues in such a way as to deflect attention from the underlying problems and without challenging the frame in which the problems are set. They use high sounding phrases and give the impression that, because the problem is obviously known to authorities, something will be done about it. In this way they serve to oil the wheels of the system.

Evidence supporting the viewpoint that those who are most willing and able to do useful things drop out of education comes from McClelland's[5.74] much earlier work. This shows that those who are concerned to find new ways of doing things, do or make new things, and make new things happen - ie those with a high "need" for achievement - ie those on whom our society is most dependent for innovation - typically leave school early.

Further evidence supporting Chomsky's position comes from Popkewitz[5.75] who suggests that the function of curriculum development activities in education is to entertain the teachers involved and give everyone - public, professionals and pupils - the impression that things are getting better when the reality is that things are bad, bad, bad and nearly impossible to change.

The processes which have been described make change in the educational system virtually impossible. Those who remain are least capable of noticing what is going on, least able and willing to do anything about it, and most given to echoing currently fashionable phrases in such a way as to give the impression that those phrases are meaningful and that they are actually going to do something about problems - but often with no understanding of the implications and with little commitment to doing something about them. This makes change increasing difficult at each successive level in the educational hierarchy ... a phenomenon which accords with experience but which is contrary to what the received wisdom about bureaucracy suggests.

In the longer term this system is anything but functional. Not only does the process we have described make change in the educational system itself well-nigh impossible, it also makes it extremely difficult to initiate the action that is needed to stem the destruction of our planet - the rape of the soils, the seas, the environment, the atmosphere, the poor, and the Third World.

Conclusion

The material summarized in this chapter points to the conclusion that some two thirds of the money spent on secondary education is wasted so far as the development of the talents and competencies of young people is concerned. Schools are, for pupils, the worst working environments in our society. They are also the least developmental. Nevertheless, although highly beneficial to some pupils and to the reproduction of the social order in the short term, the social functions performed by the educational system cannot be other than highly dysfunctional even in the only slightly longer term. They make it almost impossible to initiate rational and innovative action on the basis of good information.

Pupils are right to lack enthusiasm for their studies. Schools are not encouraging them to direct their attention to developing important talents. What they are doing confers few developmental benefits on them other than a chance to compete for a privileged position in society. Instead, schools breed a host of dysfunctional beliefs and attitudes. Pupils are right to resist involvement in them. They are right, collectively, to withdraw from competition for norm-referenced grades - because if they all tried harder to reach them they would all have to run harder to stay in the same place. They would not even get any fitter. They would only become still more exhausted and still more incapable of making their own observations, taking initiative, and inventing better ways of doing things.

Notes

5.1. Goodlad (1983); Flanagan (1978); Johnston (1973); ORACLE; HMI (Scotland) (1980); HMI (1990); Raven *et al.* (1985)
5.2. Goodlad (1983). Earlier American studies coming to the same conclusion include those of Flanagan (1978), Johnston (1973) and Johnston and Bachman (1976). A more detailed critique of Goodlad's conclusions than that which follows will be found in Raven (1986).
5.3. Flanagan (1978)
5.4. Johnston (1973)
5.5. See also Flanagan (1978) and Bachman *et al.* (1971).
5.6. HMI (Scotland) (1980); HMI (1990); MacBeath *et al.* (1981); ORACLE
5.7. Torney *et al.* (1975); Raven and Litton (1976); Raven (1988)
5.8. Throughout my career as a researcher, the worlds of academe and administration have been pervaded by a statements to the effect that "Yes, it used to be like that, but, in the last couple of years all has changed". These beliefs have generally turned out to be unfounded. Two examples may be cited. One concerns primary education. The group which is responsible for

quality control in British schools - Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools - believed that their efforts had led to substantial change in primary education. And the schools they took visitors to confirmed them in this opinion. Yet when, in 1979, they undertook their own survey in a representative sample of schools they discovered that there had been virtually no change in 40 years (HMI, 1980). Par for the course, they now believe that the steps they have taken since have led to the desired changes! In the US Goodlad (1974, 1983) and Fraley (1981) found that, despite the advocacy of progressive education over very many years, little had changed. The second example comes from teacher training. Since 1945, there have been a series of major enquiries into teacher training in Scotland. All identified virtually the same problems and made recommendations to deal with them. After each, most people (other than the students) believed that these recommendations had been implemented and that the problems had been solved. However, yet another committee (Sneddon, 1978) identified exactly the same problems - and made yet another set recommendations to deal with them. Unfortunately, these were either unrelated to the nature of the problems or ignored constraints which would nullify their effect (Raven, 1987). Other examples could be cited. Time after time, as the truth has dawned, yet another tranch of reforms - based on a new "commonsense" understanding of the problems and their solutions has been introduced in a blaze of hype. Needless to say, lacking a substantive basis in policy analysis and research, it, too, has failed. The whole process forces one to take seriously both Chomsky's claim that the role of intellectuals and academics is the same as that of court jesters in the middle ages, and Popkewitz' (1982) claim that the function of curriculum development is to divert attention from fundamental and intractable problems which teachers would otherwise be unable to tolerate.

