

PART TWO

A COLLECTION OF CASES AND LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

The idea behind the collection of case studies described below is that they are contributing to a new form of educational knowledge. I am thinking of the knowledge in individual's claims to know their own educational development. They could also contribute to the educational theories which are constituted by the descriptions and explanations which you and I, as individual learners, can produce for our own educational development as we answer questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

Whilst I make no claim to comprehensive coverage of the fields of Action Research and Educational Theory, I think you have the right to feel confident that a high level of scholarship lies behind the collection and that it should carry you to the forefront of the field. Thus I have drawn my understanding from wide experience of action research from Europe, Australia, North America and Developing Countries. These contexts include the Two World Congresses on Action Research and Process Management which were held in Australia in 1990 and 1992, the National and International Conferences of the Classroom Action Research Network, the Annual Conferences of The British Educational Research Association and Conferences of the American Educational Research Association held in San Francisco in 1992 and Atlanta, Georgia in 1993.

The idea that a new form of educational theory is being constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their own educational development from their action research, means that the practitioner-researchers must speak for themselves and make claims to know their own educational development. In every case study described below the practitioners are speaking for themselves. The majority of the studies in the collection have been accredited for Special Studies on initial teacher education programmes or for Advanced Certificate, Advanced Diploma, M.Ed. modules, M.Ed. dissertations, and M.Phil. and Ph.D. research programmes. The practitioner researchers have a range of different roles across primary and secondary schools further and higher education. They include an educational psychologist, a Head, an Advisor, Lecturers, Heads of Department, teachers and student teachers of English, Mathematics, Science, Art, Design, Modern Languages, Humanities and Technology. There are also a number a studies from non-accredited action research programmes.

This review of the case studies in the collection is followed by an evaluation of the contributions from the Bath Action Research Group in its Global context. It includes questions to researchers in the field in a conversational form which I am hoping will encourage you to make your own contribution to our community and may prompt an invitation from you for us to join your own.

One of my dreams on coming to the University of Bath in 1973 was to show the professional development of teachers starting from the experiences and

understandings of novice teachers, as a life-long process of learning in which it would be possible to receive the highest academic awards for researching the educational knowledge grounded in one's own professional practice. In 1993 the case studies in the collection show that teachers can indeed create their own educational knowledge grounded in their professional practice and related to the quality of their educative relationships with their pupils and students.

Because of the large number of case studies, I must be selective. The emphasis in my own work has been the reverse of what you might expect. In order to establish the legitimacy of a different view of educational knowledge I decided that I should focus my own practice on tutoring teacher researchers for the Ph.D. and M.Phil. research degrees. Then work on action research programmes in M.Ed. degrees followed by establishing Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diplomas in professional development by action research. If I had any energy left I thought that I should then focus on initial teacher education programmes! Whilst I had no energy left I was fortunate in working with a colleague, Moira Laidlaw, who did. By tutoring groups of novice teachers for their special studies by action research she has ensured that the collection contains contributions from her students which examiners have commented are of astonishingly high quality. Moira has produced a guide for her students on *Action Research: A guide for use on initial teacher education programmes with a final report by Justine Hocking* (Laidlaw 1992) Some idea of the nature of her educative relationships through which she has helped them to improve the quality of their learning may be understood from the following comments on the significance of thirteen of these studies from her 1993 action research group.

What is the significance of your individual contributions?

Rod Beattie: “A Shift to Pupil-Centred Learning”. (Chemistry). Your study is very impressive in its detail of curricular learning with several pupils. It charts the progress in academic learning through detailed studies of pieces of individual pupils' work and shows the beginnings of their ensuing development. I like in particular the way in which you include the expert assessments of your practice by University and School Tutors, thus giving the reader insights into the development of your practice. It is clearly the document of a professional who aims to improve his practice for the benefit of all his pupils in his care. You are also beginning to see the value of pupil-centred learning both as a way of teaching and of learning too. You state early in your account: ‘By transferring the responsibility of learning into the hands of the pupils they will hopefully respond by accepting it and as such behave accordingly.’ The rest of your account shows a commitment to putting this value into action.

Matthew Brake: “How can I create the right classroom atmosphere so as to allow Adam to realise his full potential?”. (History). This study shows us your commitment not to be dissuaded from a difficult course of action with a potentially bright student, and not to colour your own perceptions about him either through Adam's comments or his other teachers. You make a decision to act upon one of your values: ‘I was exploring in detail my teaching in order to improve and thus to improve their learning.’ As your enquiry progresses you show how Adam begins to

take responsibility for his own learning, and how this results in his moving comment: 'This is the best History I've ever done!' You contextualise your enquiry very skilfully within the action research movement, and are clearly enjoying the intellectual challenge. You pose the question towards the end of your study: 'We all helped each other in our academic work, therefore how can Action Research not be a valid academic discipline?'

Nigel Brown: "How can I help my fourth year to discover their own motives for, and hence start to enjoy the process of, writing up practical work?". (Physics).

This is a most unusual piece of work, set as it is, as a court case with the State versus Brown on four charges, the most serious one of which is 'wasting valuable pupil time'. You set out the context very skilfully, delving into areas of metaphor, the validity of your approach for educational knowledge and your more personal reasons for writing as you do. Throughout the study you bear your potential audience in mind all the time and this is one of the most impressive aspects of your report. The weight of your evidence of curricular learning is strong and you begin to analyse the significance of pupils speaking for themselves in a way which you see as being meaningful in your own educational development. You conclude with a line from a poem, 'Teacher': 'Before I teach you, I must first reach you,' and show us how you have lived this out in your own teaching. You state right at the end: 'If I had more time with my fourth years, I would like to look more at their autonomy. This aspect was implicitly in my original question... What is autonomy? A learner becomes aware of the processes involved in their learning. These processes [are] normally [...] described by some psychologist or philosopher.' You have started to enable your pupils to describe these processes for themselves!

Catherine Chapman: "How can I make French fun for my Year Nine group and so make them want to learn?". (French).

