

# Introduction to the Curriculum Ideologies

**F**or almost a hundred years, educators have been at war with each other over what the nature of the American school curriculum should be. Underlying this war are four visions of what the school curriculum should look like. These visions are based on four curriculum ideologies—or curriculum philosophies—that advocate very different purposes for schooling and very different methods of achieving those respective purposes.

These four visions of schooling have both stimulated improvement in American schools and caused conflicts that have inhibited progress in the development of the school curriculum.

The competition between the four visions of education has stimulated advocates of each to develop increasingly powerful curricula, instructional methods, and research bases. The result is improved instruction for children.

The competition between the four visions of education has also made it difficult for educators and the general public to reach a consensus on the nature and purposes of the American school curriculum. Seemingly irresolvable disagreements include the reading controversies over whether it is more important to teach decoding (phonics) or comprehension (whole language), the mathematics disputes over whether it is more important to teach mathematical understanding or mathematics skills, and the history conflicts over whether it is more important to teach knowledge of the past or to build strategies for critically analyzing and reconstructing society in the future. These disputes have recently become so fierce that they have become known as the reading wars, the math wars, and the history wars. Inability to appreciate differences in vision for the



school curriculum and reach a consensus about critical philosophical and pedagogical issues has made systematic improvement of the curriculum difficult.

Each of the four visions of curriculum embodies distinct beliefs about the type of knowledge that should be taught in schools, the inherent nature of children, what school learning consists of, how teachers should instruct children, and how children should be assessed. Each vision has its own value system; its own purposes of education; its own meanings for words (e.g., Does knowledge consist of understandings, skills, meanings, or values?); its own heroes, whose beliefs it repeats; and its own villains, whose beliefs it rails against.

Within this book, these visions are labeled the Scholar Academic ideology, the Social Efficiency ideology, the Learner Centered ideology, and the Social Reconstruction ideology. Each ideology has a long history and has been known by a variety of names. For example, at different times during the last hundred years, the Learner Centered ideology has been called "progressive education," "open education," "child-centered education," "developmentally appropriate practice," and "constructivism." These ideologies can influence people's ways of thinking about curriculum in the same powerful ways that their political beliefs can influence their stances on political issues.

The existence of these four ideologies causes difficulty for newcomers to the field, who are usually unaware of them and, as a result, often have difficulty determining how to philosophically orient themselves as subscribers to different ideologies pressure them for their allegiance. The existence of these four ideologies also causes concern among veteran teachers, who are frequently told by school administrators to embrace one curriculum fad after another—fads that often require major revision of the conceptual frameworks upon which teachers build their instruction. These curriculum philosophies frequently cause disagreement among curriculum workers, particularly curriculum developers, about what the nature of the curriculum they create and schools adopt should be. The competition among advocates of these four curriculum ideologies for influence on the school curriculum also causes concern—sometimes leading to the formation of political initiatives—among members of the general public who are interested in how their children and grandchildren are being educated, what goes on in our schools, and the ways in which schooling is influencing children's beliefs and social orientation. The best example of these political initiatives is perhaps the curriculum wars that took place in California between 1985 and 2000, during which two groups with competing ideologies had each other's favored curriculum programs removed from the list of state-funded curriculum materials and replaced by their own programs—after lengthy, well-publicized political battles (Becker & Jacob, 2000; Jackson, 1997a, 1997b; Pearson, 2004; Schoenfeld, 2004; Wilson, 2003).

The existence of these competing visions of what good education consists of and the corresponding lack of understanding regarding these visions among educators, curriculum workers, and the general public causes confusion and discomfort among Americans and within American education. As individuals, we are constantly disagreeing with each other—and with ourselves—about what we should be doing in our schools. As members of politically oriented groups, we lobby state departments of education over which textbooks or instructional programs should be used in our states. As a nation, we issue one prestigious report after another, many of them



disagreeing with each other, about what the problems of American education are and how those problems should be solved.

As a country, we have enriched our school curriculum in many ways by drawing from the four ideologies. However, systematic improvement in our school curriculum has been difficult, for we have been unable to settle on a single ideological orientation or a negotiated compromise among ideological orientations, unable to set clear goals for our schools, and unable to pursue those goals with single-minded determination.

