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Tertiary education policy: a case study of student interpretations and personal effects for school leavers

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education

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Abstract

Tertiary education policy is produced in a political context with the purpose of bringing about specific planned effects. The manner in which individuals actively process policy messages within their own particular context of experience results in policy effects at times differing from projected effects for various individuals.

The thesis is based on a case study research project which examines the decision making processes of ten senior secondary school students from a single secondary school in their final year of schooling. The research aims to identify the messages that students receive from Government tertiary policy and to evaluate the extent to which these messages are incorporated into individual decision making. Additional factors which influence the post school destination eventually chosen by students are also discussed.

The personal effects of tertiary education policy differ from its ostensibly stated effects for most students. It is suggested that principles of 'fairness' and 'greater personal choice' are not realised for the majority of students. Instead, the position, disposition and communication effects of each student are shown to influence their post school destination. While all students respond to aspects of policy in the manner that it is envisaged that they would, the agency of individuals in making rational decisions within the structures of their own circumstances means that policy effects differ for each student.

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Contents

Chapter One
Introduction

Tertiary education policy in New Zealand has undergone significant change within the last six years. During that time, universal provision of tertiary education has been replaced by a regime of higher student fees, targeted student allowances and a student loan scheme. In common with other social services, the tertiary education sector has been restructured in a manner which reflects the Government's aim to provide services which, it is purported, are fair, encourage self-reliance and efficiency and promote greater personal choice (Bolger, 1990).

Rising national unemployment, particularly for youth, and a burgeoning overseas debt preceded restructuring of the state sector and changes in tertiary education. It will be suggested that recent tertiary education policy has been formulated in response to a decline in capital accumulation in both the state and private sectors and seeks to enhance the accumulation of profit by preparing, through post compulsory education, a workforce which is 'adaptable, creative and innovative' (Haines and Callister, 1989).

Policy, which is formulated with particular purported desirable outcomes, such as a more educated workforce, incorporates values and philosophy which are part of the policy context. An understanding of the policy context then assists an examination of policy effects, which are manifest in the actions of individuals involved with policy. The effects of policy do not have a direct, linear relationship to projected outcomes, as the messages conveyed by policy are incorporated into the experience of individuals, processed variably by them in the context of their own knowledge, and then acted upon. Policy effects, then, may differ from projected outcomes.

This research examines the manner in which ten 7th form students made decisions about their post school destinations. A case study approach is utilised to place the final post school decision for each student in a personal context. As these students prepare to leave school and enter tertiary education, the effects of tertiary education policy, along with the social and material effects upon each student are discussed to examine the extent to which these factors influence their final decisions.

The research is particularly concerned with ascertaining what messages are conveyed to students through tertiary education policy, the extent to which these messages are incorporated into their decision making and what additional factors may have influenced their decision making. It is shown that the manner in which students receive and process policy messages and then decide on their post school destination varies for each student, depending on the social and material effects upon the individual. Therefore, the effects of policy, are for some students, at variance with its stated ostensibly desirable outcomes.

The literature review describes the historical antecedents which have led to the formulation of recent tertiary education policy. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of the state in capital accumulation and the relationship which the state has with its citizens to achieve this goal. The work of the social theorist, Claus Offe, is utilised to provide a framework for this section.

Capital accumulation is dependent upon the efficient use of labour and so the following chapter examines the economic and social context of work. Here, work is defined as paid employment. It is argued that work is the cultural norm in New Zealand society, and as such, is contestable as it is seen to have dual goals: the goal of social benefit on the one hand, and the goal of assisting in the process of expanding the economy and increasing

productivity on the other hand.

Recent tertiary education policy has defined clear links between education and work (Goff, 1987). Within official discourse, education is seen to be the key to a more prosperous economic future (Smith, 1991). This link is critically examined in the present study and it is argued that a direct cause and effect between education and economic growth, while suggested, cannot be proven. Tertiary education does offer specific job training to a number of students, but it is argued that for many more, their continued existence in the education system is more to do with aspects of social control and maintenance of a reserve labour force.

Lastly, the literature review discusses the manner in which individuals make decisions about their educational futures. The framework of this discussion draws on views about family reproduction strategies, youth sub-cultural production and rational choice theory. However, it is rational choice theory and in particular, the theories of Raymond Boudon which provide the structure for this research. Boudon's suggestion that it is the situation effects (knowledge gained through the indvidual's position in the social order and the socialisation process of the individual) and the communication effects (the degree of authority that is ascribed to knowledge by the socially situated individual) which form the frame of reference in which individual decisions are made, which has particular relevance for this research.

Changes to tertiary education policy over recent years occurred in a context of educational reform and wider national policy reform and restructuring. The sixth chapter of this thesis is concerned with policy issues and discusses the process and philosophy of tertiary education policy changes in the context of the political, social and economic issues raised in the literature review. Major changes in the areas of the awarding of qualifications, the provision of training and the funding of tertiary education are considered briefly, while the

policies directly affecting the students in this research (study right, student allowance scheme, student loan scheme) are outlined more fully.

Policy is formulated to encourage particular outcomes, although these are not always explicit in statements of philosophy. Nevertheless, by studying the nature and effects of policy on the lives of individuals, it is possible to recognise and describe the purpose of the policy. The seventh chapter in the thesis describes the design of the research project, which aimed to show, through interviews with ten seventh form students, the manner in which they absorbed policy messages and acted upon them. This chapter outlines the context in which student responses were collected and contains a description of, and rationale for, the qualitative method which was utilised.

Case histories of each student are included in the appendices, as are examples of consent forms, information sheets, and accounts of interviews with students, school staff and Ministry of Education officials.

Several consistent themes emerged in the course of the research and they are discussed in chapters eight and nine of the thesis, using excerpts from the field notes to illustrate their application to the experiences of the students. Within this section, the specific objectives of current tertiary policy are outlined and student responses in the areas of the interpretation of policy, attitudes to education as a private good and factors influencing student choice are discussed. The implications of the study right, student loan and student allowance policies are compared with the eventual outcomes for individuals within the group of students involved in this research.

Within the discussion chapters, it is argued that constraints, in the form of a structured and shrinking labour market, and the individual resources that students have access to, intersect with the choices that students make. Therefore, choices are made in a context of knowledge of likely outcomes.

This knowledge is derived from the situational and communication effects which then form a frame of reference for each student. It is demonstrated that factors of gender, ethnicity and social class contribute to these effects.

The position, disposition and communication effects of each student, are shown to influence the post school destination. Thus, those students with greater access to economic and social resources have less difficulty in choosing their future course of action than those whose socialisation and financial circumstances restrict the choices that they make. The definition of choice that is utilised in this thesis, therefore, is wider than that of 'absence of coercion' (Codd, 1991).

It is argued that policy principles of 'fairness' and 'greater personal choice' were not realised for the majority of students participating in this research. As eventual destinations are compared with preferred destinations, the factors which influenced the changes in decision making are outlined.

Therefore, the personal effects of tertiary education policy differed from its ostensibly stated outcomes. Contradictory outcomes are not surprising, as an individualistic, market approach to education which assumes that all enter the market with equal ability to choose, does not account for the agency of individuals in planning their future trajectory in a rational manner; a manner which makes the most sense within the boundaries of their own experience.

Part One: Theoretical and Policy Issues

Chapter Two
The State and the Economy

The role of the state and the relationship it has with its citizens and the economy has undergone dramatic changes over the last decade. New Zealand has been regarded as a 'welfare' state for much of this century, but more recently, the concept of welfare has changed from one of a degree of universal state provision where the state strives to meet the needs of all its citizens, to a 'safety net' model, where the state sees itself as responsible only for those who cannot supply their own needs. In seeking to understand why this policy shift has occurred and the ramifications that it has for tertiary education policy, the nature and functions of the state will be examined and the relationship of the state to the economy explored.

There are difficulties in attempting to define the precise nature of the state and there are various theories that can be drawn upon when examining the role of the capitalist state as it exists in New Zealand. For the purposes of this thesis, it will be assumed that the state comprises the site within which official (or public) policies are formulated and enacted. The exact nature of the state is problematic.

New Zealand is a capitalist state i.e the mode of production is organised around the accumulation of capital. The role of the state is then to act to assist the process of capital accumulation, to legitimate the capitalist mode of production and to work to provide conditions for the reproduction of capitalism (Dale, 1982). It is Dale's contention that the dominant conception of the state's role in these processes is that the state is a neutral means by which social goods are distributed among competing interest groups. The proportion of the available resources which any group is able to command

will correspond to their 'relative strength and effectiveness' (Dale 1982: 130).

On the other hand, within the extreme end of the continuum of classical marxism theories, the state is seen as an instrument of the ruling class; as a 'machine, a centralised power with organs or an apparatus of repression---the ruling class wield a certain apparatus of coercion, an apparatus of violence. The apparatus may take on different appearances from time to time; armed contingencies of troops, prisons and other means of subjugating the will of others by force' (Demaine 1981: 67). Within a particular approach to theories of the state, such as classical marxism, the role of the state is also problematic.

Althusser retains the concept of state apparatus, and incorporates the coercive aspects of state apparatus into what he categorises as Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA). However, in addition to RSAs, Althusser adds Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs), which are used in more subtle ways by the ruling class as a form of repression. Included as ISAs are churches, political parties, trade-unions, families, schools, communications (newspapers, radio, television etc) and cultural aspects (literature, the arts, sports etc). Simpson (1984) develops each of these areas in a New Zealand context to show the 'hand' of the elite in these ISAs. He argues that prominent members of the judiciary, parliament, newspaper directors etc, have family and social connections which link them to an oligarchy which has dominated areas of state influence and power from colonial days.

Althusser's theory of ideology consists of four theses:

> ideology is not false consciousness but rather ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence; ideology has no history; ideology has a material existence; and ideology is speculary (it has the properties of a mirror) or rather, it is doubly specular (Demaine, 1981: 73).

Thus, this view suggests that the 'truth' is manipulated and defined by those who have the power to do so, and therefore, control is maintained over those who are less powerful, through ideology. The concept of ideology is central to the structuralist theory of the state.

The two views of the state described here, that is, as either a benign distributor of social goods or as an instrument of the ruling class, have much to offer discussions of unequal structures in a capitalist state; in the New Zealand context both arguments are used to compare the relative status of women and maori to a ruling class that is predominantly male and pakeha. However, in both of these theories, the agency of people and their ability to create and recreate their existence in a rational and commonsense way is largely overlooked.

Therefore, within this thesis, the state is not reified as a 'tool of oppression' owned and manipulated by the ruling class, nor as a benign distributor of goods but more as a process that is historically contingent; that has some degree of autonomy in the way in which it is organised to ensure the reproduction of advanced capitalism.

The theorist whose work has been most helpful in developing this view of the state is Offe. Offe suggests that citizens and the state have a dialectic relationship in the process of the functioning of the state:

> Citizens are collectively the sovereign creators of state authority; they are potentially threatened by state-organized force and coercion, and they are dependent upon the services and provisions organized by the state (Offe, 1987: 500).

Therefore, the state has a relationship with all its citizens as they are collectively involved in the mode of production. The state is dependent on

capital accumulation by its citizens as the revenue generated from taxation is required to resource the activities of the state. In turn, citizens legitimise the activities of the state through elected governments and as they are dependent on the services provided by the state e.g public works, hospitals, benefits, tend to select the form of proposed state provision which coincides with their own values and interests.

Throughout our history, groups have been able to influence the direction of state policy in ways that would seem to be contrary to the interests of capital accumulation. The Waitangi Tribunal and its concern with the redistribution of resources is an example. Similarly, the Trade union movement has been able to influence the introduction of legislation that is not conducive to the accumulation of capital. However, as Roper (1993:165) points out, a world recession in the 1970s 'forced the State to become much more actively concerned with facilitating the process of capital accumulation. This chiefly involved restoring profitability and required a wide range of attacks on the historic gains which the labour movement had achieved through generations of struggle during the twentieth century.'

Therefore, the role of the state is to support the interests of capital and the process by which this is done is ongoing and dynamic and reflective of historic and world wide trends:

> ---although the institutional form of the state is not determined by the interests of capital, state policies will tend to shape capitalist development and reproduce the capitalist mode of reproduction. At the same time, however, the state also responds to and attempts to mediate a range of other political demands from various social movements and from state bureaucrats themselves. Thus, the political power of the state depends, indirectly, on the private accumulation of capital which, through taxation, provides the state with its resources (Codd, 1990: 198).

The Government is perhaps the most visible 'face' of the state, yet, as Dale (1982: 159) points out, it is not the whole of the state; the state is able to keep functioning in the absence, or during the change of governments. Rather, the role of government is to 'mediate the state and its subjects to each other'. This is achieved through state bureaucracy and the judiciary (Wilkes, 1993: 209).

The government has prime responsibility for policies which regulate the distribution of welfare; the 'human face' of capitalism. The term 'Post Fordism' (in conjuction with the antecedent, 'Fordism') is used by some commentators (Lauder 1991, Wilkes, 1993) to describe shifts in the organisation of the state and state provision since the emergence of New Zealand as a nation. The term 'Fordism' is derived from the world of car manufacturing and 'evokes images of uniformity, universalism, rational planning, repetition and dullness in the workplace and the creation of a world of consumer goods developed for the popular market' (Wilkes 1993: 201).

In the first 50 years (1840-1890) the 'machinery' of the state in New Zealand was developing slowly. Wilkes (1993: 193) suggests that the two central activities of the state during this time were military intervention to appropriate land from the Maori and the collection of revenue through customs and excise to fund the functions of the emerging state. Thus, state aid was minimal and individuals in need either had to fend for themselves or accept charity. During this time, the state was largely controlled by the interests of white landowners. However, towards the end of this period, under the leadership of Vogel, public amenities were growing steadily, voting rights for all were just around the corner (women were to receive the vote later than men and Maori later still), and a liberal vision of equal rights and equal justice for all was emerging. The grasp of landowners on the state was beginning to diminish as the economy began to move away from large-scale farming and towards urban processing of the rural product and a manufacturing sector.

The next 45 years (1890-1935) is characterised as the Pre-Fordist State and saw the enactment of the Old Age Pensions Act (1898), a means-tested widow's pension (1911), a universal miner's benefit (1915), a means-tested family allowance (1926) and significant mobilisation of wage and salary workers into a trade union movement. However, resistance to the trade union movement was strong from the propertied class resulting in anti-union legislation. The first world war intervened to interrupt clear demarcation of worker and employer but resulted in massively increased national debt, increased taxation and a demand for land from returned servicemen. The onslaught of a depressed economy in England, the major market for New Zealand's primary produce, led to economic decline in New Zealand and a 'collapse in the traditional patterns of capital accumulation' (Wilkes 1993: 200). Urbanisation increased as more farmers left the land, and thus social policies developed to meet a new set of needs.

The Fordist State of 1935-1984 saw a move towards the development of a social citizenship, or rights-based model of a welfare state in which the aim is

> to provide good-quality public services for all and to ensure that the levels of income support are sufficient to enable people to participate in their society, instead of merely surviving---the intention is not that the family should exhaust its capacity to provide assistance before the state intervenes, but rather that its costs should be shared, at least partly, by the whole community (Boston, 1992: 4).

With the coming to power of the first Labour Government in 1935, a number of welfare measures were put into place to deal with the problems facing the country. The Social Security Act (1938) increased pensions, introduced a national health service and added to the family allowance, which became universal in 1946. In 1939, expenditure from the public Works Fund was five times that in 1935 (Rudd, 1993). Barriers to benefits for Maori were removed, state education to age 19 years for all citizens and low cost loans to buy state

housing were available. The implementation of a 'full employment' policy was possible with buoyant markets and a strongly growing economy. Thus, the Fordist state aimed to achieve economic equity through 'universality, homogeneity and consistency' (Wilkes, 1993: 203).

Oliver (1987: 31) suggests that the social policies established in the 1930s and 1940s 'created an expectation that governments (would) intervene to prevent distress and promote wellbeing'. Education was seen as the 'equaliser' through which self development and social mobility was possible for any one who wished to take advantage of the opportunities offered to them. Therefore, education policy was conveyed in liberal, humanist terms of reward for effort and equality of opportunity (e.g Currie Commission, 1962). The curriculum was the vehicle through which the rights of individuals were defended and articulated (Bates 1990: 41).

Education was also regarded as a universal human right and this view was articulated in policy and in political statements utilising such phrases as 'equality of opportunity and 'individual development'. Dr C.E Beeby, the author of Fraser's well-known speech in 1939 that declared that it was the right of every person 'whatever his academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country' to receive a free education 'of the kind to which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers', had a view of society that was consensual, that had common ideals and therefore education was a unifying force which worked for the betterment of all its citizens (Renwick 1986).

However, as Lauder points out, the view of education as a vehicle of equal opportunity was applied within an 'inegalitarian and hence hierarchical society' and could be none other than contradictory in its aims as

> the aim of equality of opportunity--- is asking students from a working class cultural background to compete equally with those from ruling

> and middle class backgrounds in a school context which has been determined by the middle and ruling classes (Lauder, 1990: 211).

Thus, despite liberal rhetoric which assumed a 'level playing field' approach in education policy, the social reality was that the playing field was far from level and inequalities were perpetuated, not eliminated through universal education during the post-war period.

Although the aim of economic equity continued to be articulated throughout the 1950s and 1960s little was done to expand the welfare state during this time and in real terms, welfare spending only just increased in line with the growth in GDP. However, in the 1970s, there was a significant increase in welfare spending. Rudd (1993) suggests that this was in response to demographic changes (an ageing population) and economic need (rising unemployment). However, the introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit, a benefit for solo parents (primarily women) and an accident compensation scheme were innovations that were to absorb a large portion of welfare spending. A universal superannuation scheme with a generous pension for all those over 60 years of age was to become the single largest vote of Government expenditure.

The number of people out of work began to climb steadily from the mid 1970s and this also contributed to growing welfare expenditure. The reasons for this will be discussed more fully in the next section. However, rising unemployment was to be a key factor in the restructuring of the welfare state; a process which began with the fourth Labour Government in 1984. As Roper remarks,

> At the same time that rising unemployment dramatically increases the demands on State expenditure, the decline in the growth of national income places pressure on the increased taxation revenue required to fund the extra welfare spending. For this reason, the economic crisis soon generates a fiscal crisis of the state. Crisis management then

> becomes the central preoccupation of policy- making. The State is compelled to introduce policies aimed at restoring the conditions for profitable capital accumulation (Roper, 1993: 22).

In addition, social processes were undergoing unsettling changes. An increase in class-conflict from the late 1960s began to throw doubt on the myth of New Zealand as an egalitarian society, while the 'cult of domesticity' was challenged by the steadily growing feminist movement. Similarly, there was increased articulation of Maori concerns, demonstrated in the Land March of 1972 and flashpoints of confrontation, such as Bastion Point. Thus, when the fourth Labour Government came to power in 1984, social and economic indicators meant that it was accepted by the population generally that the state was at a point of crisis.

It is argued by Tobias that it was at this point of 'crisis' and in the perceived need for drastic action that a small group of people were able to 'hijack' economic policy.

> In this climate the neoclassical Friedmanite economists in the Treasury, together with the representatives of the Business Round Table, both supported by Roger Douglas, were able to capture the high ground in the debate. It has been argued that almost by default, they were able to define the terms of the ensuing debate on economic and social policy and hence to set the agenda for the wide-ranging initiatives which have since been taken to transform New Zealand society. (Tobias, 1988: 154).

Fordism was characterised by 'universality, a full employment economy, the cult of domesticity, and ethnic paternalism' while Post-Fordism is premised 'on the model of developing niche economy servicing highly specialised markets rather than on the mass production for mass consumption model of the past' (Wilkes 1993:205). Indeed, 'the market' was to become an organising principle of state policy during this Post-Fordist period. While Fordism drew on concepts of universality and community, the period from

1984 on was based on the premise that a free market that responds to individual self-interest then maximises freedom of individual choice and is the most efficient way to accumulate profit. Interference and regulation by the state is seen to be antithetical to the efficiency of the market, therefore minimal state bureaucracy and expenditure are desirable within a free market economy.

Neo-classical theory (known more commonly this decade as New Right theory) considers the state as stifling 'the impulse to make profits because it draws off funds from the private sector, thereby reducing its ability to invest and make profit' (Lauder 1990:5). The policy of taxing the more wealthly at a higher rate to redistribute to those less well off and to pay for universal services is seen to be a disincentive to the entrepreneurs to accumulate profit and a debilitating influence on their capacity to grow and thus 'trickle down' benefits to the whole of society in the form of increased jobs, higher wages etc. Similarly, by interfering with free competition through regulation, quotas and labour restrictions, the state inhibits capital accumulation.

In its view of the state, New Right theory sees the state as being over-burdened with the demands of welfare and is critical of what is seen as the paternalism of the state in encouraging dependency among its citizens rather than encouraging them to be assertive in meeting their own needs. Thus the state has been irresponsible in assuming a democratic mantle and in the attempts of its governments to 'buy' voter loyalty (Rudd 1993: 243). The manner in which the Government has become 'top-heavy' and has mismanaged state spending has been, according to the New Right, the cause of the economic crisis (N.Z Treasury, 1987).

However, Rudd (1993:244) argues that it is not as much the demands of welfare that have precipitated a fiscal crisis, but rather the power of labour. The growth of the Trade Union movement and its ability to negotiate high

wages for workers during the period of high employment 'led ultimately to a profit squeeze and escalating inflation'.

There is no doubt that labour was seen to be a hindrance to the accumulation of profit, hence the shedding of at least 10% of the labour force over the last decade and the introduction of legislation which diminishes the rights and conditions of particularly young workers (see Chapter Three). Nevertheless, it is clear that the welfare state has been 'redesigned' in line with an ideology which states that welfare expenditure is too high and is not being targeted to those in need; that asserts that high welfare expenditure has stifled growth and responsibility (Bolger 1990). Government spending was 41.6% of GDP in 1990/1991 and this had decreased to 38.8% of GDP 1992/1993. Social Service expenditure was down $142 million in that same period (Richardson 1993).

In stressing the necessity for individuals to take responsibility for their own welfare, New Right theory affirms the motivation of human action as that of self interest, not benevolence, and a desire to acquire wealth and status. Therefore, it is the responsibilities of individuals and families to provide for themselves and the success that they have will largely be due to their own efforts. It is acknowledged that those who are sick, or old may not have the capacity to provide for themselves and therefore the role of the state is minimal in providing only for those who require a 'safety net'.

The wider New Right principles of self help and user pays have been applied to policies underlying all social services, including education. Education, therefore, is not seen as a democratic right, or social good as discussed by Renwick, but rather as a commodity or a private good, which an individual partakes of in order to advance his/her own interests. Grace (1990:30) contrasts the language that has emerged with a commodity or consumer approach to education as opposed to the language utilised when discussing

education as a social 'good' or citizen right. The new language is concerned with inputs and outputs, with efficiency, competition and individual choice. Therefore this view of education considers self improvement at a material level only. As individuals are seen to have a 'prefixed' social nature of self interest and desire for self gratification through status and wealth, education for self-development and for the advancement of a just and fair society is not a concern.

As education is assumed to be a 'consumer' good and as such, can be regarded as a commodity in the marketplace, state provided education is seen as being unable to respond to consumer demand; to be inefficient as it is not contested within an open market. Consumers are therefore deprived of choice. Therefore, much of what educators have seen as desirable that students learn to enable them to be more responsible citizens in the society to which they belong, is regarded as 'social engineering' (Smith, 1990) and of little value in a market place which requires more quantifiable outcomes.

The N. Z Treasury approach to education as outlined in the Government Management Pt 2 document will be discussed more fully in the Chapter Six of this thesis. Nevertheless, despite the attention paid in this and subsequent documents (e.g The Tertiary Reviews) to equity in education and the under representation of Maori in further education and women in some courses, the market model of individual choice ignores the context of the market and the fact that not all individuals enter the market with equal resources:

> ---the expectations and decisions made by individuals are influenced by their gender, socio-economic status and ethnic background and that the labour market is part of the patriarchal, racist and class-divided society which helps to produce these expectations and decisions. This has a number of important implications. For instance, if tertiary institutions conform slavishly to market signals, they will merely continue to reproduce inequalities inherent in society (Peters et al, 1993:4).

Within New Right liberalism, there is little room for the ideal of the community working together for the good of all. Rather, maximisation of the market, and its ability to be self regulating with minimal government intervention means that individuals, acting from self interest, can do little more than perpetuate inequality. Thus are the benefits of the accumulation of capital directed to the few and the compromises arrived at between employers and labour, between men and women are of little relevance in an 'open' market (O'Neill 1993 :41).

The influence of Treasury, as a state apparatus, in the marketisation of education is undeniable (Nash, 1989, Codd et al, 1990). Perhaps less obvious has been the influence of the State Services Commission. Dale and Jesson (1993: 9) refer to remarks made by Robinson, the State Services Commission representative on the Picot Task Force which indicate that 'the SSC talks about the machinery of Government while the Treasury talks about the resources'. Thus, while Treasury was concerned with notions of education as a private good and the ramifications of who should pay for what, the SSC were more preoccupied with how the government role in education could become more effective. Therefore, 'at the centre of the SSC briefing (to the 1987 government) is the need for greater accountability and efficiency in the State education service' (Dale and Jesson 1993: 10).

The view of the State Services Commission that state provision of education should be in the form of an 'efficient firm' has played a major role in the formation of labour relations within the education sector and has contributed further to the idea of education as a product which can be delivered to consumers.

The State Owned Enterprises Act (1986) which enabled the state to corporatise, or have state institutions function like business corporations is, according to Peters et al (1993) reflected in recent legislation pertaining to the universities. The strategies employed in the process of corporatisation

include user charges, quantitative accountability mechanisms, a private sector industrial relation policy and competition. Associated with the view that education is a 'private good', these strategies have resulted in students picking up much higher costs for their tertiary tuition, and a diminishing of the role of the state in the setting of fees and the monitoring of equity of access. Thus does the historically contingent process in which the state moves to consolidate the accumulation of capital become manifested in new strategies of legitimating practices and revenue collection.

Within the last decade the role of the state is again tending to be minimalist, but unlike a hundred years ago, the mode of production and the machinery of the state are not fledgling, but are intricate relationships of a multitude of interests and values which ultimately are dependent on the accumulation of capital. While the rate at which capital has accumulated has diminished over the last twenty years, the values that were developed during periods of high production have been slower to recede. Various arms of the state have thus intervened to endeavour to assist the process of capital accumulation. This role is clearly evident in the sphere of education as the following sections will show. Nevertheless, it is a role which is not unilateral, but as in citizen -state relations, is dialectic and contestable. In seeking to create optimin conditions for the accumulation of capital, education continues to play a vital role. As Stevens notes:

> Government reports and research publications have, since the publication of Key to Prosperity (Beattie et al, 1986), told the same story: investment in education, particularly education of a vocational nature, is linked with economic growth and ultimately to prosperity. The challenge for successive New Zealand governments is to find appropriate ways of realising this goal (Stevens, 1993: 176).

This section has explored the historic background to the development of the state in New Zealand and has examined the way in which the relationship between the state and its citizens has changed to meet economic

circumstances. The following section will describe in more detail, the strategies employed by the state to 'realise' its economic goals.

Chapter Three
Work and the economy.

It has been argued in the previous chapter that the main function of the state in the New Zealand context is the accumulation of capital, and regulation (within a societal context 'amenable to capital accumulation') to maintain and legitimate the process of accumulation (Dale 1982). Work, or the exchange of labour is crucial to the accumulation of profit.

Throughout this thesis, work will be defined as paid employment. During the boom period of the 1950s and 1960s when full employment was the norm, every worker (male and initially, female) was needed to fulfill the demands of production. Paid employment was, therefore, 'real' work; a contractual agreement organised along bureacratic lines (Corson 1988). It is clear that by using this definition, much demanding work e. g mothering is classified as non-work.

Since industrialisation, and particularly since the rapid advancement of technology in the post war period (1950s and 1960s) there have been two approaches to the nature of work. For some, work has developed a status that has gone beyond the need for economic independence, and has become closely linked to feelings of self-worth, an activity which gives meaning to individual difference and self expression (Shuker, 1987). For others, work is viewed as a commodity; 'its only value and immediate purpose is to afford the possibility to consume' (Corson, 1988 : 21).

It is argued by Kelvin that a historical examination of the habits of workmen in medieval and early modern history dispels the myth of 'the diligent and industrious workman of earlier times' and reveals that through the centuries there has been a deep ambivalence towards work.