Your study shows us the value of a professional taking time to reflect on her practice, realising what is needed, and then working systematically through some ideas about how to improve the situation. I am particularly struck by the way that at the end of the study you are able to articulate what you know, not what you have been told, not what you think others expect you to know, but what **you**, as a professional trying within the context of your school and the pupils, together with your newly articulated educational values, know about your practice. You write very convincingly about the way in which it is the narrowing of focus onto individual pupils that becomes itself a way for you to perceive the wider pedagogical issues. I am impressed too by your concentration right from the beginning on Darren, and the ways in which your thinking and understanding about teaching is apparently more evolved from the individual than the ideas in books about teaching strategies. In going public you are able to say what it is you know, and how and why you know it. I am sure that other Modern Language teachers in particular will find much of value in your insights.

Sarah Darlington: "How can I help Hugh become more engaged with the Green Issues part of the Green Module?". (English). This is a complex and excellently written study of differentiation in action. We see throughout this report the way in which your understanding of what constitutes differentiation in teaching your Year

Eight class affects Hugh's learning. You give us frequent and detailed examples of Hugh's writing and comments and then employ an analytical technique in order to highlight their meaning and significance for you and for him. You continually remind us through your text of the values underpinning your enquiry and concerns, and you end with a statement which really demonstrates a practitioner new to the profession who is speaking with her own voice and who knows what she knows through systematic observation, reflection and collaboration with others: 'I have a framework. I have lived out this framework of values to varying degrees...I know it to be good as far as it goes. But, in my ending - to return to my beginning, I recognise the detail of th[is] pattern is movement. Things change and develop and so, I hope, will I.'

Kieran Earley: "Mistah Earley - he dead! How can I ensure that in teaching 'The Importance of Being Earnest', I am not being too teacher-centred?". (English).

You raise the level of self-revelation and the exploration of your own educational values to a form of art in which wholly pertinent extracts from Joseph Conrad's novel 'Heart of Darkness' permeate as leit-motifs throughout. It is a moving document and a testament to one professional's struggle not only to survive but to turn each potentially disquieting situation into positive learning for both yourself and your pupils. You address your reader directly and I feel that this will be very helpful to future students, teachers and academics who are being asked to find their own significance and values within what you write. You end with these words: 'If I'd known what it would be like, I wouldn't have done it. Now that I've done it, I'll do it again!' Living proof in your case that you have learnt the significance of what you have done only through the living out of it and seeing its effect on others.

Gail Hannaford: "How can I motivate my Year Nine class and get them to take responsibility for their own learning?". (History).

The real strength of your account, Gail lies in the way in which you have contextualised your insights into the wider spectrum of teacher education and teacher knowledge. You show us all the factors which you believe meaningfully impinge on the classroom and then you introduce us to individual children and reveal how your own understanding comes through the highlighting of individuals' learning needs. I know the real dilemmas that some of this enquiry caused you and yet still you persevered to be able to say: 'I have identified in the process so much more than I would otherwise have achieved - about my values, about my pupils' values, and about the role of the school in that interchange. I tried hard to live out my values in so far as I tried to care about each pupil as an individual. I also tried to listen to what was going on in the unspoken subtext of the classroom.' You finish with these words: 'The creative birth of insights and understandings is exhausting - but very rewarding.'

Jennie Hick: "How do I identify my Action Research question?". (French).

This is an enquiry which focuses very clearly on the development of a single pupil's learning yet outlining succinctly the ways in which your understanding and educational development have been enhanced through such a focus. Another strength of your enquiry lies in the ways in which you have shown the significance of your deviation from the action enquiry cycle and have liberated your thinking from the possible restraints of a given form. This is an ambitious undertaking which you

manage convincingly. Your learning about the processes of learning itself is clearly documented and in James we hear a voice which develops in clarity and tone steadily throughout the study. About educational research literature you are similarly strong-minded and have this to say: 'Many of the references I have used in this enquiry are from the 'living theory' found in other action research reports. Like those action researchers, I have acquired my own standards of judgement through practice with my pupils. I feel I can stand up for my values and say, 'This is where I stand. I am accountable for this.'

Philip Holden: "How should I approach 9L4 History lessons to create the most positive working atmosphere feasible in the hope of increasing the quality of pupil learning?". (History). Phil, this is the account of someone who makes explicit how he has come to know what he knows, and how this knowledge has improved the quality of his teaching and the pupils' learning. I am impressed by the way in which you are prepared to become publicly accountable for your own development, how you have searched your professional values and when found wanting, you have set about rigorously trying to modify what you are doing. Your enquiry is, it seems to me, very much an enquiry in the name of educational improvement. You state at one point: 'I do feel that initially the research rocked my thoughts on teaching - what I wanted from it and what I expected. Now...I ...feel that the process as a whole has been a very positive influence on my professionalism in that it showed me its frailty...Action Research has allowed me to view the standards of judgement with a startling clarity. For that I am grateful.'

Lara Gatling: "How can I enable my sixth formers to enjoy their lessons and develop the confidence to talk about Chaucer in an enquiring manner?". (English). This is a beautifully and powerfully written study which shows very clearly your personal and professional reasons for your emerging educational values. Your sensitivity to the right of your pupils to speak for themselves shines through at every stage of the enquiry and the quality of your analysis really is impressive. You provide us with evidence of pupils' learning in both a curricular and autonomous sense and describe and explain your own educational development with crystal clarity through this process. Your use of learning logs with the pupils enabled their learning to become more self-directed, your own insights to be more educationally focused, and a reader to be able to follow the development step by step. Perhaps most impressive of all for me in your account, Lara, is the way in which you document the significance for your learning and your pupil, Alison, in her log entry: 'However, I think it would be better if I knew what we were aiming for at the end so that we have something to concentrate on and refer back to...' You show us then how you deal with adapting your processes to Alison's needs, which is clearly one of your aims as a teacher.

Joanne Lovatt: 'How can I get the best out of all my pupils? The story so far...'. (Chemistry). I know something of the struggle that you went through in determining the focus of your enquiry and the result is an assured piece of work in which you have described and explained the processes you and the children went through in a classroom which was becoming increasingly committed to collaborative learning in Science. I am impressed that your sense of curricular responsibility and your sense

of justice for an individual pupil who was not fulfilling his potential went hand in hand in this study, and from this interaction we begin to see your own educational development. You write movingly about how David starts to find his own sense of value in working with others and conclude with this powerful statement: “I have grown to realise the importance I place on giving every child in my classroom the opportunity to benefit from science lessons. That these lessons need a calm, purposeful atmosphere, but one that allows discussion of ideas, a co-operation, an integration, a feeling of everyone, myself included, working together to reach a common aim...”

