

DEVELOPMENTS IN A POSTMODERN RECONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION?

Paper presented at AARE Annual Conference
University of Newcastle, 1994

EILEEN SEDUNARY
University of Newcastle

Introduction

One of the most significant and potentially far-reaching developments in school education in Australia at present is the growing concern for competency-based education and training. Spawned from the corporate alliance of government, business and unions and adopted initially in vocational training, the Australian formulation of competency-based education and training was advanced by the Finn Review of 1991 and elaborated in the Carmichael and Mayer Reports of 1992. In school education, the Finn/Mayer construction of a set of generic, employment-related Key Competencies has entered the lexicon and has become a major point of reference for a range of actual and proposed reforms at both state and commonwealth levels. Though intended first and foremost as the cross-curriculum core of all post-compulsory studies, the push for Key Competencies has also been incorporated into official thinking about and planning for the compulsory years. So in contrast, say, with the development of National Vocational Qualifications in England, the Key Competencies agenda transcends the traditional divide between 'academic' or 'general' education and vocational education. Generic preparation for employment is to be a basic and essential condition of all school education, a proposition that involves new, more comprehensive meanings of vocation and vocational education. The old idea of vocation denoted a particular occupational category or calling - lifelong service and identity determined and circumscribed by conditions such as class and gender location, ascribed ability, and workforce parameters. Some recent innovations notwithstanding, school education in Australia has long been organized in ways that broadly reflect and reproduce that demarcation of social roles, an organization underpinned by the historic division of mental and manual labour. Australia's Key Competencies schema breaks from this old idea of vocation, projecting a generalised orientation to work: life service and identity become more abstract qualities, detached from particular talent, class/gender position or specific job requirements, and marked by flexibility and adaptability. School education is to be modified to reflect and reproduce the more abstracted, undifferentiated construction of the person as worker-citizen, a re-organization that - critically - blurs the division of mental and manual labour. The Key Competencies agenda,

then, heralds a significant departure in the purposes, content and even structure of school education in Australia. As such, it constitutes a more thoroughgoing, distinctively Australian expression of the 'new vocationalism' that is gaining momentum in English-speaking countries.

This development has not been without its critics. From conservatives has come a defence of the integrity of the traditional subjects and the social and vocational benefits of a liberal education. The more sustained criticism, though, has come from left-leaning progressive thinkers. The main tendencies here have been to identify those elements that represent a resurgence of older, often discredited practices like behaviourism and assessment-led education, to argue that such reform of the post compulsory years may exacerbate existing social

inequalities, to question the claims of generic usage in future workplaces of current notions of competence, and to point out the clear links between the Key Competencies movement and broader New Right and economic rationalist approaches to social management dominant since the 1980s. Certainly, from both sides, these are valid and important critical perspectives. But what is notable about these critical perspectives is that - even while Australia's new vocationalism signifies radical (and, to a certain extent, unknowable) change in school education in the sense I have outlined above - they assimilate this movement to pre-existing interpretive categories, thereby effectively naturalizing it and reducing possibilities of fully recognizing and confronting its radical character. Ironically, such critical perspectives provide a counterpoise to, rather than a basis for interrogation of, the naturalizing discourse of the advocates of the new vocationalism. Contentions that the Key Competencies are a necessary catching up with 'world's best practices' (aligning education with the logic of globalization), that the Key Competencies comprise a 'commonsense' approach to preparing young people for the changing demands of employment, or that the Key Competencies are 'essential' for further education and adult life more generally, remain in the air - eluding critical leverage.

A particular, compelling variant of this naturalizing discourse is the assertion that the Key Competencies project, as a skills-based slant on existing curricula, necessarily entails classroom approaches that apply long held ideas about effective and socially constructive teaching and learning. Hence Ann Borthwick of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training claims with confidence: 'The key competencies may involve some change of emphasis in schooling ... but they are neither new nor alien to progressive thinking in education..... Those who care about general education and who have consistently sought to protect the broader purposes of schooling from the incursions of instrumentalism have reason to take heart'. This kind of assertion finds its mark with many otherwise ambivalent teachers, at least in part because the new vocationalism does embrace and give new direction

and legitimacy to many of the core principles and practices of the progressive tradition. The fact that the new vocationalism shares basic facets of educational thinking with progressive education should, I believe, be a matter of critical interest in our concern to grasp the character and consequences of the present development, and yet it has not been adequately acknowledged much less analysed by Australian critics thus far. In this country, perhaps because elements of radical progressive education have already become the new orthodoxy in prior moves (often by reformist Labor governments) to centralised curriculum reform and control, its incorporation in the new vocationalism seems to be taken for granted.

This paper takes up this point of interest. My concern is to examine and interpret the ideological and practical convergence of two ostensibly contrasting developments in late twentieth century Australian education - the progressive/radical education movement that took hold in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the present new vocationalism. Now, at a glance, recent radical education and the new vocationalism would appear to be strange bedfellows, contradictory rather than complementary in their character and intentions - and to a significant extent this is true. For example, as shall be described shortly, the radical education movement was grass roots in its origins and sought to free schooling for the dictates of centralised authority. The new vocationalism, on the other hand, has been a top down initiative and seeks to impose a new form of centralised prescription and accountability. In fact, it could be said that the new vocationalism is taking away some of the residual autonomy won for

schooling by the radical education movement and that it indicates the ultimate demise of the radical education movement. Yet, extrapolating from Finn and Mayer, we find that the new vocationalism actually espouses principles reminiscent of recent radical education: equality of access, diversity of substance and method, indifference to subject divisions, emphasis on skills rather than set content, inquiry and performance rather than passive acquisition and regurgitation of knowledge, co-operative rather than competitive learning, and concern with relevance and motivation. Indeed, keeping in mind that the Mayer Committee defines the key competencies as 'mindful, thoughtful capabilities' rather than trained behaviours, essential not only for employment but for further education and adult life more generally, the new vocationalism seems, at least in certain respects, to coincide with and provide affirmation of radical education's hopes for rounded, intellectually adept learners who are 'empowered' by their education.