The confusion in American education that results from a lack of perspective on the four curriculum ideologies, ignorance about the nature of these four visions for education, and the continuing disagreement among educators and the general public over what the nature of the school curriculum should be disrupts the effectiveness of educators as individuals and our schools as organizations (of supposedly cohesive groups of people).

One purpose of this book is to provide readers a sympathetic perspective on these visions of schooling based on a comprehensive understanding of the four curriculum ideologies in the historical context in which they have existed over the last hundred years. Another purpose of this book is to give readers perspective on their own philosophies of education as they relate to the four curriculum ideologies that have had—and are currently having—a profound influence on American schools. This book first describes and analyzes each of the curriculum ideologies, then compares them, and finally discusses the complex ways in which they influence the lives of individual educators over the span of their careers.

Perspective on and understanding of these curriculum ideologies can have several benefits. First, when educators understand their own conceptual frameworks and the range of ideological options available to them, it can help them to more effectively clarify and accomplish their own curriculum and instructional goals. Second, when educators have perspective on and understand the range of philosophical beliefs that colleagues can hold, this can enable them to better understand the nature of curriculum disagreements that inevitably take place in schools, be more accepting of others, and more effectively work with people of differing opinions. Third, when educators understand the way in which language is used differently in each of the four ideologies, it can assist them in more effectively communicating and negotiating curriculum decisions with colleagues, curriculum committees, school boards, and their communities. Fourth, when educators have perspective on and understand the differences between the curriculum frameworks influencing the current public dialogue about education, it can facilitate their ability to more effectively contribute to the public debate about educational issues. Fifth, when educators have an understanding of the ideological pressures exerted on them by society and colleagues, this can help them put those pressures in perspective and minimize—as warranted—their influence (Cotti & Schiro, 2004). In addition, when working with others on curriculum, if educators can acknowledge and clarify the conflicts and tensions that exist among colleagues who hold different beliefs about education and who use words in different ways to express their beliefs, there arises the potential to enable those colleagues to better understand and appreciate their differences and to more constructively work together (Block, 2010, pp. 523–527).



## Your Beliefs About Curriculum

This book is about both the nature of American education and the beliefs individuals have regarding the school curriculum. As a result, it is highly suggested that readers complete a short inventory that allows them to visually graph their curriculum beliefs. (The inventory and instructions for graphing its results are located in the Appendix.) I recommend that you complete the inventory now, before reading further, and again after you finish reading this book. The last chapter in this book discusses how and why educators change their curriculum ideologies over time. Seeing how your beliefs about curriculum change as you read this book will help you understand that chapter.

## The Curriculum Ideologies

The Social Efficiency ideology, the Scholar Academic ideology, the Learner Centered ideology, and the Social Reconstruction ideology are the names given to the curriculum ideologies examined within this book.

### The Scholar Academic Ideology

Scholar Academics believe that over the centuries our culture has accumulated important knowledge that has been organized into the academic disciplines found in universities. The purpose of education is to help children learn the accumulated knowledge of our culture: that of the academic disciplines. Acquiring an understanding of an academic discipline involves learning its content, conceptual frameworks, and ways of thinking. Teachers should be mini-scholars who have a deep understanding of their discipline and can clearly and accurately present it to children.

Scholar Academics assume that the academic disciplines, the world of the intellect, and the world of knowledge are loosely equivalent. The central task of education is taken to be the extension of the components of this equivalence, both on the cultural level, as reflected in the discovery of new truth, and on the individual level, as reflected in the enculturation of individuals into civilization's accumulated knowledge and ways of knowing.

An academic discipline is viewed as a hierarchical community of people in search of truth within one part of the universe of knowledge. The hierarchical communities consist of inquirers into the truth (the scholars at the top of the hierarchy), teachers of the truth (those who disseminate the truth that has been discovered by the scholars), and learners of the truth (students whose job it is to learn the truth so that they may become proficient members of the discipline).