> Despite all that has been said and written about the Protestant Ethic (especially in recent years), for the majority of both the rich and the poor, work seems always to have been a means to an end, simply according to whether one could maintain oneself comfortably without it. The --- ethic, in which work is deemed significantly inherent in itself, never touched more than quite a small minority (Kelvin, 1981: 5).

The view that work is an essential component in allowing an individual to feel a sense of 'belonging' to society, and is a 'rite of passage' towards adulthood (Catherwood 1985: 6; Abbott (ed) 1982), is one that has been part of official discourse since the unprecedented expansion of production in the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, in making choices about their post school destination, young people tend to see work as a necessary part of their personal identities. Work as a reflection of individual abilities and self image is one that has an influence on the way in which decisions are made.

Paid employment is a cultural norm which is consolidated through numerous beliefs and practices in our society. Unemployment is often linked to those seen to be alienated from society i.e those in prison and in mental institutions.

The humanist approach in which the social benefits of work are recognised would therefore seem to be more prevalent in New Zealand society (Royal Commission Social Security 1972, Royal Commission Social Policy 1988), despite thus excluding those who are involved in tasks which are classified as 'non work'. Any discussion of why this is so must focus initially on the demands of capital and the need to develop a societal context conducive to the accumulation of capital.

The decline of the economy since the mid 1970s and the consequent rising unemployment has been blamed in part on the inability of workers to fulfill the demands of increased technology.

> A changing economy throws up new employment patterns, which demand altering skill patterns. In turn upgrading skills (and levels of self-confidence) ultimately leads to the generation of new employment opportunities (Haines and Callister, 1989: 2).

Haines and Callister (1989: 19) suggest that with a move away from primary production (farming, manufacturing) as the major supplier of employment and revenue, there is a consequent shortfall in skills in meeting the demands of the 'new economy'; one that is based largely on the service sector. Occupations such as those found in tourism, the communication industry, advertising, etc are seen to be increasing rapidly and in need of these skills. It is claimed that productivity will be increased through the application of 'generic' skills and 'through innovation, co-operation, competition, creativity, commitment to excellence and above all, flexibility of attitude'.

In the N. Z. Government's 1990 Economic and Social Initiative Statement, the 'new' work ethic is also referred to.

> New Zealand needs to open up to new ideas, new workplace practices, new technologies, new capital, and New Zealanders must develop new skills (Bolger, 1990: 15).

However, a contrasting view suggests that rather than an unskilled or an inappropriately skilled workforce causing a drop in production, an over-accumulation crisis occurred; 'a crisis marked by excess productive capacity and a decline in the rate of profit' (Shirley et al 1990:14).

> 'Toward the end of the post-war boom, an imbalance between accumulation and the labour supply led to increasingly severe labour shortages. The excess demand for labour generated a faster scrapping of old equipment. Real wages were pulled up and older machines rendered unprofitable, allowing a faster transfer of workers to the new machines' (Armstrong et al in Corson,1988:149).

In these circumstances, accumulation should then have declined slowly but instead, 'in the late 60's the initial effect of over-accumulation was a period of feverish growth, with rapidly rising wages and prices and an enthusiasm for get-rich-quick schemes. These temporarily masked, but could not suppress, the deterioration in profitability. Capitalist confidence was undermined, investment collapsed, and a spectacular crash occurred' (Shirley et al 1990: 14).

International demand for commodities (wool, dairy products, meat) which had been the base for New Zealand prosperity over the last two decades began to lessen faster than supply. At the same time, prices for those commodities declined as world trade was freed up, thus diminishing foreign exchange and the ability to maintain full employment.

The economic crisis experienced in this country reflected wider structural changes in the world economic order.

> These changes include; the breakdown of nationally protected markets and globilisation of competition, major shifts in national occupational structures, and the use of electronic technology to exploit international markets (Lauder, 1991:4).

The New Zealand economy then became more dependent on international trends and markets, catering for more varied and changing markets and requiring a labour force that had a core of flexible skilled workers and a reserve of less skilled 'in and out of employment' workers. This latter group of workers is composed of the 'blue collar' workers of the old economy; traditionally Maori, Pacific Islanders, women and school leavers.

Furthermore, the incidence of more workers turning to part time work and an increased move to self employment are all features of reduced employment

opportunities within the New Zealand economy (Dept Statistics 1992). Whereas in times of full employment the structures of the labour market were obscured by a perceived high standard of living for all, such divisions have become more explicit as the recession has continued.

In arguing that free market policies mean 'trading traditional income and employment security for a cheap, young and mobile workforce, a low wage regime and a highly speculative development path', Shirley et al (1990:165) suggest that lack of an employment policy to counter free market mechanisms will continue to 'produce unsustainable costs in terms of unemployment and economic stagnation'. It is clear that unemployment has been a harsh by-product of economic restructuring, one in eight full time jobs disappearing from 1986 to 1992, and unemployment numbers rising from 4% of the workforce in 1986 to just over 10% in 1992 (ANZ Bank).

However, GDP has almost doubled in the same period, but also with a doubling of Government debt and the sale of state assets (Evening Post 10 June)- not exactly the sign of a healthy economy.

Increased use of technolgy in the post war boom, therefore, had the effect of decreasing jobs in the manual, semi skilled sector; of deskilling much of the work previously done by manual workers.

> Thus machinery in factories is now often designed so that the machinist is called upon to do little more than load and unload the machine. In offices, word-processing technology is employed to reduce labour costs and deskill women workers. Thus management attempts to control both the pace of work and the skills required, to increase more effectively their profit margins or productivity (Apple 1983: 8).

As Apple (1983) points out, along with deskilling is the process of reskilling. As new technologies are developed, so are new workers required to operate

those technologies. While Khan (1986) argues that technology has not increased new job opportunities in proportion to the number of workers made redundant by technology, a plethora of reports have argued that in comparison with other OECD countries, the New Zealand economy is performing poorly because the workforce is underskilled and ill educated (Catherwood, 1985, N.Z Treasury, 1988, Goff, 1989, Porter, 1991).

Rates of participation in tertiary education are compared to show that countries like Japan, which have high tertiary education rates of young people also have a high GDP, thus suggesting a 'cause and effect' between these two factors. Thus, says Khan (1986: 32) does the state cause attention to be 'drawn away from the purely structural economic causes of the problem, to the problems within the labour force, including the 'quality' of the individual school leaver'.

Schemes put in place to address skills shortages (ACCESS, TOP, JOS) will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. However, it is suggested by Shirley et al (1990) that such schemes form part of measures developed to encourage individuals to adjust to the new employment climate, where lack of a job is seen to be on one level, an individual failing, and on another level, an unfortunate but necessary interim by-product of policies aimed at reducing inflation and reducing overseas debt. Employment for all has ceased to be the first priority for New Zealand Governments since 1984.

Labour relations have also undergone changes in order to adapt to the 'new economy'. Of note are the Labour Relations Act, the State Sector Act and the Employment Contract Act. The Employment Contract Act which was introduced to give more flexibility to employers and has resulted in a diminished role for the Trade Union movement, has particular relevance in its implications for school leavers. Minimum wages are not guaranteed for employees who are under twenty years of age. Additionally, in the setting up

of individual contracts, young workers who have little knowledge of relativity and entitlements are at a distinct disadvantage in the bargaining process. As examples emerge of exploitation of young workers in the workplace (Service Workers Union, 1993) school leavers have become aware of their vulnerability should they wish to join the workforce straight from school. Thus, the policy behind the implementation of the Employer Contact Act discourages young workers from entering the workforce.

Nash argues that youth unemployment 'is not so much unemployment as it is exclusion from permanent employment and an on/off involvement with the secondary sector of the labour market'.

> Typically, young people in this sector move several times in the course of a year from employment to unemployment to an ACCESS course and so on. It is as if these young people were being put into a holding pattern and so long as they can keep circling around and retain their work habits more or less intact (which is essentially what ACCESS schemes are intended to ensure) it is probable most will find permanent jobs within a few years (Nash, 1990: 125).

While it is unlikely that most of the young people in this study will be registered as unemployed, it will be argued in the next section that they are presently being excluded from permanent employment in the way that Nash describes. Nash (1990: 126) writes of the unfairness of policies which manage created unemployment, allowing 'market forces to dump it on those who have the least responsibility for creating it and the least capacity to cope with it as individuals.'

Dale, drawing on the work of Claus Offe develops this idea further:

> ---the irrational limitation of individual capitals concerning their particularised and short-term realisation interests prevents 'long-term planning of the conditions for the survival and expansion of the

> capitalist mode of production'. Hence there has become established within the framework of the state apparatus 'the logic of the compensatory plugging of functional holes'--- (Dale, 1982: 132).

While temporary work and skills schemes have been recognised by some as 'compensatory plugging of functional holes' (Nash, 1990; Korndorffer, 1987; Gordon, 1990), tertiary education has not been seen in quite the same light. The following chapter will argue that policies which encourage extended schooling and tertiary education, while ostensibly being about upskilling educating young people to be more productive participants in the workforce, are also directed towards forstalling their entry to the workforce while at the same time maintaining skills and habits necessary to labour market participation.

Chapter Four
Education and Work

Links between education and work were obscured in times of full employment. A liberal approach to education was evident in the belief that equal opportunities were available to all and that the route to upward mobility was through education. 'This dominant ideology was premised on individualism and a view of education as allowing individuals to develop to the fullest extent of their powers' (Shuker 1987 :68).

The tension between two views of education among policy makers; education for democracy and education for technological development is longstanding (Corson, 1988). A democratic view of education places the needs of the individual at the forefront of policy and is premised on the view that education is a human right; that education allows individuals to develop their potential and to thus become better participants in their society. The 'democratic' view of education predominated in New Zealand throughout the 1960s and 1970s and is indeed evident in The Curriculum Review (1986).

The technocratic approach to education, particularly in the post compulsory sector, is increasingly predominant. From this perspective, education is a means to an end. Although there may be some human goals, the purpose of education and the end result is seen to be direct and linear i.e linked to the skills required in the labour market. Therefore, Science and Technology, which are seen as essential to the growth of the economy have a higher value placed on them by policy makers, schools and universities (Stevens, 1993: 169).

As unemployment has increased, educational institutions have been targeted as being largely responsible for the 'mismatch' of skills evident in the labour market and for the lack of workers who are able to adapt to the 'new'

economy. 'Learning for Life' (Goff, 1989) highlighted the need for an approach which linked all areas of education (but particularly the Post Compulsory Education and Training sector; now known as **PCET**) to the needs of the labour market. Hence, the technocratic function of education takes precedence.

It is argued by some, that despite liberal rhetoric, the primary function of education has always been linked to the economy and the workforce that services it. Bowles and Gintis (1976) suggest (rather extremely) that there is a fundamental and inevitable link between schooling and the economy. Educational institutions are seen as fairly passive instruments of the state that serve to reproduce the stratified division of labour essential to the maintenance of a capitalist mode of production. The structures imposed on the institutions are

> part of the institutional state apparatus through which the dominant capitalist classes maintain their postition of power and privilege (Codd, 1987 : 32).

Dale (1982 : 136) in arguing that education is primarily linked to the needs of the economy, observes rather cynically that the humanist approach to education, or 'education for personal development' is an example of lip service paid to educational, rather than technocratic goals by welfare state apparatus in its bid to 'buy loyalty' and provide a societal context conducive to the accumulation of capital. Despite policy documents having liberal principles (and indeed,the culture and history of the welfare state as discussed in the previous section has prevented alternative principles from being acceptable to society), the reality has been that principles of equality of opportunity and the right of all children to have the type of education most suited to their own personal development have not been realised. Instead, the hierarchical structures conducive to the accumulation of capital have continued to be perpetuated.

Direct correspondence between education and economic reproduction as proposed by Bowles and Gintis (1976) is not accepted as a tenet of this thesis and indeed, correspondence theory never did become credible to any great degree. The work of Paul Willis (1978) and other cultural theorists soon superseded deterministic theories. Rather, the view is held that individuals are instead endowed with choice, with the ability to actively make decisions within the context of their own experience, rather than actions being determined by the economic base. This view will be developed further in a later chapter. Nor is it accepted that education need be either democratic or technocratic. With some degree of honesty, it is possible to see both approaches as educational goals.

Nevertheless, a clear belief has emerged this decade that a better educated workforce is the key to economic prosperity (Treasury 1987: 274) and that the gap must be closed between 'the world of learning and the world of earning' (Employers Federation 1989). The establishment, following the tertiary reform arising from the 1989 document 'Learning for Life II ' of a labour market policy unit within the policy division of the Ministry of Education has the intention of placing emphasis on employment and labour market needs throughout the entire education process and in particular the post-compulsory education sector.

> All PCET curriculum is expected to address the connecting link between general education and the world of work, to ensure a broad career perspective and understanding for every student
> (Goff 1989 :41).

In discussing the need for a better educated workforce, statistics have been produced that demonstrate that compared to other OECD countries, New Zealand students emerge from the education system poorly qualified. (Catherwood 1985, Treasury 1987, Hawke 1988, Goff 1989, Porter 1991).

The fact that countries, such as Japan, which have a more highly qualified workforce and greater participation rates of young people in post school education also have a high GDP per capita suggests a 'cause and effect' to these commentators. Those young people who are most 'at risk' from unemployment are also those who are less well qualified. Therefore, it is suggested that increasing the level of training and education of those 'at risk' will then reduce unemployment and result in a higher GDP per capita.

The technocratic approach to education arising from these reports has, therefore, economic objectives. By acquiring skills, young people become the means of achieving economic ends, which in turn ensures the continuation of the mode of production and the opportunity for the accumulation of profit.

As part of the restructuring of the tertiary sector the New Zealand Qualifications Authority was developed to rationalise the previous system of educational accreditation and qualification. It was envisaged that the new body would place emphasis on competency, rather than norm based assessment, would recognise prior learning, make qualifications more portable and ensure that qualifications were more closely linked to the labour market and employment opportunities.

> The establishment of NEQA (sic) reflects the desire for an across the board approach which will link all sections of PCET to national needs and local initiatives (NEQA manager 1990: Conference Notes).

It could be argued that it is of benefit that all qualifications approved by NZQA, no matter how small, will be able to be absorbed into a national qualification and will have central recognition. However, there are several difficulties with the line of reasoning that 'qualifications' are the answer; that a more highly qualified workforce is better placed to overcome a 'mismatch of skills' in the labour market. Shirley et al point out that other factors need to be considered.

> In order to mimic Japan's achievements (should New Zealand wish to do so) it would be necessary to adopt similar forms of social organisation. Factors such as the sexual division of labour, the lifetime corporate allegiance to a particular company, the excessive and damaging competition for educational qualifications, high levels of pollution and wildly inflated land prices may not be desirable to the New Zealand public. (Shirley et al, 1990: 103).

It is therefore questionable whether it is possible to prove that there is a direct linear correlation between the qualifications of young people; their participation rate in further education and GDP per capita, as no causal relationships can be established. In New Zealand third formers remaining at school until the seventh form rose from 14.5% to 44% between 1980 and 1992. New polytechnics were built to accomodate the demand of increased participation in vocational institutions while universities also saw increased numbers. The percentage of 18 to 24- year-olds in training or education increased from 22% to 31% over the last five years (Dept Statistics 1992). Certainly, GDP has increased in that time, but so has the national debt and along with it, unemployment.

In most OECD countries during the second half of the 1980s, unemployment fell, except in New Zealand, Belgium, The Netherlands, Britain, Canada and Denmark; unemployment doubled in New Zealand during that period (Shirley et al, 1990:16). Therefore, any argument that increased educational qualifications and unemployment is inextricably linked cannot be sustained, while an increase in GDP does not necessarily mean an increase in wealth per capita.

Similarly, there is no evidence to support the notion that students who do remain at school longer are any more endowed with the skills of reasoning, communication etc (skills required within the new economy) than those who do not. Certainly, the number of students gaining such qualifications as School Certificate and 6th Form Certificate has risen in recent years, but it is

debatable to what extent intangibles such as reasoning, creativity, adaptability etc are measured by these examinations.

It is suggested by Shirley et al (1990: 103) that 'the inferred level of these qualities (i.e reasoning, creativity, adaptability) may have more to do with the class, gender and ethnic background of the person than with schooling achievements'. Bourdieu (1976) argues that the school rewards those students who reflect the values that the school prefers. These values are defined by those with the power to dominate the processes of the school. Therefore recognition of these attributes at post school level is likely to be a subjective process and one which reflects the preferences of employers. As most employers are white, male and middle class, not all will benefit uniformly by using these attributes as a yardstick.

Snook (1989) questions the ethics of encouraging young people to remain at school longer and to undergo further training in the belief that by so doing they will obtain the skills that will land them a job. He draws the distinction between qualifications, which are obtained after a period of training and equip a person with the skills to do a particular job, and credentials, which do not qualify a person to do anything specific, but indicate that a person has attained a certain degree of knowledge.

Snook uses Australian data to argue that credentials add little to the employment prospects of the young person, and when gained, bear slight resemblance to skills required in the workplace. He argues (1988: 216) that in fact the percentage of the workforce that have no qualifications (or credentials) corresponds closely to the percentage of the unemployed who have no qualifications. Therefore lack of further education cannot be the sole reason that the unemployed find themselves in that position.

The concept of 'credential inflation' is used by Nash (1990) to show that since

1963, credentials such as 6th Form Certificate have been declining in value as more students stay on at school to gain 'qualifications'. Therefore, as fewer jobs become available and school leavers prepare themselves to compete for those jobs, the rationale that the better qualified they are, the better their chance for a job seems fairly watertight. But as Nash points out, employers, when faced with an array of job applicants who have similar qualifications, then utilise other criteria to select the most appropriate person for the position.

> The number of further education positions or jobs is now less than the credentialled school-leavers, and in this situation, other 'qualifications' become increasingly relevant. At the extreme: if all have equal credentials, then credentials will count for nothing. In any case, the lower the level of educational credential held, and the less the preferred the division of labour, the more important factors other than educational credentials have always been (Nash, 1990: 120).

However, despite the ethics involved in encouraging young people to stay longer in education and training in the hope that it will land them a job, other policy measures have ensured that the number of young people remaining at school and going on to further training and education would increase. Changes to the welfare system have removed eligibility to the unemployment benefit to those under the age of eighteen years and requires a six month stand down period before eligibility to the benefit can be established for any one over that age. Therefore, the choice of whether or not to participate in further education and training has effectively been removed.

Policies, whether coercive or persuasive that 'encourage' young people into further education and training have technocratic goals, although these are often couched in democratic language. ACCESS was the 1987 Labour Government's scheme, introduced with the purpose of being a 'labour market training programme that aimed to improve the job prospects of unemployed people, especially those who were disadvantaged in the labour

market and for whom traditional training methods were unsuitable or unavailable' (Stevens 1993:168). On the one hand, ACCESS had the goals of providing labour market job skills and maintaining regular work habits and on the other hand, had the aim of developing personal qualities and competency in the everyday world (Nash 1988: 31).

Yet, there is a disjunction between these two goals. Young people who are maintaining habits of 'doing what they are told' in order to be available for work when (or if) they are required, are being taught to adapt to their situation. On the other hand, the language of democracy which speaks of 'developing personal qualities and competency in the everyday world' suggests empowerment of the individual to act on the world and change it. These two contradictory goals do not sit comfortably together.

It is has been shown that any link between education and training for young people and increased productivity cannot be sustained (Gordon, 1989). Korndorffer (1988 : 221) argues that policies aimed at keeping young people in education and training are a 'direct response to the collapse of the youth labour market in New Zealand' and are more about maintaining a ' "work ethic" and a set of common sense cultural attitudes towards work, when work in its traditional sense is not available.'

The state is faced with a dilemma if young people are no longer under the influence of the school and are not in employment. Diori, (1987: 106) in examining the Interim Report of the Government Committee on Transition Education (1985) notes the recommendation of this committee that community training centres be set up for unemployed young people who may not wish to be involved in further training. Diori suggests that this conveys the belief that 'the space between school and work is seen as dangerous and formless, and as generating in the young person a need for assistance and special supervision around which to structure his or her life'. The removal of

the unemployment benefit for young people has ensured that this 'dangerous, formless space' is controlled and a 'work ethic and a set of commonsense cultural attitudes towards work' maintained.

However, the manner in which cultural attitudes towards work are developed and maintained are not imposed unproblematically on young people. The processes by which young people, in conjuction with their families, their teachers and their tutors, seek to best prepare themselves for the gap between school and work will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five
Decision making processes and rational choice.

The collapse of the youth labour market and consequent policies developed to divert young people away from the labour market have impacted differently on various groups of young people. Maori and Pacific Island young people and those from lower socio economic groups are over represented in unemployment statistics. Despite the development of policies to provide equity of access to further tertiary education, the number of Maori and Pacific Island students entering these institutions is disproportionate, although a marked increase has been evident over the last few years (Ministry of Education, 1993).

In an analysis of 'why working class kids get working class jobs' (Willis 1977) (or indeed, no jobs at all) Nash (1990) suggests that five concepts need to be examined as contributing to the processes by which students achieve their post school destination. These include: family reproduction strategies; credentialism; labour segmentation; youth sub-cultural production and rational choice theory.

Credentialism and labour segmentation have been considered in the previous chapters. The remaining three processes provide a useful framework in which to discuss the decisions that young people make about what they will do in the post-compulsory school years.

5 : 1 Family reproduction strategies

The work of Pierre Bourdieu was influential in drawing attention to the family and to the mechanisms by which it socially and economically reproduces itself. He argued that as the structure and capital base of the family was changing in terms of the decline of inherited wealth and private family

businesses, education was a necessary requisite for family reproduction. Bourdieu (1974) used the concepts of habitus and cultural capital to explain how families reproduce themselves, using the resources that they possess. These resources include actual capital resources (land, money, business), social networks, and knowledge (specialist and cognitive). The latter resource is extended by Harker (1990) to explain Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and as well as knowledge, includes 'tacit understandings, style of self-presentation, language usage and values'. This is embodied in the individual as habitus.

An industrialised society such as ours is unequal as it is dependent on a hierarchical division of labour to maintain the mode of reproduction. Therefore, it follows that resources are distributed unevenly among families. The dominant group in society are those who are well-resourced and have the power to allocate further resources to themselves. Similarly, families also are endowed with cultural capital. Bourdieu argues that education is a cultural resource that is allocated to the dominant group as it reflects the 'tacit understandings', the language usage and the values of this group. There is, therefore, a continuity in habitus in the education system for those in the upper and middle class, and a lack of it for the remainder. Harker (1990) discusses the implications for the lack of continuity of habitus from the family to the education system for Maori students.

The importance of education as a resource to the dominant group, the white middle class, is related to the part that they play in the mode of production. Codd et al describe it thus:

> The people who manage the productive process, as well as those who advise them, must be informed by a world-view which can make sense of such abstract phenonema as international trade relations, legal or financial transactions and the electronic processing of information. Although an essential element of this consciousness is formed within families, it is finally realised within the education system, where it is

> selectively structured and embodied in particular individuals as symbolic capital (Codd et al, 1990: 10).

Therefore, those who enter the education system better resourced are likely to see a greater return for their investment. In a society that can support only so many managers, lawyers, accountants etc, some will inevitably miss out. Those who do so will be the poorly resourced, those who do not have the power to allocate resources to themselves. In a society that espouses egalitarian values, there are problems arising from this tendency of families to reproduce themselves and consequently maintain inequality.

Within families, sons have tended to be better resourced than daughters (a legacy of such times as the son being the major inheritor of family capital), the upper and middle class better resourced than the lower class. This was particularly so in the habitus that they inherited, an ethos of defined values, which continued to be reinforced and developed within the education system. For as Bourdieu suggests,

> social advantages or disadvantages have gradually been transformed into educational disadvantages as a result of premature choices which directly linked with social origin, have duplicated and reinforced their influence (Bourdieu, 1974: 36).

Bourdieu (1974 : 33) states that the choices made are 'largely an expression of the system of explicit or implied values which they have as a result of belonging to a given social class', and that 'parental choice is in most cases determined by real possibilities'.

Nash (1993) utilises Bourdieu's conception of the class resourced family in researching family based educational inequality in New Zealand. While rejecting Bourdieu's theory of habitus as fundamentally deterministic, Nash retains the core of Bourdieu's work, and the research is based on 'a realistic

approach that focuses on the effective practices and material resources of agents at different sites and attempts to show how the effects of their actions constitute social practices with a material reality' (Nash, 1993: 37).

And so, the perception that different groups of people have of their 'real possibilities' constrains the choices that they make. A study conducted by Lauder et al (1990) indicates that the structures of a labour market, 'segmented by race, class and gender' influences the choices of individuals. Therefore, it is not surprising to find in their study, evidence of family reproduction at work in the education system. Firstly, those in the upper and middle class capture the bulk of the higher qualifications at secondary school. Secondly, those from the working class who do gain such qualifications are less likely to go on to university- a necessary vehicle for upward mobility.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is useful to understand the differential achievement between classes and ethnic groups within the school and perhaps to understand why lower class and Maori students who obtain the necessary credentials at school, opt out of attending university. For despite their school success, they still own less in the way of 'cultural capital' than their counterparts. They still do not have the kin and social networks, or the actual capital resources to make such a choice a realistic one in light of the competition they would be up against in the world beyond educational institutions. Thus do families tend to reproduce themselves within the parameters of their existing resources.

5: 2 Sub-cultural production

Paul Willis' (1977) ethnographic study describes how some working class youth allow themselves to be directed into working class jobs. Willis' analysis of youth cultural practices sets out to show how 'the lads' made active decisions about their schooling. The learning and aspirations offered by the

school were rejected by these working class youth whose commonsense told them that their future was on the factory floor. In resisting the practices and of the school, they further consolidated their position as working class 'lads'.

A more recent New Zealand ethnographic study by Alison Jones (1991) looks at the differing classroom experiences of Pacific Island and Pakeha girls within an Auckland High School and the processes by which the middle class, pakeha girls are 'rewarded' within the school environment and the Pacific Island girls are not. However, rather than suggesting that Pacific Island girls then go on to fail in school exams and to land unskilled manual jobs because that is their statistical 'fate' or because they reject the values of the school, Jones suggests that complex classroom practices and interactions (often directed by the girls themselves) mean that Pacific Island girls are deprived of receiving the same knowledge as the pakeha girls and more particularly, the abstract reasoning skills favoured in examinations.

The view of the school as neutral territory, as offering the same opportunity to all, encourages the individual deficit view.

> Because the girls perceived the school as offering opportunities to able and motivated individuals, when they did not do well in their examinations or left before they got the qualifications they wanted, they could only blame themselves and their own personal 'inadequacy' ('too dumb' 'couldn't be bothered' 'played up' 'couldn't hack it') (Jones, 1991: 149).

Jones (1991 :170) talks about the tension of encouraging students to do well at school in the belief that social mobility can be gained by hard work and educational qualifications on the one hand, yet on the other hand, the 'cooling down' action of a hierarchical work organisation filtering and restricting the number who will actually reach the top. Despite this contradiction, 'people's motivation must be maintained to avoid widespread apathy or unrest.' The fact that some students do 'make it' against the odds

serves to reinforce the view that individual effort is the key to future success.

This ideology of individual effort thus obscures real unequal structures of class, gender and race. Foucault (1979: 200) suggests that the production of scientific theories of individualism in recent times can be seen as a particular form of control. By isolating individuals and placing them in their own 'containers' while at the same time having a normative view of the self against which the individual is analysed and exposed (the worker, the student who succeeds in exams etc) 'one is totally seen without ever seeing'. The liberal view can then be seen as a technique of discipline, obscuring a view of the 'whole' and diminishing the possibility of collective action.

Sub-cultural explanations for the decisions that young people make about their future tend to portray young people as being unknowingly subservient to false ideas; to a hidden dominant ideology which serves to perpetuate power structures within society. Although individuals are seen to be actively making decisions, their reasoning is seen to be incomplete, or false because it is unknowingly based on parameters set in place and articulated by the ruling class. Thus reproduction occurs through hegemony, as dominant ideas pervade all facets of society.

