

A CRITICAL COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEDIA LITERACY IN
AUSTRALIA, ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED STATES

by

Ramonia R. Rochester

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by

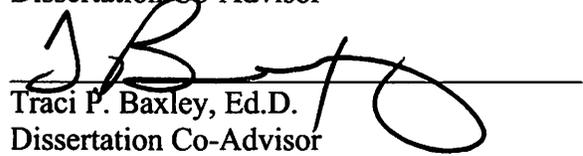
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This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's dissertation co-advisors, Dr. Emery Hyslop-Margison and Dr. Traci P. Baxley, Department of Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry, and has been approved by the members of her supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the College of Education and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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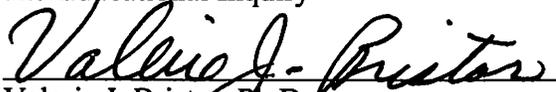
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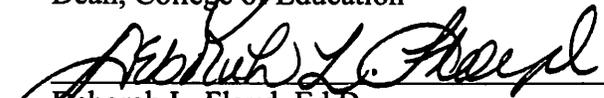
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ABSTRACT

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Ubiquitous media communications technology necessitates democratic and critical media literacy education for developing an active 21st century polity. This study analyzed the context of democratic and critical media competencies in national curriculum standards across Australia, England, and the United States. This, based on Lefebvre's (1991) conception of conceived space, where standards operate as manifest educational policy and as a basis for establishing good practice.

The study employed a multi-theoretical approach to textual analysis, within Bereday's (1964) comparative structure of inquiry. A critical policy lens supported the contextualization of ideological influences that frame democratic and critical media literacies in standards, per Bay-Cheng, Fitz, Alizaga, and Zucker's (2015) neoliberal subscales. A purposive sample of civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media arts/studies was employed. Differences across three main indicators were identified: socio-cultural and youth-based concerns, personal growth via media

production and other skills development, and reasoning and communication skills improvement. The neoliberal influences on curricular standards were subsequently explored across three emerging themes: identity politics, problem-based and critical inquiry experiences, and the inclusion of digital new media in curriculum inquiry.

Though recognized in the countries' standards as multifaceted and complex, each obfuscates identity in some way. Both England and the United States inadequately confront race, class, gender, socio-economic status, cultural commodification, and youth-based issues. Though not overtly neoliberal, the Australian standards present identity hegemonically.

The role of media is somewhat siloed from the curriculum's conceptions of identity and active citizenship across all three countries. The English standards are least adept at developing learners' understandings of the influence of media on identity development, whereas both England and the United States over-emphasize text to the neglect of new media understandings. An apolitical view of media literacy, accompanied by techno-economic terminology, is pervasive in U.S. standards.

Despite a counter-critical approach to the framing of its curriculum priorities, Australia presents the most balanced view of democratic/critical media citizenship. England's standards reflect neoliberal-communitarian citizenship and largely neglect critical questioning. Whereas the United States takes a similarly cosmopolitan view of citizenship to Australia and England, the standards fail to comprehensively explore the links between digital democracy and political engagement.

DEDICATION

For my mother, may I inherit half her strength.

– Lorna Goodison (1986)

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Beginning in post-war 1960s, the context of global, international, and economic change resulted in changes in how ideology is expressed in education. Economic rationalism and the influence of national economic objectives on public policy became the driving force behind many decisions concerning education reform in Western states (Ball, 1998; Hursh, 2005; Keating, Preston, Burke, Van Heertum, & Arnove, 2013). Economic rationalism is based in human capital theory and asserts that the viability of contemporary economies is based on having an educated, skilled, and technically competent labor force (Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014). The notion that countries could stimulate economic growth by investing in increasing educational opportunities for citizens became paramount during this era. According to economic rationalists such as Gary Becker, economic growth depends on knowledge, information, ideas, and the skills and the health of the workforce (Cummings, 2012).

In a historical analysis of education policy, Mundy (2009) charted the evolution of international and transnational policy between 1945 and 1980 and the emergence of policy actors in the mid-1980s to 2009. The author noted that the internationalization of education intervention began long before World War I through the efforts of international teacher organizations, the expansion of colonial policies for education, and international “education burrowing” (Mundy, 2009, p. 717) from Western countries by China and Japan. World models of education were subsequently developed and international policy

contexts became the basis for many national educational standards. Though attempts at international organization of education pre-World War II were relegated to international intellectual cooperation and intergovernmental information sharing via the International Bureau of Education (IBE), it was during this period (1929 - 1945) that the International Labor Organization (ILB) became involved in education regarding issues of child labor, worker education, and teachers' rights (Hursh, 2005; Mundy, 2009).

The end of the second World War ushered in an era of multilateralism and a major shift in social and economic policies in the United States and the United Kingdom (Hursh, 2005). At the founding conference of the United Nations, participating states decided to include Article 55 for educational corporation in their charter (Mundy, 2009). The United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established shortly thereafter. The main theme running through UNESCO's education discourses and, later, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), along with other conventions for educational opportunity, was the notion of equal education as a fundamental human right (Mundy, 2009). Other mandates for international education included developing an organization for post-war reconstruction and the expansion of Anglo-American scientific supremacy (the United States), high level intellectual cooperation (France), the expansion of mass literacy and schooling for all (Latin America), and peace promotion and international understanding (non-state actors such as progressive educators and teacher associations). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was later established in 1961 to promote economic growth and development policies for Western member states and would later

play an important role in facilitating information sharing and cross-national policy learning for education (Mundy, 2009).

Globalization, Neoliberalism and Technology in Education

The increasing influence of international education policy actors in national affairs is attributable to globalization (Ball, 1998; Hursh, 2005; Mundy, 2009). According to Mundy (2009), “almost any definition of globalization begins with the idea that the integration of human societies across pre-existing territorial units has sped up, assisted in part by the development of new technologies that compress time and space” (p. 721). Globalization theorists assert that interregional and “deterritorialized” (Mundy, 2009, p. 721) flows of social interaction reached unprecedented levels beginning in the 1980s (Ball, 1998). These de-territorialized flows of ideas, people, goods, and money are supported by new information and communications technologies that impact the capacity of nation-states to direct policy and increase the number of non-state based policy actors (Mundy, 2009).

Globalization’s impact on education began in the mid-1970s with the collapse of Keynesian economic policies (Ball, 1998; Hursh, 2005; Mundy, 2009), which gave way to neoliberal approaches to public strategy. These neoliberal approaches focused on decreasing state expenditure through fiscal conservativeness and increasing economic competitiveness achieved through liberating trade and privatization (Ball, 1998; Mundy, 2009). This significantly impacted education and resulted in the goals of education being directly tied to workforce competitiveness, market-model mechanisms (such as vouchers and private schools), and the increase in system efficiencies (Ball, 1998; Hursh, 2005;

Mundy, 2009). System efficiencies would later burgeon into standardized testing and accountability mechanisms (Keating et al., 2013).

Hursh (2005), and Mundy (2009) concluded that a global economic structure and national labor markers are parallel to “market-reformed” (Ball, 2006, p. 64) education systems. Ball (1998) attributed the turn in education policy to neoliberalism or “Thatcherism” (p. 122), institutional economics, performativity, public choice theory and managerialism. Neoliberal influences establish spontaneous, unplanned, and innovative responses to the market form of education, in opposition to the partisan, bureaucratic, and planned change. Institutional economics, on the other hand, explain human behavior as involving rational choices and actions. Within education, this translates into “site-based-management” initiatives or self-management and school improvement (Ball, 1998, p. 123). Performativity is based on Lyotard’s (1984) conception of a strictly functional relationship between a state and its internal and external environments (as cited in Ball, 1998, p. 122). The steering mechanism is often operated from a distance in education. Performativity therefore “replaces intervention and prescription with target setting, accountability” and mechanisms for comparison (Ball, 1998, p. 123). In tandem, managerialism is purported to be simultaneously the “delivery system” and “vehicle for change” in education policy (Ball, 1998, p. 123). Managerialism rhetoric involves the “cult of excellence,” (Ball, 2006, p. 71) attention to quality, the value of the customer, and the importance of innovation (Ball, 2006). According to Ball (1998):

One effect of this [new orthodoxy] has been a loss of support among the new middle classes for efforts to democratize education and social policy. Education is being transformed back into an ‘oligarchic good’ and progressive experimentation

in educational methods is being replaced by a set of reinvented traditional pedagogies [or curricula fundamentalism]. (p. 121)

The turn of the 20th century marked the height of technological innovation that impacted human communication on global, transnational levels. Subsequently, media communication technologies also signaled resultant changes in education and literacy (Postman, 1985; Strate, 2014). With the arrival of technology came the need to develop new literacies, multiliteracies, technological and digital competencies, or media literacy (The New London Group, 1997). Media education thus became staple curricula content in many regions including Australia, the United Kingdom (including England), and the United States (Kubey, 2003). Technological advancements on the global scale have led each of these countries to tailor curriculum and policy for education in response to global workforce competition (Ball, 1998; Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012; Hursh, 2005; Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Though in some Western countries - and certainly among proponents for democratic education - media literacy's ultimate aim is to prepare citizens to function in a democratic state (Kellner & Share, 2007a, 2007b), education policy and curriculum in Australia, England, and the United States continue to struggle to balance democratic imperatives with neoliberal reforms in education. Several authors contend that the current neoliberal education agenda has the potential to preclude the development of critical literacies (and, by extension, critical media literacies) due to its preoccupation with serving the economic ends of standardized testing and accountability (Clarke, 2015;

Flores-Koulish & Deal, 2008; Giroux, 1993; Ngomba-Westbrook, 2013; Torres & Mercado, 2006).

According to Kellner and Share (2005), a neoliberal ideology focus in education policy and curriculum promotes pseudo consensus rather than critical autonomy and independence that sustains democracy. Pseudo consensus creates a foregone conclusion regarding the nature of the challenges facing education and suggests that addressing those challenges requires instrumentalist correctives such as standardization and increased accountability. Despite recent moves to develop media literacy (ML) legislation and educational standards, the United States continues to trail other developed English-speaking nations such as Australia and the United Kingdom in this area (Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 2003; Martens, 2010; Yates, 2004).

While media literacy policy is a feature of the national curriculum in Australia and the United Kingdom, McDougall and Livingstone (2014) noted that a shift from critical approaches to instrumentalist competencies and skills focus threatens the efficacy of current initiatives. In addition, within the United States and the United Kingdom, media education in teacher education continues to be a marginally or totally unfunded mandate (Kellner & Share, 2007a). Whereas all three countries have mandates regarding the inclusion of media literacies across curriculum, the approach within each is fundamentally different.

As economic and cultural globalization increases, a complex social life with hybrid identities, texts, and discourses emerges (Taylor, 2004). New communication technologies have created a knowledge-based economy, resulting in what Fairclough (2000) referred to as social change driven by language and discourse. Language is the

connection between communication, action, and identity and an important aspect of modern social life (Taylor, 2004). Language is inherently political due to its propensity to shape and control communication, action, and identity. How language creates social meaning must, therefore, be a subject that is continuously reassessed. Curriculum is the ultimate manifestation of political language that has the greatest propensity for shaping social life (Apple, 2006; Giroux, 2008).

The education policy landscape in each of the countries under study has been influenced by various economic and social forces. The UNESCO regards media education as a priority area for educational development in the 21st century (Fedorov, 2008). While many countries agree that media education is an entitlement for every citizen, the priorities in education continue to be geared toward priming nations for global economic competition and technological innovation. Media and communications technology is perceived as a mechanism for achieving these aims, with lesser regard paid to its propensity to shape and transform social relations. Media literacy education necessarily explores the connections between communication, identity, and social action, and investigates and articulates political, social, and economic activities in society (Kellner & Share, 2005). An examination of media literacy curriculum policy is therefore an opportunity to examine the ideologies at play and whether these educational imperatives are being adequately met.

Purpose of the Study

A critical analysis of curriculum policy in the Australia, the England, and the United States explored the implications of national and transnational reform agendas in education. An analysis of curricula content is the ultimate manifestation of national

reform policy and a strong basis for designing research that explores counter-themes within and across national policies of nation states. This study examined the efforts of policy toward integrating media literacy in curriculum standards across the subjects of civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media arts/studies, for learners ages 11 to 18 years (middle/secondary years of schooling). By exploring the level and context of democratic and critical media literacy (CML) inclusion in educational standards, the researcher was able to make a critical comparison of the historical, political, social, and cultural contexts of curriculum policy across the three countries under study. The study examined the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent is democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in educational standards of the national and state curricula of Victoria, Australia; England; and Florida, the United States?
- RQA: How are these representations different across English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/literacy standards, within each country?
- RQB: How are educational standards different across countries?

Significance of the Study

Strate (2014) suggested that “When you plug something into a wall, someone is getting plugged into you. Which means you need new patterns of defense, perception, understanding, evaluation. You need a new kind of education” (p. 30). Media literacy education is the defense mechanism and both Postman (1985) and Strate (2014) have recommended it as a tool for countering the onslaught of technology. Media is said to create a hyper-reality that requires deconstruction in order to appropriate its intentions

(Postman, 1985; Potter, 2004). An education that does not attend in a specific and deliberate way to reading the media in ways that lead to critical media consumption fails to achieve the democratic imperative of having an informed citizenry, equipped to participate in civic life (Buckingham, 2003; Chen, 2007; Hobbs, 1999; Mossberger, Tolbert, & McNeal, 2008; Thevenin, 2012).

A failure to educate for critical media consciousness is equivalent to what Carr (2009) referred to as media illiteracy. Wallis and Buckingham (2016) noted that media literacy legislation in the United Kingdom has failed to embody the actual tenets of media literacy. In the United States, media literacy legislation currently focuses on ICT access and e-safety (Media Literacy Now, 2015), whereas Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is noted to focus on uncritical approaches to technology or “tool competence” (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 5). In Australia, the new national curriculum is crowded (Australian Government, Department of Education and Training [DET], 2015) and over-emphasizes production skills in media education curricula (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], n.d.c).

While several studies on media literacy and democratic education (Martens, 2010) and historical media literacy development (Fedorov, 2008) are noted in the field across the three countries being researched, no studies have looked at media literacy curriculum policy in a comparative context. This study explored the extent to which neoliberal influences registered in the democratic and critical media literacy tenets explored in the country’s educational standards and how these tenets manifested similarly or differently across curricular subjects.

Supporting Theory

The exploration of curriculum policy was guided by three primary tenets: (1) curriculum needs to be democratic and critical in order to produce an active polity that is both technologically adept and media conscious (Carr, 2009; Kellner & Share, 2005; Martens, 2010, Stoddard, 2014), and (2) curriculum policy is the most accurate manifestation of state intentions for education and requires analysis and comparison in order to establish good practices (Apple, 2014; Giroux, 2008; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014), and (3) ideology intervenes in the aims of education policy and may act as means of social control and hegemonic reproduction (Lamm, 1986; Prunty, 1985). Figure 1 demonstrates the flow of curriculum policy as it is disrupted by ideology.

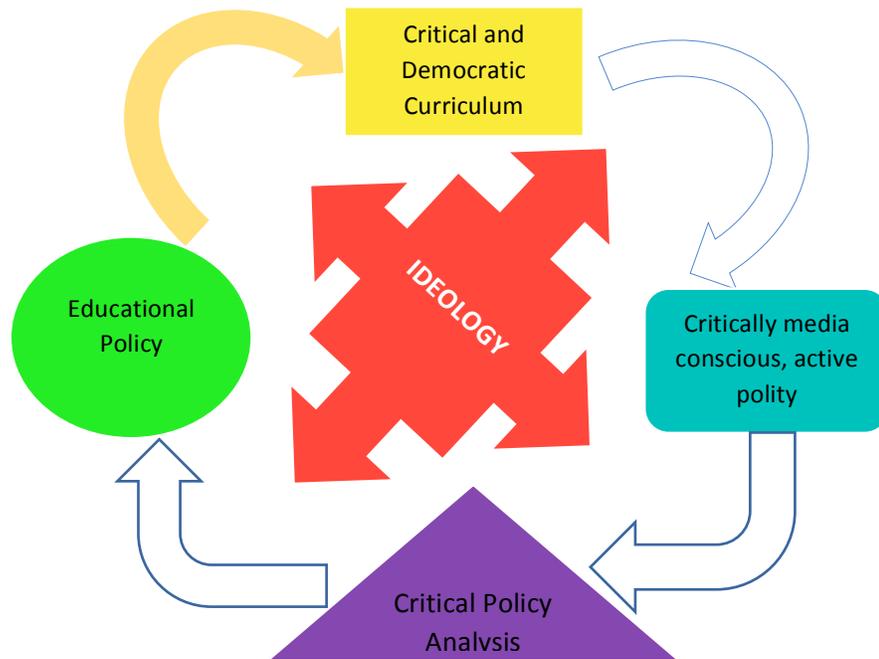


Figure 1. Model of ideological intervention in curriculum policy decision-making. This study explored the interventions at the level of manifest curriculum standards.

Ideology intervenes at every stage of the curriculum policy cycle and therefore has the potential to preclude or foster certain curriculum literacies, as well as to influence the inputs in the policy decision-making process at each point in the cycle. This study focused on examining manifest curriculum standards to ascertain the extent to which ideology may have intervened in curriculum standards mandated at the national level.

Research Delimitations

The study was delimited to analyzing secondary school (grades 7 to 12) civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media arts/studies standards at state and national levels. England does not have state or regional standards and the United States does not have a stand-alone media curriculum; the study was delimited accordingly. Each country has undergone educational reforms that led to recent and ongoing changes (England and Australia) in school curriculum. As such, the study examined only the latest versions of the documented educational standards made public via open source in each country: the English National Curriculum 2014; the Australia Curriculum v8.3, 2016 and Victorian Curriculum; and the United States Common Core State Standards (CCSS) 2009 and next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSS) for Florida.

Due to the nature of and resources allocated for the study, another delimitation is what may be considered a narrowing or lack of scope in coverage of the sample explored. Other countries such as Canada, France, New Zealand, and others may have progressive critical media literacy curriculum policy and education programs. However, this study focused on a comparison of Australia, England and the United States.

Research Limitations

The study was limited by the researcher's inability to visit the sites of curriculum

discourse that would aid in developing the socio-political and cultural context of the documents to be analyzed. This study added to the repertoire of comparative curriculum analyses in using content and critical policy analysis that employed both deductive and inductive methods to research the contents of curriculum policy.

Role of the Researcher

Yanow (2007) noted that within the interpretative paradigm, several factors influence the research analyst's meaning-making process and informs the specification and development of methods for analysis. I was the primary instrument of analysis and therefore a central actor in the analysis of the state of media literacy/democratic education as explored through state and national curriculum standards. Influencing the lens through which I viewed the issues of concern within the study are my philosophical and epistemological dispositions as a critical, multicultural education scholar, my professional experience as a media and communications practitioner-strategist, and my reflexive positioning as international scholar and, in one sense, outsider to all three education systems under study. Though I have engaged in U.S. higher education, I remain an outsider to the K-12 educational domain, having only theoretical knowledge of its practices. This lent to a more or less objective observation of the factors at play within each country's national context.

As the primary instrument of analysis, I assumed a dual role as researcher-participant, actively interacting with and forming impressions regarding the data. I come from a distinctively critical education background and so my personal assumptions about media literacy policy in the United States are that neoliberal ideologies in media literacy education policy serve to limit approaches to CML by focusing on technology. In an

attempt to maintain reflexivity throughout the project, I continuously audited myself regarding how my background influenced my data collection, analysis, and write up of the research. As suggested by Creswell (2013), I also sought to deliberately identify disconfirming evidence, particularly for those findings that were congruent with my previously held beliefs.

Definition of Key Research Terms

Critical Media Literacy (CML)

Critical media literacy includes and expands on the tenets of media literacy by engaging students in interrogating the sources of production and the institutions that motivate and structure the media industry, and by problematizing the “process of representation” to uncover issues related to ideology, power, and pleasure (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 60). Critical media literacy requires that learners develop a critical media literate disposition that enables them to do the following: (1) recognize the construction of media and communication as social processes rather than isolated neutral or transparent conveyors of information; (2) conduct semiotic textual analysis that explores the languages, genres, codes, and conventions of text; (3) explore the role audiences play in negotiating meanings; (4) problematize the “process of representation” (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 60) to uncover and engage issues of ideology, power, and pleasure; and (5) examine the production and institutions that motivate and structure the media industries as corporate profit-seeking businesses (Kellner & Share, 2007a; Schwarz, 2001; Torres & Mercado, 2006).

Democratic Voice

Democratic voice is the process of empowerment that enables transformative

education. Voice is the students' own representations as well as the means through which they issue their concerns as necessary for developing positive esteem. Voice develops positive self-esteem by allowing room for alternative and marginalized view points and the expression of opposition or dissent (Kellner & Share, 2005).

Education Policy as Curriculum

Ideas that pertain to the state agenda and are defined within broader social, political, and economic contexts find way into the documents, laws, and guidelines that regulate approaches to schooling and literacy (Bell & Stevenson, 2006) in Australian, English, and U.S. contexts. Policy is the production of the text, the text itself, ongoing modifications to the text, and the processes of implementation of text content into practice (Taylor, Fazal, Lingard, & Henry, 1997). As such, curriculum is policy in its most public form, which is both ideological, culturally selected, and represented, and which emerges as a product of choice (Looney, 2001). Ball (1994) described policy as text as “the capacity of those writing and reading the policy to shape its form at the strategic, organizational and operational levels” (as cited in Bell & Stevenson, 2006, p. 18). Education policy becomes discourse, language, and meaning, and, as such, a means by which notions of ideology and power expressed in policy documents and processes may be explored (Taylor, 1997). Educational standards therefore are manifest curriculum policy and manifest curriculum.

Identity Politics

M. Bernstein (2005) defined identity politics as a distinct political practice that defines the relationship between experience, culture, identity, politics, and power. In this sense, social identities are defined based on the notions of power and oppression; the

impact of identities on the politics of public policy is central to policy research (Beland, 2016). Within the context of this study, the analysis of identity politics or the politics of difference is concerned with acknowledging and confronting issues of race, class, gender, ability, religion, nationality, and other social constructions that are used to classify individuals and groups. Examining the ways in which pedagogy and practice attend to the need of those traditionally excluded from dominant educational discourses is critical for revealing the mechanisms of the politics of difference (Giroux, 1993). A critical examination of identity within public policy provides powerful insight into policy prescriptions and policy explanations (Beland, 2016) offered via national educational standards.

Mass Media

Mass media includes all new media and media communications technology that facilitate the distribution of communications or information, or is the product of such communication. Mass media involves all genres of media including educational text and social and pop media (Flores-Koulish, 2006).

Media Ideology

Media ideology is characterized by the expansion of institutional power achieved through “filtering information, manufacturing consent, and controlling what the public watch, listen to, read, think, believe, taste, dress, look like, speak, and how they perceive themselves” (Torres & Mercado, 2006, p. 260).

Media Pedagogy

Media pedagogy is the recognition that media are forms of pedagogy. This also involves the curricula and instructional approaches to media teaching and learning within

the field of media literacy or media studies (Torres & Mercado, 2006).

Media Literacy

Media literacy is a framework of understandings that guides the approaches to and analysis of media and information sharing. This involves recognizing that media is a socially constructed process that encompasses the analysis of textual language, genres, codes, and conventions, and explores the audience's role in interpreting media messages (Center for Media Literacy, n.d.a; Kellner & Share, 2007; Torres & Macedo, 2006).

Neoliberal Ideology

Eagleton (1991) suggested that ideology is a matter of discourse that considers how the use of language between human subjects produces specific effects; specifically, what power interests are served and what political effects are generated in a particular social context. In this context, ideology is the prevailing neoliberal, socio-political sentiments and educational philosophies that influence curriculum pedagogies and practices. Neoliberal ideology defines the role of social, cultural, and political institutions, such as education and schooling, based on economic outcomes (D. B. Saunders, 2010). It also characterizes the role of education and schooling based on economic outcomes to: (1) improve national economies by more closely aligning the intersections between schooling, employment, productivity, and trade; (2) enhance student outcomes in employment-related skills and competencies; (3) attain more direct control over curriculum content and assessment; (4) reduce government expenditure on education; and (5) increase community involvement in education through more direct input in school decision-making and the pressure of market choice (Ball, 1998; Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012; Hursh, 2005; Spring, 2014).

Social Construction of Media

All media messages are socially constructed (Kellner & Share, 2005). Message construction involves decisions about what to include, exclude, or how to represent and interpret reality through media.

State-sponsored Curriculum

Media literacy is defined as an approach to literacy and a concurrent framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and participate with messages in diverse forms, including print, video, and Internet technologies. Media literacy helps learners to understand the role of media in society and to develop the skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary to function as citizens in a democracy (Center for Media Literacy, n.d.a.). State-sponsored curriculum consists of the governmentally authorized, mandated, endorsed, and/or funded content, materials, and instruction (Bell & Stevenson, 2006) necessary to achieve media literacy mastery in grades K-12.

Dissertation Outline

The following chapters explore the role of neoliberal ideology in shaping media literacy education policy and curriculum discourses, and how the themes under study were reflected across countries and subjects. The discussion examines the concepts of neoliberalism, critical media literacy, and democratic education as relevant to education policy analysis. It specifically examines the influence of neoliberal ideologies in U.S. media literacy policy and state-endorsed curriculum in Australia, England, and the United States. Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on the historical and socio-political developments in neoliberal education reform, the role of democratic tenets in education, and the role of critical literacy and critical pedagogies in media education, along with its

relevance to sustaining participatory democracy. Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology, including the research design, data collection and analysis approaches, and study timeline. Chapter 4 delineates the findings of the study and Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the study findings.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study was conducted using a critical comparative lens as supported by theories of neoliberalism in education, critical discourse theory, and critical media and democratic education theories. Within the interpretative paradigm, modern education practice functions to legitimate ideology in two ways: (1) by classifying ideology as cognitive systems that clarify the goals and purposes of education, and (2) by operating as mechanisms of social control by which consensus is achieved regarding educational practice (Lamm, 1986). Critical and democratic education proposes to expose ideology and social control induced by new media communications technology (Kellner & Share, 2007b, 2008). Through CML learners analyze the forces that reproduce dominant ideology and engage with counter-hegemonic media alternatives (Kellner & Share, 2005, 2007b, 2008).

This review of literature examines seminal as well as contemporary research that discusses democratic and critical media education within the context of neoliberal education reform and the subsequent impact on school curriculum. The neoliberal argument for media and other literacy policies is often that these aims will result in more efficiently operated schools, improved education, and provide learners with the requisite skills to function in a technologized, global, 21st century workforce (Ball, 1998; Spring, 2014). However, current media literacy education efforts fall short of the democratic ideal for critical educational praxis (Druick, 2016; Wallis & Buckingham, 2016). The

supporting studies presented as part of this review are relevant to the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent is democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in educational standards of the national and state curricula of Victoria, Australia; England; and Florida, the United States?
- RQA: How are these representations different across English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/literacy standards, within each country?
- RQB: How are educational standards different across countries?

Neoliberal Ideology

Ideology saturates our consciousness in such a way that it defines our common-sense beliefs (Apple, 2014). Eagleton (1991) noted that ideology accomplishes this through (a) excluding rival forms of thought, (b) legitimizing neoliberal structure and outcomes, and (c) obfuscating the impacts of neoliberalism. Marketization, the role of the state, and the definition of the individual are the overarching themes of neoliberal thought: (a) marketization involves a self-regulating market as a means of social, economic, and cultural organization and evaluation; (b) decreased role of the state in social welfare and increased state role in facilitating the free operation of the markets; and (c) the individual defined as *homo oeconomicus* or a rational economic actor (Eagleton, 1991; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Patrick, 2013; D. B. Saunders, 2010).

Ideology underlies political institutions and policy choices and so defines the parameters of interaction within social networks and markets (Cantoni, Chen, Yang, Yuchtman, & Zang, 2015). Hakala, Uusikyla, and Jarvinen (2015) indicated that

neoliberal influence in educational systems in Europe and the Americas began around the 1970s after the international oil crisis. The neoliberal virtues of efficiency and promoting efficient markets, results orientation, and competitiveness thus became the mainstay of education in both these regions. However, the “age of neoliberalism” emerged definitively in the 1990s and 2000s (Keating et al., 2013, p. 255). Though neoliberal rationality is considered a failed state, or is at least being challenged in some circles (Patrick, 2013), it no less continues to permeate educational reform discourses in the United States, England, and Australia.

Neoliberal ideology acts as state apparatus through imposing its values on systems of education. Several studies have examined the ability of educational curricula to shape individual beliefs, preferences, and political ideology through public schooling: Prussian and French liberalism/conservatism (E. Weber, 1976), American social capitalism (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1993; Lipset, 1959), and communist and socialist education (Lott, 1999). A more recent study conducted with university undergraduate students in China by Cantoni et al. (2015) further confirmed that school curricula shapes students’ political attitudes and beliefs in modern political states.

Within the neoliberal state, education as a public institution for collective social good are reconstituted as part of the market – with products and services (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Educational systems, therefore, promote neoliberal aims by directing students to develop market skills and competences (Apple, 2001; Hursh, 2005). The key ideological denominator in the neoliberal system, therefore, regards the purpose of educational policy as being to promote economic productivity. Within a system of

productivity, the individual is the basis of competitive development within both organizational and national economies (Hakala et al., 2015). According to Cribb and Gewirtz (2013), neoliberalism has “taken away the joy of learning, the creativity of teaching and the formation of strong public intellectuals” (as cited in Patrick, 2013, p. 3). The ensuing discussion of neoliberalism in education explores national governance and various aspects of curriculum discourses that currently have implications for educational practice in the three countries under study: Australia, England, and the United States.

Changes in the Structural Role of the Political Establishment

Dubbed a democratic socialist agenda, reforms in education in the United States, England, and Australia are often predicated on the notion of a connection between education, poverty, and economic growth (Hursh, 2005; Spring, 2014). This despite the fact that there is yet to be any empirical evidence (in either the Australian or U.S. contexts) that attests to the notion that educational reforms result in reduced poverty, income inequalities, or will position citizens to compete within a global economic system (Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014). While there is some evidence to prove that U.S. families headed by persons with more than eight years of education experience lower incidences of poverty, the evidence that ties specific reform moves to lower incidences of poverty is not forthcoming (Spring, 2014).

According to Keating et al. (2013), policy is the product of ideologies, political power and processes, and institutional structures and processes. The policy processes within local and domestic education continue to include growing consideration for international educational standards and norms (Mundy, 2009). As such, the education

reform movements over the past 40 years have been very similar in Australia, England, and the United States (Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012).

The national and international policy issues often faced by developed nations seeking to enact reform involve redefining the structural role of governments in education regarding the following: (1) public and private school funding allocation; (2) the roles and responsibilities of government in education; (3) achieving balance of autonomy, accountability, and choice; and (4) balancing centralization and decentralization in the governance of schools (Caldwell, 2011). According to several authors, reform thrusts have aimed toward standardization, privatization, less public control of education, and the move toward a market model of schooling. Underpinning these moves is increased governmental control through standardization of curriculum and assessment, accountability mechanisms, quality control, and funding regulations (Ball, 1998; Caldwell, 2011; Hursh, 2005; Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014). In all cases, the argument is that reform will result in more efficient, locally operated schools.

In tandem, the discourse of crisis in education emerged as a coincidence of national and international social and political issues (Keating et al., 2013). Several contextual factors intervene in the policy process, of which crises are the most visible and marked in policy outcomes. Crises in education continue to shape government or federal investment in education in all three regions (Keating et al., 2013). Crises in public education are often articulated as teacher preparedness problems, curriculum deficiencies, and poor organization, as evidenced by declining rates of national achievement and international academic proficiency scores. Though these crises never originate in

education, a lack of educational productivity is usually attributed as the cause of economic productivity (Ramirez & Hyslop-Margison, 2015).

The rhetoric of knowledge economy and global competition for skills has as such catapulted education into a wider policymaking context of national and international economic crisis (Ball, 1998). Within the educational context, crises tend to require actions to support employment and employability (Ball, 1998; Hyslop-Margison, 2000; Keating et al., 2013), where education policies are intended to both achieve the material effects of schooling and produce support for those effects. Education policy reform thus becomes the panacea for crises within society, perpetuated, according to Stronach (1993) as “a form of reassurance as well as a rational response to economic problems” (as cited in Ball, 1998, p. 124). Within all three countries the introduction of curriculum that reduces knowledge to “relatively explicit” (Keating et al., 2013, p. 256) workplace competences, has occurred in a context of an open training market and competition for public funds to provide private education (Hursh, 2005).

Standards, Accountability, and Assessment

Transparency and accountability are national and international issues (Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012). The accountability policies in education in the United States, Australia, and England are invariably linked to curriculum content delivery and reporting of student achievement outcomes (Cummings, 2012). Along with international tests scores and performance, both the United States and Australia also developed and report national testing performance for comparable schools in local geographic regions, as well as across the country. In the United States, school funding is invariably and inequitably tied to school performance (Spring, 2014). In all three countries, existing accountability

legislation focuses on core content areas of reading, language arts, and mathematics or numeracy, with disparate focus on science education (Cummings, 2012).

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a semi-global technique of educational evaluation based in a post-industrial model of educational policy and represents national and transnational approaches to standardization and assessment in education in the Western world (Uljens, 2007). Declining PISA scores have been cited in various educational policy discourses across Australia (Australian Government, 2014), England, and the United States as grounds for educational reform (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

It is also interesting to note that despite these moves toward accountability, standardization, and increased funding, little progress has been made in Australia with regard to reforms for teacher education (Caldwell, 2011). Instead, efforts such as “Teach for America” and “Teach for Australia” are being used as a substitute for recruiting qualified persons to the teaching profession (Caldwell, 2009). Similarly, the U.S. education reforms marginalize teacher education by reducing funding to colleges of education and tying teacher pay to student test scores (National Education Association, [NEA], 2015).

School choice is a particularly nuanced subject with several contextual connections across funding, accountability, and market model or privatization issues. Within the U.S. context, the development of charter schools is highly encouraged and supported by current educational policy. Public schools that fail to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years must provide students with the option to transfer to schools “not in need of improvement” (Hursh, 2005, p. 7), including to a

charter institution. Within the English context of open enrollment, however, schools have the option to be selective among applicants and so may not choose students who will reflect poorly on the school's test results. Students with less favorable test results are often selected by lower performing schools. These low performing schools often experience issues with student retention and so may accept students who apply, regardless of their demonstrated academic potential (Hursh, 2005).

In the Australian context, while no comparable voucher system exists, all schools are funded by the government on a sliding scale based on the needs of the community (Caldwell, 2011). Parents, therefore, can afford to enroll their children in any school. This means that private or religious schools (equivalent to U.S. charters), which have the option to charge fees, are at a distinct advantage for providing educational services to students. Nonetheless, in all three contexts, students of low socio-economic status remain at a marked disadvantage for receiving quality public education due to inability to pay fees and inferior public school systems (Australia) or inability to pay fees for private or charter schools and/or school selectivity (England and the United States) (Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012; Hursh, 2005).

