Chapter 4
Through Curriculum Renewal: An Aotearoa-New Zealand Case Study

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Abstract The first of the case study chapters provides a compelling example of how a socio-ecologically inspired vision for education and policy initiatives can develop and ultimately change the very foundations of approaches to teaching and learning. All school teachers and teachers in training will be familiar with curriculum documents that present the aims, objectives and structure of school curricula. These documents are usually organised around key learning areas such as English, Science, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education and so on. Curriculum documents establish the boundaries of content and levels of attainment required by students as they progress through the various levels of schooling from a preparatory year, through primary and secondary schools. They reflect the philosophies of the government of the day and are in a more or less constant state of review and renewal. Committees are established and representation called for from key stakeholders such as politicians, academics with expertise in varying disciplines, members of the community and from teachers themselves. Interestingly, we have never heard of students being represented as the ultimate key stakeholder in the curriculum development process at its most fundamental level. The stakeholders argue, discuss and debate what should or shouldn't be taught in a state or nation's schools. Inevitably, curriculum documents shape, and are shaped by, a nation of people. But not all people are equally in a position to shape curriculum in this way. Curriculum documents are artifacts of history, political conventions, historical and contemporary views of knowledge and pedagogy. They are also aspirational statements about the purpose and function of schooling in the ongoing

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work of societal change. This chapter outlines a remarkable process whereby socio-ecological principles were used, and came to have a major presence, in the development of the New Zealand Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Keywords Curriculum development • Socio-ecological curriculum • New Zealand • Health and physical education

Introduction

Along with the bricks and mortar of school buildings, educational policy and curriculum documents might be thought of as foundational to the schooling process. They are the cornerstone of what is taught in schools. Generations of teachers and students come and go – each one's lived experience of their years in a school being a mix of their own efforts, the learning context they find themselves in and the curriculum. However, it is all too easy to take for granted the cultural significance and consequences of curriculum documentation. Like the cornerstone that underpins the building, it is easy to miss. In this chapter we want to call in to question the hidden work that curriculum reform does and how it can produce documentation, and ultimately impact on teaching practice, that has far reaching consequences. We will discuss the reform process that underwrote significant change in Health and Physical Education curricula in New Zealand. We think it provides a compelling example of how this can promote socio-ecological and democratic ideals and practices.

This is important, as it is often argued that the processes of curriculum development and the documents that they produce are hegemonic in character; that is, that they reflect the dominant ideas and ideals of those in positions of power and privilege. They can be seen as instruments tuned to maintain the status quo, or worse, to increase the divide between the haves and the have-nots. Each cycle of curriculum reform can thus be seen as a test of political belief and will and to reflect the prevailing social conditions within a society.

Socio-critical theorists in physical education have considered how curricula, teaching and learning in the subject can privilege some while marginalising others. Their efforts are aimed at exposing the hidden curriculum, those invisible influences that shape learning experiences, and the promotion of social justice. This has been summarised by Nutt and Clarke (2002), who draw on significant writings spanning the last three decades of Giroux, Bain, Kirk and Fernandez-Balboa, to name a few. The social critics of education want to interrogate, challenge and change the 'everyday' encounters with, and the transmission of, social inequity in all its forms. They want to expose and challenge the cultural mechanisms that make this process persistent. Exposing the hidden curriculum of physical education has resulted, to some extent, in a more accessible educational practice, less bound by perceived restrictions of motor ability, gender, age, ethnicity and so on. Yet practice is often slow to change. If the cornerstone of the curriculum is still in place, change can be ephemeral.

Kirk (1992, p. 37) defined the hidden curriculum as 'the learning of knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs, values and assumptions … communicated unintentionally, unconsciously and unavoidably.' The formal teaching, organisation and content of the politically sanctioned curriculum of the day are the medium through which the hidden curriculum works. Dodds (1985) narrowed the concept by identifying the hidden curriculum as one of four aspects of the functional curriculum:

(a) Explicit curriculum – those publicly stated and shared items that teachers want students to acquire. As we have pointed out above, this is often now stipulated in curriculum documents developed by the representatives of those in positions of political power.
(b) Covert curriculum – a teacher's unspoken, non-public agendas (still consciously and intentionally communicated). But covert curriculum might also be encoded in curriculum documentation.
(c) Null curriculum – the ideas, concepts and values left out (that could be included). Again, this applies equally to the work of teachers and to the curricula structures they work with.
(d) Hidden curriculum – reflexive aspects of what teachers say and do (e.g. non-verbal communication and/or unconscious messages related to speech, action and organisation).

