

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

EVOLVING CONCEPTS OF
MORAL EDUCATION:
1970 - 1985

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education
in Education at
Massey University

Kama Weir

2001

Abstract

Moral education is a complex and contested area of curriculum in New Zealand schools. This thesis examines the moral education debate from 1970 to 1985 and argues that much was achieved before the 'reforms' of the late 1980s diverted energy and time to other matters.

The first part of the thesis introduces the debate by outlining theoretical considerations, historical influences, and social, economic and political contexts. The main thrust of the thesis explores different aspects of the debate through the reports, courses and conferences of the 1970s. The final section of the thesis examines the significance of developments in health education between 1980 and 1985 to the moral education debate.

Preface and acknowledgements

Roger Openshaw's post graduate paper 'Education and Historical Analysis' kindled an interest in the history of curriculum development. The paper brought together two aspects of my own background: that of undergraduate studies in history as a student at the University of Canterbury during the early 1970s and my role as a teacher and later health education coordinator from 1986 to 1995 at Central Normal School, in Palmerston North. As I worked my way through Roger's paper, I recalled the legal framework for consultation which has been a unique feature of health education since 1985. The starting point for my research was therefore to look at the historical context of consultation and legislation in health education.

Preliminary research indicated that provision for consultation and the need for legislation were products of a moral education debate that had engaged the Department of Education, teachers, parents and the community for many years. The thesis topic was consequently revised to consider health education within the context of moral education.

I could not have completed this thesis without the support and encouragement of many people. I am indebted to my supervisors Associate Professor Roger Openshaw and Emeritus Professor Ivan Snook who have guided me through the process. I am also grateful for advice and encouragement from colleagues at Massey University College of Education, particularly Kerry Bethell. My thanks also to Colin McGeorge, a senior lecturer in the Education Department at the University of Canterbury, for advice and useful material.

I am appreciative of the generous contributions made by Ruth Mansell and Helen Shaw to my research. Ruth Mansell stimulated my interest in the background of the Health Education Syllabus while Helen Shaw's knowledge and reflections on the development of the syllabus were invaluable. Both provided me with helpful feedback on the final chapter.

My husband Trevor provided encouragement and skills as a proof reader. I am very grateful to him and also to Bonita Cooke who so competently formatted the thesis.

Table of Contents

	Page No.
Title page	i
Abstract	ii
Preface and acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Chapter One - Introduction	1
A new way of looking at curriculum	4
The social, economic and political context of curriculum 1970 -1985	5
Politics and curriculum	9
The historic context of moral education	10
- Moral and religious education	10
- The religious-secular debate and moral education	11
Moral Education in Schools	15
Moral education in the syllabus	22
Chapter Two - The moral education debate: legislation and initiatives	25
Legislation, sex education, contraception	26
Sex education and legislation on contraception and abortion in the 1970s	27
Moral education initiatives in schools in the 1950s - 1970s	30
The Department of Education and moral education initiatives in schools	33
Politicians and moral education	37
Chapter Three - The moral education debate: The Department of Education	39
Department of Education Structure and Curriculum Development	39
Links between the Department of Education and other groups	43
Politics	46
The Curriculum Development Unit	51

Chapter Four - The moral education debate: courses, conferences and reports	60
The Educational Development Conference	60
Conferences on Moral and Religious Education	64
Courses and Conferences on Health Education	70
The Report of the Working Party on Guidance in Secondary Schools	79
Towards Partnership	81
Chapter Five - The moral education debate: the Ross Report	85
Why the committee was set up	86
The Report	91
Reactions to the report: the first phase	92
Reactions to the report: the second phase	96
The Department of Education and the Ross Report	107
Chapter Six- The moral education debate: the Johnson Report	110
A climate of consultation	110
The Committee on Health and Social Education	112
Membership	112
The Report	114
Submissions on the Johnson Report: analysis and interpretation	118
The Department of Education remains active in Moral Education	125
Pressure Groups and Moral Education	129
Relationships between pressure groups and the Minister of Education	132
Chapter Seven- The moral education debate: <i>More Than Talk and What Do You Think?</i>	135
Resource development for moral education	135
'What Do You Think?' and 'More than Talk'	136
'What Do You Think' and the Department of Education - the beginning of a troubled relationship	138

The Department and 'More than Talk'	140
'More than Talk' and 'What Do You Think?': Conflict over moral education	144
The Department of Education and the controversy over 'What Do You Think?'	149
Chapter Eight- The Final Chapter: the Development of the Health Education Syllabus, 1980-1985, and conclusion	158
The Health Education Project Team	160
Looking towards a new syllabus	164
The significance of the consultation process	166
The Consultation Process	167
The political context	173
The beginning of a new era	181
Conclusion	194
Bibliography	196
Appendices	208