One explanatory response to this situation would be to see the congruence in relatively straightforward terms, as a pragmatic co-option by the new vocationalism of the ambiguous nature and potentialities of radical education. This has been the broad position taken by some writers in England who have presented very useful

insights into the contradictory links between radical education and the new directions in vocational education that came with the transition to a neo-conservative economic and political regime in that country. One writer, for example, contends that, ultimately, the radical progressivism of the 1960s and 1970s has become reduced to useful pedagogic 'technique' in England's new vocationalism. These accounts certainly provide valuable recognition and analyses of themes common to recent radical education and the contemporary emphasis on the vocational in school education, themes that find ready comparison in the Australian scene. But, while I am not positioned to evaluate their reasoning with reference to England today, I believe that such a one-dimensional explanation is inadequate for a full understanding of the incidence of common motifs in recent radical education and the more comprehensive new vocationalism in Australia.

The springboard for this enquiry is what I consider to be the historically novel character of both recent radical education and the new vocationalism. As I want to show, both of these events need to be understood as radical movements in Australian school education. More particularly, I argue that their radicalism is two-edged or, as I put it, Janus-faced: looking back, in growing out of, while taking their departure from, prior conditions and traditions; and looking beyond, in framing their aspirations and senses of practical possibility in terms of key, substantively newer conditions of our life-world. Of course, radical change in Australian school education (in the limited sense of significant departure from the past) is not in itself unusual in recent times. The movement to mass, comprehensive secondary schooling in the 1950s and early 1960s, for instance, was undoubtedly a radical shift relative to earlier arrangements. But the ambiguous, Janus-faced radicalism of recent radical education and the new vocationalism would seem to evidence their connectedness with some deeper, contextual turning point, as if both are symptomatic of and caught up in complex currents of profound change. So accounting for the more thoroughgoing and ambiguous radicalism of these two distinct movements requires, I think, an interpretive approach that not only attends to their contextual grounding but also treats as a matter of inquiry the forces and processes of contextual change in the latter half of the twentieth century. From this overarching perspective, I believe, it becomes more possible to characterize and make sense of events that would appear, historically, to be both contradictory and analogous. But because, on the one hand, the last four decades or so have been ones of momentous

change in Australia as elsewhere in the western world, and, on the other, we are at present grappling with how to comprehend and depict that change in relation to the larger sweep of history, such relatively recent developments in education must be seen as part of a set of trends and occurrences that we are still attempting to interpret. The approach of this paper, then, is necessarily exploratory.

The paper has two main parts. In the first, the distinctively radical character of both recent radical education and the new vocationalism is identified and discussed. In the second, a preliminary excursion into contextually-based interpretation is made through consideration of the illuminative potential of the concept of settlement. The paper concludes with the contention that certain interpretive perspectives canvassing the notion of postmodernity promise fuller critical insight into the incidence and implications of the Janus-faced radicalism of recent radical education and the new vocationalism in Australia.

The Radicalism of Radical Education and the New Vocationalism

While partly derivative of existing reformist traditions like the New Education and Deweyan progressivism, the impulse to educational change that gained influence in Australia in the late 1960s and early 1970s can be distinguished as a separate, heterogenous movement that was a product or expression of its times. Though it varied in emphasis and impact across the states (Victoria made the running), two related features stand out: it disarmed the older bureaucratic management of schooling (particularly that of the centralised state systems) and pursued substantial curriculum reform. In contrast with the patterns of earlier times, the drive for change came only to a limited degree from experts and administrators. Major protagonists were the now more professionally self-conscious and militant teaching force, particularly at the post-primary level, and - to lesser extent - the increasingly vigilant and politically organized parents of school children. While the projects of teachers and parents were not the same, their common interests were expressed in the central demand for forms of school autonomy in curriculum and assessment matters. This shift in the dynamics of educational reform was itself one indicator of the very conditions in Australia precipitating the movement: significant demographic change altering the size, composition and aspirations of school populations; economic prosperity and structural change which directed attention to education as both the source of human capital and the lever for social mobility; the growth in size and occupational and political clout of a well educated employee class, including teachers and many parents; and dramatic sea-change in cultural values, due in part to the now greater reach and moral power of the mass media, and the lifestyle preferences of the new educated constituency. Caught up in these conditions, the state entered into the movement for educational reform in a twofold way. On the one hand, it responded to and broadly contained the movement by adopting some of its rhetoric and making significant concessions. On the other, the state had its own stake in educational reform. Existing educational structures and provision needed to be revised so as to augment the supply of intellectually trained people now required by industry and public instrumentalities; at the same time, the role of education in social management needed to be reformulated so as to incorporate and direct the currents of the new times. Hence the state often took the lead in

determining the institutional basis and articulating the parameters of educational reform.

This movement for educational reform was radical in dual senses. In the first place, it had an overtly political character in that it was

marked by an orientation to equality and participation. Equality at this point meant not only achieving parity of education provision regardless of the socio-economic circumstances of families. It also meant rejection of the prevailing ideology of equality of opportunity that was tied to a purportedly neutral, meritocratic system hoisted on the old, class-related division of mental and manual labour. The quest instead was for equality of access to a biographically meaningful and socially advantageous education encounter, which implied shifting to another source or paradigm of curriculum authority. Participation meant a rejection of the longstanding hierarchical and/or exclusive structures of governance and decision-making in favour of more co-operative and /or democratic modes of operation. (For teachers, while participation meant taking the initiative in curriculum design, thereby making more complex their mental labour, this was largely put as a matter of students' needs; for parents, it meant moving beyond the subsidiary manual labour of working bees and tuckshop duty to the mental labour of defending educational access.) Within the terms just outlined, the orientation to equality and participation was politically retrospective. It was connected to and drew its principles from existing political traditions (both liberal and socialist), particularly the politics of the existing class framework. In the sense that it placed itself in opposition to and sought to reconstruct entrenched imbalances of wealth, power and opportunity, it was radical. Indeed, it may be likened to and seen as continuous with the radical tradition in education that had originated in the nineteenth century, more in Britain than Australia. To put it another way, in its overtly political character, the radicalism of the movement for educational reform was backward- looking, deriving its motivation and its objects from the perceptions and edifices of a world that was already subject to change.

