



Policy Study No. 91

Choice in Rotten Apples

bias in GCSE and examining groups

Mervyn Hiskett



CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES



Policy Study No. 91

Choice in Rotten Apples

bias in GCSE and examining groups

Mervyn Hiskett

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

8 Wilfred Street, London SW1E 6PL

1988

The author

Dr Mervyn Hiskett was for twelve years Vice-Principal of the School for Arabic Studies, Kano, Nigeria; and examined for the West African Examinations Council. He was appointed Lecturer in Hausa Studies in the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and subsequently held the Chair in Hausa Studies in the University of Sokoto, Nigeria. He has written on Islam in West Africa and on education in Africa. His latest book is *The Development of Islam in West Africa*.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Stewart Deuchar, Oliver Knox and Dr Sheila Lawlor for their comments and generous advice. I am also grateful to the SEC, and to the Examining Groups from whom I requested information; it is largely on the basis of the material which they sent me that I have written this paper.

The Centre for Policy Studies never expresses a corporate view in any of its publications. Contributions are chosen for their independence of thought and cogency of argument.

ISBN 1-870265-20-3

© Centre for Policy Studies, February 1988

Printed in England by G. Donald & Co. Ltd.

92-94 Church Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3TD

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Foreword	5
Introduction	7
1 Martin Luther or Martin Luther King?	8
2 Primer for social engineering	11
3 The friendly Red Army	18
4 Genesis of bias in GCSE	23
5 From Norwood to Cockcroft	26
6 A wish to intervene . . .	29
7 Representation – or domination?	31
8 The maze of differentiation	34
References	39

Faith, as you say,

There's small choice in rotten apples

The Taming of the Shrew
Act 1, Scene 1

Foreword

For the vast majority of schoolchildren, the GCSE is the most important examination of their lives. There can be no doubt that in its setting and marking and modes of assessment, in the laying down of syllabuses and the selection of textbooks, a great deal of the ideas of the 'new orthodoxy', building on the consensus of the 'sixties, has successfully – and disastrously – taken over. Much of the responsibility for this lies at the door of the teacher training colleges, whose practices should be urgently re-examined.

But what else should be done about it? The attitudes of the members of Examining Groups are not going to be changed overnight. The new orthodoxy of many, or perhaps most, teachers and their unions, and of many headmasters too is another fact of life.

In his paper Dr Hiskett does not suggest the exchange of one ideology for another. There should be no place for the political pendulum in the education of our children. But the demand, implicit in his criticisms, for rigour, for strict standards, and for the selection of subjects and textbooks with sound academic credentials should be heard.

It is true that the GCSE 'general criteria' contain firm admonitions against introduction by Examining Boards of any form of political bias; and it is the duty of the SEC to bring to heel those who stray. But they have not done so in the case of many religious, social science and history syllabuses, as Dr Hiskett clearly shows. The new SEAC, the composition of which has yet to be announced, should be more vigilant.

Their task of supervision would be helped if employers who use examination results, perhaps under the aegis of the CBI and other bodies, set up a committee, the main function of which would be to publish and sell an annual scrutiny of the conduct of the Groups. Given the value of such a review to schools, the operation could hope soon to be self-financing.

Another spur to the work of the Groups should be applied. Governors of schools should reconsider choice of Examining Groups every four years, with a view to change if they were dissatisfied.

Not that the choice is a very real one, for all that the

Secretary of State for Education says that he wishes to maintain competition among the independent Groups, and for all the multitude of syllabuses on offer. And the unreality of choice is not just because so many of them show tendencies similar to those which this paper demonstrates. There are other limits to effective competition, too. GCSE examinations remain the preserve of the Groups who used to administer O-levels and GCE; and it seems that the Secretary of State would not award any would-be entrant to the GCSE ranks with any greater mark of approval than 'equivalence' with the existing Groups. Then again, GCSE Examining Groups are not profit-making bodies. These restrictions should be lifted.

For one main objective of any reform to the examination system should be to give schools (and, through them, to give parents) a greater *real* choice of GCSE examinations. If restrictions were removed, a new board might establish itself as the nucleus of a new Group, offering examinations which were simpler and severer, at once in the content of their papers and in the intelligibility of their marking criteria. There might not be many schools who would immediately subject their pupils to GCSE courses and papers which had more rigorous standards; which did not, for example, insist upon coursework or offer the delights of differentiated assessment. But some schools there would be. They might even be prepared to pay more for the higher standards of this or that new Examining Group.

Finally, the case for asking parents to pay GCSE examinations fees should be considered – with suitable safeguards, of course. The principal benefit would lie in the incentive which this would give to parents to interest themselves in the nature of GCSE examinations, and to see that they obtained better value for their money. They could also, with even more justice than now, insist that they were provided with adequate information about the successes and failures of their children (and about the criteria by which they were assessed).

Director of Publications
10 February 1988

Introduction

The changes in the Education Reform Bill will give greater power to individual head teachers, boards of governors and parents, while at the same time reducing that of local education authorities. And this is certainly welcome. But if the Bill was in any way intended to circumscribe ideological indoctrination then the welcome should be muted. For one of the main channels of bias will still lie outside the control of individual head teachers and school governors; and the influence of parents or public opinion is indirect and fragmentary. I refer to the national examination system, which necessarily exerts a powerful formative effect on what is taught in schools, and how it is taught. The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the published GCSE syllabuses in Religious Studies (RS), Social Studies (SS) and History for 1988; to illustrate a bias which is contrary to the spirit of education, which should be sceptical and candid; and to urge that reform of state education must include measures to open the examination system to newcomers and to forces of competition, for the honour of schools, the satisfaction of parents, and the benefit of pupils.

There are four English Examining Groups – Midland Examining Group (MEG), Southern Examining Group (SEG), London and East Anglia Group (LEAG) and Northern Examining Association (NEA). There is also a Welsh Joint Education Committee and a Northern Ireland Schools Examinations Council, neither of which are studied here. Each Group publishes syllabuses for Mode 1 examinations, which set out the content of the subject and, in some cases, offer specimen examination questions with model answers, as well as suggestions for the two-year 'Assignment' or 'Course Work' which, together with the worked papers, will contribute to the final GCSE result. They also include notes on supervision, etc., for the guidance of teachers. In the case of Mode 2 and Mode 3 examinations, the syllabuses are devised by individual schools, though under the strict supervision of the Group for which the school may opt, which will insist that such syllabuses conform to the national criteria (see below).

Martin Luther or Martin Luther King?

