Summary

My basic premise is that up to 1944 there were two very different kinds of selection from the culture; high-status knowledge plus a certain kind of character training for the future leaders of society, in public and grammar schools; low-status, 'elementary' practical skills, and training for obedience and conformity for the future 'lower orders'. After 1944 this simple and convenient segregation of curricula was complicated by the abolition of elementary education. Since 1944 very little thinking (and planning) has been done to answer the question 'What kind of selection from culture (or cultures) is appropriate for secondary education for all?'

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Class, Culture and
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The meaning of culture

In the last chapter, I described the curriculum as a selection from the culture of a society. The idea behind that definition was that there are some aspects of our way of life that are regarded as so valuable that their survival is not left to chance but are entrusted to teachers for expert transmission to the young. In the first part of this chapter it will be necessary to clarify what is meant by 'culture' in this context; in the second part of the chapter I want to develop the idea that the possession of different views of the culture may have important effects on attitudes towards education and curriculum. To illustrate this point I shall examine the views of three important writers on culture and education; Bantock, Hirst and Williams.

Definitions of culture

It has often been pointed out that the word 'culture' has many distinct, if overlapping, meanings. The two main ways in which the word is used are the *popular* usage, and the *technical* term 'culture' as used by anthropologists and sociologists. The popular usage tends to designate certain kinds of interests and activities such as 'highbrow' music, literature and art; ten years ago it might have been summed up by reference to the BBC Third Programme. Certainly in popular usage the word 'culture' is identified with some kind of 'high' (i.e. minority-taste) culture, and possibly also with public school or Oxbridge education. A 'cultured voice' is another phrase which used to express this view, but that phrase is also now much less in use than in former years. Thus the popular usage of 'culture' confuses some kinds of minority tastes with social position and élite education. It is precisely this confusion which in more general educational terms leads to muddled thinking about culture and curriculum planning.

Raymond Williams has examined the change in the meaning of the word in his very important book *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. Before 1780, according to Williams, 'culture' meant 'the tending of natural growth' and a process of human training. Later in the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century, 'culture' came to be a thing in itself rather than a process, 'a general state or habit of the mind' closely connected with the idea of human perfection. A second meaning of this period was 'the general state of intellectual development, in society as a whole'. A third meaning which developed was 'the general body of the arts', and a fourth meaning, later in the century, 'a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual'. I shall have to return to Williams's discussion of culture later. Meanwhile we need to consider the more general definition of culture as used by sociologists and anthropologists which is very close to Williams's fourth meaning. In this scientific sense, culture is *everything* that exists in a society. Culture includes everything that is 'man-made': technological artifacts, skills, attitudes and values. Culture is regarded as a key concept in anthropology and sociology because it is culture which separates human beings from other animals. Humans are dominated much less by instincts and much more by their cultural inheritance—their behaviour patterns are acquired socially rather than biologically. Social scientists have been particularly concerned to avoid value-judgments in their descriptions, so they have tended to stress the idea of the whole way of life as the meaning of culture rather than a selection of the best or most important aspects of a way of life: 'Culture is more than a collection of mere isolated bits of behaviour. It is the integrated sum total of learned behaviour traits which are manifest and shared by the members of a society' (E. A. Hoebel, 'The Nature of Culture', in Shapiro, 1960); 'Culture is ... that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' Tylor, 1871).

A further anthropological point, of relevance to our discussion later, is that societies and their cultures differ considerably, not only in their technology but also in their attitudes, beliefs and values. Some anthropologists, such as Ruth Benedict (1934), have stressed the magnitude of these *differences*; others such as Clyde Kluckhohn (1962) have emphasized the similarities between cultures. But all social scientists are agreed that some important differences certainly exist. Hilda Taba (1962), for example, has pointed out that a key value transmitted to the young by North American cultures is the motivation to sell oneself and to excel, whereas in Samoa the opposite is the case: 'The culture [of Samoa]

values self-minimization and non-presumptive behaviour' (Taba, p. 51).