Unlike the United States, Australia rejects the voucher system, which provides government funding on a needs basis. Australia instead provides grants to individuals based on an open school choice system. Redefining the nature of public education in Australia has resulted in a new framework of accountability and government ownership of schools. According to Caldwell (2011), the decision makers in education assert that this new accountability framework should apply to all schools. In addition, schools should be built, owned, funded, and staffed by government. Despite international

evidence that the best-performing public school systems allow high levels of autonomy to individual schools regarding budgeting and staffing, all three countries have chosen to adopt measures that result in more rather than less government control of schools.

Similar to the United States, Australian funding schemes present many challenges, especially concerning the extent to which government funding is provided for private and independent or charter school choice (United States) at the neglect of public school funding and the loss of public school market share (Caldwell, 2011; Spring, 2014). Unlike the United States, all Australian private schools receive government funding based on a sliding scale that considers community characteristics, with some receiving almost all their funding from the government. As the private sector of education grows and is increasingly funded by government monies, public school growth and sustainability is jeopardized in both countries (Caldwell, 2011). Similar to U.S. charter schools, England has what are called academies or managed schools (Cummings, 2012).

Neoliberal Curriculum Discourses

Curriculum serves as an “internalization of the state’s ideology, in which schools prepare and direct students to the occupations necessary for the market economy (Akkaymak, 2015, p. 299). Several authors contend that the current neoliberal education agenda precludes the development of critical literacies (and, by extension, critical media literacies) due to its preoccupation with serving the economic ends of standardized testing and accountability (Clarke, 2015; Flores-Koulish & Deal, 2008; Giroux, 1993; Ngomba-Westbrook, 2013; Torres & Mercado, 2006). Several authors also noted the primary areas of neoliberal reform that relate to educational curricula concern the individual and the ends of neoliberal education, and the learner as commodified subject (Hyslop-Margison,

2000; Patrick, 2013). Neoliberal discourses specific to curriculum include the use of market rhetoric related to creativity, individuality and citizenship, enterprise and entrepreneurship, and the knowledge economy.

Creativity rhetoric. Hakala et al. (2015) noted that an attempt to follow global economic trends has resulted in a move toward creativity-related strategies as a major inclusion in curricula content in Finland. The study sought to explore whether an implemented education policy is based on democratic participation versus neoliberal education policy masked as democracy. A 37 question Likert-scale survey was used to explore the attitudes of art representatives (writers, visual artists, musicians), university educated academic engineers, and elementary school teachers toward the concept of creativity. Two distinctive positions emerged from the respective groups: (1) creativity as the basis for (art) work and integral to “balanced health development and welfare,” and (2) “creativity as indispensable to productive innovation” (Hakala et al., 2015p. 254). Teacher professionals had a composite view of creativity, but one that focused on the overall educational environment being conducive to creativity rather than on specific skills such as problem solving or creative thinking (Hakala et al., 2015).

The authors noted that creativity rhetoric, which morphed into innovation rhetoric, was directed by the political establishment and inspired new hopes and demands regarding school performance and practice. Hakala et al. (2015) also noted that the most pivotal development within the Finnish context involved the incorporation of creative strategy into cultural policy programming in 2003. This creative strategy was borrowed from and justified by national and international developments, particularly in the area of Finnish technological success via Nokia. Innovation, which is the result of creative

thinking, was regarded as indispensable to economic growth based on successes in the West as well as in countries such as India, South Korea, and China in the early 21st century (Hakala et al., 2015). Creative rhetoric in educational curricula was primarily infused in Finnish elementary curricula. A second stage of the Finnish creativity strategy was closely aligned with competitiveness discourses and associated with national prosperity, which depend on the quality of teaching, research and development (Hakala et al., 2015). According to the Government of Finland, Ministry of Education and Culture (2009), “a broad innovation friendly learning environment” is necessary to sustain these efforts (as cited in Hakala et al., 2015, p. 253).

The final curriculum framework that was accepted by the Finnish government in 2012 indicated that there should be an increase in the number of hours devoted to promoting art and practical subjects. The authors defined creativity as “an aspect of mental aptitude of endowment” that involves “the ability to identify or recognize new contextual perspectives...to create and develop unique or uncommon ideas, new perspectives and ways to do things” (Hakala et al., 2015, pp. 254-255). Within the Finnish framework, techno-economic terminology and dialogue reinforce the main attributes of neoliberal education policy:

to produce competence equipped, innovative, enterprising workers ... highlight issues that promote and strengthen competitiveness ... [education as a] pillar of international competitiveness ... education as a tool or mechanism for efficient economic development ... or as an antidote for sluggish economic performance. (Hakala et al., 2015, p. 260)

Individuality and citizenship. The Hayekian philosophical base of neoliberalism gives primacy to the individual autonomy and “the need for resistance of all restraints apart from the protection of property and life...” (Keating et al., 2013, pp. 255-256). Patrick (2013) suggested that the aims of education within the United Kingdom has been reshaped to suit the individual and the economy. Akkaymak’s (2015) content analysis of Turkish social studies textbooks for fourth and fifth grade, pre-and post-neoliberal reform, revealed that the concept of citizenship shifted post reform. Notably, pre-reform texts prioritize the well-being of society over that of the individual, whereas post-reform textbooks focus on society’s appreciation of successful individuals. This study corroborated what Giroux (2008) cited as the shift from democratic values regarding collective responsibility to individual self-interest and competition for material gain. Akkaymak’s (2015) study also observed that pre-reform textbooks define citizenship in terms of the responsibilities of the state and the citizen. State responsibilities include national security and wealth creation, whereas citizens are to comply with laws and regulations, return taxes, and exercise their freedom to vote.

Davies and Bansel (2007) noted that part of the redefinition of citizenship within the neoliberal context involves a reduction of social responsibility. Patrick (2013) added that neoliberalism presupposes an altered relationship between education and social justice in that neoliberal ideology asserts that a fair educational system is one that raises standards for all versus creating a level playing field. As such, children from disadvantaged backgrounds have no lesser advantage that those from privileged backgrounds. Rather, it is a lack of credentials, knowledge, and skills that prevents so-

called disadvantaged students from competing in a high-skilled, high-waged employment market.

In contrast, post-reform textbooks do not mention state responsibilities to citizens and offer broadened definitions of citizen responsibilities, including contributing to their school's budgets. Several authors have defined this as individualization of responsibility or transferring responsibility for social and personal welfare of schools to the individual (Akkaymak, 2015; Davies & Bansel, 2007; Patrick, 2013). Part of the responsibility involves the individual learner's obligation to take charge of their educational career. This includes being able to adapt to learning, job-seeking, and reskilling in an uncertain (Patrick, 2013) and increasingly competitive job market. In sum, the citizen of the neoliberal state is autonomous and active, "with rights, duties, obligations and expectations - the citizen as active entrepreneur of the self" (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 252). As such, people have been redefined as "individual entrepreneurial actors across all dimensions of their lives, [and civil society is reduced] to a domain for exercising this entrepreneurship" (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 252).

Enterprise and entrepreneurship. Within Akkaymak's (2015) analysis of post-neoliberal-reform textbooks, students are engaged in ways aimed at leading them to think and operate like entrepreneurs, salespeople, and business persons. Similarly, Patrick's (2013) review of literature on U.K. curriculum studies revealed that these curricula fail to explore the deeper purposes of education; rather, neoliberal influences posit capacities and competences concerned with shaping entrepreneurial and economically responsible individuals. In the Turkish context, these skills include being able to anticipate the need for a product, as well as design, market, and sell that product. This is concomitant with

neoliberal economic rationales for creating market conditions via education, which involves producing entrepreneurial, enterprising, and competitive individuals (Akkaymak, 2015). The objective is that enterprising individuals have the skills necessary to make their nation state a viable global competitor in an increasingly neoliberal world.

While students are encouraged to produce and consume in post pre-and post-reform Turkish textbooks, Akkaymak (2015) observed that post-reform texts contain more direct “examples directing students to actively produce, consume, and sell” (p. 296) and thus earn money. The primary purpose of production is, therefore, for selling and earning money, and textbooks essentially engages students in ways that cause students to internalize economic relations habits. Also among these economic relations habits suggested in the text are advertising for profit and competition and mass production.

A clear relationship between advertising and making money is noted, with advertising noted as the means through which publishing a student magazine is made possible (Akkaymak, 2015). Competition, selling, and mass production are also features of post-neoliberal-reform textbooks. Competition is noted in the purpose of production being able to “make different and better” products than other students. According to Davies and Bansel (2007), “responsibilized, inspired, entrepreneurial and competitive individuals” (p. 252) cause the neoliberal state to flourish through these activities. In this context, freedom is equivalent to freedom from lack, achieved through self-improvement obtained via individual entrepreneurship.

Knowledge economy/worker. Materials developed by students as classwork or homework are regarded as commodities to be sold. The “commodification of students’

products shows us the changing relationship between students and their course materials, and exemplifies the preparation of students to the neoliberal economic rationality” (Akkaymak, 2015, p. 295). Wrapped up in the idea of competition and commodification is the idea of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship does not feature significantly in the Turkish textbook analysis. Nonetheless, the author noted that several post-reform text examples address entrepreneurship in the context of producing and selling a commodity (Akkaymak, 2015). In a more intellectual sense, knowledge production is geared toward commercial exploitation rather than for societal development (Patrick, 2013). Within the university context, for example, Patrick (2013) noted that neoliberal mechanisms compel public institutions to maximize their levels of productivity in order to remain financially viable by packaging knowledge, offering flexible scheduling through information communications technology, and producing more knowledge workers at a lower unit cost.

While the precise definition is highly contested (Davies & Bansel, 2007), the concept of knowledge economy speaks to the importance of “intellectual and symbolic goods in the economy” (Patrick, 2013, p. 1). Knowledge economy is tenet of particular import, as knowledge and information provide a means for exercising power in society (Akkaymak, 2015; Ball, 1998; Olssen & Peters, 2005). Knowledge is a type of social capital (Patrick, 2013) that forces countries to amend their educational systems to compete within a global neoliberal framework (Olssen & Peters, 2005). According to Patrick’s (2013) systematic qualitative review of literature, the concepts of knowledge economy and knowledge worker are regarded as the “ends” of the educational process, where the learner becomes economic capital and commodified self. Commodification is

implicitly and explicitly engendered through positioning the learner as a customer, responsible for “self-regulation” (Patrick, 2013, pp. 4-5). “When knowledge is seen as having different levels of economic value, and when that economic value becomes predominant, the complexities of defining the heuristic, epistemological, and ontological value of knowledge as a socially constructed phenomenon are lost” (Patrick, 2013, p. 4).

Hakala et al. (2015) found that, within the educational policy decision-making context, neoliberalism is often disguised as national democracy. In the Finnish context, national curriculum development was undertaken as a democratic consultancy project, with various players in the education sector given equal opportunity to comment on the policy development process. However, neoliberal education critics assert that this is precisely how the democratic process operates under market forces: while the citizens have an opportunity to participate in the process and their voices are, in a sense, heard (Ball, 1998), what is achieved is often pseudo consensus, as the results scarcely reflect the participants’ values (Kellner & Share, 2005).

Media Literacy

Within Europe, the media literacy tradition emerged from the 1930s Frankfurt Institute of Social Research and the cultural critique of popular culture and new media’s ability to induce ideology and social control (Kellner & Share, 2008). A more advanced understanding of the role of the audience as active meaning makers, in tandem with earlier concerns regarding ideology, resulted in an expansion of the discipline. The Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham advanced CML to include semiotics, feminism, multiculturalism, dialectical understandings of

political economy, textual analysis, and audience theory as frameworks within which media and popular culture can be analyzed (Kellner & Share, 2008).

Within the United States, early visionaries of media literacy education John Culkin and Marshall McLuhan made the imperative connections between film, media, language, and the arts, and the importance of teaching individuals to view the language of mass media as having a distinctive grammar of words and images (Center for Media Literacy, n.d.b). Even at the advent of the information technology age, when its nuances were yet fully understood, these progenitors effectively characterized the effects of an electronic environment and the importance of media studies.

The unnoticed fact of our present is the electronic environment created by the new communications media. It is as pervasive as the air we breathe (and some would add that it is just as polluted) yet its full importance eludes the judgments of common sense or content-oriented perception. The environments set up by different media are not just containers for people; they are processes which shape people. Such influence is deterministic only if it is ignored. There is no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening. (Center for Media Literacy, n.d.b)

Media education or media literacy is defined less as a “specific body of knowledge or set of skills, and more as a framework of conceptual understandings” (Kellner & Share, 2007b, p. 63. Brought about through technological advances and increases in mass media use, media literacy definitions coincide around five basic elements: (1) recognition of the construction of media and communication as a social process as opposed to accepting texts as isolated neutral or transparent conveyors of

information; (2) semiotic textual analysis that explores the languages, genres, codes, and conventions of text; (3) exploration of the role audiences play in negotiating meanings; (4) problematizing the “process of representation” (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 60) to uncover and engage issues of ideology, power and pleasure; and (5) examination of the production and institutions that motivate and structure the media industries as corporate profit-seeking businesses (Kamerer, 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007a, 2008; Schwarz, 2001).

On the world stage, the Grunewald Declaration of 1982 emphasized the need for the promotion of critical understanding of communication phenomena for citizens (UNESCO, 1982). In June and October of 2008, UNESCO convened international expert groups to develop media literacy curricula for teacher education. In 2010, roundtable discussions hosted by the Aspen Institute (AI) (2014) Communications and Society Program and the James L. Knight Foundation deliberated the release of the “Digital Media Literacy: A Plan of Action” by Renee Hobbs and the Knight Commission’s 15 recommendations for creating healthy communities. The discussion engaged several representatives from government, education, and other areas (AI, 2014; UNESCO, 2008).

International approaches to media literacy or media education are characterized by four interrelated discursive models of institutional practice. The social model (Buckingham, 2003; The New London Group, 1997), the competence or protectionist model (Hobbs, 1999; Kellner & Share, 2007a; Livingstone, Papaioannou, Perez, & Winjen, 2012), citizenship models based on Habermas (1993), and the creativity models (Berger & McDougall, 2012). Social models adopt a new literacies or multiliteracies framework and a view that different social groups relate to media differently. Whereas

social models view media literacy competencies as socially distributed (Livingstone et al., 2012), Hobbs (1998, 1999) noted that competence models seek to delineate media literacy according to ages and contexts based on normative definitions of the media literate person or society. Competency-based models are regarded as protectionist due to the propensity to focus on inoculating individuals from the harmful effects of media (Hobbs, 1999; Kellner & Share, 2007a). On the other hand, citizenship models focus on a participatory culture of engagement and employability (Stoddard, 2014).

Whereas critical media literacy proponents champion a participatory discourse (Kellner & Share, 2007b; Thevenin, 2012), in stark contrast is a technological safety focus that perpetuates the neoliberal hegemony (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). A participatory focus can be democratic or neoliberal, the latter focused on the assertion that media and technological competences are necessary for participation in the modern workforce (Kellner & Share, 2007a). In addition, McDougall and Livingstone (2014) noted that creativity models, though the least used in practice, remain the most contested area in media literacy policy and curriculum discourses.

While England and Australia have established media literacy as a subject(s) across several levels of elementary, secondary, and even higher education curricula (McDougal & Livingstone, 2014), the United States continues to lag behind with no official curriculum for media literacy at K-12 (Kubey, 2003; Yates, 2004). England and Australia have national policies for digital and media literacies in addition to specific policies that focus on e-safety (Australian Communications and Media Authority [ACMA], 2007; McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). The United States, however, does not have a national ML policy except for existing e-safety State policy in three states (Media

Literacy Now, 2015); but it does have media arts standards for grades K-8 only (State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education [SEADAE], 2017) and incorporates media literacy across the curriculum.

In addition, regulatory bodies assume responsible for media literacy as processes associated with both formal and informal schooling in England (Office of Communications [Ofcom] and the European Commission [EC]) and Australia (NetAlert and the Australian Communications and Media Authority [ACMA]). The United States, however, has no centralized regulatory body that oversees media literacy. ML education, therefore, occurs as the prerogative of state departments of education, or at the individual teacher level. In all three countries, ML policy is heavily influenced by international organizations such as UNESCO (AI, 2014).

Media Literacy in England

Several barriers persist in the English context that preclude the development of critical media literacies. Among these are operational as well as discursive or ideological barriers that are instituted by power-holding groups (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). The author noted that the current educational discourses being touted by politicians, elite universities, and media practitioners, demonizes media studies as lacking in epistemological credibility and vocational modality (Bennett & Kidd, 2017; Thornham & O'Sullivan, 2004). Several issues are encased in this discourse, including the exclusion of media studies as entrance criteria for leading U.K. universities, failure of media institutions to demonstrate the subject's value by employing media studies graduates, and the apolitical and structural repressive apparatus that prevents citizens from critiquing media (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). The recommendations for media literacy

improvement in the United Kingdom involve engaging in more focused evidence generating research on the relationships between media studies and media, digital, and information literacy. This evidence would help legitimize the subject as a channel for digital citizenship and as such provide arguments in support of formal policy development for media studies.

Media literacy curriculum in the United Kingdom currently focuses on a framework of cultural, creative, and critical learning and engenders all four elements that exist in international models. Media and film studies courses were established in school curriculum (Years 11 to 16 and 16 to 19) in the 1980s. The 1980s focus was in textual analysis and critical demystification of media power and production. The early 1990s saw more vocational forms of media education. However, a distinctively neoliberal turn in media literacy education was experienced during the period 1997-2011, due to New Labor government mandates and related Ofcom interventions at the European Union policy level (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). Notwithstanding, at the primary or pre-11 year-old level, media education continues to be determined by the local political context, and is largely driven by teacher interests and parental input in schools (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014).

According to a 2013 audit of media literacy practices in the United Kingdom, ...the confused relationship between media education, literacy as an established educational field, media/digital literacies, computing, e-safety and media studies as a formal curriculum subject requires some initial mapping as media education in the UK in 2013 is framed, and to a significant extent constrained by these

configurations of policy, discourse and curriculum. (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014, p. 4)

As such, though media literacy is an established subject in England at the secondary school, higher education, and vocational levels as an extra-curricular subject and as central to literacy curriculum at the primary grades, the intended benefits of the subject are not being materialized. According to McDougall and Livingstone (2014), persisting incoherence between curriculum content, assessment modes, and media literacy policy objectives continues to stymie the area. In addition to the issue of patchwork funding for teacher preparation, ML continues to be burdened with the responsibility for fixing access and engagement barriers, which are producer or regulation issues. The authors concluded that education reforms, scheduled to be passed in 2016, would further threaten media education curriculum gains (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014).

Within the U.K. curriculum and policy discourses and debates, media education, literacy (established educational field), media or digital literacies, computing, e-safety, and media studies (formal curriculum subject) are treated differently. Information education is therefore treated as a separate curriculum category in the United Kingdom and focuses on e-safety. Media studies has been recognized as a formal curricular subject (with recognized qualifications and assessments) and enjoys marginal funding support for teacher training and professional development (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). In addition, media studies continues to be optional curriculum subject at the General Secondary School Education (GSCE) and Advanced-level (A-level) levels.

Despite some attempts to mobilize the discussion on new literacy and e-safety, education was ignored in the subsequent legislation of the Communications Act, 2003

(2003) – which is the only media literacy featured in U.K. law (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). Based on the U.K. Communications Act of 2003, Section 11, Ofcom has the statutory duty of promoting and researching media literacy in the United Kingdom. By virtue of its research into the uses and attitudes of both youth and adult populations, Ofcom plays a pivotal role in shaping public policy regarding media literacy (The National Archives, 2010). Media literacy was relegated in this sense to regulatory activities within the Department for Culture, Media, and Sports (DCMS) rather than the Department for Education (DfE).

As such, despite a favorable governmental policy discourse, media studies continues to suffer from a lack of competent graduates to teach the subject and an associated lack of media literacy skills that match the theoretical and pedagogical ambitions of the European Commission. McDougall and Livingstone (2014) noted that this is due to elitism in U.K. education, which precludes government funding and endorsement of media studies as an academic discipline or vocational route into employment. According to Buckingham (2010), media literacy declined in policy rhetoric and implementation in tandem with the inception of Ofcom and its neoliberal agenda for promoting competences for responsible participation and recent reformulations of digital literacy, which are far removed from critical media education. Buckingham (2010) noted that

There is now an urgent need to sharpen our arguments, and to focus our energies.

There is a risk of media literacy being dispersed in a haze of digital technological rhetoric. There is a danger of it becoming far too vague and generalized and

poorly defined – a matter of good intentions and warm feelings but very little actually getting done. (p. 10)

Ofcom has no responsibility for education and so cannot intervene according to the intentions of European Union policy, which endorses direct government funding of media education initiatives (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). The focus of U.K. policy has, therefore, been reduced to strengthening access to technology and protecting students from the harmful media effects (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014).

Media Literacy in Australia

Media literacy is offered across Australian primary and secondary curricula in all states with English and arts curricula, with a focus on broadcast media in primary grades. Media studies is also offered as a stand-alone subject in late high school across several states (ACMA, 2007; O’Neill & Barnes, 2008). Outside of the traditional curriculum, media literacy is promoted by several groups that support media literacy teaching and learning with student and parent groups. Support for teaching is done via the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) professional organization. The ACMA (2007) noted, however, that specific support for digital media literacy teaching is scarce in the Australian context. Nonetheless, several nonprofit organizations such as Young Media Australia and the Australian Children’s Foundation support creating positive media education experiences for children.

On the other hand, studies of literacy policy and curriculum discourses in Australia (A. Luke, 1992, 2005) indicate that dominant practices are normally based in broader political educational ideas. Compared to the United States and the United Kingdom, Australia has a short history of norm-referenced, standardized achievement

testing (A. Luke, Woods, Land, Bahr, & McFarland, 2002). Nonetheless, the focus of U.K. and Australian media literacy policy has shifted from critical analysis and demystification of media to more instrumentalist, competency-based digital literacies (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014). In addition, teacher training for media studies continues to be a largely unfunded venture (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014).

The ACMA is the media regulator established in 2005 as a merger of the Australian Broadcasting Authority and the Australian Communications Authority (O'Neill & Barnes, 2008). NetAlert is the national Internet Safety Advisory Board and the sole federal body concerned with media literacy in Australia (ACMA, 2007). In contrast to the United Kingdom but similar to the United States, Australia's state departments of education are integrally involved in media literacy policy and curriculum implementation.

According to C. Luke (2001), media education's increasing acceptance in Australian schools has resulted in a shift in focus from critiquing media texts and media production to teaching skills and techniques that do not consider the political influences of media. Dehli (2009) noted

At a time when neoliberal reforms seek to reframe education in terms of standards, outcomes and skills, and when new information and digital technologies are transforming young people's media use, it seems that Luke's concerns were justified. In both policy and research texts, media education is now frequently described as a vehicle for developing 'critical thinking skills,' 'digital information skills,' or 'multi-modal' literacy. (p. 63)

Media Literacy in the United States

While media literacy reform is a national agenda issue in the United Kingdom and Australia, the United States has been slow to adopt policy to promote media literacy at the national level. Current national policy initiatives in the United States sideline teacher education (Kellner & Share, 2007a) by having no explicit mandates for media literacy teacher preparation (Flores-Koulish & Deal, 2008; Ngomba-Westbrook, 2013), dramatically shifting from a soft-skills curriculum (Rogow, 2011) and establishing a hyper-focus on technological access (Ribble, 2011) rather than on critical experiences with media. To date, only nine U.S. states have passed or introduced media literacy legislation (Media Literacy Now, 2015). This agenda is established in policy ideology and is a primary means of manufacturing consent (Lim, 2014) regarding media literacy curriculum.

Before the term media literacy was even coined, a seminal event in the history of the U.S. communications movement was defined by a move by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in the 1970s. This movement advocated a ban on advertising to children, based on research on two issues: health concerns regarding sugar and understandings of the persuasive intent of media (Media Education Foundation [MEC], 2008). In 1979, the push by corporate organizations (mainly advertisers and marketers) to counter this policy direction in the national Congress and safeguard their own bottom lines resulted in the removal of the FTC's authority to regulate advertising via the Federal Trade Commission Improvements Act of 1980 (MEC, 2008). This policy move essentially ushered in the "protectionist" era of media literacy education (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 63) and the ensuing fallout that occurred in the public policy realm.

Between 1963 and 1981, published reports linking television violence and aggressive behavior in children resulted in four projects by the United States Office of Education (USOE) aimed at preparing elementary and secondary educators to teach students critical viewing skills (CVS) for television media. CVS training was to be integrated into language arts and social studies classroom curricula, as well as in home and community learning. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) was established for teachers of students in grades K-5, as well as for parents and youth leaders. The CVS received federal funding in 1978 for developing formal curricula and training programs for school administrators and teacher trainers, community leaders, and public librarians to train students and parents in CVS (Yates, 2004).

It was through these and other efforts that curriculum and training design began taking shape around the consensus that successful CVS skills training must begin with teachers and television program producers, considered to be the future gatekeepers of media literacy education (Yates, 2004). The negative effects of media and the need for media literacy education was once again placed front and center as personal politics of Senator William Proxmire railroaded the funding initiative for CVS. Ronald Reagan's bid to abolish the USOE, augmented by unfavorable press and an economic recession, resulted in full termination of the CVS initiative by 1982 (Kamerer, 2013; Kubey, 1998; Yates, 2004). The CVS agenda was subsequently usurped by the digital literacy educational priority thrust, regarded as vocational or hard skills versus the soft skills of critical media literacy (Kamerer, 2013; Yates, 2004). As a result, media literacy policy has continued to meander in the U.S. educational policy discourse and has only recently

began to regain footing as more comprehensive definitions of media literacy have begun to emerge.

Though current Common Core State Standards (CCSS) at the K-12 level include educational benchmarks for competencies involving creating and interpreting various forms of media (Kellner & Share, 2005), support for the development of CML in teacher professionals remains largely unaddressed (Hobbs, Cabral, Ebrahimi, Yoon, & Al-Humaidan, 2011; Kellner & Share, 2005; Torres & Mercado, 2006). Also, despite these standards for digital and information competencies and the fact that most states incorporate media literacy in curriculum (Kubey, 1998), there is still no formal curriculum for media literacy.

This failure to tackle the development of critical media literacy for teachers via curriculum and policy initiatives (Kellner & Share, 2005, 2007b; Kubey, 1998; Torres & Mercado, 2006) is directly attributable to the diminutive rate of CML education across both teacher and student populations in the United States (Kellner & Share, 2005). Nonetheless, recent moves by advocacy organizations such as Media Literacy Now have had measurable success with introducing and passing legislation in six states across the United States. Legislative bills have been signed into law in Illinois, Utah, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Mexico, Michigan, and California (Media Literacy Now, 2015).

Nonetheless, current policy rhetoric in the several state legislations in the United States expresses a bent toward, technological safety and digital citizenship, including: Washington, Illinois, New Jersey, and Utah (Media Literacy Now, 2015). Nine elements of digital citizenship are currently being promoted in curriculum: access, commerce,

communication (information exchange), literacy (technology), etiquette, law, rights and responsibilities, health and wellness, and security (Ribble, 2011). Whereas some authors claim that digital citizenship encourages social inclusion, others suggest that there are numerous implications for defining media literacy within a digital citizenship approach, including a denial of such inclusiveness (Mossberger et al., 2008).

Media Literacy Pedagogy

A holistic approach to media literacy encompasses exploring both textual and multi-modal media production and consumption within a critical framework (Martens, 2010). Several authors recommend a critical approach to media literacy teaching and learning (Druick, 2016; Kellner & Share, 2007b; C. Luke, 2001; Martens, 2010). Kellner and Share (2008) proposed CML based in ideology critique, including analysis of media representations of race, class, gender, and sexuality, and textual analysis that explores issues of social context, control, resistance, and pleasure and promotes alternative media production. A distinctively political approach to media literacy regards audiences as active participants in making meaning of media (Kellner & Share, 2007a; Schwarz, 2001). In this sense, CML is purposefully geared toward democratic social change.

Media is influential in shaping and disseminating information, idea, and values and as such CML skills and experiences in multimedia and print literacies are necessary for a 21st century participatory democracy (Buckingham, 2010). Issues of ideology are useful for understanding media effects within social and historical contexts (Ferguson, 1998, 2004). Several obstacles preclude CML, including high-stakes testing and corporate involvement in public education. As such, Kellner and Share (2007a)

recommended a Deweyan reconceptualization of literacy and the role of education in society in developing and employing critical media education.

CML and Democratic Learning

Education is a mass medium of communication (Postman, 1985). Dewey (1916) purported that democratic education serves the societal purposes of renewal, social continuity, and communication for community consensus and necessitates deliberate action. Human beings must be able to transform the energies that act upon them in ensuring the preservation of the species; otherwise human identity is lost. This renewal for the purpose of social continuity, Dewey (1916) asserted, is sustained through transmission. Education is therefore the vehicle whereby the interests, skills, purposes, information, and practices of the mature or dominant in society are transmitted. How does this transmission occur? Through communication! Democracy demands community consensus and consensus demands communication (Dewey, 1916).

Barthes asserted that myth transforms history into nature (Postman, 1985) and “any social arrangement that remains vitally social, or vitally shared, is educative to those who participate in it” (Dewey, 1916, p. 7). Communication has the power to change the attitudes of both the recipient and the initiator (Postman, 1985). On this basis, one must necessarily consider the premise that media communication technology is mythologizing, (Postman, 1985), invariably alters society’s social arrangement, and is, therefore, educative. One must also reflect on the role of demythologizing media in sustaining democracy in light of Dewey’s (1916) assertion that routine close-mindedness causes communication to lose its educative power. If media communication technology is an ideology with unintended consequences that have resulted in dramatic negative changes

in our modes of conversation and literacy (Postman, 1985), then one must consider the democratic education tools necessary for mitigating its possible harmful effects. It is on this premise that I make the argument that critical media literacy achieves the demythologizing of media and as such is indispensable to democratic education in 21st century society.

Principles for Democratic Learning

In a study involving literary synthesis of media literacy policy initiatives (including 17 government funded pilot projects for media literacy arts integration) and critical observation of two after school programs, Kellner and Share (2007a) found that critical pedagogy and alternative media production have the power to empower learners to analyze the complex relationships in media, including its propensity to itself perpetuate or influence the mechanisms that perpetuate social injustice. The approaches to media literacy are regarded as “interpretive reference points” (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 62) from which to frame pedagogical concerns and strategies. The goal of CML is to inspire skills of media analysis that demystify media and impose critical thinking that challenges common sense assumptions of media and results in alternative media production.

The concept of democracy as a way of life wherein members are partners in community and communities make choices through processes involving all its members assumes that the members of this community are capable and desirous of having choices (Dewey, 1916; Levin, 1998). Dewey (1916) contended that maintaining a democratic way of life requires allowing people the opportunity to learn what that way of life means and how it may be lived. As such, literacy for democracy “acknowledges its role in the preparation of critical political subjects to be agents of locating themselves in history

while simultaneously being able to shape it” (Giroux, 1993, p. 376). This was underscored by Beane and Apple (1995). Akin to Freire’s (1993) problem posing education, Giroux (1993) noted that critical literacy questions knowledge, effectively allowing the exploration of broader theoretical considerations, dissecting of limitations, and engagement in community visioning that is defined by its participants’ collective hopes.

Education thus becomes a political act, where difference must be defined within principles of emancipation: equality, justice, and freedom, rather than for supporting the interests of hegemonic culture (Freire, 1993; Giroux, 1993; hooks, 1994). Literacy for democracy engages knowledge and power in ways that interrogate existing dichotomies and reformulates meaning in ways that deny closed interpretations (Giroux, 1993).

Dewey (1916) and Freire (1993) heralded three essential tenets of education that define the role of education in fostering democratic citizenship: (1) ongoing search for information as imperative to fostering dialogue and debate; (2) participatory, community based learning and co-construction of knowledge, problem posing and decision making based on communal assent, and (3) critical praxis.

Learning by doing places a premium on collective engagement, which is a form of political and moral construction of literacy (A. Luke, 1992). Studies conducted by Hobbs et al. (2011) and Mills (2008) reviewed the effectiveness of critical pedagogies with elementary students in U.S. and Australian contexts, respectively. In both studies (case study and critical ethnography), students’ work samples were evaluated for their reasoning process. In addition, the Mills (2008) study examined the overall classroom discourse for representations of power. Hobbs et al. (2011) noted that media literacy

education has the potential to promote global understandings through active reasoning and critical thinking about mass media and popular culture. The authors also found that critical pedagogy has the potential to activate students' prior knowledge, engage students in researching the accuracy of visual stereotypes, employ film in developing emotional connectedness to the "Other," promote understandings of the constructed nature of film, and strengthen civic dialogue through creative expression (Hobbs et al., 2011). Mills's (2008) study supported these findings with a discussion of the influence of pedagogy, power, and classroom discourse on the ability of students to engage in designing multimodal texts. Both studies speak to providing greater levels of access to media literacies through critical pedagogies.

Giroux (2008) noted that the focus of knowledge and knowledge acquisition ought to be for the promotion of human freedom and social justice. The ongoing search for new information is central to democratic empowerment. Within the critical literacy framework, knowledge is unlimited and infinite and the value of inquiry is a consummate imperative for fostering dialogue and reflection (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1993; Giroux, 1993). The information search is, therefore, in and of itself a dialogic and decision-making process that requires the reader to critically analyze sources and dispositions covert or latent in various resources (Giroux, 1993). Both Freire (1993) and Dewey (1916) argued that developing personal information analysis skills is necessary for improving individual and collective futures. Democratic learning, therefore, must assume the qualities of a participatory, community-based, constructive learning environment where dialogue, dialectic, and decision-making are central operations, as it is in

community that dialogue becomes necessary and decision-making resides in personal and collective choice (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1993).

Within critical praxis, individuals read and write the word and the world (Freire, 1985). The premise of critical praxis proposes that there are power relationships inherent in how people read the world. People, therefore, read the world differently based on their social spaces and the relationships between themselves and others (Freire, 1985). These relationships and spaces require actions based on socially constructed ideas of values, ideologies, and experiences (Giroux, 1993). People, therefore, read the world ethically and perform actions in it based on how their values, ideologies, and experiences frame their definitions of difference or “otherness” (Giroux, 1993). Critical praxis ensures the functional skills necessary for literacy in concert with the skills necessary for recognizing, understanding, and questioning existing power dichotomies. Critical praxis is the process by which the dialogic evolves and resolves in a cycle of action, reflection, and re-creation of action (McLaren, 2002). The product of democratic education is an ever-evolving cycle of transformative action on the world (Freire, 1993). In tandem, reading the world in context requires active participation in it as it is unfolding, and problem posing has a natural output in problem solving, where learning is transformed into the practice of doing and living (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1985).

Part of this doing involves civic engagement through media. Part of the role of critical praxis involves providing the “cognitive and social scaffolding” (Martens & Hobbs, 2015, p. 120) that is needed to support civic engagement in the digital world. In a study with 400 high school students the authors found that students who participate in a media literacy program have higher levels of media knowledge and news, and stronger

advertising analysis skills. In addition, adolescents had greater intentions toward civic engagement based on increased media knowledge, news analysis skills, and an inclination to seek information (Martens & Hobbs, 2015).

