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Whitehead, J. (1985a) A dialectician responds to a philosopher who holds an orthodox view of knowledge. Are we really addressing the same question?

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**A DIALECTICIAN RESPONDS TO A PHILOSOPHER WHO HOLDS AN
ORTHODOX VIEW OF KNOWLEDGE**

ARE WE REALLY ADDRESSING THE SAME QUESTION?

A RESPONSE TO WILSON'S CRITICISMS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine and reject a number of criticisms which can be made against a dialectical approach to educational knowledge by proponents of an orthodox epistemology.

DIALECTICAL AND ORTHODOX VIEWS OF EDUCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The purpose of my original paper was to raise the question: why are the aesthetic dimensions of Higher Education omitted from the Journal? The reasons I gave for this omission focussed upon the prevailing view of educational knowledge in institutions of Higher Education.

Wilson responded to my paper by examining,

"from an orthodox point of view questions of dialectical logic; knowledge acquisition and knowledge structures; facts and values; and theory and practice. The main concern is to show that there is no essential conflict between the pursuit of objective knowledge and human values. There is, on the contrary, the highest educational virtue in achieving impersonal, objective knowledge." (1, p.66)

Wilson does not respond to my main enquiry which concerned the omission of questions concerning the aesthetic dimensions of Higher Education from the Journal. His article is however most useful for a dialectician as it reveals the kinds of criticism a dialectical view of educational knowledge provokes from an orthodox point of view. It also raises the problems of communication between those who hold dialectical and orthodox views of educational knowledge.

Wilson summarises my thesis as follows:

"Educational researchers typically presume that there are impersonal objective knowledge structures. Objective knowledge is systematically differentiated and codified in the forms of propositional logic. Assessment and educational attainment properly deploys an (impersonal) propositional calculus. Evaluation of educational outcomes requires reference to personal educational and human values and properly deploys dialectical logic. In reality there is no reference to values and no deployment of dialectical logic in educational research practice. This is because people, their values and the ways that they actually learn, are conspicuously absent from the educationalist's picture of the processes and outcomes being assessed and evaluated. Education should be unequivocally directed towards resolving the problems of people as 'living contradictions'. These are experienced by individuals as primarily moral and aesthetic, that is to say essentially personal problems; especially the problems of shared humanity, "humanity as a whole". The key to current problems in assessment and evaluation lies in the distinction between the formal and dialectical views of contradiction and a general neglect of the latter due to a failure to appreciate its importance for understanding of human life in general and learning processes in particular."(1, p.67)

Wilson presents my basic position in a way that I would accept. However, I would like to add material contradictions to the moral and aesthetic contradictions and I would like to include social problems within the personal problems. I think that these additions are significant because they place the problems in their political and economic context.

"Whilst it is clear that there is much to endorse in Whitehead's thesis, there are nevertheless several more or less serious problems with it. What I have to say by way of constructive criticism about it falls conveniently under six headings:

- 1) "Assessment" and "Evaluation"
- 2) Contradiction
- 3) Knowledge acquisition and knowledge structures
- 4) The differentiation of knowledge structures
- 5) Facts and values
- 6) Theory and practice.

What I have to say is based on very orthodox views of knowledge and education, but I hope it is none the worse for that, since it is orthodoxy that Whitehead attacks."(1, p.68)

Wilson then goes on to criticise my views in a way that I think would fulfil any Popperian's desire for 'savage criticism' as a way of contributing to the growth of knowledge. Wilson's criticisms can be answered under his own headings.

1. "ASSESSMENT" AND "EVALUATION"

In my article I explained that where criteria can be explicated in a propositional form and applied directly to an educational outcome I would say that I was assessing and that where the criteria are the values I use in making choices, rather than rules of choice, I would say that I am evaluating.

Wilson's criticism of my position is as follows:

"The distinction drawn here is a verbal mirage that can be easily dispelled if we keep in mind, not only that matters of fact can be stated in propositional form, and values used, but also that moral precepts can be stated and matters of fact used. This will be absolutely crystal clear from the following table:

OBJECT	STATEMENT	(in the propositional form)	USE	(or action)
FACT	S FACT	"Objects of specific gravity less than one will float in water"	UF	Floating ($SG < 1$) objects in water
VALUE	S VALUE	"People who harm people ought to be condemned"	UV	Condemning harmers

Significantly, Whitehead ignores (a) the use to which knowledge of propositions is put (UF) and (b) statements of value (SV). That is why he brackets propositions (explications/descriptions) with assessment, and values and use with evaluation. But the propositional form is equally appropriate for enunciation of matters of fact (such as physical phenomena) and matters of value (such as rules of choice). Propositional logic is also equally inappropriate to enacting whatever is enunciated; whether facts or values. Certainly, the propositional form of statements does not itself enjoin or involve the performance of actions in accordance with rules of choice (such as moral precepts), but that is not, as Whitehead seems to suppose, a defect of propositional logic. Statements in the propositional form are equally impotent to cause wood to float on water but that is not regarded as a defect of propositional logic! (As Einstein remarked: it is not a defect of physics that it does not capture the taste of soup)." (1, pp. 69-70)

From his orthodox view Wilson asserts that "the propositional form is equally appropriate for enunciation of matters of fact (such as physical phenomena) and matters of value (such as rules of choice)". My reasons for thinking that Wilson is mistaken are as follows.

Education is a matter of value. It is a value-laden practical activity which is essentially concerned with the giving of form to one's own life. Educational Knowledge which holds a claim to understand the educational development of an individual must represent such an ethical and aesthetic activity in a form which can be publicly criticised.

In his lecture on ethics Wittgenstein (2) points out a difficulty he experiences in finding a way of expressing the meaning of values in language:

“ . . . if certain experiences constantly tempt us to attribute a quality to them which we call absolute or ethical value and importance, this simply shows that by these words we don't mean nonsense, that after all what we mean by saying that an experience has absolute value is just a fact like other facts and that all it comes to is that we have not yet succeeded in finding the correct logical analysis of what we mean by our ethical and religious expressions. Now when this is urged against me I at once see clearly, as it were in a flash of light, not only that no description that I can think of would do to describe what I mean by absolute value, but that I would reject every significant description that anybody could possibly suggest, *ab initio*, on the ground of its significance. That is to say; I see now that these nonsensical expressions were not nonsensical because I had not yet found the correct expressions, but that their nonsensicality was their very essence. For all I wanted to do with them was just to go beyond the world and that is to say beyond significant language. My whole tendency and I believe the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless. Ethics so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the ultimate meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.” (2, pp. 11–12)

The point I take from this work is that there is a problem in trying to communicate the meaning of ethical values. Wittgenstein referred to his problem in terms of running against the boundaries of language. I have presented this extract from Wittgenstein simply to show that I think that other philosophers have acknowledged that the propositional form is not equally appropriate for the enunciation of matters of fact and matters of value.

The crucial difference between us is that Wilson believes that matters of value can be expressed in a propositional form and used as rules of choice. I believe that matters of value (such as education) cannot be represented adequately in the propositional form in claims to educational knowledge and I am advocating that such forms of discourse need supplementing with other forms of presentation such as visual records of practice. The criteria I use to evaluate a claim to educational knowledge are the values I use in giving a form to my educational development. I think that this is similar to Kuhn's (3) position where he says that the standards of judgement are values we use in making choices rather than rules of choice.

For these reasons I hold that Wilson is mistaken in his view that the propositional form is equally appropriate for enunciation of matters of fact and matters of value. I have suggested that we distinguish clearly between “assessment” and “evaluation” by adopting the criteria I have proposed. The distinction has the merit of revealing some serious problems for those who are evaluating the ethical and aesthetic dimensions in a claim to educational knowledge.

2. CONTRADICTION

For those readers who are concerned to understand the way dialecticians are criticised by those with orthodox views of knowledge I can recommend a close study of Wilson's section on contradiction. Wilson claims that to talk of 'living contradictions' serves no useful purpose. He says that I pervert the concept of contradiction and that in my use of the jargon of dialectic I confuse issues of conflict and contradiction. He also says that I put dialectical and propositional logics in opposition. As contradiction is the central category of dialectics I must refute these criticisms.

a) To talk of 'Living Contradictions' serves no useful purpose

"Whitehead depicts people as 'living contradictions', as if this were in some way in opposition to logical contradiction. But to speak of people as 'living contradictions' is merely a *facon de parler* . . . The main, unexceptionable, thought behind talk of 'living contradictions' is that people have conflicting beliefs, emotions, intentions, ideals, interests, roles and responsibilities. It serves no useful purpose and only confuses things hopelessly to speak of conflicts (personal sorts of things) and contradictions (logical, impersonal sorts of things) as if they were the same sort of thing. Sight seems to be lost here of a simple consequence of the truth that contradiction is a purely formal concept." (1, p.72)

The orthodox philosopher dismisses the dialectician's talk of contradiction as a *facon de parler*.

My own position is that contradiction is also a rigorously defined concept of dialectical logic. I acknowledge that there is a fundamental problem for dialecticians who wish to present a claim to knowledge which contains contradictions. This problem has been succinctly put by Ilyenkov (4) in his work on Dialectical Logic:

"Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites is the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category . . . but no small difficulty arises as soon as matters touch on 'subjective dialectics' on dialectics as the logic of thinking. If any object is a living contradiction, what must the thought (statement about the object) be that expresses it? Can and should an objective contradiction find reflection in thought? and if so, in what form?" (4, p.320)

Wilson says that to talk about 'living contradictions' serves no useful purpose. One of the uses of logic is that it helps to develop forms of thought which lead to an understanding of the nature of education. By developing adequate descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals my hope is that we develop a better understanding than we have at present of what we must do if we wish to improve a process of education. I value educational knowledge for two reasons. Firstly in that it gives me educational information and secondly that it is concerned with the

generation and testing of educational theory. In the latter we should use ideas which are appropriate for the development of our understanding of the educational development of individuals. I think that one such idea is that of a 'living contradiction'.

I find the idea of a 'living contradiction' useful in combating criticisms made of a dialectical position by orthodox philosophers. The propositional form attempts to eliminate contradictions from correct thought; a dialectician embraces them as essential to our understanding of human development. How do we test out which is the most appropriate form of explanation for the educational development of ideas? I would encourage individuals to present descriptions and explanations for their own development in higher education to see if they find the idea of 'I' as a living contradiction both useful and necessary.

As well as being a useful idea in refuting criticisms made from an orthodox position it has been useful in discussions between dialecticians. To clarify still further what I see as the useful purpose of talking about 'living contradictions' I will criticise Ilyenkov's work in order to suggest a resolution to the problem above.

In the introduction to his work on Dialectical Logic Ilyenkov says:

"The concretisation of the general definition of Logic presented above must obviously consist in disclosing the concepts composing it, above all the concept of thought (thinking). Here again a purely dialectical difficulty arises, namely, that to define this concept fully, i.e. concretely, also means to 'write' Logic, because a full description cannot by any means be given by a 'definition' but only by 'developing the essence of the matter'." (4, p.9)

Given that Ilyenkov was concerned with "developing the essence of the matter", why did he fail to resolve the problem of finding an appropriate form for a linguistic presentation of a 'living contradiction'? My answer to this question is that he left us with this problem because he did not examine his own existence as the essence of the matter. Thus he did not examine the form of presentation he would accept for a description and explanation of his own development as a living contradiction.

In my research I have explored the practical and theoretical implications of asking myself questions of the form 'How do I improve this process of education here?' The 'I' in such questions exists as a living contradiction in the sense that I hold within myself, as a dialectical unity, mutually exclusive opposites of the form, I value freedom/ I am negating freedom, or I value social justice/ I am negating social justice. This experience of mutually exclusive values, moves me forward in a struggle to overcome the original experience of negation.

The usefulness of talking about 'living contradictions' in descriptions, explanations and evaluations of an individual's educational development is that it gives us a way of thinking about that development which is more appropriate than the orthodox position.

Wilson's next point is,

b) That I pervert the concept of contradiction

Wilson says that the statement I make below is an obtuse way of saying that the world as it is ('in fact') is not as we desire it to be, or as it ought to be. He says that the jargon of dialectic confuses rather than clarifies this important but simple point. Before I examine my original statement I will summarise what I think are significant points of scholarship in our present understanding of 'dialectic'.

The dialectic has a two thousand year history and its essence is that it is a way of coming to 'know' through a process of question and answer. Plato, for example, in his work on poetic inspiration 'Phaedrus' (5) points out that there are two methods we use in 'coming to know'. We use our capacity to analyse things into many components and we use our capacity to synthesise a number of disparate elements under one general idea. Plato holds that the art of the dialectician is in holding both the 'One and the Many' together. The contemporary debates between formal and dialectical logicians can be traced back to differences between Aristotle and Plato. In his work 'On Interpretation' (6) Aristotle stated that a person using the dialectic as a 'way of coming to know' had to put his question into a definite form and enquire whether the man had such and such a characteristic or not. In Plato's view, the art of the dialectician appeared to contain contradiction by allowing both the 'One and the Many' to be held together. Aristotle demanded that we should choose whether a man had such a characteristic or not, and thus tried to eliminate contradiction from 'correct thought'. In more recent times we have Popper (7) claiming that dialectical claims to knowledge are based upon nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking and we have Marcuse (8) pointing out that attempts to describe and explain human action in a propositional form 'mask rather than reveal' reality.

Let me explain why I think that a dialectical approach to knowledge helps us to understand some of the fundamental contradictions of human existence. Like Plato I think that our aesthetic capacities are of fundamental importance in helping us to understand the nature of our existence. This is why I am so disturbed by their omission from the Journal. What I was attempting to communicate in the passage below was that the art of education is of profound importance in the world because it contains a vision of peaceful and productive unity.

"If we take an artist to be essentially concerned with giving form to whatever material he is working with we can take the art of education to be concerned with the giving of form to human existence. If we take our own existence to be the material, then we can take the art of education to be our own struggle to give form to our existence. This struggle can be related to the conception of Humanity as a Whole.

I am making the assumption that the existence of fifteen million children dying of starvation each year, and the dropping of the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, violate our understanding of 'Humanity as a Whole'. This is an aesthetic form of understanding in the sense that we have a view of humanity as a whole in which the existence of starvation, torture and nuclear war has been overcome. The actual existence of these events in the world violates our aesthetic understanding of

humanity and prevents the integration of our understanding into a unity.”(9, p.78)

My point of agreement with Wilson is that I do believe that the world is not as it ought to be. This does not, however, devalue the dialectic or its nucleus ‘contradiction’ as an approach to our educational investigations. The words above are my attempt to reveal a fundamental contradiction of existence which may be overcome in the practice of the art of education. The value of the dialectic is that it helps us to understand these contradictions. The relation between the art of education and these contradictions may become clearer if I relate what I say to the art of living (10).

“... living itself is an art, in fact, the most important and at the same time the most difficult and complex art to be practised by man. Its object is not this or that specialised performance, but the performance of living, the process of developing into that which one is potentially. In the art of living, man is both the artist and the object of this art; he is the sculptor and the marble; the physician and the patient... It is interesting at this point to ask why our time has lost the concept of life as an art?” (10, pp.17–18)

Why do we omit the art of education, as part of the art of living, from our evaluations of Higher Education? In raising this question I am conscious of the wide gap between Wilson’s philosophy and my own. The significance of such gaps was highlighted by Kilpatrick (11) in the first issue of Educational Theory.

“... Educational Theory is a form of dialogue which has serious implications for the future of humanity. He (Kilpatrick) states that within his own country (America) and within the world, contending philosophies are so far apart that consensus is made very difficult, if not impossible. He believes this constitutes the greatest single long-term threat to our civilisation and that education must face up to this problem in spite of its inherent difficulties.”(9, p.77)

I think that Wilson’s response to my paper is a clear example of Kilpatrick’s point that ‘contending philosophies are so far apart that consensus is made very difficult’. In addition it has become clear that communication between philosophers is made very difficult. I am told by Wilson that my concern to resurrect the dialectic as an antidote to propositional logic is far from being the radical new demand that I seem to think, “indeed it is rather *jejune*”. (1, p.73) In one sense, of course, the demand for a dialectical perspective has been with us for centuries. Any originality in my own work rests in its potential for providing an alternative form of educational theory to the ‘disciplines’ approach. I am trying to use whatever creative capacity I possess to develop a form of educational theory which includes the art of education. My research has convinced me of the fundamental significance of my experience of myself as a living contradiction in any valid account of my educational development. At the core of this contradiction is my identification with humanity as a whole. This identification is in a relationship contradictory to the present state of humanity. I use contradiction in the dialectical sense that we exist as living contradictions in holding mutually exclusive opposite values within our personal and social lives.

The vision of a peaceful and productive world is an aesthetic vision in the sense that it has a harmonious and unified form. The vision is embodied in the quality of relationship between the educator and his or her pupil, or in the case of our own education, in the quality of our relationship with the World. I am curious to hear whether other readers experience themselves as 'living contradictions' in terms of their educational values. In particular, would they accept that any adequate explanation for their educational activities must give reasons in terms which include a quality of human relationship within which the unity of humanity appears possible? I repeat that my point was not to say that the world as it is, is not as it ought to be. My point was that if we are to understand the art of education in terms of its significance for moving us towards a more peaceful and productive world then we will experience one of the fundamental contradictions of human existence. This contradiction is experienced in terms of our commitment to humanity as a whole and the experience of the violations of this aesthetic vision within the world in which we live and work.

If education is to have profound implications for the future of humanity I think that we have to understand the nature of such contradictions and the nature of the barriers to the development of a more peaceful and productive world. One such barrier is, I believe, the sole use of propositional logic for presenting claims to educational knowledge. It is a barrier because the propositional form is inappropriate as the sole form within which to present a claim to know the art of education. We need this art for a vision of a more peaceful and productive world. It should therefore be acknowledged to be of significance in the evaluation of an individual's higher education.