But, treading the watershed of change, this movement for educational reform also exhibited a different, more forward-looking radicalism. The orientation to equality and participation itself was also characterized by a liberatory impulse that was expressed in the valuing of autonomy: emancipation from the old was not to be superseded by newer systems of conformity. Radical teachers in Victoria, for instance, disputed the customary right of the university to determine the content and assessment of the senior curriculum, arguing not only that this arrangement discriminated against working class students but also that it imposed now unacceptable limits on the professional discretion of teachers. They sought not another, more benign centralized configuration of curriculum directives, but rather proclaimed the

necessity of school-based curriculum and assessment and, for a time, demanded that university entrance be decided by ballot. As this Victorian example begins to show, this liberatory impulse meant breaking from time-honoured categories of authority and organisation; it also meant broaching new conceptions of time and space. And an implicit theme in this liberatory drive was a turning away from the mental/manual division embodied in the traditional school subjects to the 'real world' in its phenomenal presentation as the framing logic and source for learning. Thus, like comparable developments in the United States and Britain, the hallmarks of the movement for educational reform were: student-centred pedagogy (the student's milieu and interests become the basis for 'negotiating' with the teacher the content, pacing and execution of learning); diversity (equality of access and teacher/student participation in curriculum decision-making entail differential programs); integrated curriculum (the distinctive and time-worn claims of the conventional subject disciplines are overridden by the more immediate relevance of the topic or theme); the open classroom (the barriers of school walls and timetables are dismantled, the isolated subject specialist merges into

team teaching, students' minds and bodies can move freely); and an inclination to synthetic community (the actual structure and locational character of the surrounding community intrudes minimally - the student grouping itself forms a 'pastoral' or 'home' base as well as a co-operative community of learners, while the surrounding community itself becomes a detached resource to be selectively interacted with and investigated). The point here is that, in its liberatory impulse, the radicalism of this reform movement consisted not only of a repudiation of the social and cultural ramifications of existing practices, it also entailed moving beyond (rather than redirecting) existing frameworks of possibility. It deconstructed the existential categories that had hitherto circumscribed schooling and cast alternative practices in an historically novel, unshackled setting.

The Karmel Report of 1973 and the subsequent establishment of the Schools Commission were primary examples (at the commonwealth level, following the election of the Whitlam Labor Government) of the state entering into and harnessing this Janus-faced radicalism of the movement for education reform. In its recommendations on policies for new commonwealth funding for schools, the Karmel Report incorporated radical ideas in its valuing of equality, devolution of responsibility, diversity, community involvement and recurrent education. It placed these values within a view of society where popular involvement in education would be a component of national reconstruction, in being a basis for redistributive social justice, community life and a continuous resource for individual formation. As these Labor initiatives illustrated, the radical education movement was ultimately reliant on the state for the legitimation and system-wide realization of its objectives, partial or selective though that may have been.

Perhaps inevitably, then, by the mid 1970s the grass roots drive of the radical education movement was dissipating, diffused to some extent by virtue of the participation of activists in state reform programs. At the same time, with the onset of declining economic conditions, the relatively unworked out character of the radical education movement was susceptible to a 'standards' backlash and the barbs of blame for growing rates of youth unemployment.

Meanwhile, the state could countenance the now more radical relative autonomy of schooling, and the comparatively unassigned person-citizen it implied, only temporarily. By the late 1970s, the Williams Report, for instance, foreshadowed things to come when it censured school curricula and teachers as being too removed from the 'world of work' and claimed that students had neither the kinds of skills nor the appropriate attitudes required for them to properly fit the rigours of employment. But whereas the Williams Report decried progressive practices and favoured a re-assertion of traditional content and methods, a wholesale return to the past was not possible. One reason for this was that fundamental principles of the radical education movement had entered the culture and organizational logic of Australian schooling. Well into the 1980s in each of the states, school based curriculum development had become a major condition of systemic regulation (though this was less the case for the senior years where the grip of the universities was shaken but still firm). And the progressive paradigm was upheld, and re-articulated in the shifting circumstances, in the various programs and reports of the Schools Commission. The other reason was that there was a growing belief that Australia's dramatically changing social and economic milieu required educational responses that left behind conventions more suited to earlier conditions. Thus the 1985 Report of the Quality of Education Review Committee paid attention to 'the changing context' in making its recommendations for a new stage of commonwealth-led reform in school education, recommendations that included outcomes-based accountability

focused on certain cross-curriculum 'competences'. Significantly, too, in its swansong report in 1987, the Schools Commission married progressive ideas in curriculum and pedagogy with the call for commonwealth-determined directives and accountability, while it supported the re-orienting of our thinking about school education in terms of an enterprising 'productive culture'. The scene was set, then, for the emergence of the new vocationalism, a state intervention in school education that was positioned to adopt remnants of the radical education movement, partly because much of the intent of that movement had become the new orthodoxy in state regulation of schooling, and partly because the changing social and economic milieu demanded certain educational values and practices that broke with the past and that radical education had itself championed.

That being so, the rise of the new vocationalism as a renovating force

in Australian school education stemmed from broader contextual developments. The wide lens would include: strategies of corporate management and micro-economic reform engineered by the Hawke/Keating Labor Governments since the early 1980s, essentially for the purposes of national economic re-structuring and global market competitiveness; continued shifts in the conditions of production and labour market requirements, marked by the predominance of service industries, moves into high-technology and entrenched structural unemployment; and an evolving ideological terrain combining an overriding economic rationality with social justice concerns and actual and orchestrated revivals of national consciousness. In this setting, the creation of the integrated Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training and its bureaucratic structures in 1987 both symbolised and laid the ground for the alignment of education (both higher and school education) and vocational training with national economic priorities. From 1989, with tripartite agreement to a National Training Reform Agenda, a number of measures were taken to reconstruct vocational training and accreditation procedures based on levels of competency, that complemented industrial award restructuring and more flexible modes of industrial relations. In the meantime, the dismantling of the Schools Commission in 1987 had paved the way for the new prominence of the Australian Education Council (AEC), comprised of the education ministers of the commonwealth, states and territories, as the vehicle for nation-wide reform of school education.

The AEC had already set in train work on the development of national curriculum statements and assessment profiles when, in 1990, it appointed the Finn Committee to consider and make recommendations about appropriate education arrangements for fifteen to nineteen year olds, whether they be in school, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), or higher education. In its Report of 1991, the Finn Committee recommended that virtually all nineteen year olds should have completed or still be engaged in some recognized form of extended education or training; it pressed for a convergence of general and vocational education; it identified certain 'Key Areas of Competence' as essential for all young people as preparation for employment; and it stressed the necessity of national co-ordination of relevant curriculum principles, assessment practices and recorded outcomes - across what were now to be seen as the different education and training 'pathways'. Subsequently appointed by the AEC to further determine the form and practical application of the employment-related Key Competencies, the Mayer Committee brought out its final report in late 1992. The Mayer Committee specified the Key Competencies as: collecting, analysing and organizing information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organizing activities; working with others and in teams; using mathematical ideas and techniques; solving problems; using technology. An additional Key Competency, cultural understandings, is currently being worked out. Like the Finn Committee, the Mayer

Committee was chaired by an executive of the Business Council of Australia and consisted of representatives of 'peak' business, trade union, training and school education bodies. Backed by the AEC, the policy directives of both committees thus had the authority of a productive consensus of those defined as the main shareholders in the education and training 'industry'. An influential member of both committees was Laurie Carmichael, formerly a leading trade unionist and now chair of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training's Employment and Skills Formation Council. The 1992 report of the latter body (the Carmichael Report) formalized the Key Competencies approach as the basis for training and certification 'networking' schools, TAFE, industry and private providers.