Kirk (1992) emphasised the interweaving of all four aspects of the functional curriculum to produce purposeful teaching and learning. Kirk goes further in linking curriculum to a pedagogical discourse by describing a discourse as 'the ways in which people communicate their understanding of their own and others' activities and events in the world' (p. 42). Furthermore, he describes an ideology as 'an arbitrary linking and fixing of formerly separate discourses in ways that seem natural and necessary and that have effects on social relations and power' (p. 43). An ideology, a kind of invisible and unquestioned logic about what should be taught in a learning area like physical education, therefore appears inevitable and incontestable and actually frames our perceptions and thinking about the world. It is through these kinds of mechanisms that students tacitly learn and internalise norms and values representing the private interests of the dominant groups in society (Apple 1985; Fernandez-Balboa 1993).

Having outlined the kind of entrenched societal forces that can resist change and sustain the hidden curriculum of a field, the contemporary curricula statements that underpin teaching and learning in Health and Physical Education in New Zealand must be seen as all the more remarkable. The excerpt below is from the New Zealand Ministry of Education's official website.

Four underlying and interdependent concepts are at the heart of this learning area:

- **Hauora** – a Māori philosophy of well-being that includes the dimensions Taha wairua [spiritual well-being], taha hinengaro [mental and emotional well-being], taha tinana [physical well-being], and taha whānau [social well-being], each one influencing and supporting the others.

- **Attitudes and values** – a positive, responsible attitude on the part of students to their own well-being; respect, care, and concern for other people and the environment; and a sense of social justice.
- **The socio-ecological perspective** – a way of viewing and understanding the interrelationships that exist between the individual, others, and society.
- **Health promotion** – a process that helps to develop and maintain supportive physical and emotional environments and that involves students in personal and collective action.[1]

The learning activities in Health and Physical Education arise from the integration of the four concepts above, the following four strands and their achievement objectives, and seven key areas of learning. The four strands are:

- **Personal health and physical development**, in which students develop the knowledge, understandings, skills, and attitudes that they need in order to maintain and enhance their personal well-being and physical development.
- **Movement concepts and motor skills**, in which students develop motor skills, knowledge and understandings about movement, and positive attitudes towards physical activity.
- **Relationships with other people**, in which students develop understandings, skills and attitudes that enhance their interactions and relationships with others.
- **Healthy communities and environments**, in which students contribute to healthy communities and environments by taking responsible and critical action. (http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Learning-areas/Health-and-physical-education. Accessed 8 September 2011)

The remarkable nature of this curriculum occurs on multiple levels. Health and Physical Education have been integrated in many different countries. Richard Tinning (2000, p. 20) has argued that 'in the always limited time available for physical education (even if integrated with health education), preference should be given to pursuing those educational objectives that are developed through participation in physical activity – objectives that focus on knowledge, skills and attitudes considered useful in preparation for a healthy lifestyle'. Tinning argues: 'Education *for* a healthy lifestyle is a reasonable compass-bearing for our professional mission as physical educators'. Health and Physical Education has become more overtly a vehicle of the 'new public health' agenda, itself an amalgam of positivist and socially critical approaches and, seen in this light, may be perceived as an answer to those indicators of public ill health that appear on the increase (e.g. drug abuse, teen pregnancies, youth suicides, youth depression, obesity), while at the same time addressing indicators that appear on the decrease (e.g. fitness, skill, participation). More remarkable, we feel, is the commitment to a socio-ecological perspective that

[1] In health and physical education, the use of the word hauora is based on Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model (1982). Hauora and well-being, though not synonyms, share much common ground.

endorses teasing out the interrelationships that exist between individuals, others and broader society, a point that has been emphasised as fundamental in this book.

Yet even more remarkable is the commitment to, and infusion of, indigenous knowledge, values and practices into the nation's curriculum. Collectively, this approach has the potential to be deeply transformative for both individuals and for society. This is a real-world example of what Gruenewald (2003) referred to as the kind of decolonisation of beliefs and ideas that is needed before re-inhabitation of a more socially and ecologically just world is possible. To understand the setting or context in which this reform was developed requires a short diversion into New Zealand history.

New Zealand: South Pacific Island or British Colony?