It is also important to bear in mind that apart from very simple societies (such as pre-industrial Samoa) it is rarely possible to identify just one all-pervading culture; it is usually necessary to trace the inter-mixing of several different cultures which may fuse to some extent but also tend to survive as individual and distinct regional or ethnic sub-cultures. A classic case of the merging of many different cultures is the USA, which has developed a distinctive culture out of the successive generations of immigrants from various parts of the world, all of whom have contributed something to the general (or common) culture but have also in many cases retained their group characteristics which are different from those of other Americans. Thus it might be appropriate to refer to *sub-cultures* in the USA—such as the Polish sub-cultural groups in Chicago or the negroes in Harlem. As we shall see, there are also sub-cultures in the UK but it is not always easy to identify them as clearly as some of the American examples; it may also be the case that in England the major problem for education is not the continued existence of ethnic sub-cultures such as West Indians and Pakistanis but the emergence and continued existence of working-class sub-cultural groups.

Three views of culture and education

Thus, in a complex society such as ours there are at least two major educational problems associated with 'culture'. The first concerns the extent to which it is possible to identify a general or common culture as the basis for a selection for curriculum planning. The second problem concerns the extent to which sub-cultures or aspects of sub-cultures should be reflected in educational programmes or processes of curriculum planning ('Black Studies' is one current example both in the UK and the USA). Underlying the second of these two problems there is, of course, a whole set of other questions relating to the criteria by which such selections should be made.

Bantock

G. H. Bantock is one of the few educationists who have attempted to grapple with such problems, and in doing so he has put forward a third meaning of culture. Bantock begins *Culture, Industrialisation and Education* (1968) by differentiating carefully between the anthropological use of culture and the Matthew Arnold use of culture as 'the best that has been thought and said'. He then

proceeds to steer a course between these two very different definitions (p. 2)

> In this book the word 'culture' is being used in a sense which lies between the two. I do not want to include everything in it because that would involve a number of trivialities; so it is applied selectively to important areas of human thought and action. But in itself it is not intended to imply anything about the value or quality of these activities and thoughts. In my meaning of the term, a folk song, a pop song, and a Beethoven symphony are similarly representative of culture; for music plays an important part in human affairs and all three are equally examples of music. We might want to argue, further, that some are more valuable forms of music than others, but we cannot deny that all three provide us with examples of a culture in this sense.

In some ways this third view of culture (i.e. a partially selective one) is useful for educational discussion since it provides a short cut by eliminating certain aspects of culture, in the anthropological sense, from our educational debate. But it also begs some important questions such as 'Why is music a non-trivial activity?' Bantock does not systematically ask these questions but eventually they cannot be escaped. Bantock (op. cit., p. 3) also points out that:

> Until the coming of industrialisation in this country, in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it has been possible to distinguish two broad cultures, using the word in the sense defined. There has been the culture of the upper classes based particularly on their ability to read and write. And there has been the culture of the ordinary people or 'folk', based largely on their traditions of oral communication.

In Chapter 3, I shall want to ask whether this kind of historical analysis is adequate; in particular how these two traditions originated and to what extent, if any, they still exist. It will also be necessary to examine carefully the claims of so-called folk culture, in the sense used by Bantock, and to see whether it should be seriously considered for transmission to the young by means of education. These two problems will be examined later; the main purpose of this section is simply to put forward the particular view of culture and education expressed by Bantock but shared by many others.

According to this view, then, the culture of a society such as ours can be sub-divided into high and low, upper-class and folk. They might both be categorized under the same headings, at least to some extent, such as music, art, etc., but they are essentially

different (despite Bantock's reference to T. S. Eliot's view that 'Fine art is the refinement, not the antithesis, of popular art'). The most important difference between these two cultures is the non-literary, oral tradition of folk culture, and Bantock quotes with sympathy D. H. Lawrence's views about the essentially non-literary elements in working-class culture. According to Bantock, public or mass education has so far been a dismal failure, and this is largely because we have attempted to force a literary culture down the throats of the masses whose tradition is an oral one.

In some respects there is an evident similarity between Bantock and the once influential views of T. S. Eliot. Eliot, in his *Notes Towards The Definition of Culture* (1948), clearly identified the most worthwhile aspects of culture with the existence of a small, governing, leisured class. This class, according to Eliot, was necessary in order to create and preserve the 'high' cultural heritage and also to ensure its transmission to the next generation of that class. The hereditary element was seen to be very important and Eliot was concerned about the threat to the existence of a cultured upper-class, either by the growth of a meritocratic élite or by 'equalitarianism'. Eliot seemed to find the idea of a common culture distasteful, or even necessarily a contradiction in terms—diffusion of the precious cultural commodity among large numbers could only be a dilution of quality.

