

*Andre Keet, Nazir Carrim*

## Human Rights Education and Curricular Reform in South Africa

In this paper we chronicle the development of Human Rights Education (HRE) in South Africa within contemporary structures and processes of curricular reform in the country. We argue that human rights have been constituted as a discursive regime within education that traverses all education policy texts: laws, white papers, guidelines, recommendations and regulations. As such it has found a distinct expression in the new schools' curricula for General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET). We explore the history, processes and structures related to the infusion of human rights into the curriculum in two ways. First, the codification of HRE in the curricula is a product of a continuity and discontinuity with the anti-apartheid struggle for social justice and resistance to apartheid education. Second, the centrality of HRE in the curricula in South Africa is driven by a compliance-approach aimed at meeting an array of international obligations as far as HRE is concerned. In this compliance with global directives HRE in educational policy texts become political symbolic articulations that derive its 'logic' in large measure from the human rights language that is constructed within the systems of the United Nations.

### Keywords:

Human rights education, curricular reform, South Africa, curriculum policy, curriculum development, apartheid education, People's Education (PE), minimum infusion, values, Human Rights Compliance, political symbolism

## 1 Introduction

South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 took place amidst a worldwide preoccupation with international human rights standards generation and the consolidation of the international normative framework for the promotion and protection of human rights. Emerging from a wretched colonial and apartheid past that haunted, and is still haunting, all aspects of societal life, South Africa set out to transform political, social and economic spheres in the pursuit of equality and the equal enjoyment of economic, political and social rights. Transforming the education sector and the curriculum has been a central and complex priority within the broader scheme of things since 1994 because educational sites represent

the most peopled social space in the country. Almost 12 million learners out of a total population of roughly 44 million people attend 27.647 schools in the country on a daily basis (Department of Education [DoE] 2004, 4). This paper is principally concerned with Human Rights Education (HRE) and curricular reform as a subtext to the broader efforts of transforming the education system and South African society in general. These broader efforts in education are summarised by Chisholm (2005, 201-226) in an overview of schools after a decade of democracy. Gutto (2001, 7-16) provides a useful overview of transformative social legislation and developments in other sectors such as housing, welfare, environment and development (see also the Economic and Social Rights Reports of the South African Human Rights Commission, 2003 and 2004).

This paper firstly provides a short historical background to HRE in South Africa through an exploration of the continuities and discontinuities in the attempts to develop a HRE in South Africa in line with the history of resistance to apartheid education. As Leedy (1997, 182) notes "ideas and concepts have origins, growth, and development" and the emergence of HRE in South Africa did not happen in an ahistorical vacuum. Tracing the links and disjunctures between what exists currently and what preceded and informed it is important for analysing the particular construction of HRE in the curriculum.

We then explore the recent and contemporary processes of infusing HRE into the Revised National Curriculum Statement for grades 1-9 in the General Education and Training band (RNCS-GET) and also refer to processes associated with the National Curriculum Statement for the Further Education and Training band for grades 9-12 in schools (NCS-FET). This is done through 'insider-accounts' by reflecting on our own experiences (see Carrim, Keet 2005) as participants and members within these structures and processes. Two comprehensive guidelines documents (February 2001; June 2002) were developed by the working groups<sup>1</sup> for GET (WG-GET) and FET (WG-FET) respectively to assist curriculum developers. In addition commentaries and assessments on the progress of HRE infusion within the curricular development processes have been submitted on a regular basis between February 2001 and December 2002. Because we view curriculum policy as a "symbolic expression of normative claims worked into a potentially viable institutional blueprint" (Levinson, Sutton 2001, 3), we examine at least one powerful "specific social arena (s) where the interests and languages comprising a governing charter (policy) get negotiated into some viable form" (ibid. 3). This arena is the curriculum development space constituted by ministerial committees, task teams, working groups, reference groups, plenary meetings, briefings sessions and bilateral assessments within which we played our roles as members of these structures. We are also mindful of Ball's (1990, 3) injunction to take "discontinuities, compromises, omissions and exceptions seriously" within policy formulation processes.

Thereafter we locate the development of HRE in South Africa within the broader processes of a global political economy. In this regard we argue that HRE in South Africa is characterised by a "compliance" with global developments and imperatives. We also note that the dominant "symbolic" character of HRE in South African education is due to this "compliance" with

international obligations and directives.