Critical media literacy advances democracy through initiating critical dialogue about the representations of culture and politics in media. The learner is conscientized to media effects through reflection and critical examination of how media is consumed and produced. Democratic consciousness is therefore achieved in CML's ability to evaluate (1) assertions of the merits of equity, justice, and reciprocity against bureaucratic hierarchies; (2) assertions of the merits of justifiable true beliefs against power; and (3) assertions of the merits of individual autonomy and community solidarity against domination and coercion (Levin, 1998).

Curriculum Policy Analysis

The context of global and international and economic change that began in post-war 1960s resulted in changes in the expression of ideology in education. Economic rationalism and the influence of national economic objectives on public policy became the driving force behind many decisions concerning education reform (Ball, 1998; Hursh, 2005; Keating et al., 2013). Economic rationalism is based in human capital theory and asserts that the viability of contemporary economies is based in having an educated, skilled, and technically competent labor force (Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014). The notion that countries could stimulate economic growth by investing in increasing educational opportunities for its citizens became paramount during this era. According to economic rationalists such as Gary Becker, economic growth depends on knowledge, information, ideas, and the skills and the health of the workforce (Cummings, 2012).

Neoliberal discourses are often obscured within curriculum by what Apple (2001, 2006) and Maynard (2013) referred to as a saturating of consciousness that commandeers our common sense beliefs. There are three ways in which ideology accomplishes the task of becoming common sense: (1) through excluding rival or alternative ways of thinking, (2) through legitimizing particular structures and outcomes, and (3) through obfuscating the impacts that ideology have on everyday life (Eagleton, 1991). Within school curriculum, standardization; market rhetoric related to creativity, enterprise, and entrepreneurship; the redefinition of identity and citizenship in individualistic and commodified terms; and the classification of knowledge as empirical, economically profitable, and necessary for competition are some of the ways in which neoliberal ideology has permeated education reform and policy discourses across English-speaking and developed nations (Apple, 2001, 2016; Hursh, 2005; Hyslop-Margison, 2000).

“Education has, in most instances, been reshaped to become the arm of national economic policy, defined both as the problem (in failing to provide a multi-skilled flexible workforce) and the solution (by upgrading skills and creating a source of national export earnings)” (Blackmore, 2000, p. 134). In support of Blackmore’s argument, Druick (2016) identified several studies which indicate that, rather than critique capitalist aims, contemporary definitions of media literacy, including the nomenclature and dispositions associated with deeming media studies a literacy in the first place, have invariably furthered the neoliberal agenda in education. Druick noted that the neoliberal vision imposes the following: (1) a media reading skills approach to developing competencies for “creative economy” (p. 1134); (2) the commodification of community through a pervasive digital culture of corporate social media, multiplayer games, and

prosumer content production and consumption for profit; and (3) a discourse of citizenship that defines technology as the overriding pre-requisite of citizenship and technological exclusion as the most salient social issue.

In tandem, several scholars have called for the re-politicization of media literacy in efforts to reconstruct education (Kellner & Share, 2007a; Thevenin, 2012). It is on this premise that the ensuing discussion makes an evaluation of the findings across the three countries, bearing in mind that "... the notion that curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation are impartial must be dispelled ... For the policy analyst to assume an 'objective' stance, and to accept the 'neutrality' of schooling is to tacitly legitimate a system which perpetuates inequality" (Prunty, 1985, p. 135).

Curriculum as Policy

Ball (1994) noted that the four-message system of education comprises curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, and organization. This four-message system allows theorists and policy analysts to address the deficit in theory in the field (Looney, 2001) and move toward a more critical assessment of curriculum policy. Ball (1994) suggested that identifying the intersections between these systems of education - curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, and organization - allows for an analysis that accounts for the macro or system-level effects of policy.

Policy is at the intersection of the systems of education and "is an authoritative allocation of values" (Prunty, 1985, p. 136) and understandings regarding what counts as knowledge in schooling. Education policy is, therefore, a direct representation of the values being validated in education and points to the concepts of power and control in society (Prunty, 1985). On the other hand, Ball (1994) suggested that policies do not tell

what to do, but enter existing circumstances as to set particular goals or options, or to create new circumstances in which the range of options for deciding what to do are narrowed or changed.

Curriculum as policy asserts that discourses surrounding education often culminate within curriculum development and so represent the manifest values of the state regarding education. Looney (2001) noted that exploring curriculum from a policy perspective has a prerequisite of accepting that curriculum is policy in its most public form, which is both ideological, cultural selected, and represented, and emerges as a product of choice. Mansworth (2016) added that Lefebvre (1991) conceptualized the trialectic of conceived, perceived, and lived, and therefore socially produced spaces in education, wherein curriculum policy operates within the conceived space. The author noted, “curriculum as a policy document can be seen as a conceived space in which ideologies are enacted, boundaries are drawn out, and the teaching and learning that takes place in institutions envisioned” (Mansworth, 2016, p. 117). In tandem Looney (2001) noted that the discourse surrounding curriculum has been dominated by a discussion of procedures versus “what counts as legitimate knowledge” (p. 151). A policy studies approach to curriculum analysis curriculum therefore seeks to alleviate the dichotomy which Young (1998) categorized as curriculum as fact versus curriculum as practice (as cited in Looney, 2001).

Policy text as part of the policy process. In rejection of the linear view of policy implementation, the approach to curriculum as policy considers policy text itself as part of the policy process (Looney, 2001). To this end, Taylor et al. (1997) asserted that “policy involves the production of the text, the text itself, ongoing modifications to the

text and the processes of implementation into practice” (p. 25). Taylor et al. (1997) noted that the pursuit of the technical over the theoretical results in curriculum focused on rich descriptions without due consideration of the nature of the subject to be described, and is based on principles of a “neo-liberal consumer democracy” (as cited in Looney, 2001, p. 152). This, in turn, produces a hyper-focus on the (measurable) outcome of policy and little consideration of the social impact of the curriculum itself. Ball (1994) and Taylor et al. (1997) suggested that this false dichotomy may be overcome by a more unitary view of the text/discourse, process/product of curriculum as policy.

It is from this provenance of a need for a more theoretical underpinning of curriculum that the notion of curriculum as policy text emerges. According to Taylor (1997), “Policy texts represent the represent the outcome of political struggles over meaning” (p. 26). Codd (1988) stated:

... policy documents can be said to constitute the official discourse of the state ...
Thus, policies produced by and for the state are obvious instances in which language serves a political purpose, constructing specific meanings and signs that work to mask social conflict and foster commitment to the notion of universal public interest. In this way, policy documents produce real social effects through the production and maintenance of consent. (as cited in Taylor, 1997, p. 26)

Critical Policy Analysis

According to Merriam (2009), power dynamics are at the heart of critical research. Creswell (2013) added that critical researchers employ a dialogic process in using to interpret social action. Interpretative approaches to the analysis of public policy provide alternatives to methods that enact positivistic ontological and epistemological

inquiry (Yanow, 2007). Interpretative methods of research analysis find grounding in several philosophical and theoretical schools of thought, including hermeneutics, phenomenology, and literary theories. Both Yanow (2007) and A. Luke (2005) called for a hermeneutic social science perspective to policy research, based in interpretative philosophies. Interpretative policy analysis is therefore the substantive study of meaning specific to a policy issue expressed in policy documents, as well as the specific requirements for and development of the methods for the analysis (Yanow, 2007).

Critical policy analysis as a form of social inquiry has its genesis in the critical theories. A paradigm shift in educational policy analysis occurred around the 1970s (Prunty, 1985), just on the heels of major education reform movements in the United States and other countries, toward what Burrell and Morgan (1976) described as the “radical humanist” (p. 32) perspective. This change emerged from the critical tradition of the Frankfurt School (Institute for Social Research, Frankfurt, Germany) theorists, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, Horkheimer, Fromm, and so on (Giroux, 1983; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002).

The shift in thought was predicated on the critique of instrumental reason and scientific rationality bequeathed by the Enlightenment era and the Positivist paradigm. The Frankfurt School sought to expose the latent social relationships that were often obscured by reified appearances and so precluded equity and social justice. Marcuse (1941) posited that a more just society can only be achieved through allowing reason to demonstrate its power of critique and negativity. In this vein, the theorists argued for the development of a form of social inquiry that observed societal contradictions in its analysis of the distinction between “what is” and “what should be” (Giroux, 1983, p. 9).

Several authors support a post-structuralist, critical theory perspective on the policy process (Ball, 1998; Prunty, 1985; Sabatier, 2007; Weaver-Hightower, 2008). Sabatier's (2007) noted, however, that even contemporary theories continue to utilize rationalist, functionalist approaches developed by Lasswell (1951) and championed by Easton (1953) and Anderson (1979). Lasswell's (1951) model has been criticized by Prunty (1985) and others, who noted that rationalist models sought to "couch policy analysis in the guise of scientific precision" (Prunty, 1985 p. 133). Policy analysis frameworks such as those underscored by Lerner and Lasswell (1951) fail to account for the nuanced and complex contexts that influence policy decision-making and implementation across time (Prunty, 1985; Sabatier, 2007). A non-critical, traditional, and rationalist view of policy decision-making assumes value-neutrality and, in so doing, disregards issues of power and underestimates the realities of education as a highly contested and political (Weaver-Hightower, 2008).

Whereas the traditional view of policy asserts that policies work in the democratic interests of all concerned, critical theory orientations of policy analysis suggest that the policy making process is never value free (Apple, 2014; Ball, 1998; Weaver-Hightower, 2008) and serves the interests of the most powerful in society (Prunty, 1985). Kincheloe and McLaren (2002) asserted that critical research has the power to both challenge and disrupt the status quo. Rather than limit the work of analysts to a description of the status quo (Prunty, 1985), critical policy analysts explore issues of power, control, legitimacy, privilege, equity and social justice that are embedded within education policy (Ball, 1998).

Education policy is public policy and public policy is at best tenuous (Cohen, Moffitt, & Goldin, 2007; Datnow & Park, 2009). Analyzing the relationship between policy, research, and practice in educational policy remains a complex activity with respect to explaining macro and micro levels of planning and implementation (Lane & Hamann, 2003).

Weaver-Hightower (2008) asserted a critical post-structural view that considers policy in the following ways: (a) physical and graphic form as well as the textual content; (b) multi-dimensional, multi-stakeholder perspectives; (c) value-laden; (d) complex connections to other policies and institutions; (e) roundabout implementation; and (f) a preponderance of intended as well as unintended consequences. The author called for an ecological approach to policy analysis that includes conceptualizations of agencies and processes outside of a national context but that also include the national effects and the participation of local actors in the policy process. Nonetheless, Bowen (2009) noted that, within the hermeneutic interpretative paradigm, documents may be the only necessary data source.

Critical analysis of curriculum texts. Gramsci's (1996) conception of hegemony (as cited in Howarth, 2015) underscores the notion that domination and power in 21st century society is achieved through social-psychological means that seek to achieve popular consent to domination via cultural institutions such as school and media. Hegemony, then, is inseparable from ideology in that it is the attempts of the powerful to win the consent of the less powerful, which produces dominant or hegemonic ideology. Hegemonic ideology comprises the cultural forms, meanings, rituals, and representations that produce consent to the status quo (Howarth, 2015; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002).

Within the field of education, curriculum texts (including standards) help to define discursive practices by establishing, “a set of tacit rules that regulate what can and cannot be said; who can speak with the blessings of authority and who must listen; and whose social constructions are valid and whose are erroneous and unimportant” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 94).

The question for this era in social science research, for education, and for this study remains: To what extent do policy texts, such as curriculum standards, act as agents of bureaucratic social reproduction and hegemony, and do they hold promise of democratic possibility and resistance? Critical educators and researchers therefore challenge the notions put forward by Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis, and other Marxist philosophers that schools are mere capitalist agencies of social, economic, and cultural reproduction (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002).

As such, critical theorists champion the notion of human agency and the capacity for schools to become institutions of empowerment rather than subjugation (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). Giroux’s (1988) discourse of textual forms advocated a mode of critical textual analysis that exposes the ideology behind text, thus uncovering the “layers of meanings, contradictions and differences inscribed in the form and content of classroom materials” (p. 97). Yanow (2007) regarded the interpretative paradigm of policy analysis as eschewing the notion that the persons on behalf of whom policies are created are mere targets that lack agency. This represents a democratization of the policy analysis process itself, where the local knowledge and circumstances of those for whom the policy is designed are brought to bear on policy interpretations. Yanow (2007) noted:

To the extent that human artifacts, including public policies, are expressive of human meaning, and not just rational in a goal-oriented, instrumental way, we need an analytic approach that enables us to engage values and feelings (or sentiments), those very human, expressive qualities that are part and parcel of the policy problematics, along with a more cognitive, rational side of human life. (p. 117)

Ball (1998) noted that policies are both systems of values and symbolic systems of ways of legitimating, representing, or accounting for political decisions. Lamm (1986) posited that modern education practice functions as ideological legitimization in two ways: (1) “ideologies are cognitive systems that clarify the aims and essence of education” (p. 2), and (2) ideologies are mechanisms of social control by which consensus is achieved regarding educational practice and societal renewal. Ideology as cognitive systems allows human beings to discover and invent the meaning of life (Fiala, 2007; Lamm, 1986) and so act as a means of social control through educational legitimization. Education is a both an historical and a political act (Freire, 1993; hooks, 1994; Giroux, 1993). Corey (2014) asserted that neoliberal ideology cannibalizes the democratic aims of education and asserts its position through policy and curriculum.

In the Foucauldian sense, societal power relations are expressed through language and practice (Foucault, 1980). Similarly, Bourdieu (2002) purported that language practices and interactions with texts become embodied forms of cultural capital with exchange value in certain social fields (A. Luke, 1997). This also supports Habermas’s (1998) claim that language is a means of domination and social power and becomes ideological when those inherent power relations are not articulated. Contextual power

relations are therefore intrinsic to the logic of discourse, as these power relations are what cause some articulations (of language) to be more likely than others to be adopted, or to be muted all together.

Critical Discourse Theory

As B. Bernstein (1996) noted, “every time a discourse moves there is space for ideology to play” (p. 24). Critical discourse analytical theory engages the several interpretative philosophies including hermeneutics and critical theory. Whereas neoliberal ideology cannibalizes the democratic aims of education and asserts its position through policy and curriculum (Corey, 2014), critical discourse theory supports democracy’s ongoing commitment to make these mechanisms transparent (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). As policy and media authors continue to use linguistic mechanisms as abstraction and metaphor to systematize language (Halliday & Mattheissen, 1999), critical discourse theory provides a framework within which the systematic relationships between text and the social and ideological functions of (education policy) discourse can be examined (Halliday, 1985).

Critical discourse analytical theory supports democracy from a radical perspective where there is ongoing commitment to liberty and social equality, as well as political voice for the marginalized (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Critical discourse analytical theory can be employed in the study of textual practice and language use as social and cultural practice (Fairclough, 1992), such as evidenced in educational policy and curriculum. Linguistic practices are relevant to policymaking and analysis due to the malleability of educational language concepts, how language changes over time (Taylor, 1997), and the

fact that that actual textual practices and interactions with texts become embodied forms of cultural capital with exchange value in particular social fields (A. Luke, 1997, 2005).

Critical discourse theories have the power to address the changes of educational language and concepts overtime (Taylor, 1997) and reveal “technologies of power” (A. Luke, 1992, p. 112). A. Luke (2005) noted in his policy auto-ethnography of Australian education policy decision-making processes, however, that state policy decision-making sometimes appears less systematic or indicative of a dominant ideology than anticipated. In his study, policy discourse represented more of an arbitrary display of truth, power, and knowledge or an “emotional economy of educational administration” (A. Luke, 2005, p. 664).

Comparative Analysis

One of the primary purposes of comparative inquiry is so that we can learn from good practice elsewhere (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). The proliferation of media communications technology has led to a broadening of the spectrum of educational transfer between countries and regions, with varying degrees of national and cross-national influences in the policy arena (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Though theorists such as Michael Sadler and Isaac Kandel contest the feasibility of policy borrowing, comparativists agree that comparative educational inquiry must be based on an analysis of the social and political ideals that school reflects (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014).

It is in this vein that Ball (1998) noted that understanding education policy globally and comparatively requires examination of complex relationships between ideas, the dissemination of ideas, and the recontextualization of these ideas. According to B. Bernstein (1996), “Every time a discourse moves, there is space for ideology to play” (p.

24). Recontextualization takes place within and between both “official and pedagogic fields, the former “created and dominated by the state and the latter consisting of pedagogies in schools and colleges, and departments of education, specialized journals, [and] private research foundations” (B. Bernstein, 1996, p. 48). These fields are constituted differently in different societies. The new orthodoxies of education policy are grafted onto and realized within very different national and cultural contexts, and are affected, inflected, and detected by these varying official and pedagogic fields. According to Ball (1998):

National policy making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice. (p. 126)

Beyond the local context, comparative inquiry provides a means for exploring international influences on national policy decision-making (Lor, 2011; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Policy borrowing can only successfully take place when national practices are exposed and examined through systematic inquiry (Bray, Adamson, & Mason, 2007). Bereday’s (1964) model for comparative education provides a structure of comparative inquiry that is defined by a classic four-step process: (1) description, (2) interpretation, (3) juxtaposition, and (4) simultaneous comparison. This model has been

expanded by Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014) to incorporate six steps for comparative inquiry: (1) conceptualization or neutralization of research questions, (2) contextualization or description of issues against a local background, (3) isolation of differences or analysis of differences across the data, (4) explanation or development of hypotheses, (5) reconceptualization or contextualization of findings, and (6) application or generalizability of findings.

The first two steps of the comparative inquiry structure are concerned with establishing the basis of comparison for the objects of study. This involves providing rich descriptions of the comparative units (nations, regions, institutions, etc.). Interpretations based on cultural, historical, political, and economic contexts are an important first step to establishing the basis for comparison. As such, establishing what Nowak (1976) theorized as relational equivalence in selecting the objects of comparison is paramount to substantive inquiry.

Equivalences in Comparative Analysis

Vital to establishing a purposeful sample, relationally equivalent phenomena operate on four primary bases of comparison: cultural, contextual, structural, and functional equivalence (Nowak, 1976). Cultural equivalence is one of the more important aspects of establishing relational identities, and is denoted by parallels between social meanings and subjective definitions given to objects, actions, or social situations that can be perceived, understood, and evaluated in similar ways in different cultures (Nowak, 1976). For the purposes of educational inquiry, this means that the social and subjective definitions related to education and schooling are understood in similar, though not in identical, terms across cultures being compared. By extension, this would mean that not

only is education and schooling understood and described in similar way, but that they are also evaluated in a similar fashion.

To the extent that the objects of study (education and schooling, curriculum, and even policy decision-making processes) are similar in certain societies, the compared phenomena then may be considered culturally equivalent (Lor, 2011). Furthermore, when the societies compared are analogous with respect to certain of their characteristics, it becomes possible to distinguish between the various relations a social system and some of its components (Nowak, 1976). For example, comparing school systems across two nation states with comparable systems of governance and secondary grades would make it possible to compare achievement at different grade levels within each country and then cross-nationally between the two countries.

Contextual equivalence refers to the fact that elements within a system belong to some hierarchy of groupings (Nowak, 1976) or higher level aggregates that are classified as equivalent, such as school media centers in high schools (Lor, 2011). In this sense, all students in Grade nine in a school system are contextually equivalent, independent of the achievement of individual schools. In addition, three students from different schools may be considered contextually equivalent if they belong to corresponding school classes, for example, based on their average academic achievement. Contextual equivalence is, therefore, predicated on similarities in culture, based on features that are deemed important by the researcher (Nowak, 1976).

Functional equivalence has to do with the roles of certain individuals, processes, and objects play in social systems (Lor, 2011; Nowak, 1976; Raivola, 1986). Functional equivalence has to do with the objects playing the same role in the functioning of the

system being compared. For example, teachers play the same role across most countries and curriculum standards serve the purpose of guiding the development of curriculum and instruction across nation states and countries. By extension, American corporate librarians and French documentalists play the same role in the respective library information systems (Lor, 2011). Structural equivalence is determined based on whether objects occupy the same absolute or relative position within particular systems. The objects must be previously defined as similar with respect to select properties (Lor, 2011; Nowak, 1976).

Relational equivalence is important for achieving juxtaposition or establishing the terms of comparison (Bereday, 1964). Juxtaposing facilitates the isolation of differences or the basis on which the variances between the objects under study will be examined and further reconceptualized or contextualized as hypotheses or explanations for the observations of difference and similarities between the objects are developed (Bereday, 1964; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Bereday's (1964) comparative structure of inquiry concludes with a consideration of how findings may be generalized or what are the possible implications for such similarities and differences in a separate context (Bereday, 1964; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014).

Conclusion

The benefits of democratic learning and critical media literacy continue to be championed within educational discourses throughout Australia, England, and the United States. A review of curriculum and reform policies, however, suggests that curriculum often does not reflect the intentions of policy (Wallis & Buckingham, 2016). A critical comparative assessment of existing national and state curriculum standards is intended to

reveal the ideological mechanisms within policy that thwart the incorporation of democratic and critical literacies. Current research in media literacy pedagogy suggests that democratic education offers a participatory framework via which media literacy may assume both critical and democratic characteristics (Martens, 2010; Stoddard, 2014). However, discourse of neoliberal reform continues to hijack curriculum in many contexts (Druick, 2016; D. B. Saunders, 2010). Critics of curriculum in Australia, England, and the United States point to a reduction of soft skills (Rogow, 2011), critical experiences (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014), and a depoliticization of curriculum (Apple, 2014; Stoddard, 2014; Wallis & Buckingham, 2016).

Summary

“The development of mass media has changed the way culture operates” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002, p. 95) and popular culture (television, film, computers, music, etc.) has an increasingly pivotal role in how we interpret power and domination. With the development of mass media has emerged new forms of culture and culture domination and new epistemological requirements for interpreting culture and cultural domination based on constantly blurring distinctions between the real and the hyper-real, the actual and the simulated (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). Electronic messages proliferate local, national, international, and personal spaces, and their constituent signs and images act as a mechanism of control in contemporary societies (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002).

Beginning in the 1990s, national education systems were observed to be resembling each other more and more (Hakala et al., 2015). Unfortunately, this mirroring of educational systems also means that the traditional role of education as an agent of

social change is vanishing in tandem. Akkaymak (2015) suggested that counter-hegemonic discourse can create spaces in education that interrupt the neoliberal discourse. Rather, an educational system promoting social solidarity, critical thinking, and critical pedagogy should be the feature of democratic education systems. In tandem, curriculum development as a democratic exercise results in concepts gaining new angles and dimensions of educational content (Hakala et al., 2015).

Critical media literacy is a multidisciplinary approach evolving from fields involving critical inquiry and cultural studies (Kellner & Share, 2007b); it offers critiques of media and society, the critique of representation. Contemporary culture studies view audiences as “active constructors of reality” (Kellner & Share, 2007a, p. 63), rather than simply reflections of that reality. Freire (1993) compared this to a problem-posing approach to education that requires students to critically examine social and knowledge realities rather than being passive recipients or repositories of information. In concurrence with Dewey’s (1916) philosophy of democracy in education, the ability to critically question must be extended to all facets of social life. As such, ongoing critical interrogation of media communication technology is a fundamental goal of education in the modern age.

The need to provide a diverse group of learners with tools for active reflection and participation in transforming society is best fostered through media literacy, which employs a critical pedagogy. Critical media literacy makes media communication technology the object of ongoing study and reflection and helps the 21st century citizen navigate participation in democratic life. Democracy by nature is fluid and CML praxis becomes democratic education praxis as learners examine the role of media in society

and their individual lives through problem posing. Problem posing denotes engagement in critical informational understandings; decision-making achieved through communal assent; and engagement in a cycle of action, reflection, and re-action in efforts to transform individual and collective social realities.

Postman (1985) wrote in an era when technology and mass media were nascent, but his forebodings were as palpable then as they are today. In chorus with contemporary critical theorists such as Giroux, Kellner, Share, and others, Postman (1985) wittingly suggests that the solution to the media communication technology onslaught must be found in strategically redesigning how we interface with its products. As the mass communication medium of education invariably competes with mass media technology, critical media literacy seems the most plausible response to leveling the playing field for democracy.

The 21st century has ushered in an unprecedented proliferation of for-profit media communication technology conglomerates. These conglomerates are comprised of media agencies backed by powerful private financial institutions and other corporations, the government, and the Federal Communications Commission (regulating agency) (Torres & Mercado, 2006). A critical approach to media education is therefore an urgent imperative if democracy is to succeed in its bid to transform hegemonic cultural discourse. Torres and Mercado (2006) suggested that “Critical media literacy is founded on the legitimate role of media to serve the public’s right to be truly informed, and thereby serve democracy” (p. 260). Learners need to critically engage with media in order to develop a repertoire of strategies to understand its workings and sagaciously participate its use.

Authors such as Dewey (1916), Freire (1993), and Giroux (1993) equated the maintenance of democracy with the maintenance of human identity. Democratic education serves the societal purposes of renewal and social continuity and transmission (via communication) for community consensus. Democratic education therefore warrants deliberate action! Freire (1993) contended for deliberate action in stating the following:

Just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If humankind produce social reality (which, in the 'inversion of praxis,' turns back upon them and conditions them), then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for humanity. (p. 51)

Referred to as intellectual self-defense (Torres & Mercado, 2006), CML ensures meaningful 21st century democracy through an understanding of how media represents power and politics in contemporary life (Torres & Mercado, 2006). If the task to be more fully human may be achieved through democracy, then the tool for maintaining humanity is indubitably democratic education. It follows, then, that in contemporary media communication society, democratic education must involve a tool for developing critical understandings of media. Critical media literacy supplies the consummate response to the 21st century democratic imperative for social continuity and transformation.

In tandem, the goal of critical discourse theory is to emancipate language through creating a level transparency necessary for countering hegemonic discourse (A. Luke, 1997; Meyer, 2001). Part of the distinctive purview and benefits of the application of critical discourse theory to education policy analysis resides in its capacity to examine how policies are framed from economic, social, political, and cultural contexts, which shape policy language and content (Taylor, 1997). As such, critical discourse theory

enables the framing of inquiry and analysis of knowledge and identity construction across texts and (educational) institutions. A. Luke (1997) noted that:

... [critical discourse theory] has in this respect an emancipatory research interest as it seeks to make transparent the micro-technologies of power inscribed in the linguistic utterances that create and sustain the inequalities of power.

Transcending the boundaries of traditional analytical tools, we are thus able to understand: The centrality of language, text and discourse in the constitution of not just human subjectivity and social relations, but also social control and surveillance, the governance of polity and nation-state, and attendant modes of domination and marginalization. (p. 99)

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Neoliberal ideas in education policy can preclude critical competences experiences in curriculum and instruction (A. Luke, 1997). This study sought to provide a realistic picture of current media literacy content in Grades 7-12 curricula, specifically as evidenced in national and state civics or citizenship, English/English language arts, and media studies/literacy curricula (national and state) in the Australia, England, and the United States. The study attempted to comparatively analyze the degree to which critical and democratic literacies are present in educational standards, as well as examine how neoliberal ideology tenets present within these standards are framed differently across the three countries. All documents used in the analysis were openly-sourced via the state and national Departments of Education websites for the countries and states in question (See Appendix A for a complete list of countries, states, and curricular subjects analyzed.)

This study examined three research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent is democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in educational standards of the national and state curricula of Victoria, Australia; England; and Florida, the United States?
- RQA: How are these representations different across English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/literacy standards, within each country?
- RQB: How are educational standards different across countries?

This study sought to ascertain the authorial intentions of the national and state civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media studies/arts curriculum standards. Though policies are constantly reinterpreted and reconstituted as social actors interface with documents (Taylor, 1997), critical policy analysis offers a type of textual analysis, ideology critique, and deconstruction that highlights the constitutive practices texts use. This analysis was conducted using a transdisciplinary approach, championed by Lasswell (1951), who indicated that “the policy sciences of democracy (were) directed towards knowledge to improve the practice of democracy” (p. 15).

A transdisciplinary approach employs multi-theoretical and interdisciplinary frameworks to policy analysis to enable deeper and broader understandings of complex educational issues (Diem, Young, Welton, Mansfield, & Lee, 2014). Critical policy analysis, employing qualitative content procedures within a comparative inquiry framework, was used in this study.

Analytical Methods

The study was informed by an interpretative framework of theories and research methods that support critical inquiry and employed textual analysis of media literacy/democratic education policy. The findings were grounded in Theisen and Adams’s (1990) classification of comparative research (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014, p. 104) and organized according to Bereday’s (1964) structure of comparative inquiry. Both content and hermeneutic textual analysis approaches to policy analysis were employed by this study. Qualitative content analytic procedures were applied in managing the raw data, whereas comparative inquiry framed the critical review and presentation of the research findings. The content analytic procedures employed were based on

methodological insights from Krippendorff (2004, 2013), Neuendorf (2002), and Mayring (2000, 2014). These procedures were employed in organizing, coding, and tracking and measuring the data. Critical policy analysis was both the hermeneutic method and interpretative lens that framed the research discussion.

Interpretative Textual Analysis

Critical policy analysis employs methods from the interpretative research paradigm of textual analysis (Dash, 1993). Employing interpretative research approaches from the interpretative paradigm supports the potential to generate new understandings on the emerging concept (Crotty, 1996) of critical media/democratic education. An interpretative approach to this study involved Moustakas's (1994) requirements for the following:

1. A holistic focus on the research subject under study.
2. Research questions and problems that reflect the interest, involvement, and personal commitment of the researcher.
3. The use of qualitative designs and methodologies.
4. The search for underlying meanings rather than surface measurements or manifest explanations (p. 21).

The humanistic inherent literary focus of qualitative research of a distinctive interpretative order lent to the interpretation of talk and texts, including policy texts. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) noted that words, which are the most basic representations of talk and text (messages), describe and so help us understand the values, meanings, and processes that constitute real life.

Textual analysis was therefore applied to curriculum policy documents in a bid to make inferences about national education standards by what Clatworthy and Jones (2001) referred to as systematic identification of characteristics within the data. Holsti (1968) noted that textual analysis provides research techniques for objective, systematic identification of special characteristics within messages. This study utilized the research techniques described to identify manifest (Berelson, 1952) as well as subversive or latent content to establish a series of judgments according to specifically defined conditions and the objective criteria (Lasswell, Lerner, & Pool, 1952) that the study identified as necessary for critical media/democratic literacy. Kerlinger (1964) noted that textual analysis is a method of observation that asks questions of the communications people produce rather than observing people's behavior directly or surveying or interviewing them.

Both content analysis and hermeneutic procedures were employed in order to meet the criteria for holistic, rigorous, and systematic analysis (Holsti, 1969) and to develop understandings of how social order is produced and reproduced (Merkl-Davies & Brennan, 2011) via educational policy. Content analysis allowed for a systematic application of rules used to categorize the data, which enabled the researcher to summarize and compare the documents (Paisley, 1969).

Hermeneutics involves what Gallagher (1992) noted as a process of "building a complex series of bridges between reader and text, text and author, present and past, one society or social circumstance and another" (p. 5). One goal of hermeneutic interpretation is to identify the epistemological, sociological, cultural, and linguistic factors that condition the process of interpretation (Gallagher, 1992). In the context of this study,

hermeneutics defined the critical focus of the research investigation in exploring the ideological factors that frame and/or obscure particular critical media/democratic understandings in curriculum policy. The critical policy approach to textual analysis consists of hermeneutic methods of dialogic questioning. Based in the theories of the Frankfurt School, critical hermeneutics therefore involves uncovering false consciousness, discovering the ideological nature of our belief systems, promoting distortion free communication, and thereby accomplishing a liberating consensus (Gallagher, 1992, p. 11).

In addition to the rigor provided by the procedures employed in this study, the unobtrusive nature of textual analysis, cost-effectiveness, ease of access to the documents under study, and the potential for longitudinal studies of (curriculum policy) processes over time made this method advantageous (Babbie, 1998). This study relied on “non-quantitative (or non-statistical) modes of data collection and analysis about the nature of social or organizational reality and the production of knowledge” (Prasad & Prasad, 2002, p. 6). A process of reflection and interpretation was employed in subjectively deducing the constructs (Merkl-Davies & Brennan, 2011) concerned with the critical media/democratic literacy and neoliberal ideology in the national curriculum policies of Australia, England, and the United States.

Critical, Comparative Policy Analysis

Critical inquiry has been described as the process of assembling and assessing information, ideas, and assumptions from various perspectives, in efforts to arrive at well-thought analyses and understandings that lead to the generation of new ideas, new

applications, and questions for further inquiry (University of South Carolina, 2017).

Giroux (1983) noted:

The concept of critical theory refers to the nature of self-conscious critique and to the need to develop a discourse of social transformation and emancipation that does not cling dogmatically to its own doctrinal assumptions. In other words, critical theory refers to both a ‘school of thought’ and a process of critique. (p. 8)

A critical approach to policy analysis provided a framework of understandings for the study. As outlined in Chapter 2, these understandings emerged from critical theory orientations that assert that policy making is never value neutral and serves the interest of society’s most dominant groups (Apple, 2014; Ball, 1998; Prunty, 1985). As such, this study explored the concepts of legitimacy, social justice, and power as directly related to the relationship between democratic and critical media curriculum knowledges and neoliberal influences on education.

A comparative understanding of education policy necessitates an exploration of the relationship between ideas, idea dissemination, and idea recontextualization (Ball, 1998; B. Bernstein, 1996). Media and communications technology has led to increased educational transfer between countries and comparative inquiry provides an avenue via which international influences on national policy can be explored (Lor, 2011; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). This study employed Bereday’s (1964) model for comparative education to establish the basis and to delineate the steps of comparison for this study. Bases of comparison were established based on Nowak’s (1976) cultural, contextual, functional, and relational equivalences, outlined in Chapter 2, and applied later in this chapter.

Critical researchers use theory and dialogue to interpret social action (Creswell, 2013). Content analysis is a technique for analyzing textual information, including textbooks and curriculum (Bos & Tarnai, 1999; Neuendorf, 2002), which employs categorical analysis using a framework. Content analysis is suitable for examining the values, attitudes, and politics of society as expressed in educational materials (Krippendorff, 2004). Content analytical procedures provided a systematic way to organize, code, and apply weighting criteria to curriculum policy text content.

Documents were simultaneously coded and analyzed in three phases based on critical policy questions. The questions examined assumed beliefs and assumptions underpinning the curricular standards. This enabled a cycle of deconstruction and reconstruction, based in Bereday's (1964) structure of comparative inquiry, where the ideologies implicit in the texts were actively deconstructed and later re-conceptualized as grounded by the following iterative critical questioning: (1) Whose perspectives are represented and silenced? (2) What are the methods used to construct the logic of the text? (3) What are the likely effects of the text? This is central to the interpretative meaning making process, where a new layer of understanding was added at each subsequent iterative level of coding and category development process (Yanow, 2007).