Bantock shares Eliot's disbelief in the desirability of a common culture but argues the case with closer reference to educational practice in a way that merits careful examination. The conclusion Bantock draws from his analysis is that there should be two kinds of curriculum: a high-culture curriculum for a small minority who are academically minded (drawn, presumably, largely from the upper and middle classes, whose tradition is high culture), and a totally different 'non-literary' curriculum for the masses.

Bantock has outlined his case for a non-literary curriculum in two interesting articles in the *Times Educational Supplement* which have been reprinted in Hooper (1971). Bantock's argument runs as follows: the Industrial Revolution has produced two educational problems concerning curriculum. The first of these concerns establishing a suitable curriculum for the meritocracy, to replace the classics-based curriculum thought suitable for the landed élite. The second problem concerns finding a suitable and satisfying curriculum for the majority (since the watered-down, academic curriculum has failed). Bantock mainly concerns himself with the second of these problems; I have mentioned the first problem as well, since it seems to me to be of some interest and importance.

In seeking support for his view that the majority of the population is not suited for the traditional academic curriculum, Bantock

refers to a number of claims, including that of D. H. Lawrence, that a characteristic of the 'primitive mind' is that it finds difficulty in dealing with universals and is most at home with particulars; the implication is that the life tradition of working-class people is dynamic and instinctive but not truly rational. One difficulty about Bantock's argument is whether he regards this working-class and primitive response to reality simply as different from the high culture or as inferior.

Bantock goes on to quote such evidence as Bernstein's work on language to support his view that working-class children, or 'the masses', have a tradition which is not really suited to academic secondary education. Finally, Bantock brings in the psychological views of Burt, Eysenck and Jensen to stress the importance of heredity in the distribution of intelligence. He quotes as of particular importance the views of Jensen that there may be two kinds of mental functioning, 'one at the conceptual level and one at what he has termed "the level of associative learning" '. The evidence that Bantock presents to support his thesis is, however, extremely thin and of a highly controversial nature even among psychologists. It certainly could not be assumed that Bantock has demonstrated his point of view by means of the evidence that he has selected. The argument about one culture or two will be examined from a social-historical standpoint in Chapter 3.

In his outline of an alternative curriculum for the mass of the population, Bantock suggests that it should have the following characteristics: the curriculum should be aimed at practical common life; it should be concrete and specific rather than abstract; it should include aspects of television, film and popular Press; the education of the emotions should not be neglected as it is in conventional education; and finally, education should be concerned with preparation for leisure. Thus education should be liberal education but avoiding the usual concentration on reading: Bantock urges that dance and drama, and art and craft should be developed in a suitable way for working-class children.

There is much to be commended in some of Bantock's suggestions: a selection from contemporary culture (rather than past culture) would certainly include film and television studies, for example. But the question that arises immediately is 'Why is all this relevant for the masses of the population but *not* for the academic?' Do they not need to be educated emotionally? Do they not need preparation for leisure? Will not television and film and the Press be an important part of their lives as well as of the lives of the masses?

There are many other difficulties connected with Bantock's suggestions: for example, who will select the pupils for academic or

for mass education? He has suggested that most of the mass-educated will be working-class in background, but who will sort out the exceptions? What about the D. H. Lawrences? It is also perhaps a little naïve to expect all members of the upper and middle classes to be academic and literary-minded. Such practical questions as these cannot be ignored in a curriculum proposal of such importance as Bantock's. Bantock's analysis of the problem is much stronger than his solution of it, although to be fair we should remember that the title of his article was '*Towards* a Theory of Popular Education' (italics mine).

The most important criticism of Bantock's ideas about 'popular education', however, is that they rest on an assumption that it is possible to divide 'culture' neatly into 'high' and 'low', and also that it is possible to allocate individual human beings or groups of human beings to these two rigid categories. The reality is, I suggest, much more complex: the distinction between high and mass culture is difficult to maintain consistently, and there is a great deal of overlap, especially since television has become an important medium in nearly every household, and film has developed as an art form. Moreover, individuals may have 'highbrow' tastes in, say, music but not in literature. What Bantock has put forward as popular education could much more appropriately be regarded as part of everyone's education. As one important part of a common curriculum it would be an improvement, but as the whole of a curriculum for one section of the community it would be reactionary. John White (1973) has pointed out the similarity between Bantock's ideas for educating the 'children of the folk' and Plato's prescriptions for the 'children of bronze' whose training was quite different from the rational education of the 'children of gold'.

