RACE AND VALUES IN EDUCATION
The story and critique of a unique South African process

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Beginning in early 2000, the South African Department of Education (DoE) embarked on a *Values in Education* initiative, which has subsequently been renamed *Race and Values in Education* (RVIE). Broadly stated, the aim of the initiative is to articulate common values which should be central to the new curriculum and the educational experience of all South African children, youth and educators. The initiative was largely participatory and attempted to gain wide spread support and participation from various sectors of society. Much of the criticism of the process has centred around the theoretical construction of the term *values*, the dangers of nation-building in a global society, and the lack of consultation with educators. These criticisms were addressed through responses to the initial report (*Values in Education*) by the public, a conference in January 2000 (*Saamtrek*) and a final report issued in August 2001 (*Manifesto*).

In this paper I will describe the process which lead to the creation of a directorate in the national department of education (*Race and Values in Education*) in South Africa and highlight the importance of citizenship education in a nascent democracy such as South Africa. I will then provide a critique of the process, the outcomes to date and future plans of the DoE, and finally I will articulate some of the inherent areas of challenge for the implementation of citizenship education and its intersect with both moral and religious education.

The Process

Table 1 summarises the process to date of the RVIE initiative of the South African DoE and places it in the context of South Africa's emergence as a free and democratic state in 1994. It also highlights the achievements to date, which include the production of a comprehensive report *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (*Manifesto*) which is given a prominent position in the newly revised South African schools' curriculum statement. The table then summarises some of the implementation plans articulated by DoE in order to turn the recommendations of the report into reality.

Table 1 *The Race and Values in Education Initiative Time Line*

Date	Action
April 1994:	The first South African democratic elections are held.
1995 - 1996:	The South Africa Constitution and Bill of Rights are produced.
1995 - 1998:	The Truth and Reconciliation Commission deliberates.
February 2000:	A working committee established on *Values in Education*.
May 2000:	*Values, Education and Democracy* - first report on values in education produced.
June 2000 – February 2001:	Responses invited and obtained from the public.
February 2001:	*Saamtrek*, a national conference on *Values in Education* held.
July 2001:	*Celebration of Our National Symbols*, a resource for educators produced.
August 2001:	Final report submitted to the Minister of Education.
October 2001:	A pilot project investigating diversity in South African schools funded by UNESCO produced as well as school based research .
January 2002:	The establishment of a Directorate within the National Department of Education, headed up by Dr Brenda Liebowitz.
April 2002:	A revised curriculum statement for Grades R-9 produced to include *Race and Values in Education*.
April 2002:	Commonwealth workshop on citizenship education.
June 2002:	A programme of action produced by the new directorate, *Race and Values in Education*, with specific outcomes.
July 2002:	A national heritage project launched to coincide with National Heritage Day on 23 September 2002.
September 2002:	Training of School Governing Bodies to incorporate *Values in Education* into curriculum.
November 2002:	Formative evaluation of initiative.
February/June 2003	Training of educators to incorporate *RVIE* into curriculum.
April 2003:	Creation of an Arts Endowment to further the celebration of culture and diversity in education.

Source: *First Report*, *Manifesto* and *Action*.

Recommendations and Strategies

Table 2 *Goals and Values of RVIE*

Overall Goals of Education	Values of The Manifesto
Schools should… 1. Nurture informed and critical thinking. 2. Invite, welcome and include all learners (as opposed to discriminate or prejudice learners). 3. Provide learners with the tools to solve problems that come with being human, throughout the lifecycle.	1. Democracy 2. Social justice and equity 3. Equality 4. Non racism and non-sexism 5. Ubuntu (human dignity) 6. An open society 7. Accountability (responsibility) 8. Rule of law 9. Respect 10. Reconciliation

Source: *First Report*, p.6 and *Manifesto*.