Wilson then says that:

c) I put dialectical and propositional logics in opposition


This statement is manifestly false. The truth is that in my dialectical view of education I use propositions within the dialectical form of my enquiry. I see my educational development as a process of transformation within which propositional forms can be clearly distinguished. In my original article I presented a classification of my research reports which showed that my educational development could be partially understood as a scientific enquiry. The principles used in the classification were presented in a propositional form and drawn from the work of Medawar (12) and Popper (13). Any idea that I put the two logics in opposition should be dispelled by the analysis shown in the table below. The table shows how I have used Kosok's (13) work to demonstrate how a propositional form exists within the dialectical form of my educational development. I would draw Wilson's attention to the fact that dialecticians do not put the two logics in opposition. It is rather the philosopher with an orthodox view of knowledge who excludes the academic legitimacy of dialectical claims to knowledge and places them in a conflicting relationship. The dialectician shows how the orthodox view can be incorporated and transcended within his approach.

I use Kosok's (14) idea of a 'Transition Structure' to show how the propositional form (in, for example, the disciplines of education) can be incorporated within the process of transformation of education. I am using the concept of 'Transition Structure' as a form of thought which exists within the transformatory nature of a form

of life. For example, in the table below I distinguish five Popperian Schemas (13) of formulating problems, proposing hypotheses, eliminating errors and reformulating problems. I have also used Medawar's (12) classification of a scientific enquiry. Medawar distinguishes between critical and creative phases in a scientific enquiry. He says that these phases alternate and interact. In the creative phase we formulate an idea, we propose a hypothesis or we experience a problem. In the critical phase we test the idea, usually by experiment. This pattern of the alternate creative and critical phases in the enquiry can be seen in the table below. Mitroff and Kilman (15) distinguish four methodological approaches to the social sciences. They refer to the four approaches as those of the Analytic Scientist, the Conceptual Theorist, the Conceptual Humanist and the Particular Humanist. They give the different criteria for distinguishing the modes of enquiry and the preferred logics which characterise each approach. The table shows where I have used the four approaches in my reports. The pattern shows that the critical, schematic and methodological reports correspond. It also indicates the possibility of a fifth methodological approach which is not within the Mitroff and Kilman classification.

The table presents an analysis of my educational development which includes the propositional forms from the above classifications. The propositional forms, in reports 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, are integrated within the process of transformation. I characterise this process as the form of life of a living contradiction.

THE FORM OF LIFE OF A LIVING CONTRADICTION

REPORT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
MEDAWAR'S PHASE OF SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY	CRITICAL	CREATIVE	CRITICAL	CREATIVE	CRITICAL	CREATIVE	CRITICAL	CREATIVE	CRITICAL
THE POPPERIAN SCHEMA	S ₁	-	S ₂	-	S ₃	-	S ₄	-	S ₅
MITROFF'S & KILMAN'S METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	ANALYTIC SCIENTIST	-	CONCEPTUAL THEORIST	-	CONCEPTUAL HUMANIST	-	PARTICULAR HUMANIST	-	-
KOSOK'S SELF-LINEARIZING FORM	A NON-LINEAR DIALECTIC PROCESS DEPICTED AS A SELF-LINEARIZING FORM WHICH REVEALS TRANSITION STRUCTURES (IN THE SCHEMAS AND CRITICAL PHASES) AS NODAL POINTS OF SELF-REFLECTION 								

3. KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES

According to Wilson:

"Whitehead seems to forget that it is not the idiosyncratic nature of the puzzles of isolated individuals that produces the objective knowledge of Popper's World Three, but the frameworks of publicly shared concepts and language that gives rise to them." (1, p.75)

He says that fruitful questions are formulated only within a framework of shared concepts and are posed only in a common language. Shared concepts and language go with shared criteria for their proper use in a shared form of life.

I have not forgotten what Popper says. It is that I profoundly disagree with those researchers who use Popper's view of objective knowledge as the epistemological base for the generation and testing of educational knowledge. I think that such a view of knowledge tends to lead to a view of education which places undue emphasis upon the pupil or student acquiring knowledge structures in a way which omits a consideration of the aesthetic and ethical qualities which should be guiding the process of education. Like Whitehead (16) I think that education is essentially the acquisition of the art of the utilisation of knowledge. For me the acquisition of knowledge structures is not a sufficient condition to define a process as educational. This is because history abounds with examples of individuals and groups who have acquired knowledge, but used it in ways which are aesthetically and morally unacceptable.

Paul Hirst is one researcher whose work will serve to illustrate the nature of my concern. In the *Logic of Education*, Hirst and Peters (16) state their purpose and on one page (17, p. 15) use the word 'impose' three times.

"It is the purpose of this book to show the ways in which such a view of education must impose such a structure on our practical decisions . . . For one of the problems about 'integration' is to understand the way in which 'wholeness' can be imposed on a collection of disparate enquiries . . . All it attempts to do is to sketch the ways in which this conception of education must impose its stamp on the curriculum, teaching, relationships with pupils, authority structure of the school or college community."

Hirst (18) has consistently held to his commitment to the propositional logic of education and to the primary significance of Popper's 'Third World'.

"From these considerations I conclude that, though education is very much concerned with the exercise of human powers, it is not characterised at all adequately in terms of the exercise or development of those powers, even dialectically. It is only in learning, by the human powers becoming structured and organised through the agency of the 'Third World', that what we mean by education takes place." (18)

Peters (19) has acknowledged that his earlier concept of development, which confined education to the development of knowledge, was too limited. He now stresses that we are persons as well as democrats and that our lives will be impoverished if we have no sense of the beauty of the world or of man's striving to give concrete embodiment to intimations about the human condition which we cannot explicitly articulate. Hirst (1983) has also acknowledged that his earlier view of educational theory was mistaken.

I do not believe that the community of educational researchers has shared concepts and language to go with shared criteria for their proper use in expressing, describing or explaining the educational development of individuals. This is the central assumption in my paper. I am saying that it is the very adherence to the orthodox view of knowledge that Wilson holds which is preventing the development of the kind of dialectical research which enables such problems to be revealed. I would also say that it is an adherence to this logic which allowed Richard Peters (20) and Paul Hirst (18) to clarify a misconception of education and educational theory. In their 'Logic of Education' (17) Hirst and Peters describe their purpose in terms of showing how a structure must be imposed upon practical decisions in education. I would say that in education we do acquire knowledge structures as part of the process of transformation. I reject, however, the idea that such structures must be imposed upon practical decisions. Acquiring knowledge in a process of education appears to me to have the aesthetic quality described by Martin Buber where he points out that the educator has a special humility which enables him or her to subsume a particular selection and arrangement of knowledge to the emergent form of the pupil's life.

"If this educator should ever believe that for the sake of education he has to practise selection and arrangement, then he will be guided by another criterion than that of inclination, however legitimate this may be in its own sphere; he will be guided by the recognition of values which is in his glance as an educator. But even then his selection remains suspended, under constant correction by the special humility of the educator for whom the life and particular being of all his pupils is the decisive factor to which his 'hierarchic' recognition is subordinated. For in the manifold variety of the children the variety of creation is placed before him."

My insistence on the importance of the art of education is related to the development of those values which should guide the use of knowledge structures. Also of importance is the development of technical skills and the capacity to control the material world. I am concerned that an undue emphasis on the imposition of knowledge structures will have the same effect which Whitehead (16) described in relation to the prolonged imparting of technical skills:

"This is only an instance of the more general fact, that necessary technical excellence can only be acquired by a training which is apt to damage those energies of mind which should direct the technical skill. This is the key fact in education and the reason for most of its difficulties." (16, p.144)

4. THE DIFFERENTIATION OF KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES

Wilson's point in this section is that there is a need to be considerably clearer about what is meant by 'educational development' on the dialectical account. This was one of the few points in his paper with which I could agree.

The way I see my educational development in terms of the differentiation of knowledge structures can be understood in terms of Plato's idea of the art of the dialectician. In the exercise of this art the dialectician holds the 'one enquiry' and the 'many enquiries' together. I have explored the implications of asking the question, 'How do I improve this process of education here?' in the context of my work in Higher Education. In the course of this one enquiry I have pursued many enquiries in the traditional disciplines of education. For example, in report 8, listed in the table above, I have examined the assumptions in linguistic and phenomenological philosophy, in behaviourist, cognitive and humanistic psychology and in structural functionalist, marxist and phenomenological sociology to see in what ways they describe and explain the development of individuals in terms of human values and personal agency.

In my conception of educational development the differentiation of knowledge structures can be seen and 'assessed' in terms of explicit criteria. For example, by reading the texts in the above table an authority in the disciplines of education could see whether or not I demonstrate an understanding of the basic assumptions in the different schools of thought.

The conception also contains something that Peters (20) believed in, but failed to show in his work, namely that integration and differentiation exist together in the working out of a solution to a practical educational question. The philosophers with an orthodox view of knowledge have only been able to show what it is to break an educational problem down into its separate components. They can also savagely criticise the work of others. What they have failed to do is to show how both the capacity to integrate and the capacity to differentiate can exist together in the working out of a solution to a practical educational problem. This failure of the orthodox view is implicit in Wilson's section on the Differentiation of Knowledge Structures. Whilst the dialectical approach to educational knowledge shows the capacity to break a problem down into its separate components, it differs from the orthodox view in its capacity to show how the separate components are integrated in the working out of a solution to the problem.

To be clear about my conception of educational development it is important to understand how both the differentiation of knowledge structures and the process of integration exist together in that development. The way this can be done has been described in 2(c) above.

A dialectical approach to Educational Knowledge incorporates both a claim to know educational development as a process of transformation (the one enquiry) and a claim to know the knowledge structures (the many enquiries) which exist within this process. The orthodox philosopher remains blind to the essentially dialectical nature of education because his logic does not permit an acknowledgement of the academic legitimacy of a dialectical claim to knowledge. By adhering to his logic, the orthodox philosopher

is led to a position which stresses the imposition of differentiated knowledge structures upon practical decisions in education.

Considering the damage which the prolonged imparting of knowledge structures is likely to produce on the aesthetic and ethical values which should guide our use of these structures I am asking contributors to this Journal to concern themselves with the question: why is the art of education not represented in the Journal? If we are to represent education as an art I think that we must show how both our mastery of different knowledge structures and our capacity to integrate these structures exist together in the working out of practical educational problems.

5. FACTS AND VALUES

Wilson makes three criticisms under this heading.

i) He says that I treat moral questions as aesthetic. His case is as follows:

“Whitehead is concerned very much that values are not neglected in educational development, its assessment and evaluation. In this connection he surprisingly uses ‘aesthetic’ where one would expect ‘ethical’ or ‘moral’. Thus:

“... (harmful events) violate our understanding of ‘Humanity as a whole’. This is an aesthetic form of understanding in the sense that we have a view of humanity as a whole in which the existence of starvation, torture and nuclear war has been overcome. The actual existence of these events in the world violates our aesthetic understanding of humanity and prevents the integration of our understanding into a unity.”

Wilson’s surprise may be due to attachment to orthodoxy. By analysing aesthetic and ethical values and examining them as if they are distinct, sight may be lost of their relationship in claims to educational knowledge. The way I see the relationship can be understood in the terms which Plato used to describe the art of the dialectician. In his work on Poetic Inspiration (5) Plato states, through the character of Socrates, that there are two principles involved in ‘coming to know’.

“First, the comprehension of scattered particulars in one idea, as in our definition of love, which whether true or false certainly gave clearness and consistency to the discourse, the speaker should define his several notions and so make his meaning clear . . .

The second principle is that of division into species according to the natural formation, where the joint is, not break any art as a bad carver might . . . I am myself a great lover of these processes of division and generalization; they help me to speak and to think. And if I find any man who is able to see a ‘One and Many’ in nature, him I follow, and ‘walk in his footsteps as if he were a God’. And those who have this art, I have hitherto been in the habit of calling dialecticians.”

In drawing attention to the relationship between synthesising judgements which are necessary for an 'understanding of Humanity as a Whole' and the analytic judgements which separate different components in education (some of which are moral), I am directing attention to the art of education which I think, given the present state of the world, involves a struggle to overcome those aspects of the human condition, such as starvation, torture and the possibility of nuclear war, which are an affront to a wholistic view of the world.

ii) Wilson says that if I follow recent critics of 'positivist' theories of ethics which distinguish analytically between facts and values then I am misled into supposing that a concern for objective truth is incompatible with proper human values. The reason that I do not think of myself as so misled is that I do not see a concern for truth as incompatible with proper human values. Indeed, I see a concern for truth as a virtue. What I do think is that there is something basically wrong with the claim that there is an objective moral law that can be grounded by an appeal to pure practical reason.(23)

6. THEORY AND PRACTICE

i) I am told by Wilson that I follow recent 'radicals' who argue that there is a kind of inevitable, necessary link between objectivist 'theories' of knowledge and impersonal or inhumane practice. Nowhere in my paper do I infer this.

"What then of Whitehead's concern about the relation between collectivist theory and bad practice? He recounts such facts as teachers making racist and sexist comments; pupils' initiative being repressed; and teachers' failures of organisation. He refers to teachers' reluctance to press for moral and democratic practice, and to general deficiencies in the quality of human relationships (p.78). We are invited to believe that these things somehow follow from orthodox educational theory and commensurable theories of knowledge and value . . . it is unnecessarily portentous to look at the epistemological roots of practice to explain the ills of education."

Let us look carefully, once again, at the differences between the meanings in the statements I use and the use Wilson makes of my statements in the quotation above. What I actually say is:

"There have been long periods when I have drawn back from the struggle to establish democratic forms of control in my workplace because of the stress involved in the struggle. There have been other times when I have violated the basic respect and quality in human relationships which are required for a conception of humanity as a whole . . . So these are important components in my conception of Higher Education: concern with the art of education which contains a conception of 'Humanity as a Whole'; a concern with educational values, such as freedom, justice, consideration of interests, respect for persons, worthwhile activities, and democratic forms of organisation."

Wilson then says that my readers are invited to believe that my problems somehow follow from orthodox educational theory. As I raised these issues as practical problems for myself in my own educational development, how can Wilson say that I am inviting you to believe that these issues follow from orthodox educational theory? The issues were problems I have had to face in the course of my own educational development and were presented as such.

ii) Wilson says (1, p. 81) that it is a mistake to confuse pedagogy with epistemology. I agree. I also agree that wherever learners start, and however they proceed, the proper goal of their teachers is to develop in them a respect for truth, objectively conceived, as well as respect for other persons. I do not confuse pedagogy with epistemology. What I am attempting to develop is a form of educational theory which is adequate to the task of providing valid explanations for the professional practices of teachers and the educational development of their pupils. For the past thirty years the dominant view of educational theory has failed to give an adequate account of professional practice. My own enquiries have focussed upon the epistemological foundations of educational knowledge. I have concluded that educational knowledge which is adequate to the task of producing a valid explanation for the life of an individual will have a dialectical form and will incorporate the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of the individual's educational development.

One of the ways in which I see this being achieved is by educators assessing and evaluating their own professional practices and justifying their claims to know what they are doing. This will involve the presentation of their personal educational theories in a form which can be publicly criticised (22). I am concerned that the aesthetic criteria, which we must develop if our claims to educational knowledge are to include knowledge of the art of education, should not be omitted from a Journal which is concerned with Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education.

My original paper raised the question of why the aesthetic dimensions of Higher Education were omitted from the Journal. Wilson's arguments have not moved me from my original view that these omissions are due to the dominance of an inappropriate epistemology.

I think that I have met Wilson's criticisms and that the following points still stand. When judging those components of education which can be represented in a propositional form, I have suggested that we are 'assessing'. When we are dealing with the ethical and aesthetic aspects of education I am suggesting that we are 'evaluating'. The propositional form is not equally appropriate for the enunciation of matters of fact and matters of value. We need to find an appropriate form of presentation for claims to knowledge which evaluate the ethical and aesthetic nature of education. I am suggesting that we could start by showing, with the assistance of visual records of practice, what we mean by an evaluation of an individual's educational development. We do not have an academic community with a shared set of assumptions concerning the art of education. I am suggesting that we address ourselves to the creation of such a community so that we can heed Whitehead's point that education is the acquisition of the art of the utilisation of knowledge and ensure that Kilpatrick is correct when he asserts that educational theory is a form of dialogue which has profound implications

for the future of humanity. If the criteria we use to judge an individual's educational development are inappropriate or if we omit an evaluation of educational development as a form of art, I am saying that we are likely to ignore the development of this vision in ourselves and in the next generation. Such a vision is needed not only for our own sakes but for the future of humanity as a whole. I do not believe that it is pretentious or arrogant to affirm a commitment to the art of education, and to take a personal responsibility for attempting to replace a view of educational knowledge which is either mistaken, or too limited, to be acceptable as an epistemological base for the generation and testing of educational theory. One arena for such a struggle is a Journal which is concerned with Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education in an International Context.

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How do we Improve Research-based Professionalism in Education?—A question which includes action research, educational theory and the politics of educational knowledge

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Text of Presidential Address to the British Educational Research Association at the University of East Anglia, 1 September 1988.

My purpose today is to affirm the value of BERA as a forum for testing new ideas. Ideas which claim to be contributions to educational knowledge. I will therefore offer for your criticism my own ideas on a living educational theory and my reasons for questioning the accepted canons of educational enquiry. I also believe that BERA is a forum for protecting our academic freedom to conduct educational enquiries. I thus want to consider our responsibilities when we experience academic freedom being undermined by the abuse of institutional power. Finally I will explore how BERA could extend its protection of educational values. I will argue that we should do this by leading the way in the development of a General Education Council for the research-based accreditation of in-service and initial teacher education.

These concerns indicate the scope of my address. I'll begin with a few reflections on my own experiences as a teacher and researcher. Eleven years ago I presented my first paper to BERA. It was entitled 'The process of improving education in schools', and attracted one participant. Some of you who knew me then will not be surprised to hear that I proceeded to talk at my listener for some 15 minutes on my 'expert' knowledge of local curriculum development through case study. My listener then introduced himself and gently suggested that I could perhaps develop my 'sense of audience'. Hence my first claim to distinction is that I instructed Lawrence Stenhouse on case study and curriculum development!

Last year's Presidential Address was well argued, passionately committed and the

most stimulating call to protect the values of the research community that I can recall. Tricia Broadfoot (1988) called for greater political involvement by researchers in confronting the potential overcoming of our educational values by industrial/commercial values. When she pointed out the damage being done by government education policy to our most precious natural resource many of us breathed a sigh of relief and sucked our lollipops in admiration as Tricia conducted both a virtuoso solo performance and at the same time protected one of the country's new generation. We were all delighted to hear that Tricia gave birth to a daughter very shortly after her address.