Barbara Myerson: “A Report of my Development as a Teacher”. (French). This is a lovely and moving account of how, against the odds, you were determined to realise your own educational values in action and how they affected your pupils’ learning. It is a powerful document, particularly in its commitment to tell the truth and not to hide behind cliché and other people’s preconceptions and values. You speak in a strong voice, Barbara, and show clearly your persistence in realising that at the end of the day, you hold much of the responsibility for doing the best job you can. You express dissatisfaction with what you have written, but since then you have told me that you recognise that all action enquiries are, to a certain extent, unfinishable. You write this about the writing up process itself: ‘Until I had understood the nature of the phase I had entered in writing the report, i.e. that it is a transitional phase rather than a dead one, I could not ‘end’ it. This area of learning will lead me further yet...’

Emma Trigg: “How can I encourage my Year Twelve to enjoy their English lessons and take responsibility for their learning about Hardy’s poetry?”. (English). Your account has many strengths. One of these is the way in which you show the parallel nature of the teaching and learning process for you during your teaching practice, and how becoming a learner within your own practice has enhanced your insights into what you do, how it can be improved and how your pupils are learning. Another strength seems to me to lie in the high profile you have accorded Katie’s voice throughout the enquiry. Her needs start to shape your teaching. Her outcomes are seen by you as evidence of part of your own professional development. Of many moving statements, perhaps the following one struck an intense chord within: ‘The write-up for me was significant as in fact it was the bridge to cross between my implicit values becoming explicit.’

So, as you can see, each of you has contributed something unique and yet more generalisably valuable and comprehensible. I will finish with something which Joanne leaves her reader with, something which I find inspiring in its humility and hope:

‘I do not know what I may appear to the world but to myself I seem to have been only a boy playing on the sea-shore and diverting myself now and then, finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me.’ (Isaac Newton)

Tony Ghaye coordinates the M.Ed. programme at Worcester College of Higher Education. There are two contributions from Tony in our collection from **START**.

This stands for **S**haring of **T**hinking on the **A**rt of **R**esearch into **T**eaching. *How was it for you? Passionate Stories from beginners* is Occasional Paper 4 and “*On the Turbulent Brink: Essential Reading For Managers*” is Occasional Paper 5.

Marion Hammond, a teacher adviser with the Somerset Education Authority has provided a copy of the Somerset Humanities Action Research Project Report 1991-1992 of *History and Geography in Action : 50 Teachers' Action Research Projects into National Curriculum History and Geography Key Stages 1,2 and 3*.

Terry Hewitt a teacher at Sir Bernard Lovell School in Avon has, for the past five years, provided support for teachers undertaking action research in Avon Schools. Don Foster, M.P. for Bath and the SDLP spokesperson for education helped to promote action research in Avon Schools during his period as Chair of Education of Avon Education Committee in the mid 1980s. Booklets in the collection which reflect this type of support include the reports of teachers on the Department of Education and Science course *Supporting Teachers in their Classroom Research 1985/1986* and the reports from the Avon **STRICT** initiative from 1989/1990 (**S**upporting **T**eacher **R**esearch **I**nto **C**lassroom **T**eaching)

My tutoring has been focussed on the action research programmes of teachers working towards advanced qualifications. I have chosen examples to emphasise the idea that professional development can be a life long process in which it is possible to achieve academic recognition at the highest levels for creating educational knowledge grounded in professional practice. I am thinking of the following awards for Advanced Certificate, Advanced Diploma, M.Ed., M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees. In each case the individuals show how they worked at living their values more fully in their practice and how they have produced a description and explanation for their own educational development in the workplace.

Patti Budd is a Head of Department at Swindon College. Her Advanced Certificate for her study, *How can I support change in a way which fits my belief in equality of opportunity?*, was awarded in 1993. Marguerite Corbey, Jo Fawcett, Sue Jackson and Daniela de Cet were members of a group of Wiltshire teachers supported by Pat D' Arcy during her time as English Adviser. They were awarded their Advanced Diplomas in 1991 for the following studies and this award carries an equivalence of two M.Ed. modules. Daniela de Cet *How do I improve the quality of my pupils' writing? How can I develop my teaching of poetry to my GCSE classes?* (Secondary). Marguerite Corbey *Thinking Through Emergent Writing* (Primary). Jo Fawcett *Writing Journeys* (Primary). Sue Jackson *The Nature of Action Research : How do I improve my educational management.* (Primary Head).

In addition to registering for advanced qualifications by action enquiry, teachers can work at such enquiries on a modular basis and for a dissertation for the M.Ed. degree.

For example the collection contains Simon Baskett's (1992) *How do I improve the quality of group work in the (science) classroom?* and Jackie Stephens' (1992) *How*

can I improve the quality of the evidence I collect concerning the quality of the learning experience whilst carrying out an LEA monitoring and evaluation?

Two M.Ed. dissertations which are valued highly in our community are Martin Forrest's (1983), *The Teacher as Researcher- the use of historical artefacts in primary schools.*, and Peggy Kok's (1991) *The art of an educational inquirer.* Martin lectures in Education at the University of the West of England. His study remains one of the most convincing examples of the value of a validation group in helping an action researcher to answer a question of the kind, 'How do I help my students to improve the quality of their learning so that they can help their pupils to do the same?'. Peggy lectures in Vocational Education and Training in Singapore. Chapter Six of her dissertation is included later in this book and shows the nature of educative conversations and reflections on the values which constitute an individual's educational development.

The highest research awards achieved by our action researchers are M.Phil. and Ph.D. Degrees. The following four M.Phil. Theses are in the collection together with one Ph.D. by Mary Gurney.

Don Foster (1982) *Explanations for teachers attempts to improve the process of education for their pupils* (M.Ed. by research now called M.Phil.). Andy Larter (1987) *An action research approach to classroom discussion in the examination years.* Chris Walton (1993) *An action-research enquiry into Attempts to improve the quality of narrative writing in my own classroom.* Paul Hayward (1993) *How do I improve my pupils learning in design and technology?*

Mary Gurney (1988) *An action research enquiry into ways of developing and improving personal and social education.* In the collection you will also find the five booklets which constitute Mary's (1991) integrated personal and social education programme.