The final report issued in August 1991 succinctly summarised the goals and values of schools and is summarised in Table 2. Sixteen practical strategies through which these values must find their outworking form the bulk of the report and are listed in Table 3. The *Manifesto* is a remarkable document. Not only does it comprehensively define a vision and ethos for South African education, it provides a hard hitting, no holds barred, *state of the nation* report on education and how it is failing in many of the areas which the *Manifesto* (through the newly established directorate *Race and Values in Education)* seeks to address. The evidence of widespread civil participation in the process (through written submissions made in response to the first report) and rich dialogue which emerged from the *Saamtrek* conference held in Cape Town in February 2001 are reflected in the final manifesto, which is substantially changed from the first report. Concerns over practical theoretical frameworks, implementation, the involvement and training of educators and full articulation with the current reality on the ground have all received thorough attention. But this is not to say that the *Manifesto* (as both process and policy) is flawless.

Table 3 *The Proposed Strategies of RVIE*

Sixteen strategies for instilling democratic values in young South Africans	Summarised commentary from the Manifesto
1. Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools.	*A place for safe expression and where values can be negotiated rather than imposed.*
2. Role modelling: promoting commitment as well as competence among educators.	*Educators as role models.*
3. Ensuring that every South African is able to read, write, count and think.	*In order to participate in society and in democracy.*
4. Infusing the classroom with a culture of human rights.	*Not any form of totalitarianism masquerading as moral regeneration.*
5. Making arts and culture part of the curriculum.	*To help transcend linguistic barriers between young people, and foster non-coercive team work.*
6. Putting history back into the curriculum.	*An informed awareness of the past, preventing amnesia, checking triumphalism.*
7. Introducing religion education into schools (but removing religious education).	*To reaffirm the values of diversity, tolerance, respect, justice, compassion and commitment.*
8. Making multilingualism happen.	*Pedagogical as well as constitutional entrenchment of additive bilingualism.*
9. Using sport to shape social bonds and nurture nation building at schools.	*To achieve cohesion, promote tolerance and trust and affirm respect between those arbitrarily kept apart.*
10. Ensuring equal access to education.	*Freeing the poor from poverty depends on it.*
11. Promoting anti-racism in schools.	*Including the inherent racism of having poor, all Black schools.*
12. Freeing the potential of girls as well as boys.	*Countering patterns of social behaviour and opportunity that favour boys and men.*
13. Dealing with HIV/AIDS and nurturing a culture of sexual and social responsibility.	*Influencing children's ideas about sex and relationships before the onset of intimate encounter.*
14. Making schools safe to learn and teach in and ensuring the rule of law.	*Where lines of accountability and authority are clear, and discipline is fair, just and proportionate.*
15. Ethics and the environment.	*Valuing our natural resources, assets and heritage to sustain life now and in the future.*
16. Nurturing the new patriotism, or affirming our common citizenship.	*Through a shared sense of pride in commonly held values and symbols.*

Source: *Manifesto – Executive Summary*.

The Theoretical Framework

Many misunderstood the first report to be an attempt by government to impose moral values upon the general populace. This was perhaps most clearly communicated in the article entitled *Holy State? Values, Legitimation and Ideological Closure in South African Education* (Carrim and Tshoane, 2000) as well as by outspoken objections from many religious and liberal groups. South Africa's history of social oppression, the abuse of a state endorsed religion (as well as the past privileging of one religion) is just too raw to allow any one group to prescribe values for another. But this is not a fair assessment of the final *Manifesto,* rather it displays the various interpretations and meanings that values have, and with which a secular state ought to be concerned.

The Meaning of Values

Many people felt that no distinction was being made between personal values (or morals) which many felt were best taught in the home (or in religious institutions) and the democratic values that could be found in the constitution and should be part of citizenship education taught in schools. The South African Minister of Education Kader Asmal in his preface to the first report stated that "the moral fibre and value systems of our people are constituted and reconstituted in our schools, in our places of worship, on the sports fields and at the workplace" (First report, 2000, p.3). This is a sentiment with which many South Africans will agree. But he continues to say that educational institutions "have an extremely important role to play in supporting the development of our value system and in establishing the regeneration of the ethical fibre of our society" (First report, 2000, p.3), and "inculcating a sense of values at school is intended to help young people achieve higher levels of moral judgement" (Manifesto, 2001,