Tricia argued that we should emphasise a research style in which the more abstract search for generalisations does not preclude addressing the more specific questions of a particular policy issue. She argued for more comparative studies blending relevance and objectivity in order to maintain our scientific integrity.

Tricia pointed out that our research community is characterised by values, goals, ways of working and rewards which are fundamentally at odds with those of *laissez-faire* individualism and profit, market-forces and competition. I identified with her points that we form part of that scholarly community which upholds, and seeks to promulgate, the values of systematic enquiry and respect for evidence, and that in this community we are concerned with the pursuit of truth in which we seek to describe, illuminate, portray and hopefully sometimes, even explain that small section of reality that serves as the focus for our particular enquiry.

In her comments on Tricia's views, Joan Solomon (1988) agrees that researchers should address questions which are specific to current policy issues without deserting the well established canons of systematic enquiry. Joan believes that those of us who are lucky enough to have the academic independence that tenure confers, should use public critical analysis to fight for the epistemological integrity of our discipline. In this address I want to treat as problematic the 'canons of enquiry' which many researchers believe to be well established. In particular I want to raise questions about the propositional nature of educational theory and the criteria we use to judge the validity of claims to educational knowledge. In these reflections I am affirming the value of the research enterprise which is directed towards original contributions to knowledge of our subject.

I am thus sharing commitment, with Joan Soloman, to engage in public critical analysis and to fight for the epistemological integrity of our discipline, education. I want to fight for this integrity by presenting a living approach to educational theory, by challenging the canons of systematic enquiry which are, 'well established' and by presenting two cases which involve confronting the truth of power with a power of truth. In these cases I have in mind those power relations which place an examiner's academic judgement beyond question through a procedure of appointment, and those power relations which enable a university to sack a tenured academic without good cause.

I wish to relate my questions about educational theory and the nature of the canons of enquiry to Peter Chamber's (1983) point that making sense of research in personal, experiential terms seems to point the way forward. Peter explained how he experienced a gap between his research activity and his work as a teacher, administrator and participant in curriculum development and validation. He concluded that the assumptions, the traditions and the expectations built into British higher education are either mistaken or at least dysfunctional to the tasks of training teachers and advancing professional knowledge.

My feeling that something was seriously wrong with the educational theory of professional practice was aroused some 20 years ago when I compared the dominant disciplines approach to theory, with my reflections on my classroom practice. Whilst I fully acknowledge the personal benefits I gained from studying the disciplines, this approach failed to produce a description and explanation for my professional practice. As a teacher I needed to feel confident that the profession possessed an educational theory which could relate directly to educational practice in classrooms.

In constructing an alternative to the disciplines approach I have sought to show where insights from this approach can be integrated within the living alternative. This has required the rejection of fundamental assumptions. I am thinking of the rejection of propositional forms of educational theory. The rejection of the clarification of the meaning of values solely through conceptual analysis, and the rejection of a solely linguistic approach to generalisability.

I want to stress that I examined these concerns in relation to my classroom practice as I tried to improve the quality of my teaching in a school. That is, from the perspective of a teacher researcher. Although I was employed by the University of Bath as a lecturer in education, I was able to teach in a school as an extension of my method commitment with postgraduate education students.

I owe the fundamental insight on which my enquiry was based, to video-tapes of my practice. In 1972 I was provided with a video-camera by the Inspectorate and asked to explore its use in the science department of Erkenwald Comprehensive School in Barking. I don't know how many of you have video-taped yourself teaching. I found it a short-cut to insomnia. I was shocked to see myself having the opposite effect on some pupils to the one I intended without being aware that this is what I was doing. I could see myself existing as a living contradiction in my practice. A contradiction in the sense that I held together two mutually opposite values in action. The 'I', in questions concerning practical improvements, no longer seemed the unified 'I' which could be subsumed under a general concept such as person or teacher. 'I' became a living contradiction and a focus of the enquiry into my teaching.

I wanted to change my teaching with a third year science class in a Bath Comprehensive School, from a class-based approach to one which emphasised individual and small group learning. I had two main reasons for changing. The first was that the ability spread within the class made it difficult to distribute my time and expertise in a social just way within class-based teaching. The second was that I wanted to encourage some enquiry learning and I found my class-based teaching was inhibiting this form of learning.

Video-tapes were made over an eight-week period as I reorganised the classroom with the help of resources produced by the Avon Resources for Learning Unit. My answer to the question, 'How do I improve this process of education here?', has the form of an action research cycle (Whitehead, 1977) of defining concerns, planning, acting, evaluating and modifying.

In constructing an explanation for my professional practice I found it necessary to clarify the meaning of my value of social justice by showing its emergence in action. In this respect I agree with Searle (1987) in seeing that words derive their meaning from the contexts in which they are used and that these in turn depend ultimately on forms of life. The visual records were necessary to communicate my meaning in relation to my educational values. If we are to construct a living

educational theory I think we will need to build a community of shared discourse which is grounded in ostensive definitions of educational values in action (Whitehead & Foster, 1984).

Another insight I wish to share with you concerns the way we present educational theory within language. In all the texts I have read, including those of dialecticians, theory is presented in propositional discourse such as the one I am using here. Theory is seen as a set of determinate relations between a set of variables in terms of which a fairly extensive set of empirically verifiable regularities can be explained. Theory is presented within propositions which conform to the Law of Contradiction. This law excludes the possibility of two mutually exclusive statements being true simultaneously. Yet as I have already said, 'I' have seen myself existing as a living contradiction in my professional practice and require an explanation for this practice to contain such a contradiction (Whitehead, 1980).

The reasons I gave for my actions, in the explanation for my practice, were presented in terms of an attempt to live more fully my values. The form and content of the explanation led me to conclude that propositional forms of theory are not capable of containing a description and explanation for the educational development of this individual or for others who are existing as living contradictions (Ilyenkov, 1977) in their professional practice.

Let me be clear about the relationships between explanatory texts and present practice, in constructing a living theory. The texts are historical accounts. They describe and explain past activities. They also have a proactive function in that the evaluation of these accounts prompts a vision of the future in an imagined possibility of how present practice might be improved. We can thus make sense of the living practice through understanding the relationship between the account of the past and the vision of the future. Hence educational theory is, for me, a living theory in that the explanation contains evidence of an evaluation of past practice, evidence of an intention to produce something not yet in existence and evidence of the present practice through which the intention is being realised in action (Whitehead, 1985a).

I hope that you can now see why I characterise the approach as a living approach to educational theory. It is to distinguish it from a linguistic approach which is contained within propositional relationships and captured in texts on library shelves. In contrast to this I am proposing an organic view of educational theory which is living in the public conversations of those constituting professional practice. It is thus growing in the living relationships between teachers, pupils and professional researchers and embodied within their forms of life.

Questions may be raised about the generalisability of this approach. By generalisability I mean something which applies to or can be used by all. I believe that educational theory is being created through the theorising of individuals about their own professional practice as they attempt to improve the quality of their own and their pupils' learning. To the extent that a community can be shown to be sharing a form of life in their research activities I would say that the approach was generalisable. The evidence for the integration of the above insights in the work of other researchers is now firmly embedded in MEd, MPhil and PhD degrees. The evidence is too copious to present here but when the address is published in *BERJ*, I will include an appendix of notes on this research. *BERA Dialogues* No. 1, also contains evidence on the generalisability of the approach outlined above. This evidence also demonstrates the effectiveness of relationships which link academic

scholarship, professional development and the process of enhancing the quality of pupils' learning (see Appendix). I hope my address so far has fulfilled one of my responsibilities as a researcher. That is to support the power of truth by presenting ideas for public criticism. I now want to consider our responsibilities when we find academic freedom to conduct educational enquiries being undermined by the truth of power.

Let me begin by recalling my first BERA Conference. BERA '77 was memorable because of Brian Simon's Presidential call that we should focus our research on education itself. This echoed my own belief in conducting research into educational question of the kind, 'How do I improve this process of education here?'. The significance of his biographical details, when he recalled that, in the late 1940s he had failed to gain his MEd at the power house of psychometry, Manchester University's Department of Education was, however, largely lost on me. I confess that I felt smugly satisfied in the knowledge that such an eminent researcher had not managed to pass his MEd whilst I had received my Master's degree from London University in 1972. Given Brian's enormous contribution to our research community you may think me arrogant in claiming to have surpassed his achievement some 21 years before my own retirement. Perhaps you won't mind too much when I say that the achievement I have in mind, which does indeed greatly surpass Brian's, is in the level and scope of failure. We usually feel embarrassed about failure and so I was very grateful to Jean Rudduck and David Hopkins when they presented their views on failure as a realistic practical achievement (Rudduck & Hopkins, 1985).

I can now report that although I passed my MA (education) I failed to obtain my PhD on two occasions in 1980 and 1982 for my research on educational practice and its theory. Now I wouldn't like you to think these were close failures. They were total failures. The examiners agreed that I couldn't conduct an original investigation or test my ideas against those of others. They agreed that there was no matter in the theses worthy of publication and that given the choice of reducing the award to an MEd, the right to resubmit or the refusal to resubmit they unanimously decided that I should not be awarded an MEd or permitted to resubmit. These judgements indicate the comprehensive nature of the failure. Now when you think of what Brian has achieved on the base of a mere failure to gain an MEd just imagine what a double PhD failure might achieve! It is this failure which led to my consuming interest in the politics of truth within educational institutions.

My examiners look like a role of honour of the educational establishment. It took some courage to appeal against the first set of judgements in 1980. I wanted to question the adequacy of the judgement of my examiners. The University informed me that under no circumstances could the competence of the examiners be questioned once they had been appointed by Senate. This is still the position in my university. The academic judgements of examiners are placed beyond question by a procedure of appointment. Such experiences of academic judgements and the institutional arrangements for their legitimation have led to my interest in a study of my own educational development as I support the power of truth against the truth of power within our institutions of higher education.

I am curious about our responsibilities, firstly as examiners, to permit questions about our judgements on claims to educational knowledge and secondly as academic colleagues, to protect our employment as researchers. In developing my own enquiry in these areas I accept Foucault's point (1977, 1980, 1982) that the analysis, elaboration and bringing into question of power relations is a permanent

political task inherent in all social existence. I believe he is correct in saying that a local, specific enquiry can take on a general significance at the level of that regime of truth which is essential to the structure and functioning of our society.

In developing the enquiry I agree with John Elliott (1988) when he says that our visions of methodological possibilities are inevitably framed by our professional biographies. He believes that we would do well to reflect about our biographies in responding to the threat (or challenge) of the commercial culture. I would however go further than John and relate enquiry to the development of our personalities through our research. I believe that the constitution of theoretical possibilities rests upon the study of our developing personalities as we support the power of truth against the truth of power. In other words I believe that research which is educational is necessarily related to the development of the researcher's personality.

By personality I am meaning the total system of activity which forms and develops throughout our life and the evolution of which constitutes the essential content of the biography (Seve, 1978). At BERA '85 I began this phase of my research by describing some institutional reactions to my own actions (Whitehead, 1985b). The questions I asked my audience at BERA '85 were, 'How can I challenge the use of power by a university, to confer a competence which cannot be questioned, upon examiners before they make their academic judgements?', and 'How do we protect and extend academic freedom and democracy?'

The truth of power holds that no questions can be raised about the academic judgements of examiners because it is deemed that their competence is beyond question because of a procedure of appointment. I hold this to be a denial of what I understand by intellectual integrity and is opposed by the power of truth. No matter how uncomfortable I may feel when challenged, I believe that my academic judgements on my own work and that of other researchers are, as a matter of principle, open to question.

Do you believe as I do that as examiners we could not keep our intellectual integrity and at the same time accept the view that our academic judgements are placed beyond question by a procedure of appointment? If we share this belief shouldn't we be campaigning for the implementation of the Code of Practice for Higher Degree Submissions from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. In particular, shouldn't we be supporting paragraph 4, iii, which allows an appeal on the grounds that there is evidence of bias, prejudice or inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners? At this time I know that Nottingham University and the Open University have, following grievances, set up appeals procedures which permit the questioning of academic judgements on these grounds. I would hope that we will all be active in our institutions to ensure that the academic freedom to challenge academic judgements is protected.

As the Education Reform Act 1988 states,

the University Commissioners shall have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff have the freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at their institutions. (HMSO, 1988)

I see the question, 'How do we protect and extend academic freedom?' as an invitation to work collaboratively at an answer. The decision of the University of Hull to give notice of dismissal, from 2 October 1988, to Mr Edgar Page, a tenured

Lecturer in Philosophy, without establishing good cause should, as the AUT point out, be a matter of urgent concern for us all. The university is failing to protect the academic freedom of a tenured academic. There has been no criticism by the university of Edgar Page or his work. The AUT states that Mr Page was selected for dismissal by the 58-year-old vice-chancellor, because he was 57 years old. As the AUT says, the university will blight a creative academic's career at a fruitful and fulfilling stage (Kopp & Warwick, 1988).

Another President of BERA helped me to protect my own academic freedom when my employment was terminated in 1976. I cannot speak too highly of those qualities (Hamilton, 1985) which enabled him to empathise with my problems. Along with other academics associated with the Campaign for Academic Freedom and Democracy, he spent his valuable time in rectifying what he saw as an injustice. I will make a point which I think bears repeating later. Whether it is to protect academic values in the individual or the state we must learn how to form alliances and how to act collaboratively to overcome the negation of our educational values.

My question concerns our ability to empathise with a colleague who has both a contract of employment which involves research and a notice of dismissal. My question is: 'Could and should we not learn a great deal about ourselves as an educational research community by examining our collaborative actions in the process of ensuring that Edgar Page's enquiries are permitted to continue?' I believe we should engage in such an enquiry to overcome the negation of our values of social justice and academic freedom.

This conviction completes the first part of the address in which I wanted to affirm the importance of risking one's ideas in the public arena. The risk is in acknowledging that the ideas may be shown to be mistaken. At the same time I know that so much of my identity is at stake in the feeling, the hoping and the knowing that the ideas are contributing to knowledge of our subject, education.

I now want to move from considering our responsibilities as researchers in relation to the politics of truth, to the organisation of our research activities which are protecting educational values. I want to argue that some of our energy should be used to develop a General Education Council for the support of research-based professionalism in education, and which, during my Presidential year, I intend to support. In looking at the organisation of BERA activities I tend to categorise them into International, National, Regional, Local and Individual Initiatives. Members of the BERA Council have agreed to forge closer links with educational research associations in other countries. Tricia Broadfoot has been particularly active in this respect. Perhaps we should also provide research support to strengthen the international relationships developed by the World Education Fellowship and its publication *New Era*.

I have been heartened in the sphere of international relations by the effort being made by the German Democratic Republic to help teachers and academics from this country to study the workings of their educational system. The teacher exchanges, involving more than 100 teachers over the past two years have done much to develop our understanding of the educational system in the GDR. I hope that we will be able to reciprocate this hospitality in the coming years and perhaps engage in collaborative research into each other's educational systems. I would also like to extend a particular welcome to Professor Boris Gezshunsky of the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences.

In the arena of National Educational Policy BERA members have been at the

forefront of debate. The symposia which enabled BERA to contribute to Government Policy have promoted the influence of educational research in improving the quality of education in this country. Ed Stones showed what could be achieved with the organisation and subsequent publication of *Appraising Appraisal*. This was the model for the BERA response on National Testing and Assessment organised by Harry Torrance (1988) last February. These symposia brought together the country's most eminent researchers in the field. They focused in a highly disciplined way on a particular issue of national significance and with great efficiency published a response which could make an immediate contribution to the debate on government policy. They fulfilled what Tricia Broadfoot called for last year when she said that we must be the champions of evidence, of clear-thinking and of objective debate.

BERA members contributed to this process at the 'Unite for Education' Demonstrative Conference, organised by Forum also last February. The aim was to demonstrate opposition to The Education Reform Bill. The proposals on the national curriculum, opting out, testing and academic freedom were heavily criticised. Michael Armstrong's (1988) critique of the underlying assumptions of the curriculum to be 'delivered' was particularly telling. I explained to the conference my own view that the Bill was seriously flawed, as an instrument for improving education, because of its omission of a statutory right by teachers to sustained and systematic in-service education. These criticisms were sent to members of both Houses of Parliament in time to inform debate. The vital importance of a close relationship between our desire to protect academic values and political power was highlighted in the House of Lord's amendment on Academic Freedom. Success on this issue emphasised the importance of mobilising alliances with sufficient power to protect academic values in the political arena.

Tricia also focused on the importance of teachers as a potentially powerful ally in the fight for educational evidence, rather than political expediency, as the basis for policy-making. I do agree that we must lay before the public the evidence from experience and research that is the only effective research response against policies inspired by a political climate of self-seeking and natural selection.

In my judgement this response would be strengthened by a General Education Council for the accreditation of teacher education. A recent initiative almost succeeded in developing a General Teaching Council. This initiative focused upon initial teacher education and clearly build upon the experiences of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Without detracting from the initial selection and education for entrance to the profession I wish to emphasise the importance of a research-based in-service teacher education for what could be some 30 or 40 years of professional activity. The growth of Diploma/MEd/MPhil/PhD qualifications for action enquiries into the quality of classroom practice bears witness to a research-based professionalism in education. Shouldn't BERA be taking a lead in the establishment of a General Education Council with the authority to accredit both initial and in-service teacher education? Jack Wrigley (1976) has urged us not to separate ourselves from the decision-makers and planners. I believe BERA should take the initiative in promoting the development of such a Council.

Much of the energy expended by BERA members in the development of the Regional activities below has gone into supporting the practitioner research networks of our Association. I believe we should be campaigning to extend these

networks into an Educational Council. Such a campaign could build on our present organisation and help to strengthen the infrastructure of our research activities which John Nisbet (1980) called for in his BERA inaugural address. This infrastructure is being built in line with Ted Wragg's (1982) request for more direct involvement of teachers and others in the educational service. Ted advocated more action-orientated research in full co-operation with local authorities, schools and individual teachers. Tricia Broadfoot placed these activities firmly in the political arena when she said that we must systematically strip ourselves of our naivety and I agree that we must individually and collectively examine what strategies we may adopt to sustain and strengthen educational research in the hostile years to come.