The landmass Aotearoa-New Zealand rides the edge of two giant continental plates – the Indo-Australian Plate and the Pacific Plate. Pressure and movement along these plate boundaries provides New Zealand with its distinctive topography of alpine mountains in the south and volcanoes, hot springs and bubbling thermal mud pools in the north. The first New Zealand settlers were Moriori and Māori, arriving in their waka (canoe) fleets during the great era of Polynesian ocean voyaging, some time in the thirteenth century AD (King 2003). Legend has it that Kupe, a great Polynesian navigator, discovered the islands and named them Aotearoa ('the land of the long white cloud'). Māori society in Aotearoa is made up of many iwi (tribes). The iwis share collective history, language and belief systems. The late eminent historian Michael King (2003) suggested that there was no uniform Māori name for the collective islands until after European colonisation. Even so, both 'New Zealand' (for the British) and 'Aotearoa' (for Māori) have stuck, and henceforth we follow the post-colonial convention of pairing them to recognise the foundation of the nation's bi-culturalism (with a few exceptions when we are referring specifically to one or the other). Both Māori and Pakeha (the Māori word for all non-Māori) make up the peoples of Aotearoa-New Zealand.

The possibility of a great land in the south, a *Terra Australis Incognita [the unknown south land]*, fired the imagination of European cartographers and explorers between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. Eventually the presence of a Great South Land (Australia) would be confirmed by Abel Tasman and James Cook's explorations in 1769–1770. Cook mapped most of the coastline of New Zealand and the east coast of Australia on this voyage and European colonisation soon followed. Abel Tasman charted a section of New Zealand's west coast in 1642, but thought the land he saw from the pitching deck of his boat was connected to South America, itself only partially charted at the time. Whaling and sealing stations were set up throughout the South Pacific, and in New Zealand, as early as 1791.

Māori communities provided considerable resistance to European settlement and the New Zealand Wars raged between 1845 and 1872, despite the signing in the North Island in 1840 of the Treaty of Waitangi. It is important to understand for

the rest of this chapter that the Treaty of Waitangi not only provided the formal declaration of New Zealand as a British colony and accorded Māori the rights of British subjects, but also recognised for Māori 'full, exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates, Forests, Fisheries and other properties' (Treaty of Waitangi, Article 2). The date of the original signing ceremony has been celebrated annually as a national holiday since 1974 – Waitangi Day. Even so, negotiation and reconciliation between Pakeha and Māori is ongoing.

A Sporty or Healthy Aotearoa-New Zealand?

Sport and physical activity have long been a defining characteristic of New Zealand identity. Much of this results from the nation's origins as a British colony with foundational attempts to create a better Britain. British settlers introduced Shakespeare's birds, trees and flowers and game animals such as deer, rabbits, ducks and trout. This was the raw material for the hunting, shooting and fishing fraternities. Life for the early Pākehā settlers involved manual outdoor work in a rugged physical environment where a risky workplace, isolation and remote rural communities were daily realities. In addition, the sports and pastimes of the home country, like rugby, cricket, netball, rowing, tennis, aquatics and athletics were established, became popular and were taught in the schools. The All Blacks rugby team is the highest profile sporting team in the country and represents a unique combination of British and Māori values, with each match commencing with the team performing a Māori dance, the haka.

Education was highly valued by the early settlers, who quickly established schools with the conservative traditionalism of the home country. Following international trends, curricula later became more humanistic, with child and experience-centred pedagogy. In terms of physical education the curriculum for many years mimicked British models, rather than developing something unique and distinctive to its local context, particularly in terms of its emerging biculturalism. In more recent times this has changed to a hybrid with uniquely Aotearoa-New Zealand perspectives (with the echo of Britain growing ever fainter). How then did the unique Health and Physical Education curriculum of Aotearoa-New Zealand come into being? How did the curriculum reform bring together both innovative approaches that might be thought of as Western concepts (such as a socio-ecological perspective and a focus on community health and wellbeing) and an indigenous focus on hauora? And what does this mean for teachers and students in practice?

In an attempt to provide answers to these questions we (the authors of this chapter) audio-taped a conversation, with Brian primarily taking the role of interviewer and provocateur and Mike as the interviewee. Brian has worked in outdoor and physical education in Australia for many years and has travelled extensively throughout Aotearoa-New Zealand. Mike, on the other hand, has a long history of working in physical education in Aotearoa-New Zealand, as a teacher, academic and participant in the curriculum reform process. The excerpts that follow were

based on four broad questions used in the interview (which, perhaps ironically, was recorded in Denmark, where both of the authors were attending a conference). The framing questions were as follows: What motivated the curriculum reform? What resistance was encountered? What processes were used to increase the likelihood of its success? How have the curriculum reforms been received in practice? Post interview, and after the initial transcripts had been checked, additional writing and editing work was done to check accuracy, provide detail and to improve the readability of the excerpts.

