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Submission on 2006 draft education curriculum  
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The 2006 draft education curriculum is a dangerous document and puts all our children at grave risk. It contains fundamental flaws that work to generate unsustainable behaviour. These must be addressed if New Zealand is not to continue being a serious liability to humanity.

On a personal level, I am born and bred in New Zealand and have had a very good education in terms of our system. I also believe the New Zealand education system destroyed a significant amount of the science in me and thus the art in me. For instance it was not until I was in my 30s that I learned from other sources than our education system that art can be developed in me, as can any other language and that it is underpinned by science. As a result I long felt betrayed by and very angry at our education system. While I did not understand why it had failed me I sensed the system lacked morality and generated arrogant, uncaring beings. I sensed it contained a major disconnect.

I also believe the evidence of our national statistics indicates our education curriculum is, on balance, failing the average New Zealand citizen and contributes directly to the lack of science in our country.

This lack of science is manifest as:

- Falling living standards;
- Addictive uses of precious resources such as food, oil and Gas;
- Our high per capita carbon emissions;
- Grossly inefficient design, construction and use of dwellings (thermal and moisture management) and utility grids (uses of electricity including broadband);
- Our profound ignorance of atmospheric processes;
- Our rising household debt levels;
- And in general we are a nation that models very destructive uses of Earth's resources. If all peoples were to adopt our model then humanity would have no future.

Recently I have had reason to explore the design and impact of our education curriculum in greater depth. My conclusion is that it models and is modelled on equally unsustainable cultures such as are found in the USA, Canada, Australia and Britain. Knowledge is imagined as divorced from morality and thus science is destroyed. As a result the fundamentals of our national education curricula are framed not by formal educators but by the PR industry acting for

the short-term interests of a minority group. It is exclusive by design and practice.

The current structure of the draft education curriculum means it will work to frame our Technology and Economics so they destroy rather than sustain the balances that enable humanity to exist. Our use of technology and knowledge will not be underpinned by the requisites of science. In other words, the draft curriculum reinforces the unsustainable status quo.

I mentioned my long experienced sense of a major disconnect. I now characterise that disconnect as a denial of change in the universe and our role in change. This denial stems from and generates a lack of science. Science ceases to exist when any of the following overlapping requisites are not present:

- \*Inclusiveness.
- \*Honesty
- \*Collegiality, openness and sharing
- \*Time and trust
- \*Reflection
- \*Compassion

I believe we are each born with these requisites and they enable the spirit of honest and reflective experimentation to exist. This spirit in turn enables us to interact with our environment and better mirror the balances that sustain us. This is evidenced in our ability to learn to walk, talk, draw, farm and to sustain civilisation in general. At various stages in our life form we have a greater physiological capacity to develop these capacities. However if the individual does not enjoy all these requisites at those crucial times then that individual's ability to develop their physical, language and art potential is denied.

In cultures where the requisites for science do not exist this denial of potential is manifest as:

- Starvation and obesity;
- Mental and physical retardation;
- Extreme wealth distribution and lack of democracy;
- Addictive uses of chemicals such as oil, Gas, uranium, coal, opium, diamonds, "sex aids", mood depressants/stimulants etc;
- Industrial-military complexes and war;
- And, in general, the destruction of supporting environmental balances.

I have summarised my concerns about the draft NZ curriculum on my website under the title

**Defining Science**

**&**

**Why the draft New Zealand education curriculum is a recipe for war and misery**

<http://www.bonusjoules.co.nz/Energy%20Gobbledegook/Defining%20Science.htm>

This article is an integral part of my submission on the draft curriculum. Please notify me if this use of electronic media is not acceptable in submissions. In it I briefly discuss how science is destroyed when any of its requisites are missing. I conclude with the following brief reflection on the draft curriculum in which I suggest its fundamental structure is unsustainable from the very first sentence in its introduction. I also suggest how this sentence can be rewritten to frame a more sustainable document.

From my website submission:

**Quick Reflections on the New Zealand draft education curriculum.**

This document lacks science. It frames science as a minor subset of our lives, rather than as central to our existence.

By defining it as separate from language and art it creates major barriers. Our children are denied the science that enabled them to originally learn languages and communicate.

They are denied art because they are taught it is not science. As a result, for instance, they fail to learn that drawing is simply another language and that it is by constant and rigorous experimentation that we are able to capture the truth of the subject. Instead they are told art is exclusive of those without the right genes.

They fail to learn that any language can be learned using science, just as they learned the language they were born into.

The draft curriculum framework acts to diminish awareness of the central role of morality in our decision-making and reduces acceptance of mortality in our lives. It divorces the knowledge we generate from our responsibility for its use. In so doing the draft curriculum promotes amorality, if not immorality. In short, it continues the denial of reality that has come to dominate Western culture since the so-called Industrial Revolution three hundred years ago.

Reflecting on the first line of the foreword:

“To succeed in a knowledge society, young people need strong foundations in literacy and numeracy. They need to develop the competencies that enable them to acquire knowledge and skills in essential learning areas, and which will enable them to become confident, creative, productive, and caring members of society.”

Certainly young people need literacy and numeracy. However these cannot exist without science. Technical proficiency in literacy and numeracy will be used in ignorance if they are not founded in science with all its requisites. Our modern psychotic corporations are born of such ignorance. They are full of people with enhanced knowledge of business administration, genetics, physics, chemistry, graphic art, psychology etc. They also work to put our civilisation at great risk of failure. The people with their finger on the nuclear missile buttons and who create terminator genes and SUVs are chosen because of their literacy and numeracy. They are also chosen because they will respond in unthinking fashion to any instructions.

The first sentence is perhaps unhelpful then. It provides a necessary condition (literacy/numeracy) for civilisation to exist but ignores the far greater capacities that are required for sufficiency. If a “knowledge economy” is driven by greed, dishonesty and exclusivity then it will not be sustained. It will prove a miserable existence for our young people. A more sustainable forward would read to the effect:

To succeed young people need strong foundations of compassion, honesty, inclusiveness, time, trust, collegiality and reflection. These are the requisites for science to exist. Science is necessary for the development of a body of knowledge that enables humans to better mirror the universal balances that enable civilisation. The experience of science will simultaneously enable our young people to develop language and art. Together these capacities generate the literacy and numeracy skills required for a sustainable society.

Thank you for reading my submission

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