The real problem has been analysed in a more sensitive way by Lawrence Stenhouse in *Culture and Education* (1967, pp. 10-11). Stenhouse would agree with Bantock to some extent but his solution is quite different:

> Compulsory education has provided for the majority of our people an impoverished literacy which does not support an effective culture. An academic few, who have enjoyed higher education, have entered into a culture fed by literature and the arts, but most people have not been enriched by their education to the extent we might have hoped. They have learned the basic skills of reading and writing, but they have not been taught to bend these skills to their own purposes and to make them serve their needs by introducing an element of creativity into their everyday living. In the old schoolmaster's phrase, they have 'mastered their letters'; but they have not gone on

to enter into the spirit of humane letters. Part of the difficulty is that it is the *spirit* of humane letters that must be conveyed, not the academic tradition of literae humaniores. As Richard Hoggart has said, 'It seems unlikely at any time, and is certainly not likely in any period which those of us now alive are likely to know, that a majority in any class will have strongly intellectual pursuits.' But he adds: 'There are other ways of being in the truth.'

Two important points emerge from this: first that there are ways other than the 'literary/academic' of being 'in the truth', and secondly that this is *not* simply a working-class problem but one which applies to a *majority* of all classes. The problem in terms of curriculum is thus to find a way of bridging the gap between the academic and the everyday, and not to force half-digested academic ideas down unwilling throats of *all* classes and all abilities: the solution does not lie in dividing people neatly into two closed categories. Bantock's main fault consists of an inadequate analysis of culture, and especially that part of culture referred to as worthwhile knowledge. Bantock may be right in suggesting that compulsory education has failed. But if so it has failed for all classes, not just working-class children.

Hirst

One of the curriculum theorists whose views were referred to but rejected by Bantock was P. H. Hirst. Hirst's views on the relationship between culture and curriculum are summarized below but should be read carefully in one of the original sources. Bantock's major disagreement with Hirst concerns the suggestion that there is no need for a 'radically new pattern of the curriculum'. Bantock cannot accept Hirst's view that 'the central objectives of education are development of mind', or that:

> no matter what the ability of the child may be, the heart of all his development as a rational being is, I am saying, intellectual. Maybe we shall need very special methods to achieve this development in some cases. Maybe we have still to find the best methods for the majority of people. But let us never lose sight of the intellectual aim upon which so much else, nearly everything else, depends. Secondly, it seems to me that we must get away completely from the idea that linguistic and abstract forms of thought are not for some people. (Schools Council, *Working Paper No. 12: 'The Educational Implications of Social and Economic Change'*, quoted by Bantock (1971, p. 257).

Hirst does not talk in terms of curriculum as a selection from the culture, and I may be doing less than justice to his thesis by trying to force it into my own framework, but the theory seems to me to run as follows: the first principle is that we should be clear about our educational goals. The second is that 'the central objectives of education are developments of mind'. Hirst sees the development of mind in terms of the development of 'forms of knowledge' (Hirst and Peters, 1970, pp. 63-4):

> Detailed studies suggest that some seven areas can be distinguished, each of which necessarily involves the use of concepts of a particular kind and a distinctive type of test for its objective claims. The truths of:
>
> 1. *Formal logic and mathematics* involve concepts that pick out relations of a general abstract kind; their deducibility within an axiom system is the particular test for truth.
> 2. *The physical sciences* on the other hand, are concerned with truths that, in the last analysis, stand or fall by the tests of observation by the senses. Abstract though the theoretical concepts they employ may be, the sciences necessarily employ concepts for what is seen, heard, felt, touched or smelt; for it is with an understanding and knowledge of the sensible world that they are concerned.
> 3. To be clearly distinguished from knowledge and experience of the physical world is our *awareness and understanding of our own and other people's minds*. Concepts like those of 'believing', 'deciding', 'intending', 'wanting', 'acting', 'hoping', and 'enjoying', which are essential to interpersonal experience and knowledge, do not pick out, in any straightforward way what is observable by the senses. Indeed the phrase 'knowledge without observation' has been coined to make this point. The precise nature of the grounds of our objective judgments in this area is not yet adequately understood, though their irreducibility to other types of test can perhaps be most readily seen in judgments of our own states of mind.
> 4. *Moral judgment and awareness* necessitate, in their turn, another family of concepts such as 'ought', 'wrong', and 'duty'. Unless actions or states are understood in such terms, it is not their moral character of which we are aware. The claim to objectivity in the case of moral judgments is a matter of long standing dispute, but the sustained attempts that have been made to show the objectivity of morals, and its irreducibility to other forms of knowledge, make this domain one which must be recognised