Other action research M.Phil. degrees are in the University Library. For example there are Ron King's (1987), *An action inquiry into day release in further Education.* Margaret Jensen's (1987) *A creative approach to the teaching of English in the examination years* and Kevin Eames' *The Growth of a teacher-researcher's attempt to understand writing, redrafting, learning and autonomy in the examination years.*

Other action research Ph.Ds. in the University Library. Jean McNiff's (1989) *An explanation for an individual's educational development through the dialectic of action research.* You will also find three books by Jean McNiff in the collection. These are described below. Paul Denley (1987) also drew on insights from the action research literature in his Ph.D. on *The development of an approach to practitioner research initiated through classroom observation and of particular relevance to the evaluation of innovation in science teaching.*

In my work as a tutor I try to help my students to relate their enquiries to action research literature from around the world so that they can check their own enquiries

to see if they are at the forefront of the field. I try to do this by showing how I am engaging with this literature in relation to my own research. Let me see if I can do the same for you.

ACTION RESEARCH LITERATURE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Many students have an understandable desire to be able to define clearly what it is they are doing. If they enrol on an action research programme they want to know what defines the programme as action research. If you wanted to know this is what I would say to you,

In *Becoming Critical* Wilf Carr and Stephen Kemmis have defined action research as:

Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants (teachers, students or principals for example) in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations (and institutions) in which these practices are carried out (classrooms and schools, for example). It is most rationally empowering when undertaken by participants collaboratively, though it is often undertaken by individuals and sometimes in cooperation with 'outsiders'. In education, action research has been employed in school-based curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs and systems planning and policy development (for example, in relation to policy about classroom rules, school policies about non-competitive assessment, regional project team policies about their consultancy roles

Debates on action research can be studied in Stephen Kemmis' (1985) response to Rex Gibson's (1985) 'Critical Times for Action Research', and by following the implications of Rob Walker's report on 'Breaking the grip of print in curriculum research'

According to Kemmis, Gibson criticises 'Becoming Critical' on twelve counts:

- 1) *it is intensely uncritical (ie. it doesn't practice what it preaches);*
- 2) *its prescriptions are likely to result in increased conformity (ie. it would produce its own rigid orthodoxy);*
- 3) *it is naive about group processes;*
- 4) *it prefers the group over the individual, and an in-group over the out-group.*
- 5) *it is bedazzled by the notion of "science";*
- 6) *it rejects objectivity, yet privileges its own view of reality;*
- 7) *it is characterised by hubris (ie. it lacks modesty in its claims and perceptions);*
- 8) *it is highly contradictory (actually, not a bad thing in the human condition, but the book doesn't recognise its own contradictions);*
- 9) *it has far too much respect for the authority of critical theory;*
- 10) *it is an elitist text masquerading as an egalitarian one;*

11) it insufficiently acknowledges that action research at the three levels of interpersonal (e.g. classroom), institutional (e.g. school or L.E.A.), or structural (e.g. economic, political, ideological) involve different activities and levels of difficulty for would-be action researchers, and

12) in its seeming preference for the institutional and structural levels, it is attempting to set action research off on a course very different from its present practice. Kemmis, S. 1985 p3-4.

Kemmis meets each criticism clearly and persuasively. Where I see a problem however is with the logical form of both these discourses in that they are purely propositional. Both Gibson and Kemmis appear to believe that they can communicate the nature of action research through the sole use of the propositional form. In my own view of action research, educational knowledge has a dialogical and dialectical form which is not amenable to systematic representation in a purely propositional form (Whitehead and Lomax 1987). In this respect I am drawn to Rob Walker's (1986) desire to break the grip of print in curriculum research.

Walker attacks our use of the conventional literary forms through which we communicate our research. I support his view that curriculum research adds to the *'accretion of established structures, reinforcing attitudes, values and practices and legitimizing the existing distribution of knowledge'*. Even when the content of what we say attempts to change radically the nature of educational knowledge we are still trapped within the web of the propositional form.

I agree that there is a need to shift the ground more dramatically, *'not just to change the words, but to change the language, and to change it to something closer to the vernacular, not further away from it'*. Perhaps the contributions in the case study collected listed above are moving in this direction,

The following defining characteristics of action research were presented in 1989 to an *"International Symposium on Action Research in Higher Education, Government and Industry"*. Do have a look at the proceedings of this symposium. I have found the work of Herbert Altrichter (1990) particularly useful in understanding the roots of action research. In a joint paper with Stephen Kemmis, Robin McTaggart and Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit, Herbert works at *Defining, Confining or Refining Action Research* and says:

"If yours is a situation in which

- * *People reflect and improve (or develop) their own work and their own situations*
- * *by tightly interlinking their reflection and action*
- * *and also making their experience public not only to other participants but also to other persons interested in and concerned about the work and the situation, i.e. their (public) theories and practices of the work and the situation*

and if yours is a situation in which there is increasingly

- * *Data-gathering by participants themselves (or with the help of others) in relation to their own questions*
- * *Participation (in problem-posing and in answering questions) in decision-making*
- * *Power-sharing and the relative suspension of hierarchical ways of working towards industrial democracy*
- * *Collaboration among members of the group as a "critical community"*
- * *Self-reflection, self-evaluation and self-management by autonomous and responsible persons and groups*
- * *Learning progressively (and publicly) by doing and by making mistakes in a "self-reflective spiral" of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, replanning, etc.*
- * *Reflection which supports the idea of the "(self-) reflective practitioner"*
- * *open enough so that further elaboration and development seemed possible,*
- * *allowing for an ex post facto incorporation of projects into the discussion (which had not been initiated and conducted on the basis of some elaborate understanding of action research),*
- * *and, above all, shared with respect to the process of its formulation for a specific context.*

Then yours is a situation in which ACTION RESEARCH is occurring.

Some recent historical work by Peter Gstettner and Herbert Altrichter (McTaggart 1992) has shown that Moreno was the first to use the term action research and that he developed the idea of co-researchers as early as 1913 in community development initiatives working with prostitutes in the Vienna suburb of Spittelberg. The significance of this discovery is that it shows that action research had its origins in community action rather than in a discipline of the social sciences.

Many action research texts suggest that Stephen Corey (1953), was the first to systematically define the characteristics of this form of research in education. Corey says that the expression action research and the operations it implies come from at least two somewhat independent sources, Lewin and Collier. Lewin attempted to study human relations scientifically and to improve the quality of these relations as a consequence of the inquiries. Collier, during the period (1933-45) when he was Commissioner of Indian Affairs used the expression action research and was convinced that the administrator and the layman must participate creatively in the research, 'impelled as it is from their own area of need'.