5: 3 Rational Choice theory

The Russian developmental theorist, Vygotsky uses the concept of a structured environment (or zone of proximal development) to show how the self constructs his/her own self through rational self-dialogue. Valsiner (1988: 287) utilises Vygotsky's ideas and argues that decisions are made within a cultural milieu. Here culture is not viewed as static, but as 'undergoing constant change' as individuals act on the environment, and in turn, are influenced by the environment. Valsiner suggests that each person develops a personal culture which arises from the internalisation of shared meanings

of the collective culture. The collective culture is structured in accordance with its historical and cultural setting. As individuals reflect and act upon personal experience, the consequent external actions in turn 'meaningfully reorganise the physical environment'. Therefore, actions are rational as they utilise the available 'tools' within the known environment.

Understanding, then, is 'a conceptual system which is grounded in successful functioning in physical and cultural environments'; the world is understood through the interactions that individuals have with it (Lakoff 1980: 194).

From a sociological viewpoint, Boudon places this idea in a wider context and when discussing inequality of opportunity he argues that lack of social mobility is the result of a host of

> ---individual acts, which of course are not those of disembodied people but of individuals who are socially situated, in other words people who are part of a family and other social groups, and who have resources which are cultural as well as economic. Moreover, the choices which these individuals face are not abstract, but are choices the terms of which are fixed by specific institutions-for example, in the field of education; or by constraints-for example, the supply of and demand for skills in the context of career choices (Boudon 1989:7).

Therefore, Boudon sees the choices made by individuals as fully rational acts, as decisions that are made on the basis of available knowledge and personal experience. This knowledge will be incomplete, but it is not false as it makes sense in the context of the situation in which the individual is engaged.

Boudon (1989) suggests that situation effects (position and disposition effects), and communication effects form the frame of reference in which decisions are made. Situation effects are the viewpoint or social knowledge from which decisions are made. These effects consist of the knowledge

gained through the individual's position in the social order and the disposition effects, arising from the socialisation process of the individual (Codd, 1991:7). Communication effects are the degree of authority that is ascribed to knowledge by the socially situated individual.

The initial frame of reference 'which has been acquired in the home and school' assists in directing students towards different bands of occupations. Furlong (1987) argues that people gain impressions about themselves through making comparisons with significant others; the self image is developed by means of these relationships.

> Cooley (1922) describes this as the 'looking glass self' in that people see themselves reflected through their relationships with significant others, and these reflections enable them to test the validity of their beliefs.---it is important to remember that self concepts are not purely subjective constructs but develop out of a person's experiences within objective structures (Furlong, 1987: 59).

Therefore, individuals see different theories as providing a rational answer to certain problems or events, and adopt as truths knowledge or theories that make contextual sense, even though the tenets of the theory may not be in their best interests.

> A theory may be of interest to social actors not only because it offers a cognitive basis for action, but also because it helps solve ethical or deontological problems which are encountered in the normal course of fulfilling the actors' role. On the more general level, it may be of interest because it leads actors, in their view, to a better definition of the limits of their role, of the aims which can legitimately be achieved within this role, and of the means used to achieve them (Boudon, 1989:118).

Codd (1991) utilises Boudon's explanation of the limits of rational choice for socially situated individuals to demonstrate 'why it may be rational for some individuals to adhere to false or dubious neo-liberal theories and to support

anti-welfare-state policies that potentially could be contrary to their interests'. Thus, the discourse of New Right theory with its criticism of involvement by the state and the cost of government, gained ascendancy at a time of fiscal crisis when 'top heavy' government could logically be claimed to be draining the state. Similarly, in a climate of tight regulation and unpopular politics, 'individual choice' is able to emerge as a popular policy.

Nevertheless, even if a theory or policy does not seem to have popular support or to make complete sense, it will still be accepted if there is seen to be no logical alternative or if the ability to carry out any alternative is limited or impossible. Therefore, unequal structures are perpetuated with the consent of the populace, even though for many, it is not in their best interests. This, suggests Nash, has to do with the imperatives of credentiallism, labour market segmentation, family reproduction strategies, sub-cultural production and rational choice:

> ---class-located families, concerned to 'do the best' for their offspring, are engaged in practices of family reproduction (thus ensuring at the cultural level, social class reproduction); that the real (non-inflationary) distribution of credentials, which give access to the segmented labour market, is now virtually uncontrolled; and that the processes by which pupils are rationally allocated, or self-allocated---must be seen as complex processes of structured cultural production (Nash 1990: 127).

The following chapter will outline current issues in tertiary policy, and the 'commonsense' official discourse utilised in policy documents and political 'speak' will be discussed. As the experiences and decision making processes of the young people in this study are outlined, these theoretical issues will form a framework in which to consider the trajectories chosen by each student.

Chapter Six
Policy Issues

When discussing current tertiary policy, it is necessary to consider it within a context of recent educational reform, and wider still, in a context of national reform and restructuring. Roper et al (1993) argue that in order to gain a full appreciation of the philosophy and implication of reform, it is necessary to locate the changes in the structure of government in the particular trajectory of historical development in that country.

The previous chapter has discussed the wider socio-economic and political context in which current tertiary policy has evolved. The purpose of this section is to give a descriptive account of policies which have significance for this research.

It was the first Labour Government of 1935 that consolidated an approach to education and other social policy which had been evolving from the late 19th Century. Peter Fraser's 1939 declaration of the right of each individual to a free and appropriate education was to set the tone and societal expectations of education for the ensuing decades. The role of the state was to provide for the benefit and needs of all its citizens through state funded and bureaucratised institutions.

However, within the last ten years, since the election win of the fourth Labour Government in 1984, there has been dramatic restructuring within the state sector in New Zealand. Among the initiatives have been (Tobias, 1988:54)

> a reduction in the scope of the provision of state services and of state expenditure on the provision of these goods and services, the promotion of 'user-pays' policies in order to increase revenue to the state, the introduction of a greater measure of commercialism and managerial accountability within the state services, the creation of state owned enterprises which are being placed on the same operational footing as private-sector enterprises, and the promotion of greater flexibility in the negotiation of wages in the labour market.

The application of these initiatives to tertiary policy will be clearly evident when they are discussed in light of the political, social and economic issues raised in the previous chapters. However, these changes were not evident in education policy until the period following the 1987 re-election of the Labour Government. The new Labour Minister of Education in 1984, Russell Marshall, had an educational philosphy that 'was a liberal progressivist one with an emphasis on individual needs and a modern pupil-centred curriculum' (Snook, 1989: 5). The Curriculum Review, (1986) produced policy statements reiterating a traditional Labour approach to education and there was a degree of harmony between the Minister, the teachers' unions and the state Department of Education.

At the same time, Ruth Richardson, the National spokesperson on education slated the performance of Russell Marshall and advocated a market approach to education in line with other reforms in the public sector. 'Local control, teacher accountability, decentralised financing and national standards of attainment' achieved through the mechanism of a voucher system and unrestricted by state bureaucracy were the basis of her proposed policies (Snook, 1989).

As the economic reforms (as outlined previously by Tobias) began to result in restructuring of the state sector, attention was centred on a number of reviews of tertiary education which were undertaken throughout the 1980s. These included:

1980-1982	University Review Committee (Professor Brownlie)
1983	OECD assessment of the N. Z education system
1985	Combined Dept. of Education/University Grants Committee/Treasury Review
1986	Audit Office Review

1986	Beattie Report on Research and Development
1986	Vice Chancellors' review of New Zealand Universities (Watts Report)
1986	The Probine-Fargher report on polytechnic education and training.

Boston (1988: 8) suggests that behind these reports was strong governmental concern about the relatively few people in higher education in comparison with other OECD countries; the high cost of tertiary education in comparison with other education groups; despite low comparative participation in tertiary education, a rapid increase in demand for tertiary places with a changing pattern of courses in demand; the desirability of 'selling' education to foreign students. However, the above reports were not instrumental in bringing about any significant policy change.

6:1 The Tertiary Review

A review of tertiary education was begun in February 1987, with the statement by Russell Marshall that

> The fourth Labour Government has made the improvement of economic productivity and social equity matters of priority. Tertiary education has a pivotal part to play in this process by contributing to the provision of a skilled workforce and ensuring that available jobs can be distributed equitably amongst all social groups (Tertiary Review, 1987: i).

The main issues to be considered in this review were the requirement for tertiary education to be

-responsive to the needs of the individual, society and the workplace
-effective and efficient in meeting those needs
-accessible in general terms and in terms of social equity

-resourced in order to establish and maintain an effective knowledge base
-able to equip students with credentials which reflect their attainments and are recognised by employers
-accountable for its educational achievements and use of resources and, wherever possible, be decentralised (Tertiary Review, 1987).

The closing date for submissions for this review was 1st June 1987. But before the review was developed into a policy document, the 1987 election intervened.

Following the 1987 election, the then Prime Minister David Lange conferred upon himself the education portfolio. Russell Marshall was on the receiving end of a conservative backlash following the publication of 'The Curriculum Review' in 1986, and it would appear that David Lange had a different agenda for educational reform than that envisaged by Russell Marshall.

6:2 The Treasury Report- Government Management Brief to the incoming Government Vol II, Wellington, The Treasury, 1987.

The 'opening of the books' exercise of 1987 initiated the production of the Treasury document 'Government Management Volume II: Education Issues'. Within this document it was claimed that a liberal humanist approach to education had not worked in promoting social equity, nor had it been effective in turning out a product that was equipped to participate in and contribute effectively to an increasingly technological and competitive workforce. Instead, education had been allegedly captured by the middle class who was therefore absorbing most of the resources at the expense of those who needed them most. It was suggested that the education sector should be reorganised in order to cater for more people more effectively.

The Treasury statement on education was the second volume of a document that looked at across the board social issues. Of particular note within the

whole document was the discourse that was developed in relation to the nature of society, social relations, human nature and individualism. The philosophical underpinnings of Treasury's arguments with regard to tertiary education are described by Boston as following a welfare economics framework defined in terms of the following six assertions:

1. Tertiary education is not a merit good or positive right.
2. Tertiary education yields both consumption and investment benefits to the consumer.
3. Individuals are the best judges of their own interests or welfare, even if subject to bounded rationality.
4. Individual's external preferences (that is, what they want for others or society as a whole) are irrelevant for policy purposes.
5. Broadly speaking, relative prices within the economy are correct; and
6. Average course costs in the tertiary sector are less than or equal to the marginal costs (Boston, 1990:165).

Based on these assertions and the assumption that individuals act in their own self interest, it was concluded by Treasury that

> The general availability of government funding for all students is liable to be inefficient and inequitable. As long as private returns to tertiary education exceed public returns, the demand for tertiary education, if fully met, is liable to produce inflation in credentials, increasing costs in the economy and disadvantaging those who do not join the paper chase. Hence, for the generality of students, only limited government subsidy to reflect general social benefits not captured by the individuals concerned can be justified as possibly effective and not grossly inequitable (The Treasury, 1987 Vol II: 286).

Therefore, Treasury was suggesting more association between 'who pays and who benefits and between who benefits and who chooses', to increase efficiency and equity. Students who are able to should pay a higher proportion of their course costs; a course bringing high personal returns should cost the individual more; allowances should be targeted to those most

in need. In line with its general philosophy, Treasury argued that 'excessive' government intervention reduced freedom of choice and weakened the ability of the individual to be responsible for his/her own actions.

Although not a policy document as such, "Treasury-speak" i.e neo-liberal discourse, was to be evident in subsequent policy. As Snook (1989: 6) suggests 'doubtless, many in the government were impressed *(by the Treasury arguments)* and, more practically, at least one Treasury official was involved in all the subsequent reviews of education'.

6:3 The Picot Report
Administering for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education.

The Picot committee was formed in 1987 with a view to recommend measures for the administrative reform of compulsory education. It is argued by Nash (1989: 116) that the terms of reference of this committee were couched in distinctive Treasury terms, although at the same time there was an evident commitment to traditional Labour values of equality in education.

In summary, 'Picot saw the (existing) system as too centralised, its administration as too complex and divided, and argued that a lack of information and choice, ineffective management practices, a wide-spread sense of "powerlessness", and "consumer dissatisfaction and disaffection" had resulted from these basic problems (McCulloch, 1990: 63). Of particular attraction to groups who gathered to discuss and make submissions in reply to the discussion document was the emphasis that schools should be responsive to, and administered by their communities. Thus there was to be a reduction of central state services and advisory services available on a 'user pays' basis to schools. The point of connection between the school and community was to be a charter.

The reforms recommended in 'Administering for Excellence' and translated into policy statements in 'Tomorrow's Schools' were to further set the scene for tertiary reform and the reform of the early childhood sector.

6:4 The Hawke Report

In 1988, Professor Gary Hawke of the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University was contracted to head a team of consultants to 'bring together' all the reports on tertiary education since 1980 'and to present a comprehensive framework for a new and simplified system' (Goff, 1989:11). The terms of reference to be considered included

-the role of post-compulsory education and training in the social and economic life of New Zealand
-how to increase the provision of post-compulsory education and training while fairly apportioning the cost
-the role of central government in the sector
-the need for greater equity, both in terms of access to post-compulsory education and training and in the terms of the way it is delivered to all those wishing to participate
-the need for efficient and effective delivery mechanisms
-the establishment of more appropriate management structures
-the development of national certification arrangements.

The recommendations of the Hawke Report formed the basis for public submissions and comment. Contentious issues, such as a proposed graduate tax (loan scheme) and a higher fees regime, signalled to many educators an end to Peter Fraser's concept of 'free education' as a universal right linked with personal and intellectual development and instead, education was seen to have been reconverted to a 'product' to be managed effectively and efficiently (MacGregor, 1990: 10).

6:5 Learning for Life I and II

Cabinet considered the public submissions and the recommendations of the Hawke Report and brought together their discussion document 'Learning for Life'. Seventeen formally established working parties and some less formal groups were set up to report on different aspects of 'Learning for Life'. The working groups generally consisted of around ten members, and were fairly well balanced in terms of gender and ethnicity. Each group was tasked to consult with a wide range of councils, committees and departments, signalling the Government's stated commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and to equity issues.

Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and schools were previously administered by the Dept of Education. Universities were relatively autonomous, or were at least separated from direct departmental control by the University Grants Committee. 'Learning for Life: Two' states that the broad thrust of tertiary reform

> is that more responsibility for decision making should rest with the institutions, that they will be able to use their resources as they see fit to achieve their agreed objectives, that broad direction will be through charters and corporate plans and that new procedures will be established to ensure accountability. Charters, corporate plans, bulk funding, transfer of assets and accountability are all interdependent elements of the Learning for Life system (Learning for Life: Two, 1989: 30).

In addition to this restructuring, several central agencies were created which linked PCET firmly to the world of work; The New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Training Support Agency and The Vocational Guidance and Careers Advisory Agency (next known as QUEST RAUPARA but now as Careers Advisory Raupara). The functions of these bodies was set out in the education amendment act.

Education Amendment Act

The final policy document 'Learning for Life: Two' was published in August 1989. An omnibus Bill to activate the system was introduced 29 March 1990 and the Education Amendment Act passed into legislation July of that year.

The Education Amendment Bill was regarded by educationalists to be flawed and not reflecting the overall thrust of 'Learning for Life' (Crozier 1990). When it was reported back to Parliament on 21 June it contained some 103 pages of amendments.

Of particular concern was the proposed shift in control from local governance to more centralised political control. A reading of the proposed legislation revealed extraordinary powers vested in the Minister of Education. Universities expressed concern at the power given to the Minister to determine the composition of Tertiary Councils and to be able to dismiss council members. Councils' powers in approving courses to be provided at an institution were to be 'subject to the powers of NEQA, (and) the power of the minister to direct a particular institution not to provide a particular course' (Section 209). In addition, NEQA had the right of direct entry to an institution and the right to remove student writings etc from the premises in order to monitor courses.

After fierce lobbying, there were significant amendments to the previous Bill, including a transferring of some of NEQA's (now NZQA) powers to the New Zealand Vice Chancellor's Committee (particularly in the area of setting and conducting examinations) and more freedom in the appointment of councils and tertiary staff.

Legislation pertaining to eligibility to Student Allowances was introduced 23rd July 1990 and is contained in Section 304 of the 1989 Education Act. This was amended December 1991 and again on 25 June 1993 as Social Welfare benefit eligibility criteria have altered.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

The rationale behind the establishment of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (originally NEQA National Education Qualifications Authority) was concern at the previous system of educational accreditation and qualification. These concerns included:

-a plethora of examining and certifying authorities
-emphasis on norm-referenced rather than on achievement or competency based assessment
-uneven response to the changing nature of society and the pace of technological change
-large numbers of certificates without national recognition
-lack of portability of qualifications
-a highly structured and frequently inflexible system of courses
-a mismatch between skills and employment opportunities
-lack of articulation between various sectors of PCET
-difficulty of access to PCET for certain groups
-lack of coherent information through much of the system which frustrates choice (NEQA manager, Conference Notes, 28 April 1990).

The purpose of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) therefore, is to attain an 'across the board' approach to accreditation which links all sections of PCET to 'national needs and local initiatives (NEQA 1990)- in consultation with the labour market policy unit of the Ministry of Education.

In the document 'Building the Framework' (NZQA 1992) it is suggested that a national certificate and diploma be introduced, which has different levels of attainment within it. Any PCET provider (private i.e PTE or government GTE) is able to apply to NZQA for accreditation of the course run within its organisation and to have the resulting qualification assigned a 'level' within the qualifications framework. The Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith has

used the term 'seamless education' to describe how it is envisaged that students can begin completing modules toward their national certificate while still at school, and then to keep adding modules as they move on with various tertiary providers.

In keeping with the philosophy of choice and competition espoused by Treasury, the extension of the numbers and variety of providers was seen as having the ability to promote competitiveness between providers so that the quality of courses, and realistic pricing of them, are maintained (Peters, 1993).

Within each area of learning, there is a national standards body to set criteria for learning objectives within that area. 'The main tasks of these bodies are to set standards for qualifications and make decisions that ensure these standards are maintained and improved'. This is done within a framework of needs analysis which maps out the 'full sweep of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that need to be contained within qualiications' (NZQA, 1993: 4). It is acknowledged that within 'career' areas of PCET, industry will be the 'central player' in setting standards.

Section 233 of the Education Amendment Act provides for the members of NZQA to be appointed by the Minister of Education. Courses must be approved and registered by NZQA before they qualify for funding and can proceed. There is provision for NZQA to enter institutions at any time, to remove pieces of written work and to monitor quality of courses. Only institutions approved and accredited by NZQA can offer units and qualifications from the national framework. However, these functions are to be carried out in partnership with the Vice Chancellor's committee through a joint working group consisting of representatives from both groups. Thus, although policy would seem to indicate a 'freeing up' of the PCET sector in allowing diverse providers to provide courses and to set their own fees, ultimately, the degree of central control held by the Minister of Education and

industry is significant.

Training Support and Education Agency

The functions of the Training and Support Agency are set out in the Education Amendment Act and indicate that the purpose of the agency is to administer the ACCESS Training Scheme and the Apprenticeship Scheme. Neither of these schemes now exist. The Training Opportunities Programme (TOP) has replaced ACCESS and the Apprenticeship Scheme has been phased out.

NZQA has input into the accreditation functions of the Training and Support Agency and the TOP programme is now geared to offering linked courses that fit into the national qualifications framework, rather than 'one off' courses. 'In doing this, it is intended to allow trainees progressively to develop their skills for the employment market (Stevens 1993: 169). Local boards oversee the suitability of courses run to 'local needs and initiatives'.

TOP is targeted towards those who are seen to be severely disadvantaged in the job market and who did not benefit from the ACCESS programme; those with no school qualifications, no work experience, the long term unemployed etc. and offer them training courses of usually around three months duration. A wide variety of community and institutional groups have set themselves up as training providers under the wing of the Training and Support Agency.

Quest Raupara

Both the Training and Support Agency and the Vocational Guidance Service (QUEST) were previously under the auspices of the Dept of Labour. Within the Education Ministry, the role of QUEST is to

-provide occupational, education and training information
-provide training and consultancy for careers advisors, guidance and transition

-establish and operate a data base on vocational and careers information.

Over the last few years QUEST has undergone restructuring and a significant reduction in the funds available with which to function. As unemployment has continued to be a feature of the 'new' economy, providing funding for counselling people on how best to apply for non existent jobs has become a low priority.

6:6 Funding

Funding has become perhaps the major issue of tertiary reform and the policies associated with this have direct relevance to this research. The move in the manner in which education is viewed (from that of a public good, to one that brings private benefits) is reflected in funding policies. Therefore, rather than education being funded for all as a universal right, a 'user-pays' approach is in evidence.

The formula arrived at for bulk funding has been based on the 'nominal value of a full time-equivalent student' (EFTS) and the types of courses offered. Bulk funding is administered three yearly and actual yearly amounts supposedly adjusted to student numbers. This form of funding is common to both the labour administration that formulated the policy and the subsequent national government.

The Labour Government accepted the recommendations of the Hawke Report that students pick up 20% of their course costs and at the beginning of 1990, introduced a flat fee across all full time courses (excepting ACCESS and post-graduated research-oriented courses) of $1300. This was in contrast to the $259 fee that students had paid in 1989.

However, the government rejected the recommendation of using taxation as a method of collecting loan repayments as it was seen to be difficult to

administer and brought very little return revenue in the short term. Instead, it was anticipated that a state supported loan scheme at a zero interest rate be operated by banks and private lending institutions.

At this time, all tertiary students received a basic allowance of at least $46.00 a week. This was added to for those students living away from home, those travelling long distances daily to attend tertiary institutions, and those from low income families. The lower threshhold that catergorised a low income was $27,475. This universal allowance was seen as colateral in the taking of a loan. Before discussions with banks reached a conclusion, however, National came to power in the November 1990 election.

6:7 National's Tertiary Policy

National's election manifesto set out a skills policy which would be implemented should the party come to power.

> National's Skills Policy addresses an urgent need for action to lift New Zealand's performance in education and training (Smith, Feb 1990).

The Skills Policy was designed to introduce elements of

-**Flexibility**-so people have wider options to enter tertiary education and training situations at levels and through courses appropriate to their individual needs.

-**Portability**-so people can transfer easily between courses and institutions to earn recognised qualifications.

-**Qualifications**-so people can achieve a nationally recognised level of attainment through tertiary study and training.

-**Performance**-so New Zealand benefits from the effort to build the resource of skill needed to produce a high level of growth in a dynamic, modern economy.

Details of what were entailed were fairly sparse, but included the proposed 'scrapping' of Labour's tertiary fee, the introduction of a training opportunities programme that would supersede ACCESS and a scheme that would enable school leavers to undertake further education and training as 'of right' (Study Right). The additional cost of National's Skills Policy was put at $150 million.

The December 1990 Economic and Social Initiative Statements to the House of Representatives by the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Finance and Labour forecast policy changes contained in the 1991 Budget that were to impact on the degree of choice that young people had in entering further education and on the extent to which the government perceived that individuals should be picking up costs for their own education (and other social services).

> This Government believes that, in general, those individuals and families with reasonable means should attend to their own social needs (p. 20). Today, I am also announcing a number of changes to social policy that will restore integrity to the system and produce immediate fiscal savings (p. 24). The high cost of Government has stifled growth. It will be reduced (p.39) (Bolger, 1991).

The proposals for the reform of social assistance were underpinned by four key principles:

-**Fairness.** It is essential that adquate access to government assistance be available to those in genuine need, but those who can make greater provision for their own needs should be encouraged to do so.

-**Self reliance.** The design of Government programmes should not foster

dependency on state provision, but increase the ability and incentives to individuals to take care of themselves;

-Efficiency. Social services should be provided in a manner that ensures the quality and quantity of service represents the highest possible value from each tax dollar spend (sic) and;

-Greater personal choice. Alternative providers of health, education, housing, and welfare services will provide people with a wider choice to meet their needs (Bolger et al, 1990).

Although these broad principles appeared coherent in the context of the recent changes in the provision of social services, the definition of such terms as 'those in genuine need' and 'wider choice' were closely tied to targeting threshholds . Thus, it could be argued that subsequent policies scarcely met these objectives as they put user-pays charges on individuals who certainly didn't see themselves as being able to 'make greater provision for their own needs'. As the following discussion will show, young people in particular were then forced to re-evaluate their 'own needs' to correspond with what their families could afford.

Earlier in 1990, eligibility for the unemployment benefit was scrapped for young people under the age of 18 years. The December 1990 Economic statement announced the extension of the payment of the youth benefit rate (previously payable up to age twenty years) to twenty five years. All benefits were reduced to slightly less than the student allowance payable to specified full time students, in April 1991.

Following the December 1990 Economic Statement, a tertiary review group was set up to consider within three separate reviews, the organisational form of state tertiary institutions, the Study Right policy announced by the Government in the pre-election education policy and the equivalent full time

student (EFTS) funding system. The three reviews were guided by a set of common objectives which were in essence 'to identify opportunities for fiscal savings, and to develop a framework to encourage efficiency and responsiveness, while ensuring fairness of access to tertiary education' (Tertiary Review Group 1991: 3). These reviews were part of a number of reviews set up to review eucation generally. It was noticeable that the reviews were carried out in secrecy and without the input of educationalists (Peters et al 1992).

The Tertiary Review Group found that the Study Right policy as proposed in the National Party 1990 election manifesto was going to cost an additional $180-$380 million per annum; hardly conducive to fiscal savings (Boston, 1992: 188). So it was then necessary to come up with policies which gave some credibility to manifesto statements, but also achieved fiscal savings. At the same time, the Review Group expressed concern at the 'tradeoff' in encouraging young students into tertiary education at the expense of mature students and others needing to retrain.

The Tertiary Review Group reported to the Minister of Education in April 1991. Foreshadowed in these reports were also changes to student financing schemes (which were not addressed in the National Party 1990 election manifesto). These changes were to have more wide ranging influence on the decisions of students than the Study Right Scheme.

The 1991 July Budget contained the articulation of further changes in tertiary policy. These were outlined in the document 'Education Policy: Investing in People Our Greatest Asset.' A summary of the policies in this document are prefaced by the comment 'Through re-ordering priorities in education funding, the government will achieve its goal of maximising New Zealand's economic performance with a more highly skilled, better educated, and more adaptable workforce'.

Study Right

The main policy plank of the July budget was the introduction of the Study Right scheme, aimed primarily at raising the participation rates of 'young' New Zealanders in formal education and training. Therefore, it was envisaged that Study Right students (those under twenty two years on enrolment) would have 95% of their tuition fees subsidised by the Government for the first three full time years of tertiary study. For subsequent years of study, or for those over twenty two years, the subsidy would be 75%, although some research-based post-graduate students could also be eligible for a 95% subsidy. The policy became effective in the 1992 academic year, although the reduction in subsidy for 'mature' students was to be phased in over three years.

However, with the 1991 Budget, tertiary institutions were enabled to adopt their own pricing policies and were not bound to differentiate between Study Right and non-Study Right students although the two groups attract different levels of funding from the Government. Consequently, a number of universities have levelled fees across all age groups. Some institutions (including most polytechnics) continue to reflect the Government's intention of encouraging school leavers by having lower fees for this group.

With the 1991 Budget, the Government kept to its pre-election promise to abolish the $1300 standard tertiary course fee set by the previous Government. However, by then allowing institutions to set their own fees and funding them at a set level, the standard fee was replaced by one that will meet or have exceeded the standard fee by 1994 within most tertiary institutions.

The Review Group also recommended that a differential fee system be adopted that required fees to be set in manner which reflected more accurately the costs of the course. Therefore, students studying computer science, science, nursing etc should pay higher fees as their courses were

more expensive to run. The Tertiary Review Group also argued that higher costed courses usually brought a higher rate of private benefit in later years, therefore it was fair to charge higher fees for these courses (Boston, 1992: 196). However, it could be argued that 'low' cost courses such as law and accountancy also can bring a rate of private benefit, but that not all 'high' cost courses e.g nursing, have high financial returns.

Some universities (Otago, Massey) and most polytechnics have utilised a differential fee system over different courses. Therefore, at Otago University, a dentistry student eligible for Study Right, pays higher fees than an arts student eligible for Study Right. Within a polytechnic, a nursing student pays higher fees than a business studies student.

The previous fee rebate available to low income students ($130 payable for a full time course) was abolished and replaced by the Study Right Scheme for young students and some beneficiaries. However, those students attending institutions charging a flat fee over all age groups now had no fee relief.