The GCSE Religious Studies syllabuses of all four English Groups provide many examples of how teachers foster ideas and attitudes associated with the Left (especially unilateralist ideas). Candidates are often required to comment on Liberation Theology, Passive Resistance, and the 'just' war – 'just' picked out by quotation marks. Bruce Kent, Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu and other dissident churchmen make frequent appearances and are recommended as exemplars worthy of study.

Still more significant is what these syllabuses leave out. Thus MEG, in a pamphlet entitled *Specimen Papers* has (p.70):-

- (ii) Name one religious group which teaches pacifism
- (iii) Name one statement by a Christian church on peace
- (iv) Name one Christian pacifist and one of his writings.

Where, one may ask, is the candidate given the chance to name eminent Christians who have argued against pacifism, or believed that war may be justified in defence of certain basic moral values? Other current issues of controversy are similarly treated. For instance, on p.31:-

Name two well-known people in South Africa opposed to apartheid.

Pupils are not encouraged to imagine that there are Christians in South Africa who argue the moral case that apartheid is the lesser of two evils. But is it not part of a good education to study several sides of a question?

There is of course an excellent case to be made that subjects such as liberation theology and apartheid should not form any part of a school's syllabus, on the grounds that there is no respectable corpus of textbooks to study; no tradition of accepted discipline. It would surely be better to study Martin Luther than his twentieth-century namesake Martin Luther King. But MEG *Specimen Papers* (p.31) include:-

Outline the work of Dr. Martin Luther King concerning

Civil Rights.

This is one of a number of references to the Doctor, who would scarcely have gained the approbation of the father of the Reformation (mentioned so far as I can find only once, and passingly, in any of the RS syllabuses) who wrote that,

For no matter how right you are, it is not for a Christian to appeal to law, or to fight, but rather to suffer wrong and endure evil; there is no other way. . . .¹

An experienced teacher of RS, who is also the Principal of three Christian schools, has commented as follows on the GCSE RS syllabuses:

I run three Independent Christian Schools and have come to the conclusion that the GCSE Religious Studies syllabus is incompatible with the aims of a Christian School. The same is true of the Scottish "O" Grade in Religious Studies. Christianity is seen as but one of several world religions, each of equal validity. Religion is seen as a human phenomenon and if pupils are made aware of the rites and customs of a few religions, it will promote good race relation through tolerance, today's virtue.

The pupils are encouraged to evaluate the minute amount of Biblical material prescribed, sixteen chapters of St Mark's gospel in one Board. But the Gospels were not written for the critical appraisal of 16-year-olds, but to show them the way, the truth and the life.²

In the light of this comment, it is interesting to read the following from the *Annual Report 1982-83* of the Joint Matriculation Board of the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Birmingham (JMB):-

The Subject Committee for Religious Studies has been concerned for some time that it is possible for a candidate to gain Grade C in Religious Studies (Ordinary) Syllabus A, Christian Responsibility, by following a course of study which might more properly be described as Social Studies (p.15).

So it seems that the problem of secular entryism into RS afflicted GCE as it now afflicts GCSE.

Religious Studies have a place among the Additional

Subjects of *The National Curriculum* which may be studied for GCSE. This being so, it is desirable to restore to the subject a more traditional approach. It seems unlikely that this can be accomplished within the present GCSE, and this is one of the reasons why an alternative examination should be created, for adoption either by the existing examining boards or by one of the new boards recommended in the foreword.

Primer for social engineering

The GCSE Social Studies or SS syllabuses provide abundant examples of disguised political propaganda. My first example is taken from the SEG SS syllabus. This has an introductory section (p.6-13) headed *Subject Content*, intended to define the broad parameters of the two-year course leading up to final GCSE. One first finds *Social Issues* (a) Poverty. The syllabus then goes on, under *Associated Contents* to define poverty under two divisions, absolute and relative. Yet can the examiners not know that many would object to the very concept of 'relative' poverty on the ground that measurement cannot be agreed upon? The concept demands that we regard as impoverished the least advantaged groups in any society regardless of the basic standard of living in that society. Unless we accept egalitarianism as the *summum bonum*, this is an absurdity, – well demonstrated by the leading article in *The Times* of 23 December 1986, 'The Poor at Christmas',

The term invented to confuse poverty with inequality is, of course, relative poverty. The essentially bogus character of this concept can be seen in this hypothetical example: if a slump were to cut the median income by half but the earnings of the bottom-fifth by only a quarter, the low-paid might be starving but they would be relatively better off.

The SEG examiners can hardly be unaware of such basic criticisms. If, therefore, they wish to introduce this dubious notion, they should at least not assume it as axiomatic but rather pose it as an open question – "Discuss the validity of the concept 'relative poverty'". This they do not do. Indeed, they go on to ask the question,

Can poverty be reduced?

for which the model answer is given as,

Social, political and economic initiatives, e.g. the development of the Welfare State; positive discrimination; pressure groups.

But this assumes the self-evident desirability of a state-centralist response to the alleged problem. Neither here nor elsewhere in the syllabus is the candidate invited to discuss the

contrary view that minimal or even negative government, reliance on market forces and cooperative voluntarism might offer a better remedy for what is termed poverty than the Welfare State. It is as if Hayek had never lived. The assumption that welfarism and social engineering are the correct responses to social problems is so enmeshed in these syllabuses that, almost, it may be unreasonable to criticise the examiners on this ground, just as it might be to criticise an examining board of theologians for taking for granted the existence of God.

The presumption of 'relative' poverty raises its head in the following question (page 28, no 3), this time taken not from SEG but from LEAG GCSE SS syllabus. It starts by rehearsing this passage from the London Weekend television programme, *Breadline Britain*:-

A major survey of poverty when applied to the population of Britain as a whole showed that:
Approximately 3 million people in Britain today cannot afford to heat the living rooms of their homes.

Nearly 3 million people don't have consumable durables such as a carpet, a washing machine or a fridge because of lack of money.

At least 5 million people regularly go without some essential food item, such as a roast joint, once a week.

And so on.

Then follow questions, among which are:

(a) What is meant by the term 'relative poverty'?
– certainly better than the previous arbitrary imposition of the term. Then:

(c) What reasons can be suggested for the persistence of poverty in Britain?

The first objection is that a piece of television journalism is used uncritically as an authoritative source. In this instance the media is taken as sound because it supports the egalitarian concept of 'relative poverty'. Yet, on other occasions, the SS examiners frame questions to elicit answers casting doubt on its veracity. It is of course true that the television programme, if it is accurate, does describe considerable hardship (though it

gives no indication whether this is short term or long term – most important in evaluating the significance of such statistics). All the same, to imply that a roast joint is an essential food item, to go without which constitutes poverty; or that to be without a carpet or a fridge is poverty, is far fetched except on the assumption that the norm is universal equality. Moreover, (c) is clearly *parti pris*. It requires acceptance of the statement poverty exists in Britain. But there are those who argue that poverty means less than bare subsistence and that, except in a statistically insignificant number of cases, this is nowhere to be found in present-day Britain. The question would be respectable only if it were framed in some such way as: 'Discuss the view that poverty exists in Britain.' These examiners clearly require the candidate to accept the premiss without further ado.