In short, the Key Competencies framework has been urged on school education as part of a more comprehensive state program of modernization, prompted by and directing changes in the conditions of Australian life. More particularly, the new vocationalism that this implants in school education is one constituent element of a wider project of integrated institutional reform. What is perhaps less apparent, though, is that this new vocationalism in Australian school education is - like recent radical education - an historically novel, essentially radical movement. Like recent radical education, too, its radicalism is Janus-faced: looking back, in being framed by yet seeking to remake existing ideas and structures; and looking beyond, in projecting ways of thinking and being that supersede time-honoured constructions.

This can be seen initially in the shifting way notions of 'general' and 'vocational' education are employed. Like the radical education movement, the new vocationalism has a backward-looking rationale in that it is concerned to distance itself from, yet expresses itself in terms of, the arrangements of the living past. The Finn Review repudiated the 'historical connotations of separation and difference', carried by the binary structure and practices of 'general education' (for life) and 'vocational education' (for work). Even so, it drew upon that same thinking in proposing an intersection of substance and purpose in 'general vocational education', where the distinctive claims on education - of life/citizenship and work/employment - are nevertheless recognized. But, transcending the binary oppositions of the past, Finn also envisaged a new stage of fusion of life and work, enabled by the collapse of 'general' and 'vocational': 'Traditional notions of separation between education and work will be replaced by an integrated concept of work intertwined with lifelong learning, commencing with postcompulsory education and training'. It is this transcendent notion of the oneness of life and work mediated by a reconstructed education that indicates the forward-looking stance of the new vocationalism. The Mayer Committee proceeded further. It redefined general education (for life) as the dormant 'foundation' of knowledge, skills and understanding to be activated and given point by the Key Competencies ('putting general education to work'); and it

treated life ('further education and adult life more generally') as a peripheral extension of approaches to work, being a secondary beneficiary of the Key Competencies.

Consistent with this conceptual fusion of life and work in which work becomes the centripetal image, in other policy making for school education the Key Competencies - stripped of their 'employment-related' rider - are now incorporated as a fundamental condition. The growing belief is that: 'All students from the earliest school years and in training institutions need to develop and consolidate key competencies'. Moreover, even as the Key Competencies are being woven

into the national (subject/learning area) statements and profiles now modifying each state's curriculum and assessment order for the compulsory years, there is also a sense in which the Key Competencies are displacing the traditional subjects (or the reconstituted 'learning areas') as the very core or basis of school education. Over the last couple of years in New South Wales, for instance, there have been state-sponsored moves to replace external examination of 'core subjects' with testing of 'core skills' for the Year 10 School Certificate. In this new vocationalism, competencies are thus increasingly accorded a foundational authority. This trajectory certainly redraws, perhaps effectively undermines, school education's immanent capacity for a critical tension with the immediate conditions of life and work hitherto carried in the discipline-based school subjects. Something of this prospect of a shift in the relation of school and life-world is unwittingly evoked by one reputedly progressive educationist who now talks of the classroom as 'the student's workplace' and who implicitly endorses notions of learning as a 'production process' that needs to be aligned with 'world's best practice'.

But the Janus-faced radicalism of the new vocationalism is revealed more fully when we examine its concern for bridging the divide of theory and practice (long a characteristic feature of Australian school education, particularly at the post-primary level), and its related demand for 'contextual' learning. This stance finds itself in tension with the traditional, subject-based academic curriculum which has been both the basis and end-point of general education as we have known it. Yet, going back to the ways Finn and Mayer distinguish general and vocational education as outlined above, we note that there is little acknowledgement that the existent general education at the senior level - the academic curriculum - has always served explicit vocational (abstract intellectual training) purposes, particularly for those select students moving on to the professions. This apparent oversight discloses the fundamentally ambiguous attitude of the new vocationalism to the established academic curriculum, an attitude that further points to its two-edged radicalism.

On the one hand, the new vocationalism shares with the earlier radical education movement an antagonism to the esoteric nature of the academic curriculum and revives radical education's rejection of the social distinctions reproduced by the academic curriculum. In its dissatisfaction with general education, the new vocationalism contends that the academic curriculum does not, in its present form anyway, adequately prepare young people for the changing requirements of the workplace, particularly new work practices and the nature of new technology (radical teachers argued that its archaic content and pedagogy were out of touch with emergent social realities, including the impact of the mass media and the knowledge explosion). In a similar vein, the new vocationalism contends that the academic curriculum, by virtue of its exclusive content and pedagogy, has the effect of discouraging or preventing a sizeable proportion of young people from completing a full secondary education, a problem when the workplace is said to require, from all, higher levels of cognition and skill (radical teachers argued that the exclusive character of the academic curriculum meant that many were barred from the economic and social rewards it afforded). Capturing this dissatisfaction with the academic curriculum, Carmichael sounds remarkably like radical teachers of more than twenty years ago:

The problem here is one of assuming that the curriculum in Years 11 and 12 should still be theoretical, academic and abstract (as it used to be designed exclusively for university entry) when, in fact, it is simply not possible to deal with learning in that manner for all those for

whom we wish success. If we're talking about being able to bring forward the ability of all capable young people to think, then we need to provide the means whereby that can be achieved. Many will learn contextually or will learn conceptually through contextual learning just as effectively as if they did it by abstract, theoretical and academic learning. On this point, we are in very deep conflict with those who hang on to past syndromes.

Indeed, in its disdain for the academic curriculum, the new vocationalism replays the retrospective political radicalism of the radical education movement. As Carmichael's words suggest, it stresses the familiar radical values of equality and participation - values now merged by the new vocationalism in today's discourses of 'equity' and improving the life chances of 'disadvantaged groups', narrowly understood in terms of the ability to enter, contribute to and seek advancement within the changing productive workforce.