## 2 People's Education and the Development of HRE in South Africa

It is fashionable today, especially in human rights education circles, to refer to the RNCS-GET and the NCS-FET as human rights aligned education constructs. Human rights in education and HRE, though relatively new conceptions within post-apartheid educational discourse, have their roots in the broader history of the struggle for a non-racial and democratic education system. The history of South African education is permeated with resistance against discriminatory practices, policies, structures and institutions that have become entrenched during the colonial period and the apartheid era (see Kallaway 1986). This resistance carved out a trajectory of educational struggle that culminated in the Soweto student uprising of 1976.

Within the context of apartheid education, the period between 1976 and 1986 includes two major watershed events in South Africa. First, the 1976 uprising and the school boycotts of the 1980s "demonstrated the extent to which educational institutions had become sites of struggle in South Africa" (Kallaway 1986, 20). Coupled with worker organisation and worker education, new alternative conceptions of education were framed. All these conceptions mirrored key features and principles of HRE (Cooper 1998, 78; Christie 1986, 271). Second, the Vaal uprisings of 1984-1985 marked the beginning of a decisive shift in strategy from "educational boycott to a long-term strategy of reconstruction through the development of an alternative People's Education" (PE) (Levin 1991, 2) under the leadership of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) (see also Moshamba 1992).

These educational struggles were rooted in an opposition to the racist, discriminatory practices that were constructed through the policies of the Nationalist government. Since coming into power in 1948 the Nationalist government pursued an agenda of enforced segregation between black and white people under the policy Apartheid for various political, ideological and economic purposes. Bantu education for blacks was introduced as an educational configuration of Apartheid and resistance against it culminated in the Soweto uprising of 1976. Since then educational sites became one of the primary arenas of struggle against Apartheid. By the mid 1980s PE has emerged as the casing of alternative conceptions of education. Cooper (1998, 77-84) views PE and the worker education of the 1970s and 1980s as closely linked with one another around the following key features and principles:

- Collective experience and a 'culture of sharing'.
- Knowledge arises out of organisation and action.
- Education is political.
- Respect for people's knowledge and skills.
- Education must empower and lead to transformation.

Other key elements of PE include its application as an "overall strategy for developing democracy in education" and its focus on "democracy, access and equity" within the context of a vision of a "unitary, anti-racist and anti-sexist schooling system" (Motala, Vally 2002, 182-183).

It was defined variously as an educational movement, a vehicle for political mobilisation, an alternative philosophy of education, or as a combination of all three (ibid. 174).

As an alternative educational construct, PE provided the scaffolding for resistance within education against an apartheid regime and against an educational system that was modelled on reinforcing inequality and discrimination on the basis of 'race' and other categories of discrimination. The influences of critical pedagogy and especially the work of Freire (ibid. 178) on the development of PE are evidenced in the way the key features, principles and elements of PE were formulated. On a broader international scale there was also a convergence between the conceptual frameworks developed by Freire and that of HRE (Flowers 2004, 119). It is thus no surprise that PE and HRE exhibit, at least in their pre-policy constructions, a high level of synergy and as such, the central tenets of PE as a transformative educational practice echo conceptual links with HRE and embrace the vision of a just educational system similar to the objectives of HRE.

The period of political negotiations that started in 1990 and culminated in the first democratic elections in 1994 included the development of a "values framework" (Jansen 1999, 4) for a democratic post-apartheid educational policy agenda. This framework supported a pro-HRE approach and was developed through the processes of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI 1992). The fundamental human rights education principles articulated in the NEPI reports, which were "non-racism", "non-sexism", "equality", "redress" and "democracy" (NEPI 1992), were taken up in chapter 7 of White Paper One on Education and Training (WP1) in 1995. As the first major post-apartheid educational policy, WP1 (Chapter 7, paragraphs 57-61) importantly formalised HRE as a policy concern for the 'new' South Africa.

The reasons for the formalization of HRE as a policy concern can partly be located within the history of PE and this particular rootedness of HRE in relation to PE was probably a central motivation to include "social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity" as a set of principles for both the GET and FET curricula.

GET ( <a href="#">DoE 2002, 10</a> )	FET ( <a href="#">DoE 2003, 9</a> )
<p>The curriculum can play a vital role in creating awareness of the relationship between human rights, a healthy environment, social justice and inclusivity. In some countries this is done through subjects such as civics.</p>	<p>The National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) seeks to promote human rights, social justice and environmental justice. All newly-developed Subject Statements are infused with the principles and practices of social and</p>

<p>The Revised National Curriculum Statement has tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflect the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution. In particular, the curriculum attempts to be sensitive to issues of poverty, inequality, race, gender, age, disability, and such challenges as HIV/AIDS.</p>	<p>environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. In particular, the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) is sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability and other factors.</p>
--	---

These two statements and principles capture the importance attached to HRE in the curricula and a cursory glance at the GET and FET curriculum statements will verify the infusion of human rights into the scopes, definitions, outcomes, assessment standards and exemplars of all the learning and subject areas.