In tandem, Bereday's (1964) structure of comparative inquiry, as adapted by Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014), was applied as follows: (1) conceptualization or neutralization of the research questions, (2) contextualization or description of the issues in their local contexts, (3) isolation or analysis of variables, (4) explanation or development of hypotheses, (5) reconceptualization or contextualization of findings, and (6) application or generalizability of findings. However, considering Kincheloe and

McLaren's (2002) premise that critical theory is multifarious, always advancing, and avoids specificity in order to allow for divergent theoretical views among theorists (p. 89), this study did not employ step six of Bereday's (1964) structure in seeking to generalize these findings. Rather, the presentation of the interpretative meanings garnered from the study follow Yanow's (2007) premise of a situation-specific, meaning-focused, and highly contextualized social science inquiry. Noting that hermeneutic interpretation is situated and located, Gardiner (1999) noted that, "The goal is not objective explanation or neutral description, but rather a sympathetic engagement with the . . . wider socio-cultural context within which these phenomena occur" (p. 63). As such, the research findings and implications were discussed from the standpoint of the specific contexts under study.

Units of Analysis

The study employed a content analytical approach wherein a unit of analysis for coding was a conceptual phrase. Using phrases in coding is useful for capturing broad-based concepts used within a particular sociolinguistic community (Carley, 1993). In keeping with Carley's (1993) methodological assertions, so-called irrelevant phrases, or phrases that did not fit within the critical media literacy/democratic education scheme, were not deleted but coded as "other" in phases I and II of the coding/analysis cycle, then later reexamined for thematic patterns within phase III. At the level of comparative analysis, the units of analysis were: (1) within country: national versus state and subject-to-subject, and (2) between countries: national to national comparison (subject-to-subject and overall picture of democratic and critical media literacy inclusion). Table 1 provides

an overview of the curricular standards analyzed. (See Appendix B for the document retrieval protocol.)

Table 1

Research Units of Analysis

Country	National	State	Grades/Levels
Australia		Victoria:	
	Civics and Citizenship	Civics and Citizenship	7-8, 9-10
	English	English	
	Media Arts	Media Arts	
England	Citizenship Studies	N/A	7-8, 9-10
	English		
	Media Studies		
United States		Florida:	
	Civics	Civics	7-8, 9-10, 11-12
United States	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	

Co-occurring codes. Krippendorff (2013) noted that qualitative researchers often use overlapping codes due to the fact that uniform unitization and such formal analyses as employed within quantitative content analysis are often irresponsive to the nature of the texts studied. It is important to capture and analyze overlapping codes within qualitative content analysis research. ATLAS.ti offered the capability to apply codes to overlapping data segments or multiple aspects in the data (Friese, 2017). This allowed for the analysis of code co-occurrence. Connections in the data were made evident through this process. Each sub-code used within the coding framework represented critical media and democratic understandings within different categorical contexts.

Using computer-aided coding, via ATLAS.ti, allowed for the utilization of recording units that do not need to be defined by physical boundaries. Krippendorff (1980) noted the recording unit is concerned with capturing broad ideas regarding, in this case, the understandings of critical media/democratic literacy in curriculum standards statements. As such, whereas overlapping data segments were sometimes organized into different sub-codes, per Krippendorff (1980), each code belonged to only one category. For example, Indicator A (or category) represented communication and reasoning skills, whereas Indicator B represented democratic knowledges and skills. Use of the built-in co-occurrence formula within ATLAS.ti allowed for an examination of overlaps between these two (and other categories), which revealed the theme “problem based and inquiry experiences.”

Sampling Plan

This study examined the public school English language arts and citizenship educational standards for Grades 7 through 12 in England, Australia and the United States. A purposive or relevance sampling technique that considered the population of texts relevant to this study was employed (Creswell, 2013; Krippendorff, 2013). All curricula were retrieved from nationally and state published open source as the officially authorized curriculum standards for 2016 and onwards. (See Appendix C for a full list of curricular sources.) Krippendorff (2013) noted that the texts in content analysis should answer the research questions fairly. In a bid to establish balance in inferences across curriculum, the standards for three subjects were examined: civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media studies/arts. Whereas civics and citizenship curricula speak directly to democratic education tenets, they, along with English/English

language arts and media arts/literacy, are primarily where media literacy tenets are incorporated in school curriculum (Heins & Cho, 2003). In addition, Australia and England currently have official media arts/media studies curricula. This study thought it pertinent to examine these curricula, even considering the non-existence of a comparable stand-alone subject at the high school level in the United States. The United States instead incorporates media and information literacies across several subjects of the curriculum.

In a bid to avoid the challenges associated with sampling online and digital sources, only textual data were analyzed; no visual images of formatting issues were considered in this analysis. In this instance, online versions of the countries' curricula represent the most current data sources available, and were sourced directly from the corresponding national and state governmental agency open-source platforms. Given the object of the study to neither generalize these findings nor establish a population measure, and given the bounded nature of official national and state standards, an assessment of sample size was deemed irrelevant. Table 2 provides an overview of the documents selected for this study.

Each country in the sample had several additional guidance documents that were not included in this analysis. Each document selected reflects the state or national requirements mandated by the governing education authority. Documents that either duplicated standards or were annotated or reports of the standards were not selected for the analysis. All documents included in the study met at least three of the four equivalency criteria assessed: cultural, contextual, structural, and functional equivalence.

Table 2

Documents Selected by Country and Subject

Country	Grade/ Standards	Subject	# of Documents National	# of Documents State	
England	KS3 & 4 Curricula	Citizenship Studies	1		
		English	2		
	KS4 / GSCE Assessment	Citizenship Studies	1	N/A	
		English	1		
		Media Studies	1		
			Total	6	0
United States	7-8 & 9-12 Curricula	Civics		3	
		English Language Arts	1	1	
		Civics		1	
	7-12 Assessment	English Language Arts			
		Civics	1	2	
			Total	3	8
Australia	7-8 & 9-10 Curricula	Civics and Citizenship	1	1	
		English	1	1	
		Media Arts	1	1	
	7-8 & 9-10 Assessment	Civics and Citizenship	1	1	
		English	1	1	
		Media Arts	1	1	
		Total	6	6	

Sampling Criteria

Nowak's (1976) relationally equivalent phenomena was used to assess the equivalences between the countries based on cultural, contextual, structural, and

functional equivalence. The concepts of media literacy and democratic education were determined to be equivalent in the countries chosen for inquiry, each being English-speaking, developed democratic countries, with government-funded public systems of secondary or high school education that subscribe to a common international system of assessment and to international academic exchange; each engage similar conceptual definitions of curriculum standards or curriculum policy and similar disciplinary or subject domains; and each has a designation of analogous secondary or high school years of enrollment.

The objects under examination, the curriculum standards for civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media studies/arts are culturally comparable in all countries with respect to the language of articulation as well as the subjective meanings ascribed to discipline-specific curriculum standards. Contextual equivalence was analyzed with respect to grade or achievement level standards under review. Secondary or high school standards for analogous learners, ages 12 through 18 and in grades 7 through 12, were examined across all the three countries.

Structural equivalence was analyzed for this study as the relative position of curriculum standards in the respective education systems, specific to who develops it, who interprets it, and who manages its implementation at both national (departments of education and training, assessment authorities, and professional boards or councils), state (state education and assessment authorities, boards, or departments) and local (local school administrations, district authorities in the case of the United States, and teachers) levels (Lor, 2011). In addition, the position of the subjects under examination are relatively similar across the countries with respect to place in the school curriculum –

mandatory, elective, and or/assessed subjects for secondary or high school years (up to the legal school leaving age).

In this instance, functional equivalence was denoted by the role of curriculum standards (as policy mandates) being the same across each of the countries; that is, to guide the development of curriculum and instruction for the respective subject areas. The standards examined were for the equivalent of beginning high school up to final high school grades (i.e. Grade 12 for the United States and England, and Level 10 for Australia). Table 3 identifies the curricular standards analyzed in this study, based on the equivalencies described previously.

Table 3

Curriculum Standards by Country, Age, and Year Groupings

Age	School	<u>Country</u>					
		<u>England</u>		<u>United States</u>		<u>Australia</u>	
		Year	Key Stage	School	Grade	School	Year / Level
12-13	Secondary School	8	KS3	Junior High	7	Secondary School	7
13-14	Secondary School	9	KS3	Junior High	8	Secondary School	8
14-15	GCSE	10	KS4	High School Freshman	9	Secondary School	9
15-16	GCSE	11	KS4	High School Sophomore	10	Secondary School	10
16-17	6 th Form College	n/a	A' Level	High School Junior	11	Senior Secondary	11
17-18	6 th Form College	n/a	A' Level	High School Senior	12	Senior Secondary	12

Note. Data for curriculum standards from Australian Government (n.d.), “Education System” (2012), and U.S. Department of Education (2008).

Demographics

The three countries studied were selected based on the criteria of being leaders in media literacy education (Fedorov, 2008; Hobbs, 1998; Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 1998; Martens, 2010). However, though the United States is a comparably developed nation and one of the early progenitors of media literacy (Yates, 2004), it has failed to make significant advancements in its media literacy program for public education (Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 1998, 2003; Martens, 2010; Yates, 2004). In addition, each of the three countries is among the top media producers in the world, with the United States being the top media exporter (Potter, 2004; PwC Global, 2017).

England. England is divided into nine regions: North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, South West, East, Greater London, and South East (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency [EACEA], 2010). The official school leaving age in England is 16 (since 1973). However, children must remain in school, apprenticeship, or engage in part-time voluntary work up to age 18. Education is entirely free up to the end of the secondary level or 18 years old (EACEA, 2010; “National curriculum,” 2014). Citizenship and English are mandatory subjects throughout all school attendance years (Burton & May, 2015). Media studies is offered as an elective at the secondary level (Department for Education [DfE], 2014a).

England’s government subscribes to a Parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The Department for Education (DfE) has national oversight of all matters relating to education and children’s services, and coordinates curriculum standards and testing via the Standards and Testing (STA) executive agency (“2010 to

2015,” 2015). The 152 Local Education Authorities (LEAs) - district and county councils - have oversight of public schools, including assessment, in England. Local schools have responsibility for implementing a national curriculum (Sandals & Bryant, 2014; DfE, 2014c).

Australia. Australia has six states and two territories: Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, and Western Australia (ACARA, n.d.c). Australia has mandatory curriculum for grades F (foundation) through 10. The school attendance age varies across territories from 5 to 17 years. Whereas individual states adopt their own curricula, all subscribe the national standards. Both English and civics and citizenship are mandated through all levels of public school attendance and conform to national curriculum standards (ACARA, n.d.c).

The Australian governance model is a combination of the U.K. parliamentary and U.S. federal government, or a Federal parliament (Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Office of Education, n.d.). The Federal government coordinates shared national educational policy framework (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2013) and national curriculum and assessments (ACARA, n.d.c). Similar to the United States, the state level governments within each of the territories are responsible for education (ACARA, n.d.c) and implement curriculum and testing based on agreements with the Federal government (OECD, 2013). States and local governments share an almost equal role in education policy decision making: 51% to 49%, respectively, with local schools making most of the decisions concerned with decisions the organization of instruction (OCED, 2013).

The United States. The United States comprises 51 states and five territories. The U.S. version of a national curriculum is the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). CCSS have been adopted in 42 states and four US territories (CCSS, 2017). The school leaving age varies across the states and ranges from 16 to 18 years (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). English language arts is offered through all levels of public school, and the national CCSS standards for the subject have been adopted in 42 states. Media literacy is incorporated across several subjects within the U.S. high school curriculum. Civics is a strand of the social studies curriculum and is a high school graduation requirement across every U.S. state; 37 states have an assessment requirement (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2016).

The United States operates under a Federal government, which primarily plays a funding role in education (U.S. Department of Education [DE], 2017). As such, education is chiefly a state and local responsibility. School curriculum and assessment is a state prerogative, whereas decisions about instruction happen on a local school district and school level. Unlike Australia, however, each U.S. state may opt for creating and regulating its own educational curricula. Thus, each U.S. state has different standards (“The role of federal,” 2017).

Data Selection

National English language arts standards were reviewed for each of the countries. Document selection took place over a one-month period. The curriculum documents were extrapolated from open sources, and are the official curriculum standards for the respective countries and states. A purposive sampling process ensured that documents included in the study met pre-defined sampling criteria outlined previously. Purposive

sampling in a non-probability sampling method used in qualitative research. This sampling technique facilitates the exploration and understanding of themes and research questions (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). A total of 29 English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/arts curriculum documents were analyzed as part of this study.

To account for the differences in curricula across national and state standards, the study also explored curricula from a comparable state territory in Australia and the United States. The civics and citizenship standards across the three countries are comparable to the U.S. civics and government strand of the social studies curriculum. However, in the United States, social studies is only required in 9 states and only 39 states mandate civics or American government (“Civics education,” 2012); 37 require demonstrating social studies proficiency via assessment (ECS, 2016). In addition, states and territories in Australia each have their own adaptation of the national curriculum standards for all subjects (ACARA, 2009). The U.S. national curriculum equivalent (the Common Core State Standards) is also adapted across each state (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2017). As such, individual state and/or territory curriculum standards from the states of Victoria, Australia, and Florida, United States, formed part of the analysis.

Australia. Victoria has 79 municipal districts and is the most ethnically diverse state in Australia, with the highest population of persons born outside of Australia. As of 2011, 26.2% of Victoria’s population was born overseas, most coming to Australia as migrants (Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2011). Victoria is also the second largest and fastest growing state in Australia, with just under six million residents (Australian

Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2016). Twenty-two percent of Victoria's population is between age 0 to 17 years (Victoria State Government, 2017a). Just about 23.1% of the population speaks a language other than English at home (Victorian Multicultural Commission, n.d.).

Students in Victoria are required to attend school between ages 5 and 17 years (ACARA, 2009). Australia has different curriculum standards for public or government versus independent or religious schools (South Australia Department for Education and Child Development [SADECD], 2016). The Australian national curriculum for English was first published in 2010 and implemented in February of 2011 (ACARA, n.d.c). Australia's national curriculum is implemented across all territories as mandated under the National Education Agreement (ACARA, 2011). Australia has adopted national media arts and offers this subject as an elective at the secondary or high school levels (ACARA, 2009). The state of Victoria, however, has its own curriculum that incorporates the Australian national standards (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority [VCAA], n.d.c).

England. Citizenship, English, and media studies standards were analyzed as part of this study. England mandates media arts education at key stage 4 and citizenship education at all key stages of the curriculum. Media studies is offered as an elective at key stage 4 and as part of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualification needed to pursue advanced studies in media. English is mandated at all key educational stages (Grades 7 to 11) as a core subject (DfE, 2013). National curriculum standards are mandated for citizenship and English at key stages 3 and 4 (ages 11 to 16). England is the most ethnically diverse country in the United Kingdom, with a foreign-

born population growth of 8% between 2011 and 2014 (The Migration Observatory, 2015). Per the Migration Observatory (2011), one in three persons living in Greater London was born abroad, and nearly all the United Kingdom's migrants live in the capital city of London.

The United States. The state of Florida is one of the more ethnically diverse states in the United States, with the population subdivided among several ethnic groups. The Florida population (as of April, 2015) is just under 19.9 million, distributed over 67 counties, with 20.8% residents being 0 to 17 years old (University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2015). Just over 24% of the population speak a language other than English at home. According to the Migration Policy Institute (2017), as of 2014, 20% of Florida's population is foreign born.

In Florida, the mandatory age for school attendance is 6 to 16 years (NCES, 2015). The State of Florida is one of the more progressive, being one of the first to incorporate media literacy into K-12 education statutory requirements. Of the 42 U.S. states that have adopted the CCSS, Florida is also one of the few that have statutory and curriculum requirements for social studies and civics education. Florida State statutes require that students graduating from high school have taken three middle grades or higher courses in social studies, beginning at Grade 6. At least one semester in civics education and state and federal government is required according to Chapter 1003, Section 4156 of the Florida K-20 Education Code's (2005) general requirements for middle grade promotion. Florida has its own adaptation of the CSSS for English and language arts (CPALMS, 2015).

Data Analysis

Data analysis took place across seven months. The ATLAS.ti8 qualitative data analysis software was used to code the data and assist with analytical memoing and frequency analysis. Data were analyzed based on the categorical indicators developed from literature as well as through the critical reading and reduction process noted previously. Through this process, the content was reduced to grammatically abbreviated expressions (Mayring, 2014). A full list of indicators for democratic education and critical media literacy was then used to prepare a code book. Subsequent to three iterative rounds of coding, frequency analysis examined findings across countries, across national and state data, and across different subject areas.

The literature review process formed part of the critical policy analysis process that supported Steps 1 and 2 of Bereday's (1964) structure of comparative inquiry. Initial steps in analysis therefore involved (1) neutralizing the research questions to be addressed, and (2) developing a description of the local background for each of the unique country contexts involved, prior to critical reading, data reduction, and code finalization process. Five of the six categorical variables used in the study were directly derived from research literature. Each indicator is represented in distinctive ways within educational standards.

Data Coding Indices and Categories

Krippendorff (2013) noted that content analysts define units based on five kinds of distinctions: physical, syntactical, categorical, propositional, and thematic. Categorical units of data collection were used in this study. "Categorical distinctions define units by their membership in a class or category – by their having something in common"

(Krippendorff, 2013, p. 106). Krippendorff (2013) also noted that categorical distinctions can be drawn from a theory adopted for an analysis. In this case, the study's theoretical framework informed the operational definitions of the syntactic (form) and semantic (meanings) of the data language categories or analytic terms that the coder used to categorize the data units. These definitions were supplemented by inductive examples gleaned from the data through the iterative coding process.

Phase I – Inductive/Deductive Coding Cycle

In keeping with Mayring (2014), apriori codes were developed based on indications from a review of literature. The material was then reduced to units of analysis via a critical reading of all documents. The individual units to be coded were then re-written in short descriptive phrases. In addition, conceptual phrases that were dubious or repetitive were coded as other to be re-evaluated at later stages of the iterative process (Mayring, 2014). This was done in preparation for the subsequent pilot analysis and three rounds of iterative coding and analysis.

Coding Framework

As recommended by Patton (2002), a coding framework was developed based on a deductive and inductive approaches to document analysis. Mayring (2000) noted that deductive categories are developed based on pre-determined criteria for identifying key words, based on the research questions and theory. This was followed by a deductive adaptation of democratic education tenets based in Hyslop-Margison and Graham's (2001) work, and critical media literacy core curriculum requirements expounded by Hobbs (1998), Stoddard (2014), Winter (2017), and Van der Linde (2010). A preliminary code book of categories and their operational definitions was developed following critical

close readings by the principal investigator. A total of five categories for democratic/critical media literacy emerged from the literature. The codes deduced from literature formed the basis for the preliminary and closed-critical reading phase of the study. These codes, categories, and definitions were subsequently inductively refined based on iterative category definition and a single coder reduction process (Hruschka et al., 2004; Mayring, 2000). There was a total of three iterative rounds of coding and three associated revisions of the coding schema. Table 4 offers a snapshot of the final list of indicators analyzed in the study. (See Appendix D for full list of final indicators definitions and coding schema.)

Table 4

Categorical Indicators and Sub-indicators Codes

Category	Source	Sub-indicator
A: Developing reasoning and communication skills	Brunner & Smith, 1994; Hobbs, 1998, 2010	6 codes, 1 inductive
B: Exploring general socio-cultural issues including youth-based concerns	Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; Gorley, 1997; Hobbs, Donnelly, Friesem, & Moen, 2013	5 codes
C: Developing attitudes toward democracy, citizenship and political participation	Carnes, 1996; Dewey, 1916; Guilfoile, Delander, & Kreck, 2016; Hall Jamieson, 2013	7 codes, 1 inductive
D: Role of media and communication policy and industry practices, and other social institutions	Hobbs, 1998; Van de Linde, 2010	4 codes, 2 inductive
E. Facilitating personal growth through media skills and competency development	Hobbs, 1998; Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Van de Linde, 2010	6 codes
F. Teacher role in facilitating the students' critical/ democratic experiences	Banks et al., 2001; Gay, 2013; Kohut, 2014; The League, n.d.	Inductive category 4 codes
G. "Other"		miscellaneous

Coding Procedures

A pilot test of the coding framework analyzed 8 of the 29 documents (27.6%). The pilot test was preceded by a general critical reading and involved a reframing of the coding frame, as well as the addition of new codes. The eight documents used in the pilot were coded per the established coding framework of deductive and inductive codes. The following documents were piloted: Australia – Victoria civics and citizenship levels 7-8 and levels 9-13; England - citizenship key stage 3, key stage 4, and GSCE citizenship assessment; United States – Florida civics 7-8 and 9-12, and Florida end-of-course assessment level descriptions. The pilot and all subsequent rounds of coding were completed using computer-aided software program, ATLAS.ti8.

Phase II – Simultaneous Coding and Data Analysis

Two subsequent rounds of coding followed, with simultaneous thematic analysis facilitated by analytical memoing. A transdisciplinary approach encompassing post-structuralist critical lens, a social constructivist epistemology, and a comparative structure or inquiry were employed in data analysis. Bereday's (1964) structure of comparative inquiry was employed in the following way: (1) established equivalencies between aspects of each curriculum across countries, states, and grade/age groupings (constants); (2) identified differences or contrasts across countries, states, and subject grouping indicators; and (3) established criteria for comparison based on emergent themes within the data in postulating critical explanations for the similarities and differences across the units of analysis. These steps constitute the third or the isolation phase of Bereday's (1964) model (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). The second of three rounds of iterative coding involved a final revision of indicator codes and categories.

Analytical memoing. Saldaña and Omasta (2018) described the analytic memo as extended researcher commentary about what they observe during the process of data gathering and analysis. Through the process of memoing, I registered inductive inferences as they emerged throughout the data coding and analysis process. I employed both manual and computer-assisted memoing as provided through the ATLAS.ti8 software. In addition, I employed Saldaña's (2015) prompts in focusing my initial analysis and composing reflections on each round of analysis regarding the following: (1) emergent patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions; (2) possible networks and processes among patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions; (3) emergent and existing theories related to the findings; (4) challenges with the study; (5) personal and ethical dilemmas concerning the study; (6) future direction for the study; (7) tentative answers to research questions; and (8) drafts for final reports for the study.

Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis of education policy is of practical value for understanding what is done and why in education systems outside of the United States. Through comparative inquiry, educators can learn from the experience of others in efforts to improve the process at home as well as in developing an explanation of what constitutes the education local system of education in the first place (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Comparative analysis involves using the same research tools to systematically investigate the manifestations of phenomena in more than one temporal or spatial sociocultural setting (Hantrais, 2008, p. 2).

There are four classifications of comparative research based on the purpose intended by inquiry (Theisen & Adams, 1990). For this study, the descriptive and exploratory domains were explicitly utilized in answering the research agenda.

The descriptive and exploratory domains of comparative analysis lent to a scrutinizing of the conditions and relationships presented by the phenomena of democratic and neoliberal ideologies in curriculum. A critical policy analysis generated rich, thick descriptions of the phenomena elaborated in texts. The exploratory phase of the study revealed several phenomena regarding the differences across country contexts that warrant further research.

Qualitative analysis. The language of text provides information regarding relationships between text and discourse, social level explanations of textual processes, as well as broader socio-political and historical contexts (Taylor, 1997). The language of curriculum is by far one of the strongest textual manifestation of education policy and A. Luke (2005) suggested that a hermeneutic social science perspective, is the best way to assess policy decision making processes in education, and by extension the manifestation of policy decisions via curriculum. While not the primary analytical mode of the study, the computer-aided capabilities of generating descriptive frequencies of categorical indices were advantageous.

Similar to A. Luke (2005), the Cantoni et al. (2015) study employed a comparative method of analysis to assess Chinese curriculum texts and government documents detailing the goals of reform. The study employed a national unit of analysis that compared the attitudes of two distinct student groups regarding two categories of curriculum (old and new), then evaluated those attitudes against the messages of reform

in government documents. Student results for this new survey were also compared to the findings in the Asian Barometer Survey, which measures these beliefs and attitudes in a broader sample of the older Chinese population (Cantoni et al., 2015).

While this study did not employ quantitative interpretations, it similarly employed descriptive frequencies to explore overarching findings and data themes. Each category was scored by counting aggregate frequencies (R. P. Weber, 1990). Frequency tests were done across country by category, curriculum subject, and state versus national comparisons of the standards. This, along with a critical policy review of the curricular contexts, informed a discussion of how the concepts [of democratic education/critical media literacy] are framed within the standards (Howarth, 2002).

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is twofold: (1) to delineate the results of this research study, and (2) to establish a precedent for the discussion of the results in the subsequent chapter. This study explored the democratic and critical literacies contained within curriculum standards across three countries in attempts to determine how each disseminates ideas about the value and place of these literacies. This study sought to examine curricula in the selected countries, as, though there is consensus in the field regarding the importance of critical and democratic literacies and practices in school curriculum, there is contention regarding the subject's definition (Wallis & Buckingham, 2013) and whether current programs of media literacy are adequate in scope (McDougall & Livingstone, 2014; Wallis & Buckingham, 2016).

The methodology undertaken is explicated, as it was employed in conducting the study, in Chapter 3. This chapter commences with an introduction, followed by a brief description of the national contexts of the countries under study, then outlines the results of the data analysis. The report of the data analysis findings conforms to the structure of comparative inquiry stages 1 through 3, in preparation to provide a discussion of these variables in Chapter 5 (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). A critical comparative analysis of curriculum standards in Australia, England, and the United States addressed the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent is democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in educational standards of the national and state curricula of Victoria, Australia; England; and Florida, the United States?
- RQA: How are these representations different across English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/literacy standards, within each country?
- RQB: How are educational standards different across countries?

The following presentation of findings compared each country's local context, then moved to provide a comparison of common equivalences, followed by an illustration of variabilities between countries. This was based on the relational equivalences and the associated critical comparative methodology outlined in Chapter 3.

Analytical Framework

The analytical framework for this study amalgamates the tenets of democratic education and the core principles of critical media literacy in assessing curriculum standards. The framework was based in critical media literacy theory (Brunner & Smith, 1994; Hobbs, 1998; Kellner & Share, 2007a; Van der Linde, 2010) and the tenets of democratic education (Dewey, 1916; Hyslop-Margison & Pinto, 2007). Five categories were developed apriori, with a sixth category added based on inferential findings, and as supported by literature. A total of 33 codes were analyzed. Table 5 lists categories that formed the final coding frame.

Table 5

Critical Media Literacy/Democratic Education Categories and Code (Annotated)

Category	Code
Reasoning and communication skills	1. Critically evaluate of media messages for credibility
	2. Media deconstruction
	3. Problem-based and critical inquiry experiences
	4. Responsible media production
	5. Media theories
	6. Self-reflection on experiences with media
	7. Use media as a tool of interpretation (<i>inductive</i>)
General socio-cultural issues and youth-based concerns	8. Media influence and effects
	9. Representation and the politics of identity
	10. Social justice, diversity, and inclusion
	11. Youth issues
	12. Materialism and the commodification of culture
Attitudes toward democracy, citizenship, and political participation	13. Civic participation skills and competencies
	14. Democratic knowledges
	15. Role of technology in communication
	16. Relationship between media and politics
	17. Challenge media paradigms
	18. Role and influence of global law, politics (<i>inductive</i>)
Role of media and communication policy and industry practices, and other social institutions	19. Media ownership and economics
	20. Media production techniques and industry practice
	21. Role of political and social institutions (<i>inductive</i>)
	22. Role of media and the free press (<i>inductive</i>)
Facilitating personal growth through media skills and competency	23. Media appreciation and creative personal expression
	24. Responsible media consumption
	25. Media consumption for pleasure
	26. Media production skills and competences
	27. Career skills development
	28. Outside of class/school literacies
Teacher role in facilitating the students' critical/democratic experiences (<i>inductive, including all codes</i>)	29. Holistic assessment and evaluation
	30. Teacher-led, culturally responsive curriculum
	31. High teacher expectation
	32. Holistic curricula educational development
Other	33. Other

Research Question 1

Bereday's (1964) structure of comparative inquiry lists a contextualization of the local issues in each country as the second step in the analysis process. This supports the goal of research question one, which established the nature of democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in curriculum standards of the state curricula of Victoria, and national curricula of Australia; national curricula of England; and state curricula of Florida and the United States national standards. In RQ1, the major findings for each country and state were analyzed separately to allow for comparison with England, which has only a national curriculum.

Australia/Victoria State

The civics and citizenship, English, and media literacy standards content and sequence for achievement for levels 7 - 8 and 9 - 10 were analyzed as part of this study. Analysis of the democratic and media literacy tenets embedded in select Australian standards revealed a significant portion of the standards content is concerned with improving reasoning and communication skills (31%) and improving attitudes toward democracy (22%). Sixteen percent of the standards are dedicated to dealing with socio-cultural issues, whereas 15% are concerned with facilitating personal growth through the development of media production and other skills and competences. The curriculum standards dedicate very little content to understanding the role of media and other social institutions in society (8%), and only 1% to its discussion of the teacher's role in facilitating students' critical and democratic experiences. Figure 2 illustrates a breakdown of these findings.

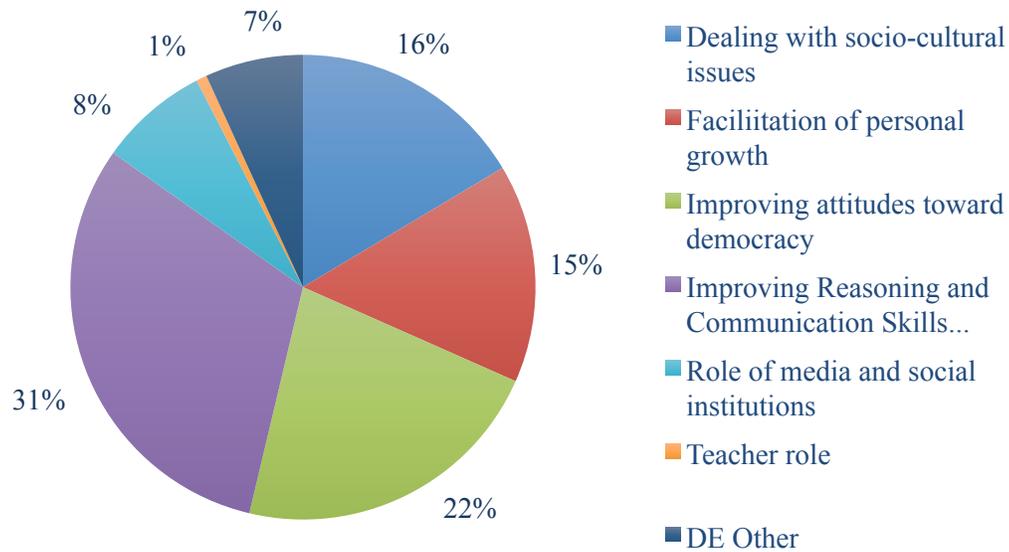


Figure 2. Observed occurrences of democratic/media literacies in Australian civics and citizenship, English, and media arts curricular standards; $N = 976$.

National versus state standards. The Victoria state curriculum standards for civics and citizenship, English, and media arts are a near mirror image of the national standards. As can be noted from Figure 3, Australia state and national standards dedicated the same relative amount of content to all indicators explored. Much of the standards content is dedicated to improving reasoning and communication skills at both levels (national, 33.46%; state 28.15%). The state of Victoria does dedicate almost equal amounts of content to improving attitudes toward democracy (22.07%) and dealing with socio-cultural issues (19.18%). The facilitation of personal growth through the development of media skills and competences enjoys a fair amount of coverage at both national and state levels, being 14.46% and 15.55%, respectively.

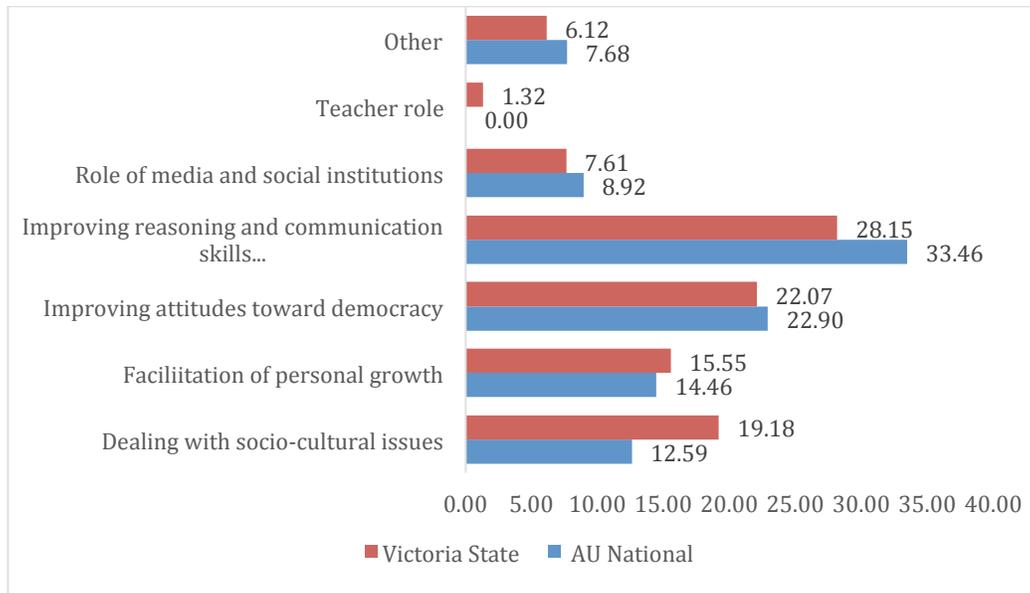


Figure 3. Observed breakdown of indicators at Australian national and Victoria state level. This chart represents average % content dedicated to each indicator across standards; $N = 365$ (national); $N = 611$ (state).

The national standards allocate a greater amount of their discussion to improving attitudes toward democracy (22.90%) over dealing with socio-cultural issues (12.59%). However, as will be seen in the discussion of the breakdown of standards content by subject area, much of the Australia's national standards regarding improving reasoning and communication skills is of a democratic nature.

The largest percentage difference in indicators between Australia national and Victoria state standards concerns dealing with socio-cultural issues, with Victoria dedicating just over 7% more of its discussion content to the area. A closer examination of these category codes reveals that the disparity lies in how much content is dedicated to the discussion of issues related to confronting race, class, and gender issues, such as stereotypes and identity, versus those explicit calls to promote intercultural awareness, such as Asian and indigenous identity, pluralism, and the promotion of a multi-faith society. Victoria state dedicates more of its discussion of curriculum standards to the

former than do the national documents. Table 6 provides a breakdown of the findings within the indicator codes for socio-cultural issues and youth concerns.

Table 6

Australia: Socio-cultural Issues and Youth Concerns – Disparate Sub-indicators by Percentage

Indicator	AU National	Victoria
Understand the role and influence of media at individual and societal levels	28.95	35.85
Confront race, class, gender, stereotypes, identity issues	32.46	18.87
Promote faith, social justice, intercultural awareness, diversity, and inclusion	36.83	45.25

The state also appears to dedicate minimal content to the discussion of the teacher’s role in facilitating the curriculum (1.32%), whereas there is no indication of this in the national standards.

England

Standards for the subjects of citizenship studies and English (content and sequence for key stages 3 and 4), and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) citizenship studies, English, and media studies were analyzed as part of this study. Within England’s curricula, the most content was dedicated to the discussion of tenets associated with improving attitudes toward democracy (33%) and improving reasoning and communications competences (25%). Eleven percent of the standards is dedicated to facilitating personal growth through the development of media production and other skills and competences, while 9% deals with socio-cultural and youth-based issues. A mere 6% (each) is dedicated to understanding the role of media and other social

institutions in society, and only 3% to the discussion of the teacher’s role in facilitating students’ democratic and critical learning experiences. Figure 4 illustrates a breakdown of these findings.