Some of these strategies have been outlined by Brian Wilcox (1986), in his explanation of how in Sheffield, the university, the polytechnic, the LEA and its schools have developed the firm sense of being members of a collaborative community in which research is both carried out and applied and where theory and practice influence each other. As an external examiner for the Dipoma/MEd at Sheffield Polytechnic I have seen at first hand how successful these initiatives are in supporting practitioner research and in convincing teachers of the value of research in understanding and improving the quality of their practice. Teachers are being supported in the generation of a form of educational theory which can be directly related to the process of improving education within schools.

The BERA symposium on Facilitating School-Based Enquiry, organised by Gordon Bell, presented case studies of collaboration between teacher and professional researchers from Sheffield, Nottingham and Humberside. These studies supported Brian Wilcox's point that there is a need to involve key groups in LEA's more closely in the Association's activities. As Brian said perhaps we should be talking about 'advisers as researchers', 'education offices as researchers' and school psychologists as researchers'. In Avon, teacher researchers have been particularly fortunate to have Don Foster, a lecturer in education at Bristol University, as a member and Joint Chair of the Education Committee. This link between academics, teachers, and LEA policy formation and implementation, has been crucially important in the extension of the teacher research network in Avon. The report on the 1987-88 Avon Curriculum Review and Evaluation Programme, 'Supporting Teachers in their Classroom Enquiries', contains examples of collaborative action enquiries within the authority's schools together with the details of how the practitioner researcher network is being sustained and extended. I believe that this programme shows how educational action enquiry can contribute to the realisation of humanistic values in policy formation, its implementation and evaluation. I would like to extend John Elliott's (1988) point that educational enquiry is a process of policy-making disciplined by those conditions necessary for the development of practical wisdom. I see a policy as an imagined resolution to a practical problem. The process of policy-making is but one component in many educational enquiries. I see such enquiries incorporating imaginative episodes, as well as action and educational evaluation in the development of practical wisdom. I prefer to see educational enquiry as a process of knowledge generation which incorporates policy-making, rather than a process of policy-making which subsumes the educational enquiry.

Such policy related initiatives, some originated by BERA members and often sustained by them, will need to be strengthened over the coming years. Other initiatives, such as the seminar programme, Extending the Enquiry Networks,

originated by David Hamilton and developed by Pam Lomax, are enabling BERA to provide regional and local support for educational researchers. Many BERA members are contributing to the Regional Initiative of the Classroom Action Research Network. Over the past year I have attended seminars at Bath, Kingston and Nottingham, which demonstrate the impressive growth of action enquiry networks.

I believe the strength of these networks justifies a campaign to attract many more schools as corporate members of BERA. Shouldn't we be making more of an effort to communicate the success of these networks to heads, governors and teachers so that they can see the relevance of research in improving the quality of education within their schools? Wide circulation of examples of successful in-service support for professional development (Bell & Pennington, 1988) could do much to show the relevance of this research to schools and hence support the idea of an Educational Council.

In addition to this work BERA members are carrying out their own, individual initiatives. For example, Michael Bassey, Professor of Education at Trent Polytechnic, has been supported by CNAA in organising seminars on the development of educational research proposals for higher degree students. Michael's seminar/workshops have focused on the explication of the standards of educational judgement and their use in criticising claims to educational knowledge. Thus helping to improve the quality of practitioner research. The seminars are most helpful to students on such courses as the MEd at Kingston Polytechnic where Pam Lomax co-ordinates an action management project in year two of the three-year course. All the students have to produce an assignment which shows amongst other criteria how they have gathered, collated and presented evaluative data for the purpose of legitimating their claims to educational knowledge. The work of Pat D'arcy, Wiltshire English Adviser, and Hylton Thomas, the headteacher of Wootton Bassett School, in supporting practitioner research between and within schools, has helped to establish an impressive range of case studies (Lomax, 1986). I believe such work offers a convincing demonstration of the effectiveness of research-based professionalism in improving the quality of education in our schools.

Whilst having strengthened many parts of the research infrastructure we are still weak in an area distinguished by John Nisbet in 1974. That is in information retrieval. We still do not have an effective data base using new technology, on educational researchers. I hope to report to BERA 1989 that a searchable data base of BERA members is operational. At the BERA seminar on Facilitating Research, a report on the Humberside practitioner network described the use of such a computerised data base on the activities of members and on relevant publications.

Looking back over the past 11 years I feel the pleasure of being and working with people who can openly share and celebrate the values of an academic community. I know that sometimes, especially in the heat of argument, we are not warmly disposed to each other. Yet as long as we retain our mutual respect and commitment to dialogue we will ensure the continued growth and influence of our work within the association.

Having drawn most of my own inspiration for this address from a woman president I recognise that I must be a disappointment to the only other previous woman president of BERA, Sara Delamont. Not I hasten to add because of my research but because of my gender.

I think we would all agree with Sara's point (Delamont, 1983) that woman's place

in education is one of equality and that we must face up to the implications of understanding that this can only be achieved when man's place in the house becomes one of equality too. As Sara said, woman's place in education will be nearer when 'mothercare' is renamed 'parentcare,' just as it will be nearer when BERA elects its 10th woman president in 1994. Unless John Elliott has some urgent treatment the score in 1989 will be Women 2, Men 14. BERA is however better than Bath, statistically speaking, because in my own school of education the score is one woman member of academic staff to 18 men.

I'll leave you as you might expect with educational enquiries which I think we should all work on because of our commitment to social justice, intellectual integrity, and faith in a more peaceful and productive world. How do we live more fully our educational values in our work and other social relations? What can we do? Even as I say this I am conscious of having given an address in the propositional form when I am committed to a form of dialogue which acknowledges one's own existence as a living contradiction. As part of this contradiction I acknowledge that my partner, member of BERA and academic colleague, is looking after our two children at home whilst I am here.

I hope we can share the pleasure and withstand the pain of some collaborative research as we act to show ourselves living our educational values in practice, more fully together, and as we develop our understanding of the constraints which prevent such values being realised in action. Having 'addressed' you as custom dictates I hope we can now engage in a conversation which helps us to understand the nature of educational theory and the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of such claims to educational knowledge. I would like to know what you think about the idea of studying your own educational development as you encounter the politics of truth within institutions and society. I would appreciate a response which shows the strength of feeling on the need to develop a General Education Council from a research-based approach to professional development. Your response should also tell me if BERA has indeed reached the parts other ERAs have failed to reach and improved my sense of audience!

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Appendix: examples of action enquiries

(1) Vera Coghill

Making meaning through designerly play. Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of PhD, Royal College of Art, 1987.

This enquiry begins with a review of educational action-research as it pertains to curriculum development. A process model of action-research based upon personal knowledge is presented. This model is used to research designerly play as a human skill and as a component of education in the early school years.

(2) *Paul Denley, Science Editor, Avon Resources for Learning Unit, Bristol*

The development of an approach to practitioner research initiated through classroom observation and of particular relevance to the evaluation of innovation in science teaching, PhD, University of Bath, 1988.

This study is particularly relevant for all those who are interested in forming, sustaining and extending networks of practitioner researchers. Following his examination of questions concerned with the improvement of in-service support Paul focused on the importance of evaluative dialogues. These dialogues were stimulated by observations of classroom practice which were based on an observation schedule. The schedule was created through negotiation between Paul and the teachers.

(3) *Kevin Eames, Head of English at Wootton Bassett School, Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire*

The Growth of a teacher-researcher's attempt to understand writing, redrafting, learning and autonomy in the examination years. Mphil, University of Bath, 1987.

Kevin's enquiry (1984-87) into the development of narrative writing presents detailed case studies of the work of three of his pupils. Kevin analyses the criteria he uses to judge the quality of the writing and applies them to the work of these pupils. He is now extending his enquiry into a PhD submission on the influence of profiling on the development of pupil autonomy.

(4) *Donald Foster, Lecturer in Education, University of Bristol*

Explanations for teachers' attempts to improve the process of education for their pupils. Med (research), University of Bath, 1982.

This thesis is concerned with explanations for the lives of educators. It argues that the dominant paradigm of educational research is inappropriate as a means of generating such explanations. The problems of developing an alternative approach are discussed and a solution is proposed. The alternative approach was used to develop explanations for the lives of three science teachers who were trying to improve the process of education for their pupils. The form and content of the explanations are presented in four research reports which are supported by audio-tapes and video-tapes. Finally, the new approach is evaluated and it is claimed that the explanations generated can contribute to an educational theory which is not separated from educational practice and which can be of assistance in solving the practical educational problems faced by other educators.

(5) *Martin Forrest, Faculty of Education, Bristol Polytechnic*

The teacher as researcher—the use of historical artefacts in primary schools. MEd (taught) dissertation, University of Bath, 1983.

ABSTRACT *This dissertation is concerned with improving the quality of education in schools and with the generation of knowledge of the processes by which that improvement may be engendered. A critical view is taken of the 'centre-periphery' nature of the Research Development and Diffusion model of curriculum development widely adopted by Schools Council projects and the contribution of educational*

research generally in helping teachers to improve their practice is questioned. The alternative model proposed follows the lines of an action research project aimed at improving the quality of learning in local primary schools, in which partnership between the external researcher and his school teacher associates is seen as of central importance.

(6) *Mary Gurney, Brockworth School, Brockworth, Gloucestershire*

Mary is preparing her PhD submission on her practice in personal and social education. Her case records contain video-tape evidence of one term's work with a group of first year pupils, together with her analysis of the values which underpin her practice. Her case report contains a description of how she negotiated the categories which constitute a pupil profile, with the pupils. The first chapter of her submission contains an impressive justification for practitioner research. Extracts from this chapter have been accepted for publication in *BERA Dialogues* No. 1—a publication of the British Educational Research Association.

(7) *Margaret Jensen, Hardenhuish School, Chippenham, Wiltshire*

A creative approach to the teaching of English in the examination years—an action research project. MPhil, University of Bath, 1987.

Margaret's dissertation is in the form of four research reports which show her working at a creative approach to the teaching of English in the examination years (14–16). Margaret's third report contains material of value to practitioner researchers. The problems of gathering too much data, of difficulties in presentation and of difficulties in analysis are all highlighted in this report. The movement between reports three and four illustrates the importance of reflecting on the process of transformation which we undergo as we attempt to improve our practice and our understanding of our pupils' learning.

(8) *Ronald King, Lecturer at Bath College of Further Education*

An action inquiry into day release in Further Education. MPhil, University of Bath, 1987.

When the HMI report on Further Education (1984) highlighted the passivity of the students and raised questions about the dominance of 'chalk and talk' methods, Ron and a number of his colleagues were already working on changing to more active learning methods. Studies of video-tapes, together with evidence from classroom observation and interviews with lecturers and students showed some fundamental contradictions between what lecturers and students believed they should be doing and what was actually happening in practice. Working collaboratively with his colleagues Ron has analysed the attempt to develop an action enquiry approach to professional development within his college.

(9) *Andy Larter, Greendown School, Swindon, Wiltshire*

An action research approach to classroom discussion in the examination years. MPhil, University of Bath, 1987.

This is the first MPhil presentation which shows the dialogical form of question

and answer in action. The dissertation demonstrates how evidence from video-tapes, audio-tapes, pupils' work, transcript material and critical evaluations of the theories of other academics, can be integrated within the form of question and answer. An example from this work has been accepted for publication in *BERA Dialogues* No. 1. This should be available from December 1988, from the British Educational Research Association.

(10) *Jean McNiff, former Deputy Head, Kingsleigh School, Bournemouth, Dorset*

Jean is also preparing her PhD submission on personal and social education. Jean's book *Action Research—Principles and Practices* is due to be published by Macmillan in December 1988 and provides a wide range of examples and information on how to move through a first action research cycle. Jean is working on the problems of presenting an individual's claim to know their own practice in a way which shows the transformation in values in a process of educational development. It contains an excellent survey of the action research literature.

(11) *Mike Park, Bath College of Further Education, Bath Avon*

How can I evaluate my teaching in engineering technology? in: J. McNiff (Ed.) *Action Research—Principles and Practices*, London, Macmillan, 1988. Mike's account of his enquiry shows how he worked at improving the quality of education with his TEC students and what can be achieved on a nine day course spread over one year.

This report sets out to describe the developments that have taken place in the investigation I have undertaken in my own classroom practice as a Lecturer in Electronics at the City of Bath Technical College through my participation on the DES funded course held at Bath University 'Supporting Teachers in their Classroom Practice (April 1985–1986)'. It does not set out to present in detail the evidence that I have collected so far but to describe the process by which this course was able to offer me an insight into the way I might begin to develop a systematic research method appropriate to my particular classroom experiences and concerns.

(12) *George Preston, Bath College of Higher Education, Newton Park, Bath*

A review of the teaching and learning strategies used in the teaching of history at Bath College of Higher Education, MEd, University of Bath, 1987.

George's dissertation presents a collaborative action enquiry into a review of the seminars and lectures used in history teaching at the college. It is a most impressive account of how a mutually supportive group can be constructively critical of each other's practice. It shows what energy and commitment can be liberated in this process to improve the quality of education with students in higher education.

5.5

Whitehead, J. (1990) How Can I Improve My Contribution to Practitioner Research in Teacher Education? A Response to Jean Rudduck.

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How Can I Improve My Contribution to Practitioner Research in Teacher Education? a Response to Jean Rudduck

JACK WHITEHEAD, *University of Bath*

Educational research by university academics has failed to provide a research base for professional practice. Practitioner research seems to be providing a more promising way forward. An influential group of academics which includes Jean Rudduck, Wilf Carr and Stephen Kemmis (1986) have argued powerfully that teachers should research their own practice. Taking Jean Rudduck's (1989) paper in this Journal on 'Practitioner research and programmes of initial teacher education' as an example, I want to argue that the logical form of their criticism is getting in the way of a creative response to the problems of practitioner research. Taking my own practice as Chair of Governors as an example I will try to show an alternative, dialectical form of presentation. I will then extend the form of the argument from the individual researcher into school and LEA contexts to make a case for the creation of a General Education Council to enhance research-based professionalism in education.

Jean Rudduck has made a major contribution to the development of teacher research in local, national and international contexts. Whilst I support many of her ideas I want to improve my own contribution to this form of research by focusing on what I see as limitations in the form and content of her arguments. I will then propose a way of overcoming the limitations. I will be suggesting that the central limitation in the article on practitioner research in initial teacher education is the omission of evidence which could show the students' reflections on their own practices and which could substantiate her claims to educational knowledge in relation to the programmes of initial teacher education in the School of Education at the University of Sheffield.

Here are the points of agreement. I agree with the crucial need for Higher Education to work with new and experienced teachers in ways that are intellectually challenging as well as relevant to practice. I agree that some form of reflective-based research, or, more ambitiously, critical action research, is an appropriate medium. I also agree with her point that there is a danger in the present climate of conflating the role of Higher Education in initial teacher training and that of the teacher recruitment crisis. I agree that we should recognise the strengths of current practice

in teacher education programmes and that we should think constructively about ways of dealing, in the short term and in the long term, with the problems that lie behind the crisis in recruitment.

In this article I will not only attempt to show a recognition of such strengths, but will also point to the locations in which adequate evidence for these strengths of current practice in teacher education are being produced. In thinking constructively about the crisis of teacher recruitment I will draw attention to a number of collaborative enquiries undertaken between teachers, schools, higher education and an LEA. I will be suggesting that such enquiries if supported through the creation of a General Education Council, would do much to embody the forms of professionalism which would help to convince new recruits to enter the profession.

It may be that Rudduck is correct that there is still a case to be made for approaches to teacher education which are based on ideas such as the reflective practitioner, action research, the teacher as researcher, critical action research, action enquiry etc. My own view is that the major paradigm shift towards this view took place in the early eighties. What I think we should now be looking for from practitioner researchers is the evidence to show that a more appropriate form of educational theory is emerging and being tested from the base of this research (McNiff, 1988).

In other words I think creative academics will be finding ways of exploring their own practitioner research and supporting other practitioner researchers in speaking for themselves as they show the ways in which they are trying to improve the quality of education with their pupils or students. Working from this perspective makes me critical of the writings of Pollard & Tann (1987) on *Reflective Teaching* in the Primary School on the grounds that their text contains no examples from the pupils of reflective primary teachers. Similarly when Wilf Carr (1989) writes about *Understanding Quality in Teaching* he does so without drawing on any examples from reflections from his own students which could show the meaning of quality in his own teaching. Clem Adelman (1989) talks of the practical ethic taking priority over methodology without showing what his practical ethic looks like in his own educational practice. The upsurge of interest in practitioner research has led to a large number of texts produced largely by academics who do not show themselves engaged in their own practitioner research. This is not to criticise the important contributions each of the above researchers has made to the development of the teacher researcher movement. It is to criticise the omission of research on this practice. I am criticising the work of these educational researchers in the same sense that Whitty (1986) has criticised the work of American and Australian sociologists on the politics and sociology of education.

Yet, if the prescriptions of these writers are not to remain purely rhetorical, there is an urgent need for them to engage in an active exploration of the implications of their work among the political constituencies in whose interests it is supposedly being carried out.

The major part of Jean Rudduck's paper is spent arguing the need for something which my experience of teacher education courses (Bath University, Bristol Polytechnic, Bath College of Higher Education, Kingston Polytechnic, Sheffield Polytechnic and Bristol University), has convinced me that the principles and practice of practitioner research have been accepted for a number of years. Discussions with other external examiners from institutions of Higher Education around the country

have convinced me that there is no need to carry on arguing for something which is now widely accepted. However, I do believe that there is a need for those academics who have been arguing for this position for so long to show how they have translated their arguments into their own practice.

As I have said, whilst I have no difficulty in understanding or accepting the arguments put forward by Jean Rudduck I believe they are limited because she does not show herself examining her own practice as a practitioner researcher. This limitation becomes apparent in the last section of the paper on 'Introducing student teachers to reflection and enquiry/research'. It was at this point that I expected an academic who has over the past twenty years, made the case for practitioner research in teacher education to show what her own practitioner research looked like as she tried to improve the quality of programmes of initial teacher education.