p3). It would seem that the Minister is arguing for what Cambridge educational philosopher, Terry McLaughlin (1992) describes as a "thick" or "maximal" view of citizenship education, one that is not merely concerned with public virtues and democratic values, but one which has at its heart personal moral regeneration and which "exceeds the principled consensus on these matters which exists or can be achieved" (McLaughlin, 1992, p249). In fact, the previous Deputy Minister of Education, Father Smangaliso Mkatchwa (later joined by the Deputy President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma) had been spearheading a "Moral Regeneration Movement" in South Africa at the same time as the RVIE initiative was taking shape. And while, this movement has aided in government-business partnerships against crime and corruption, it is a movement which doesn't "capture the imagination or seem appealing to anyone under 40 or 50" (Brenda Liebowitz, director RVIE, DoE, personal communication). These statements do in fact serve to confuse the public (hence much of the emotional response it elicited) rather than define a special niche for citizenship education.

Similarly in the first report, the concept of values initially conflated democratic or constitutional values (tolerance, non-sexism) and educational strategies or corporate values (multilingualism, equity) as well as throwing in a spattering of personal morals (including honesty, altruism, love, compassion, kindness and integrity). In addition, some of the values of the South African constitution were excluded (or at least not explicitly stated). Table 4 shows the evolution in the thinking of participants involved in the RVIE process and highlights the four different sets of values expressed in some form throughout the process.

Table 4 *The Various Constructions Of Values*

Values proposed in the First Report	General moral values referred to throughout the process	The Manifesto	Values articulated in the School Based Research Report
1. Equity 2. Tolerance 3. Multilingualism 4. Openness 5. Accountability 6. Social Honour	1. Honesty 2. Integrity 3. Tolerance 4. Diligence 5. Responsibility 6. Compassion 7. Altruism 8. Justice 9. Respect 10. Kindness 11. Compassion 12. Communication 13. Love	**1. Democracy** **2. Social justice and equity** **3. Equality** **4. Non racism and non-sexism** **5. Ubuntu (human dignity)** **6. An open society** **7. Accountability (responsibility)** **8. Rule of law** **9. Respect** **10. Reconciliation**	*By learners* 1. Love/kindness 2. Respect/communication 3. Equity *By educators* 1. Respect/discipline/order 2. Discipline/obedience 3. Honesty/transparency *By parents* 1. Respect/discipline 2. Quality education 3. Respect/communication

The final list of values in *The Manifesto* has cleared up the confusion between democratic values and educational strategies, and clearly separates the values of democracy as enshrined by the South African constitution and the means through which they might be achieved in education. However, the distinction between personal (moral values) and public virtues (citizenship or democratic values) remains unclear to many. The issue of where personal morality and democratic values intersect, remains unclear (at least in the understanding of most people) and is an urgent educational and academic task (as opposed to only an issue for public debate) if public support for citizenship education is to be expanded. Indeed the efficacy of citizenship education is clearly dependent upon a clear understanding which will guide our implementation.

Citizenship Education

That citizenship education should be taught in South African schools is indisputable, and while the *Manifesto* provides a guide for this, it is interwoven with many issues of personal morality. Until this is teased out and discussed conceptually there will continue to be opposition from both the conservative right wing as well as the liberal left wing, which is precisely the case at the moment (Brenda Liebowitz, personal communication).

South African educational policy should be driven by core corporate values such as equity and multilingualism and the *Manifesto* provides a clear guide for this. Democratic values do not necessarily result in moral people but moral (and spiritual people) people may (not always, but often) be better prepared to be democratic citizens. This is especially true when it comes to issues of equality, dignity and acceptance. But what of the intersect between religion/religious education and morality? Asmal describes one of the events leading up to the RVIE process: "The Ministry of Education was working on a document dealing with religion in education and had no broader frame of reference to locate this important discussion" (Manifesto, 2001, p1).