The aim of education for Scholar Academics is the extension of their disciplines by introducing young people into them. This involves making youth members of a discipline by first moving them into it as students and then moving them from the bottom of the hierarchy toward its top. Extension of a discipline is accomplished through the transmission of its knowledge and ways of thinking to students. The curriculum provides the means of this transmission, and it derives both its meaning and its reason for existence from the academic disciplines. Scholar Academics' major concern is to construct curriculum in such a way that it reflects the essence of their discipline.



## The Social Efficiency Ideology

Social Efficiency advocates believe that the purpose of schooling is to efficiently meet the needs of society by training youth to function as future mature contributing members of society. Their goal is to train youth in the skills and procedures they will need in the workplace and at home to live productive lives and perpetuate the functioning of society.

Subscribers to the Social Efficiency ideology believe the essence of learners lies in their competencies and the activities they are capable of performing. Youth achieve an education by learning to perform the functions necessary for social productivity. Teachers manage instruction by selecting and using educational strategies designed to help learners acquire the behaviors prescribed by their curriculum. Instruction is guided by clearly defined behavioral objectives, and learners may require a lot of practice to gain and maintain mastery of skills.

Social Efficiency educators' first job is to determine the needs of society (or another more specialized client). The things that will fulfill these needs are called the terminal objectives of the curriculum. Educators must then find the most efficient way of producing a product—the educated person—who meets the terminal objectives of the curriculum and thus fulfills the needs of society (or the client).

Social Efficiency ideologists believe the most efficient achievement of a curriculum's terminal objectives results from applying the routines of scientific procedure to curriculum making. Central to Social Efficiency conceptions of scientific procedure is the assumption that change in human behavior (that is, learning) takes place within a fairly direct cause-effect, action-reaction, or stimulus-response context. This conception requires Social Efficiency educators to predetermine the relationships between cause and effect, action and reaction, and stimulus and response, and to predict the causes, actions, and stimuli (that is, the learning experiences) that will lead to the desired effects, reactions, and responses. Thus, three things that play an important role in the Social Efficiency ideology are the concept of learning (or change in human behavior), the creation and sequencing of learning experiences (the causes, actions, and stimuli which lead to the desired effects, reactions, and responses), and accountability to the client for whom educators work.

## The Learner Centered Ideology

Learner Centered proponents focus not on the needs of society or the academic disciplines, but on the needs and concerns of individuals. They believe schools should be enjoyable places where people develop naturally according to their own innate natures. The goal of education is the growth of individuals, each in harmony with his or her own unique intellectual, social, emotional, and physical attributes.

Learner Centered educators believe people contain their own capabilities for growth, are the agents who must actualize their own capabilities, and are essentially good in nature. In addition, people are viewed as the source of content for the curriculum; their ends are considered to be the appropriate ends for the curriculum.

This leads Learner Centered advocates to treat the concept of growth as the central theme of their endeavors. Growth of learners in terms of their unfolding in conformity



with the laws of their being becomes educators' objective. As a result, education involves drawing out the inherent capabilities of people. It is a facilitator of healthy, virtuous, and beneficial growth if what is drawn out is naturally coaxed out of people's innate abilities.

The potential for growth lies within people. However, people are stimulated to grow and construct meaning as a result of interacting with their physical, intellectual, and social environments. Learning is thus considered a function of the interaction between a person and his or her environment. Because individuals' interactions with their environment are assumed to be unique to the individual involved in the interaction, it is further assumed that the result of learning (the construction of meaning) is also unique to the individual.

Learner Centered curricula are thus thought of as contexts, environments, or units of work in which students can make meaning for themselves by interacting with other students, teachers, ideas, and things. It is the job of educators to carefully create those contexts, environments, or units of work, which will stimulate growth in people as they construct meaning (and thus learning and knowledge) for themselves.

### **The Social Reconstruction Ideology**

Social Reconstructionists are conscious of the problems of our society and the injustices done to its members, such as those originating from racial, gender, social, and economic inequalities. They assume that the purpose of education is to facilitate the construction of a new and more just society that offers maximum satisfaction to all of its members.

Social Reconstructionists view curriculum from a social perspective. First, they assume that our current society is unhealthy. They believe its very survival is threatened. Second, they assume that something can be done to keep society from destroying itself. This involves developing a vision of a society that is better than the existing one, a society in which its problems and conflicts are resolved. Third, they assume that action must be directed toward reconstructing society along the lines suggested by the vision.