Constructions of HRE within curricula across the world are determined by particular historical, social, economic and political trajectories that privilege some catalysts for curriculum change over others. For instance, in Latin America the construction of HRE is determined by a popular education that is rooted in resistance (Candau 2004, 62-77) whilst in most countries in the Southern African Development Community it was informed by the advent of multi-partyism within the context of reconstruction, development and nation-building (Keet 2005, 18). In South Africa the notions and ideals of nation building, reconciliation, social solidarity, social cohesion, inclusivity and anti-discrimination seem to provide the basis for the rationale, purpose and structure of HRE in the curriculum, and are linked to the PE movement and the broader anti-apartheid struggle. These are codified within three pedagogical formations in the South African schools' curricula: Democracy Education, Human Rights Education and Citizenship Education (see DoE 2002 and 2003; Lomofsky, Lazarus 2001; Enslin 2003; Waghid 2004). Thus HRE has been established through historical and political processes and accepted as such within contemporary curriculum constructions in South Africa.

Notwithstanding, the continuities between HRE and PE in South Africa, the discontinuities between PE and post-apartheid educational policies have been explored from various perspectives (Kallaway 2002, 5; Motala, Vally 2002, 174-194; Cooper 1998, 77-84). In a similar vein Kraak (1999, 24), argued that the language of PE has been merely "resurrected to give legitimacy to what is essentially a conservative and technicist unit-standard based assessment technology". Our central argument here is that the coalition of educational struggles into a framework of PE in the 1980s and 1990s constituted a particular thrust for the infusion of HRE into the curriculum since 1994, despite the fact that the broader orientation of the post-apartheid outcomes based curriculum militated against a high level of human rights infusion (see Carrim, Keet 2005) in the curricula.

### 3 HRE and the Revision of the Curriculum: Processes and Structures

Between 1996 and 2000 a new outcomes-based curriculum (Curriculum 2005) was developed and partially implemented. Outcomes Based Education (OBE), embodied in the emerging National Qualifications Framework (NQF), pulled together a completely foreign educational language that posed acute challenges for the HRE lobby group that structured itself as the Forum for Democracy and Human Rights Education (FDHRE) in 1997. The primary objective of the FDHRE was to ensure the institutionalisation of HRE in the curriculum which required the translation of human rights principles into outcomes and assessment standards. Implementation problems directed the DoE to appoint a committee to review Curriculum 2005 (C2005) which ultimately resulted in the revision of the curriculum for GET in 2001.

In June 2000, the Council of Education Ministers agreed that the Statement of the National Curriculum for Grades R-9 should be revised in accordance with the recommendations of the Report of the Review Committee (31 May, 2000) to streamline and strengthen C2005 (DoE 2002, 2). The review committee made two important recommendations relating to HRE:

- a. "The review committee advocates a high knowledge and high skill curriculum as a means to promoting social justice, equity and development.
- b. HRE and education for civic responsibility should be infused through all the learning areas. Issues of anti-discrimination, anti-racism, anti-sexism and special needs require particular and enhanced attention throughout the curriculum. The implications of this for all learning areas should be prioritised".

In January 2001, the following curriculum working groups were established:

- Learning Area Working Groups
  - Life Orientation
  - Economic and Management Sciences
  - Languages
  - Mathematics
  - Natural Sciences
  - Social Sciences
  - Technology
  - Arts and Culture
- Transversal Working Groups
  - Human Rights and Inclusivity (WG-GET)
  - Qualification
  - Implementation

This process brought approximately 150 curriculum developers together under the leadership of a Ministerial Project Committee (MPC). The brief (Keet et.al. 2001, 3) of the WG-GET working group included the following:

- Consider issues of human rights, values, inclusivity, Education of Learners

- with Special Needs (ELSEN), multilingualism, racism, sexism, poorly resourced schools, the environment, etc.;
- Clarify human rights concepts and values in the various learning areas and programmes;
- Propose ways on how to infuse these concepts and values into the learning area statements and programmes;
- Suggest approaches and methods to assess these concepts and values in learning programmes and areas and how these contribute towards the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC);
- Propose strategies to promote multilingualism in the learning areas and programmes; and
- Suggest ways of ensuring that Human Rights Education (HRE) is a cross-curricular issue.