Many other examples of this attitude to inequality – always seen as a problem, never as a fact of human existence which has social advantages as well as disadvantages – will be found in the MEG SS syllabus. Under the head *Social Inequality* there appears the question,

What causes inequality?

to which the required response is *Economic scarcity; scarcity of talent; power and authority; private property and inheritance; sexual and social divisions of labour*. A second question is:-

What are the major causes of poverty in Britain today? to which the required response is *Age; family size; unemployment; low pay; single parenthood; sickness and disability; the poverty trap*. Trust in the workings of the state is implicit in all this although, apart from the use of the term poverty, not all of it is contentious.

More disturbing is what is left out. Excepting the reference to scarcity of talent no acknowledgement is made of possible differences in human intelligence. Nor is there any recognition of individual lack of motivation, which some may consider to be the outcome of the welfarism that the examiners so favour. And is private property and inheritance amongst the causes of inequality? There is a familiar argument that the ebb and flow of private property sustained by inheritance promotes the social and economic mobility that is the most effective agent of true equality. But there is no hint in this syllabus that such ideas deserve questions and answers.

All the SS syllabuses address the problems of crime and

deviance. Once again, their approach suggests that they have taken sides on the way people behave before they have properly considered all the data. Take the SEG syllabus (p.13 ff.). The initial key question runs,

What are the causes of crime?

to which the required answer is *Cause of crime: social, economic, political, psychological*, – a set of guidelines that omits any reference to moral considerations. The following specimen examination question points clearly to where these guidelines lead in practice,

Read the following interview between Bill, a skinhead gang leader, and his social worker, and then answer the questions which follow:

Q. "When did you become leader of the gang?"

A. "Nine months ago."

Q. "How did you become leader?"

A. "I beat up Harry (the previous leader). Now the rest of the gang do what I tell them."

Q. "So, if your friends don't do as they're told, you beat them up?"

A. "No! We decide together what to do. It's only when someone gets heavy (aggressive) that I have to sort him out – or he leaves the gang. I like to be fair though. I'm not a bully. Some leave the gang because they chicken out."

Q. "What sort of things do the gang do?"

A. "Well, we go fighting, nicking and smashing things. The best thing is being chased by the police."

This is followed by two questions, based on the above interview:

(i) Many people would consider that the activities of the gang challenge 'Authority'. Why do you think this is so?

and

(ii) Does Bill have power, or authority, or both, over the gang? Give reasons for your answer.

What are we to make of those questions about authority? Are teenagers likely to regard Bill as an awful warning, or more likely as a hero? The same equivocation seems to lie behind this next question (SEG, page 18):-

(Headline): "Teenage Truants Arrested with Women Rioters at Greenham Common." Why might the behaviour of both the teenagers and the women be considered deviant?

The model answer to this requires that *a good answer should have clearly defined deviance and recognise [sic] the social construction (through the media) of deviance and conformity. . . .*

This implies that the roots of deviance and conformity are no more than those suggested to us by the media – a proposition which ignores tradition, moral teaching, parental example and a host of other factors. What the examiners appear to be angling for is the response that both truancy and riot are to be judged relatively, not absolutely; and that both may be justified by reference to the cause for which they are undertaken, in this case that of the women of Greenham Common.

The cultivation of orthodox left-wing attitudes is pursued in these syllabuses in order to draw out the favoured answer, with conviction and tenacity. Model question 7, from SEG (p.19) is a case in point, trivial in itself but nonetheless instructive. Candidates are told to: Study the photograph of an assembly in a girls' school.

The reproduction is poor, in smudged black and white. The girls, dressed in dowdy gym slips and blouses, sit stiffly upright, hands folded demurely in laps, scarcely a smile among them. Elderly teachers, drab and forbidding, sit at the ends of rows while one stands at the main door, as if to guard against escape. The hall is bare of furnishings save one ancient iron wall radiator and what may be heavy dark curtains over the door. The scene could not be more lugubrious. Candidates are asked to respond to such questions as Explain TWO things which you think this photograph tells us about attitudes to discipline in this school. The model answer calls for comments on *School uniform. Way in which girls appear to be sitting; girls trained to keep hands in lap . . . etc.*, and states that,

In fact, it is a photograph for a private school's prospectus.

Clearly, any candidate who arrives at this conclusion should be given credit. The hostility of the examiners to formal school discipline, school uniforms, and private education is

patent; and they hope that the candidates will reproduce it. They must have taken some pains to find such an unprepossessing photograph, perhaps from a long-forgotten Edwardian album.

Another way used by the GCSE SS examiners to elicit answers which conform to their ideas is to string together a chain of questions or prompts leading to foregone conclusions. The model answer or marking scheme, as the case may be, instructs teachers how the prompts should be expanded. The following is an example taken from LEAG (p.23), Question 17: Describe the functions of a jobber on the Stock Exchange. Question 18 is: What are the reasons for nationalisation? As if this sequence of suggestions was inadequate, the marking scheme (p.34) sets out among the required responses to Question 17 *Deals on the floor of the Stock Exchange with brokers not the public*, and to Question 18 *Political – nation should share profits*. Thus are pupils steered into attitudes and beliefs which are a far cry indeed from anything approaching an enterprise culture.

Similar methods are employed in the following question from SEG (p.18):

Describe how consumer wants are satisfied within

- (i) a capitalist society
- (ii) a communist society

which, in itself, is unexceptionable. But then it is followed by:

Why do some people in the UK have greater income than others? How could a more equal distribution of income and wealth be achieved?

The marking guidelines require the candidate to differentiate between income and wealth . . . and inherited wealth/unearned income . . . and to explain the various mechanisms through which redistribution can be achieved (eg capital transfer tax).

The use of unearned income, where the Revenue term has for long been 'investment income' is another straw in the wind.

The protest culture, too, receives more favour than the enterprise culture. Thus in LEAG (p.24): Describe the methods by which individuals can protest against Central and Local Government policy. How effective do you consider each method to be? And (p.22) Explain the term 'picket' (p.29): What is meant

by 'a strike'? What is meant by 'working to rule'? And so on. MEG SS syllabus recommends the following partisan studies as suitable for the two-year assignment,

A case study of a local political campaign or incident, e.g., an attempt to prevent a school or hospital being closed.