Student Allowances

The universal student allowance of $46.00 per week was abolished in the 1991 Budget and was replaced with a tightly targeted allowance calculated on the basis of combined family income. Students under 25 years of age from families with a combined family income of less than $27,872 were to receive the basic rate of the youth unemployment benefit, or 80% of that if living in their parent's home. Students whose combined parental income was $27,872-$46,000 received an abated rate of allowance; the allowance abating 25c for every dollar above the lower threshhold. The upper level was increased to $50,000 for those students living away from home. Married students under 25 years of age, or those who could show that they had earned and lived independently of their parents for two years could apply to receive the same as the over-25 years student allowance (untargeted) which was equivalent to the adult unemployment benefit.

At the time of the 1991 Budget, the Government announced the intention to introduce a student financing facility in recognition that 'some students may face financial barriers to participation in tertiary education' (Smith 1991: 27). Although details were not announced at the time, it was clear that talk of allowing students to 'defer the costs of tertiary education until after the completion of their studies' referred to a loan scheme. The scheme was finally unveiled in November 1991 and was in place for the 1992 academic year.

Student Loan Scheme

The Student Loan Scheme, government run and quaranteed, allows students of all income groups to borrow to cover their tuition fees, up to $1000 associated costs (textbooks, software etc) and up to $4,500 (less any Student Allowance received) to cover living costs. The real interest rate is set at 6%. Once students earn above $12,670 per year, they are taxed an additional 10c per dollar for every dollar they earn above that amount.

In the first year of operation (the 1992 academic year) take up of the loan did not meet expectations. However, that trend was reversed in 1993 with 59, 246 students owing a total of $180,706,748.79 (as at 31st July), in student loans.

It has been suggested that the introduction of a loans scheme signals an eventual end to any sort of student allowance or targeted assistance (Corban 1992). Maori students have been able to apply for some reimbursement of fees through Te Puni Kokiri, thus quietening some concerns about equity of access. Nevertheless, the full Student Allowance was taken up by 24.6% of all students in 1992 at considerable cost (Boston, 1992).

Policy is formulated in a political, social and economic context. The key rationales in the forming of current tertiary policy have been driven by the

need for capital accumulation. Thus the fiscal concerns of the need to reduce funding (education expenditure quadrupled in the decade 1981-1991 MOE, 1992) and target it more effectively, particularly towards the development of a skilled workforce which is better able to meet the demands of a changing workplace have evolved to further the interests of capital. At the same time, on a more philosophical level, the assumption 'that tertiary education is a private satisfaction rather than a public good' means that the purpose of education is reduced to technocratic aims and considerations of equity and social responsibility 'collapse' (Peters at al, 1992: 140).

As the research undertaken for this thesis is described, it will be evident that policy decisions have very personal effects as they form part of the context in which young people plan their post school destinations. These decisions are not always concurrent with what was intended by the policy; thus does the state and its citizens engage in a dialectic relationship in which policy is created and recreated.

Part Two: The Case Study

Chapter Seven
Research Context and Procedures

7:1 The Research method

The objective of the current research is to examine the decision making strategies of senior school students and the influence that tertiary education policy and wider structural effects have on their post seventh form destinations. Tertiary education policy does not develop in a vacuum, but within a social, economic and political context. The context in which recent education policy has been formulated has been discussed in previous sections. However, incorporated within policy are values (arising from the policy context) which convey messages for individuals affected by the policy. Therefore, the research also aims to ascertain which policy messages have been absorbed by students and to evaluate the extent to which they have been acted upon by the students.

The research is based on the experiences of a small group of students in one state, coeducational, secondary school, who were in their final year of schooling. It is anticipated that the responses of these students, when studied in depth, can provide a framework for evaluating some aspects of Government tertiary education policy.

The implications and aims of the policy for these students are compared with the eventual outcomes in the following chapters. It is argued that the relationship between policy and outcomes is not direct and linear, but incorporates a dialectic process whereby students actively interpret the messages they perceive to be conveyed through policy, incorporate the perception that they have of those messages into their own experience, and then begin to rationalise and choose their future course of action. It is

suggested that this process varies for different students, depending on the context of their experience; the resources that they have available to them, their socialisation and the manner in which policy messages are conveyed to them.

Therefore, it was necessary to look 'in depth' at a number of students; to develop an understanding of their personal characteristics and the factors that influenced the way in which each arrived at their destination at the conclusion of their seventh form year.

A Case Study approach was used to carry out the research. The purpose of the case study method is described as 'to study intensively the background, current status, and environmental interactions of a given social unit: an individual, group, institution, or community' (Isaac and Michael 1985:48).

As it has been suggested previously, tertiary policy has been developed in a particular context. Therefore, the messages that the Government is conveying to young people in the form of policy is in response to a set of political and economic conditions. It was a concern of this research, therefore, to determine what messages were received by these young people and to what extent they were incorporated into individual decision making; how did students 'make sense' of the messages that they received and what was the individual frame of reference that students utilised in deciding what they would do in the year following seventh form?

Because of the time allotted to the research, it was decided to use open-ended interview techniques to gain information from students and to begin to build up a case history for each of them. However, from the beginning, the students were involved in the design of the research and although an opening question was prepared for each session, students had their own questions and issues that they felt they wanted to talk about. Therefore, the research process was very interactive. Also, the method of

recording interviews was decided collaboratively. Students did not want to be recorded on tape as they felt that this would inhibit what they would say. However, they appreciated that there needed to be a written record of our meetings but understood the confidential nature of anything that was recorded.

This empirical study set out to describe the process that each student underwent in the course of their seventh form year and was designed to provide illustrations of decision making from which wider inferences could be made. Utilisation of a case study approach allowed for in-depth study to be invested in each individual, thus making it more likely that contradictions and interactions would be revealed. A more generalised sort of research is not able to uncover these factors.

7:2. The context of the study.

The School

The school is a state, co-educational school, teaching students from Forms three to seven. The roll stands at around 900 and this includes 47% pakeha, 27% Pacific Island, 22% Maori and 4% Asian students. The roll has been as high as 1100, but as the city's population has aged, the number on the roll has declined. The recent report of the Education Review Office notes that the school's commitment to multi-cultural and mixed ability education is as strong as it was when the school was founded a decade and a half ago. The school's 1993 Prospectus Booklet maintains that 'Students are, therefore, given an excellent opportunity to develop an understanding of, and an insight into, cultures other than their own. The college emphasises pride in one's culture and tolerance of other people's.'

The charter mission statement of the school is

> To encourage and assist each student to achieve personal excellence- physical, social, intellectual (Appendix No. 10).

and arising from this statement are the school's aims which are: 'to develop to the fullest extent in each student:

* a sense of his or her own personal worth

* a personal morality based on a concern for, and a sensitivity to, others.

* basic literacy and numeracy as well as the ability to study independently, listen alertly, sympathetically and critically to others, and to communicate effectively with others in the widest variety of situations

* an understanding of the physical and social environment in order to enable each student to participate fully and constructively in a rapidly changing democratic society.'

Although the school tests reading and comprehension on entry, students are not streamed according to 'ability', a system which seems to have worked well with the less able students. Students are assigned a form class based on the number of years that they have attended secondary school and not reflecting the level at which they are studying. Nor is there any gender discrimination; all students may choose any course. The ERO report (1992) states that an excellent menu of courses is offered (see Appendix No. 10) and there are good relationships between staff and pupils. The school usually attains a School Certificate subject pass rate of around 50%.

The school draws 60% of its pupils from some 15 contributing schools in the immediate suburbs. The remaining 40% travel to the school from elsewhere in the district and some from the greater Wellington area. Since dezoning, students have been bussed to the school from the far side of the city where the housing is low to middle income and the secondary schools do not attain

as high School Certificate results as this school. The Maori and Pacific Island population of the school has thus increased since dezoning as parents seek to send their children to a 'better' school. Similarly, a large number of students from the middle to high income suburbs travel to single sex and predominantly European schools outside the city, thus bypassing this school.

In 1992, there were 156 students in the 7th form. Less than half, or 55 of those students were sitting Bursary in 1992 and of that number, 29 actually achieved an 'A' or a 'B' bursary. Ten others gained university entrance. The remainder of the 7th form was studying at 6th and 5th form level. As with the school population at large, the length of time that students remain at the school has increased. In New Zealand 3rd formers staying on until the 7th form rose from 14.5% to 44% between 1980 and 1992 (Ministry of Education, 1993).

The 7th Form consisted of 94 males and 62 females. Of the 156 students in the 7th form, 20% were Pacific Island, 7% Maori and 72% pakeha. The percentage of Maori students entering the 7th form is therefore greatly decreased in comparison to the number of Maori students in the school (22%). The percentage of pakeha students in the 7th form is greatly increased in comparison to the total proportion of pakeha students in the school (47%).

Although there were fewer females than males in the 7th form, the numbers of females taking science and maths subjects was still low comparatively. In the physics class of 20 students, 2 students were female while in the chemistry class of 11 students, 2 were female. Similarly, there were 6 female students in the calculus class of 26 students, and 14 out of the 46 students in the statistics class were female. The numbers of students taking science subjects overall is fairly small.

Communication between the school and parents is primarily through a

student planner in which information about homework, attitudes and special messages are written. There is also included in the planner general information about the school; a map, a list of key staff, requirements for study at 5th, 6th and 7th form level etc. Parents are encouraged to sign the planners once a week and to use them to explain absences etc. The teachers at the school feel that the planners work well in keeping important information together and in communicating with parents. However, they are not routinely signed once a week.

Reports on student progress are sent to parents each term and parent teacher evenings when parents are able to discuss progress with teachers are held twice a year, except at third form level, when they are held three times a year, the first session being six weeks following the beginning of the school year. The purpose of this meeting is an attempt on the part of the school to involve new parents in the life of the school and to inform them of important events and procedures. Teachers are encouraged to ring all parents of students in their form class before this, and other parent/teacher meetings.

Liberal Studies for 6th form students and Life Skills for 7th form students are programmed for two hours each week and are designed to 'prepare students for the new challenges of life when they leave school to enter the workforce or to continue study at the tertiary level' (1993 Prospectus). However, it is at the 6th form level that this is done primarily, when students compile a C.V, discuss career options, look at what is offered by the different tertiary providers. The Life Skills programme has included modules in exam preparation, rights and responsibilities in sexual relationships, sex education, parenting etc. However, a number of students indicated to me (Field notes, 2 June 1992) that they felt that the school didn't do a good job of 'linking' them into information about careers and courses and that it was difficult to get hold of information. They didn't realise that the school had the QUEST database; this was in the transition room and was used by the students in the transition

class.

Assemblies are the main forum for disseminating tertiary-related information to the 7th form. 7th form assemblies were held about once every three weeks in 1992 when this research project was in progress. The frequency has been increased in 1993. There is often a guest speaker at these assemblies; the liaison officer of a university or polytechnic, an ex-student from the school who is involved in a challenging aspect of tertiary study. Victoria University has a high profile during the course of the year. Trips are arranged to the polytechnics in the greater region and to Massey University for those students who wish to go.

School fees are kept to a minimum with an activity fee of $44 charged for one student and $70 for two or more students in the same family. In addition, fees are charged for those subjects which have a considerable 'take home' component e.g home economics, horticulture.

The school has a staff of 55 full time teachers and 6 part time teachers. Six of these teachers are Maori and four of the six are departmental heads. Four of the six departmental heads are male. In addition to the Principal, there is also a Deputy Principal and an Assistant Principal and a PR4 Admin. The school has an executive administration officer and an ancillary staff of 14. The gender mix of the teaching staff is equal, although there are more men teachers teaching mathematics and science subjects than there are women. However, the head of the science department is a woman.

The school has a regulation uniform which students in forms 3-6 must wear. All students must also play for a college team as an extra-curricular activity.

The Wider Community

As with the other cities in the greater Wellington area, the city in which the school is situated expanded rapidly in the Post-war period to house rural

dwellers seeking, and fulfilling a need for unskilled employment in a rapidly growing economy. From the early 1950s to 1965, the state erected thousands of houses in the area until in 1965 the population reached 20,000, thus giving it the status of a city.

Franklin (1978: 350) is highly critical of this rapid development. He talks of the lack of planning that resulted in a town centre 'deviod of any architectural interest', the 'vast low income and markedly Polynesian suburbs', and 'the slower development of employment opportunities and community facilities compared with the provision of housing'. As a consequence, the city was little more than a dormitory suburb, catering for 'mum-dad and-the-kids.' Towards the end of the 1960s, private developers began to move into the area north of the state housing blocks, erecting private dwellings for middle to upper income earners.

The city continues to house a young population, the largest group being that in the workforce age-group 15-59 years- 62.5% of total population (Dept Statistics 1992a). The ethnic mix is Pakeha descent 56%, N.Z Maori descent 13.5%, Pacific Island 19.5%, Other (predominantly Asian) 2. 3% and the remainder comprising of a mixture of ethnic descent (op cit). The combination of these factors has meant that the city has had a more rapid rate of population growth than that found nationally. The present population of the city is 46,221. Similarly, the population is comparatively mobile (Internal Migration Statistics 1992b).

In 1971, 69% of private dwellings were rented accomodation and 29.3% were owned with or without mortgage. In 1981, the story was quite different, with 42% of houses providing rental accomodation and 56% owned with or without a mortgage. In 1991, houses owned with or without mortgage consisted of 65% of private dwellings (Dept Statistics, 1992a). This reflected the expansion of the middle to high income suburbs north of the state housing blocks, and the gradual ageing of the population.

The 1991 census suggests that at that time only 19.4% of the city's earning population were receiving an income of more than $30,000. Women earnt less than men (op cit).

Unemployment has often been seen as a problem in the city, and yet, by national standards it is not disproportionate despite the young population. In 1991, 7% of the workforce was unemployed (Dept of Statistics, 1991a). Of concern, are the groups most affected by unemployment- women and ethnic minorities, and the young of these particular groups. The largest group of unemployed are those in the 20-24 years age group. Thus the city experiences 'pockets' of unemployment, concentrated mainly in the state housing blocks . A large number of training schemes tends to obscure the extent of real unemployment in the city.

The city has a polytechnic within its environs and a large shopping centre. New industries (manufacturing) are being established in the city, although a large number of residents commute a variety of distances to work outside the city. The city is well served by transport links to Wellington city, but the use of public transport is time consuming and costly.

The Students

The group of ten students participating in this research consisted of 7 females and 3 males. There was 1 female Maori student and 1 female Pacific Island student. Although the ethnic balance of this group did not reflect the population of the school at large, it was fairly indicative of the make up of the 7th form. An additional Pacific Island student would have balanced the group.

The group was not representative of the gender mix in the 7th form which consisted of 60% male and 40% female students. Although initially the gender mix would have been more indicative, once two male students were asked to leave the school, the students who actually stayed with the project

were predominantly female.

All of the group involved in the research were doing bursary subjects, although two of the females, the Maori and the Pacific Island student were also studying at 6th form level. Therefore, this group was not representative of the 7th form generally, where less than half of the 7th form were studying at bursary level. The three males were all doing science subjects, while one of three of the females was studying chemistry and mathematics. A further female was studying chemistry. These two students were therefore atypical of the majority of females in the 7th form. A number of the females and one male were studying Biology.

The majority of the 10 students were from middle to high income groups. One pakeha male and one pakeha female were from middle income groups while the Maori and Pacific Island females were from low to middle income groups.

7:3. Procedures

A Wellington college was identified which had a cross section of students i.e there was a range of socio economic and ethnic groups represented and the school was co-educational. Preliminary discussions with the Principal indicated that he was willing for 7th form students at the school to be approached to find out who might be interested in participating in the research, but permission needed to be sought from the Board of Trustees before a meeting could be convened with the students.

A letter was sent to the Board of Trustees February 1992 (see Appendix No. 5) and a favourable reply was received by telephone in March 1992. Discussions then commenced with the school's careers' adviser who had agreed to co-ordinate the project on behalf of the school. She was enthusiastic about the project and it also had the support of the 7th Form Dean. Initial student information and consent forms were set up to give to

students at the first meeting (see Appendix No. 6). It was decided that individual parent consent was not necessary as the Board of Trustees had given its consent on behalf of the parents it represented.

The initial meeting with students was 31st March with the form class of the careers' adviser during their form time. It was hoped that this class as a whole might participate in the research for ease of organisation. However, it was clear during the first session that this was not going to be viable. The teacher was new to the school and the pupils in her form class had not begun to form a cohesive unit. During the first form time that I attended, students wandered in and out and they chatted among themselves as the teacher introduced me. There was some degree of suspicion as I explained the purpose of the study and what was required of students in terms of time and commitment. It was noticable that there was lack of eye contact with most students intitially and some display of indifference. Nevertheless, the class did begin to listen and most showed signs of interest.

Eventually, eight students filled in the consent forms that they had all been given, and several others came up to me at the conclusion of the session to talk about the study. Several of these were interested in attending Massey University in 1993 and saw me as a possible source of information. I was disappointed with the initial response of students to the study as I had hoped to work with twenty students to give me a reasonably balanced sample. However, I felt that once a rapport had been established with students who had indicated their willingness to participate, they would then involve some of their friends. This turned out to be the case, as when I next met with the students 14th April, an additional four students turned up. Meantime, one other had decided to withdraw from the project.

Each time I visited the school, I noticed what a very busy place it was- students and teachers rushing in all directions, bells ringing; lots of noise. When I enquired where everyone was going, it was clear that it was going to

be difficult to co-ordinate times to meet consistently with the students as they participated in so many other activities than 'regular' classwork. At this second meeting with students, they were asked to nominate times that it would be convenient to meet with me and to indicate whether they wanted to meet with me alone, or with others. They were asked who they would like to form a group with if they preferred to meet that way (see Appendix No. 7). All students responded that they wished to meet in groups, and form time (11.55 a.m- 12.25 p.m Tuesday and Thursday) seemed to be the best time in which this could happen. The school allocated the 7th Form Dean's meeting room to be used for these sessions and it was booked on an ongoing basis for every Tuesday form time and lunch time.

The remainder of April was occupied by a hectic school calender: teacher training courses, school trips. With the absence of the careers' adviser, I was unable to set up a meeting with students before the end of the first term. Also, during this time, two of the students who had intitially indicated that they would participate in the research had been asked to leave the school as they were persistently absent from school. As it was, they had returned to school after the commencement of the school year as they had either been unable to gain entry to a post school course of their choice, or had found that having gained entry, they were unable to pay for it. It was these 'extras' who had been assigned to the form class of the careers' adviser. I regretted the withdrawal of these students as their experiences would have contributed greatly to the research. It also meant that I ended up working with a group of students who were not representative of the 7th form generally as they were all taking bursary subjects.

I next met with all nine remaining research participants 2nd June. This session was fairly introductory as not all of the students knew each other and I knew very little of them. During this session they filled out a biographical information sheet about themselves (see Appendix No. 8) and we discussed the subjects that they were studying that year and what their aspirations were

for the following year. I explained to the students that they had all indicated that they would like to work in groups and that I had divided them into three groups of three that I would work with week about. Therefore, I would meet with each group once every three weeks. This was to be an objective that was impossible to attain as school events and events in my workplace meant that cancellation of some meetings was inevitable.

Mid way through the year, the careers' adviser asked if an additional two students could join the group. They were both males who intended going to Massey University the following year, and they felt that it would be useful for them to be part of the group. I agreed, as the group was not balanced in terms of gender. However, one student came only twice to his assigned interview sessions, so he has not been included as a case history. The other student met all of his interview times and also attended some sessions for which he was not scheduled. He has been included.

During the remainder of the year I met with most students six times each. One went overseas for several weeks in the second term, while another seemed to be overcommited and continually stressed. On two occasions she rushed into a session and excused herself after five minutes or so. One other student needed to change appointment times frequently as she had a number of other commitments at the school and this reduced the amount of time that we had together. With the remainder, a consistent pattern was established. I wrote an individual letter to each student prior to our next meeting and left the letters at the school the day before the scheduled meeting to be handed to the student. Sometimes not all three students would be available and I would need to absorb the missing student into the next session the following week.

Each session was commenced with a guiding question and this theme was repeated with each of the three groups (see Appendix No. 9). For example, early on in the process I wanted to find out what knowledge of Study Right, Student Allowances and the Student Loan Scheme the students had already.

As the sessions proceded, their knowledge about these increased as I answered their questions, corrected misconceptions and undertook to find out more information for them. As mentioned previously, these sessions were not taped by request of the students, but I recorded them in the form of field notes immediately following the session, either in the carpark or in my office some five minutes away. This was not ideal, as I did not end up with much in the way of verbatim script and inevitably, there were parts of conversation which I omitted, without the prompt of a tape recording.

As well as interviews with students, I also spoke with the Principal of the school, the Careers Adviser and the 7th Form Dean (see Appendix Nos. 3 and 4). In addition, I visited the Ministry of Education to interview the director of economic policy, Jeremy Corban. He had requested that I send him prepared questions in advance of this interview (see Appendix No. 2). I wrote his replies to my questions as we discussed each one in turn. However, I later realised on reading the Tertiary Review Group Reports (into which he had considerable input) that most of the issues I addressed with him were in fact well covered within the Tertiary Reviews. This then influenced my plan to also speak to Department of Social Welfare as the answers to questions I wanted to ask there were contained in the document 'Welfare that Works' (Shipley, 1991). Obtaining them in oral form which then needed to be written up did not seem to be a good use of time.

In addition to the interviews, I brought three of the students to the polytechnic 12th August to work on the Quest Raupara career's database. Two of the three were now very unsure about what they wanted to do the following year, while the third was convinced that she would not be accepted for the course of her choice and therefore needed to look at alternatives. After exploring different options on the database, we discussed them and I photocopied the relevant written information for the students.

Once the students had finished school early November to prepare for the

Bursary examination, they did not return formally. My next contact with the students was in February 1993 when I contacted them all by phone to find out what they were planning to do that year. I was unable to make contact with two students, one who had gone overseas as an exchange student and another whose phone number had evidently been changed. However, the school was able to tell me that she had returned there in 1993 and to give me information about her 7th form grades.

7:4. The Reflexive Nature of the Study.

In the terminology of Jones, this research was 'framed'.

> It is set within my particular knowledge of schooling; within the historical and cultural form of the educational institutions which determine the sort of knowledge available to me; within the purposes I have for studying these students; within my personal history (Jones, 1991, 14).

I was conscious that my values were inserted into this research, but as the research progressed and I reflected on the interactions between students and myself, I attempted to describe rather than inscribe. However, as Lather (1989:17) suggests, the writer is always in the text as she 'actively selects, transforms and interprets.'

In addition, it could be argued that the students contributed their own framework. Some had participated in the research to fulfil their own objectives or motivations and this helped shape the form that sessions took. Usually this was in the form of knowledge that they wanted from me, as indicated in the following passages from the fieldnotes.

> *David* has requested a B.Tech handbook while Phillip (not included in case studies) has requested a B.B.S handbook (Field notes, 23rd July, 1992).
>
> *Hine.* Looking at enrolling in a Performing Arts course at the

> polytechnic. As this course is familiar to me I was able to discuss the requirements with her and undertook to bring her the brochure/ application forms (Field notes, 23rd July, 1992).

They knew that I worked for a university and that I was skilled in the teaching of study skills and in course planning.

> *Hine.* We talked about exams and how she cannot decipher what the questions mean. I agreed to help her with exam techniques in papers (as above) (Field notes, 23rd July, 1992).

Therefore, there often was a two way flow of information; a degree of repricocity. There is no doubt that the knowledge of tertiary policy of this group of students was increased throughout the year. That knowledge, then, also contributed to the decision making process. At the same time, I encouraged students to think of new options that they had not known of previously as they planned their post school destinations, and supplied them with information that would assist in this.

Ethically, I felt that the research was sound only if the students gained from their participation also. There is a danger when using the case study method that students can become 'objects' and serve the purposes of the researcher rather than the experience being of value to them. Although I did not attempt to quantify what the students had gained, I feel that more would have left the group had there been no value in it for them, as there was no coercion attached to their attendance.

I did not attempt to build up the case histories as pure participant observer research. There were acknowledged differences between the students and myself. I was the same age as their parents and I worked for a university in an advisory/counselling role. Therefore, although I pointed out that I was also a student, there always was a situation of perceived differential power between us. Nevertheless, the relationship that we had was one of trust and acceptance and the feedback that I received at the conclusion of the practical

component of the research was that they had enjoyed meeting and talking things through.

> *Angela:* Thanked me for my interest and for encouraging them (Field notes 4th Feb, 1993).

Thus, the research could be regarded as being at the end of the continuum of participant research in that a relationship did develop between myself and these ten students and the interactions that we shared were an essential part of the research. I became involved in the decision making of these students, a process which Jones, 1991:28 describes as being more than 'dangerous bias- it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives'. I found that I was anxious for them as they began to sit their Bursary exams; I felt apprehensive the day I knew that they would be receiving and opening their results.

I do not believe that this involvement detracted from the objectives of the research, but rather enhanced the value of what was achieved for the students as well as myself. It is suggested by Kidder (1981:188) that a feature of participant observer research is that the researcher 'immerses themselves in the research setting and the lives of the people they study--- and are drawn into interactions by the people they study.' However, the interactive nature of the research method that was used meant that methodological questions did arise. As Acker notes:

> The question becomes how to produce an analysis which goes beyond the experience of the researched while still granting them full subjectivity. How do we explain the lives of others without violating their reality? (Acker. in Lather 1988: 572).

Lather goes on to suggest that reflexivity and critique are skills that must be utilised when engaging in research that includes involvement in the life of other people. Such research practices form the basis of action research.

> Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understandings of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis, 1986: 162).

Therefore, Carr and Kemmis (1986: 165) suggest that the two essential aims of all action research are to involve and improve. However, in incorporating democratic techniques into the research design, these two goals are then not necessarily equally attainable. For example, the current research was undertaken on the basis of acceptance of the rationality and agency of the participants. It was clear that attempts to improve the 'situation in which the practices are carried out' would not have been a rational option for the participants. They were pragmatic in their recognition of the structure of the labour market and their preparation for involvement in it. Therefore, any improvement that occurred was at the level of understanding and therefore, rationality.

On the other hand, involvement was a significant element of the design of the research. Despite this, the involvement that we jointly had in the research and the additional knowledge gained by students as a result of the involvement was not sufficient to empower them to be able to take control of their own situation. Even if I had been able to be more involved, I doubt whether this would have been the case. Rather, the frame of reference in which they were operating was broadened and the opportunity offered for more choices to be explored. Ultimately, final decisions were made in a context of constraints. These will be analysed in the discussion chapters of this thesis.

Chapter Eight
Student Interpretations of Policy

The research sought to ascertain what messages were conveyed to students through tertiary education policy, the extent to which these messages were incorporated into their decision making, and what additional factors may have influenced their decision making.

The students in this study identified four main messages contained in Government tertiary education policy:

1. It is necessary to keep studying when you leave school to gain a good qualification.

2. The cost of paying for post compulsory education is too high for the Government and as students benefit in the long run from their education in the form of a good job, those who can afford it should pick up more of the costs themselves.

3. Students need to work hard to pass everything. Individual effort is rewarded by reduced fees and allowances for a minimum period, but there are no second chances.

4. All school leavers should have access to post-compulsory education.

Not all students agreed with all of these statements (for example, some disagreed with the definition of affordability, while others were sceptical of equity objectives and universal access), but generally they discerned that these four principles were those which the Government was trying to tell them through present policy.

These principles are discussed in light of the experiences and backgrounds of the ten students involved in the study, using excerpts from the fieldnotes to illustrate their responses. Therefore, the extent to which messages were absorbed and acted upon will be evaluated, and finally, in chapter nine, additional factors that contributed to the decision making process of the students are outlined. Theoretical issues raised in the literature review provide a framework for the discussion.

In conclusion, it is argued that while all students are responding to aspects of tertiary policy as it is envisaged that they would (for example, all of the students returned to further education in 1993), the four principles of fairness, self reliance, efficiency and greater personal choice which were purportedly to underpin all social policy following the December 1990 Economic and Social Intitiative Statement were not perceived as having been realised for all of these students. Therefore, the outcomes of aspects of tertiary policy experienced by these students differed from its stated objectives.

As more students become involved in tertiary education, the cost of paying for it will continue to be a major issue. It is argued within this chapter that the manner in which these students responded to other aspects of tertiary policy i.e the Student Loan Scheme and the Student Allowance scheme suggests that the key principles underpinning policy do not have equal application to all students.

8:1. The need for qualifications.

The students in this study were well aware that jobs for school leavers were rare, or else were 'going nowhere' jobs. To get a decent job, you first had to go and get a qualification.

> *Discussion with 9 students:* All agreed that there is no choice in what they want to do- constraints, no jobs, entry to desirable courses require

high grades (Field notes, 2nd June).