Religion Education

One of the outcomes of the RVIE process has been the removal of religious education (an approach that fosters faith development) from the school curriculum and its replacement with religion education (a historical understanding of various religions). The *Manifesto* states that "there is no place in the classroom, then, for an education that promotes any one creed or belief over any other. Yet, there is every reason for schools to expose learners to the diversity of religions that impel and inspire society, and the morality and values that underpin them"

(Manifesto, 2001, p31). It continues to say that religion education must do more than promote diversity and knowledge of the other. It must showcase the "values of justice and mercy, love and care, commitment, compassion and co-operation…[that] chart profound ways of being human in relation to other humans"(Manifesto, 2001, p.32). In this case religion education becomes synonymous with moral education. And while this is not objectionable, we do ourselves a disservice as a country if we fail to articulate our philosophy towards education in the religious, moral and political domains – a conversation hitherto absent in South Africa.

Moral Education

In terms of personal morality, no amount of citizenship education will produce the kind of people we all desire South Africans to be and become. There are many scions of democracy who are incredibly immoral people. Citizenship education will provide a good backdrop, and ensure that society itself is convivial to moral behaviour. But while citizenship education is a helpful contributor to personal moral education, it is not sufficient in and of itself. And while personal moral education is clearly not the focus of the *Manifesto*, it has implications (by either its presence or absence in our schools) for the "the evolution of a national South African character" (First Report, 2000, p.10). So its inclusion is welcome in the *Manifesto* yet it lacks substance. It is therefore not surprising that theories and strategies for moral development are noticeably absent in both our educator training and in the values dialogue that has taken place in South Africa over the past two years. Theologian Albert Nolan mentioned the work of Lawrence Kohlberg during the *Saamtrek* conference (but almost in passing), when he said that learners must be helped to move to the third stage of moral development, where they act out of personal conviction rather than merely group identity.

The debate on both moral education and citizenship education would do well to be informed by both classical and contemporary theorists in the field such as Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Carol Gilligan, Martha Nussbaum, Thomas Lickona, Robert Selman, Larry Nucci, William Damon, Nel Noddings, Eamonn Callan, Terrence McLaughlin, Elliot Turiel and others.

It is especially important, since by far the majority of South Africans profess the Christian religion and so almost always equate moral education with religious *(Christian)* moral education. This was confirmed by a pilot study done in Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces by the University of the North. They conclude:

> Christianity dominates in all schools, with the diversity of denominations being the only reflection of variance. Indeed, other practices of religion are not revealed in the school records. Only five learners in one school were declared non-Christian." (Pilot, 2001, p.4).

Hazards of Citizenship Education

Of course there are *caveats* for any process of citizenship education. This fear was repeatedly expressed throughout the process and illustrated in the total rejection of a proposed pledge of allegiance[1] made in the first report. The opposition to such a pledge of what could be interpreted as coerced loyalty was summarised in a submission to the department by a group of learners: "What happens to your loyalty to your country if it conflicts with your commitment to truth and justice?"[2]. Instead of a pledge of allegiance, the *Manifesto* proposes that schools, educators and school governing bodies prepare their own statement of values and code of conduct which could include elements of a pledge if the school community feels it is appropriate. The same group of learners who expressed scepticism at the pledge of allegiance "reported that they 'identified deeply' with the words 'let us work for peace, friendship and reconciliation'" (Responses, 2000, p.8).

A key remaining weakness in *The Manifesto* is the omission of an expanded discussion of the danger of nation building. While it does describe a *new* patriotism, one that is not nationalistic, arrogant or jingoistic, it does not do enough to allay fears of potential totalitarianism and increased xenophobia. This danger of nation building needs to be further explored. It is crucial that educators realise the difference between nation building that is nationalistic and nation building that addresses the past, yet stops short of parochialism. The difference is often subtle and insidious. Liebowitz's response to this criticism is that "the new patriotism is meant to be a call to identify with the state, the continent and your neighbour [but] there was such strong criticism of the oath of allegiance that we've excluded it from the manifesto for the most part" (personal communication).

My fear is that the educator corps at the moment lack the ability and skill to make this distinction. This is most appropriately shown in the Pilot Project on Diversity undertaken for DoE that concludes[3], "While the Department of Education continues to draw policies that enable communities and schools to deal with their diverse situations and environments, it is important that the policies are well understood and interpreted by those who influence activities in the schools" (Pilot, 2001, p5).