The WG-GET adopted three strategies in collaboration with the MPC. First, presentations were made to the plenary of the curriculum development sessions. Second, face-to-face engagements with the working groups happened on a continued basis and members of the working group interacted with curriculum developers throughout the process. Third, the WG-GET worked through all the draft curriculum statements at various stages of the revision process, meticulously reporting on gaps and providing feedback on how these could be dealt with. These processes ensured that HRE was taken up in all the design features of the curriculum - the definition, scope and purpose of all the learning areas; the learning outcomes; and the assessment criteria. In addition human rights were adopted as fundamental principles underlying the curriculum. The same processes were followed in the development of the FET curriculum in 2002 and 2003 with the establishment of the WG-FET. The brief (Keet 2002, 2) of the WG-FET differed slightly from that of the WG-GET. These processes allowed for a much more structured interplay between human rights issues and curricular development and ultimately resulted in an interesting construction of HRE in the curriculum. The notion of infusion and its consequences for the alignment of learning areas with the principles of HRE are explored in another article (Carrim, Keet 2005, 101) where we argued that the whole RNCS reflects a level of minimum infusion. Minimum infusion refers to two particular ways in which learning areas or subjects deal with human rights. First, "content indirectly or tangentially makes reference to human rights issues and concerns". Second, the "knowledge, skills, attitudes, values or development" related to human rights issues are "covered separately or singularly". Minimum infusion thus essentially refers to the tendency to cover human rights issues indirectly and not in a holistic way.

The WG-GET (Keet 2001, 25-26) proposed that all curriculum developers consider the following exit-level outcomes for the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) as a basis for infusing human rights through out the eight learning areas using the principles of horizontal and vertical articulation and internal cohesion:



Strand	Outcomes
<p>Human Rights and Responsibilities</p>	<p>By the end of grade 9 learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrate an awareness of the evolution of human rights.</li> <li>b. Display the capacity and skills to access human rights protection mechanisms, nationally and internationally.</li> <li>c. Express, debate, evaluate, take and defend positions on human rights and responsibilities with regard to contemporary challenges (e.g. crime, environment, poverty, discrimination).</li> <li>d. Garner, analyze and reflect on information and take part in human rights debates.</li> </ul>
<p>Principles, Values And Attitudes</p>	<p>By the end of grade 9 learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Explain, express and justify the importance and meaning for all citizens to hold shared values and principles.</li> <li>b. Identify ways people can work together and work with others to promote the shared values and principles of the nation within the context of diversity.</li> <li>c. Describe conflicts among the fundamental values and principles.</li> <li>d. Explain the necessary conditions for developing constitutional democracy and their responsibility within it.</li> <li>e. Know the principle of inclusivity as a human rights principle aimed at eradicating discrimination.</li> <li>f. Demonstrate sensitivity towards other people and the environment.</li> </ul>



<p>Participatory Citizenship, Civics           And Governance</p>	<p>By the end of grade 9 learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Know about and explain the functions of government and its structure, possibilities and limitations.</li> <li>b. Explain democratic and participatory citizenship and identify and demonstrate ways in which individuals and communities can take up civic and environmental responsibilities.</li> <li>c. Express themselves as South African, African and world citizens with national, regional and global responsibilities.</li> </ul>
---	---

Though the above exit-level outcomes are not reflected in its totality within the RCNS, it certainly provided both a guide and framework of criteria for the infusion of human rights in the curriculum.

The processes, structures and approaches described above represent to our mind a considered and coherent strategy for the infusion of HRE into the curriculum. It also reflects assumptions about the ultimate construction of HRE in the curriculum by pre-determining an approach of infusion. As such the notion of a dedicated subject of HRE has never seriously entered curriculum debates since 1996. In fact, both the Chairpersons of the Ministerial Project Committees for GET and FET curriculum development favoured an integrated and cross-curricular approach to HRE (DoE 2001b, 26). It also presupposes a human rights approach throughout the education system in relation to governance, financing, access, admissions and equity. This presupposition however did not materialise, as we argue later on, in an integrated approach to HRE throughout the system. Parallel to the curriculum development processes the Department of Education launched the values in education initiative with a distinct HRE character that culminated in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE 2001a; DoE 2001b) that certainly provided further impetus for the infusing of human rights in the curriculum. The table below reflects the expression of human rights as infused within the curriculum, vertically and horizontally.