Social Reconstructionists assume that education is the social process through which society is reconstructed. They have faith in the ability of education, through the medium of curriculum, to teach people to understand their society in such a way that they can develop a vision of a better society and act to bring that vision into existence.

Because Social Reconstructionists view education from a social perspective, the nature of society as it *is* and as it *should be* become the determinants of most of their assumptions. They consider human experience to be shaped most powerfully by cultural factors—and assume that meaning in people's lives is determined by their social experiences. They believe that truth and knowledge are based in and defined by cultural assumptions.

As a result, Social Reconstructionists believe that there is no good individual, good education, truth, or knowledge apart from some conception of the nature of the good society. Since society is undergoing a crisis, it follows that the good person, the good education, truth, and knowledge are also undergoing a crisis. The aim of



Social Reconstructionists is to rectify this situation by eliminating from their culture aspects that they consider undesirable, substituting in their place social values that they consider desirable, and by doing so to reconstruct their culture so that its members will attain maximum satisfaction of their material, spiritual, and intellectual wants.

### Historical Perspective on the Ideologies

Each of the curriculum ideologies has a history. Recognition of the traditions out of which each grew gives an important sense of perspective. Although the origin and evolution of each ideology provides a fascinating study in itself, this book will concern itself with the ideologies only as they have existed since 1880. The Scholar Academic ideology will be examined by exploring the period of curriculum development that resulted from the work of Charles Eliot and the Committee of Ten in the 1890s, the "new curriculum" movement of the 1960s, and E. D. Hirsch's cultural literacy movement at the end of the 20th century. The nature of the Social Efficiency ideology will be explored by examining the tradition linking Franklin Bobbitt, Ralph Tyler, and the Race to the Top Fund (and its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act). Tracing the evolution of the Learner Centered ideology will lead us to an examination of the continuity of belief uniting the work of Francis Parker in the 19th century, the progressive education movement in the first half of the 20th century, and the open education, developmentally appropriate practice, and constructivist movements of the last 50 years. Examination of the Social Reconstruction ideology will include an investigation of the tradition, publicly initiated by George Counts, that has evolved into the present social justice movement. My intent is to help readers understand the ideologies within the richness of the traditions out of which they grew rather than view them solely as they are presently manifested.

### Curriculum Workers

People who work on curriculum engage in many different types of endeavors. The ideologies elaborated in this book are relevant to the endeavors of the following curriculum workers.

*Curriculum practitioners* use curricula within the instructional arena and supervise its use in schools. Classroom teachers who plan instruction using social studies textbooks, implement a reading program, or derive a science program from curriculum ideas offered on a Web site are curriculum practitioners. School administrators who make curriculum adjustments to meet state or national curriculum standards, implement team teaching, encourage teachers to utilize a particular instructional methodology, or insist on the use of a particular textbook series are also curriculum practitioners.

*Curriculum disseminators* make known to curriculum practitioners the existence of curricula and the proper methods of using them. A curriculum disseminator might be a textbook salesperson, a school district subject matter specialist, a college professor offering a methods course, or a workshop leader for a publishing company or professional organization (such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics).



*Curriculum evaluators* collect, examine, and assess data for the purpose of reporting on the effectiveness, efficiency, and worth of the endeavors and creations of other curriculum workers. Curriculum evaluators might be employed by a private testing service, the central administration of a school district, a government-monitoring agency, a publishing company, or a curriculum development group. Their reports are meant to aid in decision making concerning curriculum materials, student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and school accountability.

*Curriculum advocates* are educators and members of the general public who are concerned about and attempt to influence what is taught in schools and how it is taught. A curriculum advocate might be a parent attempting to influence the curriculum decisions of his child's school, a citizen trying to influence the curriculum decisions of the state department of education, or a politician (perhaps a president, governor, or legislator) attempting to implement her curriculum ideas through the political process.

*Curriculum developers* intentionally create curriculum materials and strategies for others to use in the instructional arena. The important ideas here are "for others to use" and "instructional." Curriculum developers can be textbook writers, teachers who work on school curriculum committees, curriculum specialists who work for private educational organizations, or concerned citizens who design instructional materials for homeschooling.