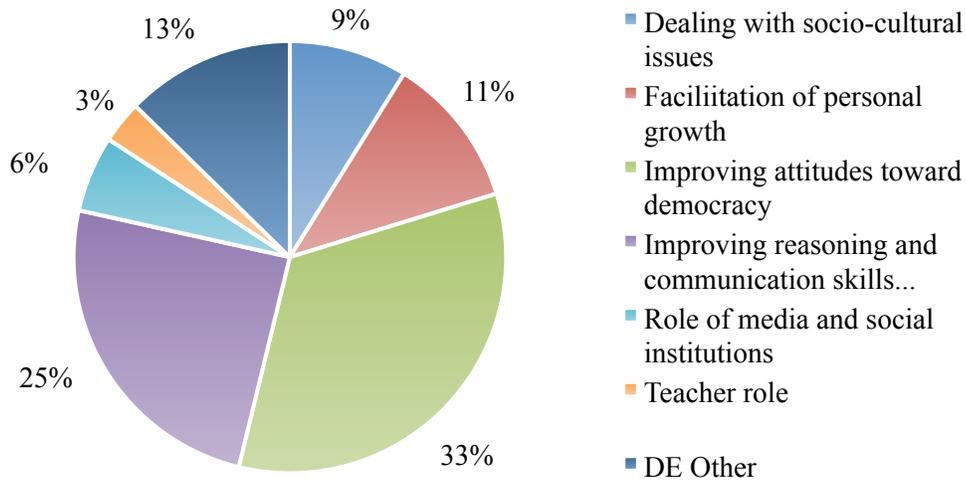


Figure 4. Observed occurrences of democratic/media literacies in England citizenship, English, and media studies curricular standards; $N = 159$.

The United States/Florida

The civics and English language arts content sequences and achievement standards for Grades 7 and 8 and 9 to 12 were analyzed in this study. The findings reveal that over half of the standards content is concerned with improving reasoning and communication skills (44%) and improving attitudes toward democracy (22%). Only 6% (each) of the content is dedicated to the development of media production and other competences for personal growth and addressing the teacher’s role in facilitating students’ critical and democratic experiences. The content also lacks discussion of general socio-cultural and youth-based issues (3%), and the role of media and other institutions in society (1%). Figure 5 illustrates a breakdown of these findings.

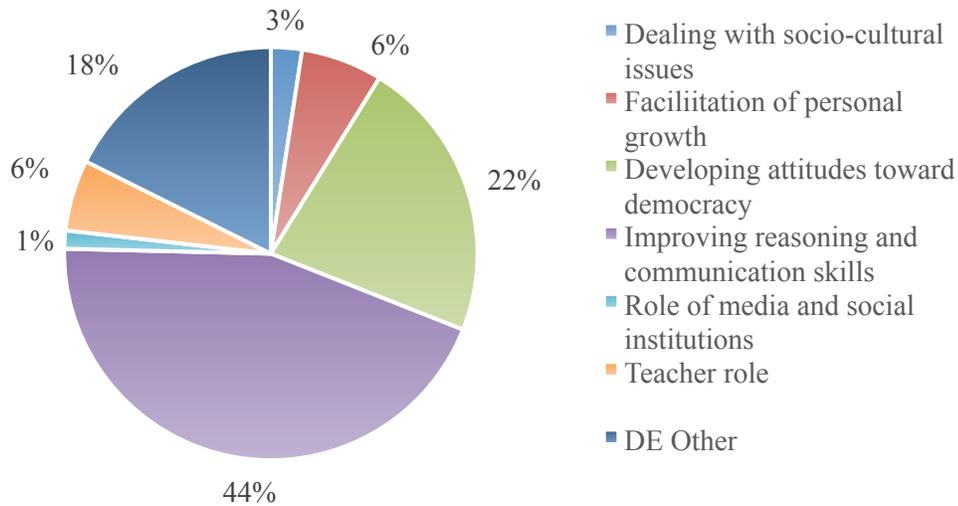


Figure 5. Observed occurrences of democratic/media literacies in United States civics and English language arts curricular standards; $N = 987$.

National versus state standards. Both the U.S. national and Florida state standards dedicate the major part of their discussion to improving reasoning and communication skills (national, 39.3%; state, 46.79%) and developing attitudes toward democracy (national, 28.6%; state, 19.13%). In tandem, both national and state standards leave little discussion content for the role of the teacher in facilitating students' critical and democratic experiences. However, the standards are disparate regarding the amount of time spent dealing with general socio-cultural youth-related issues, with the state dedicating less than 1%. Similarly, developing students' media and other competencies is also low, as is the role of media and other social institutions, which is accorded just over 1% for both state and national standards. Figure 6 provides an illustration of these findings.

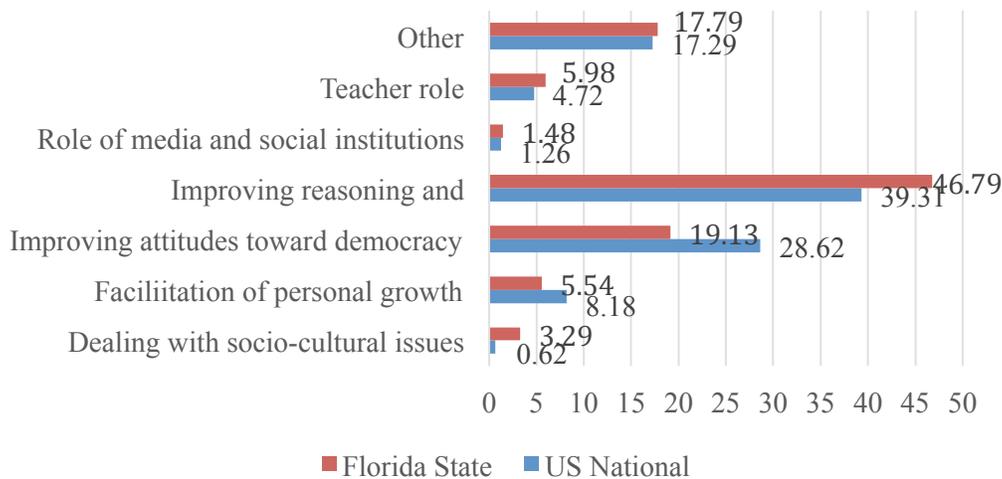


Figure 6. Observed breakdown of indicators at United States national and Florida state level. This chart represents average % content dedicated to each indicator across standards; $N = 337$ (national), $N = 650$ (state).

The state pays significantly more attention to developing reasoning and communication skills (46.79%) compared to developing attitudes toward democracy (19.13%), most of this occurring via the English language arts standards and based in inquiry and text-based interpretation and analysis. The national standards express greater balance between these two indicators, with the civics standards paying higher regard to developing attitudes toward democracy and the English language arts standards being more concerned with improving reasoning and communication skills.

The greatest disparity between the national and state standards concerns developing attitudes toward democracy, with the national standards dedicating just under 9.5% more content to this discussion. However, this is largely due to Florida state standards' comparatively greater focus on improving reasoning and communication competences (just under 5% more) and on dealing with general socio-cultural and youth-related issues (2.7% more). Closer examination of the indicators within the theme of

improving reasoning and communication competencies also reveals that the state’s focus is within the inquiry-based and media interpretation indicators (see Table 7).

Table 7

United States: Improving Reasoning and Communications Skills – Disparate Sub-indicators by Percentage

Indicator	U.S. National	Florida
Problem-based, critical inquiry experiences	35.81	47.01
Understand media bias and agenda setting	0	2.69
Understand the tools of media interpretation/evaluation	40.12	30.24

Research Question A

In continuation of the comparative framework, RQA dealt with a comparison of content across different subject area standards for each country.

Australia/Victoria

Across the curriculum subjects explored, each could be seen to dedicate a unique amount of content to each grouping of democratic/media literacy tenets examined. For example, the civics and citizenship curriculum standards are noted to have dedicated just under 60% of its content to developing attitudes toward democracy and another 20% to dealing with socio-cultural issues; English dedicated the larger share of its content to improving reasoning and communications skills (44.37%), whereas media arts dedicated almost equal amounts of content to improving reasoning and communication skills (31.73%) and facilitating personal growth through media competencies and skills development (29.5%). Except for within the media arts standards where the content approximates to just under 21%, developing understandings of the role of media holds little to no coverage in the Australian civics and citizenship and English curricula (See

Appendix E for the total number of units analyzed across subjects by indicator). Table 8 documents the subject scored for each indicator category.

Table 8

Breakdown of Australia Indicators by Subject by Percentage

Subject	Indicators*						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Other
Civics	17.19	20.83	57.81	2.08	0	1.04	1.04
English	44.37	15.92	3.61	0	16.14	0.85	19.11
Media Arts	31.73	12.5	4.8	20.83	29.5	0.32	0.32

Note. *A = Reasoning and communication skills
 B = Socio-cultural and youth-based issues
 C = Attitudes toward democracy
 D = Role of media and other social institutions
 E = Personal development via media and other competencies
 F = Teacher role in facilitating students' democratic/critical experiences

Also of note, whereas by numbers alone very little regard may have been paid to developing attitudes toward democracy in both English and media arts curricula, further exploration of the qualitative content of the document indicates that a democratic imperative is met in both subjects' approaches to improving reasoning and communication skills due to the inclusion of critical inquiry imperatives. This, along with possible explanations for the relegation of the role of media in civics and citizenship and English curricular standards, is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Indicator A - Improving reasoning and communications skills (N = 303).

Much of the focus of improving reasoning and communication skills across the three curricula standards honed in on the development of critical inquiry skills through critical questioning, collaborative problem-based inquiry, and analysis from multiple

viewpoints. Just over 31% of the overall content of the Australian standards analyzed is dedicated to these activities. Within this theme, media interpretation and deconstruction were other prominent indicators underscored. Most of this discussion was done within the subject of English and media arts. Findings across national and state standards are similar.

Civics and citizenship. Within the civics and citizenship standards, reasoning and communication skills development engaged democratic inquiry, with a significant number of references within this content relating to contemporary issues in democratic society. In the preamble of the Victoria civics and citizenship standards for example, it was noted that, “Students present points of view on Australian democracy and contemporary issues based on consideration of multiple viewpoints and evidence” (VCAA, n.d.a, p. 7). In addition, the standards require students to engage in questioning as a precursor to critical inquiry.

The national standards for civics and citizenship achievement note that, “When researching, students develop a range of questions and gather and analyze information from different sources to investigate Australia’s political and legal systems. They consider different points of view on civics and citizenship issues” (ACARA, 2015a, p. 1). Of special note, the Australian national standards for civics and citizenship explicitly allude to critical inquiry as a function of the standards in stating that students are expected to “critically analyze information and ideas from a range of sources in relation to civics and citizenship topics and issues... for relevance reliability and omission” (ACARA, 2015a, p. 1). This is stated for both levels 7-8 and 9-10 of the standards.

The national and state civics and citizenship standards dedicated disparate amounts of content to the discussion of improving reasoning and communication skills. Whereas just over one-quarter of the national standards are focused on this objective, only 8.51% of the state standards covered this area of focus. Nonetheless, within both the national and state standards, the primary focus was on developing critical analysis skills by engaging multiple viewpoints, collaborative inquiry, and active citizenship.

English. Within the English standards, students are engaged in critically questioning the reliability of sources of ideas and information and in using evidence to demonstrate “how events, situations and people can be represented from different viewpoints” (ACARA, n.d.c, p. 3). Within the state standards, students are also called to question the representation of stereotypes of people, cultures, and so on. Whereas most of the content spoke to developing critical inquiry skills, a significant portion of the English standards content also examined text production, persuasive strategies, and evaluating textual media.

Text creation is a major feature in the Australian English curriculum standards at both the national and state levels. The standards do not regard this as media creation or media production. As such, much of the text creation activity referred to in the standards is concerned with improving reasoning and communication skills by virtue of the focus on problem-solving, collaborative discussion, and the development and justification of arguments. For example, both the 9-10 national and state English achievement standards state that students “create a wide range of texts to articulate complex ideas. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, building on others’

ideas, solving problems, justifying opinions, and developing and expanding arguments” (VCAA, 2016, p. 42).

Reading is paired with viewing skills within the Victoria State English curriculum standards and involves critical analysis and reflection on a range of texts and media, including literary texts. The standards note that, “Reading involves active engagement with texts and the development of knowledge about the relationship between them and the contexts in which they are created” (VCAA, 2016, p. 5). The state English standards purport to develop in students the skills and dispositions required to engage in understanding and analyzing the philosophical, moral, political, and aesthetic bases of texts, including contemporary media. The preamble to the Victoria English standards state, “Reading and viewing involves students understanding, interpreting, critically analysing, reflecting upon, and enjoying written and visual, print and non-print texts... in a wide range of texts and media, including literary texts” (VCAA, 2016, p. 5).

Improving reasoning and communication competences are met with almost equal regard at the national and state levels, with this being the primary focus of both content. Just slightly higher at the national level (46.96% versus 42.76%), the national standards allocated comparable attention to the skills involved in problem-based/critical inquiry experiences and media or textual deconstruction. The national standards allocated greater focus to media and textual deconstruction of language strategies and how text structures construct meaning, whereas the state standards engaged a wider array of skills for media evaluation, production, and student reflection on their own media production and consumption. At levels 9-10 of the state standards for example, as part of the text creation portion of the literacy strand, students are required to “create sustained texts, including

texts that combine specific digital or media content, for imaginative, informative, or persuasive purposes that reflect upon challenging and complex issues” (VCAA, 2016, p. 39).

Media arts. According to the preamble of the Victoria state standards, media arts engages students in discovery, experimentation, and problem-solving, and the development of perception about visual images, sound, and text. Across both national and state standards, just under 32% of the media arts document content analyzed was dedicated to improving reasoning and communication skills, with explicit references to developing students’ “critical and creative thinking skills, Media Arts languages, [and] knowledge of Media Arts theories and practices” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 6). More emphasis is placed on improving critical inquiry skills in media at the Victoria state level compared to the national standards (33% versus 28%).

At the state level for levels 9-10, there is a particularly critical focus on media creation and analysis. The standards state, for example, that a key tenet of media arts education involves, “using critical theories when creating media art works, for example, analysing the social and ethical implications of a viral marketing campaign” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 16). As part of the critical inquiry stance, the production context is also a feature of critical investigations. Victoria students are expected to “develop their perceptual and conceptual understandings, critical reasoning and practical, skills through exploring the world, through the media arts” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 6) and to apply their knowledge of media arts in making critical judgments as both artists and audiences or producers and consumers.

As within the English standards, most of the focus was allocated to collaboration and the consideration of multiple viewpoints in media creation and critical interpretation. The national standards discuss media manipulation and the importance of exploring alternative points of view and identifying and evaluating socio-cultural beliefs. For example, levels 9-10 of the national standards require students to

analyse a range of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks, including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and international media artworks. (ACARA, n.d.a, p. 7)

Whereas both the national and state standards speak to enlisting critical theory in the interpretation and creation of media products, the national standards dedicate more content to the discussion of media production (20%), with most references to interpretation and analysis tied to some type of media production in the national standards.

Indicator C - Developing attitudes toward democracy (N = 215). The Australian curriculum standards dedicated 22.07% of its state and national discussion space to the issue of developing attitudes toward democracy, over 70% of which was within civics and citizenship. The overall findings for all indicators were almost equal at the state and national levels, except for the discussion surrounding the role of global law and policy, which was significantly greater at the state level.

Civics and citizenship. The theme of improving attitudes toward democracy was most represented in the civics and citizenship standards (76.7%). Most of the civics and citizenship standards were dedicated to developing general democratic knowledges

(60%) and opportunities to develop practical skills (21%). The Victoria state standards state, “Civics and Citizenship curriculum develops students’ knowledge of political, legal institutions and explores the nature of citizenship in a pluralistic liberal democracy” (VCAA, 2016, p. 7). The matter of national and global relationships, identity, and politics as imperative to the democratic society received a fair amount of attention (13%). For example, the national standards for level 9-10 require students to “explain the values and key features of Australia’s system of government compared with at least one other system of government in the Asia region” (VCAA, 2016, p. 14). Media-specific knowledges and skills were less represented in the discussion in the civics and citizenship standards in general – less than 6%.

At both national and state levels of the civics and citizenship standards, over 70% of the discussion was regarding democratic knowledge and practical experiences. The state level of the standards, however, dedicated twice the amount of discussion content to the role of global and national law and policy (19%) than the national. The Victoria preamble notes for example that, “While the curriculum strongly focuses on the Australian context, students also reflect on Australia’s position, and obligations, and the role of the citizen today within an interconnected global world” (VCAA, 2016, p. 6). Most of the state level discussion surrounding media-specific skills concerned understanding the relationship between media and politics (7%).

English. The theme of developing attitudes toward democracy has significantly less content in the English standards. Just about 13% of the overall discussion of this indicator is within the subject of English. Within the English standards, over half of the discussion is focused on developing democratic knowledges. The preamble to the

national standards note that English helps students "... become ethical, thoughtful, informed and active members in society... [and] plays an important part in developing the understanding, attitudes and capabilities of this who will take responsibility for Australia's future" (ACARA, n.d.e, p. 1). Of note, the English dedicates a combined 30% of the discussion of this theme, developing attitudes towards democracy, to evaluating the credibility of information (or media messages), responsible media production, and understanding media and informational bias.

Across national and state standards, English is consistent in dedicating most of the discussion to developing the knowledge associated with democratic citizenship. Both the national and state standards seek to make the connection between language, text, and technology. The national standards for English level 7-8 note that students, "Understand the way language evolves to reflect a changing world, particularly in response to the use of new technology for presenting texts and communicating" (ACARA, 2015b, p. 15). This imperative involves analysis of the effect of technological innovations on texts, particularly media texts. Level 9-10 of the Victoria standards require students to investigate "the structure and language of similar text types like information reports and narratives and how these are influenced by different technological affordances" (VCAA, 2016, p. 38). In tandem, the national standards for levels 9-10 require that students "create sustained texts, including texts that combine specific digital or media content, for imaginative, informative, or persuasive purposes that reflect upon challenging and complex issues" (VCAA, 2016, p. 39).

Media arts. Within the theme of improving attitudes toward democracy, only 10% of the overall media arts curriculum standards are dedicated to this discussion. Just

over half of the standards are focused on teaching students to challenge the existing media paradigms. For example, the national standards for levels 9-10 encourage students to “experiment with ideas and stories that manipulate media conventions and genres to construct new and alternative points of view through images, sounds and text” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 15).

The relationship between technology and communication (26.6%) in tandem with democratic knowledge (13.3%) and understanding the relationship between media and politics (6.67%) is also explored. The Victoria media arts preamble to the standards discusses digital citizenship in relation to media rights, responsibilities, protocols, and “exploring the role of media makers in challenging prevailing views on issues of contemporary relevance, for example, social and cultural issues presented in Australian film and television” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 17). The national and state standards dedicated almost equal amounts of content to discussing the indicators within this theme.

Indicator B - Dealing with socio-cultural and youth-related issues (N = 156).

A total of 16.2% of the Australian standards was dedicated to exploring socio-cultural and youth-based issues. Just under half of this indicator was explored within the English standards, with civics and citizenship and media arts dedicating just about equal content to dealing with socio-cultural and youth-based issues. Youth-based issues were only presented in the English standards.

Civics and citizenship. General socio-cultural and youth-based issues are covered in 20.8% of the civics and citizenship standards. Well over half of that discussion is structured around matters related to intercultural awareness, faith, and diversity. Another one-third of the subject content addresses issues of identity and stereotyping. Media’s

influence on society being is just under 7% of what is discussed within this indicator category. The subjects of youth-based concerns and materialism are not referenced in the civics and citizenship standards.

Australia is described as a multicultural and multi-faith secular society. Engagement on the issues of intercultural awareness, faith, and diversity has two distinctive foci: national identity, including indigenous heritages (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) and the exploration of regional and global perspectives of diversity. The preamble to the Victoria state standards notes:

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 includes multiple opportunities for students to learn about worldviews and religions. This enables students to be more informed and engaged at both a local and global level, understanding the perspectives of diverse local communities and being informed about the beliefs and practices of diverse traditions. (ACARA, 2016, p. 4)

The subjects addressed within the category of general socio-cultural and youth issues engaged the concepts of democratic citizenship, identity, and diversity to promote inclusivity.

Discussions of identity underpin both the national and state standards, and stereotyping was often linked with discussion of the influence of media on representation. Just over 34% of the civics and citizenship standards concerned identity. Level 7-8 of the Victoria standards, for example, requires students to “explain how groups express their identities, including religious and cultural identity, and how this expression can influence their perceptions of others and others’ perception of them” (ACARA, 2016, p. 11). The

contribution of indigenous heritages and the country's Asian influences were also discussed.

The national and state standards address general socio-cultural issues in similar ways; however, both also neglect youth-based issues and omit any discussion related to the commodification of culture or materialism. In addition, the discussion of the influence of media on society and the individual is scant in national standards (15.79%) and non-existent in state standards for civics and citizenship. However, where there is discussion, the role of media is most juxtaposed as facilitating the democratic process. For example, the national standards for levels 9-10 include an imperative to assess "how citizens' political choices are shaped at election time, including the influence of the media" (ACARA, 2016, p. 14). The national standards dedicate over 50% of this category to the discussion of intercultural and faith-related issues, whereas the state utilizes 62.5% of its content for this aspect of the discussion.

English. Within the category of general socio-cultural and youth-based issues, 15.92% of the discussion occurs within the English standards. Like civics and citizenship, English focuses most of its content on intercultural awareness (44.9%), and is deliberate in its enunciation of the literary histories and identities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Asian influences. The remainder of the content addresses the influence of media (32%) and identity (23.1%). The subject of identity is explored from multiple vantage points and is often connected with the use of language. For example, the national English standards for levels 9-10 notes that students should "understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people" (ACARA, 2015b, p. 15). In addition, the standards call for an

understanding of texts and how the contexts in which they are used reflect the society and culture in which they were created.

Connected to matters of identity and intercultural awareness, the concept of the role of media in society is discussed from the viewpoint of the effects of technology innovation on communication and text production. Whereas the standards explicitly call for an understanding of the roles and relationships that are developed through language and interpersonal interaction, they, in tandem, call for the ability to “analyse how the construction and interpretation of texts, including media texts, can be influenced by cultural perspectives and other texts” (VCAA, 2016, p. 29). In addition, the Victoria English preamble notes that students also study how texts or works become canonized or preferred reading in certain cultures.

The national and state treatment of general socio-cultural and youth-based issues is relatively the same. For both, just under 44% of the discussion of this category is dedicated to intercultural awareness, including multiculturalism, multi-faith issues, and consideration of inclusiveness. However, while the state standards devote equal content to identity and the role of media (28% each), the national standards allocate more discussion to the role of media as explicitly connected to the role of language and text production (43%). In both curricula, texts are multimodal and multi-sourced, and include world, Asian, Australian, and (student-selected) immigrant literature.

Media arts. In discussing the influence of media on society and the individual, the focus of media arts content is on examining how media shapes identities and attitudes toward diversity. At the national 7-8 level students are, therefore, required to examine alternative viewpoints put forward by media. An exploration of the institutional and

ethical influences on media production and consumption is also advanced in the national standards.

Similar to the view of language with the subject of English, the media arts standards present media as constantly evolving, as impacted by social, cultural, and historical influences. The state standards call for students to experiment with the “use of images, sounds and text and selected conventions to challenge existing stereotypes in society [which may convey a sense that culture is static or create a hegemony]” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 10). The standards also call for students to develop media representations based on what is shared or familiar and, in so doing, learn how various techniques and traditions shape cultural expression on local, national, and global levels.

The national and state curricula standards differ only in their apportioning of content to dealing with identity-related issues and matters of intercultural awareness, with the latter being discussed at the national level and the former within the state standards. At the state level, there is greater expansion of the discussion to confront stereotypes, create multiperspectival media artworks, and defy genre conventions to create new innovations in media art. The issue of representation as expressed through the media arts is therefore dedicated to more discussion content in the state discourse. By extension, “the depiction of cultural groups and social values in Australian film and television” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 11) and the analysis of exaggerations and omissions in media artwork are also key features of the Victoria state standards.

Indicator E - Personal growth via media and other competencies (N = 146).

Just over 15% of the total standards are concerned with personal growth through the development of media and other skills and competencies. The content surrounding this

theme is based in English and media arts standards almost equally, with more of the discussion taking place within the state level standards (over 65%). Within the theme, the indicator most frequently referenced at both the national and state levels concerns developing media production skill and competencies.

English. The theme of media and other skills development for personal growth represents 15.92% of the overall English discussion. Within this theme, over half of the focus is on media production skills and competency development, which relate directly to text creation. Within the English standards, media appreciation often is concerned with texts, described in the state standards as “media texts, everyday texts and workplace texts” (VCAA, 2016, p.7) with which students engage for enjoyment. The national standards for level 7-8 note that this involves “creating a variety of texts, including multimodal texts adapting ideas and devices from literary texts [involving the] ... use of a range of software, including word processing programs to confidently create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts” (ACARA, 2015b, p. 20).

Media appreciation, then, receives a reasonable amount of discussion coverage (25.64%), whereas as media consumption explicitly for pleasure is never referenced. In cases where aesthetic appreciation or pleasure is discussed, it is in the context of production. For example, at level 9-10 of the national standards, students are required to “plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for aesthetic and playful purposes” (ACARA, 2015b, p. 21).

At both the national and state levels, over half the standards are also focused on media production and skills and competency development. There is no discussion of media consumption for pleasure at either state or national levels, and no discussion of

responsible media consumption at the state level. The national standards for English, for example, note that “reading and literacy skills help the young develop the knowledge and skills needed for education, training and the workplace” (ACARA, n.d.e, p. 1).

Media arts. The media arts standards dedicates 12.5% of its overall discussion to the theme of personal growth via media production and other skills development. Within this theme, over half of the discussion is dedicated to media production skills and competency development, with production being focused in the artistic realm and having some intercultural function. The national standards for levels 7-8 indicate that students “experiment with the organisation of ideas to structure stories through media conventions and genres to create points of view in images, sounds and text” (ACARA, n.d.a, p. 7). These media production skills and competencies involve evaluating technical and symbolic elements of media, using software to manipulate media images, and safe use of media technologies. Just under one-quarter of the data explores responsible media production and consumption; media appreciation is covered in 12% of the documents.

Similar to the English standards, coverage of this theme has little concern with outside of school literacies, media consumption for pleasure, or career skills development at both national and state levels. Nonetheless, at both levels of the national and state standards, students “produce and distribute media artworks for a range of community and institutional contexts and consider social, ethical and regulatory issues” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 10). The skills associated with media distribution to an online audience are framed as outside of school literacies and often have associated social responsibility components.

Indicator D - Role of media and other social institutions (N = 78). A mere 7.64% of the overall discussion in the Australian standards is dedicated to this theme,

with most of that content being within the media arts standards and the remainder in the civics and citizenship standards. All of the discussion at the national level is within the subject of media arts, whereas over 90% of the state discussion is within this subject. Within the theme, the primary focus is on understanding the various media industry techniques, tools, and perspectives that concern media as an institution. The sub-category regarding media ownership and economics and the role of other social and political institutions round out the discussion. There is no discussion of the free press in any of the standards.

Civics and citizenship. This theme is allocated very little content within the standards overall (2.08%). Within the content utilized in presenting the theme, all the state level discussion focuses on media ownership and the role of other political and social institutions equally. The discussion of social and political institutions is invariably tied to the role of democracy. In the Victorian curriculum standards preamble, it is noted that the theme of civics and citizenship “involves a study of Australian democracy and the key institutions, processes and roles people play in Australia’s system of government” (ACARA, 2016, p. 7).

Media arts. Just over 20% of the overall media arts content is dedicated to discussing the theme of the role of media and other social institutions in society. Within the theme, 71.8% of the discussion is associated with media production techniques and institutional practices. In understanding industry practices, for example, students are required to conduct “a case study of how the story from a Hollywood blockbuster film is adapted across media platforms to reach different audiences, for example, game players, social media users, television viewers” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 13). Students also analyze social

and ethical responsibilities of media producers in different social, cultural, historical, and institutional contexts. Media ownership and the role of other political and social institutions are the other indicators covered; there is no mention of the free press in any of this discussion.

At the national level, over 90% of the discussion is regarding media techniques and industry practices, whereas at the state level, the discussion is between media techniques and industry practices and media ownership and economics. The national media arts preamble notes that “students explore and interpret diverse and dynamic cultural, social, historical and institutional factors that shape contemporary communication through media technologies and globally networked communications” (ACARA, n.d.d, p.1). The state standards underscore the need to understand “the use of techniques, materials, processes and technologies” (VCAA, n.d.b, p. 6), as well as social, cultural, and industry practices as important for developing an understanding of media culture overall.

Indicator F - Teachers’ role in facilitating students’ critical experiences (N = 10). The role of the teacher in curriculum is less than 1% of the overall standards content. This discussion is at the state level and mainly concerns subjects such as pedagogical inclusivity (44.4%) and teacher-led curriculum development (33.3%). Higher teacher expectation and holistic curriculum development are marginally represented in the study of the Australian standards (just over 11% each). Over half this discussion occurs within the English curricula, with equal content dedicated within the civics and citizenship and media arts curricula. The Victoria civics and citizenship curriculum standards preamble notes that “The curriculum is being presented in a scope and sequence chart to support

teachers to easily see the progression and assist in planning teaching and learning programs to meet the diverse needs of students” (VCAA, n.d.a, p. 8). The English preamble also notes that the curriculum for students with disabilities is provided to facilitate teachers’ goals for inclusion.

England

Similar to the Australian standards, England’s focus on improving attitudes toward democracy is mostly concentrated within the citizenship standards (over 60%). The citizenship standards dedicate another 23% to improving reasoning and communication skills. English dedicates most of its content equally between improving reasoning and communication skills and facilitating personal growth through media competencies and skills development (23%), whereas media arts dedicates marginally more content to improving reasoning and communication skills (just under 30%) than to facilitating personal growth through media (21.6%). Developing understandings of the role of media is mostly addressed within media studies standards, and is absent from the standards for English. Whereas the standards for the study of English do not address general socio-cultural and youth-related issues, the role of the teacher features only in the standards for English. Table 9 documents the subject scores for each indicator category.

Table 9

Breakdown of England Indicators by Subject by Percentage

Subject	Indicators*						Other
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Civics	23.17	9.76	60.98	4.87	1.22	0	0
English	23.08	0	2.56	0	23.08	12.82	38.46
Media Arts	29.73	16.22	5.41	13.51	21.62	0	13.51

Note. *A = Reasoning and communication skills
 B = Socio-cultural and youth-based issues
 C = Attitudes toward democracy
 D = Role of media and other social institutions
 E = Personal development via media and other competencies
 F = Teacher role in facilitating students' democratic/critical experiences

Indicator C - Developing attitudes toward democracy (N = 53). A total of 33% of the England standards examined are concerned with developing democratic dispositions in learners. Across the three curricula, the theme of developing attitudes toward democracy is chiefly engaged with developing knowledge related to democratic themes and issues (43%) and secondarily to affording the development of democratic participation skills (30%) and understandings of global politics (20%). None of the standards discussed show how students can challenge existing social paradigms through media, and only the media studies standards acknowledge the role of technology in media communications, albeit a single observation. The major part of the discussion concerning developing democratic knowledge, understanding global politics, exploring identity occurs within the citizenship studies standards. A single reference to developing the skills of civic participation occurs within English (subject) standards.

The discussion of media communications technology centers around engaging students with the understandings of “how digital democracy, social media and other

measures are being developed as a means to improve voter engagement and the political participation of citizens” (DfE, 2015, p. 6). At key stage 4 of the standards, students explore the many ways in which “a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity” (DfE, 2013, p. 3).

Indicator A - Improving reasoning and communications skill (N = 39).

Twenty-five percent of the standards explored are concerned with improving reasoning and communication skills. Of this total, the tenets explored within the theme are mostly concerned with deconstructing media messages and using media; developing skills of interpretation across various media, including text; and engaging in other problem-based inquiry experiences. Most of the problem-based and inquiry learning is featured in the citizenship studies standards (79%), whereas message deconstruction and interpretation across media is more prominent in English (71%) and media studies (86%) standards, respectively. The standards do not discuss critical evaluation of media messages for credibility or responsible media production, nor do they explore media bias.

Citizenship studies. Within the citizenship studies standards, reasoning and communication skills development engage critical inquiry for problem solving, advocacy, planning, and the evaluation of information. Problem-based experiences represent 100% of the standards, where critical thinking, evaluation of evidence, development of persuasive arguments, and justification of conclusions are some of the skills students are required to demonstrate on the GCSE evaluation for citizenship at the end of key stage 4. At key stage 4, students are required to develop research strategy skills to “weigh up evidence, make persuasive arguments and substantiate their conclusions. They should

experience and evaluate different ways that citizens can act together to solve problems and contribute to society” (DfE, 2013, p. 2).

Among the critical evaluation skills required, students are prepared to estimate the effectiveness of citizenship actions and assess progress and impact of intended goals on individuals, groups, and communities. Problem-based activities include actions addressing public policy, challenging injustice, and resolving issues to improve their own communities.

Media studies. Similarly, media studies requires that students demonstrate skills of inquiry through media interpretation (54.5%), problem-based experiences (27%), and media deconstruction (18.5%). The GCSE media studies standards calls for students to demonstrate “skills of enquiry, critical thinking, decision-making and analysis” (DfE, 2016, p. 3) in their evaluation of media products, their production and consumptions contexts and about media issues in general. An assessment of how media constructs and communicates meaning in historical and contemporary contexts and how this affects culture and politics in society is a key feature in GCSE media stage 4 content. Media interpretation skills are tackled via a discussion of how media language constructs and influences meaning that conveys messages and values.

English. GCSE English calls for the comparison and synthesis of differing views and perspectives, which most of this subject content focused on critical deconstruction of texts (55.6%). At key stage 3 students focus on making inferences and referring to textual evidence and critical reading, whereas at key stage 4 students advance their understandings in the critical evaluation of texts. The preamble to the English standards explicitly refers to the learning of English and language skills as a tool for participating

and for preventing disenfranchisement. The English standards mention digital and media technologies or language as multimodal (both textual and digital) only once in the GCSE assessment framework.

Indicator E - Personal growth via media and other competencies (N = 19).

Eleven percent of England's standards content is focused on facilitating students' personal growth through the development of media production competences. These activities are centered around developing media production skills (66.7%) and developing creative personal expression and media appreciation (33.3%). Almost all these references were identified in the English and media studies standards frameworks, with a single reference to media appreciation found in the Citizenship Studies standards.

English. The English standards that refer to this theme solely concern media skills development and media appreciation activities (55% and 45%, respectively). The development of media production skills is approached through the writing requirement of stages 3 and 4, as well as the GCSE English assessment framework. Media appreciation falls under the purview of reading. Both media production and appreciation solely consider textual media and text construction in the English standards. For example, key stage 4 of the English standards note that "Pupils should be expected to read whole books, to read in depth and to read for pleasure and information" (DfE, 2014a, p. 4).