Corey's thesis was that teachers, supervisors, and administrators would make better decisions and engage in more effective practices if they were able and willing to conduct research as a basis for these decisions and practices. He refers to action research as the process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct, and evaluate their decisions and actions. He saw this process as a cooperative activity which would support democratic values. He believed that the failure to see the necessity for cooperation in curriculum research had marred the attempts of many communities to improve their schools. He was particularly interested in gaining the cooperation of parents.

In his comparison of traditional research in education and action research, Corey stated that they are alike in that each is difficult to do well. In 1953 a great deal had been written in an attempt to improve the procedures of traditional research. Very little had been written, in the field of education, that was particularly helpful to persons who were interested in action research. Most of the references to this kind of investigation had to do with attempts to improve human relations.

A key text in the theoretical literature is the one I mentioned above, *Becoming Critical* by Wilf Carr and Stephen Kemmis(1983). It provides an understanding of the approach to action research which has been influenced by critical theory. Carr and Kemmis point out that after enjoying a decade of growth in the 1950s, educational action research went into decline.They show how a 'Technical' Research, Development and Dissemination model of educational change became established which diverted legitimacy from the small-scale, locally organised, self-reflective approach to action-research. Their central argument is that,

The professional responsibility of the teacher is to offer an approach to this task: to create conditions under which the critical community can be galvanized into action in support of educational values, to model the review and improvement process, and to organize it so that colleagues, students, parents and others can become actively involved in the development of education. The participatory democratic approach of collaborative action research gives form and substance to the idea of a self-reflective critical community committed to the development of education.

Carr and Kemmis have developed the idea of action research as a critical educational science. They have drawn extensively upon the work of Jürgen Habermas at the University of Frankfurt and follow his distinction between three forms of knowledge and their associated cognitive interests; the technical, the practical and the emancipatory. John Smyth (1986), a colleague of Stephen Kemmis at Deakin University for many years (recently moved to Flinders University), has pointed out that Technical reflection, by being concerned only with problem solving, serves those who label the issue as 'a problem'. He believes that practical reflection, because of its concern with the moral rightness of actions in context, serves the interests of those who see themselves as the conscience of society. He says that critical reflection, because it aims to assist people to discover the historical processes that led to their social formation as well as to discover the ideological way in which thought and action become distorted, is directed towards emancipatory interests. He also emphasises that we ought to be clear about the interests being served by each form and the extent to which we are treating the political context as problematic.

One of the great weaknesses of Habermas' work and hence of those attempting to create a critical educational science based on his work is that, as Brian Fay (1977) says, he gives no idea at all how it is that what he says at the level of individual psychology can be made appropriate for someone interested in social reform. Do have a look at Brian Fay's paper on *How people change themselves: The relationship between critical theory and its audience*. It will help you to understand the 'critical theory' approach which has characterised much of the action research work

by the group at Deakin University. Colin Henry, one of the group at Deakin, has contributed to our collection John Smyth's (1987) book on *Reflection-in-Action*. This contains the paper by Brian Fay. Colin has also ensured that we have the Third Editions of *The Action Research Reader* and *The Action Research Planner* from Deakin, in the collection. He has also provided evaluations of the two World Congresses on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management in 1990 and 1992 in Brisbane. I recommend that you read the key contributions to the First World Congress in the collection. These include Reg Revans' address on *The Concept, Origin and Growth of Action Learning* and John Elliott's *Action Research, Practical Competence and Professional Knowledge*.

Patricia Weeks, a lecturer at Queensland University of Technology, visited the Action Research Group in September 1992, for a seminar to discuss the Teaching, Reflection and Collaboration Project at QUT. In the booklet on Exploring Tertiary Teaching, in the collection, you will see some case studies of University Lecturers undertaking action research into their own teaching. This is something which is missing from Habermas' work on communication and the evolution of society.

Habermas' critique of modern society, is closely mirrored by Carr and Kemmis (1983). Their work is a critique of technical rationality which is seen to dominate the way in which society understands itself and by which the dominant interest groups legitimate their oppressive political, economic and social practices.

"In education, research which has a critical theory thrust aims at promoting critical consciousness, and struggles to break down the institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce oppressive ideologies and the social inequalities that are sustained and produced by these social structures and ideologies."

I would argue that some of the case studies in the collection at Bath show how to transcend the constraints of technical rationality in a way which integrates both the individual's values and social understanding. The integration of social understandings does need to be strengthened. For example, as I respond to the work of Erica Holley and Moira Laidlaw in Part Three I suggest that they examine more fully the nature of the social context and the power relations within which their work was produced.

The development of action research in Britain owes a great deal to the work of the late Lawrence Stenhouse and his collaborators at the Centre of Applied Research at the University of East Anglia. For example, the work of the Ford Teaching Project 1973-1976 directed by John Elliot and Clem Adelman involved teachers in examining their own attempts to develop inquiry/discovery approaches to learning and teaching. Following this project John Elliott established the Classroom Action Research Network based at the Cambridge Institute of Education. Twelve bulletins have been produced by the network. His latest book (Elliott 1991), relates action research to such issues as the National Curriculum, Appraisal and Professional Development. Clem Adelman (1989) is now Professor of Education at the Open University and has recently called for hard, joint theorising on the relationship of values, action and consequences prior to the devising of fresh options for action.

Thus the disappointment on reading teachers' action research reports as purveyed by Hustler et al. (1986), McNiff (1988) and Elliott (1985). Without attributing any blame or incompetence to the teachers involved, what these accounts reflect is the belief that an aspect of teaching can be improved if it more effectively achieves a desired outcome. What these cases lack is the hard, joint theorizing on the relationship of values, action and consequences prior to the devising of fresh options for action. An understanding of teaching as a species of practical ethic is lacking. These accounts read like the pursuit of certitude, of effectiveness or predictability and in this sense are indistinguishable from the positivistic, single-item, cause-effect research which the promulgation of teaching as a practical ethic has tried to replace..... It may be that the arguments for action research as an acceptable means of educational research have been won, but there is no reason for complacency, a malaise that may be encapsulated by the response, 'well you've got to let teachers start somewhere'. Action research stands or falls by its demonstrable relevance to the practical ethic of education, as well as whether it is reliable, valid and refutable as a methodology.