as having serious claims to independent status.

5. Likewise the claims for a distinctive mode of objective *aesthetic experience*, using forms of expression not confined to the linguistic, must be taken seriously, even though much philosophical work remains to be done.
6. *Religious* claims in their traditional forms certainly make use of concepts which, it is now maintained, are irreducible in character. Whether or not there are objective grounds for what is asserted is again a matter on which more has yet to be said. The case would certainly seem to be one that cannot be simply dismissed.
7. Finally, philosophical understanding as indicated in chapter 1 would seem to involve unique second order concepts and forms of objective tests irreducible to those of any first order kind.

This passage from Hirst and Peters could well stimulate a variety of discussions about the nature of curriculum planning; many educationists such as Stenhouse (1973) and Eisner (1969) would have serious doubts about the clear-cut nature of specifiable objectives, for example. I have included Hirst's viewpoint here as an example of curriculum planning which is largely 'non-cultural' in the sense of being transcultural. This is because Hirst sees the curriculum largely in terms of knowledge, and the structure and organization of knowledge is, by his analysis, universal rather than culturally based. For this reason Hirst will have no truck with different kinds of curriculum for different levels of ability, or different areas, or different sub-cultural interests. The main objectives of education are concerned with knowledge; most school knowledge should not be bound to specific sub-cultures—it is objective and universal; therefore if we are serious in our desire to educate everyone in a society, then everyone must have access to the same kinds of knowledge. Everyone needs the same kind of curriculum (although, of course, different methods of attaining the curriculum objectives might well be employed): the ends will be the same but the means may differ. For Hirst, then, the traditional secondary curriculum, with some important modifications such as the inclusion of social sciences and moral education, will provide the appropriate selection from the culture for all pupils. The question of the sub-cultural background of the pupils is irrelevant to the *ends* (or goals) of education, but may be very relevant to the *means* (i.e. teaching method and content). A similar conclusion is reached by John White in his recent book *Towards a Compulsory Curriculum* (1973). White accepts Hirst's basic thesis, as outlined above, but develops the forms of knowledge into a

curriculum subdivided into what should be compulsory and what should be offered as optional experiences. Further reference to this book will be made in Chapter 6.

Williams

As a final example of a theorist with views on the relation between culture and education, I should like to look at the work of Raymond Williams. Williams's ideas can be seen mainly in two important books: *Culture and Education* (1958) and *The Long Revolution* (1961). (A different kind of insight into the problem can also be gained from his novel *Border Country*.) In particular, the first chapter of Part 2 of *The Long Revolution*, 'Education and British Society', should be read carefully by all interested in this question. Williams begins his chapter on education and British society with this statement (p. 145):

> There are clear and obvious connections between the quality of a culture and the quality of its system of education. In our time we have settled to saying that the improvement of our culture is a matter of improving and extending our national education, and in one sense this is obviously true.

One interesting point about this introductory remark is that although Williams is using the word 'culture' in its anthropological sense he does not adopt the extreme social science relativist position of pretending that all cultures are equally valuable or equally worthwhile. This is a very important point to be made at the beginning of his argument.

Williams also suggests that we cannot discuss the relation between culture and education adequately without historical analysis —the past is contained in the present. As part of his analysis Williams examines education systems in a general way and suggests three main aims or purposes:

1. To pass on the accepted behaviour and values of society,
2. the general knowledge and attitudes appropriate to an educated man, and
3. a particular skill by which he will earn a living.