Media studies. The media studies standards focus on media skills development, with eight out of nine references being about developing practical skills. The GCSE for key stage 4 requires both the development of media understanding and producing media products as a means for making the connection between media theory and media practice. Media production is therefore explored within the contexts of language, representation,

industries of distribution and production, and audiences. Within the England standards, students independently create media based on television and film theory. The GCSE media studies standards note that students should “develop practical skills by providing opportunities for creative media production” (DfE, 2016, p. 3).

Indicator B - Dealing with socio-cultural and youth-related issues (N = 14).

Nine percent of the England national standards examined address general socio-cultural, with no specific references to youth-related issues. Identity and media representation are the more prominent concepts addressed, with all references found in the citizenship and media studies curricula.

Citizenship studies. The citizenship studies standards discuss identity within the context of identity and diversity, noting that the United Kingdom consists of diverse national, regional, religious, and ethnic identities. The GCSE citizenship assessment framework notes that this underscores “the need for mutual respect and understanding in a diverse society and the values that underpin democratic society” (DfE, 2015, p. 8). In addition, the preamble to the national standards notes the requirement for “All state schools ... to make provision for a daily act of collective worship and must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage and relationship (and sex) education to pupils in secondary education” (DfE, 2014a, p. 4).

Media studies. Media representation, awareness of commodification, and the role of media are the sub-areas addressed in the media studies standards. Media representation (57%) is the most prominent sub-theme within the media studies standards. The standards refer to subjects such as how the media portrays events, issues, individuals and social groups, individuals, and issues. These understandings include critical awareness of the

“different functions and uses of stereotypes” (DfE, 2016, p. 6) including how they become established over time. The standards also explore various theoretical perspectives involved in representations including feminist approaches and those concerning media selection, construction, and mediation. The GCSE media studies standards framework notes that students should understand “theories of media audiences including... Blumler and Katz’s Uses and Gratification theory” (DfE, 2016, p. 8). A single reference to developing critical understandings of the role of media in historical and contemporary contexts was also noted.

Indicator D - Role of media and other social institutions (N = 9). Only 6% of the discussion within the English standards content explored addresses the theme of the role of media and communication industry practices and other social institutions. This discussion happens across citizenship and media studies standards and addresses the sub-themes of media ownership and media techniques in media studies and the role of other political and social institutions and the free press in citizenship studies. The various techniques and industry practices used in media production were the most prominent category explored, representing 40% of the reference to this themes across the standards analyzed.

Citizenship studies. The role of public institutions and interest groups, including non-governmental organizations, is a feature of the GCSE assessment framework. This is noted as vital to providing voice and support for different groups in society and a key feature of the right to representation. The role of the free press comprises 25% of the discussion content within the citizenship studies standards and comprises an entire module in the GCSE citizenship standards. The standards also note “the rights,

responsibilities and role of media and a free press in informing and influencing public opinions, ... and in holding those in power to account, ... to investigate and report on issues of public interest...” (DfE, 2015, p. 5).

Media studies. Media production techniques and an understanding of media ownership and economics are explored within the media studies standards. One of the requirements of the GCSE media studies assessment is that students understand “how media industries’ processes of production, distribution, circulation affect media forms and platforms” (DfE, 2014a, p. 4). Curriculum topics explored include ownership and control of media organizations, including conglomerate ownership, and the impact of media convergence on digital consumption and production.

Indicator F – Teachers’ role in facilitating students’ critical experiences (N = 6). As within the Australian standards, the role of the teacher received very little attention within the England curriculum standards. Three percent of the discussion content is dedicated to this theme. All references to the role of the teacher in facilitating students’ critical and democratic experiences occur in the English standards and address the sub-themes of teacher-led curriculum development (50%), inclusive pedagogical practices, and facilitation of a holistic curriculum (33%).

In its discussion of the provision of a holistic curriculum, the English standards note that curriculum should promote spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils in preparation for opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in later life. It notes, however, that the national curriculum framework is only an “outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons...

as part of a wider school curriculum” (DfE, 2014b, p. 5) and there is time and content in the school calendar to offer instruction beyond the national curriculum specifications.

The curriculum standards also have explicit statements of inclusion incorporated into its framework. The preamble to the United Kingdom National Curriculum framework notes that “Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment” (DfE, 2014b, p. 8). It also notes that lesson planning should respond to individual student needs and be tailored to facilitate overcoming potential barriers for these individuals.

The United States of America/Florida

The examination of the U.S. curriculum standards led to very different findings across the subject areas. Whereas the civics standards dedicates more content to developing attitudes toward democracy (44.05%) and improving reasoning and communication skills (24.23%), the English language arts standards focus on improving reasoning and communication skills (61.54%) and facilitating students’ personal growth through the development of media and other competences (11.07%). The role of media receives little discussion focus in the civics standards (4.2%) and even less place in English language arts standards– less than 1%.

English language arts (ELA) appears to dedicate very little content to the discussion of developing democratic attitudes (3.56%). However, an examination of the variables within the category of improving reasoning and communication skills suggests that the ELA standards focused on problem-based, critical inquiry experiences offer some

measure of democratic learning. Table 10 documents the subject score for each indicator category.

Table 10

Breakdown of U.S. Indicators by Subject by Percentage

Subject	Indicators*						Other
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Civics	24.23	4.2	44.05	2.42	0.88	3.96	20.26
English	61.54	0.94	3.56	0.56	11.07	6.94	15.39

Note. *A = Reasoning and communication skills
 B = Socio-cultural and youth-based issues
 C = Attitudes toward democracy
 D = Role of media and other social institutions
 E = Personal development via media and other competencies
 F = Teacher role in facilitating students' democratic/critical experiences

Indicator A - Improving reasoning and communication skills (N = 438). Just over 44% of the U.S. data speak to the category of improving reasoning and communication skills, with much of this focusing on problem-based and critical inquiry learning experiences, interpretation and evaluation of media conventions, and media deconstruction. Across the two curricula examined, English language arts dedicates more of its discussion to this theme (61.54%) than civics. Across national and state standards, the national civics standards do not address media or media-related competences in this category. Findings across state and national ELA standards are similar, with certain aspects of media learning neglected equally at both levels.

Civics. Just under a quarter of the U.S. civics standards examined address improving reasoning and communication skills. Over half of this discussion concerns critical inquiry and problem-based learning experiences (59%), with the remainder

distributed across developing the skills of media deconstruction and interpretation and evaluation of media tools. As part of their problem-based learning experience, students at Grade 7-8 civics standards are required to “Develop a plan to resolve a state or local problem by researching public policy alternatives, identifying appropriate government agencies to address the issue, and determining a course of action” (CPALMS, n.d.d, p. 3). Within this and other exercises, students are required to examine multiple perspectives on current issues of public concern.

Another requirement involves the use of technology to produce and publish writing and to explore or self-generate research topics. The standards for level 7-8 require students to analyze media and political communication for bias symbolism and propaganda. Additionally, the civics standards require students to analyze information presented via various media formats and to be proficient using various media software and equipment. Media analysis, however, focuses mainly on textual analysis. The U.S. national assessment framework for civics notes that students should be able to use print and electronic sources and media to acquire and exchange information and ideas as well as employ “various media to advance points of view on public affairs” (National Assessment Governing Board [NAGB], 2014, p. 29).

Whereas the Florida state civics standards dedicate 31% of their content to the discussion of improving reasoning and communications skills, the U.S. national civics standards allocate a mere 6.3% to this theme. Whereas the state standards engage problem-based educational experiences, the national standards focus more on inquiry and collaborative learning skills.

English language arts. ELA utilizes over 60% of its discussion content on improving reasoning and communication competencies. The discussion in this area of the standards focuses on developing the skills to interpret and evaluate media, inquiry-based learning experiences, and media analysis. The national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA state, for example, that students should be able to “comprehend as well as critique...work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question... assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning” (CSSI, 2010, p. 7).

The preamble of the national CCSS also notes that research and media skills are incorporated across the standards in order to prepare students for further education, the workforce, and for life in a technological society. These skills are to be utilized in solving problems and answering original research questions, and in the process of evaluating and synthesizing information. Once again, however, media deconstruction is discussed within the purview of literary texts and documents. For example, the CCSS ELA standards for both Grades 7-8 and 9-12 require students to analyze historical documents, such as the U.S. Declaration of Independence, for themes, purposes, and rhetorical features, and to delineate the reasoning within these seminal texts. Technology was listed as being for the purpose of aiding inquiry: publication, research, and collaboration with others.

Across the national and state standards, ELA constitutes a similar level of coverage across the sub-categories within this theme, and almost identical standards verbiage. Both require assessment of information based on the technical features within the text. For example, Grade 9-10 of the Florida state ELA standards requires students to analyze text sources based on date and origin of the information. In addition, both levels

of standards fail to discuss media bias and afford little discussion concerning responsible media production (state 1.8%, national less than 1%).

Indicator C - Developing attitudes toward democracy (N = 219). The U.S. standards cover the issue of developing attitudes toward democracy in 22.19% of its content. The content is primarily concerned with developing knowledge regarding democratic social perspectives and secondarily with understanding the role of global law politics and identity. It also affords students opportunities to practice democratic participation. The bulk of this discussion is conducted within the civics standards. Neither the civics nor English language arts standards address the issues of challenging social paradigms via media, nor do either address the role of technology in media communications. The findings across national and state standards were similar.

Civics. The largest share of the civics standards is dedicated to discussing the development of attitudes for life in a democracy. The civics standards address this theme across three main sub-areas: developing democratic knowledges, including understandings of global law and politics; developing civic participation skills; and identity. Forty-four percent of the civics standards are dedicated to the aforementioned topics, with similar amounts of space allocated at both state and national levels of the discourse. Of the total civics content utilized in exploring this theme, 65% is focused on developing an appreciation for democratic knowledges and perspectives such as freedom, citizenship, and power.

A prominent theme within the approach to developing democratic knowledge within the civics standards is the skill of analysis. For example, among the democratic knowledge fostered by the standards are requirements to “evaluate constitutional rights

and their impact on individuals and society” (Florida Department of Education, [FLDOE], 2012, p. 61). Within the state standards, students are also required to analyze the ideas and complaints within the U.S. Declaration of Independence, compare different forms of government, and identify the relationship and how power is divided between the state and federal governments. At levels 9-12 of the standards, students are asked to use case studies to explore various socio-cultural aspects of American life, including, “social, political, legal, and economic relationships in history” (CPALMS, n.d.a, p. 3).

As part of the experiential learning component, the state civics and advanced career planning, as well as the general civics standards, students are required to “demonstrate their skills through participation in a capstone and/or extended research-based paper/project (e.g., history fair, participatory citizenship projects, mock congressional hearing, projects for competitive evaluation, investment portfolio contests, or other teacher-directed projects)” (CPALMS, n.d.b, p. 2). At levels 9-12 of the civics standards, students engage in monitoring public issues and analyze civic participation trends such as voter turnout or the effect of a mock election on a school or community. In addition to these opportunities to practice civic participation, the U.S. national assessment framework for civics also requires students to know how to monitor and influence government leaders at the local, state, and national levels, and how to participate in coalition building.

English language arts. Less than 4% of the overall ELA content addresses developing democratic attitudes and dispositions, most of which occurs at the state level. The primary sub-categories expressed include developing democratic knowledges (over

half) and understanding the relationship between media and politics. The ELA standards do not speak to providing students with the opportunities for civic engagement.

The ELA requirements for analysis of documents, which underpin democratic function of the nation, are the same standards found within the civics standards. In addition to the requirements in the civics standards, the analysis of seminal U.S. documents also include analysis of socio-political histories of how these legal documents came to be. For example, within the ELA standard for Grades 7-8, students identify the steps involved in a bill becoming law or how interest rates are raised and lowered. As part of this assessment of information, the state standards also require students to “analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats... and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation” (CPALMS, 2017, p. 12).

Indicator E - Personal growth via media and other competencies (N = 63).

The U.S. standards related to the theme of facilitating personal growth through media production and other competencies comprise only 6.38% of the overall standards content. Most of these references were noted in the English language arts standards. For both the civics and the ELA standards, the amount of discussion content attributed to the national and state standards is similar, with the primary sub-category explored being related to developing media production skills and competencies – 90% in each level.

Civics. The discussion on this theme has a single thematic reference in the civics standards, that of developing media production skills and competencies. At both the state and national levels, the standards underscore the use of technology to produce and publish individual and group writing products for several purposes, including to

disseminate personal point of views on public issues. The discussion was, however, limited to writing products.

English language arts. Facilitating personal growth through the development of media and other competencies is referred to within the context of media production as well as outside-of-school skills in the U.S. ELA standards. The development of media production skills and competencies are more widely discussed within the ELA standards. Research and media skills are paired with writing and embedded within the CCSS for ELA as key to college readiness, workforce training, and life in a technological society. The ELA CCSS note that these skills are necessary for helping students to evaluate and report information and ideas by conducting “...original research to answer questions and solve problems, and to analyze and create a high volume and extensive range of print and nonprint texts in media forms old and new” (CCSSI, 2010, p. 4).

The ELA standards also briefly discuss media appreciation and creative expression through narrative writing, which students then publish via electronic media. The Florida state ELA standards for all grades discuss how students use technology to facilitate writing and collaborating with others. The preamble to the CCSS for ELA further notes that “... the skills and understandings students are expected to demonstrate have wide applicability outside the classroom or workplace” (CCSSI, 2010, p. 3).

Indicator F – Teachers’ role in facilitating students’ critical experiences (N = 55). The role of the teacher in facilitating students’ critical and democratic experiences comprises only 5.57% of the U.S. standards studied. The English language arts standards makes more references to this theme than does the civics standards. However, the civics standards conduct more of their discussion at the Florida state level. Across both

curricula, the three sub-categories primarily discussed are the inclusive pedagogical practices (42.4%), the teacher's role in developing holistic assessment and evaluation (37.3%), and teacher-led curriculum development (12%).

Civics. Whereas civics dedicates only 3.96% of its total discussion to the role of the teacher in facilitating students' critical and democratic experiences, over half of that (57.9%) speaks to inclusive pedagogical practices in the U.S. classroom. The issues of inclusive curriculum and assessment are paired with the U.S. civics assessment standards. The inclusive practices consist of provisions for English language development (ELD), appropriate assessment, and elimination of testing bias. As part of the ELD standards, the Florida state standards discuss that teachers are required to facilitate the listening, reading, speaking, and writing instruction for English language learners (ELLs) as part of maximizing their communication and social skills and producing language essential to academic success at all levels of the standards analyzed.

The preamble to the U.S. national assessment framework for civics and the Florida civics end-of-course assessment speak to formative assessment at the individual classroom level by way of a suggested capstone or extended research or service project, such as some form of mock civic participation activity, which should be teacher-directed. This is, however, noted as a form of assessment only within the civics and advanced career standards. Within the general civics standards, participation in these types of teacher-directed activities is not denoted as assessment.

English language arts. Just under 7% of the ELA standards cover the role of the teacher in facilitating critical and democratic learning experiences via the curriculum. At both the state and national levels, fostering holistic assessment practices (47.5%) and

ensuring inclusive pedagogical practices (35%) are the main points of discussion. At the national level, teacher-led teaching activities comprise another 15% of the discussion content. A stronger discussion of holistic curriculum takes place at the Florida state level. National and state level standards are almost identical in verbiage.

Indicator B - Dealing with socio-cultural and youth-related issues (N = 24).

Though discussions of socio-cultural issues pervade the U.S. curriculum, standards specific to general matters and youth-related issues only comprise 2.43% of the standards content. A significant portion of the references to the theme identified in this study are noted in the civics standards, particularly at the state level. Though scant, the sub-categories discussed cover intercultural awareness, the role of media in society, youth-based issues, and identity politics.

Civics. The civics standards utilizes 4.2% of its discussion content on addressing issues, including American unity/diversity and youth-related health discussions. One assignment with the Florida standards for Grades 9-12 involves researching the “contributions of entrepreneurs, inventors and other key individuals from various gender, social and ethnic backgrounds in the development of the United States” (CPALMS, n.d.a, p. 5). In addressing testing bias, the state civics assessment benchmarks also note that “Test items should not be designed to create disadvantage or exhibit disrespect to anyone in regard to age, gender, race, ethnicity, language, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, occupation, or geographic region” (FLDOE, 2012, p. 2).

Each strand of the state standards for Grades 7-8 addresses youth health. Students are required to support their position on health-related issues, such bullying prevention, internet safety, or nutritional choices. At Grades 11-12, students extend this activity to

evaluating the influence of public health policy and government regulations on health promotion and disease prevention. The Florida civics assessment benchmarks also note that test items should reflect contexts that are of interest to middle (and high) school students. The standards do not reflect inclusion of such issues as materialism and cultural commodification.

English language arts. Just under 1% of the U.S. ELA standards speak to socio-cultural issues, with no mention of youth-related concerns. Socio-cultural issues are examined within the ELA standards via literary and media analysis. For example, the Florida state ELA standards for Grades 7-8 require students to analyze the purpose of information presented in various media formats, including the evaluation of the social, commercial, or political motives that may inspire these presentations. In addition, students explore how fictional works borrow from and renew socially established ideas based in myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible. The CCSS for ELA also supports a critical exploration of “other” perspectives and cultures in order to promote an understanding that the modern classroom and workplace comprise people from “widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives” (CCSSI, 2010, p. 7).

Indicator D - Role of media and other social institutions (N = 14). With less than 2% of coverage in the U.S. standards, the role of media industry practices and other social institutions in society is the lowest indicator overall. More of this discussion is referenced at the Florida state level and is more prominent in the civics standards. The role of political and social institutions, including media and media industry techniques

and practices, are discussed; however, neither media ownership and economics nor the specific role of the free press are addressed.

Civics. Only 2.42% of the civics standards discuss the role of media and communication industry practices and other social institutions. The U.S. national framework for the assessment of civics requires a broad exploration of the role of organized groups in political life and calls for an assessment of how media affects students' knowledge, skills, and civic dispositions. By extension, the state standards require students to “evaluate the origins and roles of political parties, interest groups, media, and individuals in shaping public policy” (CPALMS, n.d.a, p. 2), and speak to the role of the non-governmental organizations in this milieu

English language arts. Within the ELA standards, the single discussion of this theme centers around evaluation of media techniques in both the national and state standards. Students are asked to compare and contrast different versions or media formats of a literary piece (written story versus filmed, staged, multimedia version) and analyze the effects of the techniques unique in each medium, such as lighting, sound, color, or camera angles in film.

Research Question B – Differences Across Countries

The third and final research question (RQB) proposed to discuss the differences in findings across the three countries. In keeping the comparative structure of inquiry framework, these findings represent a juxtaposition based on an isolation of the differences in indicators across the countries (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Within this chapter, there is a presentation of these findings, whereas the ensuing discussion is an analysis as to the implications of these data.

Summary of Findings Across Indicator Themes

The indicator themes of improving reasoning and communication skills and developing attitudes toward democracy were most frequently referenced across all countries, across all subjects. Personal growth through media production skills and other competency development was the next most prominent finding across England; however, this theme was referenced with the same frequency as the teacher’s role in facilitating students’ democratic and critical learning experiences in the U.S. curricula. The general socio-cultural and youth-based issues indicator was next, except for in the case of Australia, where this theme was seen with only 1% more frequency than personal growth through media production skills and other competencies. Across Australia and England, the role of the teacher in facilitating students’ democratic and critical learning experiences was the least referenced category. The U.S. curricular standards referred least to the role of media practices and other social institutions. Table 11 provides an overview of these findings.

Table 11

Comparison of Indicators for Australia, England, and the United States by Percentage

Country	Indicators*						Other
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Australia	31	15	22	8	15	1	7
England	25	9	33	6	11	4	13
United States	44	3	22	1	6	6	18

Note. * A = Reasoning and communication skills
 B = Socio-cultural and youth-based issues
 C = Attitudes toward democracy
 D = Role of media and other social institutions
 E = Personal development via media and other competencies
 F = Teacher role in facilitating students’ democratic/critical experiences

Each of the three countries spent a major part of their discussion of the standards for each subject on addressing improving students' reasoning and communication skills and developing attitudes toward democracy: Australia (53%), England (58%), and the United States (66%). Within the subjects of English/language arts and media arts/studies standards, improving reasoning and communication skills is the primary focus of standards across the three countries.

Whereas Australia and the United States focus more attention on improving reasoning and communication skills (31% and 44%, respectively), England spends more of its discussion on developing democratic attitudes in students (33% versus 22% in the other two countries' curricula). Within the subjects of civics/citizenship, all three countries spend most of their standards on developing attitudes toward democracy; this indicator is seen far less within English/language arts and media arts/studies for all three countries, with just between 2.5% and 5.5% across the board.

Personal growth through media and other skills development was the third most discussed area across the countries, with the United States allotting the least content (6%) to this indicator theme. Though one of the least discussed in the civics/citizenship standards, this theme's indicators were referenced the second highest number of times within the subjects of English/language arts with a range of 11% to 23%, and media arts/studies with a range of 21.6% to 29.5%.

Though variant with regard to its position within the civics/citizenship and English/language arts standards for the three countries, the standards' bid to address general socio-cultural and youth-based issues saw reasonable coverage in Australia (16%) and England (9%) curricula, but being only 3% of the U.S. standards discussion.

Within the Australian standards, this indicator was rated more highly than improving reasoning and communication skills overall (20.83% versus 17.19%). Within the English/language arts standards, general socio-cultural and youth-based concerns were well established in the Australian standards (15.92%) but represented less than 1% of the discussion within the England and U.S. content.

The role of media practices and other social institutions in society was the second least prominent indicator theme across all three countries, receiving just 1% of coverage in the U.S. standards. As with the theme of developing personal growth through media and other competencies, however, the findings on this indicator are largely predicated on the significant amount of content dedicated to these topics within the media arts/studies standards only for Australia and England. Were data from both these subjects to be extracted from the aggregate findings for each country, the numbers would appear at lot more similar across these two themes in particular. Table 12 offers a view of aggregate findings for the subjects of civics/citizenship and English/language arts only.

Table 12

Comparison of Indicators without Media Arts/Studies Standards for Australia, England, and the United States by Percentage

Country	Indicators*						Other
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Australia	31	19	22	8	15	1	7
England	25	9	33	6	11	3	13
United States	44	3	22	1	6	6	18

Note. * A = Reasoning and communication skills
 B = Socio-cultural and youth-based issues
 C = Attitudes toward democracy
 D = Role of media and other social institutions
 E = Personal development via media and other competencies
 F = Teacher role in facilitating students' democratic/critical experiences

Across the curricula examined, references to the role of the teacher in facilitating students' democratic and critical learning experiences were scant. It was the least featured within Australia's (1%) and England's (3%) standards and a mere 6% across the U.S. curricula. The indicator theme was most referenced within English/language arts for England (12.82%) and the United States (6.94%), but was less than 1% of the Australian English standards. The civics/citizenship and media literacy findings were significantly low, being 1% or less for Australia and not discussed within the England standards.

The "other" indicator, noted across these findings, was an initial holding area for areas of the standards content regarded as extemporaneous to this study. After careful reassessment through the three iterative rounds of coding, the data that remained in this category included items that do not directly relate to any of the other indicators, such as mathematics literacy and geography standards; general statements of achievement, statutory guidance, overall considerations, and guidelines; test guidelines unrelated to the role of the teacher; and extended English/language arts guidelines related to phonics, handwriting, spelling, speech, etc.

While the approaches to standards in each country were not necessarily unique with regard to the topics discussed, the approach to the three subjects explored, the amount of discussion allotted, and the content dedicated to that discussion within the whole are different. Table 13 expresses the hierarchical position each indicator holds within the standards for each of the three countries.

Table 13

Hierarchy of Themes Expressed in Curricula Across Australia (AU), England, and the United States (US)

Theme	Curriculum							
	<u>Civics/Citizenship</u>			<u>English/ Language Arts</u>			<u>Media Arts/Studies</u>	
	AU	England	US	AU	England	US	AU	England
Reasoning and communication skills	3 rd	2 nd	2 nd	1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st
Socio-cultural/youth-based issues	2 nd	3 rd	3 rd	3 rd	5 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd
Attitudes toward democracy	1 st	1 st	1 st	4 th	3 rd	4 th	5 th	5 th
Role of media/other social institutions	4 th	4 th	5 th	6 th	5 th	6 th	3 rd	4 th
Personal growth via media/skills development	6 th	5 th	6 th	2 nd	1 st	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd
Teacher role in students' critical/democratic experiences	5 th	6 th	4 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	6 th	6 th

Analysis of Differences Across Countries

Across all indicators, the most disparity is evidenced in the three indicators: (1) socio-cultural and youth-based concerns, (2) personal growth via media production and other skills development, and (3) reasoning and communication skills improvement. The Australian standards dedicated much more attention to the theme of socio-cultural and youth indicators in comparison to England and the United States. By comparison, England dedicated the least content to this theme within its English/language arts standards, whereas with the United States, both civics/citizenship and English/language

arts references were low. While all being on the low end of the discussion content, the role of the teacher in facilitating democratic and critical learning experiences is variable across countries, the only exception being England standards' comparatively high references to this theme within its English standards. Reasoning and communication skills improvement provided an interesting comparison, ranging from 23% to 44% across the countries.

Civics and citizenship. Within the civics and citizenship curricular standards analyzed, attention to general socio-cultural and youth-based issues was most disparate. The teacher role in facilitating students' critical and democratic learning experiences also varied most across the three countries. Whereas for all countries, dealing with general socio-cultural and youth-based issues was the second (Australia) or third most referenced themes within the hierarchy; England and the United States dedicated a sparse amount of their discussion to this theme. The teacher's role in facilitating students' critical and democratic experiences was low across all standards within this subject. However, England's concise curriculum framework had no references to this indicator and therefore this topic was positioned last on the hierarchy of indicators in the England standards overall. In contrast, whereas the U.S. references to this theme were also low, it was fourth (or highest) in a hierarchy where the bottom most three indicators across all three countries ranged between 0 and 5%.

Socio-cultural and youth-based issues. Across the five sub-indicators within general socio-cultural and youth-based issues, the U.S. civics standards had the most coverage, presenting four sub-indicators: influence of media, identity, intercultural awareness, and youth-based issues. The influence of media had no place within the

England civics standards and the Australian standards did not address youth-based concerns. Awareness surrounding materialism and the commodification of culture was the fifth sub-indicator analyzed within this category and received no attention in any of the countries' curricula.

Aside from the disparate level of discussion allotted to these sub-categories, the civics/citizenship standards also have different foci. Within U.S. curricula, how media influences individuals, interest groups, and government was explored. In addition, as part of an exploration of citizen roles, rights, and responsibilities, students analyze the qualifications of political candidates, including their political advertisements. The Australian standards explore the influence of media, including social media in shaping identities and attitudes toward diversity, and how media shapes political choice.

Youth-based concerns within the U.S. standards were all focused on health promotion, safety, and prevention, whereas the England standards analyzed crime and factors affecting the crime rate in society in general. As part of the civics standards, students explore the nature, purpose, and effect of various sentences and punishment for offences and strategies to reduce crime, which includes crimes perpetrated by youth. Figure 7 illustrates the differences across the indicators listed previously.

The civics/citizenship standards explore the teacher's role in facilitating students' democratic and critical learning experiences across two sub-categories: Australia discusses inclusive pedagogy and overall holistic curricula, whereas the United States discusses inclusive pedagogy and high teacher expectation. The other two sub-indicators, holistic assessment and teacher-led curriculum development, are not discussed in any

country's documents and England has no discussion of the five indicators within its citizenship studies standards.

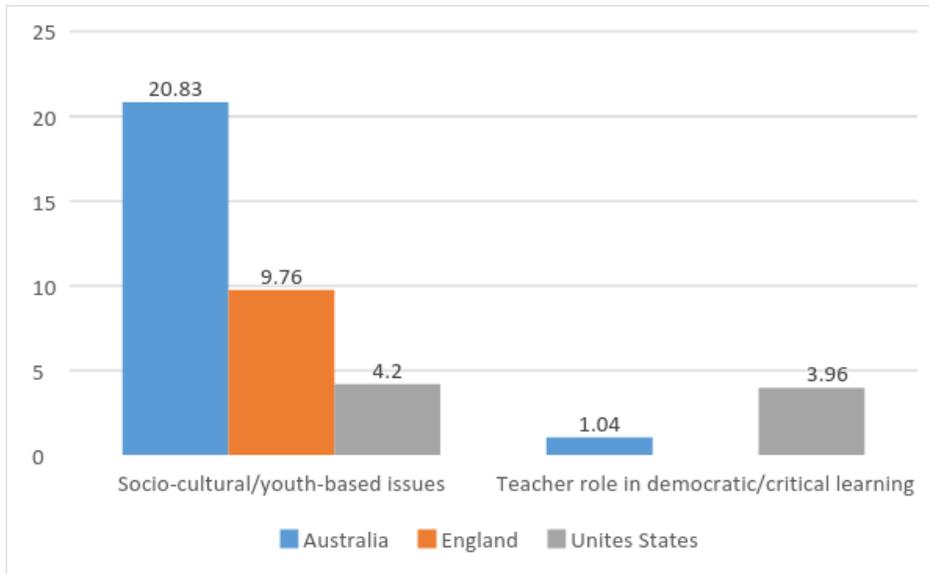


Figure 7. Observed differences in democratic/media literacies in Australia, England, and United States standards for civics and citizenship education. Socio-cultural and youth-based issues was the most disparate indicator between countries.

Inclusive practices are a feature of both the Australia and U.S. discussions. The Australia preamble to the civics and citizenship standards makes a general statement regarding teachers' use of the scope and sequence to assist in planning teaching and learning programs for diverse learners. The U.S. standards refer primarily to inclusive practices regarding ELD. In addition, the U.S. national assessment framework for civics also encourages the use of test measures that alleviate bias based on race, class, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and language spoken at home (NAGB, 2014, p. 12). The U.S. standards also speak to varying the level of complexity of test items as appropriate for students based on the course content, cognitive development, and reading level.

There is a single reference to high teacher expectations in U.S. standards and to holistic curriculum development in the Australian civics and citizenship standards. The

U.S. standards underscore the need for teachers to “ask high level, text specific questions... requiring high level, complex tasks and assignments” (CPALMS, n.d.b, p. 2). The preamble to the Australian civics and citizenship standards notes that the civics curriculum is designed as a continuum of learning.

English/language arts. Within the English/language arts curricular standards analyzed, three indicators were found to be disparate across the countries: improving reasoning and communication skills, general socio-cultural and youth-based issues, and teacher role in facilitating students’ critical and democratic learning experiences. Improving reasoning and communication skills and general socio-cultural and youth-based issues were most disparate. Improving reasoning and communication skills differed regarding how widely the indicator was referenced, whereas socio-cultural and youth-based issues were additionally varied with respect to their position within the countries’ hierarchy of indicators.

Improving reasoning and communication skills. Though improving reasoning and communication skills was the indicator referenced most infrequently in the English/language arts curricula in all three countries, there was considerable difference in focus across curricular standards. Of the seven sub-indicators analyzed, the standards across the countries primarily addressed media deconstruction, problem-based and critical inquiry experiences, self-reflection on media production and consumption, and using media to interpret information. Whereas all three countries concentrated the bulk of their discussion across three variables, Australia standards were relatively evenly referenced across media deconstruction, problem-based and critical inquiry experiences, and using media to interpret information. England focused more on media deconstruction

and critical inquiry, whereas the United States heavily referenced problem-based and inquiry experiences along with using media to interpret information.

Whereas the England standards address other areas common to the three curricula, including collaboration, discussion, debate, and critical experiences with media, problem-based experiences are not enumerated within the English (subject) standards. Media deconstruction within the both Australia and U.S. standards examine both textual and digital media, whereas England focuses on text. Problem-based and critical inquiry experiences is the most referenced sub-indicator for Australia.

Socio-cultural and youth-based issues. The sub-indicators that were most disparate within the themes of socio-cultural and youth-based issues concerned the politics of identity. Youth-based concerns, the commodification of culture, the influence of media on society, and intercultural awareness were the other sub-indicators explored. The sub-indicator of identity politics is prominently established within the Australian standards, whereas it is absent from England and U.S. English/language arts standards.

At the heart of the Australian standards is the discussion regarding identity of language as emergent and evolving, and as influenced by history, culture, and media. All three countries' standards describe language as evolving; with the Australian curriculum standards describing the contributions of its indigenous peoples as central to literary culture. The standards also speak to how language use can have inclusive or exclusive, empowering or disempowering, social effects on people. Students are required to identify stereotypes and prejudice in texts; assess how texts written on social issues, such as racism, may contribute to social change; explain differences in point of view in texts based on culture, gender, and age; and evaluate how similarities and differences in ethical

positions across different cultures are represented in text. Media representation (textual) through language, structural, and visual choices is also explored in the Australian English standards. Figure 8 illustrates the differences across three indicators listed previously.

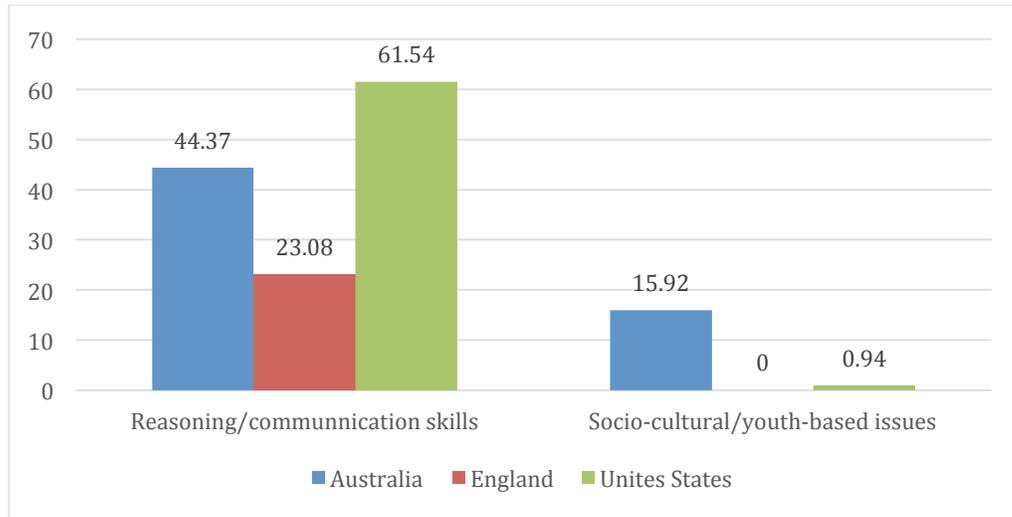


Figure 8. Observed difference in democratic/media literacies in Australia, England, and United States standards for English/language arts education. Improving reasoning and communication skills was the most disparate indicator between countries.

Media arts/studies. Within the Media arts/studies curricular standards analyzed for Australia and England, attention to socio-cultural and youth-based issues, in tandem with the role of media practices and other social institutions, were most disparate indicators.