But on the other hand, again as Carmichael's emphasis on the capacity to 'think' and Mayer's interest in general education as the 'foundation' for the Key Competencies both suggest, the new vocationalism values the conceptual and the interpretive - the intellectual development and training long associated with the academic curriculum. However, like the radical education movement, the new vocationalism gives intellectual training a legitimacy and purpose

independent of the abstracted organisation, particular contents and historic culture of the academic curriculum. Interpretive intellect is to be brought to bear on immediate, actual, heterogeneous situations. For radical education, this meant confronting the 'real world', in the form of the topic, theme, or slice of the local community. For the new vocationalism, it means incorporating interpretive intellect instrumentally as 'high skill levels' geared essentially to new forms of work organisation and work practices that integrate theory and practice. Thus while the Janus-faced new vocationalism disputes the appropriateness these days of the 'theoretical' academic curriculum as the organizing principle, it wants to exploit its legacy of intellectual training. It sees that elemental component of the academic curriculum as the basis of a more practical or 'contextual' work-oriented education, looking to a different future where all students will have been trained to 'think' in ways similar to the formerly elite graduates of the academic curriculum. As Carmichael puts it, '.....work over time will become more and more professional and the gap between the humanities and instrumental pursuits [will] become less and less'. Similarly, in arguing for a new model for senior schooling, a recent Schools Council Discussion Paper refers to 'the new intellectual demands which the post-industrial workplace will impose on its employees'.

Indeed, underlying the new vocationalism's concern to combine theory and practice or intellect and application is an impatience with the traditional distinction between mental and manual labour which the academic curriculum marked and reproduced in the original structures of Australian post-primary schooling and which it has continued to symbolise. Whereas radical education implicitly contended that the distinction between mental and manual labour as institutionalised in schooling means an undesirable (class-based) social allocation of people to privileged or subordinate stations in life, the new vocationalism regards the distinction as functionally anachronistic, given the new directions in the nature and structure of work. It is this departure in thinking from a fundamental tenet of the modern world that is at the heart of the more forward-looking radicalism of the new vocationalism. In principle at least, social roles and social integration would not be erected on the mental and manual division of labour. The new worker-citizen - divorced from class positioning, and

gender-neutral - belongs more directly, by virtue of generic productive capacities, to the economically competitive nation: the 'clever country'. Further, it is on the basis of this renunciation of the division of mental and manual labour that the new vocationalism subverts customary categories of authority and organization and reworks conceptions of time and space.

The very notion of 'competency' as explained in the final Mayer Report reconstitutes those formerly separate realms of activity, blending them

and, significantly, conflating their social purposes to the 'performance' of work in its new era. Competencies are 'mindful, thoughtful capabilities':

They must incorporate a sense of the learner as one who builds concepts and develops understandings which inform technical applications.

Competence requires both 'heads on' and 'hands on': the capacity to think about performance and also to perform. It goes beyond pure or abstracted thinking to the skilled application of understanding.

The proposed basis for postcompulsory schooling and (as has been argued here) increasingly a crucial point of reference for the compulsory years, the Key competencies enunciate a meeting of mental and manual labour whose primary social function is pointedly instrumental: 'to apply knowledge and skills in an integrated way in work situations'. A number of elemental redirections follow from this. The workplace, rather than the academy or the education profession itself, becomes the pivotal curriculum authority. Educational merit may be determined at any point in time by performance level demonstrated rather than course completed. The traditional institutional integrity of schooling itself is negated as it becomes one interchangeable 'pathway', alongside training and further education, to be moved in and out of. Critically, too, this work-oriented blending of mental and manual in the Key Competencies means that the interpretive component of mental labour itself becomes instrumental. The Key Competencies constitute, then, an attenuated and subservient form of intellectual training - disengaged from its substantive foundations and culture of critique in the disciplines. Even so, another form of universality is projected. According to Mayer, it is the 'generic' nature of the Key Competencies that inevitably makes them also 'essential for effective participation in further education and in adult life more generally'. But in this sleight of thinking where education for work becomes education for the broader spheres of adult life and where instrumental intellect is detached from a more comprehensive orientation to social practice (the subject curriculum), adult life and citizenship themselves inevitably become human experience to be perceived and approached instrumentally. The capacity for a relatively independent interpretive perspective on the conditions and consequences of work itself is thus doubly diminished. The term 'vocation' indeed takes on a radically new meaning.

Ironically, in its Janus-faced looking beyond into this existentially unknown future, the new vocationalism in a quite deliberate way replicates the radical education movement's more spontaneous turning away from the historic division of mental and manual labour to the 'real world' as the framing for school education. For the new vocationalism, though, the new 'world of work' is the 'real world', one where in actuality there is not work - and, therefore, a place - for everyone.

How Useful is the Concept of Settlement?

If, as I have argued, the new vocationalism in Australian school education is in certain key respects radical in character and may be

compared in those terms with the earlier radical education movement, then this occurrence seems to challenge the prevailing way we have come to see the course of Australian education in the latter half of the twentieth century. As with other English-speaking countries, when we look at the chronicle of Australian education over this time, among the developments and patterns that appear significant, a certain point of redirection stands out. From the post-war years to the mid 1970s, education was characterized by expansion and innovation in provision, an institutional life relatively insulated from the immediate dictates of the economy, and a growing commitment to equality of opportunity and access seen as elemental to a modern democracy. But, for roughly two decades now, we have increasingly experienced contraction of education spending combined with rationalization of resources, direct incursions into education by the labour requirements and organizational logic of the economy, and reconstruction of the relation of individual and the public good where private and instrumental ends prevail. From the standpoint of the present, such themes of contrast provide the basis for a valid and neat periodization against which contemporary ideas and events may be positioned, named and interpreted. In this narrative, the radical education movement and the new vocationalism stand on different sides of the divide; hence we are more likely to notice and theorise their points of contrast. Any congruence between the two therefore becomes of secondary importance, to be interpreted as either the inevitability of the newer movement modifying its project to accommodate entrenched ways or the pragmatic adoption by the newer movement of existing practices that actually suit its purposes. The relative validity of both of these interpretations has been alluded to already in this paper. But, as I have attempted to show here, the Janus-faced radicalism of both the radical education movement and the new vocationalism warrants recognition as a matter of primary significance. It calls for an historical analysis that registers and theorises the existence of a fundamental concurrence between these two complex and ostensibly contradictory events.