All brief statements of educational aims are open to criticism, and this set of three may seem too simple, but Williams clearly recognizes that the three overlap and inter-relate, and also that the general pattern of culture may be subject to change, either slow or rapid; the aims are not intended to convey a static view of education and culture.

Williams's historical analysis is necessarily a partial one (op. cit., p. 147):

> I propose to examine the history of English education from this particular point of view: to see the changing complex of actual relations, in social training, subjects taught, definitions of general education, in the context of a developing society.

Williams sees a close relationship between training for vocation, training to social character and training to a particular civilization. In the first English schools in the sixth century the intention was to produce priests and monks, for example. For this Latin was essential. Of necessity this kind of education was only for a few, but of course the 'few' were meant to interpret the scriptures and thus make them available to the many—thus to use the modern word 'élitist' would not be completely appropriate. Later there was an extension of the curriculum to include rhetoric and logic, but the framework was still firmly Christian. In this sense, a common Christian culture pervaded the whole of society: education was vocational, serving the needs of a Christian society. Schools were not the only educational (and vocational) institutions, however: the apprenticeship system catered for craftsmen and tradesmen, and chivalric training was provided for children of the nobility. Thus although there was a common culture, different curricular selections were made according to social rank, but there was some opportunity for social mobility, mainly by joining the ranks of the clergy.

Even after the Reformation, the central educational institution remained the grammar school, but it was no longer so closely connected with the Church. (Education was becoming 'private' rather than 'national'.) The major achievements of the Renaissance were, however, almost completely ignored by the grammar schools—education was lagging behind the changes in society; curricular change was slower than cultural change: literature in the English language, geography, painting, music, philosophy and science found no place in the grammar school curriculum.

As the population expanded and more people were concentrated in towns, education became more rigidly organized along class lines. Gradually, schools of a sort were provided for the poor, but it was training of a very limited kind. The Clarendon Report 1864, the Public Schools Act 1868, the Taunton Report 1868, the Headmasters' Conference 1869 and the Endowed Schools Act 1869 all emphasized the class nature of the structure of secondary education.

Williams argues that the two major pressures—industrial and democratic—gave rise to many kinds of arguments about the purposes of education. In particular he selects for discussion three responses to industrial and democratic developments:

1. The genuine response to the growth of *democracy* (by men such as Mill, Carlyle, Ruskin and Arnold).
2. The protective response, or *moral rescue* response, to the growth of democracy, typical of those who feared the extensions of the franchise and said, 'our future masters ... should at least learn their letters'.
3. The practical *vocational* response by those, such as Forster in 1870, who felt that only education could preserve industrial prosperity.

Williams regards both the industrial and democratic arguments as valid but suggests that an over-emphasis of the industrial argument has distorted education, particularly in the direction of training a passive work force. Such a view of education was, according to Williams, challenged from two sides during the nineteenth century: by those who believed that an essential aspect of democracy was the natural right to be educated; and also from the other side by those who might have opposed democracy but felt that man's spiritual health depended on 'liberal' or 'humane' education rather than specialized work training. Thus there were three groups in the nineteenth-century debate:

1. The public educators (who saw education as a natural right).
2. The industrial trainers (who saw education as a means of economic efficiency).
3. The old humanists (who saw education in a liberal or humane way but not as vocational training).

Williams argues that the curriculum which emerged was a compromise between all three, but with the influence of the industrial trainers predominant (op. cit., p. 163):

> The significant case is the long controversy over science and technical education. If we look at the range of scientific discovery between the seventeenth and the end of the nineteenth century, it is clear that its importance lies only in part in its transformation of the techniques of production and communication: indeed lies equally in its transformation of man's view of himself and of his world. Yet the decisive educational interpretation of this new knowledge was not in terms of its essential contribution to liberal studies but in terms of technical training for a particular class of men. The old humanists muddled the issue by claiming a fundamental distinction between their traditional learning and that of the new

disciplines, and it was from this kind of thinking that there developed the absurd defensive reaction that all real learning was undertaken without thought of practical advantage. In fact, as the educational history shows, the classical linguistic disciplines were primarily vocational, but these particular vocations had acquired a separate traditional dignity, which was refused to vocations now of equal human relevance. Thus, instead of the new learning broadening a general curriculum, it was neglected, and in the end reluctantly admitted on the grounds that it was of a purely technical kind. The pressure of the industrial trainers eventually prevailed, though not with any general adequacy until the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, and even here, significantly it was instruction rather than education.