Subject/ Learning Area	Learning Outcome	Assessment Standards: Grade 8	Assessment Standards: Grade 9
Arts and Culture	Learning Outcome 2 The learner will be able to reflect critically and creatively on artistic and cultural processes, products and styles in past and present contexts.	<p>We know this when the learner:</p> <p>Dance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discusses dances in own social, cultural and historical contexts, focusing on gender, disability and power.</li> </ul> <p>Drama:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researches human rights and environmental issues and interprets these in small group role-plays.</li> </ul> <p>Visual Arts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and explains how photography, filmmaking, sculpture and printmaking can</li> </ul>	<p>We know this when the learner:</p> <p>Dance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflects on and compares how social dances reflect their time.</li> </ul> <p>Drama:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyses the positive and negative effects of television, radio, documentaries or films on our lives.</li> </ul>

		document human rights abuses.	
Life Orientation	<p>Learning Outcome 2 The learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to constitutional rights and responsibilities and to show an understanding of diverse cultures and religions.</p>	<p>We know this when the learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discusses violations of human rights and plans counter-strategies.</li> <li>• Explains how to use democratic processes to address a local problem.</li> </ul>	<p>We know this when the learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debates issues with regard to citizens' rights and personal choices.</li> <li>• Critically investigates issues of diversity in South Africa and ways in which to promote understanding of diverse cultures.</li> <li>• Reflects on and discusses the contributions of various religions in promoting peace.</li> </ul>
Mathematics	<p>Learning Outcome 5 Data handling: The learner will be able to collect, summarise,</p>	<p>We know this when the learner: Critically reads and interprets data presented in a variety of ways to draw conclusions and</p>	<p>We know this when the learner: Critically reads and interprets data presented in a variety of ways with awareness of sources of error</p>

	display and critically analyse data in order to draw conclusions and make predictions, and to interpret and determine chance variation	<p>make predictions sensitive to the role of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context</li> <li>• Categories (age, gender, race)</li> <li>• Any other human rights and inclusivity issues.</li> </ul> <p>Poses questions relating to human rights, social, economic, environmental and political issues in own environment.</p>	<p>and manipulation to draw conclusions and make predictions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social, environmental and political issues</li> <li>• Any other human rights and inclusivity issues.</li> </ul> <p>Poses questions relating to human rights, social, economic, environmental and political issues in South Africa.</p>
Technology	<p>Learning Outcome 3 Technology, society and environment: The learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between science, technology, society and the environment.</p>	<p><b>Bias in Technology</b> We know this when the learner: Produces evidence that details opinions, backed up by factual evidence, about the effect of technological solutions on human rights issues (e.g. age, disability).</p>	<p><b>Bias in Technology</b> We know this when the learner: Produces evidence that details opinions, backed up by factual evidence, about bias (e.g. gender, age, access) in making technological decisions, and suggests strategies for redress.</p>

The examples are selected from the GET phase (grades R-9) which consists of eight subjects or learning areas namely Arts and Culture, Economic and Management Sciences, Languages, Life Orientation, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology. This configuration of HRE in the curriculum underscores our contention that the exit-level outcomes for the GETC as proposed by the WG-GET certainly influenced the curriculum development processes in relation to the infusion of human rights. Conversely it also provides the curriculum topography on which basis we developed the notion of minimum infusion.

#### 4 HRE and Human Rights Compliance

The adoption of the interim constitution (Act 200 of 1993) provided the first broad compliance framework for the transformation of the educational system as far as HRE is concerned. It provided for a Bill of Rights and also for international treaties to become law subject to certain legislative processes. South Africa thus ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as early as 1995 and in the same year the first major post-apartheid educational policy (WPI) was adopted after the 1994 elections. In anticipation of a convergence between the policy expressions of HRE in the NEPI reports and those in international human rights instruments, WPI articulated ambitious positions with regard to HRE (paragraphs 57-61). The year 1995 also marked the beginning of the United Nations Decade for HRE with the DoE participating in drafting the guidelines for the decade. As the majority party in power after the 1994 election, it was inconceivable for the African National Congress (ANC) to ignore the body of human rights provisions which has so ably assisted it as a liberation movement. South Africa thus ratified a number of international and regional human rights instruments in quick succession since 1994 which brought these normative frameworks into the realm of national justifiability.

Freeman (2002, 36) estimated that "there are now approximately 200 legal human rights instruments". In addition, regional human rights regimes have been established in Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia-Pacific which are governed by regionally-based human rights instruments, structures and processes. The international and regional human rights framework thus acted as a surrogate for the 'new' South Africa and its compliance requirements played a significant role in developing the topography of HRE in the GET and FET curricula. This is a result of the articulation of HRE as a human right in at least ninety-two provisions in international and regional covenants, protocols, conventions, declarations, principles, guidelines, resolutions and recommendations (United Nations 1999) either as part of the right to education and other rights or as independent provisions. The legal status of these instruments varies and though only a limited portion is legally binding on member countries that ratify or accede to them, all of them have an "undeniable moral force" (United Nations 1999, 2).