What Motivated the Curriculum Reform?

BW (Brian Wattchow): Mike, we want to talk about the reforms to the New Zealand Health and Physical Education curriculum and, in particular, how it came to incorporate a socio-ecological perspective. But first it would be helpful to paint a bit of a picture of the political climate in which the reforms took place. What do you recollect about those times?

MB (Mike Boyes): I think the political foundations of the reforms began years ago. There was a steady trend for Western societies to withdraw from state control and overt welfare provision, towards embracing neoliberal thinking and global capitalism. In New Zealand the Lange Labour government of 1984 totally embraced neoliberalism and the importance of the free market. This was led by Minister of Finance Roger Douglas and known as 'Rogernomics'. He idealised the unbridled marketplace and an unregulated economy and thought that government infrastructure could be arranged this way. His ideas were well motivated to reduce inflation, bring down national debt and increase economic growth, but had unfortunate side effects. Subsequently centralised and local government was reduced drastically and outsourced to competing private providers where possible. The governments that followed watered back some of the extremes of raw economics but still embraced neoliberal economic policies.

Changes to New Zealand's education system commenced about the same time. The centralised Department of Education with the mandate of education as a public good was disbanded in favour of a streamlined Ministry of Education that served the minister. Schools were organised as competitors in the marketplace. They were set up as self-managing with community-based Boards of Trustees. They were seen as separate cost centres responsible to the Ministry of Education through accountability for funding. So while education was seen as a market, the government operated a monopoly, requiring highly specified outputs developed for each key learning area contained within a national curriculum. I think there was quite a move towards vocational training, which trickled down from being quite specific at tertiary level to more general at primary-school level.

I think teaching changed as well. The expectation of a post-modern teacher was more about imparting industry-specified skills to a selected client group driven by

individualism and self-interest and costing the state as little as possible. There is no doubt in my mind that the curriculum documents were intended to establish a direct relationship between the neoliberal philosophies of the government, educational objectives and curriculum content. The key drivers were the politicians, although they recognised that if teachers and others were not taken on board there would be slippage between curriculum and practice. For instance, when teachers resisted and carried out business as usual, they were accused of provider capture and attempts were made to marginalise their influence.

I think the problem for state control is that in post-modern society the relationship between policy and practice is contested and in a constant state of flux. Hence the importance of collaborative relationships between politicians, professional associations, academics and parents, but with a heavy government hand. Things changed too with the election of new governments. In 1993 the Bolger government took the extreme Rogernomic right-wing economic policies and shifted them to the left, focused on Tony Blair's Third Way, a knowledge economy and the importance of human capital. It opened the door to the recognition of broader socio-ecological factors in education. It was about this time that the NZ Curriculum Review began.

I think the other strong motivation to change actually came from within the physical education profession itself. During prior years, dominant paradigms embraced the scientific and biophysical bases like anatomy, exercise physiology, exercise prescription and the like, with a focus on physical fitness and sports skills. The thinking was being challenged by some influential folk like academics and teacher educators Ian Culpan, Bruce Ross and Bevan Grant, who embraced a socio-critical approach with recognition that the body operated in a social context. I think they saw that bio-science was important but only part of the picture.

In the new curriculum, Health and Physical Education were lumped together and having to look at Physical Education from the perspective of health, as compared to sporting performance, meant that we had to reappraise physical education from a broader perspective. So the dominant paradigm was challenged by the socio-critical approach, which acknowledged that health operated within a social context and hence the interrelatedness of the physical, social, mental and emotional nature of wellbeing.

BW: Mike, you have provided an interesting political background of those times. It sounds like a very conservative environment, but also a time when some were challenging the philosophies behind those political beliefs. How did this translate into the kind of change that is embodied in the alternative philosophy of the PE curriculum reforms? How was that change initiated?

MB: Health and physical wellbeing was identified as one of seven key learning areas within the New Zealand curriculum framework. The area was to encapsulate health education, physical education and aspects of home economics, and at times these initially appeared to be uneasy bedfellows. The name physical education even disappeared from the title. In 1995 the Ministry of Education hand-picked an expert advisory group of Health and Physical Education professionals and other stakeholders. They were asked to establish a framework for the development of the

curriculum that was to integrate the three areas, be based on sound research and best practice, reflect the principles of the curriculum framework and acknowledge the values, learning styles and needs of students.