A case study of the reporting by a sample of several national newspapers of a particularly controversial incident, e.g. a strike, the activities of the women at Greenham Common.

An analysis of sexism in advertisements in particular magazines over a defined period.

There will be those who defend such questions and projects on the ground that they do no more than prepare young people to take an active part in the workings of a democracy. Such a justification ignores the recurrent negativism in these syllabuses. For instance, instead of dwelling constantly on protest, why not questions such as "In what ways can the individual serve the community in a democratic society?"; "Discuss measures taken in your area to create jobs and assess their results"; "Discuss the role of youth movements and Service cadet corps in reducing juvenile delinquency". In fact, such positive approaches to society and its problems seem few and far between in these syllabuses.

Despite pressure to include them, Social Studies do not have a place in *The National Curriculum*. So far, so good. But the subject may still be offered for GCSE. Parents and school governors should therefore be aware of its nature and ready to question its inclusion in the school curriculum.

The Friendly Red Army

The four English Examining Groups each provide a number of History syllabuses. I draw attention to just one or two examples of conspicuous bias, some of them in papers which are, in effect, mandatory. There are many others.

Anti-Americanism and approval of Communist China

NEA syllabus A, p.18, includes the following instruction to candidates,

4. Use source material by brief quotation . . . to support reconstructions (e.g. 'The attitude of some Americans to the massacre of Indians was "nits breed lice"').

One might, not unreasonably, class this as an incitement to anti-americanism.

NEA B, p.6 :-

A3 Communist China (b) The Triumph of Communism . . . (iii) The Communist state established Rule of the Party; Economic and Social Policy – Co-operatives, collectives, industrial expansion, *conversion of the people* (my emphasis).

Contrast this with B, The USA in the 1920s and 1930s:-

(b) The 1920s, (i) The prosperous side of America – Mass production – Henry Ford – Hire Purchase – Social effects: (ii) The darker side of America – Klu Klux Klan, Organised Crime, Prohibition.

But did not Communist China have a darker side too?

A similar exercise in partisanship will be found in LEAG Syllabus A, p.2, Section A. Asia:

Source B (taken from the Rules of the Red Army), 1. Speak politely; 2. Pay for what you buy; 3. Return anything you borrow; 4. Pay for anything you damage; 5. Don't hit or swear at people; 6. Don't damage crops; 7. Don't take liberties with women; 8. Don't ill-treat captives, (b) (ii) How important was the following of these rules in the winning by the Red Army of the support of many Chinese people?

This may be contrasted with p.7 of the same syllabus, Section North America. The centre of this question sheet, approximately one third of its total area, is taken up by a photograph of a Klu Klux Klan initiation ceremony. Candidates are asked to identify the organisation and to . . . show how its attitudes and actions were dangerous.

It may be doubted whether the Klu Klux Klan deserves so much emphasis.

Still in the land of our principal ally, SEG Syllabus 2, pp.48-49 has:-

Internal Issues in the USA, 1945-1976: (a) How great was the discrimination faced by blacks in the United States in the years immediately following the Second World War. (b) Describe the tactics of and the success achieved by the Civil Rights movement in the years up to 1970. (c) Why have these successes been achieved?

These are the sole topics relating to internal issues in the USA over the period 1945 to 1976, as far as I can discover.

On the very next page of the SEG syllabus we come face to face with smiling Chinese grouped around a Dazibao, 'big-character' poster. Candidates are asked to

(a) Write a wall poster (in English) in which, in 1966, you support the ideas of the Cultural Revolution . . .

It is true that a second question requires them to write one, in 1968, suggesting reasons for discontinuing the Cultural Revolution. But are there no aspects of China, 1925-1968, worthier of attention?

Anti White South African sentiment

That South Africa should be a favourite target of the examiners is to be expected. SEG Syllabus 2, World Powers since 1917, p.37, displays a notice in the original Afrikaans and in English translation, which specifies two separate picnic sites for whites and blacks. This is the subject of several questions obviously designed to elicit answers hostile to apartheid. It may be thought that the inclusion of such an issue as a designated picnic site in a paper with the scope of World Powers since 1917 reveals a curious set of priorities, as well as a failure to understand that

the doctrine and practices of apartheid are best discussed in a less superficial manner (all the more so because of the intense passions which it arouses, and sufferings it causes).

LEAG Syllabus A, p.4 Section B: Africa South of the Sahara devotes three out of its ten questions to apartheid. Of the rest, one concerns the expulsion of Asians from East Africa, one is a multiple choice question requiring the identification of Lumumba, one is on Rhodesian UDI and one requires the candidate to identify an African state in which there is a Cuban presence. Given the vast range of possible topics – the economic and cultural consequences of the decline of the trans-Saharan trade, the development of rail and air links, the discovery of oil, pan-Africanism and pan-Islamism, etc. – most of these questions, weighted towards issues of racialism, are partial to say the least.

The 'shop-steward' syllabus

This is a course of study, which I have styled the 'shop-steward' syllabus, that may start as early as the Chartist Movement, and is pursued down to c. 1980, tracing the history of trade unionism and, almost exclusively, the Labour Party. It appears in the syllabuses of all the four English Groups, often under what seem unsuitable headings. The method of presentation is often openly emotive, as for instance in LEAG C, Paper 1, p.12, which shows a cartoon figuring Aneurin Bevan as a Dickensian matron dishing out spoonfuls of physic from a bowl labelled 'National Health Service' to a queue of unwilling doctors. The question based on this source reads,

Write a sentence to explain one reason why doctors disliked the service named on the medicine bowl when it was first introduced

which rather oversimplifies the welcome given to the NHS by the medical profession. Could *one* reason even begin to be adequate for any such complex issue? If the deviser of the syllabus does wish to use this cartoon (which cannot properly be described as source material) he should ask the candidate, "Do you think this cartoon properly represents the way in which the medical profession reacted to the introduction of the NHS?" That is, he should if he wishes to be objective.

The same syllabus, Paper 2, p.10, Source A shows that

emotive pictorial relic of the General Strike, the photograph of a lorry with the bonnet festooned with barbed wire and guarded by an armed soldier – together with Source B, an extract from the May 1926 *British Gazette*, the official Government news sheet of the day. However one may interpret them, these sources are scant evidence on which to base any judgement about the General Strike.