Simon: There are no jobs, so it is best to keep on learning- you're not able to go on the dole until you are 20 years old. (Field notes, 23rd June).

At the beginning of the year, all students had their sights fixed on a university qualification. University was seen to offer a better calibre of qualification, and indeed, within the Qualifications Authority framework, a degree is step 7 of an 8 step framework.

9 students: Discussed subjects each student is taking. Angela- 'easier subjects' e.g Biology, so that she can get a high Bursary grade and therefore get into the course of her choice next year (although she doesn't know what that will be at university).

All students (except Tessa, who wants to be a jockey, but is still studying Bursary subjects to 'keep the options open') have their sights fixed primarily on university (Field notes, 2nd June).

Therefore, as these students prepared themselves to be actively involved in the mode of production, they were responding to limitations and hierarchies within a structural labour market while at the same time placing demands on state organised and state funded services. And so the relationship of students to the state is dialectic, as they create a demand for higher education; a demand which has been precipitated by the absence of jobs for them.

As the year progressed, students began to align themselves and the decisions that they were making alongside these realities and of factors and events in their own lives. Thus there was an 'intersection of choice and constraint' revealed in the interview data.

Not all these students had decided to remain at school as a matter of course in 1992. Simon would have liked to leave and get a job at the end of his 6th form year. Nevertheless, as there were no jobs available, there was no

alternative but to stay on at school and get further qualifications that would then lead on to study at tertiary level.

> *Simon:* Didn't really want to be back at school this year, but wasn't too sure of other options. Doesn't like the competitiveness and pressure to 'perform' (Field notes, 2nd June).

All students agreed that they needed qualifications to get a good job. Therefore, as the year progressed and some were not achieving at the level that would indicate that they would be going onto university, the pressure on these students was great.

These students had absorbed the message that they needed to go on to further study, but linked this to 'getting' a good job' rather than perceiving that a more qualified workforce was the key to improved economic performance. Many students were involved in part time work after school and in the holidays and were aware of the marginalisation of young, casual workers. None of them had a part time job that they would like to do full time.

There was some awareness that qualifications were not necessarily linked to an actual job. None of these students had a parent who was unemployed and yet, not all parents had a qualification that had direct relevance to the work that they were now doing. The school careers' adviser also had a strong philosophy of encouraging students to not concentrate too much on a particular qualification, but to do whatever they undertook with an enthusiasm and commitment (Appendix No. 4). This viewpoint has been reinforced by several large employers e.g Lion Nathan. The following comments in a newspaper article exemplify this view.

> The graduates that Lion Nathan looks for are not necessarily 'A' students nor even holders of business degrees. But they are a certain type- ambitious, intelligent, energetic, passionate, leaders who can work in teams, flexible, and people who have integrity and

> entrepreneurial flair. On top of that, they must thrive on constant change. We talk about the fact that we're not so worried about the degree type as the people type (Evening Post 22 Sept).

However, this viewpoint was not one which students were comfortable with and all students did consider the type of qualification to be important.

> *Angela* is very unsettled-nothing that she wants to do-no clear idea of what she wants to study even. Is feeling pessimistic about the chances of her getting entrance and is thinking of going to polytechnic next year. If she does gain entrance she may go to VUW and study for a B.A. But she feels that she will really be filling in time because she doesn't know what else to do. (Field notes, 29th September)
>
> During this meeting (with the Careers' Adviser) *Frances* arrived, having heard from---that I was there. Science marks not good (was going to do medicine). Now thinking that she will shift to History where she does well. 'But where on earth will that get me? What can I do with that?' (Field notes, 5th November).

Thus, it was evident that the 'skills' message had been absorbed by students. Indeed, the numbers of students wanting to enter courses such as law, accountancy, veterinary science and medicine have escalated in recent years, and there is now a surplus of students emerging in these disciplines who are unable to be placed in a job. It is not uncommon for an advertisement for junior law positions to elicit 1000 replies for just a few vacancies (Brown, 1993). Similarly, in 1992, 14% of Vet. Science graduates were unplaced in related employment (Mildon, 1993).

Most of the students in this study had discerned the difference between qualifications and credentials, although they didn't use those terms to differentiate between them. At the beginning of the research project, all students wanted a qualification which was job related. For example, Michelle wanted to be a vet, Hine, a lawyer and Frances a doctor. Angela was unsettled because she didn't know what she wanted to be, and therefore any

qualification at university would be just 'filling in time' because she didn't know what else to do (Field notes, 29th September). When it became clear to Frances that she would not be attending med school but would most likely be studying a B.A in history, she felt that it wouldn't get her anywhere- 'what can I do with that?' (Field notes, 5th November).

However, this knowledge did not then deter these students from going on to gain a general qualification. 'If you want any sort of a job these days you have to have a good qualification' (Field notes, group interview 2nd June). A qualification that wasn't directly job related was seen to be a lesser choice, despite the sorts of transferable skills (creativity, critical and analytical thinking skills, writing and research skills) that a student could gain from a B.A degree having been discussed.

Within the discussion sessions, the issue of the the changing labour market and the rise and fall of different markets had been raised, but students could make decisions based only on the information available to them at the present time. Therefore, it was difficult for them to project 'themselves' as adults into the future and to try to predict what occupations might be in demand at that time. They could see the direct linkage between studying courses in law, medicine and vet .science with the job market and could see that there would most likely continue to be jobs available in those high-status, therefore desirable, areas.

Similarly, when Simon began to feel that he wouldn't make the grade with a university degree, he rationalised his next choice of a polytechnic certificate course by saying that it was more job related.

> *Simon:* Is now feeling that he will gain entrance and is marginal for a B. Bursary. However, he has now discarded the idea of university entirely and is firmly set towards CIT and an environmental course which he sees as leading towards a job (Field notes, 29th October).

Thus, the more desirable qualifications were those which trained students for a specific career although it was preferred that these should also be university qualifications.

Although students were aware that some qualifications wouldn't necessarily prepare them for a particular job, they knew that they had to have a qualification to 'be in with a chance'. When Angela believed that she would not gain entrance, she considered attending polytechnic. However, when she found that she had achieved entrance and was just four marks off a B Bursary, she then enrolled in a degree programme. Polytechnic qualifications, although job-related, were seen to have less status than university qualifications, while not studying at all was not an option that they even considered.

> *Angela:* Is feeling pessimistic about her chances of getting entrance and is thinking of going to polytechnic to study for an NCB next year. If she does gain entrance she will go to VUW and study for a B.A. But she feels that she will be really filling in time because she doesn't know what else to do. She hasn't begun studying for school exams yet and seems to lack motivation and any sense of purpose (Field notes, 29th September).

Qualifications, therefore, were firmly linked to the job market rather than to ideas of self exploration and development. This would seem to confirm Treasury's assertion that tertiary education is pursued for reasons of self advancement and self interest, but such an interpretation would not take account of the contextual, social and structural factors that were shaping the students' decisions.

Rather than decisions being made from individual self interest, these students were striving to fulfil the expectations of those around them; their parents, the school and society at large. For them, leaving school and going on the unemployment benefit after the mandatory stand down period, while

financially more rewarding, was not an option that they even considered. The students all came from families where employment was the norm, and they all saw themselves as future workers. The stress and pressure that they were often under arose from their desire to make a 'right' decision that would enable them to achieve this goal.

> *Frances, Tessa, David:* A rather subdued group today following the results of the mock exams. For all bar David, they would not gain entrance on these results. David said that poor results would spur him on to try harder for Bursary, but the others said that it made them feel discouraged. All admitted to feeling under pressure. Frances very fidgetty. Says that she is sick of everything- sick of making an effort and worrying about the best thing to do. Tessa has done badly in mock exams and is feeling discouraged. Also feeling 'fed up'. Just wants final exams to be over (Field notes, 15th October).

It has been suggested previously that paid employment is the cultural norm in New Zealand society, despite unemployment reaching 12% of the workforce and many more unregistered unemployed and under-employed individuals not showing up in these statistics. It is in the interests of capital to maintain a norm of employment, for if this was not the case, surplus labour would then engage in alternative pursuits and not be available as a 'reserve' labour force, if and when the need for additional workers arose. As none of the students in this study came from a situation where there was immediate family unemployment, the 'central place of work as an ideology in Western societies' was one that was perpetuated (Shuker, 1987: 66).

Therefore, the decision of students to seek higher qualifications which would lead them into employment does not confirm the assertion of Treasury that the motivation of individuals enrolling in tertiary education is based on self interest and personal gain. Rather, students were acting in a rational manner as they faced the realities of a structured labour market and then aligned themselves in preparation for entry to the market in a manner conducive to their socialisation and their own self concept.

Despite students penetrating a discourse which linked qualifications to a good job, students saw no option but to pursue higher qualifications. They were aware that increasingly university graduates were unplaced in jobs. In 1992 only 4 in 10 students found jobs immediately following graduation compared with 6 in 10 students in 1987 (Mildon 1993). Similarly, the numbers of students going on to post graduate study in that same period has increased 25%. Perversely, this knowledge reiterated to the students how important it was to gain a good post school qualification, for even with a degree it was difficult to find work. Without an advanced qualification, it would be impossible.

Treasury, in the 1987 briefing paper speaks of the inadvisability of providing 'general availability of government funding' to all tertiary students as it would be 'liable to produce inflation in credentials, increasing costs in the economy and disadvantaging those who do not join the paper chase'. And yet, this is precisely what has happened. With no jobs for young people to go to, there is no option but to 'join the paper chase' and the private returns for a large number of these students are unlikely to be great. Rather, as Nash (1990) suggests, the students who will be advantaged are those who have resources other than credentials when they enter the job market. The students who are able to tap into family networks and who display the personal attributes sought by employers will be more likely to find employment.

At the same time, it is argued that credentials are 'awarded' on the basis of 'familiarity with the dominant culture, not 'ability' (Jones, 1991:145). The research of Lauder and Hughes (1990) indicates a discrepancy on the basis of class and ethnicity between the credentials obtained by mainly European students whose parental occupations are in levels 1 to 3 on the Elley-Irving scale, and those students who are Maori and come from a working class

background. Furthermore, some of those in the latter group, although equally qualified to enter university, choose not to do so; they 'discount' themselves. As the Bursary grades required to gain entrance to university are pegged higher in 1993, credentials continue to be awarded to a certain number of students.

This group of students was very young when students their age were able to find work more readily. Certainly during the time that they have been at secondary school, work for young school leavers has been virtually non existent; that is the reality to which they have been exposed throughout the last five years, and which helps structure the frame of reference in which they operate.

Therefore, these students would seem to be responding to policies aimed at keeping young people in education following the collapse of the youth labour market, and which are directed more towards 'maintaining a "work ethic" and a set of common sense cultural attitudes to work, when work in its traditional sense is not available' (Korndorffer, 1988). Sifa came back for an eighth year when she didn't achieve sufficient marks in the external examinations to get her to a good polytechnic course, or university. A teacher at the school remarked that the senior school has begun to feel like a holding pen; that students were returning to fail again subjects that they had failed in the past and that there seemed to be little critical analysis of what these students were being taught and why (Appendix No. 3).

The school has been active in reinforcing the qualifications message, particularly in the 4th and 6th forms where the 'crossroad' decision points are seen to be. Therefore, in the 4th form, 'at risk' students are targeted for Link courses which aim to encourage them to remain at school through raised self esteem and activities which they find interesting (see Appendix No. 10). Similarly, if students remain at school for the 7th form, the likelihood of them

then going on to university or polytechnic is enhanced. For those leaving earlier, the choices are more likely to be between TOPs courses and the unemployment benefit at a later date. For the students in this study, however, leaving school early had not been an option they seriously considered, despite the fact that there was no work for them to go to.

8:2. Education is a Private Good

The students had received the message that the cost of tertiary education was too high for the government. This was conveyed to them primarily through policies such as higher fees and the abolishment of the universal student allowance.

With increased numbers of students entering tertiary education, cost was a major factor when the Tertiary Review Group met early in 1991 to articulate the principles which should underpin tertiary policy. The objectives of tertiary policy were stated to be to:

-constrain Government expenditure in the short, medium, and long term;

-foster an environment which will promote the best amount, quality, and mix of tertiary education and training;

-ensure fairness of access to tertiary education and training;

-provide incentives for students, institutions and industry which will promote the efficient use of national resources; and

-ensure consistency with the principles underlying the Government's proposals to increase the targeting of social assistance.

Although students could follow the logic that increased numbers of students required more in the way of Government expenditure, they then identified the paradox of policies aimed at encouraging more students to enter tertiary education, but at the same time making it more difficult for the majority of them to pay for it.

> *Frances, David:* Government is forcing them to continue with education- essential to get a job at all, eventually. On the one hand, Govt. is saying continue with higher education- on the other hand, discouraging them by removing assistance (Field notes, 28th July).

At the same time, these students did not have strong ideas about alternative methods for funding tertiary education. They were aware of the stress that making the right monetary and academic decisions placed on their own lives, and their energies were absorbed in solving their own problems rather than criticising revenue collection and dispersal.

Students had absorbed the message that tertiary education was expensive and those who could afford it should pay more of their own costs. However, the idea that education has private benefits and will reward those who work hard and 'make an effort' was processed by students in different ways. There were those who could afford it, for whom paying for their education was not an issue.

> *Tessa, Michelle, Sarah:* None of these three students knew anything about the targeting provisions for student allowance and were unconcerned about lack of money next year. It was clear that all three anticipated continuing their same domestic arrangements as this year- living with and having all their expenses paid for by their family. --- this was not something they needed to be concerned about. Sarah thought that it might be hard for some people to pay when they had other expenses (Field notes, 11 June).

However, the remainder of the students felt that they would have difficulty in meeting their expenses.

Graham: Was planning on going to Victoria University, but felt he would have difficulty in meeting his expenses-$50.00 travel costs per week and course costs.

Simon: He knew that he would not qualify for any assistance as with his mother's part time job, his parents earning were just above the targeting threshhold. 'I wonder if Mum would give up her job?' He felt that this was unfair as he needed to go to Massey the next year to do his degree. He figured that he would need about $7000- which he was trying to find himself by doing two part time jobs (Field notes, 23rd June).

These students, although having a job market approach to future education, did not think of it in terms of personal benefits, but as a way that would enhance their chances of gaining employment in the future. They saw this as being an appropriate role for them. The targeting aspects of tertiary policy, therefore, affected various students in different ways. This will be evident as specific policies are discussed.

Study Right

The policies designed to best meet the objectives of tertiary reform included the Study Right scheme, the Student Loan Scheme and tighter targeting of Student Allowances. The Study Right Scheme sought to direct Government fee subsidies to young students under the age of 21 years, thus fostering 'an environment which will promote the best amount, quality and mix of tertiary education and training'. The environment considered to be the 'best' was one that kept young people in education and training in their post school years as a first priority.

The Tertiary Review Group, in their deliberations recommended abandoning the Study Right Scheme in that it was discriminatory for older students wishing to upskill and retrain, and in fact did not foster the best environment for the development of skills across the board. Nevertheless, the Government retained the Study Right Scheme, suggesting that the imperative of keeping

young people 'in the system' had priority over the training needs of older workers. Thus, it can be suggested that the social control of young people is an issue here, as much as retraining a workforce that is better adapted to meet the demands of the 'new economy'.

Although the students in this study thought that Study Right was a good idea, in the end, it did not impact on their decision making to any great degree.

> *Sarah, Tessa, Michelle:* Sarah had heard of Study Right and although she didn't know what was entailed, knew it wasn't for 'old people'. Michelle thought that it might be something that was paid to students. The main philosophy and basic ideas of Study Right were explained to them and then their opinion was asked for. Michelle thought that it was a good idea to go straight on to further study from school. Sarah noted that although she was sick of study, tertiary study was different and more interesting than school so it should be O.K to go straight on. They also thought that it was a good idea to put pressure on people to pass everything in three years (Field notes, 11th June).
>
> *Graham, Simon:* Simon didn't know anything about study right. Graham knew that it was a fee rebate for school leavers. "I think that it is best to keep studying straight from school while you are used to it" (Field notes, 23rd June).

Of the ten students in the study, five went to Victoria University where there is no differentiation between young and mature students in the fee structure. David went to Massey University where study right students paid $500 less in fees overall, not a great amount when his living costs alone were going to be in the vicinity of $7000. The two students attending polytechnic, Michelle and Simon paid differential fees and that was possibly of help to Simon, although there was no indication that this influenced his final decision to go to Polytechnic. He would have paid similar fees had he gone to Massey University.

Student Loan Scheme

The Student Loan Scheme similarly did not greatly influence decision

making before the post school year began. It was seen as an emergency 'backup'; a last resort source of funding, and not as a financing facility which increased choice or increased access to tertiary study. While Frances was considering study at Otago University, she acknowledged that she was unlikely to be able to cope financially without taking a loan, and yet she didn't like the thought of having it 'hanging over her head'.

> *Frances:* Wants to go to Otago next year, but her parents couldn't afford that (eldest of four children). Pressure on her to go to VUW. She wants to leave home; her mother wants her to leave home (says Fiona), but no choice but to stay put. Option of loan- feels that she will need to take one out, but hates the thought of having it 'hanging over her head'. Still not enough money to live on (Field notes, 28th July).

The aims of a loan scheme would seem to be to improve access to tertiary education while constraining Government expenditure in the form of tighter targeting of allowances. However, according to the results of an analysis of the characteristics of students who borrowed through the loan scheme in 1992, the 'risk' that different groups of students are prepared to take in committing themselves to a loan would appear to be influenced by factors of socioeconomic status, gender and ethnicity (Status of Women Committee, AUS, 1993). The analysis found that women were less likely by 25% to take out a student loan. Therefore, it could be suggested that the decision to take a loan is not dependent solely on financial need but is also subject to situational and dispositional effects.

A gender bias in attitude to loan take up was not evident in this research, as not one student in this study regarded the student loan as extra income that they were able to budget for in planning their post school destination. On the other hand, it was there as a backup; as a last resort should they need emergency funds at a later date. In part, this reluctance to take up a loan could be attributed to lack of experience in meeting all their own needs and

an awareness of all the cost involved in living independently. At the time of the study, all students were living in the family home, and most were planning to continue their present living arrangements the following year. But for those who weren't, the loan was still not regarded as a desirable option.

The loan scheme was seen primarily as a foil to possible disincentives effects of raised tuition fees and also as a way to reduce expenditure on Student Allowances (Tertiary Review Group 1991). Research from both Sweden and the United States indicated that loans were not a barrier to participation in tertiary education by minority groups when supplemented with grants and having as the intention the objective of increasing access to tertiary education. However, if the objective was solely to cut costs, and the loan was the only financing facility, equity objectives were not met (Bourke, 1992). The present loan scheme seeks to meet both cost cutting and equity objectives and therefore the outcomes are likely to be contradictory. As none of the students in the present study had in-depth knowledge of the details of the loan scheme, their response to take up of the student loan was a subjective one, made in the context of their own experience of the risk involved in borrowing money.

Student Allowances

Changes to the Student Allowance Scheme were to affect the decision making of students more than any other policy. Prior to 1991 all students would have received a minimum allowance of $46 a week. Those travelling some distance to their tertiary institution (and all of these students met that criteria) received a travel allowance and those required to live away from home to study the course of their choice received a 'living-away- from-home allowance'. This meant that some students who didn't meet targeting threshholds could still receive 80-100 dollars a week.

Universal eligibility to these base allowances was abolished in June 1991

thus making these students very early participants in policy requiring extended dependency on family resources. Five of these students didn't see that their future was going to be too much affected by this policy change. Michelle, Tessa, Sarah, Angela and Graham were quite content to treat their first year of tertiary study as an extension of their school years where they lived at home and were, in the main, provided for by their parents. With the exception of Michelle and Tessa, all had looked at the options of courses available in the area close to their home and there was no indication that the scope of this choice was directed solely by money, but also involved their own comfort levels. Although Michelle had indicated that she was willing to leave home to study to become a vet or a dentist, she also gave the impression that she didn't really want to leave home, although her parents could afford to pay for her to live elsewhere.

> *Sarah, Tessa, Michelle:* None of these three students knew anything about the targeting provisions for Student Allowances and were unconcerned about lack of money next year. It was clear that all three anticipated continuing their same domestic arrangements as this year- living with and having all expenses paid for by the family. It was pointed out that if they kept studying, this would be the case until they were 25 years old. However, there seemed to be no desire on their part for independence from the family (Field notes, 11th June).

In encouraging students whose parents are above the targeting threshhold to remain dependent on their parents until they are 25 years of age, it is likely that students could well see their own development in different terms to their counterparts a decade earlier. Whereas leaving the family home and establishing an independent base was seen as a part of the transition to adulthood a few years ago and money was provided by the Government to assist students to do it, that option has been effectively been removed for a large number of students, and as a New Zealand Student Association research indicates (see Chapter 9:3), closeness to home is a major factor in course choice.

The reasons for choosing courses close to home were evidenced in the experiences of these students. Within the context of policy dictating that families are responsible for providing for the needs of their children, Frances and her mother were both in a 'no win' situation. Frances did not want to stay at home the following year and this may have influenced her initial decision to go to Otago to study medicine. Her mother also did not particularly want her to stay on at home but couldn't afford to have her live away from home and also depended on her to mind her younger siblings. Frances was angry about the lack of choice that she had available to her and the amount of coercion she felt was being exerted on her by both the Government and her parents.

> *Frances:* Working in the supermarket 10 hours a week to raise money. Feels that her choices have been restricted. Would like to go to Otago next year but her parents couldn't afford it (eldest of 4 children). Pressure on her to go to Vic. She wants to leave home. She says her mother wants her to leave home, but no choice but to stay put (Field notes, 28th July).

Hine, also, was keen to leave home and to go flatting. She resented the lack of personal space in the family home and wanted 'somewhere of her own'.

> *Hine:* Really wants to leave home and flat, but parents are just over the income threshhold for her to receive a student allowance, so she feels that she will have to stay at home. Transport to VUW would be a problem also (Field notes, 23rd July).

Although Hine indicated that she didn't want to keep on living at home, she still looked at courses available in the immediate area. It could well be that the courses that she wanted to do were available in the vicinity of her friends and family and so there was no need to look further afield. The influence of the Victoria University liaison personnel could also have contributed to this. They visit the school twice: once towards the end of the second term, and

again to enrol students prior to the Bursary examinations. It is thus conveyed that it is expected that the majority of students will go on to Victoria University as opposed to other universities. Hine's brother also attended Victoria University. Hine couldn't afford to set up and finance a flat and her parents weren't prepared to help her financially with this when she was able to be accomodated in the family home.

Both David and Simon were going to be living away from home the following year. Simon could have still lived at home to attend the polytechnic, but public transport there was costly and time consuming and it was not going to cost a great deal more per week for him to stay in the Halls of Residence. Having chosen a course in which he was reasonably sure of success, Simon was willing to allocate his hard earned funds to his living costs.

Therefore, reasons for course choice are based mainly on practical considerations which are part of the the situational, dispositional and socialisation effects that students experience. David's decision to go away to Massey University to study, despite having low grades and receiving no Government financial assistance, was made within a different economic and gender context than was Frances' decision not to go to Otago University. Although situational effects did not inhibit the courses chosen by Sarah, Michelle and Tessa, it has been suggested that socialisation effects did. Graham's decision to study for a B.Sc at Victoria University provided no conflict for him as it was closely attuned to his position in the labour market and his socialisation. These contextual factors are discussed in more depth in the following chapter.

> *Graham:* Enrolling B.Sc (physics and electronics at VUW). Doesn't see any barriers, as courses are not usually oversubscribed. Parents happy to pay for his education. Will live at home and travel into the city each day with his father. Could gain exemption for some papers with scholarship. Sees that an adjustment will need to be made from school to university- a different form of education, but envisages that this will

take just a few weeks. Has no difficulty with a flat fee regime (Field notes, 6th August).

As indicated previously, the main reason behind cutting universal student allowances was fiscal savings (in 1991 the Student Allowance Scheme cost $290 million [Tertiary Review Group 1991]). When rationalising why young people on the unemployment benefit should be funded differently from young people who are studying, the rationale is given that the decision to study is voluntary, while those who are seeking work and cannot find it are involuntarily unemployed. In addition, those who are studying are likely to earn more in the future than those who are unemployed (op cit). Nevertheless, it has been argued in this paper that the definition of choice must be viewed in a wider context than the absence of coercion and students themselves felt that they had no other choice than to go on to tertiary study at the conclusion of their school years. That was the expectation of themselves, their families, their teachers and their peer group.

It is now 'normal' for many young people to go on to further study in order to prepare themselves for the labour market and the students in this study had incorporated this norm into their decision making.

Michelle: It is a good idea to go straight on to further study from school (Field notes, 11th June).

Graham: It is best to keep studying straight from school while you are used to it (Field notes, 23rd June).

Simon: There are no jobs, so it is best to keep on learning. You're not able to go on the dole until you are 20 years (Field notes, 23rd June).

The social control aspects of 'education and training' have been referred to previously in this thesis. The space between school and work is seen to be 'as formless and dangerous and as generating in the young person a need for assistance and special supervision around which to structure his or her

life' Diori (1987:106). It could be suggested that parents are not only being expected to provide materially for their children for longer than was required when they themselves were students or young workers, but they are also expected to control and monitor their children's work habits and behaviour for many more years than was the case a short time ago.

It is clear that although some families in this study were not anticipating difficulty in continuing with their present roles and relationships, others were anticipating stress and conflict as parents and offspring continued to live together for a longer period of time. As parents who are less well off scrimp to pay for the education of their offspring, they are also likely to exert pressure on their children to study hard and to achieve good pass rates. The implications of the extended dependence of children on families is a necessary area for future research.

A second contradictory rationale for the cutting of universal allowances was that most young people on the unemployment benefit came from low income families, and had they been students, they would have been on the maximum allowance anyway. However, if large numbers of young unemployed people were to move into the education sector, costs would rise accordingly. Admittedly, this would then mean a drop in the amount paid out in benefits, but that amount is likely to be far less in proportion to the total benefit budget than the proportionate rise within vote education, thus leading to further cost cutting measures. It was estimated that the removal of the universal component of the Student Allowance Scheme and the raising of the age of untargeted eligibility from 20 years to 25 years would reap savings of $125 million in 1992 (Tertiary Review Group, 1991).

It was recommended by the tertiary review group that a targeted student allowance scheme and a loan scheme would go hand in hand; that although it was assumed that most families who were able to pick up the costs of their

childrens' education until they were 25 years of age would indeed do so, there could be some who wouldn't and there should then be backup for those students. Although parents of all students in this study indicated that they would pay for the education of their children, this wasn't always to the extent that the students could then pursue the course or lifestyle of their choice. The loan scheme was not seen as a way of increasing that choice.

The percentage of all tertiary students receiving some sort of a student allowance in 1992 was around 40%. Therefore, it is not surprising that in this group of students there were only two who would be eligible for an abated allowance. The initial impression that they all had was that their parents earnt too much and they would not be eligible for anything. If this impression is wide spread, then a real disincentive exists for young students on the unemployment benefit to become students even though the information is incomplete and in some cases, erroneous. Certainly, the students of the more wealthy parents in this study, Graham and Tessa, acknowledged how difficult it was for some people to get an education. As already mentioned, the policy threatening to cut the student allowance to eligible students should they fail more than half their course was absorbed by all students and seen to be very unjust.

8:3. Individual Effort is Rewarded

Students responded in different ways to the liberal ideal of individual reward for individual effort and the opportunity for all for the development of potential. Tessa indicated that she believed that the school had a philosophy of marking their mock exams hard so that poor results would spur them on to do better in the 'real' thing.

> *Tessa:* Is assuming that she will gain Entrance. Has not made alternative plans. Also feeling 'fed up'- just wants exams etc to be over. Thinks poor marks are probably 'shock tactics', but doesn't feel that

that spurs her on to do better (Field notes, 15th October).

The fact that for all of them their final results were higher than for the mock exams would seem to support this suggestion, as they did put in extra effort for the external exam. Thus, poor marks in the mock exams were ascribed to 'scare tactics' rather individual deficiency.

The degree of self blame that these students attributed to poor results was not significant in this research. Rather, David and Frances remarked that the pressure to do well came from overcrowding in courses at university driving up the marks required for entry. They therefore felt coerced; that they were being forced into further education by a Government that said that they needed a good qualification, and yet at the same time was discouraging them by removing assistance.