*Curriculum theorists* examine the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of existing curricula; study how curricula are used, disseminated, created, and evaluated; study the endeavors and intents of other curriculum workers; speculate on what curricula should accomplish; probe the "whys" of their own examinations; and write books such as this one, all for the purpose of contributing to the general body of knowledge about effective curriculum practice, dissemination, advocacy, development, and evaluation.

This book is about the ideological stances of all of these types of curriculum workers. However, the curriculum ideologies described in this book can often be best observed in the programmatic intents and endeavors of people as they engage in the process of curriculum creation (or the planning of instruction). As a result, this book will frequently focus on the endeavors of curriculum developers as though they typify and represent the curriculum ideologies of a much broader spectrum of curriculum workers. Thus, discussion of the beliefs of curriculum workers in general will often be intertwined with descriptions of the particular endeavors of curriculum developers.

## The Nature of the Curriculum Ideologies

In this book, the curriculum visions, philosophies, doctrines, opinions, conceptual frameworks, and belief systems of educators are called *curriculum ideologies*.

An *ideology* is a collection of ideas, a comprehensive vision, a way of looking at things, or a worldview that embodies the way a person or a group of people believes the world should be organized and function. It is "a certain ethical set of ideals, principles, doctrines, myths or symbols of a social movement, institution, class, or large group



that explains how society should work, and offer some political and cultural blueprint for a certain social order” (Wikipedia, n.d., ¶ 1). The word is also used to describe

how cultures [or subcultures] are structured in ways that enable the group holding power to have the maximum control with the minimum of conflict. This is not a matter of groups deliberately planning to oppress people or alter their consciousness . . . , but rather a matter of how . . . institutions in society work through values, conceptions of the world, and symbol systems, in order to legitimize the current order. Briefly, this legitimization is managed through the widespread teaching . . . of ideas about the way things are, how the world “really” works and should work. These ideas (often embedded in symbols and cultural practices) orient people’s thinking in such a way that they accept the current way of doing things, the current sense of what is “natural,” and the current understanding of their roles in society. This socialization process, the shaping of our cognitive and affective interpretations of our social world . . . is carried out . . . by the churches, the schools, the family, and through cultural forms. (Lye, 1997, ¶ 1)

Note, from this description, that the ideologies of particular groups carry cultural impulses to dominate rival ideologies and control aspects of their culture (in our case, education). Note also that particular groups replicate their ideologies by educating (socializing, indoctrinating, acculturating) people to their beliefs by subtly attempting to “orient people’s thinking in such a way that they accept” the ideology’s view of the way things should be done, the ideology’s sense of what is natural, and the ideology’s position on roles in society.

The consequence of this in our culture, in which adherents of four curriculum ideologies vie for control over our educational system, is that proponents of each ideology attempt to convert other people to their viewpoint as they assert that their educational perspective is the only proper, natural, and acceptable way of viewing the field. These attempts result in constant pressure on teachers, educators, and members of the general public to accept one ideology and reject the others. It is as though four great magnets tug on all of us who are interested in education, pulling us in four different directions. This has led to an ideological war in the U.S. that is being fought on two fronts: the educational establishment and the minds and spirits of every American concerned with what is happening in our educational system. This is not the way things have to be. Certain cultures have allowed one ideology to completely dominate the others, and other cultures have found a way to get the ideologies to cooperate rather than compete with each other. But in America, at the beginning of the 21st century, believers in each ideology view every person as a fellow member, a possible convert, or an enemy. Therefore, educators and members of the general public who have committed to one ideology feel comfortable and secure that their worldview is the best one, while those who have not committed to one ideology feel constantly torn between rival viewpoints. For those who do not have an understanding of the available alternatives, this frequently leads to feelings of either self-righteousness or insecurity and confusion.

There are two major reasons I use the phrase *curriculum ideology* in this book. One relates to my choice of the word *ideology* rather than the more common term *philosophy*.