The mandatory parts of this history syllabus are arranged in such a way that candidates will find it difficult to avoid addressing trade-union issues at some point in their studies. For example, SEG 1 requires candidates to answer two questions relating to the following topics:

1. The Old Poor Law, 1750-1836;
2. The Corn Laws and its Repeal 1815-1850;
3. Chartism, 1832-1860;
4. Trade Unions 1866-1914;
5. The Welfare State, 1942-1985;
6. Britain and Europe, 1945-1985

of which only number 6 can be said to lie outside trade-union parameters, while SEG 4 lists the following choice of themes for Paper 1:

1. Parliament and Political Parties;
2. *Working-class Organisations;
3. Women in Society;
4. Britain's Changing Position in the International Economy;
5. Education in England;
6. *Laissez-faire to the Welfare State;
7. Ireland;
8. The British Empire and the Commonwealth.

But those marked with the asterisk are Nominated Themes, that is, the candidate must study them. Therefore, whether candidates take Syllabus 1 or Syllabus 4, like Aneurin Bevan's spoonful of physic they are going to have to swallow the 'shop-steward' syllabus, like it or not, one way or the other.

Nobody should object to the history of trade unionism as one of many options in the appropriate history syllabus. But when it occurs time and again in so many syllabuses, often with what amounts to mandatory status, then it becomes a choice in rotten apples.

I have not discussed MEG History syllabuses. This is because, unexpectedly given the bias in this Group's RS and SS syllabuses, at least three of their history syllabuses seem balanced and objective – The Modern World, 1914 to the Present Day; British Social and Economic History; and British and European

History. MEG does contain the 'shop-steward' syllabus but it is fairly presented under British Social and Economic History, and has a sub-head Development of the Conservative, Liberal and Labour Parties.

But the significance of these MEG syllabuses does not lie only in their relative intellectual openness. Both they and the less reputable NEA, SEG and LEAG ones were validated by the Secondary Examinations Council. The GCSE 'general criteria' warn against the introduction of political bias into examination materials. So a validating authority capable of passing the latter in the same breath as the former must expect to have its effectiveness questioned. (This point bears on the Secretary of State's intentions as set out on p.19, (ii) of *The National Curriculum*.)

RS, SS and History are not the only GCSE syllabuses that display ideological bias.³ This is because the concept upon which the examination is based is flawed at its source as I hope now to explain.

Genesis of Bias in GCSE

Professor H B Rogers describes GCSE as "less revolutionary than evolutionary."⁴ It is certainly true that GCSE *evolved* out of a constellation of ideas associated with the 1960s – the potential for reform of social engineering, behaviourism, relativism, structuralism, feminism, poststructuralism, etc., as well as the hallowing of political and social protest. Many of these ideas, of course, have much earlier origins. But during the sixties and early seventies they flowered in institutions of higher learning, influencing the development of educational philosophy in teacher training colleges. Indeed, where I read 'bias' others may prefer to read 'the consensus of the Sixties'. Be that as it may, the wholesale adoption of progressive theory and practice by educationalists is largely responsible for the present state of the national examination system. Before embarking on a brief history of GCSE, it may be useful to look at a few salient ideas of this period, to see how they link up with the dogmatics of the new establishment.

For an introduction to the educational ethos of the period the titles in a Penguin Education Specials book list published in 1973 are instructive: Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, Everett Reimer, *School is Dead*, Paulo Freire, *Cultural Action for Freedom and Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paul Goodman, *Compulsory Miseducation*, Charles Weingartner and Neil Postman, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, Trevor Pateman, editor, *Counter Course* and so on. The publisher's blurbs sum up the attitudes which inform the works, thus "Schools are for most people . . . 'institutional props for privilege'"; "subjecting young people to institutionalized learning stunts and distorts their natural intellectual development . . ."; "we must offer our children an education which relates truthfully to their individual social environment. . ." and,

[The authors'] aim is 'to help all students develop built-in, shock-proof crap detectors as basic equipment in their survival kits.'

Enough said.⁵

Among the more influential of the theorists of the period were Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich. The former was a Brazilian who specialized in adult literacy and,

He discovered that any adult can begin to read in a matter of forty hours if the first words he deciphers are charged with political meaning.⁶

This text in hand, the new establishment found it easy to justify the politicization of education which is such a feature of the GCSE syllabuses. Here, too, is enshrined the theory, dear to the GCSE, that teaching and examining should be 'issue based'.

Ivan Illich may not have been received quite so uncritically by the new educational establishment if only because, to all intents and purpose an anarchist, he was as opposed to state centralism as he was to formal education. None the less, his views on education, especially on examining, are reflected in the consensus which is so clearly articulated in GCSE. For example,

Neither learning nor justice is promoted by schooling because educators insist on packaging instruction with certification,⁷

and

Certification constitutes a form of market manipulation and is plausible only to a schooled mind,⁸

a view which adumbrates SEC's 'natural justice' and which has contributed to formulating the apologetic of 'Differentiated Assessment' (see below), the underlying purpose of which is to reduce certification to a subjective exercise based on social, not academic criteria. Illich's opinion that,

School pretends to break learning up into subject 'matters', to build into the pupil a curriculum made of these prefabricated blocks, and to gauge the result on an international scale,⁹

is typical of the thinking that led to the emergence of the controversial Integrated Humanities, the effect of which is to break down the traditional disciplinary boundaries. Finally,

A good education system should . . . furnish all who want to present an issue to the public with the opportunity to make their challenge known.¹⁰

The authentic voice of Social Studies protest!

The emphasis on 'skills' in history teaching, to which Deuchar and many others have drawn attention, is foreshadowed in *THES* where, in 1976, 'techniques of analysis rather than fact' were advocated, an attitude that can very easily be turned into an instrument for indoctrination.¹¹

Not, of course, that all teachers subscribe to all these views. The further you get from the centre – that is, from the Information and the Research Officers whose job it properly is to promote GCSE – the more doubts you encounter among the rank and file. But the 'sixties consensus still prevails, and must be challenged.

From Norwood to Cockcroft

The notion of a 'subject' examination, that is one in which candidates can accumulate discrete passes, subject by subject, as opposed to a 'group' examination, where the award of the certificate depends on satisfying the examiners in a mandatory group or core of subjects – English, Maths, Physics-and-Chemistry and one foreign language, for example – has gained ground amongst the 'new establishment' since the publication of the Norwood Commission's Report in 1943, although as GMD Howat observed in his paper *Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board, 1873-1973* drily observes,

many of the changes which took place in the 1960s and 1970s were not ones which Norwood himself would have envisaged or welcomed (Howat, p.12).

Prior to the watershed of Norwood, the tone of the schools examination system in Britain is well summed up by Howat, quoting Abbott, that,

an examination system contained within the structure of the ancient universities was preferable to one imposed by government (Howat, p.2).