Only exceptional men such as Huxley saw that science should become part of general education and liberal culture, and that there should also be specific and technical training of all kinds just as doctors and lawyers receive professional training. But what actually happened in the nineteenth century was an intensification of class-thinking in education: trade and industry were relegated to the lower classes, and successful industrialists wanted their sons to move into the non-work world of the gentry. Important changes in the culture did not result in corresponding changes in the content of education.

In the twentieth century, the nineteenth-century framework has been expanded and improved. In theory, the views of the public educators have been accepted; but in practice the ideal has not been realized: there is still a huge gap between 'private' and 'state' education, both in quality and quantity. Since Williams's book was published (1961), sociologists and official government reports have continued to turn out statistical evidence to support this view. Public schools continue to be important aspects of the divisive character of English society.

Another kind of contrast between the ideal of genuine education as a right for everyone and the reality of the present educational scene concerns the question of ability or intelligence. Williams complains about (pp. 167-8):

> The very odd principle that has been built into modern English education: that those who are slowest to learn should have the shortest time in which to learn, while those who learn quickly will be able to extend the process by as much as seven years beyond them. This is the reality of 'equality of opportunity' which is a very different thing from real social equality. The truth is that while for children of a particular social class we

> have a conception, however imperfect, of a required minimum of general education whatever their measured intelligence might be, we have no such conception, or a much lower conception, for the majority of those outside this class.

Williams sees this stress on intelligence, and the consequent obsession with sorting and grading in education as natural to a class society. The alternative is not only a more 'open' system of education but a 'genuinely open culture'. (See also Basil Bernstein's article 'Open Schools, Open Society', *New Society*, 14th September 1967, for an interesting extension of this argument.)

Thus Williams sees our educational problems today largely in terms of successive failures of the educational system to adjust to cultural changes—for example, at the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution and the growth of democracy. The organization of education, the content of the curriculum, and current teaching methods are, according to Williams, in need of considerable reform. At an organizational level, Williams would not want school to continue beyond sixteen—a variety of institutions offering continuing education should after that take over the needs of an educated democracy and a common culture. Up to the age of sixteen Williams offers the following as an outline, reformed curriculum, based on his historical analysis of our culture:

> I would put down the following, as the minimum to aim at for every educationally normal child.
> (a) Extensive practice in the fundamental languages of English and mathematics;
> (b) general knowledge of ourselves and our environment, taught at the secondary stage not as separate academic disciplines but as general knowledge drawn from the disciplines which clarify at a higher stage, i.e.,
> (i) biology, psychology,
> (ii) social history, law and political institutions, sociology, descriptive economics, geography including actual industry and trade,
> (iii) physics and chemistry;
> (c) history and criticism of literature, the visual arts, music, dramatic performance, landscape and architecture;
> (d) extensive practice in democratic procedures, including meetings, negotiations, and the selection and conduct of leaders in democratic organisations. Extensive practice in the use of libraries, newspapers and magazines, radio and television programmes, and other sources of information, opinion and influence;
> (e) introduction to at least one other culture, including its

language, history, geography, institutions and arts, to be given in part by visiting and exchange.'

Once again criticisms could be made relating to Williams's historical analysis and his proposed solutions. But that is not my intention here: this summary of Williams's analysis has been included as an illustration of a third, very different, view of the relation between culture and education. For Williams, economic and ideological changes in society (especially the growth of industry and democracy) have brought about cultural changes which have not yet been fully assimilated by the educational system. Moreover, Williams does not hesitate to look to the future and to suggest that the logic of the situation is such that certain further cultural changes ought to be *anticipated* by education. Williams argues that if we really want a democratic society then we will need to plan for common schools with a reformed common curriculum to replace the class-based educational organizations and divisive curricula which were inherited from the class-dominated nineteenth century. Part of the difficulty here, of course, is the wide range of meanings which can be given to 'democratic'. There are some educationists who would claim to support 'democracy' but who would disagree with Williams's prescriptions.