Central legislative and policy measures in the education sector such as the National Education Policy Act of 1996 responded to South Africa's regional and international obligations. Subsequent country reports to the

international and regional monitoring structures reflected on these legislative and policy developments as prime examples of South Africa's drive towards compliance. The GET and FET guidelines documents (2001 and 2002) as well as the curriculum frameworks (2002 and 2003) responded to South Africa's international obligations as far as HRE is concerned within the context of the country's history and in line with a societal vision that is captured in the National Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). However, there is no doubt that South Africa's re-birth into a world of human rights treaties, conventions and declarations impacted on the trajectory of human rights infusion into the curriculum. Thus, the normative international human rights framework that was firmly in place and rapidly developing at the founding of the 'new' South Africa had a significant impact on the infusion of HRE by entering into the curriculum spaces that invariably opened up for a United Nations-based HRE in a transitional democracy. Certainly, compliance in relation to international human rights requirements, dovetailed neatly with "political symbolism as policy craft" since human rights compliance internationally operates mostly on a policy level.

## 5 HRE, Curriculum and Political Symbolism

Jansen (2002) provides an interesting view for analysing educational policy in South Africa through "political symbolism as policy craft". Here we are extending the construct of political symbolism to reflect on the infusion of HRE in the GET and FET curricula. Jansen argues that whilst all policies are subjected to the politics of symbolism, South African education policy-making processes stress "symbolic functions above practical consideration" (ibid. 208). The evidence includes the prominence given to policy production rather than implementation; the lack of expressions of the modalities of policy implementation; and the incoherence across the various policy statements (ibid. 200-205). The reasons for this reside in the macro-economic environment; the political arrangement of a government of national unity; constitutional limitations; and the lack of political and technical skills (ibid. 208-210). In essence Jansen (ibid. 46) is arguing that:

The making of education policy in South Africa is best described as a struggle for the achievement of a broad political symbolism that would mark the shift from apartheid to post-apartheid society.

This analysis is as useful for HRE in the curriculum as it is for educational policy in general. Given the dominant international human rights language into which South Africa was 'reborn' in 1994, the commitment to the infusion of HRE in the new schools curricula became a central terrain for political symbolism.

The premise of educational policy change was rooted in a rights-based approach (see Waghid 2004) that was woven together by the anti-apartheid history of the Freedom Charter, WPI, the Interim Constitution, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and an array of international and regional human rights instruments. The dominance of the human rights language in

global geo-political arrangements and relationships constituted the expressions of commitment to human rights as worthwhile constructions for the purposes of political symbolism. A concomitant commitment to HRE invariably followed. The commitment to the language of human rights symbolizes the shift from apartheid to post-apartheid educational practice. However, a systematic, integrated and coherent approach to HRE in the schooling sector is however still far from being realised. Disparate projects and initiatives relate to one another in staccato fashion with a disjointed approach to curriculum, teacher development, whole-school development and materials development (see Jansen 2002, 202-203). A good example of this has been the reluctance of the DoE to reformulate the norms and standards for teacher development (DoE 2001c) in order to make the human rights education requirements explicit. This would have provided for greater synergy between the curriculum and teacher development processes. Further, despite the efforts of the Values in Education initiative of the DoE in pulling the human rights initiatives together, a recent study (McKinney 2005) for instance has shown that materials that are approved for use in schools are not wholly aligned to the human rights requirements of the curriculum. This is partly as a result of the lack of a coherent strategy to deal with HRE and human rights in education.

## 6 Conclusion

The above discussion indicates the complexity of the development of HRE in curricular reform in South Africa. Whilst the influence of human rights compliance on the construction of HRE is explainable to some extent by the notion of political symbolism as policy craft, the development of HRE praxis in South Africa cannot be underestimated. Further, education authorities have consistently demonstrated a commitment to HRE amidst the curricular challenge of overload and pressures around the responsiveness of the curriculum to the notion of "economic competitiveness". Exemplars across the eight learning areas, though not perfect, reflect in large measure the efforts of curriculum developers to infuse human rights within conventionally fixed disciplines. Despite these developments, Keet (2002, 28-36) articulated a range of conceptual and implementation challenges for HRE in the RNCS. In addition, a slowly emerging research agenda focussing on human rights and social justice in education and the implementation of the curriculum will hopefully register these challenges more clearly and recommend ways in which the South African education system can respond to them (Education Policy Consortium 2004; Rooth 2005).