> *Frances:* Parents are not rich- just making do. There is no choice in courses she is able to do- Otago is just too expensive. Wants to leave home, but no choice but to stay put.
>
> *David:* Option of loan but hates the thought of having it 'hanging over his head', Still not enough money to live on.
>
> *Frances and David* agreed with each other that they feel coerced- no jobs for them, Government forcing them to continue with education- essential to getting a job at all eventually. On the one hand the Government is saying continue with higher education- on the other hand, is discouraging them in removing assistance (Field notes, 28th July).

Similarly, Hine, Sifa, Simon and Graham agreed that with increased competition for jobs, for courses and for higher grades, it was becoming harder and harder to get to where you wanted to go.

> *Simon:* Loss of confidence following results of mid year exam. Discarded idea of doing Med Lab Science and in fact, seems to think that a B.Sc is beyond him. Reluctant to pay $100 hostel fee in case Bursary results are too low and he is unable to get a refund. Feels he

would be best to 'flag' Massey and instead do a Cert Res. and Env. Planning at CIT. Feeling discouraged with study- as though he is making little progress.

Hine. Has abandoned the idea of studying law in the interim. Has decided to enrol in Dip Maoritanga as 'you don't need entrance' but can still obtain credits towards a degree.

All remarked that it is getting harder (no second chance for the Student Allowance) and more pressurised. When I pointed out that loss of S/A if they failed half of their papers wouldn't actually affect them, it was clear that they were still receiving a message- perform, or else (Field notes, 22nd September).

Graham was comfortable with his choice of a B.Sc degree, as not so many people wanted to study science and therefore there was more chance of him getting into courses of his choosing. David was equally confident about entry to his technology course. However, for the remainder of the students there were no guarantees, and they attributed this more to the pressure of the competition rather than their own lack of effort.

Furlong (1987: 65) remarks that while in periods of relatively full employment, being without a job can be a traumatic experience, in times of high unemployment, 'young people are more likely to retain a belief in their capabilities, seeing unemployment as temporarily thwarting their aspirations, but nonetheless retaining a belief in their eventual attainment.' Therefore, some of the students in this study were more likely to blame the environment than themselves for the shortage of spaces in the courses of their choice.

And yet, for Simon, he was aware that he was trying as hard as he could. When the Minister of Education announced that tertiary students failing half of their course would no longer be eligible for the student allowance (suggesting that if they tried harder they would be able to improve their standard of work), Simon downgraded his expectations. The 'work ethic' myth of reward for effort would seem to be behind this government policy, and yet Simon saw it more as a punishment for aiming too high.

> *Simon:* Feeling discouraged with study- as though he is putting in all this effort and making little progress. The announcement that students who fail half of their course will no longer receive the student allowance has had quite an influence on him and he mentioned it several times, even though I pointed out to him that it wouldn't affect him as he wouldn't be receiving a student allowance. Feels that he would be best to 'flag' Massey and instead do a polytech. course (Field notes, 22nd September).

Therefore, although students recognised the message arising from a commodity approach to education (those who work hard will be rewarded financially and those who reap the greatest benefits should be prepared to pay for it), they perceived that structural factors, such as a large increase in the numbers of students entering tertiary education and the increased cost of that participation, had more to do with difficulty getting into courses of their choice, than did their own lack of effort.

Tertiary policy, which has dual goals of 'constraining Government expenditure in the short, medium, and long term', as well as 'providing incentives for students, institutions and industry which will promote the efficient use of resources', can then become a disincentive for those students who have more to lose if they fail. As students seek to make rational decisions about their future, those with fewer resources avoid committing all of those resources to a course of action which has dubious outcomes; that is not a sensible thing to do. Thus will students, particularly those from poorer backgrounds, continue to discount themselves from high cost, high skill pathways such as technology and pure science.

A tertiary education goal which speaks of 'providing incentives for students, institutions and industry to promote efficient use of resources' would seem to be as much about social control as about 'upskilling'. Nash (1987:34) suggests that education and training in the transitional space between compulsory schooling and work has the explicit purpose of 'maintaining or

imposing regular work habits' thus maintaining a labour resource. Attendance at university and some polytechnic courses is often a matter of individual choice, therefore, removal of the living allowance for students who do not pass more than half their course indicates that the minister sees that it is necessary to 'keep the nose to the grindstone'; to maintain steady work habits which will then result in successful pass rates.

Students are often seen as an unruly sector of society, and it has been noticeable that the Minister is reluctant to meet with groups of students to listen to their concerns. High fees have already put greater pressure on students (particularly those from less well-off backgrounds) to pass all of their courses. The removal of student allowances for students who fail 50% of their course is another control mechanism which aims to keep students 'in line', while at the same time, reducing expenditure. Unfortunately, those students most likely to be disadvantaged by this policy are students whose 'habitus' is not closely aligned to that of the university; students who have English as their second language and those for whom university is an experience out of context with their family and cultural situation.

8:4 Further education is a right

Fairness of access was a key principle articulated by the tertiary review group when formulating the policy directly affecting students i.e study right, student loans and student allowances. Some of the students in this study recognised that the Government was, through its user-pays policies, trying to increase access for 'poor people'. However, there was some scepticism directed towards the definitions of 'rich', or affordability.

> *Simon:* Knew that he would not qualify for any assistance. "I wonder if Mum would give up her part time job". Unfair, as he needed to go to Massey next year to do his degree. He figured that he would need about $7000 which he was trying to raise himself (Field notes, 23rd June).

> *Frances, David:* Want to study away from home next year. Say that their parents are not wealthy (Frances thinks that what her father earns is 'just over the limit'). Working 14 and 10 hours a week respectively to earn enough money--- not fair. Parents not rich- just making do (Field notes, 28th July).

These students were situated in a large multicultural school that affirmed diversity of culture and the right of all to a quality education. Although it was observed by a teacher at the school that students tended to congregate in 'cliques', organised according to ethnicity, gender and socio economic status (Appendix No. 3), there was an awareness of other cultures and social groupings among the different cliques and the right of all students to attend a tertiary institution was not denied by any student. Nevertheless, when they extrapolated the difficulties they were having making the correct choices and then earning sufficient money to see them through, they could not see that the system was fair. Of the three students in the lower socio economic grouping, one decided to return to school, another was attending university with the assistance of a Maori grant, and the third was attending polytechnic.

Although all students agreed that fairness of access should be a goal of tertiary policy, they were aware that in practice, this wasn't so, and that issues of economic status, ethnicity and gender all had an influence on the participation of individuals in higher education. They had identified the paradox of a policy message (e.g Study Right) which indicated that all young people had a right to further education, but then made it more difficult for some of them by removing allowances. Similarly, the degree of coercion that they felt in having little choice but to continue with further education, meant that the message 'education is a right' had rather a hollow ring to it (refer Chapter 8:2).

Data on the participation at tertiary level of students from lower socio-economic groups is not gathered as systematically by the Ministry of Education as is data pertaining to the participation of women and Maori. This

is rather surprising, when equity, or fairness is one of the principles on which tertiary policy is premised. This premise, in turn, arises from the user pays approach to education where it is argued that students should pay for their education in relation to the private benefit that they are expected to derive from it.

Research from Sweden, where user- pays in education is administered along similar lines to cost recovery schemes in New Zealand, has shown that those with working class backgrounds make up a large percentage of those opting out of tertiary studies (Springett, 1986 in Peters et al, 1993). In New Zealand, high fee rises in 1990 saw a decline in the numbers of students enrolling in the tertiary sector. Mature and part time students seemed to be those most adversely affected (Boston, 1992). Although numbers soon recovered and are now on an upward trend, the distribution of different groups of students in tertiary education is still along lines of gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Further research, on an ongoing basis, is required to monitor to what extent the Government's equity objectives are being met.

Differential participation in tertiary education was also evident within the group of students involved in this research. The factors which influenced these trajectories will be discussed in the following chapter. Nevertheless, it was evident that equity of access to further education was greatly influenced by the economic, social and cultural resources that individuals had available to them as they made decisions about further education. For example, both of the students who eventually achieved the post school destination of their intitial choice, were male, pakeha and from high income families.

The numbers of Maori students entering tertiary education have been rising steadily over the last five years, but the proportion is still low (on average 7% of total enrolments [N.Z yearbook 1992]). There was no sign of a decline in 1992 when the new financing arrangements came into force. It may be that

the Manaaki Tauira grants administered by the individual institutions cushioned the blow of higher costs for a number of Maori students. At the same time, a breakdown of the courses in which Maori are enrolling indicate that they are heavily slanted towards the polytechnics and the lower status university streams. As credentials become inflated, all move accordingly without improving their relative position.

1991 Census statistics show that 24% of the Maori workforce is unemployed and 25% of Maori between the ages of 18 and 25 years. With very little increase in the number of jobs available, it is therefore unlikely that improved educational qualifications will make any difference to these statistics.

Similarly, fairness in access for women students is guided by structural constraints and subsequent individual decision making. Although the numbers of women students enrolled at university is equivalent to that of men, less women than men graduate, particularly at post-graduate level. The number of Maori and Pacific Island women enrolled at university is disproportionately low when compared to all females (Ministry of Education, 1993). Women are under-represented in Science, Technology and Engineering (O'Neill, 1993:52).

Fairness of access to tertiary education is meaningless if it then does not translate into the individual benefits that Treasury assures us is the motivation to seek access in the first place. Students 'take stock' of their cultural and economic resources before committing themselves to a course of action and using their common sense, determine the most logical pathway to take.

The knowledge that there are numbers of qualified and skilled workers who are unable to find work tends to defeat the efforts of policies designed to give greater choice and access to further education for those less well off. In addition, the high costs associated with those areas of study closely allied to

the 'new economy' (technology and science) and the propensity for them not to be taken up proportionally by women and Maori, means that a large number of students do not see that the choice of study in these disciplines is a rational one.

The influence of structural factors on the extent to which students take up their right to further education, i.e equity of access, and on the decision making strategies of individual students, is discussed more fully in the following chapter. It will be suggested that contextual factors intersected with the messages that students received from tertiary education policy, but that ultimately, decisions were shaped by perceived possibilities.

Chapter Nine
Contextual factors and student choices

During the early stages of the research, students were asked to record their first choice of course, or main activity in the following year (see Appendix No. 9). As the year progressed, shifts in student aspirations were evident as choices were aligned with perceived possibilities. Eventually, two of the ten students went on to pursue their first choice of course or activity. The factors which contributed to the students' post school destination are discussed within this section.

The messages which students received from tertiary education policy have been outlined in the previous chapter. These messages were then absorbed within the context of the individual experience of each student and filtered and processed in a manner which made the most 'sense' to the student. This process varied for each student, depending on the situational and communication effects upon the individual, which, along with policy messages, contributed to the frame of reference in which individual decisions were made. Factors, such as ethnicity, gender and social class were shown to contribute to the situational and communication effects and thus influenced the decision making of this group of students as they planned their post school destination.

The structure of the labour market, in which employment for young, inexperienced workers is scarce, is an additional variable which contributes to the context of decision making. As choices were made about destinations in the post school year, eventual likely participation in the labour market was a significant factor in the choice of course. This contextual factor is discussed in section 9:3 of this chapter.

9: 1 *Ethnicity*

Ethnicity is a factor in establishing the disposition effects which arise from the socialisation process of the individual. Ethnicity can also contribute to the position effects which are the viewpoint, or social knowledge gained through the individual's position in the social order and which form the frame of reference from which decisions are made.

Sifa felt that association with a 'university person' might assist her to 'decode' more effectively what was expected of her in examinations. She was having difficulty cueing in to the knowledge and skills that were necessary if she was to experience success in the Bursary examinations.

> *Sifa:* 'I still have problems with study. I hope that you would be able to help me. My goals that I set at the beginning of the year, are finally getting there. Hopefully, my exams go well (Field notes, 29th October).

Sifa's examinations did not go well and she returned to school for an eighth year in 1993. As contact was not established with her following the publication of Bursary results, it is not clear whether she returned to school because her bursary grades, or cost prevented her from gaining entrance to the polytechnic computer course that she hoped to do. In any event, along with the other students in the study, she continued to study at the completion of her seventh form year.

Hine, also, was not clear what was being asked of her in examination questions; what the question actually meant.

> *Hine:* We talked about exams and how she cannot decipher what the questions mean. I agreed to obtain previous Bursary papers in Maori, Geography and Classics so we could look at exam techniques and answering questions (Field notes, 23rd June).

Hine eventually talked herself out of applying for law. With a final Bursary result of 4 Ds, it is unlikely that she would have been accepted into law under the Maori quota. It did not occur to her to return to school and repeat her Bursary year. Instead, she chose a course in which it was likely that she would succeed and that would staircase her into a degree at a later date. In fact, this is the reason that the Diploma of Maoritanga was initially introduced. It was recognised that Maori participation at tertiary level was particularly low and this was partly because the percentage of Maori going on to 7th form and gaining university entrance qualifications was comparatively low (Slyfield et al, 1988). This is certainly the situation at the school which Hine attended, where Maori students were 22% of the total school population, but only 7% of the 7th form. Therefore, the Diploma enabled Maori students without university entrance to achieve a qualification at the university which would contribute to a degree. The year spent studying subjects that were familiar to them and in an environment that was more welcoming than that of the university generally would affirm that university was 'their place' as they moved into other programmes of study.

Sifa and Hine did not perceive their difficulties in terms of 'habitus' and their lack of 'goodness of fit' with the dominant culture, but were aware that as Pacific Island and Maori students, they were in the minority in the 7th form and that the reason for that was that the work was a lot 'harder' at that level.

However, as Harker argues, educational institutions and the credentials they award

> ---take the cultural capital of the dominant group as the natural and only appropriate type of capital, and treat all children as if they had equal access to it. Hence, the cultural capital that the schools take for granted acts as a most effective filter in the reproductive processes of a hierarchical society. Poor achievement for different groups in society then, is not something inherent in cultural difference *per se*, but is just as much an artifact of the way schools operate as is success for other groups (Harker, 1990: 34).

Official policy tends to view inequality in educational and occupational opportunity between races in terms of disadvantage i.e limited language, low economic status etc. Therefore, the existence of a shrinking job market and the racism inherent within it, is easily obscured in the development of programmes encouraging positive discrimination and equal opportunities. Such programmes are vital and necessary, but must be accompanied with the full awareness of just what material opportunities are available and with provision to increase opportunities to parallel rising expectations. Otherwise, they are meaningless to students like Sifa and Hine, who are aware of the limitations of the labour market and their own position in it, and make decisions about their future accordingly.

9:2 Gender

Gender emerged as a factor when decisions were being made about career choice and future courses.

Frances and Michelle were studying science subjects at school as they believed that it was a degree in medicine, in vet science that was desirable. They were encouraged in these choices by their parents, and at the beginning of the year, by their teachers. Yet, as the year progressed their marks did not 'measure up' and they began to discount taking these subjects any further. For these girls, science became difficult in the 7th form. On the other hand, science subjects posed no problem for Graham.

> *Michelle:* Has abandoned all idea of Vet Science. May still do Med Lab Science at Massey, but with 22% for her mock chemistry exam, is coming close to abandoning that idea also. Has applied to two polytechnics for nursing courses so that she has a 'fall back' position. Will most likely wait for Bursary results before making a final decision. Feels that she may do better in the Bursary examination.
>
> *Graham:* Still well on track. Heading for an A Bursary based on mock

> exams results. Sitting scholarship exam in another two weeks (Field notes, 15th October).

Frances and Michelle were the only girls in their chemistry class, and although the head of the science department was a women, science was still a predominantly male endeavour within the school. Similarly, when Michelle visited Massey University her impression was that vet science students were mainly male. In fact, this perception was not reflective of the actual composition of the vet science faculty where 48 % of the graduating students are female (Mildon 1993). It may be that Michelle observed an atypical group while at the university. Within their science classes at the school, the males tended to outperform females thus consolidating the view that science is something that males are better at than females.

What happens at school has a flow-on effect into the workforce, which in turn affects the decision making of girls as they seek a rational trajectory for themselves in the labour market. As females assess the likelihood of success for them in the field of science, the relatively small number of women who have already succeeded and are working in that area tends to confirm that science is not as much a female domain as it is male. Thus, as fewer women than men go on to post-graduate study and research, an unequal division of labour where women are employed differentially to men continues to exist:

> In their description of structural inequalities in the working world----Reskin and Roos (1990) ---found that women's progress in employment occupationally and economically, relative to men, was disappointing. Rather than genuine progress being made towards occupational equity with male co-workers of equivalent experience, nominal desegregation or ghettoism was the outcome in the occupations studied. Women were still concentrated in lower paying less desirable and dead-end jobs---. As women gained access to traditionally male occupations, the occupations had lost much of their attraction to men and were becoming less advantageous to women as well (Hamilton and Bird, 1992:71).

Although educational opportunities for girls have increased dramatically in

recent years (and indeed, the school has a philosophy that states there is no gender discrimination in the range of subjects offered within the school), educational opportunities have not necessarily translated into occupational opportunities. Frances and Michelle were in the minority in their science classes at school. Both their mothers were involved in traditional female labour; one within the home and the other as a secretary. Michelle then opted for nursing training, another traditional area of employment for women. Frances went on to study a B.Sc/B.A conjoint degree at university, majoring in Biology and History. At the same time, one of the teachers expressed concern over the level of achievement in science subjects in the senior school generally and felt that results should be higher for males and females. Indeed, the numbers of students enrolling in these subjects in the 7th form was not great (Appendix No. 3).

And so although Frances and Michelle attributed their change in career plans to their 'low' marks in chemistry throughout the year, and in Frances' case, to lack of money to pursue the preferred career choice, wider theories of gender politics are manifest in the socialisation of girls at both school and in the home. Jones remarks:

> These are political explanations of girls' subject and career choices- they refer to the 'relations of ruling' which mean that men's needs and interests have tended to shape the socialisation of girls and boys. In contrast, the girls at school usually think in terms of individuals and not in terms of the politics of the situation. They do not readily see the overall pattern of female 'exclusion' (from maths and science knowledge and from defining what counts as Science) as part of an explanation for their own experience (Jones, 1991: 155).

However, within the individual frame of reference in which decisions are made, intersecting with factors of gender and ethnicity, are factors of class and wider structures. The influence of class and labour market segmentation are considered in the following section.

9:3 Class and labour market segmentation

The structure of the labour market and their location in it was a significant factor in the formation of the context within which students made decisions about their post school destination. If the labour market had been buoyant and jobs had been available for them, some of the students would not have remained at school for the 7th form year.

> *Simon:* Didn't actually want to back at school this year but wasn't sure of other options. Felt that the school didn't do much to link them into the post school year and it is difficult to obtain information (Field notes, 2nd June).

However, it is likely that Graham and David would have made similar decisions about their future trajectory even if there had been jobs available for them. Both students had a clear idea of what sort of course they would be taking the following year and did not waver from this goal throughout the 7th form year. Both students felt comfortable with the view of 'themself' that was conveyed by their choice of tertiary course and there were no obstacles evident that suggested to them that they should rethink their initial plan. It is suggested that the situational and disposition effects experienced by these two students can explain their adherence to their initial goal.

It is clear that all of these students had absorbed the 'qualifications message' and were responding to a climate which encouraged further education and training in the manner in which the objectives of tertiary policy envisaged that they would. Nevertheless, individual circumstances meant that student responses were variable and indicative of their position in the labour market.

In 1991, the New Zealand Students Association commissioned Heylen Research Centre to research secondary school student's intentions for 1992 and requested that the objectives of the research included measurement of :

1. fifth year secondary school students' intentions for 1992;
2. the proportions intending to study at each university;
3. students' reasons for choosing a particular university;
4. students' intended course of study;
5. factors influencing the student's decision to attend university;
6. what form of admission system students would prefer.

Of the number surveyed, 60% indicated that they were likely to attend university the following year. The primary factors influencing their choice of a university were firstly, proximity to home and secondly, the courses offered at a particular university. The need for higher qualifications and the current employment situation were important influences on the decision to go to university. Of the people who influenced the decision to go to university, the report stated that 'parents are clearly the most important factor. People such as friends, teachers, careers advisers and university liaison officers all rate about the same in level of importance.'

There were parallels to these findings in the present study. For David, the course he wished to do was not offered at the university closest to his home. Nor were his marks of such a high calibre that he felt sure of success when he made his choice. And yet, he didn't 'discount' himself from the more expensive option as some of the higher achieving students did. David indicated that he thought that money could be an obstacle as he wouldn't be eligible for a Student Allowance and he didn't consider that his parents were well off (Field notes 28th July). Leaving home to study in another city was going to be expensive. Nevertheless, both of his parents worked; his father was situated in a traditionally top bracket income occupation. David had not had too much difficulty finding work throughout his 7th form year. Therefore, despite his perception that he might have trouble 'making ends meet,' his family socialisation and his own situation in the labour market made investment in his chosen course an acceptable risk.

Similarly, Michelle indicated that her parents would have no difficulty funding whatever course she chose, whether it was close to her home or not. Her grades were such that she could have enrolled in a university course. However, she chose to enrol in a nursing course at polytechnic. It has been suggested that gender socialisation influenced this decision.

On the other hand, Frances, who wanted to study medicine and wanted to live away from home couldn't afford to do that and nor were her grades sufficiently high to indicate to her that she would have a good chance of success in medicine. She consequently chose to remain at home and to enrol in a less ambitious and less costly degree.

Frances believed that with the removal of the student allowance and courses such as medicine costing far more than less applied courses, the degree of choice open to her was minimal. Similarly, Simon, who had contemplated living away from Wellington to study, chose to remain. Five of the females indicated that they did not wish to move away from Wellington, although this was not solely for financial reasons and so the task was to find a suitable course within the city area.

It has been suggested in a previous section that families are influential in the choices that young people make about their futures; that the choices made are 'those of individuals who are socially situated, in other words people who are part of a family and other social groups, and who have resources which are cultural as well as economic' (Boudon, 1987:7). The choices made by this group of students would seem to support this statement. In defining 'cultural' resources, gender and ethnicity are factors which are influential in shaping the decisions that young people make about their post school destination and are combined with economic resources to help suggest future trajectories.

David and Graham both came from families whose primary breadwinner was from a professional group scoring highest on the Elley-Irving scale of

occupations. At the same time, both boys were part of a school subject grouping that was predominantly male and European. Therefore, it was 'taken-for-granted' that they would go to university and would study 'male' subjects. Even though David's bursary marks were marginal, he did not waver from his original plan to go to Massey University to study technology. Similarly, Graham was single minded throughout the year and had his sights firmly fixed on a B.Sc. It is thus that the position and disposition effects that Boudon describes come into play. The knowledge gained from being situated in a position in the social order and the socialisation of the individual that occurs as a consequence of that placement are part of the frame of reference which students draw upon when making decisions.

Simon also was male and European. And yet, he was never entirely comfortable with the pathway that he had mapped out for himself. Neither of his parents had a university degree and as teachers, were on a lower step of the Elley Irving scale. Simon was loathe to pay the $100 deposit in October that would register a place for him in the Halls of Residence at Massey University, as at that stage he was fairly sure that he would not make the grade. Similarly, he was not prepared to invest the money he had been saving in a course where he was not too sure of his chances of success. Although Graham was continually encouraging him, Simon's marks steadily declined throughout the year as his confidence began to falter.

> *Simon:* Real loss of confidence following results of mid-year exams- highest mark 49% (Stats). Rest in 20s and 30s. Discarded the idea of doing Med Lab Science and in fact seems to think that a B.Sc is beyond him. Reluctant to pay deposit on hostel fee- $100, in case Bursary results are low and he is unable to get a refund. Feels he would be best to 'flag' Massey (Field notes, 22nd September).

On the other hand, it was clear that money was not a problem for Michelle's parents and initially she was interested in pursuing courses that they could afford i.e vet science, dentistry, optometry. She completed the year with a B

Bursary, and although this would not discount her from enrolling in a vet science degree (entry to vet science is determined by results of the first year of university study) she chose to enter nursing, the minimum entrance qualification for which is 6th Form certificate. When Michelle visited Massey University and lined herself up against first year students enrolled in vet science, she felt uncomfortable and out of place. It may well be that along with her school experiences of science being a male domain, vet science having supposedly predominantly male participation, and her own socialisation, she should then feel that vet science was not a rational choice for her to make.

> *Michelle:* Visited Vet Science, Massey. Noted the pressure to perform really well the first year and the worry about having wasted a year if she didn't make the grade. Would then look at dentistry or optometry. Money no constraint, 'just my own ability'. A lot of 'brainy males' at the open day. Quite comfortable at home; doesn't have to work part time and money presents no difficulties. Constraints in the form of competition and the 'pressure to perform' (Field notes, 4th August).

Hine's parents were not 'well off' and university fees were going to be an obstacle for them. The existence of grants for Maori students has assisted students such as Hine to receive up to 90% reimbursement for the initial fees outlay. In Hine's case, she felt that she should then do something 'like Maori' which would then contribute credits towards a degree.

> *Hine:* Is still on track to do Dip. Maori Studies at VUW. Was asking about study right and how she gets forms -however, no study right at VUW. Forgot to tell her about grants available through Ministry of Maori Development- get a memo to her next week. Is trying to get fruit picking work in Nelson over the long break. Things have settled down a bit at home and she seems resigned to living at home next year (Field notes, 29th October).

Of the ten students participating in the research, Angela and Sarah were the least focused in their post school goals. Angela had no idea what she wanted

to do as an occupation, but was pragmatic about the need for further education. However, she considered this to be mainly 'filling in time' as she didn't know what else to do (see Chapter 8:1). She didn't want to move away from home and her pessimism about the likelihood of academic success in the Bursary examination meant that her range of choices was restricted. The message that qualifications should be job related had been absorbed by Angela to the extent that she felt that choosing subjects that she found interesting (anthropology, geography) was to settle for second best. She couldn't envisage a place for herself in the labour market during her seventh form year, and although financially, she was able to attend a tertiary institution post-school, her socialisation (her mother was a homemaker) and a restricted labour market were likely to have contributed to her indecisiveness and feeling of 'filling in time' during her seventh form year.

On the other hand, Tessa was fairly sure that she wanted to be a jockey. She was keen on riding and had her own horse. However, her family wasn't completely supportive of this goal (they were situated in the middle to high income bracket) and so she was taking a range of subjects in her seventh form to keep her options open. Her parents encouraged her to apply for the overseas student scheme and she was accepted for this, thus forstalling her entry to further education and to the labour market until a more 'suitable' place could be found for her.

> *Tessa:* Now wants to be an exchange student- she thinks that it would improve her communication skills and self-confidence, and therefore help her get a better job. If that doesn't eventuate, she could do a B.A at VUW, but she feels that her Bursary grades may not be good enough (Field notes, 4th August).

The numbers of students involved in further education meant that Sarah was unable to study the course of her choice.

> *Sarah:* Wants to take journalism at Wellington Polytechnic. However, she knows that there is an enormous number applying for this course and there is a preference for graduates. Will plan out a degree just in case, as a stepping stone if necessary (Field notes, 4th August).

Thus, Sarah also moved into a waiting pattern as she planned her post school destination. She was aware that pressure on places for the course of her choice was to do with the limited number of jobs available and that the preference for graduates was a filtering mechanism which reduced the numbers that the polytechnic then needed to choose from.

Therefore, the choice that these students were exercising was not the 'greater personal choice' that the Government envisaged when outlining the key principles supposedly underpinning social policy initiatives, but rather,

> the rational choice of an individual (which) in terms of Boudon's theory, is always subject to situation effects and always made, therefore, on the basis of incomplete knowledge (Codd, 1991: 8).

As Codd, 1991 remarks, whereas the notion of choice suggested by Government policy seems to define choice as absence of coercion or restraint, in fact, choice occurs within a context of 'situation' disposition' and 'communication' effects and is 'the acts of individuals 'who are socially situated'; in other words, people who are part of a family and other social groups, and who have resources which are cultural as well as economic' (Boudon 1989: 7).

Choice, then, can be regarded as a 'scope of human action' (Furlong 1987). The scope of human action is a variable 'constrained by structure. Structure is not a fixed variable, but its strength fluctuates'. The variations in the labour market and the availability of jobs has been shown to be a major variable in the scope of action available to school leavers.