Interpretive accounts of contemporary developments in education that employ the concept of settlement have a claim here because, while they treat as pivotal the temporal divide just outlined, they are essentially concerned with capturing the deeper dynamics that indicate forms of continuity in discontinuity. As I understand it, such accounts are informed by a Marxist conception of political economy hingeing on the contradictions of capitalist society and by the Gramscian notion of achieved ideological consensus or hegemony. Arguably, the most thoroughgoing and compelling example of that approach is found in some work by the Cultural Studies Group at the University of Birmingham, with Richard Johnson having an enduring part,

where the notion of the 'social democratic settlement' is developed. Some other English historians of education dealing with the contemporary period take as given the explanatory power of a similar concept of settlement. In Australia, John Freeland (influenced by the Cultural Studies Group), has critically depicted the dynamics of change in Australian education since the war, taking as his explanatory framework the 'social settlement'. Robertson and Woock incorporate Freeland's particular way of thinking, while writers such as Seddon (from whom Freeland also draws) and Marginson refer more loosely to the 'social democratic' or 'equality of opportunity' consensus/settlement. Of interest here, too, Terri Seddon implicitly calls on the concept of settlement in discerning, recently, some 'convergence between educational progressivism and vocationalism' in Australia, which she contends could form the basis of an equitable and just 'social democratic modernization' in education. Because Freeland's employment of the concept of settlement is the more developed in the Australian literature, it is examined here, with some brief reference also to the

implications of Seddon's recent argument. The intention is to point to both the helpfulness of and some incipient flaws in this interpretive approach, at least with regard to Australia.

According to Freeland, in capitalist societies social settlements are periodic phases in which inevitably contradictory interests are reconciled to their perceived mutual benefit and in which attendant ideologies delimit the grounds of action and conflict. Social settlements are necessarily 'provisional', their emergence, particular type and their duration tied to contemporaneous historical conditions. They are also many-sided, assimilating the concerns of the economic, political and social administration spheres, each of which proceeds within its own relatively autonomous, but nonetheless contingent, 'regional' settlement or settlements; hence we can talk of an 'educational settlement' as a particular manifestation and distinctive component of the overarching social settlement. Furthermore, social settlements may have 'conservative' and 'progressive' applications and, again, these divergent tendencies may obtain at given times in an educational settlement. For Freeland, life in Australia from the post-war years to the mid 1970s was organized around a 'Keynesian' social settlement, and the two decades since can be understood in terms of the collapse of the conditions for that settlement and the ensuing 'search' for the basis and form of another. Developments in education are seen to have paralleled and formed part of that broader history.

First, to just capture the contextual narrative that can be drawn from Freeland's two main essays in this vein. Dating from the 1945 white paper 'Full Employment in Australia' (launched by the Chifley Federal Labor Government), Keynesian economic theory became the cornerstone of economic, political and social management in Australia. Though not without times of strife, the Keynesian formula (of full employment,

greater economic regulation and an extension of the welfare state) was able to balance contending demands and secure prosperity in what was to be a long period of relatively conducive local and international conditions. Adopted by successive federal governments, this 'hegemonic economic theory' thus determined the possibility, rationale and parameters of a social settlement that found conservative implementation under the Coalition (1949-1972) and was given a progressive, social democratic slant in Labor's later term of office (1972-1975). Even by the late 1960s though, the settlement's provisional character was showing: the progressive shift was as much an expedient response to popular expectations raised by the Keynesian formula itself as the reformist preference of a Labor government. Then, elected in 'the twilight years of the post-war long boom', Labor's program of social reform and attempts to deal with growing domestic fissures were impaired by the onset of world recession. That government's displacement exemplified the collapse of the Keynesian settlement. The Coalition's (1976-1982) recourse to monetarist policies, bringing only partial and what proved to be short-lived benefits, was not an adequate alternative in the new situation of recurring recession and rising unemployment. However, the revamped Labor Government, in power from 1983, has moved beyond both Keynesian and monetarist axioms, seeking more pragmatically to build a social compact on the formal collaboration of government, business and unions. Writing in 1986, Freeland considered that the latter movement promised a 'tripartite settlement' which, writing in 1991, he saw as still to be actually realized.

Turning now to Freeland's central discussion of the conditions of change in education in Australia since the war, we find that he provides a complex and cogent account of past developments and present challenges. In so doing, he takes some care to present and treat

education as a relatively autonomous social institution, with reference both to the spaces allowed by constitutional and bureaucratic arrangements in Australia and to the existence and weight of its own internal traditions, ideologies and practices. Hence he does not claim a simple, deterministic relation between the predominant social settlement and associated educational settlements. Rather, he argues that prevailing structures and forces are 'refracted' in the everyday world of education and he also infers that there can be a time lag between the actual duration of a social settlement and the life of comparable assumptions in education. The critical juncture identified in Freeland's discussion is the 1974-75 recession and the coincident and ongoing growth in unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, for: '[w]hen the 1974-75 recession undermined the legitimacy of the Keynesian welfare state it concomitantly destroyed the complacent assertion of schooling's autonomy from the labour market'.

For Freeland, the post-war or Keynesian-based educational settlement

had two main phases. Throughout the 1950s and most of the 1960s, human capital theory and an extension of the goal of equality of opportunity from the primary to the secondary years saw the rapid expansion of tertiary education and universal provision and reform of lower secondary education. This was a conservative phase, in that it left unquestioned existing social structural and cultural divisions, locked as it was into the conjoint ideologies of meritocracy and social mobility. By the late 1960s, however, new pressures for social reform combined with new demands by teachers for greater professional freedom gave rise to the second, progressive phase. Like its conservative forbear, this phase enjoyed - in its early stages at least - an economic climate where the passage of young people from school to work was relatively untrammelled. Key characteristics of this progressive phase, then, were the assertion by educators (particularly at the school level) of 'an aggressive independence' from the strictures of the labour market and the associated repudiation of university control over curriculum and examinations. This radical prizing of autonomy for education found expression in the objectives of equality, participation and diversity and in the widespread initiatives in curriculum reform. Yet, as Freeland points out, not only did the labour market 'not go away' and did schools continue (perhaps more benignly) to sort students accordingly. The progressive hegemony and real gains made at the time were actually dependent upon that continued articulation of school and labour market, in particular upon the popular connection of schooling with the then commonly experienced reality of upward social mobility. The exigencies of 1974-75 meant the end of both that perception and that reality, and sparked a forceful alliance between education conservatives, some employers, politicians and the media in discrediting the progressive agenda and blaming the schools (and teachers) for youth unemployment. The post-war or Keynesian-based educational settlement had effectively been abandoned and new terms of debate about the organisation, functions and content of education set in train.