The Participation and Training of Educators

One of the chief objections to the first report of the working group was made by the South African Democratic Educators Union (SADTU) who not only decried the exclusion of educators from the process of consultation (or more meaningful attempts to engage them, since the document was put out for general public comment which includes educators), but who also expressed disbelief in how already overworked educators could add yet another area of

transformation to their already policy-laden[4] rucksacks. Educators in South Africa are already overburdened, they argued, and adding yet another weight will result in further de-motivation and policy fatigue.

Researchers reported another unexpected phenomenon regarding the participation of teachers. It seemed that they were not terribly excited by the prospect of promoting even further the children's rights culture that, in their opinion, had arisen.

> There appears to be a backlash directed against what educators refer to loosely as the 'human rights culture' or the 'child rights culture'. There appears to be a growing association among adults (both educators and parents) between 'human rights' and the undermining of power structures that previously maintained 'order' at the levels of family, community, and organisations. Almost 80% of educators indicated that an over-emphasis on 'child's rights' has undermined classroom functioning (Research, 2001, p.2).

This highlights the necessity for training of educators before they are expected to become citizenship educators and implementers of RVIE programmes. This argument is further strengthened when consideration is given to the number of strategies in the *Manifesto* which recommends the training (or retraining) of educators as its principal strategy for implementation. Of the sixteen strategies recommended, ten of them call for the training or retraining of educators in one form or the other. Multilingualism, history[5], gender equity and religion education are specific areas where the *Manifesto* appeals to the panacea of educator training as the fundamental condition for success.

In addition to the content areas which need new pedagogical approaches, a basic understanding about the way in which citizenship education is learnt[6] and taught is also necessary. Boyd and Arnold (1992) provides empirical evidence (following a qualitative study) for the need for educators to hold three perspectives in tension if they are to become good educators of (in this case) anti-racism education. These perspectives are concerns for personal

well-being: the individual perspective; concerns for social welfare: the interpersonal perspective; and concerns for relationships among social groups: the political perspective.

Their study suggests that the third perspective is most important but should not exclude the other two perspectives. In addition failure to understand the intersect between the individual and group, results in failure in teaching anti-racism curricula. They conclude that "reforming moral education… may require, in addition to better theories, addressing the practical problem of how educators' most fundamental beliefs about education must also be changed" (Boyd and Arnold, 2000, p. 23). This is no small task for those in higher education institutions responsible for training educators.

Retraining educators is a costly, time consuming and expensive process. At the moment a brief survey of the curricula of educator training in South Africa shows the total absence of any course offerings in either moral development or citizenship education. The latter will be corrected during next year, when a number of South African Universities are to provide a post gradate course for educators in citizenship education at the behest of the DoE and funded by them (Brenda Liebowitz, personal communication). But even if one educator from every school were trained in South Africa, the attrition rate of educators and the notoriety (and failure) of trickle-down approaches in institutionalising new approaches to teaching and learning are discouraging. Perhaps bigger gains could be had in restructuring the pre-service training of new educators as well as focusing efforts on school principals in not only including citizenship education and promoting democratic values in their schools but also integrating the plethora of departmental policies currently on the platter of contemporary South African educators.

More importantly though, the current educator training curriculum needs substantial overhaul. I do not know enough about current reforms in progress (and whether educator training

numbers among them), but I am convinced that the RVIE alone provides substantiation for a comprehensive revision.

Implementation, Structure and Finances

The implementation plans for integrating democratic values into the fabric of South African education are sound and thoughtful. But they are also going to be time consuming, expensive and labour intensive. "The current focus is on school governing bodies, curriculum and teacher education" (Brenda Liebowitz, personal communication). A separate directorate, while able to focus specifically on the issue of race and values, enlarges the bureaucracy of educational administration and has the potential to marginalise the initiative (although this has not been the case to date). In the future I would argue for the inclusion of RVIE into the mainstream work of DoE, which will also mean a retooling of *Tirisano*[7], the current strategic plan of DoE. Having said that, it is a huge strength of RVIE to have dedicated personnel. The *Manifesto* is a rich report that combines participation, practical action, and commissioned research with policy integration.