I would also add that action research stands or falls by its capacity to generate living educational theories for professional practice. The idea that a living educational theory is being created from the explanations which individual learners give for their own educational development as they engage in action enquiries of the kind, 'How do I live more fully my values in my practice?', has a different base to 'critical' action research. It is not predicated upon critical theory. It is generated on the basis of questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'. It may well be that some researchers need to adopt such a critical stance before making a creative leap into seeing that they can create a living educational theory from explanations of their own educational development.

In the South West of England we have increasing numbers of teachers engaged in such action-research programmes. Support is being given by members of the Action Research Group of the School of Education at the University of Bath. In September 1985 a group of teacher researchers registered for higher degrees at Bath University organised a seminar at the annual conference of the British Educational Research Association on Action Research, Educational Theory and the Politics of Educational Knowledge. The papers are in the collection. Dr. Pam Lomax of Kingston Polytechnic was present at the seminar and published her analysis (Lomax 1986) in the British Journal of In-Service Education. This marked the first public recognition of the group of action researchers in Bath.

A Department of Education and Science course at the University, 'Supporting Teachers in their Classroom Research' from April 1985 to April 1986 provided over twenty teachers with support, as they analysed their classroom practice. Their reports are in the collection. An action research perspective on curriculum review and evaluation developed in ten schools with some fifty teachers as part of the Avon TRIST initiative from March 1986-87. For the following two years, Avon continued to support action research through the STRICT initiative (**S**upporting **T**eacher **R**esearch **I**nto **C**lassroom **T**eaching) and finally in 1990 an action research approach to

professional and institutional development became accepted as policy for Avon Local Education Authority. The action research programme in the Summer of 1990, which followed this policy decision, involved some 80 advisory teachers and some 400 staff development tutors. Whilst it is too early to judge the effectiveness of the support being provided by Avon authority there is some evidence to suggest that their policies for restructuring their support for educational development could not be sustained at the level of resource required by the National Government.

The development of the basic action-reflection spiral, which has been used by action-researchers in the School of Education at the University of Bath, began with the local curriculum development project of a group of Wiltshire teachers (Whitehead 1976). The booklet describing this project is in the collection and describes how the teachers attempted to improve the quality of pupils' learning in mixed ability science groups. A cycle begins with the individual's experience of educational concerns, questions or problems in action of the kind, 'How do I improve this process of education here?. It has the form

- 1) I experience problems when some of my educational values are negated in my practice.
- 2) I imagine a solution to my problems.
- 3) I act in the direction of a chosen solution.
- 4) I evaluate the outcomes of my actions.
- 5) I modify my problems, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations

The inclusion of the individual 'I' experiencing problems because of the negation of values emphasises that the individual is investigating his or her own practices with the intention of improving their quality. Given this base it might be assumed that action researchers reject the contributions to educational theory of the traditional disciplines of education. Indeed this was a legitimate criticism which teacher/researchers made of their own research reports at a CARN conference in 1984 (Whitehead & Foster 1984). Do have a look at this bulletin in the collection. It will give you some idea of the hard work put into the development of CARN by Bridget Somekh at the University of East Anglia.

I acknowledge the danger that action researchers may not pay sufficient attention to the problems of validating their accounts of practice or to acknowledging the contributions which psychology, philosophy, sociology and history can make to the construction of educational theory. For this reason action researchers associated with the School of Education of Bath University are encouraged to submit their accounts to the critical discipline of a validation group and to keep themselves informed of developments in the traditional disciplines. Martin Forrest's dissertation on *The Teacher as Researcher* in the collection provides good evidence on the way in which a validation group can assist a teacher researcher to improve the quality of the case study. We also inform ourselves of work in other action research communities. For example we are drawn to the analyses of 'technical rationality' offered by Schön (1972) and Carr and Kemmis (1983) .

Schön argues that the dominant epistemology of practice is that of 'technical rationality'. By this he means the view that our professional activity consists in *'instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique.'* I certainly see this model embedded in the institutional context of my professional life where it is part of the power relations which structure research and practice. I also see it in the normative curricula of my professional colleagues in schools. Even when I question the model of technical rationality as a practitioner, educator and researcher, I am aware that I may be colluding with an institution that perpetuates it.

In his examination of the emerging awareness of the limitations of technical rationality Schön makes the point that this rationality views professional practice as a process of problem solving. In problem solving, problems of choice or decision are solved through the selection from available means of the one best suited to established ends. But, says Schön, with this emphasis on problem solving, we ignore problem setting, the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen.

In educational practice, problems do not present themselves to the practitioner as given. Ron King, during his time as a lecturer in the Mechanical Engineering Department of Bath College of Further Education has documented (King 1987) the way he has constructed problems from the feeling of unease he shared with colleagues about the nature of their teaching and their student's learning. This dissertation is in the University Library. The crucial insight we have learnt from this work is that recognised by Schön. Although problem setting is a necessary condition for technical problem solving, it is not itself a technical problem.

Schön asks his readers to reconsider the question of professional knowledge. He asks us to search for an epistemology of practice implicit in the artistic, intuitive processes which some practitioners do bring to situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict.

"When someone reflects-in-action, (s)he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to a deliberation about means which depends on a prior agreement about ends. He does not keep means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which he must later convert to action. Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry. Thus reflection-in-action can proceed, even in situations of uncertainty or uniqueness, because it is not bound by the dichotomies of Technical Rationality.

"Many practitioners, locked into a view of themselves as technical experts, find nothing in the world of practice to occasion reflection. They have become too skillful at techniques of selective inattention, junk categories, and situational control, techniques which they use to preserve the constancy of their knowledge-in-practice.

For them, uncertainty is a threat; its admission a sign of weakness. Others, more inclined toward and adept at reflection-in-action, nevertheless feel profoundly uneasy because they cannot say what they know how to do, cannot justify its quality or rigor...For these reasons the study of reflection-in-action is critically important."

EVALUATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BATH ACTION RESEARCH GROUP IN ITS GLOBAL CONTEXT

I have taken the criteria of evaluation from Colin Henry's evaluations of the two World Congresses and the introduction to the 2nd Volume of the Proceedings of the 1st World Congress where the editors set out case studies which are about peoples' experiences in working together to create a new order in our society. I think it bears repeating that Colin's criteria from the First World Congress included understanding the principles of action research, especially its participatory, democratic and egalitarian values and that in his evaluation of the Second Congress he reiterated the above points and developed his view that we should be judging the effectiveness of our research in terms of its contribution to the reduction of war, starvation, poverty and corruption in the world.