Part of the reason for the omission may stem from Rudduck's use of 'we' rather than 'I' in relation to her practical concerns. When 'we' is used authentically it may be experienced as a celebration by two or more people of a feeling of solidarity and communion or it may be used falsely to imply a non-existent acceptance of a viewpoint by another individual. When used in the latter sense it can give a spurious feeling of collaboration. I have no reason to believe that the 'we' used by Rudduck is not accepted by her students and/or colleagues. Unfortunately I have no evidence from any source about the validity of her use of 'we', not least from her students. My reason for stressing the importance of including one's own 'I' in practitioner research is because I believe it changes the logic of the discourse at the point where the individual experiences her or his existence as a living contradiction. Critical discourse invariably follows the law of contradiction which eliminates contradictions from 'rational' theories. The inclusion of 'I', as a living contradiction in theoretical accounts does, I believe, help to establish a dialectic in which creative and critical episodes of thought and action can alternate and interact (Whitehead, 1985a).

In addition to these opportunities we are told that tutors will, according to their own confidence and commitment, model reflection-on-action in relation to their own everyday work with their students. We are also told that all tutors involved in the initial training of teachers are themselves engaged in school-based or school-focused research projects and that,

Our programme will continue to build its coherence around the idea of the reflective practitioner because we believe that a capacity for reflection offers teachers a means of sustaining the excitement of teaching and allows them to continue to learn in co-operative but self-critical company.

Given the plethora of references to the work of other academics when making her case for the need for practitioner research, the absence of any contribution from students or tutors about the programme 'we' have opted to introduce, is all the more striking. Is it that the students who are being introduced to practitioner research at Sheffield University don't have anything to say? I would have thought that the best evidence for the claims being made about any practitioner researcher programme would be presented by the practitioners themselves in their own voices, as adult members of our society about to enter our profession.

If Jean Rudduck's 'I' is embodied in a practitioner researcher programme does she have any evidence that anything she has done has contributed to the systematic, reflective educational development of any student teacher? It is this evidence I

would like to see reported in this Journal together with an explication of the criteria she uses to characterise the 'educational' development of her students.

Before asking for this evidence I did check that it was not provided in other articles. I looked at the paper on 'Encouraging the spirit of enquiry in initial teacher education' (Rudduck & Wellington, 1989) to see if the fuller account of the students' enquiries would produce some evidence from the students concerning their enquiries. It did not. I examined the papers by Lucas (1988a,b,c) for the detailed account of the ways in which one tutor sustains reflection-on-action as the core of his PGCE programme. I could find no evidence of any reflection-on-action being sustained by any student in the programme designed to sustain reflection-on-action.

I am not saying that what is being claimed is false. My point is that there is insufficient evidence being produced to convince a mildly critical reader of the validity of the claims being made. The lack of evidence produced by academics in Higher Education on their effectiveness in promoting practitioner research leads me to ask whether we should be looking to teacher researchers to produce the evidence on their effectiveness in supporting practitioner research with student teachers. For example, McIntyre (1988) has been promoting a design for a teacher education curriculum from research and theory on teacher knowledge which involves practising teachers as mentors. McIntyre tells us that,

...as interns' confidence and competence develops during the year, the emphasis should shift towards more wide-ranging and more individualised investigations of teaching, with interns beginning to articulate the kinds of teachers they want to be, to investigate ways of realising these aspirations, and to acquire the abilities needed to evaluate their own teaching.

Some three years after the initiation of this programme I cannot find any evidence produced by the academics or interns at the Oxford University Department of Educational Studies, which demonstrates that these shifts are taking place.

Having criticised academics for not making public their practitioner research I believe that I should give examples of the kind of evidence I am seeking in relation to my own practice. As a University Academic I am encouraged, through the University Statutes, to play an active part in civic life. As part of my professional responsibility I have accepted nomination to the Governing Body of a secondary school in Bath and for the past eight years have been elected Chair of Governors. During that time I have encouraged the development of an action research approach to professional development in the school and in the county of Avon. When I think of my own practice in teacher education I am conscious of holding a view concerning the nature of an educative relationship which requires my own students and colleagues to speak on their own behalf when I am making a claim concerning my professional practice as a teacher educator. In other words I judge my own effectiveness in teacher education by the extent to which my students and colleagues voluntarily acknowledge that ideas from my research and teaching are integrated within the sense they make of their own practice. I also judge the quality of my educative relationships in terms of the extent to which the ideas of others are subjected to critical scrutiny within the discourse.

The kind of evidence I have in mind is that provided by the Acting Head of the school. The evidence below supports my enquiry as a governor into the question, 'how do I improve my contribution to the educational management of the school?.'

In judging my activities I will focus on the values and evidence related to rationality and democracy.

My research into the nature of rational responses to questions of the form, 'How do I improve the quality of my professional practice?' (Whitehead, 1985b) has convinced me that such responses can have the form of an action research cycle in which one states what it is that one wishes to improve, imagines ways of improving it, construct an action plan (which contains details of the evidence one needs to collect to evaluate the effectiveness of one's practice), evaluates and modifies one's questions, and plans, in the light of evaluation. I am thus committed to an action-research based approach to professional development (Whitehead, 1989a).

I thus relate my attempts to improve my contribution to the educational management of a school to activities which are designed to encourage this approach to professional development within the school. From a position where I was part of a management structure supporting forms of professional development which did not incorporate the above view of rationality, I have moved to a position which supported this view in the way described below.

I have been helped in this movement by Hamilton (1990) and by the publication in March 1990 of Avon LEA's INSET booklet on 'You and Your Professional Development'. This booklet shows the Authority's commitment to providing the majority of its INSET support through an action-research approach to professional development,

In future the majority of LEA provided INSET will be directly linked to what goes on in your school and classroom. On a typical in-service programme you will spend two or three days away from school accompanied whenever possible by a colleague from the same school. You will be given the opportunity to reflect on your teaching and to identify the areas you want to develop. You will receive support in working out a plan to try out your ideas back in your school and classroom. Time for you to work with your colleagues to carry out your plans and record the results will be provided in the school. After a period of time you will get together again with members of your initial group for another day away from school. On this day you will review your progress, exchange experiences and make further plans for development. This process forms part of an action-research approach to professional development

The following extracts from a paper from the Acting Head of Culverhay School to the Senior Management Team 5/3/90 show clearly the integration of an action-research approach into the School's policy for staff development for 1990-91.

We have for a long time at Culverhay been very concerned about an INSET Policy which requires teachers to LEAVE their classes with a supply teacher, often with no expertise in the subject area, and for understandable reasons without the same commitment to the progress of the pupils.

The advantage to the School of teachers engaged in this form of INSET is also questionable, although we have tried to reduce the problems of "cascading" by having a "reporting back" form, which is then circulated to the relevant members of staff.

From the LEA draft Staff Development Policy, it is clear that INSET should now be much more CLASSROOM based, and resources should be allocated to support teachers as they carry out their work. Several Culver-

hay Staff have been involved in such INSET/STAFF DEVELOPMENT over the last few years, and the most recent example was the STRICT initiative (Supporting Teacher Research Into Classroom Teaching).

The paper continues with a definition of action research which follows the pattern:

1. The teacher identifies or is presented with a problem, and chooses a colleague to work with to help find a solution.
Ideally it would be nice if colleagues were able to choose the subject of the investigation. In reality, the identified needs of the pupils through the TVEE Project will need to be addressed, and this is one way in which it can be done. An example might be, 'How can I bring the "thrust" concerning Economic and Political Awareness into the teaching of this particular topic?', or, 'How can I approach this topic in a manner which more actively involves the pupils?'.

Our commitment to the following TVEE "thrusts" in 1990-91 will necessitate some work in the following areas:

- (a) Teaching and Learning Styles
- (b) Progression 14-19
- (c) Equal Opportunities
- (d) Economic and Political Awareness
- (e) Information Technology
- (f) Careers Education

2. The teacher works with the colleague both inside and outside the classroom, with the aim of devising an approach which will improve the quality of education provided.

This may involve looking at the manner in which the lessons are taught, e.g. whether Audio Visual Aids or IT could be used effectively to enhance the learning, or if there is something to be gained by producing suitable resource materials.

3. The lesson is taught, and information collected as the class proceeds which will highlight whether or not the approach is a successful one.
A record of the class could be recorded on video by one of the teachers, and/or through other more traditional methods such as the use of questionnaires. The latter would be composed after discussion between the teacher and his support colleague.

4. Following the class, the lesson is assessed by the two teachers.
Questions asked will concern whether the approach was successful or not, and more importantly how could it be improved?

5. The next stage requires a new improved approach to the topic to be devised, building on the experience gained from the research.
Thus the cycle of events can be continued, with both colleagues benefitting professionally from the experience, and the quality of the classroom teaching hopefully improving as a result. (5/3/90).

The following extracts from a paper from the Acting Head of all members of staff on 20/4/90 clearly shows our shared commitment to the democratic principle of staff selecting their own staff development tutor.

"We have been asked by the LEA to appoint a Staff Development Tutor.

This position should be assessed annually. The role/qualities of this person are outlined below:

1. The Staff Development Tutor (SDT) will be required to help staff decide on which aspects of their classroom work they wish to develop through Action Research.
2. The SDT, to be effective, needs to be accepted by his or her colleagues as equal partners. He or she needs to be able to work alongside teachers in an open and supportive way... The Chair of Governors and I are both happy to see the Staff select and appoint a SDT for 1990-91.

Thus my claim to be improving my contribution to the educational management of Culverhay School can be checked against the evidence of the integration of an action research approach to professional development in the school's policy and practices. This claim is grounded in my view of the rationality of action research as an approach to improving the quality of education with teachers and pupils. My claim can also be checked against the support I am giving to the extension of democratic practices in the workplace as exemplified by the democratic process of staff selection of their own Staff Development Tutor.

I now want to extend my enquiry from the work of one practitioner researcher into the institutional contexts of schools and an LEA to argue the case for an national initiative to support such research-based professionalism in education (Lomax, 1986; Whitehead, 1989a,b). What I have in mind is the creation of a General Education Council which will embody the professional values and forms of INSET accreditation developed by Avon LEA and the two Wiltshire Schools, Greendown and Wootton Bassett, in collaboration with the School of Education of the University of Bath. Teachers in the two schools have developed their own school-based research groups for continuing teacher education with the support of Bath University School of Education and with registration fees from Wiltshire LEA and the schools' budgets. Local teachers from these and other schools have already had their action enquiries accredited for MEd, MPhil and PhD enquiries. An increasing number of teachers are registering for advanced Certificates and Diplomas by action enquiry.

Avon LEA has adopted a policy of supporting an action research approach to professional development. This policy is set out in their excellent booklet 'You and Your Professional Development' (Avon, 1990a). As a result of this policy some 80 advisory teachers and some 400 staff development tutors drawn from every primary and secondary school in the county have participated in action research INSET programmes in collaboration with staff from Bath University, Bath College or Higher Education, Cheltenham and Gloucestershire College of Higher Education and Bristol Polytechnic.

The action research cycle is embodied in the LEA's documentation for the Institutional Development Plans for all schools. The Avon publication, 'Professional Development Opportunities' (Avon LEA, 1990b) offers a comprehensive set of INSET opportunities grounded in an action-research based view of teacher professionalism. Four members of the Avon Educational Management Board, Pauline Monaghan, Chris Saville, Graham Badman and Fred Ward, have been particularly influential in this development.

Teachers in the Wootton Bassett Action Research Group have produced their own booklet on Professional Development and Collaborative Action Research (Eames, 1989). They show how the approach to their own professional development

is related to the quality of their professional development and the quality of pupils' learning. PGCE students on teaching practice have written their own accounts of the influence of practitioner research on their thinking and practice. Kevin Eames is coordinating this group and has produced his own justification for an action research approach to professional development (Eames, 1989). The Head of Wootton Bassett School has supported the integration of practitioner research within each faculty of this comprehensive school and the school's policy document on curriculum development shows how an action research approach to staff and curriculum development can become an integral part of a school's development (DES, 1989).

The Action Research Group at Greendown School, Swindon, was the first school-based research group in the country to explore the potential of accredited action research programmes for staff development. The Head is a member of the group and one of the teacher researchers is conducting his PhD enquiry into the process of forming and sustaining a school-based research group for improvement in the quality of pupils' learning. A report on this work will be presented at the 1990 Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association and reported in *Research Intelligence*.

I believe that we should be building research-based professionalism in education on such LEA and school initiatives. Yet, with the exception of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, we have no national, autonomous, professional organisation which could support such initiatives and help to raise the professional status of teaching with a national system of accreditation for initial and continuing teacher education. Doesn't our profession need such an autonomous body not only to accredit teacher education but also to regulate the content of the curriculum and the examination and assessment procedures in our schools?

Whilst I believe the intellectual case for research-based professionalism has been won, the political case has still to be fought. The establishment of a General Education Council for accrediting a research-based approach to teacher education and for regulating the content of the curriculum, examinations and assessment procedures in the country's schools and colleges needs to be given a high priority in the Political Parties' Manifestos.

The establishment of a General Education Council with the powers to determine teacher accreditation, curricula and examinations would do much to restore the lost sense of pride, social status and professional well being in teaching. What is needed is a clear set of policy guidelines to be included in the election manifestos of the next government. The Labour Party is already committed to establishing a General Teaching Council when in Government. The purposes, constitution, operation and funding of such a Council needs to be defined as a matter of urgency. I have argued, from existing cases of research-based professional development at individual, school and LEA level for the creation of a General Education Council to enhance the national standing of such initiatives so that teachers, advisers and lecturers can feel that we belong to the profession of education.

It may be that readers of this Educational Journal do not see the necessity of engaging in such direct political activities as part of their professional development. I believe it to be part of our professional responsibility. (Whitehead, 1990).

I will finish with some questions and assumptions about our shared existence as living contradictions in the hope that they will help to take our enquiries forward. I believe that you, like me, are experiencing tension at work because you are not fully

living your educational values in your practice. I believe that the profession needs your case study as you show how you are trying to resolve this tension. If you are not already doing so why don't you write up and publicly share your own practitioner research as you try to resolve this tension by exploring what it means to you as you try to live these values more fully in your own educational practice? I am moved to ask this question by the following conversation between Giles Deleuze and Michel Foucault and by the responses below of a school leaver to a teacher/researcher gathering data for the Scottish Educational Data Archive. Giles Deleuze summarises my own conviction that academics who have so successfully made the case for practitioner research through the power of their criticism, should now make a creative response in their own research and show what they are doing in their educative relationships to promote the capacities of their students to speak on their own behalf.

You were the first to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others. We ridiculed representation and said it was finished, but we failed to draw the consequences of this 'theoretical' conversion — to appreciate the theoretical fact that only those directly concerned can speak in a practical way on their own behalf. (Foucault, 1980)

The following quote from a Scottish school leaver hits at the heart of the matter, I do think that practitioner researchers should now be showing, in the voices of their students, how they are helping to meet their educational needs.

I think you should try more to help us... instead of just talking a lot of rubbish all the time to us. Saying you's will help but you's don't. And I think you's have got a cheek asking me to fill this in after all you's should have come and told us what to do for the best instead of asking kids lots of things to help other people. (Gow & Macpherson, 1980)

In the spirit of dialectics I will finish with a question which may help to take practitioner research forward. Can you (and I) present the evidence, in forms such as Westminster Studies or the British Educational Research Association, which shows that your practitioner research is meeting your own educational needs and/or those of your pupils and students?

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5.6

Whitehead, J. (1992) How can my philosophy of action research transform and improve my professional practice and produce a good social order? - A Response to Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt.

Proceedings of the Second World Congress on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management, Bruce, C.S. & Russell, A. L. (Ed.) Brisbane; ALARPM. Inc.

**HOW CAN MY PHILOSOPHY OF ACTION RESEARCH TRANSFORM AND IMPROVE
MY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND PRODUCE A GOOD SOCIAL ORDER? - A
RESPONSE TO ORTRUN ZUBER-SKERRITT**

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is draw attention to a new form of educational theory for improving professional practice and producing a good social order. The recent literature on action learning and action research has focused on their appropriateness as methods to develop managerial and other professional competences. Theoretical frameworks of action research have emphasised conceptual rather than dialectical forms of knowledge. This paper questions the emphasis on method and conceptual theories and argues for a greater concentration on the creation and testing of a living and dialectical educational theory for professional practice within which one's own philosophy of education is engaged as a first person participant.

KEYWORDS

Living Educational Theory; Dialectics; Educational Development; Educational Knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

In my paper to the First World Congress I outlined a dialectical approach to educational action research and attempted to synthesise a process of personal development with a process of social evolution. I characterised the dialectical approach as a process of question and answer in which an individual 'I' exists as a living contradiction in questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?', in the workplace. I gave two examples of action research. One on my own professional development in higher education and the other on my contribution, as Chair of Governors, to the educational management of a comprehensive school. To be consistent with my philosophy of action research I am now drawing your attention to an account of my own educational development which integrates this philosophy with my attempts to improve my professional practice and to contribute to a good social order. The account is grounded in my experience of my own 'I' existing as a living contradiction in that I hold certain values whilst at the same time experiencing their denial in practice. The inclusion of 'I' in my claim to educational knowledge establishes a non-conceptual form within the account. I will contrast the non-conceptual form of educational theory which is constituted by such an account with the theoretical, conceptual framework for action research proposed by Zuber-Skerritt (1991).

ACTION RESEARCH: A METHOD FOR THEORY GENERATION AND TESTING?

One point I would like to explore is the possibility that action researchers have given in too easily to the temptation to reduce their research to issues of methodology and model building, rather than tackling the more fundamental issues of theory generation and testing. In educational research for example, the last decade has witnessed a crisis in that there is no discernable agreement about what constitutes educational theory. The view that educational theory was constituted by the theoretical frameworks and methods of validation of the disciplines of education, was abandoned by one of its creators (Hirst 1983) with the suggestion that we ought to be looking to 'operationally effective practical discourse' as a basis for theory generation.