But the strength of radical pressure for a more centralised, subject-based GCE is shown by the comment that,

On these matters the Oxford and Cambridge Board was consulted far less than it had been before the introduction of the Higher and School Certificate (Howat, p.12),

and, yet more suggestive of rough-shod haste,

Indeed, one may judge that much was assumed rather than said by both the Ministry of Education and the various examining Boards in implementing the change from the old Certificate examination to the new General Certificate of Education (Howat, p.13).

These initiatives led to the replacement in 1951 of the group-based School Certificate by a subject-based O-level GCE, and the Higher School Certificate by A-level GCE. This was

closely accompanied by the CSE, designed as a less academic qualification for those thought unable to manage O-levels. Thus the concept of a sound general grounding in literacy and numeracy, humanities and science, was cast aside; and something near to a free-for-all was adopted in its stead. Ironically, the national core curriculum is now to be introduced to make good the deficiencies.

The first major pointer toward GCE's successor GCSE was the Waddell Report of 1978. This set out the broad framework of a common national system – one to get rid of the separation between GCE and CSE – and recommended the regrouping of the then examining Boards into regional Groups. The leviathan of differentiated assessment was about to break the surface.

Waddell was followed in 1982 by a statement of intent from DES and the Welsh Office.¹² The *JMB Annual Report – 1983-84* describes the subsequent

mounting pressures on the Secretary of State to retain the present O-level and CSE systems . . . in a national press which does not normally show great interest in the more fundamental aspects of public examinations (p.10).

But JMB need not have fretted. There was even more pressure on the Secretary of State from powerful factions in the educational establishment for him to do nothing of the sort. The ardour of the 'new establishment' triumphed, as is illustrated in the following quotations from JMB, which emerges as probably the most radical of all the Boards involved in the making of GCSE.

For many years frustration built up in the educational world over the inability of successive governments to reach decisions on the reform of public examinations (JMB, 83-84, p.2)

and

. . . and that this modest development [an announcement by Sir Keith Joseph in August, 1983 of his intention to announce a decision in 1984] could be regarded as a welcome blaze of light at the end of a very long and tortuous tunnel is an indication of the protracted history of a proposal which was put forward by the Schools Council in 1970 (JMB 82-83, p.7).

Such claims to unanimity ignore the weight of opinion to

which I refer above, which had questioned the wisdom of these developments ever since Norwood.

The final milestone on the way to GCSE is the *Annual Report of the Secondary Examinations Council* (SEC) for 1983-84. Much of this document consists of a correspondence between Sir Wilfred Cockcroft, Chairman and Chief Executive of SEC, the controlling body of the national examination system, and Sir Keith Joseph, the then Secretary of State for Education.

In their essay on Mathematics in North *et al.*, Coldman and Shepherd, referring to the Cockcroft Report, *Mathematics Counts*, remark on Cockcroft's habit of

stating that something is the case but offering no supporting evidence or argument, merely handing down judgement from on high.¹³

Here is an example of his *ex cathedra* pronouncements,

Only when techniques of assessment are developed and applied which allow candidates to demonstrate their skills and abilities, their knowledge and competence, in sufficient depth and with sufficient consistency, can statements about their absolute standards be made reliably (SEC 83-84, p.72),

which begs quite a few questions in the long-standing argument about the validity of both the theory and practice of differentiated assessment.

But in the end the Secretary of State appears to accept the arguments of the Chief Executive – 'assertions' though at one point he styles them¹⁴ – and in a crucial letter of 20 June 1984 sets off the process of establishing the GCSE.¹⁵ On the same date, 20 June 1984, Sir Keith Joseph announced in the House of Commons his intention to introduce a single system of examining at 16+, based on national criteria and to be assessed by grade-related criteria (alias differentiated assessment), as soon as practicable.

A Wish to Intervene . .

The overweening claim to authority of SEC is well put in the following quotation from its 1983-84 Annual Report,

Third, I consider it to be the task of the SEC . . . to monitor all examination courses offered to the 14-16 age group (p.92).

It will be seen that this is a claim not just to administer and set examinations but to monitor all courses – that is to say, SEC believes its writ to run in every classroom in the land. The absoluteness of the SEC's claim to control over the whole of the state system (and indeed of the private sector as well, which assists in the function of providing compulsory education) is further spelt out in SEC 83-84,

Council was especially mindful of the independent status of the organisations seeking to innovate within the field of pre-vocational education, but nevertheless felt that it must declare an interest, since all members consider that the national criteria are relevant to all concerned with children during their years of compulsory education (p.77).

SEC and its successor bodies are, of course, responsible for these national criteria and, as even JMB commented in its *Annual Report* for 1982-1983,

What is emerging from these developments is a general recognition that, if the new single system of examining is eventually brought into effect, it will be subject to a much greater degree of central coordination than any previous public examination. . . . [The Secretary of State's] comments [presumably the statement of intent of August '83] were interpreted as an indication of a wish to intervene in the content of individual subjects and the way in which they are taught . . . (p.8).

So much for the spirit of an earlier age when "every effort was being made to ensure that university intervention would not be government intervention writ-large",¹⁶ when ". . . Delegates . . . considered themselves bound to consult the

wishes and requirements of the existing schools, and to interfere with them as little as possible" ¹⁷ and when "latitude in syllabus requirements were all to [the Oxford and Cambridge Board's] credit."¹⁸

Such central control, which imposes both general and 'subject-specific' criteria, bears on the question of choice. As far as Mode 1 syllabuses are concerned, the right of schools to choose whichever Group they please, of which the literature constantly boasts, is, once again, like offering a man a choice in rotten apples. Mode 2 and Mode 3 syllabuses are alike subject to the criteria. The choice is an empty boast.

Representation – or Domination?

How should teachers be represented on Examining Boards? This is a running battle. The Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board had established a policy as early as 1917 “to bring teachers into touch with examining bodies. . . .”,¹⁹ while the Oxford Delegates declared themselves anxious to “give full weight to the views of teachers”²⁰ and had long-established links with the Secondary Heads Committee, the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, the NUT and NAS/UWT.

The Norwood Report of 1943 “involved teachers to a greater extent than hitherto”²¹ and controversy about growing teacher involvement is hinted at in the measured comment of the Board that, “The views of the Norwood Committee upon the part which teachers might play in examinations were adopted more cautiously.”²² A comment by Delegacy was rather sharper that,

At such meetings [of the Standing Joint Committee’s Subject Committees or Subject Panels] teachers are in the majority. This most valuable link . . . refutes the ill-informed criticism . . . that the conduct of the General Certificate of Education is in the hands of universities and remote from the teachers in schools (*Structure*, p.3).