On the financial side, South Africa needs to decide whether it is a neo-liberal economy or a modernist economy. Fee paying and free education are causes of conflict in the country. Tendencies towards neo-liberalism are at odds with creating equity, which is at the core of both *Tirisano* and RVIE. At the same time there isn't enough money in South Africa (now or in the conceivable future) to bring about equity as envisaged in the Constitution and in the *Manifesto*[8]. This is a huge problem which needs careful attention. It could result in people becoming disillusioned with government promises and policies that it does not have the resources to deliver

or fund, and which in turn could discredit (amongst other things) the entire RVIE initiative. This

is reflected in the School Based Research report commissioned by government:

> Several parents put forward a critique of the government in respect to the link between
> access to basic social services, and the facilitation of values in young people. They
> suggest that if the government were achieving its more basic mandates, with particular
> reference to the provision of housing, jobs and a quality education for all, then 'values'
> could be more successfully navigated in the home environment (Research, 2001, p2).

Conclusion

The process of consultation which resulted from the initial report of the working group of

values and democracy has been educational in and of itself. Civil society (and to an extent

educators themselves) have been forced to engage with the South African constitution and to

consider its implication for education, and this, not in isolation of the current context and

realities of schools themselves.

As a participatory initiative, while engaging the public, the RVIE process has largely

excluded educators in local schools, an omission which is now being corrected. Educators need

to be included in processes of such import (not necessarily at the moment of conception but

certainly from the early stages) if they are to feel empowered rather than powerless with an ever

increasing workload. This is especially important if the new addition is fundamental to our

growth as a democracy and demands even greater stretch on their part. When confronted with

this criticism, Brenda Liebowitz wryly notes "we are doing the consultation now… building

critical mass… in the form of advocacy" (personal communication).

Asmal perhaps sums up in the most telling way: he says that the initiative was conceived

"as passage conversation" (Manifesto, 2001, foreword). The most successful initiatives (and

RVIE will certainly achieve success) are often those not planned in the conference room but

those that surface as a nation's need emerges and as the public shapes it's final outcome. I doubt

that the dialogue, debate and actions that have emerged are what Asmal expected during his hallway conversation – but that it was a timely and relevant initiative can be in no doubt. South Africa's national curriculum has been strongly influenced by the Race and Values in Education initiative. Despite its flaws, it is an outstanding example of education in the service of democracy and the promotion of national development.

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Endnotes

[1] The suggested wording for the initially proposed pledge of allegiance was as follows: "I promise to be loyal to my country, South Africa, and to do my best to promote its welfare and the well-being of all of its citizens. I promise to respect all of my fellow citizens and all of our various traditions. Let us work for peace, friendship and reconciliation and heal the scars left by past conflicts, and let us build a common destiny together." (First Report, 2000, p. 51).

[2] Learners from St. Cyprians School (a private girls' school in Cape Town) in their submission to DoE in response to Values in Education (Submission, 2001, p.8).

[3] This statement while referring to the flawed understanding of human rights amongst educators, could just as easily be attributed to the subtleties involved in understanding patriotism.

[4] South African educators are currently facing the implementation of a new national curriculum, with a new pedagogy (outcomes based education) as well as a plethora of departmental policies, codes of conduct and norms and standards in a multitude of areas.

[5] The Facing History, Facing Ourselves initiative is an excellent example of teaching history in such way as to promote moral development and is underpinned by the theories of both Kohlberg and Selman. < http://www.facinghistory.org/facing/fhao2.nsf>

[6] See the study conducted in 28 countries by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement regarding what youth know and need to know in the realm of citizenship education (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999).

[7] Is the name given to the transformation process (and strategic plan guiding it) currently underway in South African education. It means *working together*.

[8] From where does a country generate the additional R12 billion just to provide adequate schooling facilities, let alone adequate staff remuneration?