Socio-cultural and youth-based issues. The sub-indicators of media’s influence on society and the politics of identity were dealt with similarly within both countries’ curricula, whereas youth-based concerns did not feature in either’s standards. Intercultural awareness was discussed in the Australia media arts standards only, whereas the materialism and the commodification of culture was referenced in the England standards only. Intercultural awareness was closely associated with identity within the Australia media arts standards, and had a distinctive art focus that explored issues of

media representations of shared social, cultural values, and beliefs, and analysis of these portrayals. An awareness of the issues surrounding materialism and commodification of culture was presented through a discussion of the role of technology in reaching and identifying audiences, and knowledge of audience response theories of uses and gratification.

Role of media and other social institutions. The role of political and social institutions was referenced only in the Australian media arts standards. Whereas as the role of the free press was absent from the Media arts/studies discussions in both countries, media ownership and economics and institutional media production techniques and practices were indicated. The Australian standards require students to understand the role of political and social institutions and private versus public media programming. It further calls for understandings of the social and ethical responsibilities associated with producers of artwork in institutional contexts. Figure 9 illustrates the differences across the indicators discussed previously.

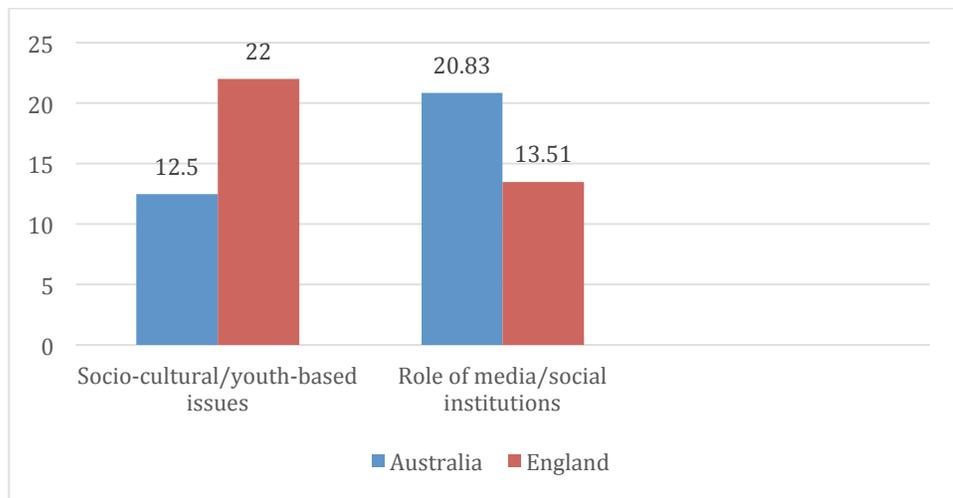


Figure 9. Observed differences across democratic/media literacies in Australia and England standards for media arts/studies education. Socio-cultural and youth-based issues, and the role of media and other social institutions were the most disparate indicators between countries.

Summary

Differences in the findings were identified across three primary themes: identity politics, problem-based and critical inquiry experiences, and the inclusion of digital and new media as points of inquiry and evaluation and skills development. Across all civics, citizenship, and media arts, Australia is more encompassing of the indicators analyzed due to a cross-curricula focus on all three indicator themes. Though Australia identifies all literary texts referenced within its standards as media and points of inquiry and evaluation, its English standards do not speak to the role of media as a socio-political institution. Whereas England also has cross-curricula coverage of problem-based and critical inquiry experiences and the inclusion of digital and new media as points of inquiry, evaluation, and skills development in citizenship studies and media studies, it registers low on addressing both the politics of identity and media-related inquiry within the English standards. In contrast, while the United States incorporates problem-based and inquiry experiences across both civics and English language arts curricula, its references to identity politics and digital and new media as points of inquiry are low in both curricula.

Though the countries registered similar overall findings for the role of media, this indicator was among the lowest across all six indicators analyzed, and was low across all subjects. Personal growth through the development of media production and other competencies was infrequently addressed across civics and citizenship and media arts/studies. English/language arts also scored poorly on developing attitudes toward democracy across the board.

Across the Australian standards, the issue of personal growth through the development of media production and other competencies was low within the civics standards. Perhaps due to the civics and media arts being required subjects, the English standards had little discussion regarding developing democratic attitudes as well as to the role of media. In tandem, media arts had very little discussion surrounding the development of democratic attitudes.

Except within media studies, England infrequently referenced socio-cultural and youth-based issues. Like Australia, personal growth via media and other competency development was low within citizenship studies curricula, perhaps due to compensation within media studies standards. Also, similar to Australia, England standards for English totally neglected the development of toward democracy, perhaps due to coverage within citizenship standards. Though England has a media studies program, which may be one reason for the lack of standards related to the role of media within both citizenship and English (subject) standards, media studies is an elective at the secondary school level. As with the Australia standards, the English standards for media studies had very little discussion of developing attitudes toward democracy perhaps due to coverage of this indicator in the citizenship standards.

In tandem with both Australia and England, there was little discussion on the role of media and other social institution policy and practice with both U.S. civics and English language arts standards. Like England, socio-cultural and youth-based issues were low in reference within the English language arts standards. Whereas the role of media was addressed in the media arts/studies curricular standards for the other two countries, the

United States has no stand-alone media literacy curricula, and instead incorporates these standards cross-curricularly within other subjects.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

Summary

This research study compared the presence of democratic/media literacies in state-endorsed civics and citizenship, English/English language arts, and media arts/studies curricula standards across Australia, England, and the United States. Whereas Australia and England are regarded as leaders in media literacy education policy (Fedorov, 2008; Hobbs, 1998; Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 1998; Martens, 2010), the United States continues to trail other countries in its media literacy efforts (Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 1998, 2003; Martens, 2010; Yates, 2004), despite being the number one media producer in the world (Potter, 2004; PWC Global, 2017).

A multi-theoretical, interdisciplinary approach (Diem et al., 2014) guided the study. The study provided a baseline of current curricular standards with respect to the inclusion or preclusion of democratic and critical media literacies (Kubey, 1998, 2003; McDougall & Livingstone, 2014) and sought to contextualize the ideological lenses influencing the framing of these literacies (Bay-Cheng, Fitz, Alizaga, & Zucker, 2015; Jerome & Bhargava, 2013; Kellner & Share, 2005; Taylor, 1997). Democratic education and media literacy are features in curriculum standards across the countries analyzed. In addition, authors have noted that the media literacy features presumed to be embodied within curriculum are often absent (Wallis & Buckingham, 2016). New over-crowded national curriculum requirements are also noted as a major challenge for delivering

effective so-called soft-skills education (Rogow, 2011). The following research questions guided the exploration of democratic/critical media literacies within national and state curriculum:

- RQ1: To what extent is democratic education and/or critical media literacy content present in educational standards of the national and state curricula of Victoria, Australia; England; and Florida, the United States?
- RQA: How are these representations different across English/English language arts, civics and citizenship, and media studies/literacy standards, within each country?
- RQB: How are educational standards different across countries?

The methodology employed involved the use of qualitative approaches to analyze the content of curriculum standards. These approaches were critically oriented and supported ideological analysis of the more prominent ideas and assumptions, regarding media literacy and democratic education, presented in state-mandated curriculum. This study, therefore, sought to go beyond a description of current occurrences in curriculum, to review the social impact of curriculum policy as suggested by Ball (1994, 1998), Merriam (2009), Creswell (2013), Taylor et al. (1997), and others. An approach employing qualitative content analysis and critical policy analysis, framed within Bereday's (1964) comparative inquiry structure, guided the study. The procedures employed in data selection, coding and analysis, were outlined in Chapter 3.

The ensuing discussion examines the similarities and differences in the countries' curricular standards against the backdrop of the neo-liberal influences present within the curriculum discourse. The argument presented therefore explores the findings in the

context of the types of knowledge and thinking privileged in curricula, how citizenship and the citizen is defined, and the possible implications this has on teaching and learning practices. Bay-Cheng et al.'s (2015) neoliberal subscales of system inequality, competition, personal wherewithal, and government interference frame the discussion of these findings.

Three key areas of disparity were identified across the countries' curricular standards and are related to the following themes: (1) the politics of identity, (2) problem-based and critical inquiry experiences, and (3) digital and new media as points of inquiry and evaluation. The countries' approaches to these themes vary considerably. The ideological underpinnings for the manifestations in curriculum policy are also expressed in varying degrees across each country and subject. The ensuing explanation engages a metaxological approach in seeking to eschew dualistic and polarized interpretations (Kearney, 2003) and unwarranted evaluative conclusions of what is a complex subject in order to achieve what Sherwin (1988) termed as logical neatness.

Ideology, Identity, and Citizenship

The role of curriculum is not only to define the knowledges and skills of citizenship and identity, but to define and address social problems through democratic civic learning (Banks, 2008; Banks et al., 2001; Gay, 1997; 2013; Grant & Sleeter, 1998; Stoddard, 2014). A democratic conception of identity and citizenship is communitarian versus individualistic and transformative versus voluntaristic (Akkaymak, 2015; Jerome & Bhargava, 2013), whereas the neoliberal curriculum additionally underscores a reduction of social responsibility (Davies & Bansel, 2007) and champions competition and meritocracy as necessary for individual advancement and societal development

(Akkaymak, 2015; Eagleton, 1991; Patrick, 2013; D. B. Saunders, 2010). Within the theme of the politics of identity and citizenship, neoliberal influences in curriculum are evident in how certain structures and outcomes are legitimized.

Identity and citizenship are invariably linked within the curricular standards of all three countries, both discussed as vital aspects of democracy and democratic learning. Across the three curricula, identity is recognized, for the most part, as multifaceted and complex. Citizenship is thus defined as requisite knowledges, skills, attitudes, and dispositions toward democracy within the ambit of personal, national, and global characterizations of identity (ACARA, 2012; DfE, 2014a; NAGB, 2014). Notwithstanding, though each country's standards attend to defining and developing broad-based democratic knowledges and skills, both England and the U.S. standards fail to reasonably attend to the types of social critique vital to sustaining true democracy, and so these countries spend less of their curricular focus on confronting issues of race, class, gender, socio-economic status, cultural commodification, and youth-based concerns, as compared to Australia. In addition, of the three countries, England dedicates the least discussion to understanding the influence of media on personal and societal identity formation.

Of the three countries, Australia has the most balanced representation of the relationship between citizens' rights and responsibilities, the nature of community and identity, and the model of the democratic/media literate citizen within its standards. Whereas the challenging and critical dimension of active citizenship is somewhat present in all three countries' curricula, with all three dedicating much of their discussion to the democratic citizenship issues (see Table 11).

As noted in Figure 7, Australia (20.83%) dedicates significantly more of its standards to the discussion of socio-cultural and youth-based issues than England (9.76%) and the United States (4.2%).the study identified the following: a limited discussion of identity within the Australian standards; sparse attention to the role of media and a limited definition of citizenship in English curricula; and a lack of attention to critical assessments of identity, youth issues, and culture across all countries. Apple (2014) noted that the neoliberal movement in education in several countries across the developed world has seen a linguistic re-articulation of education policy that divorces the terms associated with democratic education from their progressive underpinnings, accompanied by major shifts in identity.

Australia presents a more critical conception of identity and advances the discussion beyond national identity to question different cultural, religious identities as they are both expressed and interpreted. The curriculum standards frame identity as perception - how we view ourselves, how we view others, as well as how others perceive us based on the expression of these identities. It further suggests that these perceptions of self and “other” impact national identity and sense of belonging in Australia’s multicultural society (ACARA, 2012, 2015a; VCAA, n.d.a).

In contrast to Australia and the United States, England expresses a national identity based in its socio-political and economic linkages within the United Kingdom (which includes the nation-states of Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland) (DfE, 2014a). The U.S. discussion of regional identity is of a more geo-political bent, focusing on how resources such as climate and location influence how people settle, develop economies,

and establish governments in North America, and how cultural diffusion occurs because of these geographical realities (CPALMS, 2015, n.d.a).

Identity and the Australian Standards

Though Australia manages to achieve the greatest level of balance of democratic and critical media literacies across its standards, with respect to the three subjects explored, civics and citizenship, English and media arts, its treatment of identity is limited. While not overtly neoliberal in its treatment of the subject, Australia's cross curriculum priorities are highly political (Australian Government, 2014; DET, 2015; Patty, 2010) and no less ideological.

The Australia standards reasonably attend to issues of diversity and focus on the role of shared values in ensuring societal cohesion. There is also focus on active citizenship and on developing solutions to social issues. Identity is explored with respect to various attitudes toward diversity and how a sense of belonging is achieved in the national context. Rather than a focus on the individual, the standards focus on how groups participate and contribute to civic life. In addition, rather than an obscure personal obligation to an innocuous society or democracy, the standards address the rights and responsibilities of citizens toward each other (ACARA, 2015a). Nonetheless, there are two aspects of the identity and citizenship challenge the notion of democracy: (1) the concept of "fair go," which is defined as a core value of democratic citizenship, and (2) the three cross-curriculum priorities defined within the standards as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia, and/or Sustainability (ACARA, n.d.b).

“Fair Go.” The concept of “fair go” in the Australian curriculum is enumerated as one of the democratic values underpinning the society. According to the civics and citizenship curriculum standards, students learn how values such as freedom, equality, compassion, civility, and “fair go” promote societal cohesion (ACARA, 2016). The notion of “fair go” suggests that all Australians have an equal opportunity to participate in social life and to succeed. Despite being an egalitarian notion of equality, the concept is somewhat misguided, as it does not necessarily offer social justice solutions to the problem of inequity. P. Saunders (2004) noted that the notion of “fair go” is a political value and one that is difficult to define. In essence, “fair go” means many different things and is manipulated based on who is using the value to defend a political position.

“Fair go” ubiquitously undergirds the Australian approach to the teaching and learning of democratic principles of citizenship. The concept of “fair go” advocates equal access to opportunity to get wealth for individuals (Fair Go Australia, 2015; Ozdowski, 2012) and gave rise to free, compulsory education as a means for accumulating individual cultural capital (P. Saunders, 2004). Rather than being egalitarian, the early renderings of “fair go” were meritocratic and based on an equal opportunity to compete. In this sense, “fair go” represents the neoliberal consensus that the individual is an entrepreneur of self, described by Eagleton (1991), Davies and Bansel (2007), and D. B. Saunders (2010) as one whose choice, beliefs, and actions must enhance their personal human capital. Inequality then is inviolable and pervasive as individuals will amass social, economic, and cultural capital as proportionate to their individual efforts and innate abilities.

Apple (2014) noted, “Words such as democracy, equality, and freedom become eviscerated, drained of their critical histories and of the social movements that established

them as key elements in the formation of more progressive social and educational policies” (p. xix). Similar to such expressions, “fair go” represents an ideological imposition of notions of fairness that normalize existing societal conditions. If everyone has had a “fair go” then the inequality that exists in society must be either the responsibility or fault of the disenfranchised, or it is a case that equality may be a thing to strive for, but not necessarily ever achieved with respect to distributive ends.

“Fair go” therefore belies the notion of what Cook and Hegtvedt (1983) regarded as distributive justice, where there is fair exchange, fair allocation, and fair procedures. However, as the authors also noted, several factors influence how rules of fairness are applied, such as the types of relationships among group members; cognitive mediating factors; number of relevant inputs; and personal and situational factors, including self-interest. Exploring “fair go” as a value apart from attending to the complex notions of identity politics and citizenship that affect and effect its actual application is uncritical and fails to achieve the ideals of true democratic education.

In the United States, for example, redistributive justice policies such as those associated with affirmative action and victim compensation are meant to countervail the systemic inequality that is pervasively institutionalized across all sectors of society. However, without critically exploring the roots of such policies, particularly in education, one may be led to regard affirmative action as a panacea for systemic inequality. Similarly, the notion of “fair go,” presented in the standards without a critical exploration of the meaning, application, and purpose of this value, and as directly related to concepts of power, collective action, culture, and social change, possibly does no more than reinforce the status quo. Furthermore, the “fair go” concept in and of itself is indicative of

economic rationality in consideration of the distribution of economic output based on the concepts of allocation and exchange of economic resources, in which self-interest plays a fundamental role.

Active Citizenship in England

Apple (2014) noted that within the new ideological movement influencing social life, subjectivities are transformed in tandem with what it means to be responsive and effective. In tandem, the evaluation of responsiveness and effectiveness are rationalized and used to reorganize the state. However, globalization and the accompanying redefinitions of citizenship have resulted in a convergence of policies in lieu of distinct national models of inclusion and exclusion (Van Houdt, Suvarierol, & Schinkel, 2011). Many Western nation-states have developed similar social policies, particularly in light of increased immigration and a need to integrate newcomers in a manner that fosters social cohesion. Responsibility for self, community regulation, and active citizenship have, as such, become pivotal concepts in neoliberal strategy (Van Houdt et al., 2011).

Notwithstanding, the England standards define effective citizenship in what may be considered passive terms. The primary evidence of neoliberal influence resides in the skills touted by the standards as necessary for civic participation and the limited reference to critical assessment of identity in the English context. Additionally, even within the dedicated media studies standards, discussion of the influence of media on individuals and society is, at best, vague.

The neoliberal conceptions of identity and citizenship are defined as voluntaristic, individualistic, and minimalist (Hall Jameison, 2013; Jerome & Bhargava, 2013). The England standards fail in that, while they indicate impetus to participate in political and

civic life, there is no directive to critically assess of any issues presented in curriculum. This supports Jerome and Bhargava's (2013) critique of England's citizenship studies curriculum as defining the "good" (p. 6) citizen as active and helpful versus radical – critical and challenging. The skills of active citizenship defined within the preamble to the national citizenship curriculum, for example, are limited to critical thinking, debating political questions, money management, and future financial planning (DfE, 2014a).

Unlike Australia, critical questioning is not a function of this aspect of the civics curriculum in England. England focuses on diverse identities and the need for mutual respect and understanding. In addition, the citizenship studies standards denote citizenship rights as "the precious liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom" (DfE, 2014b, p. 215). While on the surface this may appear democratically communitarian, Van Houdt et al.'s (2011) theory suggests that this may be indicative of a shift toward neoliberal-communitarian citizenship, which characterizes citizenship as a type of contract and an earned, prized possession that can be lost.

Neoliberal-communitarianism is considered a political strategy that emerged in Western culture to regulate the extension of the privileges of citizenship to non-citizens. Within the neoliberal-communitarian framework, there is no discussion of the role of the political establishment in seeing to the democratic product of an equitable and just society. Rather, the greater responsibility for progress is relegated to the community or local region, with the largest share being allocated to the individual (Van Houdt et al., 2011).

The neoliberal-communitarian approach is evident across all three countries. Within each country's context, the citizen is positioned as an individual actor with the

capacity and responsibility to architecture solutions to social problems through democratic participation and collaborative action. Collective action or citizens working together through various organizations, such as the media (referred to in the England standards only), non-governmental organizations, and political interest groups, hold government to account. For example, the English standards for civics and citizenship refer to citizens attempting to change or improve their communities through collaborative group actions that address public policy, challenge injustice, or resolve local community issues (DfE, 2015). While this may resonate as liberatory citizenship, the responsibility for social change appears to be solely within the purview of citizens, as the discussion excludes the role and responsibilities of the state or the elected representatives who form the government.

In tandem, the relationship between the individual and government is portrayed as linear and uni-directional, with no discussion of government's responsibility toward citizens. There is much discussion of the procedures involved in developing laws, establishing representational governments, and achieving separation of powers. However, there is no discussion of the responsibilities of government toward its citizens. Within all three countries, there is hyper-focus on the study of the constitution and laws, with the United States even engaging historical documents as literature across the national and state standards for English language arts. Despite this, there is no discussion of the responsibilities associated with holding the powers of government accountable a single reference to government monitoring and influencing government in the civics assessment benchmarks for Florida.

Civic and political participation is critical to developing the types of social capital that sustain democracy through ongoing community renewal. Whereas the Australia standards speak to “the role of the citizen in Australian government and society” (VCAA, n.d.a, p. 6), both England and the United States refer to a conception of that role as peripheral to the political structure. Within such an arrangement, a different level of power is ascribed to the citizen versus government. Within the standards of England and the United States, the government is defined as a decision-making body, particularly on matters concerning economics, welfare, health, and education. Local political structures are important for mobilizing local (community and even state) policy decision-making and reform processes. A separation of the citizen’s roles from the broader political structure essentially defines those roles based on the needs of those in power, rather than based on the collective.

Intercultural Awareness and Multiculturalism

Intercultural awareness and multiculturalism are treated differently within the countries. Banks et al. (2001), Gay (2013), A. Luke (1992), and others speak to the importance of collective engagement as a means for developing literacies, skills, and attitudes for positive relationships across racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups. Whereas all three countries speak to citizenship and democracy as characterized by individual, local, national, and global relationships, each framework explores multicultural understandings within curriculum from different vantage points: England and the United States offer an apolitical curriculum, whereas Australia attends to an overtly political conception of its standards.

Interestingly, the England citizenship studies standards make a distinction between “participation in democracy” and “participation in society” (DfE, 2015, p. 6). This seems to acknowledge that democracy transcends the public scope of activity and enters into the personal and private spheres of individual life. This denies an isomorphic treatment of identity as equal across individual and group domains. In addition to acknowledging the barriers and opportunities for participation on an individual citizen level, the standards explore digital democracy as a means for political engagement. This supports what Banks (2008) referred to as a cosmopolitan view of multicultural citizenship, which considers global as well as national, local, and personal perspectives and consequences of decisions.

Each of the three countries discuss the two-way relationship of influence between local or national law and policy and international roles and obligations. The standards all refer to the role and responsibilities of government at the global level with respect to providing foreign aid, peacekeeping, upholding human rights, and other nationally ratified conventions and declarations. Australia requires students to research the conventions related to the elimination of racial discrimination, child protection rights, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, noting that this particular international declaration has shaped national policy regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Whereas the Australian civics standards seek to engage in a discussion of identity that is inclusive on its surface, this undertaking is contentious for several reasons. It seeks to tackle the politics of representation by blanketing its entire standards framework with overarching cross-curriculum priorities related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

People's heritages, literary, and other social contributions; and Australia's links to Asia. It, as such, frames identity and citizenship as chiefly embodied within these culturally delineated priorities. While this may serve a restorative justice and prejudice reduction that Banks and McGee Banks (2007) underscored, this may also marginalize other ethnic identities (DET, 2015), particularly for already minoritized groups.

The cross-curriculum priorities within the Australian curriculum essential narrow the frames of identity, citizenship, and democracy. In addition to addressing the histories and cultures of indigenous peoples, the Australian standards have created a new hegemony through these curriculum priorities. The definitions of citizenship and identity, and what counts as knowledge are framed by limited social contexts. In support of this viewpoint, reviewers of the Australian National Curriculum have called for a reconceptualization of the cross-curriculum priorities to include "teaching and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and sustainability explicitly, and only where educationally relevant, in the mandatory content of the curriculum" (Australian Government, Department of Education, 2014, p. 7).

Whereas both Australia and England proffer a pluralistic vision of national identity and multiculturalism, the U.S. standards offer an almost unitary view of identity and citizenship. In addition to spending a small fraction of the standards discussing socio-cultural and youth-based issues, the U.S. standards across English language arts and civics do not delineate or allude to complex and multifaceted identities. By extension, though citizenship is defined within multiple levels of personal, national, and global spaces, identity is positioned within an appeal to common culture and fails to discuss the

problematic histories or to address, racial, ethnic, or cultural difference. This effectively denies the standards the political thrust necessary for critical engagement with the concepts of identity and citizenship. While developing understandings around a common culture may have positive effects; however, understanding and addressing the root causes of disparities in society is critical to achieving equity (Giroux, 1993).

Language, Religion and *Homo oeconomicus*

Per Kincheloe and McLaren (2002), hegemony legitimates social relations as natural and inevitable. The failure to confront issues of race, class, gender, and socio-economic status in standards therefore amounts to a failure to confront the status quo, which results in a perpetuation of hegemony. The Australia and U.S. English/English language arts standards assess literary authors' conception of individuals, events, and groups. U.S. curricula, however, offer little discussion of the socio-political contexts that inform these views and how their promulgation through literature shape broader socio-cultural understandings of individuals, events, and groups. England neglects world literature and offers an ostensible critique of text that is largely approached from a perspective that positions literature as the view of individual author(s) and views from which identities can be extracted and interpreted, without examination of the socio-cultural and socio-political context of texts.

Across all three countries, English/English language arts standards focus primarily on establishing structural knowledge of English through writing, speaking, and listening. However, there is also no assessment of how media technology changes the scope of authorship or what counts as knowledge, or how media communications technology influences the social construction of knowledge.

Australia and England feature religious identity as important to the definition of citizenship, whereas the United States defines religion as having historical influence on individual identity and character. Australia further defines this as a vehicle for participation in civic life and underscores the pluralistic, multi-faith nature of Australian society, though it distinctively enumerates the Christocentric heritage upon which the society is developed. The United States holds this discussion in broad terms with respect to the historical influences on shaping identity and character, including, ethnic, cultural, personal, and national factors. The England standards, however, go a step further by mandating corporate worship as an integral part of the school curriculum. The standards, however, do not state how this corporative type of religious activity accounts for the plurality of religious persuasions represented within its school populations, and presupposes an amenable Judeo-Christian norm for these activities. On the other hand, whereas England mandates religious education as part of its national standards (DfE, 2014b), it is an optional subject for Australia (Victoria State Government, 2017b), and may be incorporated as a topic of instruction based on historical, literary, or scientific relevance across U.S. standards (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], 2017).

Unlike, the United States, England includes a broader statement on identity. Nonetheless, while the England standards acknowledge societal discrimination on some level by including a statement regarding race, class, gender, and ability in its preamble to the national standards, the role of curriculum in addressing these issues is placed squarely within the scope of teachers' responses to addressing the needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and student groups. Hence, there is no discussion of these issues in the standards, thereby obfuscating the ability of education and schooling to address

these issues on a more systemic level through transforming student attitudes and dispositions toward race, class, gender, ability, and other aspects of identity politics.

Through this articulation, the England standards placement of the duty to address race, class, gender, discrimination, and such issues solely within the purview of the local teacher and school is ideological. This speaks to what Eagleton (1991) described as the reduction of the individual to *homo oeconomicus* or rational economic actor. For one, this suggests that students do not require societal or collective collaboration to address their needs or issues, as the challenges associated with race, class, gender, etc. are individual challenges. Rather than widespread social problems that need to be tackled and systematically addressed at the broader societal and school level and in curriculum and pedagogy, the individual teacher has sole responsibility to address these needs for individual students.

Techno-economic Terminology

Several authors have noted that the concept of a global knowledge economy and global competition drive educational policy reform and curriculum development (Ball, 1998; Davies & Bansel, 2007; Patrick, 2013). “When knowledge is seen as having different levels of economic value, and when that economic value becomes predominant, the complexities of defining the heuristic, epistemological, and ontological value of knowledge as a socially constructed phenomenon are lost” (Patrick, 2013, p. 4). In tandem with the knowledge economy, the promotion of market skills and competencies (Apple, 2001; Hursh, 2005) associated with employment and employability (Ball, 1998; Hyslop-Margison, 2000; Keating et al., 2013) influence techno-economic foci in curriculum. Keating et al. (2013) and Spring (2014) noted that the nationalization of

standards is often championed as a professed promotion of equity, despite a lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of such ventures.

College and career readiness is an overarching Florida state and U.S. national standard for, among other subjects, English language arts and literacy in history/social studies. History/social studies standards include civics, and these anchor standards are at all levels of the K-12 school curriculum (CCSSI, 2010). In addition, the state civics standards delineate a curriculum for advanced civics (CPALMS, n.d.b). Here the neoliberal idea that standardization prepares students for college and career readiness, and that college and career readiness requires some special type of knowledge, is readily invoked across U.S. standards. The very use of the term “career readiness” invokes market terminology and the corresponding commodification of knowledge (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Patrick, 2013).

The U.S. civics standards call for identifying people of different races and genders, renown for innovation and entrepreneurship. This supports the neoliberal rhetoric that gives primacy to creativity, and is evocative of notions of *homo oeconomicus*, where the individual is an entrepreneur and commodified individual whose merit lies in what he or she contributes to the market of scientific and innovative enterprise (Eagleton, 1991; D. B. Saunders, 2010). Hakala et al., (2015) noted the intentionality with which technology and innovation are incorporated in school curriculum as a vehicle for national success and development. The authors noted that the creativity discourse is often aligned with discussions of competitiveness, quality teaching, research and development, and an innovation friendly learning environment as central to national prosperity.

Though suggestions for democratic learning activities, including opportunities to participate in mock elections, student government activities, and mock trials, are present in all countries' curricula, service learning is missing from the discussion. Feldman, Pasek, Romer, and Hall Jamieson (2007) and Kahne and Sporte (2008) stated that service learning is integral to helping students develop a clear sense of how they fit into the broader community by empowering them to identify and address issues that truly matter to them. This corroborates the point of active citizenship and the associated transformative aspects of identity and citizenship are inadequately addressed across the three countries. The U.S. standards are heavily focused on political participation of youth with respect to voting and, to a lesser regard, to challenging public policy and actual problem solving.

In England, for instance, the skills described within the preamble to the citizenship standards note three areas of focus: (1) critical thinking and debate of political questions, (2) day-to-day money management, and (3) planning for future financial needs (DfE, 2014b). Note that economic skills are what the standards reference as more important for citizenship. A conception of curriculum that has been narrowed to financial independence and volunteering and effectually depoliticized is the result. It follows that missing collective action and community cohesion result in missing transformative action and a curriculum void of reflection and evaluation on social issues or critical media engagement for democratic learning.

In a passive conception of cooperative citizen efforts to improve communities, the citizenship standards connect volunteer groups and public institutions together with citizenship action. Once again, however, the conception is non-interrogative. The allusion

is to improve rather than transform their community. At the GCSE assessment level, students identify two examples of how citizens change or improve their communities through actions that address public policy, challenge injustice, or resolve local community issues (DfE, 2015). The community is, therefore, the locus of operation, with no discussion of the impact on wider society or the systemic issues that create local problems. The preeminence of a system of public policy that is adequate, or might require support rather than challenge, is proffered throughout the standards.

In addition, in both England and U.S. curricula, developing the skills to improve students' communities is theoretical and school-based. There are no references to engaging the community with students' work or developing students' literacies outside of the school setting. At the senior level of the secondary citizenship studies standards students are invited to engage in solving problems and contribute to society and to experience as well as evaluate these methods.

By extension, whereas both Australia and England look at other forms and systems of government, England includes non-democratic and governments across the world, whereas Australia confines its exploration to comparison with governments within the Asian region. The United States engages in a broader discussion of systems of government outside of the U.S. system of government, including socialism, communism, oligarchy, and autocracy (CPALMS, n.d.c). Nonetheless, in an unequivocal representation of neoliberal ideologies in curriculum, the U.S. standards compare various economic systems and market structures in answering the questioning of "(1) What to produce? (2) How to produce? and (3) For whom to produce?" (Florida State University, CPALMS, 2015, p. 5) as well as various credit, savings, and investment services

available to the consumer from financial institutions. In fact, an entire section of the civics standards is dedicated to exploring broad economic goals of “freedom, efficiency, equity, security, growth, price stability, and full employment” (CPALMS, 2015, p. 5) available to the consumer.

Problem-based and Critical Inquiry Learning

One of the skill sets often touted as part of democratic curriculum involves problem-based and critical inquiry experiences. Much inquiry-based learning is incorporated into the curricular standards of the three countries, and those learning experiences take place alongside the development of democratic knowledges and skills (as in the case of Australia). Notwithstanding, these activities often fall short with respect to the problem-based critical praxis that Freire (1993) delineated as involving student-led opportunities to address personally and socially relevant issues, concomitant with reflection and opportunities for transformative action.

Developing students’ reasoning and communication skills is among the most referenced indicators across the countries’ curricula. With the exception of Australia, it is the second most important category of competencies identified in standards, second only to developing attitudes toward democracy. Incidentally, the curricula’s focus on problem-based and critical inquiry experiences was largely concentrated within the English/English language arts standards across the three nation-states. While these learning areas were almost equal within civics and citizenship standards across the countries, English/English language arts coverage and focus were variable.

The civics and citizenship standards across all three countries attend to collaborative inquiry and some amount of problem-based learning. In liberation

education, teachers and students are viewed as active participants in opposing oppression and improving democracy (Freire, 1993; Giroux, 2008). Learners are to apply a basic moral concept to disparities in society's values, examine alternative views, and so determine a set of ethical guidelines for action (Gay, 1997) through a process leading to critical consciousness or conscientizacao (Freire, 1993). Problem-based learning experiences are particularly effective for achieving and acting on critical consciousness and enacting critical praxis that bridges the gap between theory and practice.

Problem-based inquiry concerns student-generated topics of study along with topics concerning the environment and contemporary issues. Australia's standards connect the mechanisms that shape society and culture across several topics. The call to research citizenship issues and actions, however, is not particularly critical as there is no attendance to the issues concerned with recognizing and questioning race, class, gender, or ability. Giroux (1993) noted that recognizing, understanding, and questioning power dichotomies is vital to critical praxis. Though the Australia civics and citizenship standards reference taking collective action to challenge injustice, they do not define or invoke social justice definitions of transformation where students apply their solutions outside of the walls of the classroom.

Power hierarchies must be interrogated for their power to impose certain knowledges, curriculum, and teaching upon those considered less economically or politically powerful (Gutek, 2014). This may be represented in Australia's attempt to impose cross-curriculum priorities concerned with incorporating the literary and cultural contributions and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across curriculum. While this move is politically mired due to the broad sweep with which this

was implemented (ACARA, 2012), there is no comparable attempt to address power hierarchies in either U.S. or England curricula. Banks and McGee Banks (2007) and Grant and Sleeter (1998) noted that providing students with opportunities to analyze social inequality and encouraging social action is critical to democratic education practice. While the U.S. standards speak to the rights accorded to African Americans and other groups by the U.S. Constitution, it is placed within a distinctively historical rather than contemporary or political context.

The powers of transformative action lie in the ability to not simply critically inquire but to critically reflect. Reflection enables individuals to read the world ethically and perform actions in it based on their values, ideologies, and experiences with difference (Giroux, 1993). Freire (1993) defined critical praxis as reflection and action directed at the structures that necessitate transformation. Within the neoliberal curriculum, reflection is perhaps regarded as an unnecessary enterprise, as learning for aesthetic engagement and purposes outside of those that entail economic ends is considered secondary. This supports Rogow's (2011) argument that a shift in focus has occurred where hard (versus soft) skills are given primacy in curriculum. As such, reflection is scarcely engaged in discussion within the standards.

Critical reflection is crucial to developing an informed response to social issues. It is through critical reflection, precursored by dialogue, that students build cultural competences and situational consciousness. In turn, this critical consciousness defines the parameters for social action. The Australia standards engage students in reflection on media production and their experiences with text across the subjects analyzed, making distinctive links with a discussion of historical, cultural, and social representations. In

contrast, both England and the United States refer to reflection only in their writing requirements for English/English language arts, effectively denying the type of reflection necessary for the development of critical consciousness. While Australian and U.S. references to critical reflection may be considered, in instances, superficial, England's level of problem-based and critical inquiry is non-existent in English and comparatively low across the two other subjects examined.