The issue of representation had not been fully resolved by 1978. Waddell observes that the forthcoming Examining Groups – that is the present GCSE structure – should have “representation of the appropriate interests without any of these having a majority voice”.²³ But Waddell was overtaken. For the *Constitution of the Northern Examining Association*, published in 1987, sums up developments since the Secretary of State’s speech in the House of 20 June, 1984 and proclaims that its Subject Committees are ‘teacher dominated’²⁴ and that,

The separate Boards will also maintain their own subject panels, thus increasing the breadth of teacher influence . . . (*Constitution*, p.6).

It comments elsewhere on its Examination Committee, which “has the primary task of *managing every aspect of the*

administration of GCSE (my italics)"²⁵ that, "At least half of its members (but in practice a much higher proportion) must be teachers."²⁶ This is a far cry from the careful balance of interests without a majority voice, envisaged by Waddell as late as 1978.

In fact, perusal of the representation on the various committees of the four English Groups and their constituent Boards confirms that not only are teachers in a substantial majority throughout; they are also nominated not by the Groups and Boards, but by NUT, NAS/UWT and the smaller teaching unions. It is true that subject associations also nominate teachers to these committees but, since at least a proportion of such nominees will also be members of the teaching unions, this does not do much to dilute union influence.

True, business and industry are represented on SEC, and on Groups and Boards. So how does it come about that Social Studies, for instance, displays such a degree of anti-business sentiment? Is it that businessmen prefer to concentrate on broad administrative issues? They may seldom be aware of the content of individual syllabuses. And perhaps too few business organisations nominate representatives with sufficient interest in educational matters.

Also, although business and industry are represented on councils, finance committees, etc., they are thinly represented, if at all, on the subject committees and those dealing with assessment procedures. For instance, the SEC's Grade Criteria Working Parties, responsible for developing the procedures upon which the validity of examination results depends, appear to consist entirely of teachers, lecturers and members of HMI.²⁷ The latter are not noted for their backwardness in favouring the 'sixties orthodoxy.

Of course there is a strong case for having teachers on these committees. But ought they to 'dominate' (the NEA's word) them? And ought teaching unions, which have avowed political and collectivist objectives, to play such a dominant part in nominating members? Unions' credentials in assessing the ideals of education are slight. Nor are they even major customers for the products of the examination system (though they perhaps should be).

Some change in the balance of power therefore seems worth considering. A greater number of places on all subject

committees and the like, should be reserved for non-teaching graduates and postgraduates, drawn from business, the professions and industry, able to meet the teachers on their own ground but probably with different perspectives from those of union members.

The Maze of Differentiation

'Grade-related criteria', 'pupil profiles', 'differentiated papers', 'differentiation within papers', 'criteria referencing' 'general criteria and subject-specific criteria', 'performance matrices', 'subject domains', 'task-oriented examinations' – the SEC has developed a tangle of terminology in order, it seems, to obscure the ineluctable fact that in any field of learning some succeed and some fail.

Differentiated assessment, of which all these procedures form a part, is defined as follows:

a differentiated examination is one in which different components are deliberately set at different levels of difficulty to meet the needs of candidates at different levels of ability (SEC 83-84, p.17).

Graded testing and the practice of using cumulative courses to build up knowledge and skills and testing them periodically is a familiar and uncontroversial technique.²⁸ Differentiated assessment differs from this in that it can be applied in one single examination, and even within a single paper.

But what is more disturbing is the dichotomy that differentiated assessment seeks to establish between knowledge, often dismissed as 'factual recall', as if it were inconsequential, and the more highly valued 'skills' which are never clearly defined, though they seem to be valued even in the absence of knowledge or understanding. The dilemma this creates is encapsulated in the following from SEC, 85-86,

. . . mark schemes have not always been constructed so as to facilitate and recognise positive achievement in the full range of objectives. There has been a tendency to overweight recall at the expense of other objectives and therefore to couch mark schemes in terms of 'product' (the facts that will appear in an answer) rather than in terms of 'process' (the skills being demonstrated) (p.9).

If this is strictly applied in the case of history, it seems that a candidate who produces a clear, three-paragraph essay on the Battle of Hastings, outlining the preceding events, giving the

correct date, correctly naming the dramatis personae, describing the terrain and its influence on the battle and summarising what its outcome signified for English history, would receive lukewarm credit for unessential 'factual recall' or 'product'. How he then fares on 'process' will depend on whether or not the examiner considers him to have measured up to one or more of such discrete assessment objectives as 'concepts of cause and consequence', 'the ability to look at events and issues from the perspective of people in the past' etc, etc. (*NEA Assessment Objectives*). How will examiners choose between such discontinuous objectives? There is no telling. It is a cockshy, not an examination.

A second candidate will produce an essay of a sort, describing how King Harold defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Culloden in 1215. Given the lack of approbation of 'the facts that will appear in an answer' – that is, product – which SEC displays, it may well be that this latter candidate, by making a stab at 'concepts of cause and consequence' and the rest of it, would fare better than the former. The inadequacies of factual recall would not weigh heavily in the balance.

A travesty? Yet I see nothing within the practice of differentiated assessment that would prevent it happening. The swirl of confusion that surrounds this issue is exemplified in the following murky pronouncement from SEC 83-84,

It will likewise be important to ensure that techniques of assessment continue to recognise quality and overall performance (including relative performance) as well as testing for required levels of competence in the 'domains' of a subject (p.88).

Does this mean that a candidate will receive credit, say, for the 'domain' of comprehensibility even though what he writes in the 'domain' of knowledge is rubbish? Or does it mean nothing at all?

What these examiners are ignoring is the fact that history is a seamless cloak. It cannot be chopped up into distinct, separately assessable entities. The ability, for example, to 'look at events and issues from the perspective of people in the past' is valueless if the facts are wrong. Behind the facade of 'differentiated assessment' lie as many or more subjective

judgements of the pupil's performance as there ever were in the traditional method of marking. But the teachers and their pupils are more confused. That is the difference.

Next consider the implications of the statement that "our present examinations tell us more about what pupils cannot do than about what they can" and which advocates,

a system which will award grades to less able candidates on the strength of good performance in tasks which they can actually do rather than bad performance in tasks to which they are not suited, (SEC 83-84, p.83)

in support of which is adduced the following remark attributed to Sir Winston Churchill,

The questions which [the examiners] asked were almost invariably those to which I was unable to suggest a satisfactory answer. I should have liked to be asked to say what I knew . . . (SEC 83-84, p.81).

Despite the source, it cannot be unreasonable to insist that a candidate should be able to give a relevant and appropriate answer to any question within the range of the syllabus he has studied. If asked in the Zoology paper to describe the avian alimentary tract and its main features, should Winston Churchill expect the pass mark for an account of blue tits feeding off a coconut?