Freeland argues that, in the years since then, competing interests and objectives in the politics of education have taken newer forms and the relative balance of power has shifted from the 'unholy alliance' of teachers, parents and bureaucrats to the loose partnership of employers, trade unions and government ministers. But while it is now widely believed that education should play a more direct role in building Australia's economic performance, there is no general agreement on the terms by which this should occur. In tension here are the goals of equality and efficiency (or quality), and many teachers, for instance, remain committed to the progressive ideal of equality and thus wary of efficiency measures they see as working against this.

Another educational settlement is by no means inevitable. The achievement of a provisional settlement (whether conservative or progressive) able to reconcile existing demands will depend, in fact,

upon the emergence of a new, overarching social settlement. And a new social settlement will need to be based in economic and political processes able to bring together the role of the market (economic theory) and the role of the state (the provision of welfare, and education). Only within the terms of that broader framework of resolution and counter-struggle can divergent positions on the 'equality-quality synthesis' in education be held together. Moreover, one feature of a new educational settlement would need to be the direct engagement of 'the traditional education lobby' in that wider economic and political juxtaposing of market and state, as a means of protecting and advancing education's 'regional' concerns.

Now this tracing of the determination and renegotiation of the terms of endeavour in modern Australia framed by the notion of settlement is certainly plausible. Some contemporary developments may be readily and legitimately understood in this light. For example, the Keating Government's 1993 'One Nation' economic package and 1994 white paper on employment, 'Working Nation', evoke a tripartite social settlement, and gesture to an educational settlement in that both contain as an operating condition competency-based restructuring of education and training flowing from the Finn/Mayer/Carmichael agenda. With regard to the story of recent radical education and the new vocationalism in school education presented in this paper, there are obviously clear points of agreement. In addition, just as Freeland says that 'the post-war educational settlement coexisted with previously negotiated settlements in the debate about education', it could be argued that, if the new vocationalism signifies an emergent educational settlement, it is to be expected that it would overlap with its progressive forebear. But as Freeland himself points out, his approach to dealing with the contemporary period using the concept of settlement is tentative rather than definitive: within that conceptual framework he is concerned to 'provide signposts for further work'. I want to go beyond this invitation, though. I believe that, in the face of profound change in recent times, this approach is entrapped by its own mindset and thus is less able to recognize and confront the distinctively radical character of the developments in school education of interest here.

To begin with, in his portrayal of a course of events that takes us into the present, Freeland's depiction of the give and take of the social settlement warrants closer inspection because it implicitly indicates its own interpretive limits. In his earlier thesis, Freeland has a fairly orthodox Marxist stance. While allowing the significance of the family, the capitalist market and the state as critical sites for analysis, he gives central heuristic importance to the struggle between capital and labour. Given the intermittent crises of accumulation endemic to capitalism, the social settlement is a mechanism of temporary stabilization in which capital and labour both concede ground. (The Keynesian settlement was generated from a concern to avert the economic and social dislocation of the 1930s depression,

and whereas capital accepted increased government controls to gain security for investment, organized labour forsook the socialization of industry in return for the employment and social wage benefits of a buoyant capitalist economy.) Thus the conservative or progressive enactment of the Keynesian and emergent tripartite settlements indicate the relative balance of advantage for capital or labour, the progressive application in Freeland's view 'increasing the power of labour and ...reducing the prerogative of capital'. However in his later writing, and without explanation, Freeland takes a somewhat

different angle. Here the argument is that, in the Keynesian settlement, there was a new acceptance that economic theory should align the activities of areas of social practice previously held to be discrete - the market and the state. The Keynesian settlement, then, was essentially a malleable agreement among major interest groups about the form of the relationship between 'the arena of wealth production and income distribution, the market, and the arena of income redistribution, the state'. So, in the wake of the economic and social currents of more recent times, any new settlement would need to be based on a reformulation of the relative positioning of the market and the state. Hence now as then, a conservative or progressive application of the settlement would rest along a continuum of less or more state intervention in the operations of the market along with residualist or vigorous state undertakings in welfare provision.

But why the shift in specifying the field of compromise in the social settlement from the struggle between capital and labour to the interplay of market and state? We could reasonably assume that this was brought on by the momentous contextual developments of recent times that stretch the theoretical imagination. Yet Freeland shows an only limited, intuitive appreciation of how such developments challenge the capacity of received interpretive categories. The Australian social landscape, for one thing, has been transformed over the last ten years or so, in large part by its accelerated integration with the global capitalist market and the advance of neo-classical or New Right economic theory which privileges the workings of the market. This process has been embraced by both major contenders for government and their internal factions, who differ only in their views of the related functions of the state. Freeland, however, does not actually acknowledge or explore the significance of this development. It could be argued, for example, that the concepts 'market' and 'state' are themselves more riven by complexity and ambiguity these days. To take one crucial dimension of this, advances in high technology and the communications revolution have radically energized the dynamics of the market and greatly expanded its penetration of societies. One consequence of this is that individual nation-states have even less autonomy in domestic matters and must themselves reconstruct their roles and their relationships with their populations. Freeland shows little cognizance of these matters. To shift tack a little, he also

does not modify his interpretive framework to take account of recent changes in the very fabric of Australian social life. For instance, he refers to the influence of emergent movements for social reform in bringing about the progressive phase of the Keynesian settlement and he notes in particular that teachers as a group have become critical protagonists in any reorganization of education. But he does not attach theoretical significance to what other writers have called the 'new social movements'; he assimilates their existence and impact to his prior (albeit shifting) schema. Yet it could be argued that the contemporary turn to cultural politics (or the struggle over meaning) that the new social movements represent - a situation elaborated by the cultural reach of the mass media and the politics of image - injects a critical new dimension into any analysis grounded in political economy. Indeed, given the significant changes in the nature of market and state just mentioned and the influence of cultural politics, it could be argued that either the concept of settlement needs to be substantially revised or it is no longer helpful to give it such pivotal authority. To make the larger point: in newer contexts such as these, longstanding analytic categories may have less purchase or their explanatory power may be at least overlain by other salient propositions. Freeland does not entertain this perspective.