The demise of the disciplines approach to educational theory has seen a corresponding increase in the adoption of action research approaches to professional development in teaching (McNiff 1988), nursing and police training. In the United Kingdom, Professor John Elliott (1989) has been particularly influential in promoting action research in a variety of professional settings. Dr. Pamela Lomax (1989) has also been most successful in institutionalising programmes of action research for the professional development of teachers at Kingston polytechnic. What has yet to emerge from these initiatives is a view of educational theory with widespread academic credibility. The accounts of the action researchers are judged for validity and academic rigour in terms

of their methods (Winter 1989) rather than as contributions to the creation and testing of educational theory.

I can appreciate the importance of the methods which are used to ensure validity and rigour in a research paradigm with a well established theoretical base. Is there not a danger however, that in a period of crisis when there is a theoretical revolution in progress, the dominant concern with method is likely to be at the expense of encouraging the expression of the creativity of researchers in discovering new forms for the descriptions and explanations for the phenomena under investigation? What I am suggesting is that action researchers should, at this time in the development of the field, stress the importance of developing new forms of explanation rather than permitting their research to be dominated by method or by traditional forms of theoretical, conceptual frameworks.

To illustrate my point I will refer to the contents of a case report in which I explain my professional development in the workplace of a University (Whitehead 1992) and compare this with the contents of the theoretical framework for professional development in higher education proposed by Zuber-Skerritt (1991). My fundamental point is that my explanation contains a non-conceptual 'I', as a living contradiction, which cannot be adequately represented within a conceptual form. Therefore the conceptual form of theoretical framework of the kind proposed by Zuber-Skerritt below does not have the explanatory capacity to produce an adequate explanation for my professional development in higher education. The explanation for my educational development between 1976 and 1991 demonstrates how a living form of theory can include conceptual theories without itself being reduced to such a conceptual form. In other words I do not conceptualise the case being explained. I am the case. The 190 pages of my case report presents my explanation for my professional development in higher education. I have brought several copies to the Congress and would appreciate offers to test the validity of my explanation.

The following extracts from the contents of Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt's text on professional development in higher education offer a theoretical framework for action research. They indicate how she approaches praxis and theory in higher education and the integration of theory and practice. In the section on praxis in higher education, Zuber-Skerritt discusses technical and practical reasoning and discusses *The Case* in relation to the theories of Kelly, Leontiev, critical educational science and her own CRASP model. Theories of knowing and learning are described as behaviourist, cognitive and holistic theories. In the section on the integration of theory and practice the list of theories includes Lewin's theory, Kolb's experiential learning theory, Dewey's model of learning, Piaget's model of learning, Kolb's definition of learning and Boud and Pascoe's extensions of Kolb's model.

My purpose in comparing the contents of an explanation for my professional development in higher education derived from action research, with the extracts from the contents of *professional development in higher education: a theoretical framework for action research*, is to raise questions about the validity of both accounts. In criticising Zuber-Skerritt's theoretical framework I am faced with the kind of paradox I experienced in criticising the views of Professor Richard Peters, one of my teachers whose professionalism I valued highly and who stimulated a love of philosophy. In the 1960s and 1970s Richard Peters elevated the status of educational theory in programmes of professional development. In 1971, at the height of the acceptability of the disciplines approach to educational theory, I rejected the theory on the basis of reflections on my own classroom practice with my pupils and my own professional development. My reasoning was as follows. One of the tests of validity of a theory is that it has the capacity to produce an adequate explanation for the behaviour of an individual case. One of the influences on my explanation was the video-camera I had been asked to use by an Inspector to explore its educational potential in the science department of a comprehensive school where I was Head of Science. In looking at my performance I experienced myself as a living contradiction in holding two mutually exclusive opposites together. I held certain values whilst denying them at the same time.

I reflected on the logic of Richard Peters' philosophy of education with his commitment to the Law of Contradiction. This states that two mutually exclusive statements cannot be true simultaneously. I could see that the conceptual frameworks of the theories in the disciplines of education, all excluded contradiction. I followed Popper's (1963) rejection of contradiction in theories through the application of the simple laws of inference which he used to claim that dialectical forms of knowledge were based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking and entirely useless as theory. Yet, on the ground of my own experience of myself as a living contradiction, I wanted to find an educational theory which had the capacity to produce an adequate explanation for my professional development.

I decided to explore the nature of an explanation for my own professional development in higher education as I continued my educational enquiry, 'How do I improve my practice?'. The result so far over the period 1976-91 is

the form and content of the above account of my educational development. In comparing this account with the theoretical framework for action research proposed by Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt I am drawn to a similar criticism to the one I made of the ideas of Richard Peters. I recognise the professionalism in the work. I understand its value in raising the awareness and status of action research in higher education. In claiming that the theoretical framework is too limited to produce valid explanations for the professional development of individuals in higher education I do not want to damage the growth of action research approaches in professional development. I want to see them strengthened by ensuring that a valid form of educational theory is emerging from the research. For this reason I want to put forward my own stipulative definition as an alternative to the theoretical framework above. Where Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt writes about *The Case* as if the case is independent of herself, I have taken myself to be the case and provided a case report on my own educational development between 1976 and 1991.

The alternative view I am proposing is that educational theory is being constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their educational development in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'

I see my philosophy of action research in terms of first person engagement rather than from the perspective of second person participant or of a third person neutral observer. I value the traditional role of an academic in making original contributions to knowledge. I see the methodology and epistemology in my claim to know my educational development as an integral part of my educational development. I ground my justification of the values, whose meaning emerges in the course of my educational development, in the name of my own education and humanity. In attempting to live more fully my values within the context of my workplace I believe that I am helping to produce a good social order. This belief is based on the evidence of my responses in the contents of the above case report, to actions and judgements which, whilst legitimated by the University's procedures existing at the time, exerted pressure which, according to a University Senate Committee, might have discouraged and therefore constrained a less determined individual than myself. I see my philosophy contributing to the production of a good social order within the form of dialogical community represented in the work of Richard Bernstein (1991) and Alastair MacIntyre (1990).

I am particularly drawn to MacIntyre's view that we should reconceive the University as a place of constrained disagreement. What I have in mind is the re-creation of forums for the debate of ideas in which academics with different perspectives agree to participate (Lakatos & Musgrave 1970). I think that this would ensure an engagement with ideas, especially those which are aimed at reconstituting the theoretical basis of a field of enquiry. Without the commitment to subject each others' ideas to public test, there is the danger that traditional, conceptual structures, are retained as legitimate, when there are tests of validity which would reveal their limitations. I make this point because of a response, of a Professor of Education to my explanation for my educational development, that it was outside his field!

I do not believe that my paper on its own should persuade you of the validity of my claims. What it can do however, is to draw your attention to where a living educational theory is being created and it may stimulate you sufficiently to want to test the validity of this new claim to educational knowledge. Those who are interested might also wish to see how I am developing these ideas in the context of my work as Chair of Governors of a comprehensive school (Whitehead 1990). I think of the significance of your commitment to test the validity of my ideas in MacIntyre's (1988) terms that the rival claims to truth of contending traditions of enquiry depend for their vindication upon the adequacy and the explanatory power of the histories which the resources of each of those traditions in conflict enable their adherents to write.

I suppose the main challenge to academics in the above views is the implication that their research should include a public account of their own educational development in an enquiry of the form, 'How do I improve my practice?'. To hold oneself accountable in this way, in the name of education and one's own humanity, may deter those who prefer the safety of conceptual structures. There is risk, a creative leap and an act of faith, involved in attempting to make original contributions to educational knowledge. I am fortunate that I can share my work with students, teachers and colleagues in the conversational research community of the action research group of the School of Education of the University of Bath. I do hope that you will respond and help to test the validity of my ideas.

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5.7

Whitehead, J. (1996) Living Educational Theories and Living Contradictions: a response to Mike Newby.

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Living Educational Theories and Living Contradictions: a response to Mike Newby

JACK WHITEHEAD

I feel sure that Newby's review (*Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 28. 1, 1994, pp. 119–126), of Jean McNiff's (1993) book *Teaching as Learning* will help to stimulate philosophers of education to contribute to debate about the nature of the educational knowledge and the logic(s) of the educational theories being produced by educational action researchers. I share his commitment to clarity of thinking in education and to the value of philosophy in examining the grounds on which other disciplines make their claims to knowledge. Let me take a number of criticisms that he explicitly makes of me in his review.

While Newby may see my work as an action research approach to pedagogical problem-solving I see my work as focused on the epistemologies of living educational theories. I am interested in the logics of educational theories and in the standards of judgement that can be used to test the validity of the descriptions and explanations that individual learners produce for their own educational development as they answer questions of the kind 'How do I improve what I am doing?' Recent research (Elliott and Sarland, 1995) and papers in *Teacher Education Quarterly* (22. 3, 1995) on Self-Study and Living Educational Theory show that, as Newby says, there are indeed 'several university departments of education adopting an action research approach to pedagogical problem-solving in the McNiff and Whitehead style'.

I am surprised at his suggestion that 'the McNiff–Whitehead position rejects the impersonal propositional form which research normally takes in favour of a dialectical approach', since Newby himself quotes me as having written:

I am arguing for a reconstruction of educational theory into a living form of question and answer which includes propositional contributions from the traditional disciplines of education.

I have argued (Whitehead, 1989) that living educational theories can be presented in a dialogical and dialectical form which, while not being validly reduced to a propositional theory, *can integrate insights* from such theories.

In his remarks on 'Whitehead's five-fold question-and-answer strategy' Newby clearly states that I have an approach to action research that 'never seems to ask philosophical questions about the logic of "improvement", the form goals are to take, and the criteria for choosing certain goals rather than others'. I asked and tried to answer such questions in public debate some 12 years ago over a period of two years in the *International Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* (Whitehead, 1983, 1985a,b; Wilson, 1984).

Perhaps Newby might like to engage with these published papers and review his claim that I never seem to ask such philosophical questions.

Similarly, with regard to evaluation, Newby asks how evaluation can take place 'if the fundamental questions about improvement have not been asked, let alone answered'. Again, unless I misunderstand what he thinks counts as a fundamental question, I do think the debates in the early 1980s within the Classroom Action Research Network (Whitehead and Foster, 1984) and elsewhere (Whitehead, 1985a,b, 1989) show that I have engaged with this and related points.

I wonder about the evidence for Newby's claim that I impute arrogance and incorrigibility to professors of education:

Jack Whitehead accuses professors of education of unwillingness to open their own account of their educational development to public criticism (p. xi). Whether or not this is the case, it is quite unfair to impute arrogance and incorrigibility to them.

I must ask the reader to read my words in my introduction to Jean McNiff's book (1993, p. xi). At no point do I impute arrogance or incorrigibility to 'Professors of Education'. I think their logic and language is too limited to provide a logic and language of educational theory and I have put forward an alternative (Whitehead, 1985a,b, 1989).

Newby accuses Jean McNiff and myself of being 'unfairly judgemental and highly suspect. They have first had to assassinate the characters of the renowned before attempting to climb on the pedestal themselves' — this in the context of the writings and practice of Richard Peters and his colleagues.

I make no secret of the fact that I came to Bath University in 1973 with the explicit intention of trying to reconstruct educational theory because I believed the 'disciplines' approach of Richard Peters and Paul Hirst was mistaken. I believed it to be mistaken because it could not produce a valid explanation for the educational development of an individual. I recall studying under the team of philosophers led by Richard Peters with the utmost respect for their professionalism. Indeed in my own book (Whitehead, 1993) I say on the first page of the Introduction:

As a student of education at the University of Newcastle in 1967 I was influenced by the work of the philosopher Richard Peters on ethics and education . . . Peters emphasised the importance of other values such as rationality, consideration of interests, respect for persons and worthwhile activities. He also believed in the value of educational theory for the professional development of teachers and saw education as being related to the creation of a good social order.

I would also say that the idea of living educational theories is not the kind of idea through which an individual can elevate herself or himself on to a pedestal. The whole point of the view that educational theories are being produced by individuals in their descriptions and explanations for their own educational development is that it is open to all individuals to create their own living educational theory. There is a slogan on my office door at the University,

Undermine the Dominant Paradigm. The slogan is a constant invitation to critique.

There are two further general points I wish to raise about Newby's review. The first is his claim that Jean McNiff's book attempts to introduce an ethic of teaching and learning that is built around Habermas's ideal speech situation. He says that this is by no means new or original. While Jean must speak for herself I feel sure that her well-known Christian commitments exemplified in the book's preface:

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others . . . Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 4:10, 3:15).

do more than suggest that her ethics are not built around Habermas' ideal speech situation. Because Jean and I, whilst agreeing on many things, have such a different base to our ethics and our spiritual lives I think some care is needed in referring to the McNiff-Whitehead or the Whitehead-McNiff position.

I do agree with Newby when he says that:

Any approach to research that, whatever it might sometimes appear to say, disregards all academic standards and refuses to deliver propositionally expressed truth-claims as opposed to claims made in the first person, is going to have real problems developing criteria of quality. This concerns me, because teachers are now being awarded MA degrees in this tradition of action research.

However, I wonder why my approach to research is associated with the idea that propositionally expressed truth-claims are opposed to claims made in the first person. The validation procedures, included in Jean McNiff's (1988) text on *Action Research: Principles and Practice*, following Martin Forrest (1983), show that Jean and I agree that propositionally expressed truth-claims can be integrated within claims made in the first person rather than being opposed to them. And Newby's criticism here is difficult to sustain in the light of recent texts on the criteria for judging action research (Lomax, 1994, 1996; McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead, 1996).

This brings me to a further point which is related to the previous paragraph. Newby says that:

Truth-claims have their context in traditions of enquiry. They are not personal or group preferences. Their context is historical. . . . It is when we become aware that thinking can be done expertly or badly, and that traditions of expertise are digests of the best that has gone before, that we have some chance, however small, of combating our prejudices and engaging in dialogue with experts.

I wonder if Newby's beliefs about truth-claims should be questioned. Where he says that they are not personal or group preferences, hasn't Foucault (1977) made rather a good case in showing that what counts as truth and truth-claims can be related to the power relations invested in particular interest groups?

I also wonder how he copes with the problem that some traditions of expertise, which are indeed digests of the best that has gone before, no longer provide the answers to some significant questions. If he rests in the best that has gone before how does he respond creatively when this best is no longer good enough for the here and now? I argue (Whitehead, 1985a,b) that new truth-claims are required to test the validity of new forms of educational theory and that in establishing a new view of educational theory personal or group preferences, rather than a context in traditions of enquiry, may be the basis for legitimating the new view. Again, this is not to deny the value of including standards of judgement drawn from the traditions in testing the validity of a claim to knowledge.

Newby gave the title 'Living Theory or Living Contradiction' to his review. As these terms had their genesis in relation to my own work, I would like him to consider my title, 'Living Educational Theories and Living Contradictions'. I wonder how I might share an understanding of my dialectical logic and commitment to education with an orthodox philosopher. (Whitehead, 1985a) who is operating from within a propositional logic that sets up such oppositions by eliminating contradictions from correct thought. I suppose one way might be to show that I understand and share a commitment to Newby's academic values and, in a sympathetic way which does not deny his integrity, make a response which is intended to help him to enhance his own contribution to the philosophy of education.

For example I feel that Newby's critique addresses aspects of my life as a living contradiction. In the positive pole of the dialectic I am thinking of our shared values of scholarship, of our concern to represent the ideas of another with honesty and integrity and of our respect and insights into those qualities of spiritual and aesthetic sensibility that are required to communicate within an *I-You* relationship rather than an *I-It* relationship.

In the negative pole of the dialectic I am thinking of not living fully my value of scholarship which should lead me to address the points that, as he says, I never seem to address. I am also thinking of not living fully the values of honesty and integrity that should lead me to represent the ideas of others truthfully. I am thinking of not living fully my spiritual and aesthetic sensitivity to the *I-You* relation in the language of my written communications. These written communications often fall short of the full mutuality I can experience with you in face-to-face communication.

I want to say something in conclusion about the tone in which I have tried to respond to Newby's criticisms of my work. At the World Congress 3 on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management at the University of Bath in July 1994 I witnessed a dialogue between Dr Peter Reason, the Director of the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice at Bath University, and Orlando Fals-Borda, Emeritus Professor at the University of Columbia in Bogota and one of the leading proponents of Participatory Action Research. Orlando demonstrated the art of a dialectician in embracing opposites and working with contrary views. He showed great humility, yet enormous intellectual integrity, in focusing on the uniting influence of human values and the desire to contribute to improving the world through cultural renewal and education. Terri Austin (1994) of the Alaskan Action Research Network and Tom Russell (1995; Munby

and Russell, 1996) have also contributed to the kind of language I need to develop if I am to make a full contribution to such a community.

I hope that I have integrated what I have learned from the human qualities expressed by Peter Reason, Orlando Fals-Borda, Terri Austin and Tom Russell, in the content and tone of my response. I hope Mike Newby feels directly addressed and that he experiences my response as a genuine invitation to continue to critique my ideas. Other readers might like to join with me in showing how our philosophies not only interpret our world but are also integrated in our living educative relationships with our students, as we try to improve them. I am thinking of the creation of our own living educational theories that show how we are struggling to express more fully and to justify the values that we think will help to regenerate our culture and that at the same time will help us to improve the contributions our philosophies can make to the creation of an educated community.

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5.8

Whitehead, J. (1998) Developing Research-Based Professionalism Through Living Educational Theories.

Keynote Address to the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin, November 1998.

Developing research-based professionalism through living educational theories

Jack Whitehead, Department of Education, University of Bath, Bath, U.K.

An address to the Educational Studies Association of Ireland at Trinity College, Dublin,
27 November 1998.

I want to thank the organisers of this Conference of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland for inviting me to give this address. Such opportunities have played a fundamental part in my productive life in education. The discipline of writing for an audience and to a deadline has always helped to take my enquiries forward. However, I feel I should warn you of my history of disasters in my lectures and workshops on action research. In 1985 I felt elated when a large local authority asked me to tutor more than 70 advisory teachers to support action research approaches to professional development in schools around Bath. I began a session to a roomful of gloomy faces. They had all received their termination notices that morning. This highlights the form of rational educational policy making favoured by English politicians. You spend money on policy formation and then sack the people you need to implement the policy. Last February, I began a similar action research workshop with principals and administrators in the Grand Erie Board in Ontario. In contrast to the previous session I was welcomed by a roomful of delighted and happy individuals. It is difficult to describe the euphoria. Initially, in my conceit, I put it down to the idea that I was such a popular international figure that they were simply looking forward to hearing my talk. Then they explained to me that they had just heard that morning the good news that if their age and length of service came to 85 they could retire without penalties to their pension because the government wanted to take some 15,000 teachers out of service. The moral of these stories is that there appears to be a connection between my talks on action research and teachers leaving the profession. I hope to reverse this trend today.