Two principal writers – Ian Culpan from PE and Gillian Tasker from Health, both academics in Colleges of Education – were contracted to develop the curriculum. They gathered a team of about 15 writers through the country, each of whom had an advisory group. So the spread was fairly wide and they were able to make good contact with the grassroots. The regional writers met regularly with the principal writers, who constructed the document. So this was quite a good bottom-up process that probably had something to do with the subsequent derailment of the neoliberal agenda. The writers reported back to the advisory group at regular intervals and there was another group set up by the Ministry to obtain independent advice, some of which I know about.

BW: What were the most significant changes in the new curriculum compared to the previous version?

MB: Some of the changes came through the neoliberal agenda and a focus away from content towards outcomes, and I guess I've talked about those. With our area itself, the key change was to shift physical education from a technocratic scientific base towards a more socio-critical pedagogy that was clearly at odds with the government's market ethos of education. In effect the body was viewed less as a commodity of production that needed to be kept in peak condition, and more as the body in society that was aware of the power structures and social and economic forces that underpin the wellbeing of individuals and society. This didn't mean that the scientific bases were excluded, because they were strongly still part of the question. But there were growing numbers of people with different beliefs and paradigms that could challenge the dominant bio-physical ideologies. It meant that students were encouraged to engage in critical thinking about the movement culture of society and take informed action on key issues.

The other obvious change was the merging of the three areas of physical education, health education and the nutritional aspects of home economics. Originally it almost felt as if physical education was fighting for its life, as the new area was called health and physical wellbeing. To some of us this almost seemed like health and more health. To our relief, after intense lobbying we were able to get the words physical education back in, instead of physical wellbeing. But on reflection, this combination of health and PE was one of the driving forces for the embrace of socio-ecological principles. We had to think wider about how physical education could be infused with health. It was apparent very early on that a focus on sport was not going to sit particularly well with a health approach. The whole notion of wellbeing linked far more to a socio-cultural focus on physical activity in a more general sense than a focus on elite sports performance.

BW: When I first encountered the new curriculum documentation in the early 2000s several things struck me as being highly distinctive. I thought the recognition of Māori concepts was very significant. And the inclusion of a strong socio-ecological

perspective struck me as highly innovative. I hadn't seen that in formal education policy anywhere before, let alone in a curriculum document for Health and Physical Education. How did socio-ecological principles come to play such a significant role?

MB: Most socio-ecological models include a number of layers, such as the individual, social and physical environments, community and state. Bronfenbrenner highlighted the complexity and multidimensionality of environments and how relationships between people and their environments were dynamic. He also talked about influence from top-down, bottom-up and interactive effects between the layers. These ideas can be seen in the curriculum in a number of ways.

The socio-critical intent was infused throughout with the underlying concepts of Hauora (overall wellbeing), attitudes and values, health promotion and the socio-ecological perspective coming through strongly. In practice these concepts were developed through the four strands of personal health and physical development; movement concepts and motor skills; relationships with other people; and healthy communities and environments. Strands 1 and 2 focus more on the individual and Strands 3 and 4 involve recognition of social and natural environments and communities. The key areas of learning were mental health, sexuality education, food and nutrition, body care and physical safety, physical activity, sports studies and outdoor education.

There was a requirement that schools address all of the strands and not just construct a local curriculum based on strand two. In order to do justice to all of the strands a teacher had to engage in the interrelatedness of physical, social, mental and emotional aspects of wellbeing. While skill learning was still valued, there was also an expectation that the learning area would critique sport, play, exercise and physical activity within individuals and society, although it was the latter aspects that would prove to be the most challenging for teachers to implement. Ian Culpan and others have written a number of articles that develop and refine the implementation of a critical pedagogy.[2]

In addition you can see a socio-ecological process of top-down and bottom-up development and implementation of the curriculum. State management is clearly top down and the grassroots involvement of the physical and health educators was more bottom up. The principal writers had a clear vision of what they wanted and where they wanted to go. But they were certainly listening carefully to whether their approach was going to work and if it was to be embraced and what should be in the document to reflect those things. That was an ongoing process and I think that led to successful implementation in the end.