*Ideology* is used to distinguish between motives that underlie behavior and articulated beliefs. This book is concerned about the former and not the latter. The problem addressed by this distinction is that expressed intent (or philosophy) is frequently contradicted by actual behavior. Educators dealing with curriculum are often not conscious of the major assumptions underlying their actions, just as adherents of many political groups are often not conscious of the motives and impulses that drive them to act within the approved modes of behavior sanctioned by their political group. A distinction needs to be made between the visions, myths, doctrines, opinions, worldviews, and belief systems motivating curriculum workers to behave as they do and the *verbalizations* that curriculum workers make. Thus, I use the word *ideology*.

The other reason behind my use of the phrase *curriculum ideology* relates to my choice of the word *curriculum*. It is necessary to distinguish between the curriculum domain, the instructional domain, the epistemological domain, the learning theory domain, the psychoanalytic domain, the developmental domain, and so on, when discussing the endeavors of persons interested in curriculum. This is because people often behave differently when working within these different areas of discourse, just as teachers often relate differently to their own children and to their students. A person often behaves differently when acting on (or thinking about) curriculum issues from how he or she acts (or thinks) as a psychologist, parent, philosopher, or epistemologist. The conceptual systems people use are often tied to the role in which they see themselves functioning. For example, educators often behave differently and use different conceptual frameworks when they plan instruction and deal with curriculum issues versus when they execute instruction and interact with children. Thus, *curriculum ideologies* refer to people's endeavors while they engage in curriculum activity or think about curriculum issues. Curriculum ideologies do not refer to all beliefs systems of people, or even to all belief systems related to education.

The description of the ideologies presented in this book emerged from an analysis of the actions and beliefs of American educators (particularly curriculum developers) regarding curriculum during the 20th century. This framework for examining teacher beliefs is supported by the professional literature on curriculum positions in the U.S. Table 1.1 shows the alignment of the classification schemes of nine recent curriculum theorists. Almost all theorists have identified positions similar to the Scholar Academic, Social Efficiency, Learner Centered, and Social Reconstruction positions. Two schemes do not identify the Social Reconstruction position; however, this is not surprising, because Social Reconstruction just reemerged as a distinct position in about 1990. For example, in 1986 and 1987, Schubert distinguished only three positions, while in 1996 he revised his classification scheme to include four positions. Only one scheme does not identify the Social Efficiency position. Four schemes distinguish two positions where other schemes identify only one position. Note also that even though the terms used to label positions may differ, the underlying positions are the same. Terminology has frequently changed over the last century. For example, different labels for the Learner Centered ideology in the U.S. have included child study (1890s), progressive education (1910–1950), open education (1965–1980), developmentalist (1970–1990), and constructivist (1990–present).



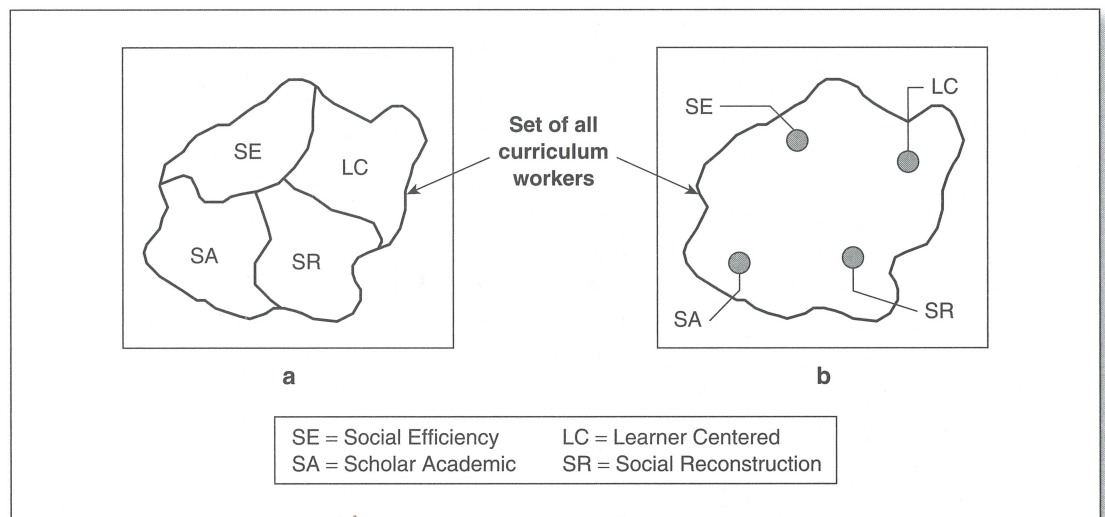
**Table 1.1** Comparison of curriculum classification schemes.