The processes and structures for curricular reform that were used for the development of HRE in South Africa have also generated some worthwhile lessons:

First, the interplay between HRE and curriculum must be guided and directed by structured processes and terms of reference. Ad-hoc strategies have proven costly in the first attempt at curricular reform in 1997.

Second, HRE must be configured to suit curriculum needs in contexts and as such a multitude of infusion strategies need to be developed that



address the system and structure of education; its history and vision; the whole structure and rules of national curricula; and the inherent contradictions embedded within curricula as policy texts.

Third, curricular reform is subjected to historical, political, cultural and economic factors within a wider globalised world where the meaning and objectives of HRE are constructed and deconstructed to suit a number of non-pedagogical purposes. Reflecting on the anti-educational potential of HRE is as important as emphasizing its pedagogical value.

Fourth, the broader HRE field is in need of a much more sophisticated conceptual framework that can generate nuanced strategies for human rights infusion in curricula as oppose to the counter-productiveness of the monochromatic strategies that are employed at present. Approaches to the infusion of human rights are in general one-dimensional, a-historical and decontextualized in their demand for a linear "push" to pierce the boundaries of the various subject areas to include human rights issues. This has led to increased resistance from education authorities as manifested in the first cycle of curriculum transformation (1996-1997) in South Africa.

In conclusion, the new Minister of Education who took up office in 2004 committed the Ministry and Department of Education to the infusion of HRE across all levels of the system at a seminar held in March 2005 on The Advanced Certificate in Education: Values and Human Rights in the Curriculum for educators in the system. This commitment bodes well for the future of HRE in the South African schools within the context of a much-needed coherent strategy across the education system. Whether this commitment will be translated into advanced action remains to be seen.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The working group for the GET curriculum was formally referred to as the Human Rights and Inclusivity Working Group and was constituted in February 2001. The working for the FET curriculum was formally known as the Working Group on Human Rights, Inclusivity and HIV/AIDS and was established in May 2002.

## References

- Ball, Stephen. 1990. *Politics and Policy Making in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Candau, Vera Maria. 2004. *Challenges of Human Rights Education in South America*. In: Georgi, Viola B.; Seberich, Michael, eds. *International Perspectives in Human Rights Education*. Güterloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers.
- Carrim, Nazir; Keet, Andre. 2005. *Infusing Human Rights into the Curriculum - The Case of the South African Revised National Curriculum Statement*. In: *Perspectives in Education*, Vol. 23, No. 2.

Chisholm, Linda. 2005. The State of South Africa's Schools. In: Daniel, John; Southall, Roger; Lutchman, Jessica, eds. State of the Nation - South Africa 2004-2005. Cape Town: HSRC press.

Christie, Pamela. 1986. The Right to Learn. Johannesburg: Sached/ Ravan Press.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993.  
(<http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/legislation/1993/constit0.html?rebookmark=1>).

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.  
(<http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/constitution/saconst.html?rebookmark=1>).

Cooper, Linda. 1998. The Implications of the National Qualifications Framework for Emancipatory Education in South Africa. In: Reconstruction, Development and the National Qualifications Framework. CEPD, Johannesburg.

DoE (National Department of Education). 1995. White Paper on Education and Training, Notice 196 of 1995.  
([http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/white\\_papers/educ1.html](http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/white_papers/educ1.html)).

DoE (National Department of Education). 1996. National Education Policy Act of 1996. Pretoria: Government Printers.  
(<http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/legislation/1996/act96-027.html>)

DoE (National Department of Education). 2000. Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 - A South African Curriculum for the Twenty First Century, 31 May 2000. Pretoria: Government Printers.  
(<http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/reports/education/curric2005/curric2005.htm?rebookmark=1>).

DoE (National Department of Education). 2001a. Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy. Pretoria: Government Printers.  
([http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:Eq6VuPvMj\\_MJ:www.education.gov.za/content/documents/89.pdf+National+Department+of+Education.+2001a.+>Manifesto+on+Values,+Education+and+Democracy.&hl=de](http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:Eq6VuPvMj_MJ:www.education.gov.za/content/documents/89.pdf+National+Department+of+Education.+2001a.+>Manifesto+on+Values,+Education+and+Democracy.&hl=de)).

DoE (National Department of Education). 2001b. Saamtrek - Conference Report on Values, Education and Democracy. Pretoria: Government Printers.

DoE (National Department of Education). 2001c. Norms and Standards for Teacher Development. Pretoria: Government Printers.