If you take time with a truly consultative process of bottom up and top down then I think you can get reform through pretty quickly. With a top-down approach it hits resistance, takes twice the time, three times the time. So I think the approach here was excellent … in some ways that process was a reflection of the socio-ecological model in itself. These guys were walking the talk. They believed in the

[2] See Gillespie and Culpan (2000) and Culpan and Bruce (2007).

socio-ecological approach and they were also demonstrating it. They were involving individuals, communities, social groups and listening to what people wanted to do.

BW: Mike, you also mentioned the Māori principle of hauora. As I said before, I was very struck by the presence and status of Māori principles in the curriculum. How did that come about? How did the curriculum reform process embrace Māori ideas and values?

MB: This was an interesting area, as Māori were short-changed in some ways and recognised in others. There is a long history of documented Māori games and pastimes dating from Elsdon Best's work in the early 1900s. Philip Smithells, who was an early NZ icon of physical education, collected a lot of material and published a series of articles in the *Education Gazette* in the 1940s. Te Reo Kori [aspects of Māori movement] became a significant component of the prior-1987 physical education syllabus. Some solid teaching resources were produced and teacher development courses ran on a frequent basis. Groups of practitioners throughout the country and the curriculum writers clearly saw Te Reo Kori as a key learning area and this was endorsed by a large meeting of health and physical educators who blessed the final draft of the curriculum before it was forwarded to the Ministry of Education. Sadly the politicians of the day asked that its prominence be reduced and to remove it from the list of learning areas. This was scandalous given the Treaty of Waitangi and the history of Te Reo Kori.

Puzzlingly the politicians agreed that Hauora (a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing) could be retained as a guiding principle. In the latest curriculum Hauora has been watered back, with the dimensions identified but not elaborated on, but importantly it is still there. There is also a Māori-language version of the 2007 curriculum called Te Matautanga o Aotearoa. There are subtle changes to the strands: Strand 1 Waiora – personal health and development; Strand 2 Koiri – movement concepts and motor skills; Strand 3 – Tangata – people and relationships; and Strand 4 Taiao – health and the natural environment. The original Te Reo Kori resources are still alive and well in practice and are important tools in most Physical Education teachers' repertoires.

BW: Were Māori writers involved in this curriculum process? Were they the driving force behind these ideas being included?

MB: There were certainly Māori writers involved and totally supportive of this approach, but interestingly it went through a bit of a debate amongst Māoridom. Some believed that Māori cultural knowledge was a taonga, which is a treasure, and to be guarded and possibly managed only by Māori. Others believed that it should be integrated into wider society – aspects of it – without losing its value as a treasure. So there was a bit of debate in Māoridom about who could use Māori knowledge and protocol and who shouldn't. That is a debate that still exists. But generally speaking there was considerable Māori input to inform the development of Hauora.

What Resistance Was Encountered?

BW: Mike, most reform processes in society face considerable resistance from the status quo. I forget who said it, but there is an understanding that most reforms go through a process of initial ridicule and rejection from those in positions of power and authority before finally becoming accepted by the community. Was resistance to the curriculum reform process encountered and how was it dealt with?

MB: There was always an inherent tension in the way the curriculum was developed, with the strong government agenda linked to a market economy on one hand, counterbalanced with the critical analysis of physical education teachers, schools and stakeholders on the other. The teaching profession was determined to be central to the development of the curriculum and had the upper hand in the writing process, as the curriculum writers were from the profession. They were able to infuse the document with socio-ecological philosophies in addition to the framework of hauora. But this was by no means a peaceful process within the profession itself. The key debates were between the advocates of the biophysical approach, who valued fitness and skill development, and those determined to elevate the importance of critical socio-cultural perspectives. The latter made ground, but devotees of the former are still alive and well today.

For instance, the Sport and Recreation Commission was very keen to see that sport was totally what Physical Education was all about. So they saw the socio-ecological approach as a watering down and a weakening of the sport lobby. They predicted dire consequences down the line; that New Zealand's prowess as a sporting nation would be lost. Once they realised the dominance was lost we saw the beginnings of things like the Kiwi Sport program, where the Commission funded external people and clubs to come into the schools with a sports coaching program. Sadly in some schools these became the focus of the Physical Education program. In other schools they were run in partnership, or more commonly the Physical Education teachers picked them up as useful resources that they would integrate into their teaching.