5.9. These include the reports of DES (1989). In the first place, the concerns which are expressed in these reports are, on the whole, so unchanged that it is difficult to believe that new goals are being pursued. Next, those which do embrace different concerns are none too positive: "Secondary school work is not as good as it might be. There is an over-emphasis on content, while opportunities for pupils to make decisions, think creatively, and engage in discussion are unduly limited. This is similar to the position in the country as a whole". When they turn to activities which might have been used to foster the kinds of qualities we have been concerned with in this book they become even more outspoken. Mini-enterprise activities are, for example, described as badly organized and strongly criticised for their muddled thinking even about even such fundamental issues as profitability (but note the emphasis on *content*). Still more generally, the *New Curriculum* in England - which is not noted for its emphasis on the wider goals of education - is said by HMI to have been badly implemented in about one third of schools ... and the work of the other schools is described in such a rosy way that it is impossible to believe that the kinds of activities that are described occur in most schools.

5.10. Morton-Williams *et al.* (1968); Raven (1977)

5.11. De Landsheere (1977)

5.12. Raven (1977); Bill *et al.* (1974)

5.13. HMI (Scotland) (1980); MacBeath *et al.* (1981); Gray *et al.* (1983); CES (1977); Gow and MacPherson (1980)

5.14. Bill *et al.* (1974)

5.15. Grannis (1983)

5.16. Bachman *et al.* (1978)

5.17. Flanagan (1978)

5.18. Robinson *et al.* (1969, 1969)

5.19. Bachman *et al.* (1978)

5.20. Tyler, L. *in* Flanagan (1978)

5.21. Raven (1977)

5.22. Raven (1977, 1980)

5.23. Flanagan (1978)

5.24. Collins (1979)

5.25. CES (1977)

5.26. Raven (1976, 1977)

5.27. Goodlad (1983)

5.28. Raven, Hannon *et al.* (1975); Raven, (1977)

5.29. Torney *et al.* (1975); Raven and Litton (1976)

5.30. Raven *et al.* (1985); Raven and Varley (1984)

5.31. Berg (1973)

5.32. Jencks *et al.* (1973)
5.33. Flanagan (1978)
5.34. Bachman *et al.* (1978)
5.35. Collins (1979)
5.36. Flanagan (1978)
5.37. Schon (1987)
5.38. Reimer (1971)
5.39. Holt (1977)
5.40. Goodman (1962)
5.41. Freire (1970)
5.42. Winter and McClelland (1963)
5.43. Freedman and Berg (1978)
5.44. Bill *et al.* (1974)
5.45. Collins (1979)
5.46. Raven (1977, 1980)
5.47. Willis (1977)
5.48. Tomlinson and Tenhouten (1976). There may be a cultural difference here. I have the distinct impression that American children are more likely to learn how to use the system for their own advantage, while many more British children learn that the educational system is a fraud - that it is not what it seems to be - and generalise that observation so that it becomes "nothing in society is what it purports to be - and is usually the opposite" and apply that observation to the workings of government, insurance, defence, health care etc.
5.49. Hope (1985)
5.50. Just as there is more food value in the packages of breakfast cereals than in their contents and what is being sold is the hype and the packaging, so most of what is sold - from cars to insurance packages - consists largely of images and fails to deliver the benefits that are claimed. Education, mental health care, and defence are conspicuously fraudulent activities in the public domain.
5.51. Bernstein (1971, 1975)
5.52. Hope (1985)
5.53. Berg (1973)
5.54. Goodman (1962)
5.55. Tomlinson and Tenhouten (1976)
5.56. Nuttgens (1988)
5.57. Bernstein (1971)
5.58. Dore (1976)
5.59. Hope (1985)
5.60. Kohn (1969)
5.61. Kinsey (1948)
5.62. Bouchard and McGue (1990); McGue and Bouchard (1989); Waller, Kojetin *et al.* (1989)
5.63. Tellegen *et al.* (1988); Stassen *et al.* (1988)
5.64. Berg (1973)
5.65. Kanter (1985)
5.66. Raven and Litton (1976)
5.67. Schon (1987)
5.68. Nuttgens (1988)
5.69. The correct word is "hegemony" but experience shows that it alienates many readers. It is not just the concept itself that is the problem, but also the way in which it is embedded in the organization and framing of educational knowledge and structures: that is to say in the divisional structure of university "departments" and the criteria which are applied in connection with promotion within that structure.
5.70. Hogan (1990)
5.71. Nuttgens (1988)
5.72. Hope (1985)
5.73. Chomsky (1987)
5.74. McClelland *et al.* (1958)
5.75. Popkewitz (1982)