The additional criteria which I apply to the work of the Bath Action Research Group concerns our contribution to knowledge and theory. Given my acceptance of Kilpatrick's (1951) point that educational theory is a form of dialogue which has profound implications for the future of humanity, I judge our work in terms of creating valid educational theories for the future of humanity.

Jean McNiff (1988) has described the form of living educational theories we have been creating in the Bath Action Research Group. In her latest book (1992), Jean stresses the dialogical nature of our contributions to action research, educational theory and the creation of a good social order. In subjecting my own work to Colin's criteria from the First World Congress I think I fulfil his criteria. I spell out the criteria I use to distinguish my own action research approach and show how the criteria are met. The more substantial work I presented to the Second Congress with the 190 page case history of my own educational development, which accompanied the summary in the Proceedings (Bruce and Russell 1992), does not directly address the issues of war, starvation and poverty. It does however address the conflict between the truth of power and the power of truth in a way which shows my engagement in supporting the power of truth. I accept the implicit criticism, in applying Henry's criteria to my most recent work, that it is not addressing directly the issues of reducing war, starvation and poverty. I accept that the quality of my work should also be judged in these terms.

In judging the contributions of the Bath Action Research Group in its Global Context I share Arphron Chuaprapaisilp's commitment to gain insights from the past, to contemplate the present using emancipatory wisdom and to take responsibility for the future. I would say that the case studies produced by participants in the Bath Action Research Group are significant contributions to the literature already produced by the Classroom Action Research Network in the UK, by the action researchers influenced

by the action research community at Deakin University (with contributors such as Robin MacTaggart, Colin Henry, Stephen Kemmis and Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit) and the Participatory Action Research networks associated with the work of Orlando Fals-Borda.

I think there are a number of original contributions from the Bath Action Research Group; revealing the nature of educative relationships between pupils, students, teachers and lecturers through the work of Erica Holley (1991) and Moira Laidlaw (1992) ; creating living educational theories for the future of humanity, through the contributions of Jean McNiff and Jack Whitehead; developing the methodology and epistemology of dialogical forms of educational action research, through the contributions of Kevin Eames (1993) and Peter Mellett and exploring the politics of truth , educational knowledge and good order in the work of Andy Larter .

Many more members of the Bath Action Research Group are making their own contributions to the field and to the development of each others' work in the way shown by Jean McNiff (1992). However I think we are all aware of the danger pointed out by Walker (1985)

It is important not to lose sight of the intent and purpose of the project, or to design complex and demanding research or evaluation studies that might drain energy better put to other purposes. In educational research, perhaps more than in any other area of social and human research, the context of use should never be subsumed to questions of a technical kind. The temptation is to let technical questions displace educational questions. It is a temptation that needs to be resisted.

I accept Walker's emphasis on the importance of the context of use in educational research. Hence I will end this section by extending my understanding of the context of use of my educational research through the work of David Hamilton (1989, 1990) and Brian Simon (1990, 1992) . In thinking about the context of use I recognise that I am in the context. The context is influencing my research and my research is influencing the context. I am not attempting to extend my understanding from the perspective of the kind of disinterested scholarly pursuit of truth implicit in Hamilton's use of a range of conceptual prisms to display some of the forms that schooling has taken over the last thousand years. I am trying to extend my understanding of my context from the perspective of a committed educational researcher whose enquiries are intended as a direct contribution to the construction of a better social order. I think this view is similar to Hamilton's conclusion that teachers and learners are at one and the same time, both the social target of schooling and the active medium through which the target can be reached. I agree that regulation and redefinition are inseparable aspects of the same social process. Given my interest in improving practice I am more interested in redefinition than regulation whilst recognising that an understanding of regulation is important in redefinition.

Hamilton is aware that his analysis has given a disproportionate amount of attention to social regulation. He sees this as an outcome of a decision to focus upon the Schooling of those who are less powerful in society. Hence the analysis emphasises

Schooling in terms of institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce repressive ideologies, social inequalities and hierarchical forms of control. I can integrate this historical understanding of the development of Schooling within my understanding of my context because it helps to explain how Schooling, as distinct from Education, has become embedded so firmly within the power relations which sustain our present social structures. I turned to Hamilton's *Learning about Education*, in the hope of further enlightenment about my present context of Education as distinct from Schooling. In stressing the history of Schooling as an eloquent testimony to the self-conscious and reactivity of human beings Hamilton shows that it was the reactivity of human beings - learners as well as teachers - that helped to turn education into schooling, and teaching into school teaching. He intentionally leaves his readers with an open-ended text in the sense that certain tensions are deliberately left unresolved in the following questions,

Under what circumstances, if any, is it possible to reconcile the 'needs' of the learner with the 'needs' of the state? Similarly, should tax-funded institutions of teacher training focus upon the skills and competences of teaching or should they, by contrast, address a different set of practices - schoolteaching? Or can they do both?

With these tensions unresolved in my present educational context, can Brian Simon's work enhance my understanding of how to attempt a resolution? Because my interest is focused on my present context I will concentrate on what he has to say about the last thirteen years of Conservative Government because of the dramatic influence their policies are having.

My understanding of my present context is focused on the tension identified in a discussion on what was at stake for Education in the 1992 General Election.

At stake is the central element in the government's domestic policies since its 1987 victory. Temporarily eclipsed by the poll tax flare-up, obscured for the moment by the arid complexity of privatisation, education nevertheless is the decisive ground on which two visions of Britain must compete, private market and public good.

The 1988 Education Act established the Local Management of Schools. This was part of the process to achieve market conditions. As a Chair of Governors of a school which received its first delegated budget in April 1992 I am experiencing the tensions and challenges of responding to and attempting to create certain market conditions whilst enhancing the educational goods for pupils and teachers within a school.

New legislation is designed to accelerate the process of 'freeing' schools from their relationships with local authorities. Schools are to be placed in the market place to compete with each other. Such market conditions have already influenced my work as a tutor on action research programmes for senior managers in three local authorities. The language and practices of Compulsory Competitive Tendering have been integrated into Local Authority Policies with an increase in tension within individuals' experience of the demands of market forces and the public good. This tension is reflected in the action research reports of the senior managers. These

reports will be examined during the 1993/94 academic year and I hope that these will be added to the collection as examples of how action research can contribute to our understanding of the process management of education in the workplace.