Once the draft document was released a formal consultation phase began, where a wide range of groups and stakeholders could provide feedback to the Ministry of Education. From memory there was strong support from the field. I think the strongest critic was the Education Forum, which was a right-wing group linked to the New Zealand Business Roundtable. They claimed there was a hidden agenda to change New Zealand society and they were probably right. They were dead against educating for change and supportive of education for cultural replication. They were also keen to get rid of Strand C: Relationships with Other People, and to restrict the focus of the document.

For whatever reason, their arguments did not carry into practice. Perhaps the public's resistance to Rogernomics was influential. There was also resistance and discussion within Māoridom about the appropriateness of Hauora. Some of the concerns were about tokenism and others were whether Hauora was the most appropriate concept. Clearly Te Reo Kori embraced physical education and Hauora

was seen to embrace health. There was concern that Hauora was to be employed outside of its Māori context and not linked to a Māori world view. The Ministry of Education, probably influenced by the minister of the day, ensured Te Reo Kori did not hit the light of day. In the 2007 revision, Hauora is watered back even more, as the neoliberal state strikes back.

What Processes Were Used to Increase the Likelihood of Its Success?

BW: Mike, you have told us about how this remarkable curriculum reform was initiated by some quite radical ideas about Health and Physical Education and how the writing of the curriculum was informed by stakeholders from across New Zealand. It really does seem to reflect the kind of bi-cultural foundations of Aotearoa-New Zealand society. Also, you have talked about the kind of resistance encountered. Given this resistance, what strategies and processes were used to increase the likelihood of success?

MB: There was actually a reasonably robust process used in the implementation. There was lots of consultation and the writing process itself created a sense of ownership in the regions. The release of the document was delayed because of the pace and workload created by the release of some of the other curriculum documents and the Health and Physical Education document was held back until the social studies curriculum had been implemented. While it was frustrating at the time, Health and Physical Education hit the schools when they were more able to deal with it.

The draft was released and trialled extensively. There was a lot of resource development and facilitator training that went on. Feedback was collated before shaping and gazetting of the final document. It has been shown time and again that teacher professional development is crucial to the roll-out of a curriculum. I believe you have to win the hearts and minds of the workforce and share ownership, otherwise you get business as usual.

How Have the Curriculum Reforms Been Received in Practice?

BW: Finally, Mike, can you describe how the reforms to the curriculum documentation have been received and how they have changed how Health and Physical Education has been taught in Aotearoa-New Zealand schools.

MB: I think the reforms were received with enthusiasm, especially by those who understood the critical and socio-ecological approaches. These were tricky concepts

to get to grips with, especially the socio-ecological model and how you actually implemented it. I'm not sure it has ever been well understood and implemented. Hauora was problematic in everyday practice too, and many continued to use the Te Reo Kori resources for day-to-day teaching. The critical pedagogy also needed ongoing teacher education. Probably those best served were the new graduates from the Health and Physical Education teacher education programs, where they had the benefits of immersion in the concepts and graduated with a range of strategies to implement them. Teachers in service didn't have the same opportunities.

After 4 or 5 years of the new syllabus, teachers were beginning to come to grips with it. Certainly I saw some great things taking place in workshops at the Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ) annual conferences. Then the government decided to implement a new curriculum, so the extensive 1999 curriculum was replaced with two pages on Health and Physical Education in the 2007 curriculum. Hauora was watered back further by the removal of mention of the four components, and this created quite a backlash. Allan Ovens, the current president of PENZ, believes the qualifications framework set by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority works against a socio-critical perspective. He argues persuasively that physical education shapes and is shaped by the assessment structures.[3] Hence teachers' subjectivities are shaped in ways that fit the neoliberal agenda.

I think the 1997 document was a forward-thinking document, ahead of its time. While it is no longer the official syllabus, it is still a persuasive philosophy. Because the 2007 syllabus could be regarded as flimsy on detail and understanding of children, the 1997 syllabus and the resources developed to support it are still powerful influences on practice. No doubt, however, the influence of the politicians in our present centre-right government will continue to have an opposing effect.

BW: The processes of curriculum reform inevitably involves managing change amongst professionals and in communities such as schools. What skills do you think teachers and administrators need to be able to manage the politics and processes of change in a curriculum, or policy, initiative like this one?