DoE (National Department of Education). 2002. Education Statistics in South Africa at a Glance in 2002. Pretoria: Government Printers.

DoE (National Department of Education). 2002. Revised National Curriculum Statement, Gazette No. 23406, Vol. 443, Pretoria: Government Printers.  
(<http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:4guBcPOGDcsI:www.education.gov.za/content/documents/7.pdf+National+Department+of+Education.+2002.+Revised+National+Curriculum+Statement,+Gazette+No.+23406,+Vol.+443,+&hl=de>).

DoE (National Department of Education). 2003. National Curriculum Statement for Further Education and Training. Pretoria: Government Printers.

- Education Policy Consortium. 2004. Research workshop - 21-23 November. Durban, South Africa.
- Enslin, Penny. 2003. Citizenship Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa. In: Cambridge Journal of Education. Vol. 33, No. 1, 73-83
- Flowers, Nancy. 2004. How to Define Human Rights Education? - A Complex Answer to a Simple Question. In: Georgi, Viola B.; Seberich, Michael, eds. International Perspectives in Human Rights Education. Güterloh: Bertelsman Foundation Publishers.
- Freeman, Michael. 2002. Human Rights. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Gutto, Shadrack. 2001. Equality and Non-Discrimination in South Africa. Claremont: New Africa Books.
- Jansen, Jonathan D. 1999. Setting the Scene - Historiographies of Curriculum Policy in South Africa. In: Jansen, Jonathan D.; Christie, Pamela, eds. Changing Curriculum - Studies in Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa. Kenwyn: Juta.
- Jansen, Jonathan D. 2002. Political Symbolism as Policy Craft: Explaining Non-Reform in South African Education after Apartheid. In: Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 17, No. 2, 199-215.
- Kallaway, Peter. 1986. Apartheid and Education. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Kallaway, Peter. 2002. The History of Education under Apartheid. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- Kraak, Andre. 1999. Policy Ambiguity and Slippage - Higher Education under the new state. In: Kraak, Andre; Young, Michael. Education in Retrospect. Pretoria: HSRC Press.
- Keet, Andre; Govender, Karthy; Meyers, A; Carrim, Nazir; Farasani, M; Musuku, N. 2001. Guidelines Document - The National Curriculum Statement and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Values and Inclusivity. Working Group on Human Rights and Inclusivity. (unpublished)
- Keet, Andre; Lotz, H; Naicker, S. 2002. Guidelines for Further Education and Training Curriculum Development. Working Group on Human Rights, Inclusivity and HIV/AIDS. (unpublished)
- Keet, Andre. 2002. Human Rights and Curriculum Transformation - A Critical Reflection. In: Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa, Vol. 9, No. 4.
- Keet, Andre. 2005. Review of Human Rights and Democracy Education in the Southern African Development Community. Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). (unpublished)
- Leedy, Paul D. 1997. Practical Research - Planning and Design. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Levin, R. 1991. People's Education and the Politics of Negotiation in South Africa. In: Perspectives in Education, Vol. 12, No. 2.
- Levinson, Bradley; Sutton, Margaret. 2001. Policy as Practice - Toward a Comparative Sociocultural analysis of Educational Policy. Westport: Ablex Publishing.
- Lomofsky, Lilian; Lazarus, Sandy. 2001. South Africa - First steps in the development of an inclusive education system. In: Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol. 31, No. 3, 303-317.

- Moshamba, G. 1992. A Conceptual Critique of People's Education. Occasional Paper, Education Policy Unit, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Motala, Shireen; Vally, Salim. 2002. People's Education - From People's Power to Tirisano. In: Kallaway, Peter, ed. The History of Education under Apartheid. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- NECC. 1992. National Education Policy Initiative - Final Report and Summaries. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- McKinney, Carolyn. 2005. Textbooks for Diverse Learners - A Critical Analysis of Learning Materials Used in South African schools. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Rooth, E. 2005. An Investigation of the Status and Practice of Life Orientation in South African Schools. University of the Western Cape. (ongoing - PhD dissertation)
- South African Human Rights Commission. 4th and 5th Economic and Social Rights Reports (2003-2004). Johannesburg, South Africa. ([http://www.element.co.za/sahrc/cms/publish/cat\\_index\\_28.shtml](http://www.element.co.za/sahrc/cms/publish/cat_index_28.shtml)).
- United Nations. 1999. The Right to Human Rights Education. New York, Geneva.
- Waghid, Yusef. 2004. Compassion, Citizenship and Education in South Africa - An Opportunity for Transformation. In: International Review of Education, Vol. 50, No. 5-6, 525-542.