In particular I want to share with you my learnings over the ten years 1988-1998. In 1988 I presented my Presidential Address to the British Educational Research Association on **Research-Based Professionalism** (Whitehead 1989a) and wrote my paper on **Creating a Living Educational Theory from Questions of the Kind, 'How do I improve my Practice?'**. (Whitehead, 1989b)

For those of you who are not familiar with the ideas of research-based professionalism and of living educational theories it may be helpful if I say that, for me, research-based professionalism refers to the process of enhancing teacher professionalism through constructing our professional knowledge-base from our self-studies of our own professional practice. Living educational theories are, for me, the descriptions and explanations which individuals offer for their own professional learning as they ask, answer and research questions of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing?'. Living theories are different from the traditional kind of theory in which the explanations are presented in terms of general concepts. Living theories are part of the way individuals create their own form of life. They are living because of the way they explain a present practice in terms of an evaluation of the past and in terms of an intention to create something better in the future in one's own practice. The fundamental explanatory principles are not presented in abstract, linguistic concepts, they are presented as values, embodied in one's practice and embedded in a particular social contexts. Their meanings emerge through practice and require, for their communication both ostensive and linguistic definition. In other words we both 'show' and 'tell' when we try to communicate the meanings of the values which constitute our relationships as 'educative'.

In today's address I want to bring the two ideas together in a new synthesis on Developing Research-Based Professionalism through Living Educational Theories in the context of:

1) Creating a Teaching Council in Ireland: Learning from the Work of the Teacher Training Agency in England and Wales and the Ontario College of Teachers in Canada.

2) Legitimizing teachers' professional knowledge in partnerships between Universities, Professional Development Centres and a Teachers' Council.

3) Demonstrating the potential of the internet for professional learning:

I now want to develop these ideas in more detail.

1) Creating a Teaching Council in Ireland: Learning from the Work of the Teacher Training Agency in the U.K. and the Ontario College of Teachers in Canada.

The 1995 White paper on Charting our Education Future acknowledged:

"a unanimous acceptance of the need for a cohesive policy on, and a comprehensive programme of, in-career professional development of teachers, related to the long-term development of the teaching profession and the education system generally." (D.O.E., 1995, p.126)

The concept of the teaching career and career-long professional learning is seen as the key to improving education. The 1998 report of the Department of Education and Science's Steering Committee on the Establishment of a Teaching Council contains a commitment to:

accredit and review national inservice initiatives designed to support new policies and programmes. (D.E.S., 1998. p. 27).

I want to focus on the importance of accrediting the knowledge of professional educators.

I imagine that many members of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland have supervised students for initial teacher awards and the awards of Master of Education, Master of Arts, Master of Science, Doctor of Philosophy or for the newer Ed.D. degrees. The presentations for such degrees in Education are often text-based dissertations and theses, bound for display and placed on library shelves. I imagine that some of you, like me, have been awarded advanced qualifications in Education **without having to provide any evidence that we have influenced the education of anyone.**

Learning from the Teacher Training Agency

In England and Wales the Teacher Training Agency has produced a framework for the professional development of teachers. At the present time it includes some 63 standards of practice which novice teachers must meet for them to be awarded their credentials of Qualified Teacher Status. It also includes the national standards for Subject leaders, for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and for Headteachers. A General Teaching Council is in the process of being established and a College of Teachers has recently been created from the College of Preceptors and The Education Council. These developments give some indication of the importance being given to the professional development of teachers in England and Wales. This concern is accompanied by a major recruitment crisis. The professional status of teaching (and I include pay within this) is not sufficiently high in England and Wales to attract sufficient numbers of good quality entrants into the profession and to retain the numbers we need. It will require a major cultural shift to change the public perception of teaching as a profession. Quotes from Ted Wragg (1998) highlight the problem when he talks of:

"... the zombie method of training heads or teachers, whereby complex human behaviour is atomised into discrete particulars, or "competencies". This mechanical approach, much favoured by the hapless Teacher Training Agency, is an unmitigated disaster..... The tyranny of brain-corroding bureaucracy must end.... Most important of all is to support creativity and imagination, collegiality and trust, not just foster the mechanical implementation of dreary, externally driven missives."

I hope that, in Ireland, you will avoid some of the problems associated with the way the TTA has set out its standards in its professional framework. Jim Graham (1998) in an excellent article

on teacher professionalism has added his voice to the growing criticism of the negative influences of the TTA when he says:

For teacher professionalism, the over-prescribed, centralist regulation by the TTA established a technicist model of teaching at variance with the autonomy, flexibility, collegiality necessary to create the learning organisations required to socialise the new generation of knowledge workers. (Graham, p. 17, 1998).

In contrast to the errors of the TTA I want to recommend the work of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) as it develops its standards of practice. Explicitly influenced by action research approaches (Squire 1998), OCT appears much more aware of the need to view standards of professional practice in terms of the living values which teachers use to give meaning and purpose to their productive lives in education.

Fran Squire works with Linda Grant of the Ontario College of Teachers on the development of standards of practice. Her enquiries, are focused on the questions,

What implications arise when standards of practice are linked to action research endeavours?

How do we keep the spontaneity and individualism inherent in action research as we establish criteria for its recognition in the educational community?

The reason I think that the work of Fran Squire, Linda Grant and the OCT is so important is that they are developing, to use Jean McNiff's phrase, a 'generative' form of action research. Unlike the Teacher Training Agency, they appear to understand that the standards of professional practice are the living values used by teachers in their educative relationships with their pupils. OCT is a learning organisation which is enquiring into the process of relating standards and professional learning in relation to the creation of a professional learning community which is concerned with the development of required professional knowledge.

In some ways the development of the research-based professionalism I have in mind is more developed in Ireland than in other parts of the world and in some ways it is less developed. As Hyland and Hanafin (1997: p. 162) have said:

'Action research has gained considerable ground as a model of teacher professional development internationally, although it has made relatively little impact in Ireland apart from its introduction into some accredited university/college courses and various curriculum projects (Leonard, 1995). One example of action research used for incareer development in Ireland is the Marino Institute of Education Action research Pilot Project which comprised nineteen case studies'. (McNiff and Collins, 1994).

Action Research is well developed in the work of Jean McNiff and the teacher-researchers she has been supporting. In her 1994 book, edited with Una Collins on 'A New Approach to In-Career Development for Teachers in Ireland', Jean describes the initial phases of the work of teacher-researchers as their enquiries begin and are supported over time. In July 1998 I attended a celebration in Bristol, following the graduation ceremony of the University of the West of England. Some 15 Irish teachers were awarded their Masters Degrees for their action research programmes in which many had embraced a living theory approach to their professional development. The Irish teachers, with Jean as their main tutor, found it necessary to move outside Ireland for the accreditation of their academic self-studies of their professional learning. In gaining this accreditation I believe these Irish teachers are contributing to the construction of a knowledge-base for professional educators. Gaining this recognition through an English university highlights a difficulty in the Irish context of a lack of support for legitimating action research studies in some Irish Universities and I now what to focus on the issue of legitimating teachers' professional knowledge

2) Legitimizing teachers' professional knowledge in a partnership between Universities, Professional Development Centres and a Teacher's Council.

At the same time the degrees were being conferred on Irish practitioners at the University of the West of England, a colleague in another university had sent me an action research dissertation which had been given a very low mark by an internal examiner. He asked for my advice because his own judgement on the dissertation was much more favourable. The internal examiner's judgements were to me, clearly being made from within a different paradigm of the kind which has been analysed in the issue of the Journal of In-Service Education to be published next month (Hughes, Denley & Whitehead 1998), and I advised my colleague to seek the judgements of other experts in the field of action research to see if it might be in the students' interest to question his colleague's judgement. Before he did this the external examiner's report had arrived, full of praise for the action research study and the dissertation received the high mark it deserved. For those interested in the way a view of 'education as text' and a 'cleverness' in manipulating linguistic concepts can blind examiners to the educational knowledge of professional educators in action research accounts, I recommend the afterword to Kevin Eames' Ph.D.. This is on the Action Research Homepage at the above address.

To give some further indication of the problems which can surround action research enquiries I recall a letter received by a student at a U.K. University from its research committee. This University had a good track record of successfully completed M.A. action research studies. The research committee had written to the research student, who had submitted a proposal for an MPhil./Ph.D. programme, to ask that the personal pronoun 'I' be removed from the title of the enquiry! For those who understand the importance of 'I' appearing in action research enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?', the request revealed the bias, prejudice or inadequate assessment of members of this research committee.

I was delighted to see one action research study reported by Dublin City University in their Conference Proceedings of the Third European Conference on Integrating information and Communications Technology in the Curriculum. I know Maggie Farren at Dublin City University is providing much needed help for practitioner researchers who wish to gain accreditation from an Irish University for their action research studies. The one action research study however, was within some 30 quantitative studies.

What I now want to do is to draw your attention to the kind of educational action enquiries which have already led to the awards of M.Phil or Ph.D. degrees. The teachers have created their own living educational theories in which they describe and explain their own professional learning as they ask, answer and research the following kinds of question:

A) 'How can I help my pupils to improve their learning?'

Dr. Moira Laidlaw

B) 'How can I help to establish action research approaches to professional development in my school?'

Dr. Kevin Eames, Dr. Moyra Evans

C) 'How can I support teachers in establishing action research approaches to professional development in their school in a way which can help to improve the quality of pupils' learning?'

Dr. Jean McNiff

Prof. Pam Lomax

D) 'How can I fulfil my system's responsibility for staff appraisal, staff and/or curriculum development?'

Jackie Delong & Dr. Ron Wideman

Erica Holley

These questions have been asked in local, regional, national and international contexts and supported by centres of professional development. Your Professional Development Centres are ideally placed to support such enquiries and I know such programmes have been developed for teachers of Drama in Cork. The teachers' accounts below show what has been learnt in

answering these questions. I have no intention of 'speaking for' the individuals below. They have all done this for themselves. My purpose, through showing you this series of Overhead Transparencies and saying why I value their work so highly, is to see if I can captivate your imagination in a way which will motivate you to access their work.

A) 'How can I help my pupils to improve their learning?'

Dr. Moira Laidlaw

(1996) *How can I create my own living educational theory through accounting to you for my own educational development?* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Examiners: Profs. Morwenna Griffith and Richard Winter.

1998 'In Loco Parentis with Sally: A matter of fairness and love'. Discussion paper for the Chat Room on <http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw>

Moira Laidlaw is an English teacher in a Bath comprehensive school. The general prologue to her doctoral thesis is a most inspiring piece of reflective writing on her experience of being a teacher. Moira uses Coleridge's Poem of the Ancient Mariner to help to communicate the spiritual and moral values she brings into her educative relationships with her pupils. In creating her living educational theory she demonstrates how educational standards of judgements are themselves living and changing within the educative relationships themselves as she works at helping her pupils to improve their learning.

B) 'How can I help to establish action research approaches to professional development in my school?'

Dr. Kevin Eames

(1995) *How do I, as a teacher and an educational action-researcher, describe and explain the nature of my professional knowledge?* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Examiners: Profs. Chris Day and David Sims. The afterword is a particularly powerful expression of how a teacher-researcher can contribute to transcending the truth of power in the Academy.

I don't often refer to researchers' work as heroic but I do think Kevin's work is worthy of particular mention. In 1987 Kevin gained his M.Phil. degree from the University of Bath. He had not been permitted to register for a Doctoral programme until he had been awarded his M.Phil. degree on the sole ground that he was doing his research through action research! Kevin obtained his M.Phil. then registered for his Doctorate which he was awarded in 1996. His Ph.D. Thesis is a remarkable achievement and shows how a teacher-researcher can contribute to the legitimation of a new discipline of educational enquiry. His publications are also significant for the way in which they show how school-based teacher-researcher groups can be sustained over several years. Kevin's work has been influential in the development of action research approaches to teachers' professional development in Ontario.

Kevin's publications include:

1987 The Growth of a Teacher-Researcher's Attempt to Understand Writing, Redrafting, Learning and Autonomy in the Examination Years; M.Phil., University of Bath.

1988 Evaluating a Teacher-Researcher's choice of Action Research' in Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education. Vol. 13, no.3, pp.312-218.

1990 'Growing Your Own: The Development of Action Researchers Within An Action-Research Approach to Whole-School Development.' British Journal of In-Service Education, Vol. 16, No.2.

1993a 'Action research in schools: Into practice' in British Journal of Curriculum and Assessment, Vol. 3, No.3, pp. 29-33.

1993b 'A dialectical form of action research-based educational knowledge: A Teacher-Researcher's view', in Ghaye, T. & Wakefield, P. (Eds) (1993) C.A.R.N. Critical

Conversations: A Trilogy, Book One, The Role of Self in Action Research; Hyde Publications, Poole, Dorset.

Dr. Moyra Evans

Moyra Evans is a Deputy Headteacher at Denbigh School in Milton Keynes.

The reason I believe that Moyra's contributions are so valuable in legitimating the knowledge base of professional educators is not only because of the originality of her contribution to educational knowledge in her Ph.D. Thesis. It is because of her work as a deputy head and supervisor of the Diplomas and Masters Degrees of her staff in association with Kingston University. The latest group of teacher-researchers include the following enquiries:

How can I work with members of the English team in order to improve exam results at KS3? Sheila Baldwin.

How can I develop effective learning strategies with my Year 11 GCSE French group? Clayton Hughes.

How can I work with the Deputy Head of Year and Year Team in order to become a more empowering teacher. David Sulley.

How can I make a personal career development plan and prepare myself for the next stage of my career? Diane Lewis.

Moyra's publications include:

Evans, M. (1996) *An action research inquiry into reflection in action as part of my role as a deputy headteacher. (See Chapter 8 - Creating my own living educational theory)* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Kingston. Examiners: Profs. Jean Rudduck and Michael Bassey.

Using Story to Promote Continuing professional Development for Teachers. *Journal of In-service Education*. vol. 24, No.1, 1998, pp. 47-55.

Shifting the Leadership focus from Control to Empowerment - a case study. *School Leadership and Management*, Vol. 17, No.2, 1997, pp. 273-283.

C) 'How can I support teachers in establishing action research approaches to professional development in their school in a way which can help to improve the quality of pupils' learning?'

Dr. Jean McNiff

Jean has been particularly influential in a range of local and international contexts in developing action research approaches to teachers' professional development and the processes of improving the quality of pupils' learning. Without Jean's enthusiasm and commitment, to generative forms of action research and the creation of living educational theories, the ideas would not have spread through a range of national and international contexts. Her spirit has been an inspiration and I want to acknowledge a huge debt of gratitude. The Symposium on Education for Mutual Understanding, to which she contributed at the British Educational Research Association in Belfast in August 1998, with colleagues from Queens University and elsewhere, was a highlight of the conference.

Jean's publications include:

1989 *An Explanation for an Individual's Educational Development Through the Dialectic of action Research*; Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath

1992 *Action Research: Principles and Practice*, London; Routledge.

1993 *Teaching as Learning: an action research approach*, London; Routledge.

1994 (Ed. with Una Collins) *A New Approach to In-Career Development for Teachers in Ireland*, Bournemouth; Hyde.

1996 (with Lomax & Whitehead) *You and Your Action Research Project*, London; Routledge.

Prof. Pam Lomax

Pam is Professor of Educational Research at Kingston University and this year's President of the British Educational Research Association. Her Presidential Address to the British Educational Research Association on *Working Together to Create Community Through Research*, contains an excellent bibliography of her writings and a description of the support developed by Pam and her colleagues in creating the Kingston Hill Action Research Group. Working with Moyra Evans they developed the award winning partnership between Denbigh School and Kingston University as they worked together to support the creation of a teacher-researcher group at Denbigh School. Pam's proposal on Creating Educative Communities through Educational Research has been accepted as the BERA Symposium at the American Educational Research Association in Montreal in April 1999 and the papers will be available on the Action Research Homepage in April.

Working with Pam has been a great sustaining force and some of the results of our collaboration have recently been published in the paper:

The process of improving learning in schools and universities through developing research-based professionalism and a dialectic of collaboration in teaching and teacher education, 1977-1997, *British Journal of In-Service Education*, Vol. 23, No.3.

D) 'How can I/we fulfil my/our 'system' responsibility for teacher development, standards of practice, staff appraisal or curriculum development?'

Jackie Delong and Ron Wideman,

Jackie and Ron, working in the context of Ontario, show what can be achieved in a partnership between staff working in a School Board (Grand Erie) and a University (Nipissing). Their publications include:

Delong, J & Wideman, R. (Ed) (1997) *Action Research: School Improvement through Research-Based Professionalism*. This Action Research Kit, which includes a video and introductory text by Jean McNiff, highlights the experiences of educators participating in the process of action research in Ontario classrooms, schools, and boards of education. The approaches being developed by Jackie and Ron view action research as learning in action; as an on-going cycle of acting, reflecting and revising which is focused on improving practice; as working best when a teacher has a critical friend of a staff group with whom to share; as a way in which teachers can take charge of their own professional growth; which is committed to improving the quality of student learning.

The Grand Erie Board in which Jackie works as a Superintendent of Schools and Peter Moffatt is the Director of Education will be trialing the new standards of practice being developed by the Ontario College of Teachers.

Jackie's and Peter's publications include:

Jackie Delong and Peter Moffatt, (1996) *Building a Culture of Involvement*, ORBIT, Vol. 27, No.4.pp.33-36.

Erica Holley

Erica Holley is Head of Upper School of Greendown Community School, in Swindon, U.K.

Holley, E. (1997) *How do I, as a teacher researcher, contribute to the development of living educational theory through an exploration of my values in my professional practice?* M.Phil. Theses, University of Bath. Examiners: Dr. Paul Denley and Dr. Tony Ghaye. In one section of her dissertation Erica shows how she responded to 'managerial demands' that she 'appraise' staff in relation to linguistic lists, through a collaborative form of peer appraisal which was focused on a mutual concern to help each other to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

Erica's achievement is all the more noteworthy as she sustained her commitment to her enquiry through the time when the economic rationalist policies of a Conservative Government were creating enormous pressures on teachers through the cutbacks in the support services of our local authorities.