Gay (1997) noted that "education should embody the cultural heritages and experiences of the peoples who comprise the... [nation state]" (p. 6). It follows that there is no interrogation of the canon across any of the countries nor is there any mandate to include literature representative of multiple ethnicities. The England standards for English also do not include engagement with world literature. In tandem, the inquiry within the subject is relegated to text and literature to the exclusion of new and digital media. This equals no opportunity to question the representations across curriculum, including the social, cultural, political, racial, gender, and ideological backgrounds of its inclusions, and no opportunity to engage in critical media analysis as both a language and extension of the conventions of communicative language.

Jerome and Bhargava (2013) noted in their review of England citizenship standards that there is a focus on knowledge versus higher order concepts, skills, and experiences. This too can be seen within the English standards, where failure to engage students in questioning may preclude critical dialogue not just regarding the authors and authorial intentions of curriculum content itself, but also societal institutions that determine the power dynamics within curriculum. It is this critical dialogue that brings learners to a point of true democratic and critical consciousness as they evaluate the

assertions of the merits of equity, justice, and reciprocity as opposed to bureaucratic hierarchy; the assertions of the merits of warranted assertions as opposed to power and absolute knowledge; and the merits of a balance between autonomy and community solidarity as opposed to domination, coercion (Levin, 1998), and maintenance of the status quo.

(Un)critical Media Literacy

All three countries present aspects of their standards where the role of media is siloed from the curriculum's conceptions of identity and active citizenship. This supports what Druick (2016) described as the "corporate discourse of neoliberal citizenship" (p. 1128) in noting that

... media education and media literacy have had many different valences over the past century, but as they become more firmly ensconced in social, political, and economic institutions of the neoliberal era, they have more clearly adopted discourses that tend to emphasize neutral methodology and downplay politics, evoking democracy while simultaneously smoothing out the conflicts and contradictions that the term all too clearly evokes. (p. 1128)

According to Stoddard (2014), media literacy for democratic education necessitates the development of critical views of technologies and information. This, the author noted, must be premised on an epistemological view of media representations as constructed and the technologies used to deliver these representations as non-neutral tools, designed for particular purposes.

Despite the relative success of media literacy as a focus of education policy reform in the countries under study, Druick (2016) noted that the central social narrative

surrounding media literacy discourses imposes claims of panacea-like skills and abilities that secure democracy. Neither of the three countries purposively attend to the demystification of media. Each discusses aspects of media production, representation, and media conventions, along with the historical and contemporary role of media in society. The United States offers a non-comprehensive, non-critical, neutral rendering of media literacy, whereas as England offers a more holistic yet sanitized version of the subject. On the other hand, whereas the Australia standards engage more critical media literacy and so make the association concerning media's representation of identity as having direct bearing on "community cohesiveness" (VCAA, n.d.a, p. 12), they present a dichotomous conception of media as separate from text.

Critical media literacy supports the concept of an active, socially constructed audience, where the audience are never passive recipients of media messages (Martens, 2010). The GSCE media studies standards posit a relationship between media practices and identity (DfE, 2016). They note the social relationships inherent in media representations and re-presentations, as well as the co-constructed relationship between media and societal audiences. The standards, however, offer a sanitized discussion of representation and identity, discussing the function and use of stereotypes, including "how they enable audiences to interpret media quickly" (DfE, 2016, p. 6), rather than how stereotypes misrepresent social realities or the implications of power, politics, and hegemony in these representations. In addition, the study of media representations limit the discussion to how and why social groups are under-represented or misrepresented and so neglects other societal dynamics that are stereotyped or that promulgate stereotypes, such as what counts as knowledge.

While the section also attends to how media constructs versions of reality, it also suggests that audiences interpret representations based on their own beliefs and experiences, among other things. Once again, a sanitized view of media presented in the standards suggests that media merely reflects the contexts in which they are produced, with no attendant discussion of the embedded values and points of view in media; the purpose of media organization; ownership and control; and the ability of media to create, reinforce, and promulgate bias. The language of propaganda, bias, and agenda setting that reflects the critical dimensions to which democratic and media literacy education must attend are only ostensibly included in curriculum standards.

A discussion of the influence of media on individuals and society is glaringly absent for the England standards for English. As such, the media studies standards are the only area of the subjects studied that discusses the tenets of critical media literacy in a holistic manner. Nonetheless, England dedicates an entire section of its GCSE citizenship studies assessment to developing knowledge and understanding of the role of media and the free press. The GCSE citizenship standards also refer explicitly to using media as a tool for civic engagement and participation. However, key stage 3 and 4 standards do not elaborate how students are to develop these skills, and the assessment rhetoric tacitly implies that media is something citizens engage in without consequence. This again is attendant to critical reflection components of media literacy that are sparse within the English and citizenship standards.

The media's relationship to society is defined in a linear manner within England's citizenship studies standards, which is a mandatory subject for all students (versus media studies, which is elective at the secondary level). In the citizenship studies standards,

there is no discussion of media ownership and control or how citizens hold media to account. The role of media and the free press is expressed in terms of being a purveyor of information of interest to citizens. The failure of the standards to regard the citizen's role in questioning this information further positions the citizen as passive recipient within these standards. In addition, this effectively establishes the media and free press as arbiters of information and knowledge. In this regard, the citizenship studies standards fail in recognizing the inherent agenda-setting, propagandizing role of media, as well as fail to recognize the citizen's role in the co-construction of knowledge, both vital to critical media literacy teaching and learning (Kamerer, 2013; Kellner & Share, 2007a, 2007b; Thevenin, 2012).

Mass media affects individuals and society and so requires critical participation by those who engage with it (Kellner & Share, 2005; Martens, 2010; Thevenin, 2012; Torres & Mercado, 2006). Australia makes a distinction between texts and media texts and in so doing appears to position texts as static, reflective, or representative of society, but void of power to shape attitudes. (Social) media on the other hand, is described as enabling the creation of communication as well as shaping identities and attitudes to diversity and political choice (ACARA, 2015a). A bi-directional relationship between media and society is suggested, where "social, institutional and ethical issues influence the making and use of media... (ACARA, n.d.e, p. 3). This supports Kellner and Share's (2005) conception of the audience's need to negotiate meanings. Whereas the language surrounding media is active and suggests a transfer between media and society, the descriptions of the activities involving text imply tacit understandings of the world and

human experience as ideas that people impose on text, rather than attitudes we develop due to engagement with text.

Australia and the United States have a similar approach to developing media literacy skills via curriculum. The bi-directional relationship between media and society and the role and influence of media on citizens and in citizenship participation is also evident. Nonetheless, the civics standards appear to relegate the role of media in the assessment of political candidates to political advertisements. Students are directed to evaluate candidates for political office across qualifications, experience, issues-based platforms, and based on political advertisements as a basis for political choice. Unfortunately, the standards fail to discuss opportunities to deconstruct these advertisements in the first place. Critical media literacy theorists note that media deconstruction is both fundamental to critical experiences with media (Hobbs, 1998; Kellner & Share, 2007a) as well as to democratic education (Kahne & Bowyer, 2017; Stoddard, 2014). In addition, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) noted that “the democratic process suffers when individuals are inattentive to or are unable to judge the factual accuracy of political content” (as cited in Kahne & Bowyer, 2017, p. 23).

Like England, the U.S. standards position media as among those societal elements that both influence and monitor government. However, a comprehensive approach to media literacy education is not achieved within the subjects explored from the U.S. curriculum. The United States does not offer media literacy as a stand-alone subject at the secondary level. Media literacy integration occurs primarily in English language arts, civics and technology-related subjects. This essentially represents, for the most part, what all students are exposed to by way of media literacy education.

Implications for Policy, Research, and Practice

Several implications for the development of policy, research, and practice can be drawn from this study. Parallel educational reforms in the three countries studied have resulted in national standardization of curriculum and assessment (Ball, 1998; Caldwell, 2011; Cummings, 2012; Hursh, 2005; Keating et al., 2013; Spring, 2014). While Australia and the United States have state-controlled education management systems, the state standards were found to mirror the priorities of the national standards. The question remains, do these standards adequately reflect the democratic and critical media literacies requisite for transformative citizenship, or are they too entangled in neoliberal ideological debris to be effective? While this study cannot independently respond to this query, it has formed a baseline of indicators that offer reasonable insight into the implications of the current curriculum standards on policy, research, and practice.

Contemporary theorists such as Kohn (2000) and Kozol (2005) have noted that standardized tests are a hazard to learning due to the undue emphasis being placed on activities to be tested. This leads not only to the neglect of more important activities, but also to the incorrectly conceived objectives and standards of achievement and educational practice (Hill, 2006). While not establishing a direct relationship between neoliberal educational influences and critical projects in education, the study noted that critical praxis as defined by Freire (1993) and McLaren (2002) is absent or, at best, incomplete within all three countries' curricula.

Curriculum Policy

According to A. Luke (2005), there are tenets of the neoliberal policy discourse that can be capitalized on in achieving critical literacy outcomes. He denoted one such

mechanism as accountability. This accountability at the policy level should include clearer definitions regarding the meaning of identity, citizenship, and critical media teaching and learning. Where policy language is not overtly neoliberal, it is sometimes ambiguous. Clearer definitions or expansions of existing definitions across the tenets in all countries is recommended.

Wallis and Buckingham (2016) asserted that policy exists for solving problems. A challenge that remains with not only standards but within implementation practice concerns a lack of knowledge concerning media literacy policy. This, along with the fact that there are too few academic programs preparing students for media policy work, precludes the capacity to intervene in neoliberal projects (Lentz, 2014). Within the context of England and the United States, in particular, teacher education policy for the incorporation of critical media literacy in teaching and learning is necessary.

Sleeter and Grant (2003) noted in their explication of approaches to multicultural education that single-group studies are similar to critical multicultural education with regard to the schoolwide discussions of the contributions and struggles of particular groups in society. The Australian curriculum appears to engender this approach through focus on Aboriginal and Torres Island Peoples heritages and social contributions as an overarching theme in curriculum. While curriculum offers a level of political awareness, cultural critique, and engagement with history and identity that supports transformative education, essentializing identity in this manner has what Sleeter and Grant (1988) referred to as a homogenizing effect. A more multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to curriculum policy requires a dialectical approach to the Australian standards.

A dialectical approach is necessary for developing understandings of the diverse and complex relationships associated with the politics of difference within society.

For both the England and the United States, a re-politicization of media literacy is necessary. Kellner and Share (2005) noted that students must become engaged in the deconstruction of injustice, the expression of their own voices, and the struggle for social transformation. In tandem, in England, media studies offers the most comprehensive version of ML across the subjects explored. The subject's non-mandatory status, however, means only a select few students receive this instruction. The lack of a stand-alone subject for media arts/studies at the secondary level in the United States, coupled with an inadequate cross-curricular project for CML, warrants attention. With an already overloaded curriculum in both countries, the more tenable solution may involve supplementing the civics and citizenship attempts at CML with a robust media studies program at the secondary level. This would also support policies for teacher training for critical media literacy education. Both teacher preparation and public school curriculum need go beyond deconstructing text and encouraging civic engagement to the deconstruction of injustice and informed social activism (Thevenin, 2012).

Research

The primary goal of comparative research is to establish best practice by learning from good practice elsewhere (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Australia, England, and the United States have unique educational and social environments that necessitate contextual approaches to policy development, research, and implementation practice. What currently obtains in the educational arena, however, is a system of policy borrowing inspired by internal dissatisfaction with local systems, global conditions such

as negative PISA evaluations, economic change and competition, and international cooperation and alliances for education and training policy (Phillips & Ochs, 2010). A policy borrowing approach seeks examples of unique, transferrable best practice, and is problematic for several reasons.

Australia is ahead of the curve on incorporating critical media experiences into democratic education tenets across curriculum standards and, of the countries compared, offers the highest level of critical interrogation. A clearer defined cultural view of media literacy has resulted in a more robust policy mandate for the critical media literacy in Australia. This despite counteracting positions of the underpinning “fair go” policies of that country (Ozdowski, 2012; P. Saunders, 2004). Australia is therefore recommended as a good case for historical policy and practice analysis. This, however, must involve a comparison of implementation practices and of improving school systems with ones that are stagnant or underperforming, and adopting tailored national policies derived from a policy learning approach (Raffe, 2011).

The national curriculum policy for all three countries is in relatively nascent stages of implementation. The standards across the countries appear to reflect convergent dispositions (possibly due to policy borrowing), despite varying degrees of democratic and critical media education incorporation. It would, therefore, be worthwhile to explore how these standards are being implemented in practice. Disparities in school and education management structures across the countries may lead to disparities in implementation. Research that studies implementation of national and state curriculum would, therefore, be of interest. In addition, comparative analysis of the extent to which democratic and critical media literacies are engaged in the curricular standards of other

nation states would further provide a more advanced picture of policy learning practices that highlight historical and effective communication between curriculum policy and local education practices (Raffe, 2011).

Martens (2010) noted that media literacy scholars should examine if and how individual and social aspects of media learning interrelate in tandem with more sophisticatedly capturing media learning outcomes. The author suggested that this, along with exploration across interdisciplinary research perspectives, is necessary for more comprehensively understanding the complexity of media literacy practice. As evidenced by these findings, an exploration of a pedagogy that attends to the relationship between identity, citizenship, and media is warranted.

In furthering exploring the disconnect between identity, citizenship, and media in curriculum policy, future research could also examine the influences of policy advocacy discourses on curriculum decision-making processes at both legislative and citizen levels. Also, an examination of the lived experiences of the individuals involved in these processes would add to the body of research knowledge. Future research could, therefore, entail a more expansive examination of the policy discourse through research of the various actors at various levels of policy and practice. Importantly, the interpretation of policy could be further explored through the classroom experiences of students and teachers, as well as experiences of school administrators and other actors involved in school governance and curriculum implementation in the current countries under study.

To wit, continued exploration of the articulation of normative educational discourses surrounding democratic and critical media education is vital. Druick (2016) noted that media literacy discourses are invariably linked to citizenship, participatory

democracy, and even diversity. These discourses cannot be assumed to operate in univocal ways and must be explored for their association with the neoliberal project that may serve to preclude truly critical renderings of curriculum.

Practice

Civic media literacy education is being advocated by some as a means for equipping students with the intellectual tools necessary to judge political communication and misinformation in the digital age (Hobbs, Donnelly, Friesem, & Moen, 2013; Kahne & Bowyer, 2017). Studies such as these have noted that educators must respond in ways that foster students' critical capacities to evaluate and determine the accuracy of information. Despite this, the teacher role in facilitating critical media literacy curriculum is under-articulated across curriculum standards. Deal, Flores-Koulish, and Sears (2010) noted that three challenges persist in teacher ability to implement media literacy: contextual limitations and restrictions, ML content knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge.

The obvious implication here is that if teachers are going to facilitate critical learning experiences, they must themselves be able to critically engage with media. However, several U.S.-based studies have noted policy-practice tensions in implementing critical media literacy in teacher education practice (Deal et al., 2010; Flores-Koulish & Deal, 2008; Ngomba-Westbrook, 2013). That, coupled with the current high stakes testing regime that has relegated teachers to a prescriptive curriculum (Keating et al., 2013; Kohn, 2000), effectively stymies the potential for CML education at the K-12 level.

It stands to reason, then, that schools of teacher preparation, along with in-service and professional development training, need to engage in developing teachers' critical media competencies and pedagogical acumen for integrating CML across curriculum. Media literacy should be part of the core curriculum for teacher education (Amory, 2011; Flores-Koulis & Deal, 2008; Kellner & Share, 2005; Pérez-Tornero & Tayie, 2012). These experiences must include education regarding the ideological influences in curriculum and techniques of intellectual and professional resistance.

In addition, teachers need the academic freedom necessary to implement standards with critical fidelity. Teacher training should, therefore, promote teacher activism for the reform of policies and practices concerned with CML development (Torres & Mercado, 2006).

Achieving a truly active polity is dependent on education's ability to foster critical and democratic dispositions for transforming society. The standards of England and the United States lack transformative problem-based learning experiences with media. Service learning serves the two-fold purpose of allowing students opportunities to engage in transformative action and, in tandem, clarify their identity and role as citizens. This supports several authors' studies that indicated that service learning contributes significantly to learners' sense of how they fit into wider society and empowers them to identify and address social issues that are relevant to their lives (Feldman et al., 2007; Kahne & Sporte, 2008).

In addition, the social critique necessary for developing critically conscious citizens is necessary, particularly in England and the United States. While the incorporation of service learning across the curriculum will support a more active view of

citizenship, social critique is vital to achieving a more equitable and just society. Issues such as the commodification of culture and certain youth-based concerns will necessarily fall under this purview. To achieve this in practice, however, teachers need to either have the intellectual freedom to deliver what may be a curriculum that critiques the status quo or the professional and personal security to practice pedagogical resistance.

It follows that a curriculum that goes beyond ostensible social critique necessitates time and pedagogical latitude, free from the constraints of teaching to a standardized test. While this has a multiplicity of implications for policy and practice that were not necessarily explored in this study, the role of school administrators is pertinent to this discussion. Managerial and accountability mechanisms deny the role of human agency in the school and classroom. It therefore rests within school administrators' purview to foster an academic environment that ascribes preeminence to the holistic development of students. This not only provides critical practitioner support but also a culture and model of the democratization of education for learners to emulate.

Conclusion

The convergent, yet unique elements of the education policy contexts within the nation-states of Australia, England, and the United States provided an interesting basis for comparison. Each country enjoys a different level of consensus regarding the national and state mandated curriculum standards. While the developmental process is similar across all three locales, intervening ideological influences, along with other macro and micro policy variables, have resulted in significant differences in the extent to which democratic and critical media literacies are engaged in curriculum. As Bourdieu (1998) so poignantly stated:

Everywhere we hear it said, all day long--and this is what gives the dominant discourse its strength--that there is nothing to put forward in opposition to the neo-liberal view, that is has succeeded in presenting itself as self-evident, that there is no alternative. If it is taken for granted in this way, this is a result of a whole labor of symbolic inculcation in which journalists and ordinary citizens participate passively and, above all, a certain number of intellectuals participate actively. (p. 29)

The neoliberal agenda in education raises several questions concerning the standards: do they reflect the actual views of the polity, versus what Ball (1998) and Kellner and Share (2005) have described as pseudo-consensus; do they represent national democracy (Hakala et al., 2015); and, vitally, does raising standards level the proverbial playing field? While this study cannot answer the question of whether critical media literacy is happening in schools in Australia, England, and the United States, unhampered by the neoliberal project, it can reasonably suggest whether, based on the parameters set by curriculum standards, it is of an efficacious scope. As submitted by Ball (1994), the questions posited by the study sought to ascertain whether civics and citizenship, media arts/studies, and English/English language arts, sufficiently set goals, options, or created circumstances that permitted a range of critical options for teaching subject content pertaining to media literacy and democratic education.

With respect to the three major themes deliberated, the countries, though similar, vary regarding their level of engagement of critical literacies across the standards. Attempts to engage students in exploring identity, critical, and problem-based inquiry, and new media production and evaluation are well-represented across Australia's

standards. With perhaps the exception of England, the countries suffer from an overwhelmingly large curriculum and accompanying strident testing regime. An incorporation of more critical tenets of citizenship (such as problem-based learning) and the inclusion of new media and digital technology across the English standards is warranted in England. Similarly, less technicist language and goals in the standards and deeper critical exploration of media across curriculum, along with greater levels of problem-based inquiry, are necessary in both England and the United States.

The standards of all three countries could benefit from advancing the level of exploration across issues of race, class, gender, and ability. The issue of representation also warrants further attention in the standards, with greater representation needed among minority and indigenous groups in the case of the England and the United States, and greater inclusion of other minority groups in the Australia context. In the United States, a more concerted focus to offer civics education to all students at both national and state levels is needed. In tandem, media literacy needs to be presented as a more salient social issue, perhaps warranting its own subject at the secondary school level.

At the risk of staying at a level that is too abstract to develop substantive theory or fully explain the effects of policy, this study has sought to look at curriculum policy text, not in silo, but rather as one cog in the proverbial wheel, which is critical media literacy education discourse. It was with an understanding that the policy process is a multi-faceted network of intervening variables and social constructions, of which the curriculum policy text is merely one output that has an intermediary effect within the policy process, that this study sought to explore these tenets in curriculum standards.

It was also with a clear understanding that the nuances associated with curriculum implementation or enactment are also quite complex and contextual and outside the scope of this exercise that this study was conducted. Nonetheless, this research exercise sought to establish what may be a single, yet powerful parameter via which societal values are legitimated, institutionalized, and confined, vis-à-vis curriculum policy. As Prunty (1985) has suggested, lurking behind reified systems terminology is an image of society. I would be inclined to add that this study demonstrated that this societal image, while not overtly neoliberal in all instances, is woefully inadequate in its representation of critical media literacy and, subsequently, democratic education values. Nonetheless, as Apple (2014) stated:

... one of our most important tasks is not only to defend the idea of a truly responsive and thickly democratic public sphere, but also to help reconstruct it so that is even more responsive and so that it provides a robust and critically reflexive arena for the development of a radical egalitarian politics of redistribution, recognition, and representation in education and throughout society. (pp. xxii)

APPENDICES

Appendix A. National and State Curriculum Documents

	Subjects	Grades / Levels	Document Type
Australia			
	<i>National</i>		
	Civics and Citizenship English Media Arts	Levels 7-8 Levels 9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and Sequence ▪ Achievement Level Descriptions
	<i>Victoria State</i>		
	Civics and Citizenship English Media Arts	Levels 7-8 Levels 9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and Sequence ▪ Achievement level descriptions
England			
	<i>National</i>		
	Citizenship Studies English	Key stage 3 Key stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum framework ▪ GSCE content
	Media Arts	Key stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GSCE assessment content
United States			
	<i>National</i>		
	Civics	6 - 8 9 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment framework
	English Language Arts	7 - 8 9 - 10 11 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and sequence ▪ Achievement level descriptions
	<i>State</i>		
	Civics	6 - 8 9 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and sequence ▪ Advance career sequence ▪ Achievement level and assessment specifications
	English Language Arts	7 - 8 9 - 10 11 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content and sequence ▪ Achievement level descriptions

Appendix B. Document Retrieval Form

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Rrochester2013@fau.edu

Date:	Website/Entity:
# of pages:	Document Source/ URL:
Document Title:	
Description:	
Researcher's Notes:	

Note. Adapted from *Qualitative Data Analysis* (3rd ed.), by M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman, 2014, p. 127.

Appendix C. Curricular Sources

Country	Grade	Subject	Source(s)
England		National	
	KS3 & 4 Content	Citizenship Studies	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335116/Master_final_national_curriculum_220714.pdf
		English	
	KS4 / GCSE Assessment	Citizenship Studies	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/438602/GCSE_subject_content_for_citizenship_studies.pdf
		English	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254497/GCSE_English_language.pdf
		Media Studies	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496451/Media_studies_GCSE_subject_content.pdf
Australia		Victoria	
	7 – 8 & 9 - 10 Content & Assessment	Civics and Citizenship	http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/the-humanities/civics-and-citizenship/introduction/scope-and-sequence
		English	http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/english/introduction/scope-and-sequence
		Media Arts	http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/the-arts/media-arts/introduction/scope-and-sequence
		National	
		Civics and Citizenship	http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/learning-areas-subjects/humanities-and-social-sciences/civics
		English	http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/learning-areas-subjects/english-foundation-to-year-12
		Media Arts	https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/

United States		Florida	
	7 - 8 & 9-12 Content	Civics	http://www.cpalms.org/Public/PreviewCourse/PrintCourse/13352?IsPrintPreview=true
			http://www.cpalms.org/Public/PreviewCourse/PrintCourse/13313?IsPrintPreview=true
		Advanced/career planning	http://www.cpalms.org/Public/PreviewCourse/PrintCourse/13317?IsPrintPreview=true
		Digital technologies	http://www.cpalms.org/Public/PreviewCourse/PrintCourse/13392?IsPrintPreview=true
		English Language Arts (CPALMS, 2017)	http://www.cpalms.org/public/search/Search
		National	
		Civics	https://nagb.gov/naep-frameworks/civics/2014-civics-framework.html
		English Language Arts	http://www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/ELA_Standards1.pdf
	7 - 12 Assessment	Civics - State	http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5662/urlt/0077548-fl12spiscivicswtr2g.pdf
		Civics - National	https://nagb.gov/naep-frameworks/civics/2014-civics-framework.html

Appendix D. Analytical Framework

Category	Definition	Examples	Coding Rules (abbreviated)
<p>A: Developing reasoning and communication skills (Brunner & Smith, 1994; Hobbs, 1998, 2010)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically evaluate of media messages for credibility (Van der Linde, 2010) 2. Deconstruct or be able to read and understand the deeper meaning of media messages and various persuasive strategies (Van der Linde, 2010) 3. Participate in problem-based educational experiences that survey historical and/or contemporary issues, engage multiple viewpoints and sources, and develop student's critical capacities and inquiry skills (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1993; Giroux, 2008; Grant & Sleeter, 1998) 4. Responsibly produce media, including political and economic expression (Chen, 2007; National Association for Media Literacy Education [NAMLE], 2014) 5. Understand media bias and media agenda setting (Kellner & Share, 2007a; Van der Linde, 2010) 6. Engage in self-reflection on one's own media consumption and production (NAMLE, 2014; Van der Linde, 2010;) 7. Use media (whether textual, digital or otherwise) as an interpretative tool (<i>inductive</i>) (National Communication Association [NAC], 1998 as cited in Chen, 2007) 	<p>“Use comprehension strategies to interpret and evaluate texts by reflecting on the validity of content and the credibility of sources...” - A1</p> <p>“Develop a plan of action to resolve a state or local problem by researching public policy alternatives, identifying appropriate government agencies to address the issue and determining a course of action.” - A3</p> <p>“Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.” - A7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code 1A examining the information sources, distinguishing fact from opinion • Code 2A assessing author's intention, communication purpose, examination of logos, pathos, ethos, and other rhetorical features; and production contexts • Code 3A finding solutions to a social problem, researching social problems, student-generated research questioning, interrogating the soundness of an argument or examining varied and alternative perspectives of an issue • Code 4A involves creating media artifacts to express a particular political or economic viewpoint (not necessarily personal) • Code 5A understanding political/ personal motivations for media coverage, news and journalism or unbalanced coverage or positions taken by an author • Code 6A reflection on one's personal relationship with media, and on media in general; including written responses • Code 7A using media to evaluate social situations, how knowledge is socially constructed or represented across various media, how text structure, mode of deliver, platform, language (visual, textual, digital) contribute to meaning
<p>B: Exploring general socio-cultural issues</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Understand the influence and effects of media on both societal and individual levels (NAC, 1998 as cited 	<p>“... discussing the different intentions of media artists and the influence of media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B8 gaining knowledge of how media both reflect and define societal values, how

<p>including youth-based concerns (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; Gorley, 1997; Hobbs et al., 2013; Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1996)</p>	<p>in Chen, 2007)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Confront issues of race, class, and gender inequities; media stereotypes and the politics of representation or the politics of identity (Eriksen-Terzian, 1992), and acceptance of the other (Giroux, 1993) 10. Promote issues of faith and social justice (Mahony, 1992), including diversity, multiculturalism, and intercultural awareness 11. Address youth substance abuse, youth violence prevention and general crime prevention/ intervention 12. Inspire awareness of materialism and the commodification of culture (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Citizens for Media Literacy, 1993) 	<p>artworks on different audiences, for example, how ideological and political perspectives are used to engage a particular audience.” - B8</p> <p>“Assess the influence of a range of media, including social media in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity.” - B9</p> <p>“Media representations: the ways in which media represent (rather than simply present) the world, and construct versions of reality the choices media producers make about how to represent particular events, social groups and ideas...” - B9</p>	<p>audiences respond to media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B9 challenging existing societal norms concerning social issues: racial/ethnic, class or socio-economic status, and gender, in media; understanding and analyzing how media defines identity through stereotyping individuals and groups and confronting these representations • B10 discussing religion and faith; diversity and cohesion; understanding and inclusion of other cultures/ethnicities heritages; equity and fairness on a societal level • B11 addressing topics of interest and concern to youth: bullying, teen dating violence, violence prevention, health • B12 exploring how society values the pursuit of possession and physical comfort as compared to intellect or spirituality. Understanding how society uses culture and cultural artifacts and people as objects of trade and profit <p><i>*Where specific to identity, code as 9. Where general issues of understanding or practicing multiculturalism or inclusion, code as 10</i></p>
<p>C: Developing attitudes toward democracy, citizenship, and political participation (Carnes, 1996; Dewey, 1916; Guilfoile et al.,</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Develop requisite skills and practice participation in civic life as related to voting, applying the rule of law, volunteerism, etc. (Guilfoile et al., 2016) 14. Appreciate various perspectives on social issues and practices related to democracy, such as citizenship, governance, power, freedom, dissent, 	<p>“Plan practical citizenship actions aimed at delivering a benefit or change for others in society.” - C13</p> <p>“Understand how digital democracy, social media and other measures are being developed as a means to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C13 practicing the skills associated with civic participation skills as listed, such as mock trials and service learning • C14 gaining knowledge and insight related to democratic and social concepts • C15 learning how technology facilitates media communication and creates or generates issues specific to the digital media

<p>2016; Hall Jamieson, 2013; Jospin, 1992; Landa, 1992; Morduchowicz, 1997; Newspaper Association of America Foundation, 1995; Sandroni, 1992)</p>	<p>conflict resolution, policy development, and societal transformation (Meirick & Wackman, 2004)</p> <p>15. Understand the role of technology in communication (Van der Linde, 2010)</p> <p>16. Understand the relationship between media and politics (Van der Linde, 2010)</p> <p>17. Learn how to challenge existing paradigms (Grant & Steeter, 1998) in and through media (Kellner & Share, 2005; Van der Linde, 2010)</p> <p>18. Understand the role of global and international, as well as national law, politics and global identity (<i>inductive</i>)</p>	<p>improve voter engagement and the political participation of citizens.” - C16</p> <p>“Experimenting with the use of images, sounds and text and selected conventions to challenge stereotypes in society.” - C17</p> <p>“Identify issues related to ... domestic and foreign policy, describe the ways that government and individuals may support international organizations...” - C18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C16 understanding how media influence politics/ political decisions and vice versa • C17 developing or producing counternarratives to existing media narrative through the production of alternative media artifacts that representative non-mainstream, non-traditional values and ideas • C18 assessing and acquiring knowledge of how relationships with other countries, regions and nations shape local and national identity, and define or influence laws and political events. For example, foreign and human rights policy, geopolitics, and maritime laws
<p>D: Role of media and communication policy and industry practices, and other social institutions (Hobbs, 1998; Martens, 2010; Van der Linde, 2010)</p>	<p>19. Understand media ownership and economics</p> <p>20. Understand the various techniques used in media production</p> <p>21. Understand the role of political and social institutions such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (<i>inductive</i>)</p> <p>22. Understand the role of media and the free press (<i>inductive</i>)</p>	<p>“Identifying a variety of ways in which media can be produced, including through sole digital producers, cross-media organizations, public and private sector, and multinational organizations from different time periods and cultures.” - D19</p> <p>“... rights, responsibilities and role of media and the free press in informing and influencing public opinion, providing a forum for communication and exchange of ideas and opinions, and holding those in power to account.” - D22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D 19 analyzing how media are funded and controlled, and how this influences what is produced • D20 gaining insight into institutional practices and comparing media production techniques used across different industries such as film, television, radio, and social media • D21 knowing how social institutions such as NGOs, social action and interest groups, professional unions, etc., influence and shape public policy • D22 understanding and assessing how media acts as a mechanism of public/political accountability and source of public information

<p>E. Facilitating personal growth through media skills and competency development (Hobbs, 1998; Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Van der Linde, 2010)</p>	<p>23. Encourages media appreciation and creative personal expression through media (Buckingham, 1993)</p> <p>24. Encourages responsible media consumption (NAC, 1998 as cited in Chen 2007)</p> <p>25. Encourages media consumption for pleasure (Buckingham, 1993)</p> <p>26. Learn media production skills and competences (NAC, 1998 as cited in Chen 2007)</p> <p>27. Develops career skills (Freedom Forum, 1994);</p> <p>28. Students learn how to use skills outside of class (Van der Linde, 2010)</p>	<p>“Media Arts has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of students, encouraging them to develop their creative and intellectual potential.” - A23</p> <p>“Develop and refine media production skills to shape the technical and symbolic elements of images, sounds and text for specific purpose and meaning.” – E26</p> <p>“... organising and curating a school media arts festival of exhibition...” - E 28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E23 facilitating knowledges about media arts, including the contribution of media arts to society and how media is used to express creativity • E24 gaining knowledge about critical media evaluation including freedom, responsibility, privacy, and public standards of decency associated with what you read, watch, listen to, and publish • E25 using media for entertainment and fun • E26 learning how to produce media artifacts in several formats such as film, radio, blogs, etcetera; and how to use media equipment to these ends, including word processing software, and presentation software such as PowerPoint • E27 learning media and other skills, specifically stated as for career development. • E28 gaining skills through practice outside of the classroom settings, for example, publishing a blog online, creating a website, or making an oral presentation in a public forum
<p>F. Teacher role in facilitating students’ critical/democratic experiences (<i>inductive</i>)</p>	<p>29. Assessment and evaluation that encompasses holistic curriculum (soft skills, the hidden curriculum, formative assessment)</p> <p>30. Teacher-led curriculum development versus standardization, and inclusive pedagogical practices</p> <p>31. High teacher expectation</p> <p>32. Facilitate holistic curricula educational development and the development of</p>	<p>“Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.” - F29</p> <p>“... must offer a curriculum which is balanced and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F29 testing and evaluation outside of traditional standardized tests, and which are created and/or assessed by the teacher • F30 addressing teacher autonomy and flexibility to create, expand, and define curriculum and instruction • F31 addressing issues associated with differentiated instruction, and that consider students of varying achievement levels, abilities, linguistic and cultural, as well as

	positive student attitudes toward life-long learning	broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at school for opportunities, responsibilities and experience of later life.” - F32	<p>socio-economic backgrounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F32 proposing teachers engage students in high cognitive level, challenging work • F33 discussing aspects of the school curriculum outside of standard subjects and instruction, including co and extra-curricular engagement such as sports, devotional/worship activities, etcetera
G. “Other”	33. Miscellaneous		<p>Any additional information that does not represent any of the codes specified above, such as those related to mathematics or geography standards, general statements of achievement, statutory guidance, overall considerations and guidelines; test guidelines unrelated to the role of the teacher, and extended English/language arts guidelines related to phonics, handwriting, spelling, speech, etc.</p>

Appendix E. Total Units Analyzed

Australia			
	Civics and Citizenship	English	Media Arts
Indicator A	33	209	99
Indicator B	40	75	39
Indicator C	111	17	15
Indicator D	4	0	65
Indicator E	0	76	92
Indicator F	2	4	1
Other	2	90	1
Totals	192	472	312
England			
	Citizenship Studies	English	Media Studies
Indicator A	19	9	11
Indicator B	8	0	6
Indicator C	50	1	2
Indicator D	4	0	5
Indicator E	1	9	9
Indicator F	0	5	0
Other	0	15	5
Totals	82	39	38
United States			
	Civics	English Language Arts	
Indicator A	110	328	
Indicator B	19	5	
Indicator C	200	19	
Indicator D	11	3	
Indicator E	4	59	
Indicator F	18	37	
Other	92	82	
Totals	454	533	

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