MB: There is no doubt in my mind that the 1997 Health and Physical Education syllabus with its socio-ecological approach and the embrace of a critical pedagogy was a very effective philosophy to enable people to understand and cope with change. Issues of social justice, like Freire's work, were prevalent in educational writing. These socio-ecological perspectives embrace the interdependence of individuals and their social and natural environments. They can expose the hidden, covert and null curricula and encourage the development of an understanding of the influences of power and the questioning of whose knowledge rather than what knowledge? I think there are also strong links to be made to strands in the social studies curriculum, such as how people can participate as critical, active, informed and responsible citizens. The Education for Sustainability Guidelines also adopt a critical socio-ecological approach.

[3] See Ovens (2010).

BW: It sounds like the socio-ecological model in the new curriculum has provided a tremendous resource and range of possibilities for teachers. It seems to have been motivated by what needed to change in practice and developed an effective strategy to achieve that, rather than impose a kind of conceptual model and then try to enforce that with teachers. It seems to have been able to keep sound elements from previous versions of the curriculum, while developing a more significant vision for the present and the future. Is that a fair summary?

MB: I think the socio-ecological approach allows you to set completely different objectives, provided you still have your base of human movement. You can set social, community or health objectives that before you would not have been able to do. In fact the end point that had once been the biophysical body expands to become a much wider range of outcomes. You could go a number of ways. I think physical activity and health are still strongly underpinned in practice, otherwise it becomes like Peking duck without the duck!

Conclusions

A socio-ecological perspective works across many layers and levels. But it also works through time, from the past, in the present and into the future. Being able to influence and change policy is a vital component of working for positive change on the broader scale and across a longer timeframe. Initiatives that have only a few supporters can be very hard to sustain if they are not accepted by larger social networks both within the community and even within government. As can be seen in this case study, the most fundamental ideas that support curricula can become contested by the advocates of a newer socio-critical and socio-ecological approach. In this case the advocates of change came up against the dominant and entrenched supporters of a biophysical or bio-medical model for sport and physical education. According to Sparkes (1991, p. 103), such 'paradigm wars' were a feature of physical education discourse of the 1980s.

> At a most fundamental level different paradigms provide a particular set of lenses for seeing the world and making sense of it in different ways. They act to shape how we think and act because for the most part we are not even aware that we are wearing any particular sets of lenses. (Sparkes, cited in Macdonald 2002, p. 168)

Particular views, beliefs and practices relating to a paradigmatic structuring of knowledge become institutionalised, as they had in the older curriculum versions of Physical Education for the development of fitness and sport skills. Sparkes (1991, p. 107) has argued that it becomes possible for the nature of paradigmatic influence to be continually reproduced as newcomers, like trainee or early-career teachers, are initiated into specific sets of assumptions, both overtly and covertly. He argues these lead to a 'blind allegiance to a specific worldview and its concomitant methodologies'. Even so, one of the truly compelling and inspirational outcomes of the process of curriculum reform we have documented here is that the best of the

old has been able to be carried forward and blended with a newer vision for Health and Physical Education. Reform does not necessarily require total replacement. What can be seen in this example is reconciliation between the old and the new. An understanding of the biophysical elements of human movement continues to be important, but the reformed curricula provide a far richer context for that knowledge to contribute to a more significant set of educational objectives.

This case study provides an example of how an agenda for educational and social reform can work. The strategies employed by the reformers may not be the 'perfect fit' for every situation, but we feel that many of the elements presented here will be of value to others considering, or involved in, the processes of educational reform and renewal. The top-down/bottom-up approach is an effective social mechanism for gaining the best perspectives of curriculum specialists, the attention of policy makers, and for recognising the contributions of practitioner expertise and the reality of local conditions. Rather than a divide, these different stakeholders represent points along a continuum, with all parties working for the benefit of learners, educators, schools, communities and ultimately the nation. The timeframe for meaningful and lasting change is often longer than anticipated.

Curriculum development is always an ongoing work in progress. It is iterative. Change may be sweeping or it may be incremental and occur over generations of curriculum reform. Effective advocacy amongst key stakeholders and winning the 'hearts and minds' of all is crucial. Providing ongoing support and resources as change influences the daily lives of practitioners is a requirement if the reform agenda is to be accepted and make a real-world difference. It is the socio-ecological perspective – with a focus on the four foundational concepts of lived experience, place, experiential pedagogies, agency and participation – and in this Aotearoa-New Zealand example it is also the infusion of Māori knowledge and values that has created such a distinctive version of Health and Physical Education. Finally, it is a curriculum that requires acceptance and ownership on the part of teachers and learners who have been granted the cultural licence to reconnect with their communities. This will be the final validation of this important policy initiative.

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