The situation of the individual in relation to the hierarchy of the labour market

structure is another variable which influences the choices that they make, as do the disposition, or socialisation effects. Bourdieu (1974) has argued that choices are largely an expression of the system of explicit or implied values which they have as a result of belonging to a given social class'. The students then develop realistic expectations about their future (although this may be different from an 'ideal' future) utilising criteria of 'success and failure' derived from their family context; 'the linguistic and social competencies as well as the qualities of style, manners and know-how' (Harker, 1990:36).

It is argued, therefore, that factors of class, ethnicity and gender give rise to the disposition effects which are all part of the frame of reference utilised by students as they make decisions about their futures.

The disposition effects of the individual will also influence the communication effects. That is, the authority ascribed to the statements and viewpoints of significant others will depend on the hierarchical relationship of the 'other' to the individual. Although in this study, teachers rated highly in the authority 'stakes', the lack of women teachers in HOD positions and as senior teachers in maths and science tended to then give their words less authority.

Parents were not always acknowledged as an authority, as the experiences of their generation differed from those of their children. And indeed, if the aspirations that they had for their children did not match the resources that they had available to finance it, then the authority was rendered rather meaningless. The environment in which young people are growing up today is different from that of their parents. As Valsiner comments:

> The *active* role that the child plays in the cultural transmission guarantees that the culture that the children's generation shares goes necessarily beyond that of their parents.---the promoted cultural messages are actively assimilated into the children's internalised knowledge structure in *novel* ways (Valsiner, 1988: 293).

Young people today see the world differently from their parents who were the young people of the 1950s and 1960s. Labels that are conferred upon today's young people are not passively accepted and acted out by them, but are reflected upon and internalised only if they make sense in the light of personal experience.

Chapter Ten
Conclusion

Policy is developed in a political, economic and social context. The context of present tertiary policy has been examined and the historical antecedents which have led to a 'market' approach to educational policy have been outlined. It has been shown that policy making is not a neutral exercise, but has inherent values which reflect the values of different groups in society. Ultimately, however, policy reflects the necessity for capital accumulation.

The language utilised in the formulation of policy and the manner in which it is implemented tends to lend 'commonsense' and authority to the policy. Current tertiary policy was formulated at a time when there was a crisis in capital accumulation and when the cost of sustaining the activities of the state was seen to be too high and preventing economic growth. The language used to describe alternative free market economic policies is clearly evident in the policy which has been examined in this study.

It has been argued within this paper that structures within society firstly tend to be perpetuated because of the nature of the society; that a capitalist mode of reproduction, which is dependent upon capital accumulation for its continuation, requires a hierarchical and segmented labour market to facilitate the accumulation of profit. Secondly, the objectives of policies which aim to provide 'equity of access' and a 'fairer distribution of resources', often fail because of the tendencies of families to reproduce themselves; additional factors include credential inflation, labour market segmentation and youth sub-cultural production. These factors combine to provide a frame of reference utilised by individuals as they make rational choices about their future.

The present study has examined the decision making strategies of a group of ten seventh formers from a Wellington college. Discussions with the students

throughout the school year revealed changing patterns of aspirations in terms of future study plans and career paths as structural factors began to intersect with the choices that students were making about their futures. In addition, students received a number of 'messages' through Government tertiary policy. These have been examined and the extent to which they influenced the decision making of students has been discussed.

This has been research of a descriptive nature in which the values of the researcher have been part of the design of the study. The participants have also contributed their viewpoint and have helped shape the direction of the research. However, the process of this study, although assisting students to look at a greater range of options in choosing courses and in helping to define career goals (and thus extending the frame of reference they utilised in planning their future trajectory), did not have the facility to interrupt the structural imperatives which constrained the choices that students made. It was anticipated at the beginning of the study that this would be the case.

The structures of the labour market helped shape the decision of all of these students to go on to further education and training. They all knew that there were no jobs available for them, and that to get a good job when they were older, they had to have a good qualification. Therefore, there was little option for them but to go on and gain further qualifications when leaving school. The structure of the labour market was such that young people needed to be kept in a 'holding' pattern of acquiring skills and maintaining work habits until they were needed in the labour force. The decision to go on to further study was, therefore, a pragmatic one, based on the 'commonsense' knowledge that students had about a restricted labour market, a shortage of skilled labour, and an economy that was in deficit.

The position that individual students found themselves in in relation to the labour market influenced the decisions that they made about future study. Those who came from well- off households had more choice in the scope of

study that was available to them. Their parents were able to afford the courses that their children chose, and they were prepared to support their children financially through their tertiary education, even though the prognosis of success was not clear cut. On the other hand, for those who could not afford the courses of their choice, grades were also of concern in determining to what extent they pursued their goal, or 'cut their losses'.

In some instances, money was not a disincentive to pursuing courses that the students ideally aspired to. However, as students aligned themselves with their peers already studying similar courses, their own socialisation made them feel sufficiently uncomfortable with that course of action, that eventually they abandoned it. This was particularly so with girls seeking to enter what they perceived to be 'non traditional' courses and those from minority cultures. Therefore, the disposition effects of the individual, their values, the view that they had of 'themself' all contributed to the decision making process.

Students had absorbed the message the cost of tertiary education was too high and that those who could afford it should pick up their own costs. They were aware that for most of them, their parents earned too much income for them to be eligible for any financial assistance. Therefore, continuing to live at home while studying at tertiary level and finding after-school jobs which would give them an independent income were all realities which influenced the choices that they made. At the same time, there was a degree of resentment towards policies which insisted that their parents earnt too much for them to be able to receive a student allowance, and yet then restricted the choices that some of them could make because their parents earnt too little to be able to afford the more expensive courses that were their first choice. Therefore, although lack of a student allowance did not deter students from undertaking tertiary study, it did influence the course they applied for in terms of location (living costs) and fees.

Although students had heard of Study Right and the Student Loan Scheme, they initially had little awareness of what these policies entailed. There was the feeling that Study Right was some sort of a handout, while the student loan was a debt that would grow and should be avoided if at all possible. Study Right policies had little influence on the decision making of these students, as the most commonly attended tertiary institution had a flat fee. Similarly, Student Loan policies did not enter the decision making process to any great degree; students budgetted for their courses according to what their parents could pay and what they themselves could earn. The Student loan was seen as an emergency 'back-up' only and not as a facility that increased choices.

In some ways, these students were responding to government policy in the way it was envisaged that they would; i.e they were continuing with further education (although for most, it was not directly related to 'skills') and in the main, parents were picking up most of the costs, with the students contributing what they could. However, the students did not perceive that they had increased personal choice as the policy documents suggested they should, nor did they perceive the system to be particularly fair. They were aware that the choices that they made were the most viable, given restrictions of money and lack of places in the courses of their choice, due to the number of their peer group going on to further education.

No doubt several of these students will take up a student loan as they meet unexpected costs or their family circumstances change. However, there was no evidence that at this stage the student loan had any influence in increasing access to various courses or in expanding student choices. In this aspect of Government policy, the actual effects were contradictory to the intended effects.

The school, in particular, the teachers had an impact on the decision making strategies of these students. Students perceived that there was a subject

'hierarchy' in which the sciences were seen as more valuable knowledge, leading to occupations such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science etc. Subjects and qualifications that were more job-related were seen to have more value and more desirable to aspire to. The humanities, social sciences etc were seen more as 'filling in time' and not leading to a job. Students who had initially aspired to qualifications that were directly job-related then felt that they were settling for 'second best' when poor grades or lack of money discouraged them from pursuing the goal that was their first choice.

Students continually sought to 'make sense' of the messages they received from the school, through tertiary policy, from their families and the knowledge that they had of the labour market and their likely place in it. These messages were not incorporated mechanically into the decision making of students, but were part of an active process as students adjusted their decisions to fit their circumstances or their perceived role in the wider world. As boundaries became apparant, frames of reference were developed in which decision making was rational and commonsense. This research sought to discover the frame of reference for each individual student within which the final decision of their post school destination was formed, and to examine the effects of tertiary policy on that decision.

The experiences of each student in this study have been described as a case history and their different characteristics have indicated the degree of influence that situational, dispositional and communication effects have had on the decisions that they have made about their future.

Within a climate of user pays and accountability; of individual choice and freedom, the notion of welfare has shifted to a residual model where individual and families are responsible for their own needs and the state is there as a 'safety net' for those who cannot meet their own needs. However, it is then assumed that apart from the small number of people who are in the latter category, the majority of the population then have an equal capacity to

make choices about the provision of social services. As choices will be made on the basis of self interest, education is then viewed as a private good; as a commodity in the market place.

Such an approach overlooks the hierarchical structure of the labour market where all do not have the capacity to enter on equal terms. It has been shown that youth, gender, socio-economic and ethnic factors all influence the expectations and decision making of individuals as they seek to align themselves within the hierarchy.

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Appendices

Appendix One

Student Profiles

Simon

Simon comes from a family of three children; he is the middle child with an older and a younger sister. His parents are pakeha and both are involved in education; his father as a Primary School principal (a local, small primary school) and his mother as a part time Adult Literacy tutor. I knew Simon's mother as we had worked together and was interested to see if the sense of social justice she displayed was also evident in her son.

He saw himself as 'different' from the rest of the students, and indeed, maintained at our first interview that he had no friends. Yet he was comfortable with another male in the group of students participating in this research and so I usually saw them together along with a female who also seemed to be a bit of a 'loner'.

At the beginning of the second term, Simon's plan was to:

a. get as high Bursary grades as possible
b. get a full-time job as soon as school finished
c. go to university to complete a Bachelor of Medical Lab. Science
d. begin a Dip Environmental and Resource Science at Central Institute of Technology (Wellington).

He acknowledged that this course of action would be very expensive, particularly as he wanted to live away from home. His parents were earning too much for him to be eligible for a Student Allowance. He was knowledgeable about the student allowance to the extent that he knew he was not eligible for anything unless his mother gave up her job. He had two part-time jobs out of school hours to try to find the money that he would need

for the following year- $7000 by his reckoning. He didn't know a lot about the Student Loan scheme but was adamant that he didn't want a loan. He spoke of the pressure of having 'something like that hanging over his head for years and years'.

Simon hadn't wanted to return to school for the seventh form, but he wasn't sure what other options were open to him, and his parents wanted him to return to school. He didn't like the competitiveness and pressure to 'perform' that he felt was exerted on him by the school and 'society' at large. He felt that increasingly higher grades were necessary to gain access to courses and that therefore there was no choice in the matter.

As the mid year exams approached, Simon became increasingly anxious. He was having difficulty retaining what he was revising. Following these examinations he suffered a real loss of confidence. His highest grade was 49% and the remainder of his marks were in the 20s and 30s. At this stage, he indicated he was 'flagging' any idea of a university course and had downgraded the Diploma course he was aiming for, to a Certificate course.

Around this time the Minister of Education introduced his 'no-second-chance' student allowance policy i.e if students receiving a Student Allowance failed more than half their course in one year, they would not be eligible to receive the student allowance the next year. Although Simon was not eligible for a Student Allowance anyway, he took this all 'on board' as a non-failure directive and down-graded his aspirations accordingly.

We discussed his study methods as he was feeling very discouraged; he had put a lot of work into revising for exams with disappointing results. It was clear that he had no focus when revising. He was just reading through chapters of his textbook hoping that it would 'stick'. I showed him how to structure study sessions and lent him some books which gave him questions around which he could focus his study.

In the school examinations prior to the external Bursary examination (the 'mock' exam), Simon achieved higher marks than he anticipated. This led him to feel that University Entrance was within his grasp, and maybe even a 'B' bursary. However, by this stage he had discarded any thought of attending university and had his sights firmly fixed on Polytechnic. In the build up to external examinations, he was under stress and was receiving counselling. He had already applied for 19 jobs in the hope of gaining holiday work but had had no success so far. We talked about student job search and the options open to him if he was unable to find work on his own.

Simon did indeed achieve University Entrance, although not the 'B' Bursary that he would have liked. When I spoke to him early this year, he had been accepted for a Certificate in Environmental and Resource Science course at CIT and was looking forward to the year ahead. He manged to find work over the summer holidays- scrubcutting and working in a pharmacy. He intended to stay in the Halls of Residence at the polytechnic and had saved enough money to pay his board. He had rationalised away his earlier goal of thinking that he might go on to university by saying that he really wanted to do something more specific anyway. He had gained 16% for statistics in the Bursary exam and had enrolled to resit this subject through the Correspondence School as he felt that he would need a statistics background.

Angela

At our first meeting, Angela had no idea what she wanted to do the following year. She had chosen Bursary subjects that she saw as 'easy' (biology, geography) as she felt that it was necessary for her to gain as high marks as she could so that she could get into the course of her choice, whatever that might be.

Angela listed her mother's occupation as 'housewife' and her father's as a business manager. She was the second of three children in the family with an older and a younger brother. Her family were pakeha and she lived in a higher income suburb within the city. Throughout the year it was evident that she was very attached to her family. She would not consider going away to attend a course out of the district and so looked just at the courses offered by local institutions to see what what was offering.

Although Angela had no idea what she wanted to do as an occupation, she was very pragmatic about further study. She felt that there was no other choice but to go on studying as there were no jobs available and she wasn't eligible for the unemployment benefit. Therefore, the following year she intended staying at home and attending either polytechnic doing maybe a business course, or university studying for a B.A if her Bursary grades were high enough.

Angela was aware that she wasn't eligible for a student allowance as her father's income was too high. She hadn't heard of Study Right but thought that it was a good idea as there were few options other than further education available to school leavers and the existence of study right acknowledged this.

Following the mid term break, Angela went overseas with her family and did not return to school until the third term. When I next saw her, she was very unsettled. She was no closer to knowing what she wanted to do the following year; no idea what she wanted to study nor what she wanted to do as an occupation. She was feeling very pessimistic about her chances of gaining entrance and was going ahead with her plan to enrol at the local polytechnic in a Business Studies course. She thought that if she did gain entrance qualifications to university, she would go there instead. However, she couldn't see that this was anything other than filling in time as she would be attending university as she didn't know what else to do.

At this stage (the end of September), Angela hadn't begun studying for her school examinations. She admitted that she was lacking motivation and any sense of purpose. We talked about setting short term study goals that would enable her to begin focusing on the school examinations and then, by doing the best preparation that she could for Bursary, it may be possible that more options would be open to her. As it turned out, her marks following the school examinations were poor (she in part blamed the time that she had been away from school), and she resigned herself to going to polytechnic. However, she said she would still prefer to go to university as it was cheaper. She was planning to do short term babysitting over the long holidays to help with course costs. The school career's counsellor advised me that she had had discussions with Angela to try to help her to sort out a programme of study that would make sense to her, but had felt that little progress had been made.

When I contacted Angela in February, she was preparing to go to Victoria University to do a B.A degree. She had gained an entrance qualification in the Bursary examination and indeed, had been 4 marks off a 'B' bursary. This had boosted her confidence and although she still didn't know what she wanted to do long term, she had enrolled in subjects at university that she felt interested in-anthropology, geography and science- and was looking forward to moving into a new environment.

Angela hadn't been working through the holidays. Her family were prepared to pick up the costs for her study, and she took it for granted that she would be staying at home and continuing on as usual while she was at university.

Hine

Hine wanted to be a lawyer. That was her ultimate aim throughout the time we spent together. However, she was aware that her school grades would most likely prevent her from being accepted into law school unless she was admitted under the Maori quota system. An 'A' Bursary was the usual criterion

for entry to law school at Victoria University. Even with availability to her of the maori quota, she knew that her chances of admission were minimal. When I first spoke with Hine, she was studying 4 Bursary subjects and 1 6th Form subject.

Hine came from a family of four children, two boys and two girls of which she was the third-born. She listed her father's occupation as a director of crown lands, while her mother was a cleaner. The family identified itself as Maori and Hine was active in the school culture club. Maori language was the bursary subject that she enjoyed the most, and had the most success with, at school. The family lived in a middle to low income suburb outside the city and Hine travelled some distance to the school each day. The family had liked the school's commitment to things Maori and felt that it was worth making the extra effort to attend the school.

Throughout the year, Hine was unsettled in her family situation and wanted to go flatting with a friend. She didn't want to live at home the following year, but was concerned, as her parents between them earned only just too much for her to be able to receive any student allowance. She was prepared to apply for a student loan to fund her post school study but found the prospect of owing a large sum of money 'scarey' even though she realised, following our discussions, that it would be repaid through the tax system. She felt that if she had to remain at home the following year, transport to and from university would be a big expense, and so she was hoping to build up savings by working in an orchard in Nelson over the long holidays.

Following a performance at the school by a dance group from the Performing Arts course at the local polytechnic, Hine decided that she would like to investigate this course as an alternative to university. I brought the course brochures with me when I next came to the school, but by that time Hine had gone off the idea. Neither her parents nor her teachers were keen.

Hine asked to see me by herself one day in the lead up to the mid-year exams. She said that she had difficulty deciphering what the questions meant when she was sitting exams and wanted some help with her exam strategies. I obtained some past exam papers with the intention of working on some questions to get an idea of what was going wrong, but didn't see Hine again for a month or so, as she was ill on one occasion that she was scheduled for a meeting with me, and she was attending a tangi on another occasion.

When I saw Hine in September, she had abandoned the idea of studying law. She had, instead, decided to enrol in a Diploma of Maoritanga at Victoria University as she was able to gain admittance to that course without having university entrance, but was able to receive some credit towards a degree. The mid year exams had not gone at all well for her and she was now convinced that admittance to law was out of the question. However, at that stage was preparing for the school 'mock' exams prior to Bursary and was feeling more positive about her study. She was 'right into it' and was beginning to get the work covered.

Hine's results in the mock exams were poor, confirming for her that applying for the Dip Maoritanga was the right course of action for her. It was an area of study where she was succeeding at school and in which she felt interested. She was not managing to save much money and had become resigned to staying at home the following year. She asked me about Study Right- what it was and how she could get the forms. As Victoria University charges a flat fee to all students, Study Right was going to be of no benefit to her. However, I told her of funding options through Te Puni Kokiri (for which she would be eligible) and later sent her information on the grant, Manaaki Tauira.

Hine did not gain University Enrance. She received 4 'Ds' in the Bursary exam. She was accepted for the Diploma of Maoritanga at Victoria University (a one year, full time course) and was planning to pay for her fees with money she had earnt from part time work over the holidays, and a Student

Loan. She didn't mention utilising Manaaki Tauira, but I was confident that the Maori Liaison staff at Victoria University would encourage her to seek reimbursement from this source. Hine said that studying law was still her ultimate goal, but she would just have to see what happened over the next year.

Graham

Of all the students in the study, Graham was the one who seemed to 'have it all together'. His goals at the beginning of the year included gaining an 'A' bursary and studying for a B.Sc in computer science and physics at Victoria University in 1993 and these goals remained firm throughout the year. His sunny (although quiet) temperament and ability to laugh at himself meant that he was accepted by the other students in the study and indeed, in the course of our sessions, he actively encouraged and 'jollied' along those who were feeling discouraged and under pressure.

Graham's family were from England and came to New Zealand when he was 10 years old. There are two children in his family; himself and an older half-sister. His father is a bank manager and he listed his mother's occupation as 'Home executive'. They live in a new, high income suburb within the city.

Within our group sessions, Graham was mainly content to let the others do most of the talking and when he participated, it was usually to support what one of the others was saying or to counter negative points they were making about themselves or the school with encouraging or pragmatic remarks. I was glad to have a session with him by himself in August to be able to find out what he was thinking without his sense of responsibility to the other students intervening. He was well informed about policies such as study right, the student allowance scheme and the student loan scheme. He felt that it was a good idea to keep on studying straight from school as there were no jobs available. However, he acknowledged that this might not suit a lot of people

and it wasn't really fair on them.

Following the mid year examinations, Graham decided to aim to gain scholarships in two of his subjects, physics and economics. His teachers had been encouraging him in this and he was keen to be able to gain exemption from some first year university subjects if he was successful. He didn't forsee any barriers that would prevent him from enrolling in the courses of his choice the following year; science subjects are not usually oversubscribed and his parents were happy to pay for his education. However, he wanted to contribute as much as he could to his study and intended working in both the August and summer holidays to earn money. He intended to travel by car into the city each day with his father to attend university the following year.

The results from the 'mock' exams prior to Bursary indicated to Graham that he was well on track to achieve an 'A' Bursary, although he wasn't sure if his grades would be high enough to achieve his two scholarship subjects. He had managed to work in his father's office for two weeks in the holidays and had begun saving.

Graham did indeed gain an 'A' Bursary and a scholarship in economics. He hadn't been happy with his performance in the physics examination and in the end, received 71%. He had decided to change his B.Sc majors to computer science and electronics and had been accepted into all his papers by the university. he had been working 'flat out' over the long summer holidays and had come to an agreement with his parents that while they were paying his fees, he would pay for his textbooks and help to cover transport costs.

David

I didn't really get to know David well over the 6 months that I was working with the group. He was encouraged by the career's adviser to join the group halfway through the year as he wanted to go to university to study a B.Tech

and she felt that I would be useful contact for him to have. He agreed, and did attend sessions for which he was programmed. However, he didn't become involved in the research as most of the other's did and was fairly specific in the information that he wanted from me. David had no career aspirations at this stage, nor did he have any idea what he would major in at university. He was planning to 'see how next year goes' and how well he had done.

David's father was dentist and his mother, a teacher. He was the eldest child in the family and had two younger brothers. He lived in a middle to upper income area of the city, but maintained that his parents were not well off and that he would need to support himself through university. To that end, he was working about 14 hours a week to raise the necessary cash. David felt that it was unfair that he had to do this. He felt that the Government was forcing him to continue with his education because there were no jobs available, and indeed, it was essential to have further education to get a good job, yet at the same time, the removal of assistance was a real disincentive.

David indicated that he would be taking a student loan, but hated the idea of having a loan 'hanging over his head'. He didn't see the loan provision as a 'helping hand' but would take one because there was no alternative. The degree that he wanted to do wasn't offered at Victoria University and therefore he had to live away from home to do the course of his choice. He was planning to stay in a hostel at Massey University, and this was going to be costly.

Results from the mid year exams indicated to David that he would have sufficient marks to gain entrance to university. However, at the beginning of the year he had hopes of gaining an 'A' Bursary. Now he felt that he would be lucky to gain a 'B' bursary. Following the 'mock' exams, he had sufficient marks to gain him entrance' had the exams been the 'real' thing, but not enough for a Bursary. He said that his poor results would spur him on to prepare better for the Bursary exam, and he believed that the exams had

been marked 'hard' to achieve this result.

As it turned out, David gained University Entrance, but not a Bursary. He was very disappointed about this. However, he was really looking forward to the year ahead; he had a group of friends going with him to Massey University and he had been accepted for hostel accomodation. With a loan, he was sure that he had enough money to meet his expenses.

Tessa

Tessa was taking a spread of subjects in her 7th form year. She really wanted to be a jockey, but felt that she should keep her options open by taking both science and arts subjects. However, she had no further ideas about what she would like to do as a future occupation.

I had difficulty 'personalising' Tessa for a little while. She was in a, interview group with two of her close friends. These three were always very much in accord with each other. They had similar appearances and were rather conservative in their view of things. Therefore, it took a little while to sort out who Tessa actually was in relation to her friends.

There were three children in Tessa's family, two females and one male. She was the youngest of the three. Her father was an air worthiness inspector, while her mother worked as PA secretary. The family lived in a middle to high income suburb of the city. She was particularly keen on riding (horses) and badminton. She also liked reading and writing.

Tessa did not know about, nor was she concerned about targeting critera for the student allowance, or study right. She was confident that her family would pay for any further education and so money considerations were not part of her 'framework' when she was planning her post school year. Tessa was also not anticipating any change in her living arrangements; she would continue

to live at home and be supported by her parents. Although she doubted whether she would be able to make use of the study right provision, she felt that it was a good idea to keep on studying straight from school, and that it was wise of the government to limit study right provision to three years as that then put pressure on students to pass everything within three years. She had heard that there was a student loan available, but didn't envisage that she would need to take one up.

By the end of the second term, Tessa was considering the overseas student exchange scheme. She hadn't done particularly well in the mid year exams, but felt that being an exchange student would improve her self-confidence an communication skills and would therefore help her get a better job later on. If that wasn't possible, she thought that she might study for a B.A at Victoria University, but she doubted whether her grades would be good enough for her to get into the courses that she wanted. Entry to first year English papers need a 7th form grade of 60%. In any event, she still wanted to be jockey and she was also prepared to look at doing a chef's course at the local polytechnic.

Tessa came to the local polytechnic with her two friends early in August to explore career options on the QUEST data base and to look further at career options. I noticed that she was very much 'at home' on the computer, and she found her way around the database very easily. However, she concentrated on looking at the areas she had previously indicated that she was interested in i.e stablehand, riding instructor etc. We looked at information on equine courses offered at various polytechnics around New Zealand.

Before the school 'mock' exams, Tessa applied for, and was accepted for an overseas student exchange scheme. She wanted to go to the U.S.A or Canada, but had been offered Malaysia or Thailand. She wasn't interested in going to either of these countries, but she was still hopeful that an opportunity would arise for her to go to the country of her choice.

Tessa's results in the 'mock' exams weren't sufficient for her to gain entrance, had they been the 'real' thing, but she said that she wasn't worried, as she didn't need entrance. She hoped to be overseas the following year and then to work as a jockey on her return-and she didn't need exams for that. There was a possibility that she would leave for overseas mid year in which case she planned to do stable work in the 6 months before she left. She was planning to find work during the long summer holidays to get a bit of extra money.

When I rang Tessa's house in February the following year, I spoke with her father and found that she had indeed gone overseas to the USA. Tessa achieved a 'B' Bursary and would therefore have little difficulty being admitted to university on her return to New Zealand.

Frances

Frances seemed to be under pressure from the first time that we met. She was the eldest child in a family of four children and had two younger sisters and a younger brother. Her father worked as a courier, and although she listed her mother's occupation as housewife, her mother was involved in other activities outside the home and her parents relied on her a lot to look after her younger siblings. Her family lived in the northern part of the city in a modest house and finances seemed to be a problem.

When I saw Frances for the first time, she indicated that she was intending to study medicine at Otago university. To this end she was studying mainly science subjects in the 7th form, but was the only girl in her chemistry class. She thought that she would be eligible for an abated allowance as she would be living away from home. However, she was sure that she would need to take up the full amount of the student loan and felt apprehensive about the amount of debt that she thought she would be getting into. Of all the students

in the study, Frances was well informed about student allowances and the loan scheme. She said that she had friends who were already at varsity and that they had told her about those things. She was aware of the need for superior grades if she was going to be accepted for med school and felt under pressure to achieve.

Frances was forceful and articulate but seemed to have numerous worries. She seldom made her set interview times, or if she did come, she would say at the outset that she could only stay for a few minutes as she had so much else to do. But just when I thought that I had lost her from the project, she would arrive in someone else's scheduled time. As the sessions were every Tuesday from 11.55 a.m on, she knew when I would be at the school and where.

By the end of July, Frances was beginning to think that although she still wanted to go to Otago university, it might not be possible. Her parents wanted her to remain in Wellington and go to Victoria University. She believed that they couldn't afford to allow her to go to Otago as soon they would also need to be supporting her younger sister in tertiary education. She really wanted to leave home- she was not getting on well with her mother and her mother had indicated that she didn't enjoy having her in the house. At the same time, she was needed for babysitting. And so, for the moment, she felt that she had no option but to remain put. Frances felt that she had little choice in what she would be able to do the following year.

Frances did sufficiently well in her mid year exams to indicate that she would achieve a 'B' bursary. She realised that she would need to really raise her grades if she wanted admittance to med school. However, her grades on the third term 'mock' exams were lower still. When I saw her immediately following these exams, she was very fidgetty and 'up tight'. She said that she was sick of everything; sick of making an effort and wondering about the best thing to do. She hadn't managed to work in the holidays and save any money

and her marks were poor. She felt that the easiest thing to do was to stay at home and look after her younger brothers and sisters as her parents wanted her to do and maybe 'cruise' into university if her marks were up to it.

I saw Frances again in the week preceding her departure from the school to prepare for the Bursary exam. I was meeting with a staff member when she knocked on the door and came in. She had been discussing her future with a couple of the teachers at the school and had been receiving conflicting advice. As her science marks had not been good, she was, on the one hand being advised to drop science the following year and shift to history where she had done well. However, another teacher had confirmed her feeling that there is 'nothing that you can do with history'. 'What can I do with that'? Therefore she was better off to stick with Science and get a good job. The staff member and I discussed the pros and cons of this approach with her.