The suspicion must be that all these elaborate stratagems to avoid ever failing candidates stem from social attitudes, not from academic rigour. Indeed, this is made clear in SEC 86-87 where it is stated that the educational case for maximising positive achievement must be reconciled with 'natural justice'.²⁹ Which means what? The answer is in SEC Working Paper 5, *Making Ourselves Clearer: Readability in GCSE*. Referring to the language used in examination questions, the author writes,

The use of this kind of language in assessment tasks discriminates against those students with poor general knowledge and/or a home environment which does not expose them to networks of knowledge which underpin the various meanings (p.12).

The author goes on to give the following example from the Chemistry paper,

Which of the following requires a non-aqueous solvent to dissolve it? A Salt, B Sugar, C Sodium nitrate, D Sulphur (p.11),

arguing that 'non-aqueous solvent' is unfair to the disadvantaged and ought to be rephrased to read,

Which one of the following requires a liquid other than water to dissolve it? . . . (p.11).

Similar objections are made to the use of 'lateral', 'vertical' etc., in the Geography paper and circumlocutions are suggested to avoid them.

But it should be the job of teachers to teach their pupils so that they can cope with non-aqueous solvents and lateral faces. Meanwhile, this doctoring of examination questions is unfair to the disadvantaged but bright pupil who does have the interest and intelligence to master a basic terminology but is presently denied the opportunity to do so; nor is it 'just' that the employer should take on a trainee laboratory technician only to discover that he cannot understand the simplest technical instruction.

A great deal of research has been thrown up by GCSE. Confidence in its usefulness is shaken by the sheer banality of many of its findings. For example, on the subject of the readability of examination papers, the author of *Working Paper 5* contributes,

Many research experiments have shown that there is a clear relationship between the readability of written material and the comprehension levels attained by students using it (p.2).

One recalls Professor G R Elton's comment,

Like so much else in sociology [for *Working Paper 5* is sociology of a sort], impressive theories, looked at closely, dissolve into pointless glimpses of the obvious.³⁰

Again, in *Working Paper 1*, in reference to marking an English essay on 'a personal experience', the author solemnly asks,

[Is credit] given for worthwhile work at all levels and not merely for 'good', 'middling' and 'poor' versions of an expected response?³¹

To which the answer ought simply to be, 'Since I mark

them in a range of 1-10 and some score 7/10 and others 4/10, "Yes!". Most startling of all, the GCSE establishment itself seems uncertain how differentiated assessment is to be applied. In 1983 JMB wrote about

. . . new approaches to assessment . . . whose advantages have yet to be identified and certainly have not been experienced (JMB 82-83, p.29).

And the SEC itself, as late as 1986, commented that 'in the approvals process it has become apparent that examiners are only slowly coming to terms with these different techniques'.³²

These doubt and hesitations were excused on the grounds that

The rapid introduction of the GCSE was not dependent upon the proposed grade-related criteria being in operation from the beginning (JMB 83-84, p.11).³³

It is now clear that differentiated assessment will be applied in the 1988 examination (even to history, perhaps the most doubtful candidate of all). For NEA History syllabuses specifically affirm, in each case, that 'Differentiation in the written papers will be determined through 'outcome'.' 'Differentiation by outcome' is an arcanelly oblique method of setting and marking papers by 'neutral stimulus' that is discussed but far from made clear in SEC Working Paper 1.39 It may well be that we are about to push blithely ahead with '. . . What nobody is sure about.'

References

- 1 From Luther's *An Admonition to Peace*, quoted in Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250-1550*, Yale, 1980, p.281
- 2 I am grateful to Mr Charles A Oxley, MA, ACP, for his permission to quote from comments made to the seminar on 'Education and Freedom', organised by the Freedom Association, 9 May 1987.
- 3 *The GCSE: An Examination*, edited by Joanna North, 1987, chapters on specific subjects; also John Marenbon, *English our English*, CPS, 1987 and Alan Beattie, *History in Peril*, CPS, 1987
- 4 *The Constitution of the Northern Examining Association*, 1987, p.5
- 5 The titles and blurbs can all be found at the back of Illich, *Deschooling Society*, Penguin Education Specials, 1973 and in other issues in this series.
- 6 Illich, op. cit., p.25
- 7 ib., 19
- 8 ib., 122
- 9 ib., 45
- 10 ib., 78
- 11 N Entwistle and D Hounsell, 'How do students learn?', *THES*, 4 June 1986
- 12 *Examinations at 16-plus: A statement of policy*, November 1982
- 13 North, p.76
- 14 SEC 83-84, p.71
- 15 ib., 95
- 16 Howat, p.4
- 17 *Delegacy of Local Examinations*, University of Oxford, p.5
- 18 Howat, p.6
- 19 Howat, p.9
- 20 *The Structure and Examining Procedures of the Delegacy*, University of Oxford, 1983, p.2
- 21 Howat, p.12
- 22 ib., p.12
- 23 *School Examinations*, Part 1 Cmnd 7281-II, 1978, p.24
- 24 *NEA Constitution*, p.6
- 25 ib., p.5

- 26 ib., p.5
- 27 SEC 86-87, pp. 36-38
- 28 B/TEC, for example, employs a form of criterion grading. But as I understand it this does not involve a dichotomy between skills and knowledge and it does apply academic and/or technical rigour, not social considerations, to the assessment process. It is therefore, in my view, essentially different from the GCSE differentiated assessment.
- 29 p.3
- 30 *Reformation Europe*, Fontana edition, 1963, p.314
- 31 *Differentiated Assessment in GCSE*, p.3. Perhaps the key to this opaque question lies in the author's concern that we should reward not only an 'expected' response but also an unexpected one. But since the essay is on 'a personal experience', the nature of which is necessarily unknown to the examiner before he has read the essay, the response is essentially unexpected *ab initio*— unless possibly we are asked to reward an essay written in sign language or a sketch instead of an essay? Loose thinking of this kind peppers the research and makes it hard to attach clear meanings to what the authors have to say.
- 32 SEC 85-86 p.10
- 33 p.3. The passage states: "free-response questions' discriminate well at the upper end of the ability range but should form only part of any scheme intended to discriminate across the whole range". I take this to open up the possibility of having both free-response questions and other types of questions – say multiple choice – within the same paper. But how does one establish an equivalence in intellectual value between a well-written, well-integrated essay on the origins of the Chartist Movement and a multiple choice question requiring simply the identification by tick of Julius Caesar, Cromwell, Lumumba *et al.*? To suggest that each should carry the same weight seems to me to be intellectually irresponsible.