The importance of Williams's contribution is that whilst giving due emphasis to the importance of social class in contemporary society, and recognizing that education in this country is still dominated by class-based curricular traditions, he does not make the claim that education has to be *determined* by cultural background: if participatory democracy is to become a reality, then society and education must be changed. Education cannot effect this reform unaided, but it is not completely impotent, as others have suggested. If we want a better society we need a better system of education, and part of this requirement may well be a common curriculum selected from a common culture.

To a very limited extent all three educationists referred to above are in agreement: they all recognize the importance of the transmission of culture as the basis of education, and to some extent they identify the same aspects of our traditional culture as important—for example, art and music. But they also differ considerably in the emphasis they place on certain aspects of our culture and also the kinds of selection they would make as a basis of curriculum planning: for example, Bantock has little to say about mathematics and science, Hirst has little advice to give about the link between academic learning and the everyday world, Williams seems not to be concerned with the 'disciplines' as a basis for learning. There are also other more fundamental differences: Bantock believes in

different kinds of curricula for different kinds of cultural groups; Hirst advocates a common curriculum for all, based on the recognition of the importance of forms of knowledge; Williams sees the purposes of a common curriculum as even wider, having social as well as cognitive perspectives.

None of them has attempted to describe in detail how a selection from the culture might be made and structured as a planned school curriculum.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to define culture and its relation to education. The popular usage of 'culture' as high culture has to be rejected as a useful basis of discussion for educationists since it begs too many questions; the anthropological definition of culture —as everything created by man in a society—is more useful since curriculum can then be defined as a selection of content made by educationists from the whole culture.

The second part of the chapter has dealt with the views of three important theorists whose attitudes to culture and education are very different: Bantock, Hirst and Williams. The point of taking these three examples was to illustrate the thesis that how one sees culture determines one's attitude to education and to curriculum planning.

Bantock sees culture as sharply divided into two kinds: high and low culture, or élite and mass culture, or sophisticated and popular culture. His deep-rooted concern for the preservation and development of high culture, influences his educational thinking in the direction of separate schools for the future participants in high and low culture, with quite different curricula for the two groups.

Hirst, on the other hand, tends to ignore historical and social differences in cultures and sub-cultures. He sees education largely in terms of 'culture-free' knowledge. Thus for him curriculum reform is mainly a question of making available to all pupils the traditional curriculum—suitably modified to fill in the gaps in his 'forms of knowledge'. Since, according to Hirst, the curriculum is based on knowledge, it would make no sense to have different kinds of curriculum. For Hirst, a non-academic curriculum is a contradiction in terms; the problem of different levels of ability is one of teaching method not of curriculum content.

Finally, Williams sees culture in a historical setting—in particular he examines cultural change taking place over a long period of time. His analysis also shows that educational change has not kept pace with social change and cultural change, and indeed that in his view education has taken several false turnings. Williams

focuses attention on the unsuitability of a class-based nineteenth-century structure of education and divisive curricula for the needs of a democratic, industrial, twentieth-century society. His solution includes a common curriculum for all pupils, but, unlike Hirst, he does not see the traditional curriculum as providing a useful basis: the planning of a common curriculum for all pupils needs to be thought out from first principles.

3

Social class and culture

Chapter 2 was concerned in general with the relation between culture and education. One of the specific problems implicit in such a discussion was also raised: namely the extent to which it is possible to base curriculum planning on a *common* culture in a society which is pluralistic. In this country the debate is currently concerned with the desirability, and even the 'morality', of imposing the 'dominant' culture on to the majority of the population—the working-class population—whose traditions and cultural standards are, according to some, very different. This chapter will be mainly concerned with an examination of so-called working-class culture, its historical background, its recent development and contemporary characteristics. Before looking at the historical background of culture in England, however, it may be useful to outline the current debate.

Social class and equality of opportunity in education

In Chapter 1, I suggested that during the 1920s and 1930s the debate about equality of opportunity in education was primarily concerned with questions about access to education. It was established that many more working-class pupils were capable (in terms of IQ) of benefiting from grammar school and university education than were actually there. The solution was often seen simply in terms of more places being made available for working-class pupils.

In the 1940s and 1950s this kind of argument continued, but with certain significant changes: more attention was paid to problems of performance and achievement within grammar (and comprehensive) schools. The problem had not simply disappeared by making educational places available—attention also had to be paid to the 'under-achieving' pupils. Sometimes the problem was seen in terms of 'pupil deficits', i.e. something lacking in a child's