The limits of an interpretive approach attached to the concept of

settlement are indicated, I believe, when the convergence of radical/progressive education and the new vocationalism is considered within that framework of thinking. For example, in a later writing (going to press prior to the publication of the Finn Review), Freeland notes the 'peculiar coincidence of interests', at least in some states in Australia, between progressive educators and social groupings committed either to equitable labour market reform or to tripartite principles for economic restructuring. In this development, Freeland sees the basis for a new and desirable social settlement, the educational component of which would merge 'democratic' and 'vocationally relevant' concerns. Indeed, in foregoing discussion, he outlines proposals for requisite educational reform which in some significant respects anticipates the Finn/Mayer/Carmichael Key Competencies program. But what Freeland does not anticipate is the capacity of that Competencies initiative - while selectively meeting both democratic and vocationally relevant aspirations (looking back) - to radically deconstruct and effectively set aside traditional as well as existing reformist thinking about the organization of education (looking beyond). It does this by inserting instrumental intellect (whose primary social object is the performance of work - and 'work' defined more narrowly than Freeland would want, by the way) as the very core and organizing principle of education.

Some related limitations are indicated in Terri Seddon's subsequent article where she takes up the observation, made more cursorily by

Freeland, that in Australia now there are signs of a unity of outlook between educational progressivism and vocationalism. Her argument too is that this development ought be supported as containing possibilities for socially ameliorative educational reform, in contrast to the conservative/free market version of vocationalism (more like that of England?) 'waiting in the wings'. As Seddon sees it, the form of vocationalism currently being developed in Australia is part of federal Labor's project of 'redefining social democracy', and its strength is that - like the earlier phase of radical progressivism - it disrupts and forces a reassessment of the dominant liberal meritocratic tradition in Australian education. Her hope (like Freeland's) is that the emergent educational position found in themes of agreement between educational progressivism and vocationalism will gain ascendancy - and thus form part of a new, socially ethical provisional settlement. But, just picking up on key elements of that educational position, I think that there are still basic matters for concern. Seddon says that a positive feature of the progressive-vocationalist education is that - compared with the prior progressive phase - it is 'more explicitly contextualized and grounded in social practice'. I take it that she alludes here to shortcomings that were in fact part of the unworked out character of recent (grass roots) radical education. Its preoccupations with autonomy and diversity, it could be said, limited its ability to connect educational innovation with a more comprehensive, critical social practice - one that probes the meanings of, rather than moves in celebration with, the changing times. Yet it seems to me that that same unreflexive outlook is dangerously characteristic of the existing progressive-vocationalist position. Harking back to the analysis of the Janus-faced radicalism of both educational movements presented in this paper, I believe we need to think out further what we understand by and how we embrace 'contextualised' learning. As was just implied, radical education's attempt to bring together theory and practice, with its turn to the 'real world', was ineffectual in its orientation to a wider critical social practice. The new vocationalism, in making the 'world of work' the essential rationale for combining theory and practice, seems to answer the call. It carves out a new, and in some respects progressive social practice that breaks with what are now seen as undesirable

strictures of the past, and tackles the changing times in some unprecedented, creative ways. But it is a social practice that brings its own, newer contradictions.

Two such contradictions are alluded to in the analysis developed in this paper. First, instrumental intellect is cut loose from an historic (if flawed) social relational framework for apprehending our life-world (the subject curriculum), one that extends beyond and is able to critique the world of work: ought/can we have today frameworks of shared meaning that are able both to represent context in its full dimensions and to constrain instrumental intellect? Second, given

present directions, the world of work will continue to toy with, or exclude, sections of the population, thereby shutting them off from that historic social medium by which identity is formed (directly or indirectly) and material welfare is gained: the life-world faces a new, intractable division of 'haves' and 'have nots'. These are contradictions of late capitalist society that would seem to be outside the interpretive scope of the concept of settlement.

A Postmodern Reconstruction ?

The growing body of thought that conditions of life in the late twentieth century comprise a qualitative departure from those of living memory - sufficient to warrant a new conceptual construct distinguishing the modern and the postmodern - becomes for me, then, a point of reference for an ongoing historical enquiry into the Janus-faced congruence of recent radical education and the new vocationalism. It is not my intention to rehearse either the variety of general elaborations upon this construct or the number of particular ways it is drawn upon in education. Two approaches to theorising the modern/postmodern hiatus offer particular insights for the concerns of this paper. Both have in common with the concept of settlement a grounding in political economy yet both, in different degrees, bring into relief certain contemporary developments in ways that modify that frame of reference. Hence both are better able within their respective terms, I believe, to throw explanatory light on the two-edged radicalism of recent radical education and the new vocationalism. These two approaches are found in a specific work of the now English-based writer, David Harvey, and in lines of thought that stem from the work of the Australian writer, Geoff Sharp. Very briefly, Harvey argues that the contemporary 'sea-change in cultural as well as political-economic practices' needs to be understood in terms of the emergence of more flexible modes of capital accumulation and the resultant phenomenon of 'time-space compression'. Sharp, while circumspect about elements within the modern/postmodern body of thought identified as post-structuralist positions, directs interpretive attention to the under-recognized yet fundamental role of intellectually related practices in transforming both political-economic and cultural practices. In drawing in particular from these two writers, my intention is to pursue and assess my own tentative reasoning that, because both recent radical education and the new vocationalism are expressions of the profoundly changing setting and hence derive from the same historic momentum, they exhibit common 'progressive' impulses and have similar, contiguous agendas. Broadly speaking, whereas recent radical education was concerned with developing the autonomous person liberated from the structured oppressions of the past, the new vocationalism is concerned with attaching the unassigned person to the structured necessities of a world now dominated by the market and information flow. The proposition, then, is that at this point in time recent radical

education and the new vocationalism may be recognized as inchoate,

only partly contradictory, stages in the working out of what could be called postmodern schooling. Given that interpretive perspective, of course the question that still remains to be addressed is: at this point in time, what would be the conditions of, and the relationship between, an appreciation of context, educational innovation and a critical social practice?

*The basic framing of my thinking in this paper derives from readings of and discussions over the years with editors of an Australian journal concerned with critical analysis of contemporary life - Arena, now Arena Journal - in particular Geoff Sharp, Doug White and John Hinkson.

Notes