Schiro (2013)	Eisner (1974)	McNeil (1977)	Schubert (1996)	Fenstermacher & Soltis (1992)	Posner (1992)	Zeichner (1993)	Joseph et al. (2000)	Ellis (2004)	Kliebard (2004)
scholar academic	academic rationalism	academic	intellectual traditionalist	liberationist	traditional & structure of the disciplines	academic	constructing under standing & connecting to the canon	knowledge centered	humanist
social efficiency	technology & cognitive processes	technological	social behaviorist	executive	behavioral	social efficiency	training for work and survival		social efficiency
learner centered	self actualization	humanist	experientialist	therapist	experiential & cognitive	develop- mentalist	developing self and spirit	progressive & learner centered	child study
social reconstruction	social reconstruc- tionism	social reconstructionist	critical reconstructionist			social recon- structionist	confronting the dominant order & deliberating democracy	society centered	social-meliorist



Two kinds of classificatory systems are useful in illuminating the differences among educators (and members of the general public) who are interested in curriculum. These systems are depicted in Figure 1.1. One classificatory system is designed to map out the entire population of educators into a finite set of disjoint categories into which any person can be uniquely classified. Figure 1.1a portrays this kind of classificatory system, in which the entire population of educators is divided into four separate categories—SE, SA, LC, and SR. Here, it is assumed that there is a great deal of uniformity within each category as well as a great amount of difference between categories. This kind of classificatory system is not useful in distinguishing between curriculum ideologies. A classificatory system of ideal types that portrays a finite number of positions representing the range of practices utilized by educators is more useful. Figure 1.1b portrays this kind of classificatory system, which consists of four ideal types—the four curriculum ideologies—that provide exemplars of the essence of the four distinct curriculum worldviews of educators. Each ideal type is an archetype that portrays an idealized model of a particular view of curriculum, with the individual practices and beliefs engaged in by educators being approximations of the ideal types. In Figure 1.1b, educators (and members of the general public) interested in curriculum cluster around the ideal types without having to behave exactly in accordance with them—their distance from an ideal type in a particular direction being an indicator of both how and how much they differ from that ideal type.

**Figure 1.1** Classificatory systems.



This study focuses on elaborating in depth the ideal types, which represent the range of beliefs that have influenced American education over the last century, and then comparing them. As a result, many of the variations on each ideal type are not



described, compared, or distinguished from each other. Thus, although Bruner's structure of the disciplines approach, Piaget's epistemological approach, the broad fields approach, the correlated fields design, Mortimer Adler's Academic Rationalism, and many variations on the core curriculum approach are all closely related to the Scholar Academic ideology, they are not separately described or compared, for the many versions of this general approach to education are best portrayed by the interpretation of the Scholar Academic ideology herein described. The reader should note and compare the ideal types herein delineated to currently emerging variations, as well as historically influential ones.

The four ideologies presented in this book—the ideal types—have been chosen because they represent the current range of beliefs among those interested in curriculum, because each has clearly identifiable roots in and influences on American education, because they offer dramatic alternatives to each other, and because they seem to be prototypes around which educators cluster—the density of the set of all educators in Figure 1.1b being highest around ideal types SE, SA, LC, and SR. Because the curriculum ideologies represent ideal types abstracted from reality, and not reality itself, even though educators will be spoken of as believing or behaving in accordance with certain beliefs, it is difficult to find educators who exactly fit the characterizations; and even though the expressed thoughts and observable behavior of most educators approximate the characteristics of only one of the ideal types, many educators exist whose behavior is a combination of the characteristics of more than one ideal type.

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Activities designed to extend what is written here and provide additional insight into the ideology are located on the SAGE website at [www.sagepub.com/schiroextensionactivities](http://www.sagepub.com/schiroextensionactivities).