Frances gained a 'B' Bursary in the external examination. She enrolled at Victoria University in a double degree course; a B.A (majoring in History) and a B.Sc majoring in biological science. She had been working over the long holidays and felt that with what she had saved, a student loan and part time work throughout the year she would manage.

Sarah

I was surprised that Sarah stayed with the research project throughout the year, as she seemed uncomfortable with me for a while. At the first session I had with the students, it was a large group and she did not participate at all at that stage. It wasn't until I saw her for the third time that Sarah began to volunteer information about herself. She wanted to study journalism at Wellington Polytechnic the following year, but she had heard how competitive the entry to the course was; each year hundreds of students applied for about 50 places. Therefore, she thought that although she would go ahead and apply for the course, she would probably end up going to university and

getting a degree first. She was planning out a university course to this end. Journalism interested her as a career as she enjoyed English as a subject, and she liked writing. She felt that journalism offered a way of using something she was good at in a way that had variety and was challenging.

Sarah, along with her friends Tessa and Michelle lived in a middle to high income suburb to the north of the city. She had an older brother. Both of her parents worked full time; her mother as a legal executive and her father as an engineer/technician. It was clear that lack of money was not going to be an issue for Sarah as she planned her post school year. She didn't have a part time job throughout the school year and was comfortable at home with her parents. I pointed out to her that there were journalism courses available in other tertiary institutions, but she had no wish to leave home or to live away from Wellington.

Sarah came to the local polytechnic early in August in order to look at other courses where she might be able to use writing skills. However, she felt that creative writing courses wouldn't get her a job and they weren't as highly thought of as journalism. At the same time, although she looked at information a university course in journalism, it was clear that she wasn't considering that as an option as it was offered at Canterbury university. She went to an open day at Wellington polytechnic later that month and had a look around the facilities, and visited the journalism department.

Following the school 'mock' exams, Sarah was feeling particularly low. Her results had been poor and indicated to her that she would not gain entrance if the exams had been 'for real'. This would then mean that she would not be able to study English at university, neither would she be accepted for journalism at polytechnic. She was feeling discouraged and under pressure, but was determined to do better in the final exams.

Sarah gained a 'B' Bursary in the external examinations. Her highest mark

was English for which she gained 63%. As entry to first year English papers at Victoria University required a 60% pass in Bursary English, Sarah was confident that she would be accepted into English along with her other choices of sociology and classics.

Sarah had not found work over the holidays and indeed, had no need to work. Her parents were going to fund her completely through university, and she would continue to live at home .

Sifa

Sifa was a quiet member of the group and I was conscious that she was uncomfortable with some of the other girls in the project. After the first initial meeting when I saw everyone together, I then tried to include her with Hine or Simon. However, I didn't see as much of Sifa as I had planned. She was involved in a lot of extra activities at the school; basketball, volleyball, music, Samoan culture club.

Sifa was a New Zealand born Samoan and lived in a low to middle income suburb of the city. There were two children in her family and she had a younger brother. Her father was a taxi diver while her mother taught at a local primary school.

Although Sifa stated at the beginning that she was keen to go to university, she felt that this was unlikely as she was studying just four Bursary subjects and one subject at 6th form level. She didn't express any strong career goals, but was interested in computers and thought that if she didn't get unversity entrance, she would most likely go to polytechnic and study for a Certificate or Diploma in Computer Science.

Sifa had no knowledge initially of Study Right, Student Allowance or Student loan provisions. We worked out that she would be eligible for a very small

student allowance as her parents' combined income was close to the upper thresh hold. She felt this was rather unfair as her parents were not just supporting her and her brother, but they were also very involved in church and cultural activities to which they contributed financially, as well as sending money home to Samoa on a regular basis. Also, with an enormous increase of taxi drivers in the city, the amount that her father brought home each week was variable.

The mid year exams were a let down for Sifa. Her marks were in the 20s and 30s and she asked me for help in preparing for the next exams. I was happy to do this, but although time was set aside, I didn't see Sifa again until just after the mock exams, when once again, Sifa had been disappointed with her results.

When the students left the school early in November to prepare for the Bursary examinations, I was conscious that Sifa's expectations of our reciprocal arrangement had not been fulfilled. She had hoped that participation in the research project would enable her to learn more about study and the university system. Ethically, I felt that I had let this student down for although she rarely came to her set interview times, I should have made more of an effort to see her outside the set times and to work through study and exam techniques with her. I discussed my unease with the career's adviser who undertook to follow through with her prior to the final exams and to fill in any gaps.

I was unable to contact Sifa again. The family weren't on the telephone at home and the contact number that Sifa had given me was the school where her mother worked. There was no-one home on the occasion I visited the home and when I rang her mother's school at the commencement of the new school year, I was advised that her mother didn't work there anymore. I then contacted the college to find out what results Sifa had achieved in the Bursary exam and whether they had any knowledge of what had happened

to her. To my surprise, I found that she had returned to school for another year.

Michelle

Michelle was keen to become a vet and had therefore joined the research group as she planned to attend Massey University in 1993 and thought that she might be able to find things out about the course that she wanted to study and the university. She was studying a mixture of subjects in 1992 and along with chemistry, biology and maths, she was also studying horticulture and english. We discussed the competitiveness of entry to Vet. Science and she was well aware of this. However, she said that she felt that the competition was a good thing because it made you try harder.

Michelle was from a family of two children, and had a younger brother. The family lived in a middle to high income suburb in the city and throughout the time we had together, Michell indicated that the funding of her tertiary education would not be a problem. Her parents both worked; her father as a company director and her mother as a secretary.

As with her friends, Tessa and Sarah, Michelle knew very little about study right, student allowances or the student loan scheme. As it she would be ineligible for an allowance and probably wouldn't need to take a student loan, she felt that she didn't really need to concern herself with these policies. As Massey University did differentiate between study right and non study right students, we discussed the rationale behind this provision. Michelle indicated that she thought that it was a good idea that students were encourage to go straight into further education from school as there were no jobs available without further education. She also thought that it was a good idea to put pressure on people to pass everything in three years, even though she would need to pay much higher fees for the last two years of her vet science course.

Following the mid year examinations, Michelle was beginning to feel under pressure. Her mid year grades had been in the low 50s and high 40s. She was aware that she would need to perform very well in her first year at university if she was going to gain entry to vet science and was worried that she may have wasted a year if she didn't make the grade. We discussed the options of other ways in which first year science papers could contribute to other qualifications, but she was particularly keen to train for something that was directly job related and indicated that she would then train for dentistry or optometry if she didn't make it into vet science.

Just two weeks later, Michelle travelled to Massey with some of the other 7th formers from the school interested in going to Massey University and visited the Vet Science faculty. Next time I saw her, she was less sure again of becoming a vet. She said that all the students there looked 'really brainy' and she could tell that her grades weren't going to be good enough for her to get in.

When Michelle came to the polytechnic with Sarah and Tessa to look at career options, I noticed that she was investigating areas such as dental nursing, nannying and nursing. She thought that she might look at these careers for a 'fall back' position and she later went to Wellington polytechnic with the school visit to investigate nursing and dental nursing courses.

Following the mock exams. when Michelle gained 22% for chemistry, she had abandoned all idea of studying vet science. She thought that maybe she could look at Medical Laboratory Science, but that she had also applied to two polytechnics for nursing courses. She thought that she would wait for her Bursary results before making a final decision.

Michelle achieved a 'B' Bursary in her external examination. Chemistry had been her lowest mark at 44%, so she had decided to abandon the idea of studying science subjects at university and had decided to train as a nurse at

Wellington polytechnic. She had been doing some babysitting over the long holidays to earn money to help pay for textbooks that year.

Appendix Two

Interview with Ministry of Education officials 20th June 1992

Jeremy Corban, Manager Economic Policy
David Woods, Economic policy Analyst

Questions were forwarded to the Ministry, at their request, prior to the interview.

1. Student Allowances

Questions

a. How were the threshholds of eligibility established?

b. What was the rationale behind the removal of a universal allowance for students under the age of 25 years?

c. Which groups had input into the formulation of this policy? What research was utilised?

d. What were the projected outcomes of Student Allowance policy? How is this being monitored?

e. At present, the parents of students not living in a university city pay substantially more for the education of their children. Are there mechanisms to evaluate the impact of present policy on different geographical/socio-economic/ethnic/age/gender groups?

Results of discussion

The present threshholds for the Student Allowance are a carry over of previous targeting. The rationale behind the removal of the universal allowance was in line with general Government strategy to remove all universal benefits. In raising the age of universal eligiblity to 25 years, significant savings could be made. At the same time, it was recognised that a loan scheme would need to be put into place. It was realised that with tighter

targeting there would need to be an alternative funding scheme. At the same time, there has been higher takeup of the independent circumstances allowance.

The December1990 Economic Statement underpinned tertiary policy. As the unemployment benefit rate was decreased overall, but more so for those under 25 years, the Student Allowance also had 25 years as a cutoff point. Obviously, strong assumptions were made about the willingness of families to provide for all their members, but there is a backup in the form of the loan scheme.

The outcomes of the altered Student Allowance Scheme were seen to be primarily fiscal. The aim has been to improve the quality of Government spending yet maintaining access to tertiary education.

At present, no evaluation of the Student Allowance Scheme is proposed. Research is being conducted on the loan scheme to find out to what degree people regard it as a liability.

2. Study Right.

Questions

a. What was the process which established the levels of state subsidy to study right and non study right students?

b. Why was the minimum fee level for beneficiaries replaced by study right?

c. Was the reduction of study right from the proposed 4 years entitlement to the 3 years a fiscal decision, or were there additional reasons?

d. Study right and the philosophy of 'Learning for Life' do not seem to fit comfortably together. Do the principles of 'Learning for Life' guide tertiary policy formulation?

Results of discussion

Study Right was introduced in the National Party manifesto and originally consisted of 100% subsidy over 4 years of Study. However, the Tertiary review Group found that the fiscal imperatives of this was extra cost- half a billion dollars more in funding, or the displacement of mature students. This conflicted with the retraining imperative.

It is difficult to define the benefit to society of tertiary education while individual benefit is more identifiable (higher incomes). Therefore unlike it was promised in the National Party manifesto there would not be guaranteed access and no set term for Study Right.

Study Right was a Government signal to institutions that they wanted to encourage young people into tertiary education. Beneficiaries were now expected to take up the loan scheme to fund their study.

The reduction of Study Right from four years eligibility to three happened mainly on fiscal grounds. However, as most courses are three years long it seemed more logical. Also, if eligibility remained at 4 years, institutions would respond by increasing the length of their courses. It is acknowledged that there is some fiscal disadvantage to more mature students.

3. Student Loan Scheme

Questions

a. What factors were considered in setting the income level determining the commencement of loan repayment?

b. Has the takeup of Student Loans paralleled the projected amount set aside?

c. Are Student Loans likely to replace Student Allowances in future years?

Results of Discussion

The payback threshhold ($12,500) has been geared to the minimum wage. Therefore those below this level get the maximum benefit from the scheme. Those earning a market income are applying a real rate of interest so that the debt is retired. If the threshhold was higher, it would be slower to pay back. Tax is on margin above $12,500.

There has been difficulty in budgeting the amount required for the loan. $240 million has been allocated for 1992. At this half way point of the year, $160 million has been allocated, although the cash flow, the takeup of the loan has been lower than this.

The aim has been to introduce a mixture of loans and grants. Although some in Treasury would like to see an end to grants, it is likely that the current mixture will remain.

Appendix Three

Interview with staff member, 8th September.

1. Is achievement-based assessment utilised over the whole school?
This type of assessment is used primarily in the sixth form. However, it is being more frequently used in areas such as science and maths right across the school.

2. How frequently are assemblies held for the senior school?
About once every three weeks for an hour. The purpose of them is liaison and to give out information. For example, an assembly was held when VUW staff came with enrolment forms etc.

3. *It has been claimed that the school receives 60% of its students from local contributing schools. Where do the remainder come from?*
With dezoning, some parents see this school as a desirable one to send their children, perhaps because exam results tend to be a bit higher. Therefore, children are bussed from across town.

4. *Do the notebook planners, as described in the school prospectus, work efficiently?*
Parents don't necessarily sign them, particularly after the third form. However, it does keep key information together (information about school events etc which is usually handed out in form time). It has information about the key people in the school, maps of the school etc.

5. Are parent-teacher evenings well attended?
Teachers are asked to ring parents before hand as sending home a notice doesn't work. However, this is time consuming, and in practice very few teachers manage to get around all of their parents. There is a special parent teacher evening for third form parents 6 weeks after the beginning of the

school year. This is to make sure that parents are well informed and feel part of the school family.

6. *The mission statement of the school talks of tolarance towards other cultures. Does this happen in practice?*
The kids at the school tend to mix in their own cultural groups and there are definite cliques that you can identify. However, they are mixing with, and being exposed to other cultures even though they may not realise it.

7. *What topics are covered in the Liberal Studies/Life Skills section of the curriculum? How many topics deal with career choice, preparation for work etc?*
This is more prevalent in the sixth form when they have 2 x1 hour sessions a week. They are encouraged to look at their own strengths and weaknesses. Some of them have particularly unrealistic expectations about what they want to do (when they leave school) and we try to get them to think about that. At this level we also look at C.V preparation, and different careers. In some cases, we encourage them to stay on at school to get them more prepared for a particular career. However, for some, you know that they are not going to make the grade and it is difficult to know how it is of benefit to them staying on longer at school. The upper school is beginning to feel like a holding pen, with no evaluation of what these kids who are returning are being taught, or why.

We cover topics such as sexism and prejudice in these sessions- issues for these students as they go into the workplace. We also look at personal rights and responsibilities in sexual relationships, and parenting.

8. What is the gender mix of teachers in the school? What is the gender mix in subjects such as Maths and Science?
The gender mix throughout the school is well balanced- 32 female and 33 male. However, within science and maths, there are five men and two

women. However, the HOD Science is a woman. The proportion of girls taking maths and science subjects is low- they constitute no more than 25% in any maths or science class. However, the number of students taking these subjects generally is low and the overall results give cause for concern.

9. *What is the proportion of Maori and pacific Island teachers at the school?*
I don't know that there are any Pacific Island teachers. There are six Maori teachers, and four of these are departmental heads.

Appendix Four

Discussion with Careers' Adviser, 5th November, 1992.

1. *How is information from the Ministry of Education re changes in policy etc dessiminated to students?*

"Maybes' are not passed on, but 7th Form Dean and Form teachers etc alerted. Pieces of paper are not read by students , although information concerning students is posted on noticeboards. Some information concerning trips etc is passed on at assemblies and discussed during form time, or selected students are spoken to personally.

When information arrives at the school from the Ministry of Education, NZQA etc, it goes initially to the Principal, who vetts and passes it on to the 7th Form dean or careers' counsellor. Anything that is really urgent is communicated in a letter home, otherwise, if it can wait, it is announced at assembly, during form time, or put on the noticeboard. It is acknowledged that a lot of 7th formers miss information this way, as they just don't turn up to assemblies and form time.

2. *How do students gain careers information from the school?*

Messages about preferred occupations, e.g those using Business Studies, Science, Maths seem to come primarily from the family. People don't seem to hear the message that studying the arts is good general preparation for a career. They see that there are jobs advertised in the paper in computers and accountancy and push those areas.

There has been no Careers day at the school this year, although it is hoped to have a careers' expo next year. Older students are shown the NZQA video. The QUEST data base is situated within the transition section of the school and it is not accessible to other students informally, although 4th form

students are given one or two lessons on it during the 'Looking Ahead' section of their Life Skills module. We will begin doing this with 3rd form students next year. Careers' leaflets are held in the Library. Students can always come individually for careers advice, and 7th formers tend to be seen individually.

3. *What other measures are taken to link senior students into further study?*
There are visits to the two closest universities and to the local polytechnics during the year, and students can put their names down for these trips. There is a real lack of co-ordination with university/ polytechnic liaison. For instance, the Lincoln adviser rang a week before exams with a set date. The date co-incided with exams, and there were no asemblies etc to let people know that he was coming. Therefore, there were very few individuals around for those sessions.

Appendix Five

17th February 1992

The Chairperson
Board of Trustees

Dear Ms

I am writing to seek permission to work with a group of 7th Form students at the College throughout 1992, in order to complete research of interest to Massey University and to fulfil the requirements of a M.Phil thesis for Massey University.

The purpose of the research is to observe and discuss the decision making strategies of school leavers as they plan their destinations beyond school. The personal effects of Government policy are, at times, unintended and unexpected. I am interested to ascertain the extent to which tertiary policies such as the introduction of 'Study Right', the abolition of living allowances for students of 'high' income families, the Student Loan scheme and the present 'user pays' philosophy influence the choices that students make about their futures. These policies help provide a context for decision making, as do wider issues such as the present employment climate.

I am currently employed by Massey University in a position which involves course and career advice, the teaching of study and examination skills, and student counselling. I would hope that in the course of the research, skills that I have could be utilised by the school in some way and that the research itself would be of interest to the students involved and to the Board of Trustees.

I do not anticipate that the research would demand much in the way teacher hours, apart from initial, preliminary discussions. Contact with students would likely average out to about an hour a fortnight and would continue throughout the 1992 school year. I would also envisage that I would work in with the school's Careers' Adviser, should she be agreeable.

Although I would want to have contact with the entire 7th Form initially, I would then work with a sample group of 20 students, utilising a case study approach. Usual research ethics of complete student agreement, confidentiality and protection of identity would be observed at all times.

I would be grateful if you would consider this research proposal at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. My best wishes to the Board for the year ahead.

Yours faithfully

Sue Mortlock

Appendix Six

7th FORM STUDY-PLANNING FOR THE POST SCHOOL YEARS

Information and Consent Form

Sue Mortlock of Massey University is conducting a study on the decision making strategies of 7th Form students. This research is of interest to Massey University, and will fulfil the requirements of an M.A for the researcher.

What is the study about?

The aim of the present study is to observe and discuss the decision making strategies of school leavers as they plan and evaluate their choices beyond school. The study will investigate the extent to which Government tertiary policies such as 'Study Right', the abolition of living allowances for students of 'high' income families, the Student Loan Scheme influence the choices that you, as students, make about your futures.

What will you be asked to do?

You will be asked to take part in discussions, both group and individual, throughout the year. It is possible that some contact will be necessary following 1992 examination results. The study will involve approximately 15 minutes of your time once a fortnight.

Your rights as a participant.

All participants:

have the right to contact the researcher at any time to discuss the study.

have the right to withdraw from the study at any time

provide information on the understanding that it is completely in confidence and to be used only for the purpose of the research. It will not be possible to identify individuals in any reports of the research.

have the right to information about results on completion of the study.

Sue Mortlock.

Participation

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete the details below:

Name _____ _____
(Last name) (First names)

I understand what is involved in this study, and wish to participate under the conditions as set out.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I would like to receive a summary of results at the completion of the study (Please tick one).

Yes **No**

Appendix Seven

Interview Timetable Sheet

Name

Times available
(25 mins required)

I would like to work

1. By myself
2. In pairs
3. In a group of 3 or more

Names of other students with whom I would like to work

Times of the year that I will not be available

Appendix Eight

Student information sheet

Name

Address

Phone Number

Date of Birth

No. of children in family: Male: Female:

Place of self in family

Mother's occupation

Father's occupation

Interests

Other information (if applicable)

Appendix Nine

Student interviews. A sample of the field notes.

4th August

Guiding question: *In considering what ideally you would like to do next year, tell me what the choices are and then any likely constraints that might prevent this happening.*

Michelle, Tessa, Sarah, Graham.

Sarah wants to take journalism at Wellington Polytechnic. However, she knows that there is an enormous number applying for this course and there is a preference for graduates. (Action: information on other journalism courses offered.) Will plan out a degree just in case, as a stepping stone if necessary. Discussed the reasons for her choice of journalism- variety, investigation, enjoyment of English and writing.

Tessa now wants to be an exchange student - she thinks that it would improve her communication skills and self confidence, and therefore help her get a better job. If that doesn't eventuate, she could do a B.A at VUW, but she feels that her Bursary grades may not be good enough.

We discussed why higher grades were now required for entry into most courses- Tessa suggested that there was pressure on the university from increased numbers wanting to attend and therefore increased competition. Sarah acknowledged that increased pressure might mean that she couldn't do a degree, but if all else failed, she could go to Polytechnic and do a chef's course, or she could become a jockey. There were no perceived barriers in place there.

Michelle wants to study Veterinary Science at Massey University. Pressure to perform really well in the first year and worry about having wasted a year if she didn't make the grade. Would then look at dentistry or optometry. Money to pay for these courses not a constraint- just her own ability. A lot of brainy males at Massey (the day she visited with the school).

These three are quite comfortable at home. None of them work part time and money doesn't seem to present any difficulties. Constraints are in the form of competition and the pressure that they feel under to perform.

Graham is aiming for an A Bursary, and two scholarship subjects. He wants to do a B.Sc in physics and electronics at VUW. Doesn't see any barriers, as courses are not usually oversubscribed. Parents are happy to pay for his education- will live at home and travel into the city each day with his father. Could gain exemption from some papers with scholarship grades. Sees that an adjustment will need to be made from school to university as it is a different form of education, but envisages that that will take just a few weeks. Has no problem with a flat fee regime as he feels that it hypocritical of the Government to expect older people to retrain but to then not allow them reduced fees. Also, is in favour of more expensive courses costing more. Is planning to work through the school holidays and then get a job in the long holidays so that he can contribute as much as possible to his costs next year.

28th July

Frances and David

Frances wants to attend Otago University next year, while *David* wants to go to Massey. Parents not wealthy- 'just over the limit', therefore, David and

Frances are working 14 and 10 hours respectively each week to raise money. Both feel that choices have been restricted- less choice. Frances doesn't think that her parents will be able to afford her going to Otago next year (she is the eldest of four children). They are putting pressure on her to go to VUW. She wants to leave home, her mother wants her to leave home, but there is no choice but to stay put. There is the option of a loan- both Frances and David feel that they will probably need to take one out, but hate the thought of having it 'hanging over their heads'. Even with a loan, it is unlikely that there would be enough money to live on. Not fair- Frances says her parents are not rich, just making do. There is not a choice in courses she is able to do as Otago is just too expensive.

Both Frances and David agreed that they feel corerced. There is no jobs for them- the Government is forcing them to continue with higher education- essential to get a job eventually. On the one hand, Government is saying continue with higher education- on the other hand, discouraging people by removing assistance. Don't see the loan as a 'helping hand', but as no alternative.

Appendix Ten

Excerpts, School Prospectus, 1993

CURRICULUM

1. The college offers a broad, flexible curriculum which includes a wide range of both academic and practical courses. The aim is to offer a course of studies to each student which is most likely to promote his or her educational development .

2. Students are not classified into their form class on the basis of academic or other test results. Classes are of mixed ability. Students are free to take any of the optional subjects offered provided the Principal is satisfied the student is likely to be able to cope with them. There is no gender discrimination; all students may choose any course. Programmes are so designed as to enable students to learn at their own rate and at their own level.

3. Considerable changes are presently being planned for secondary schools – the final version of The National Curriculum Framework has now been released, and new syllabuses in Mathematics and Science are being introduced to schools. School Certificate and Bursary examinations are expected to become optional tests, rather than central to schools, as at present.

   Concurrently with this development, the NZ Qualifications Authority is producing a National Qualifications Framework with eight levels, three of which will be taught at secondary school, and the remainder at tertiary institutions.

   As we are right in the middle of these changes, it is not yet possible to give final details or the full picture. However parents should understand children beginning their secondary schooling in 1994 are going to experience considerable change in curriculum and assessment procedures during their years at college.

4. The curriculum of the school is much more than a mere collection of subjects. It includes sporting and cultural activities. Students are also encouraged to see these as an integral part of school life and vitally important elements in their education. Moreover, many of the attitudes and values a student learns at school are not taught in any formal classroom sense but are inferred from the total experience of school. The moral climate of the school must encourage the development in students of respect for, and tolerance of, others and a genuine spirit of enquiry. No particular course of studies will teach a student this; the example of good parents and teachers will .

5. Details of the subjects currently offered are found in this Prospectus folder.

GUIDANCE

Students often need advice over courses and problems. Whether for educational or personal reasons, students often simply need someone to talk to. The following people, in particular, will welcome any student:

* the student's own form teacher
* the deans (there are two at each level)
* the guidance counsellor
* the senior students attached to third and fourth forms
* the careers adviser
* senior administrative staff

but we trust that anyone and everyone at will be concerned to listen and try to help.

COMMUNICATION WITH HOME: THE YEAR PLANNER

Parents are urged to communicate with the school by phone or appointment, or by writing notes in the student's planner. These planners are especially important in the junior classes and carry information about homework, attitudes and any special messages such as details of a class trip. Please look at them and sign them at least once a week and use them to explain absences. etc. Parents are encouraged to contact the school **directly** if there are matters of immediate concern.

REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Students are assessed regularly, by a variety of methods, and reports are prepared three times a year.

Reports for Junior (Forms 3 and 4) students are issued at the end of each term, while for Seniors (Forms 5 to 7) an interim report is prepared late in Term One, and then full reports are written after the mid-year examinations (held in June) and at the end of the year. Parent evenings when teachers are available to discuss progress are held twice a year for each form level .

LIBERAL STUDIES (F6) and LIFE SKILLS (F7)

First introduced in 1991, these programmes for two hours each week are taken by all 6th and 7th form students. They are particularly designed to prepare students for the new challenges of life when they leave school to enter the workforce or to continue study at the tertiary level .

Subject Course Structure 1993

AVAILABILITY OF SUBJECTS DEPENDS ON CLASS SIZES AND STAFFING

FORM 3	FORM 4	FORM 5	FORM 6	FORM 7
1. CORE SUBJECTS[1]	**CORE SUBJECTS[1]**	**SELECT SIX**	**SELECT FIVE**	**SELECT FIVE**
English	English	English [1]	English [1]	English
		English Cert.[3]	English Alternative[4]	
		English as a Second Language[3]	Drama	
Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths with Calc.
		Maths Alternative [3]	Maths Alternative [4]	Maths with Stats
Science	Science	Science		
		Science Alternative [3]	Science Alternative [4]	
		Biology	Biology	Biology
			Chemistry	Chemistry
		Horticulture	Horticulture	Horticulture
			Physics	Physics
Social Studies	Social Studies	Accounting	Accounting	Accounting
		Economic Studies	Economics	Economics
		Geography	Geography	Geography
		History	History	History
		Lifeskills[3]		Classical Studies
		Social Science[3]	Sociology	
Physical Education	Physical Education	PE Certificate[3]	Physical Education	
2. CRAFT CYCLE [1]			Sports Education[4]	Sports Education[6]
3. OPTIONS	**PLUS THREE OF-**			
Art	Art	Art[2]	Practical Art	
				Art History
				Design[7]
	Extension Science			Printmaking[7]
	Horticulture			Painting[7]
				Sculpture[7]
Design & Textiles	Design & Textiles	Clothing & Textiles	Design & Textiles	Design & Textiles
	Home Economics	Home Economics	Home Economics	Home Economics [5]
Language Extension	Language Extension			
French	French	French [2]	French	French
Japanese	Japanese	Japanese[2]	Japanese	
Maori				
Maori Enrichment	Maori	Maori [2]	Maori	Maori
German	German			
Graphics	Graphics	Graphics	Graphics	Graphics
Workshop Craft	Workshop Craft	Workshop Technology	Design & Technology	Design & Technology[5]
		Design & Craft	Motoring Studies[4]	
Music	Music	Music [2]	Music	Music
	Practical Music			
**Shorthand (T-line)	Shorthand (T-line)	Shorthand (Pitmans) [2]		
Typing	Typing	Typing [2]	Typing/Word Processing	Typing/Word Processing[5]
*TWO to be studied for the first half of the year: TWO others for the second half			Computer Studies	Computer Studies [5]
			Alternative Computer Studies[4]	
			Liberal Studies[8]	Life Skills [8]
			Transition[4]	Transition[5]

**Students taking Shorthand must also take Typing.

(See 1994 Course Information Booklet for details).

AVAILABILITY OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS IS DEPENDS ON CLASS SIZES AND STAFFING

NOTES:
1. Compulsory
2. Must have been studied in Form 4
3. Not a School Certificate course
4. Not a Sixth Form Certificate course
5. For Higher School Certificate only NOT Bursary
6. Not a Higher School Certificate course
7. TWO only to be chosen - consult with HOD Art
8. Compulsory – 2 periods per week