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ACCESS:
The limits and capacity of the state

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A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

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Abstract

This is a study of a process of educational policy-making, and the subsequent implementation of policy. It is theoretically embedded within the neo-marxist analyses of the sociology of education, but much of the study is concerned with developing a more adequate framework for the investigation of policy and processes within the state than that provided by relative autonomy theories. It begins, therefore, with an overview and critique of various approaches to education from a sociological perspective, and goes on to develop an analytical framework, based on the concepts of the limits and capacity of the state, with which policy processes can be more fully analysed. The development and implementation of the ACCESS post-school training scheme for the unemployed forms the central policy study of the latter part of this thesis.

Acknowledgements

We live in disturbing but exciting times of change, many aspects of which are documented in this study. The process of writing about these issues has underlined for me how important it is to be involved in them, rather than merely observing them. The process of thesis-writing, I think, removes us from the very real-world activities that we seek to study. Because of my consequent lack of enthusiasm for this task, there are a number of people without whom I could not have continued to work in this way. These people have supported me, and sometimes even inspired me, to get it finished.

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Abbreviations

ACCESS	This is not an acronym
ALS	ACCESS Liaison Service
APTEP	Advisory Panel on Training and Employment Programmes
COGS	Community Organisation Grants Scheme
DETAC	District Employment and Training Advisory Committee
EPC	Employment Promotion Conference (March 1985)
JOS	Job Opportunities Scheme
MSC	Manpower Services Commission (U.K.)
NACTSWL	National Advisory Committee on Transition from School to Working Life
OTF	Occupational Training Family (U.K.)
PEP	Project Employment Programme
STEPS	School Leavers Training and Employment Preparation Scheme
TAP	Training Assistance Programme
WSDP	Work Skills Development Programme
YLC	Youth Learning Centre
YPTP	Young Persons Training Programme
YOP	Youth Opportunities Programme (U.K.)
YTS	Youth Training Scheme (U.K.)

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