Having focused on the practitioner researchers whose work I am commending to you I now want to concentrate on the processes of legitimating the living educational theories which have been created and embodied in most of their work and which help to guide them. In particular I want to focus on the nature of the living values or standards of judgement which the teacher-researchers have used to validate their claims to professional knowledge. I also want to explore the implications of legitimating living educational theories as teachers' professional knowledge in partnerships between the Academy, Professional Development Centres and a Teacher's Council.

Because of the ferment in academic life, related to what has become known as the postmodern condition, I feel the need to locate my ideas on reconstructing educational knowledge in relation to this condition and in relation to the nature of the values used by teacher-researchers in creating and testing their professional knowledge.

In his important report for the University of Quebec in 1979 on 'The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, Lyotard (1984) describes this condition as a 'scepticism towards Grand Narrative'. In advocating that each individual creates their own living educational theories in their autobiographies of their learning, I do locate myself in a postmodern context. Yet, I also want to hold on to some of the values of a Grand Narrative. For example, the world is gripped by the globalisation of capital movements. The Chicago academics who founded the Fund for Long Term Capital Management have played the 'free market' and lost billions of dollars as they moved them around the world in search of the maximisation of profits with no concern for the effects of such large global movements of cash on the economies of the countries concerned. The Grand Narrative of Capitalism does provide me with some valuable understandings of some of the economic and political forces which are influencing what I am able to do in education. I see no difficulty in holding on to both a sense of the postmodern in the creation of living educational theories and the integration, within these living theories, of insights from Grand Narratives in the form of conceptual abstractions in propositional theories.

Indeed, I find analyses, such as those offered by Jim Graham (1998), both helpful and disturbing. I find it helpful to be able to understand how teacher professionalism has been one of the key arenas in which the contradictions of economic and social change have been played out in a series of crises of control for the state (p.11). I find the analysis offered by my colleague Hugh Lauder (Brown and Lauder, p.6, 1996) on Fordism, Neo-Fordism and Post-Fordism most persuasive as it helps me to understand my present disquiet with the policies being pursued by our New Labour Government, a government I voted for and fought hard to see elected. I share Graham's concern that far from being a radical transformation to recognise the importance of teachers as professionals in the premier division of international economic and social activity, the current policies are, '*locked in the Tory legacy of blinkered bureaucratic myopia essentially committed to maintaining traditional patterns of power and control at the expense of precisely the social and economic objectives they propose to achieve*' (p.12).

Whilst I find such Grand Narratives provide me with helpful insights, I often find myself disturbed by the way some of their totalising conclusions appear, within their powerful rhetoric, to embrace a concern with the local and living, yet manage to obliterate any evidence of this concern within the totalising structures of their language. A characteristic they share with

traditional forms of theory. It may be helpful at this point if I share some of ideas which led me to reconstruct my view of educational theory.

A focus for my own learning about the nature of the knowledges and theories created by different educational researchers occurred in 1971, whilst doing some classroom research for my masters degree. I was trying to understand how to answer and research my classroom questions of the kind, 'how do I help you to improve your learning?', in relation to my pupils. At the beginning of my enquiry, largely through the influence of my physical science degree programme, the cognitive psychologists and the linguistic philosophers tutoring me, I held the view that educational theories were constituted by general forms of conceptual, abstract explanation. From the general form of explanation I believed a theory could produce a valid explanations for the actions of individuals of groups. I believed that educational theory was constituted by such general forms of explanation in the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education (Peters 1966, Hirst & Peters 1970). I also believed that statements of fact and statements of value formed independent realms of discourse and that contradictions must be eliminated from correct thought.

As I was conducting my classroom enquiries with my pupils I came to question these fundamental assumptions in my view of educational theory. Through focusing on my enquiry, 'How do I improve my practice?', and being open to the influence of Michael Polanyi's (1958) ideas in *Personal Knowledge*, I came to see, with the aid of video-tapes of my practice that 'I' existed as a living contradiction in my claim to know what I was doing as I worked at my classroom enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'. I also understood that I created matters of fact, in moving my classroom resources to support enquiry learning, from matters of value, as I worked at enabling my pupils to form their own questions and at providing the resources which would enable them to answer them.

These insights helped me to see that my living educational theories were not constructed in the form of the conceptual or propositional frameworks of the traditional disciplines of education, but were living forms of explanation. By this I mean that the explanations were embodied in my present practice in terms of an evaluation of my past and in terms of an intention to create something better in the future. The explanatory principles which constituted my explanations as 'theory' were the values I used to give my life its meaning and purpose and whose meanings emerged through action. The communication of these values to others needed both ostensive definitions, related to practice, and value-words such as loving care, freedom, justice and democracy. One of the problems with text-based theses which are bound on library shelves is that our written language cannot carry our non-verbal communications. Yet, I imagine that we would all acknowledge the importance of non-verbal communication. I do support Elliott Eisner's (1993) call for us to extend the forms of representation we use in communicating our educational research and claims to educational knowledge. Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler (1998) Rob Walker and Ron Lewis (1998) have shown the potential of such extensions through their use of photographs and the use of the world wide web. I will come back to this point when I look at the potential of the Internet for communicating to each other our educational research and standards of judgement.

In 1989 the publication of Richard Winter's *Learning from Experience* helped to take my ideas forward on the ways in which the 'rigour' of action research accounts could be enhanced through the use of dialectical and reflective critiques, the use of multiple resources and a plural structure, highlighting risk and emphasising the processes of theory practice transformations. Richard also helped to take my ideas forward in his keynote address to the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) Conference in November 1997 where he developed the idea that theories in action research could be seen as forms of 'improvisatory self-realisation'. This idea fitted well with my commitment to supporting action researchers in the creation of their own living theories. You can access Richard's keynote address from my homepage link to the CARN Homepage.

I also want to thank John Schostak of the University of East Anglia, whose enthusiasm for the work of Seyla Benhabib (1992, p.6), stimulated my reading of her work on situating the self and helped me to see more clearly the importance of discourse in establishing the validity of my

truth claims and the importance of narrative in constituting my identity and values base through self-study.

In making these points about different kinds of educational knowledge and theory I agree with David Bridges (1998) that, as an educational researcher I am also engaged in the articulation of propositions, in relation to my questions, which assert the truth or falsity of what I have to say and that I am operating with identifiable theories of truth. Where I need to extend my understanding is in relation to the appropriate forms of representation of the spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values which help to constitute my educational enquiries, my educative relationships and my truth claims. I also need to deepen my understanding of how knowledge-claims which contain such values can be tested for validity and legitimated.

The importance of such research can be seen in the problems of establishing appropriate standards of judgement for examining teachers' professional learning. Throughout my academic life I have met colleagues who simply accept that they have the competence to make these judgements. Until 1991, in my University, their academic judgements were protected by the regulations, against being questioned under any circumstances. Thankfully, this no longer applies and questions are permitted on the grounds of bias, prejudice and inadequate assessment. Kevin Eames is a teacher-researcher who included correspondence on this issue as an afterword to his Ph.D. Thesis on the professional knowledge-base of teaching. I have already recommended his work to you.

John Elliott (1998) who has been doing much to support action research in Ireland, draws on the work of the Ford Teaching Project to show how a professional knowledge-base can be constructed through action research, as teachers engage in standards-setting. I accept his recommendation that teachers engage in a form of 'creative compliance' in relation to external standards setting. He advocates that the teaching profession responds to external requirements by developing the capacity to accommodate and creatively reinterpret the external standards as part of the professions well articulated and publicly defensible standards framework.

I view each of the 'living theory' accounts, on the Web at the above address, as a contribution to the creative re-interpretation of such professional standards of practice and judgement for the teaching profession.

In making these points, about legitimation and values as standards of judgement, I do not want to ignore the importance of researching the influence of power relations on the processes of legitimation and validation. Morwenna Griffiths (1998) has focused on helping researchers who want justice to argue among themselves in such a way that they are united. I agree with Morwenna's analysis about the importance of attempts to draw on theory and philosophy to help members of the research community to gain in reflexivity and clarity about the possibilities of empowerment and voice, and about the different assumptions about power which underlie them.

In the creation and testing of living educational theories I accept the gains in such reflexivity and clarity as part of an individual's education. If you do adopt your own living theory approach to professional development I would urge you to integrate insights from Griffiths' philosophical analyses of education within your enquiries of the form, 'How do I live my values more fully in my practice?' and 'How do I help you to improve your learning?'. I am thinking of forms of integration which show our practical engagements, as educators, with the power relations associated with legitimising and validating our knowledge in the Universities in the process of asking, answering and researching such questions.

I will emphasise this by focusing on the action research thesis of Jacqui Hughes and the circumstances surrounding its examination.

Hughes, J. (1996) *Action Planning and Assessment in Guidance Contexts: How can I understand and support these processes?* Ph.D Thesis, University of Bath.
Examiners: Profs. Ian Jamieson and Michael Bassey,

The analyses of her learning and the learning of her supervisor and tutor as they developed their understanding of some of the power relationships surrounding the legitimisation of this educational knowledge will be published in December 1998:

Hughes, J., Denley, P. & Whitehead, J. (1998) How do we make sense of the process of legitimising an educational action research thesis for the award of a Ph.D. degree? - a contribution to educational theory, in the Educational Action Research Journal.

This paper stresses the importance of engaging with the power relations within one's own workplace when such relations appear to support the truth of power rather than the power of truth. The paper also raises the issue of the 'unconscious incompetence' of academics in the context of supervision and examination.

I have developed this analysis in more detail in the two papers to BERA 98. The first (Whitehead 1998a) was presented as a 'victory' narrative to the Symposium, Philosophy and Educational Research, convened by David Bridges. The second (Whitehead 1998b) was presented as research as 'ruin' to the Symposium Educational Change in Higher Education, convened by Roger Murphy. Both of these papers can be downloaded from my Action Research Homepage in the menu section on Writings related to my Work/ BERA and AERA presentations.

I will conclude this section with an emphasis on the importance of Professional Development Centres for providing appropriate opportunities for teachers to extend their professional learning. Here are some details from a Portfolio Assessment programme for teachers' professional development I have been involved in with Professional Development Centres in England:

Learning Outcomes

i) The participants will learn how to gather evidence of their professional development as they work at questions related to improving the quality of pupils learning.

The evidence in the portfolios will be drawn from data such as:

- * *prior professional development;*
- * *pupils' test scores;*
- * *pupils' work which shows their learning;*
- * *contributions to departmental or school policy;*
- * *autobiographical accounts which reveal professional values and commitments;*
- * *action plans;*
- * *data from classroom, school and other activities used as evidence in a description and explanation of your professional learning;*
- * *an annotated bibliography of your professional reading;*
- * *critical familiarity with relevant research;*
- * *application of research evidence in your school based project;*
- * *video-tapes and other visual and audio records of classrooms and other professional practices;*
- * *evaluations of actions in terms of values, skills and understanding;*
- * *new action plans which show a modification of concerns, action plans and actions in the light of the evaluations;*
- * *evaluations from colleagues which show how you have validated your claims to understand your professional learning as you influence/improve/understand your pupils' learning;*
- * *evidence from another colleague's portfolio which shows how you are influencing their professional development in the process of helping pupils to improve their learning;*
- * *creative use of a variety of media for analysis and sharing of work in progress e.g. hypertext.*

ii) The participants will learn how to construct a portfolio in a form which shows and explains the relationships between the professional learning and the processes of improving the quality of pupils' learning.

Participants in this progress have been given information on how to access the above teacher-researcher accounts from the Internet and I now want to consider the potential of this medium for teachers' professional learning.

3) Demonstrating the potential of the internet for:

i) Constructing, communicating and testing teachers' professional knowledge.

ii) Defining and communicating the values used by teachers for evaluating the validity of their living educational theories. I am thinking particularly of the different meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic and moral values which can be communicated through multi-media presentations.

The power of the internet is part of a global transformation in communications. I am thinking both of its help in communicating teachers narratives and its potential, with the expanding band widths, to carry video-images as well as words, pictures and sound.

The dramatic increase in users of the internet is a phenomena of our time. Let me just see how many of you have browsed the internet or downloaded material from the internet. When I asked this question of my novice teacher groups two years ago, only 2 out of 30 had this experience. This year all 50 had used the internet in these ways. When my son Jonathan created my action research web-page in March 1995 there were almost 1000 logins during the first year and some 2000 in the second year. So far this year it is over 5000. The web is full of innovation. If you look at David Geelan's Ph.D. Theses from Curtin University you will see how the internet can be used to assist in the construction of Theses and Dissertations as well as to take educational enquiries forward. If you look at the Pepsi Cola homepage you will see how the multi-media technology could be used to extend our understanding of how to integrate film, sound, graphics and text within the narratives of our educational journeys.

My own interest in the internet is now focused on its capacity to communicate the spiritual, aesthetic and moral qualities in educative relationships. I have been helped in this growing awareness by Helen Hallissey, an Irish drama teacher who has been exploring the value of drama in developing pedagogy across the curriculum. Helen has been working with a Professional Development Centre in Cork and has been most influential in showing me the power of images for communicating feelings in educative relationships.

Let me just give you an example of the new power of communication provided by CD-Roms and the WEB. These CD-Roms contain the contents of my action research homepage and Tom Russell's homepage at Queen's University in Kingston Ontario. Just by dropping the main file onto a netscape icon you have access to all the information on my web page. The growth of the on-line journals is also a great support for teacher-researchers. From my action research homepage you can go to other sites of interest including such on-line journals.

Just imagine the different meanings we will be able to communicate with the aid of video-images. If you access the picture of Jane Verburg, a teacher at Oldfield Girls School in Bath in my paper to BERA 98 (Whitehead 98a) I wonder what you will see and feel is being communicated to her pupil at this moment? The spiritual energy I feel in my educative relationships is communicated to me through Jane's being as she shows her delight in being with her pupil.

Loving care, the values of freedom and justice, as they are embodied in teachers' lives, do not shine through the linguistic checklists of standards of practice of the TTA. They do however shine through the general prologue of Moira Laidlaw's Ph.D. which was viewed by her external examiners as amongst the best pieces of reflective writings they had read. As The Teachers

Council in Ireland works on the procedures for accrediting teachers' professional learning I am suggesting that it will enhance professionalism and morale in teaching by awarding professional recognition to these values as fundamentally important in the lives and professional learning of teachers and educators.

What the Internet is enabling us to do is to build up our case studies and studies of singularities as we describe and explain our professional learning as we ask, answer and research questions of the kind, 'How do I live my values more fully in my practice?'. It is enabling us to create valid explanations for the educative influences of teachers with their pupils (Holley 1997) in ways which can embrace the qualities more usually communicated through the expressive arts. I fear however, that the possibilities of the technology in helping to create new forms of educational knowledge and theory is running ahead of our capacity to accredit and legitimate teachers' knowledge in the Academy as we remain bound to our text-based cultures.

In conclusion, in sharing my learning over the past decade and some of my hopes for the next decade, I would say: learn from the partnerships created by Jean McNiff with the University of the West of England and between Moyra Evans at Denbigh School and Pam Lomax at Kingston University. These kinds of partnership are the bedrock of professional development because they focus on the generative capacities of teachers to improve the quality of pupils' learning and the professional status of teaching. They rest on the enthusiasm, commitment and care of teachers for their pupils and their education, and the sustained commitment of providers of in-service support for professional learning in Professional Development Centres.

Then comes the need for sustained support for professional and academic recognition through accredited programmes of Education which also lead to the recognition of professional educators. I have suggested that the Irish Education System has much to learn from the Teaching Training Agency and the Ontario College of Teachers. I am thinking of learning from what Ted Wragg has referred to as an 'Unmitigated Disaster' in approaches used by the TTA. I am thinking of learning from what I have referred to as the creative and generative capacities of the Ontario College of Teachers. I am sure you will find a uniquely Irish way of creating and sustaining partnerships between your Universities, Professional Development Centres and Teachers' Council for the professional development of teachers in a way which will have wider significance in our international contexts. It maybe that the Teachers Council will be the first such body to recognise the professional learning of teachers in terms of initial accreditation as a Teacher, followed by opportunities to develop as Teacher-Educators, Master-Educators and Doctor-Educators. Whatever arrangement you come to, for enhancing professionalism in teaching, I feel sure that you will create a network of support for teachers' professional learning which will be focused on what I imagine is the shared concern of helping pupils to improve the quality of their learning.

I want to acknowledge the importance of the following organisations in providing forums for the public presentations of my papers. Without these forums I doubt if I would have had the motivations to gather my ideas together and to take my enquiries forward. I also know the importance for my productive life and enquiries of my colleagues in our Monday evening teacher-researcher group and of the company of Sarah Fletcher, Jen Russ, John Fisher and Carmel Smith in our Department of Education.

TAKING CHARGE OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE WITH ACTION RESEARCH
A keynote address to the Annual Conference of the National Association for Pastoral Care in Education at Warwick University, U.K. on 11 October, 1998.

THE EDUCATIONAL THEORIES OF AN EDUCATOR AND SOME PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION. A revised paper following a presentation to the Symposium convened by David Bridges on Philosophy of Education and Educational Research at the Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association in Belfast 27-30 August 1998.

EDUCATIONAL THEORIES OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION: ROBUSTNESS IN THE ROMAN RUINS. A paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association in Belfast 27-30 August 1998, to the Symposium on 'Educational Change Within Higher Education' convened by Roger Murphy.

ACTION RESEARCHERS CREATING THEIR OWN LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORIES
- A paper presented to the Action Research SIG session 9.45 of the American Educational Research Association Conference in San Diego on 14/3/98.

CREATING LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORIES THROUGH PARADIGMATIC AND POSTPARADIGMATIC POSSIBILITIES. A paper presented at the BERA symposium at session 39.38 of the American Educational Research Association Conference in San Diego on 16/3/98.

EDUCATIONAL ACTION RESEARCH AND YOU. A keynote address to The Ontario Educational Research Council Conference on 5/12/97 in Toronto.

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