Writing in the context of the National Curriculum, Simon (1992) explores the influence of the teacher researcher movement and I accept his point that it is indeed a hope for the future.

It is this stance, as I understand it, that characterises the reflective teacher - one who submits his or her own practice to a consistent appraisal. To achieve this is surely no easy task, but if we are to empower our youth - to enable them to achieve rationality, to be articulate, tolerant - in short to develop as students, then the teacher's reflective role, action research, a continuous questioning must be the hallmark of success. So my question is - how far is this possible, indeed practicable, in the new dispensation now coming to being? I believe, this movement, concerned as it is not only with classroom processes but also those relating to the functioning of the school as a whole, has represented a nodal point of change - a hope for the future. The professionalisation of teachers in this sense must lie at the heart of the educational process as a whole

Such a hope has, for me, a practical implication in that it involves a commitment to support this movement. Writing months before the 1992 General Election Simon emphasises once again the tension between market forces and public good. He says that all agree that major advances in education right across the board are necessary both to enhance the quality of life in Britain and to restore the country's economic and industrial position generally. He concludes

In place of the doctrinaire reliance on market forces to shape the future, we must substitute joint, co-operative effort by all concerned to build an educational environment directed to realising the full potentialities of all our citizens, whatever their age, gender, race or social class. Such must be the objective.

I now understand better the tension I experience between the influence of market forces and my commitment to contribute to the public good through education as a defining condition of my present educational context. In setting out my action plans I intend to use my influence to encourage the creation of living educational theories from action research, for our pupils, our profession and our humanity. I see such theories as directly contributing to the construction of an educational environment which is moving towards a better world or a good social order. This practical commitment moves beyond the conceptual forms of understanding of the historian or traditional educational theorist. It requires a personal commitment to contribute oneself to the creation of a living educational theory in the name of education and humanity.

CREATING LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORIES FOR OUR STUDENTS, OUR PROFESSION AND OUR HUMANITY

Some recent contributions to action research and educational theory have been discussed by Jean McNiff (1993) and John Elliott (1989) Chapter three of Jean's book, *Action Research: Principles and Practice*, contrasts different approaches to action research and outlines the concept of a living educational theory. John edited a special issue of the Cambridge Journal of Education on *New Directions for Educational theory and on Educational Inquiry* and the *Development of Teacher's Professional Knowledge*. Pages 90-100 of this issue of the Cambridge Journal, relate my ideas on creating a living educational theory to the ideas of a number of international contributors. I must emphasise that the growth of the idea of a living educational theory is not a matter of applying my ideas to your practice. The growth of the idea rests upon your decision to understand your professional practice from your own points of view as professionals who are exercising their own creative and critical powers in generating valid explanations for their own educational development in the name of their own education and humanity.

I now want to consider a number of presentations at the First and Second World Congresses on Action Research and Process Management (1990 and 1992), from Britain, Australia and Developing Countries and relate these to the creation of living educational theories.

As I mentioned above the last decade has seen a significant growth of interest in action research in schools, universities and the public services. A number of texts referred to above, (McNiff 1988,1992, Elliott 1991, Winter 1989, Carr and Kemmis 1986, Carr 1990) outline the principles of action research. What is noticeable about these texts is that with the exception of McNiff 1992, no author presents an account of their own sustained educative relationships in their workplace in which their students show their own educational development. Yet as each author acknowledges, a defining characteristic of action research is a study by the researcher of their own practice. This omission raises a similar question to that raised by Colin Henry (1991) at the end of the First World Congress on Action Research.

A final issue is the question of authenticity, the problem of recommending to others activities we do not engage in ourselves. If someone was to tell us: "Tennis is a great game and you should play it regularly. But I don't play tennis myself and wouldn't want to play it", we might be sceptical about the advice we were given. Similarly, how convincing is it when we recommend action research or action learning to others, but never engage, or intend to engage, in action research or action learning ourselves?

I have raised such a critical question elsewhere (Whitehead 1990) in relation to the work of Jean Rudduck, another British academic who has done much to promote the teacher research movement. I want to put such criticism in the context of MacIntyre's (1990) proposals for reconceiving the University as a place of constrained disagreement for the development of moral and theological arguments. One of the ways in which dominant forms of discourse retain their position is by ignoring criticism or through the exercise of bias, prejudice and inadequate assessment. Drawing on the work of Foucault I pointed out to the First World Congress how particular

regimes of 'truth' can retain their 'legitimacy' through the power of their proponents. For those concerned with truth it is a matter of concern when academics do not respond to criticism which is intended to point out mistakes and errors and to offer ways of transcending such mistakes and errors.

I wonder if this partially explains why it is that with the growing literature on action research there is no consensus on the nature of the theory produced from such research. I am suggesting that the main reason is that the most influential proponents of action research have not systematically studied their own educational development and explicated the epistemological and methodological assumptions in a claim to know this development. In asking the following questions I want to include a personal form of communication. I am doing this because I want the following individuals to feel that my questions, whilst critical, carry no destructive intent. They are asked with the intention of enhancing their already substantial contributions to educational research. I am hoping that the dialogical form of my response to their work will serve as an invitation for you to engage in conversations and correspondence with those whose work is in the collection. Through such communications you can contribute to our development and to the growth of educational knowledge.

For example, when Jean (Rudduck 1989), you write about teacher research in initial teacher education I could not find any evidence in your students' own voices which showed how they experienced an educative relationship with you and in which they had learned something of value. I wonder if your own enquiries could be moved forward by answering questions about the quality of evidence which needs to be gathered to enable you to show the nature of your educative relationships in initial teacher education. Do you think that those asking such questions should be answered?

When Wilf (Carr 1989), you write about the Quality of Teaching and your enquiries do not contain your students' voices or any evidence to show how you relate your teaching to your students' learning, using the principles you advocate, I wonder if your enquiry could be moved forward by gathering evidence to show to what extent you are living your own principles in your practice ?

When John (Elliott 1991), you write about action research, practical competence and professional knowledge I looked for some evidence which might show a direct relationship between your practical competence and your professional knowledge in the voices of those you teach. If you can offer such evidence I wonder if your enquiry could be moved forward by relating the gathering of this evidence to the principles you outline in your text on action research and educational change?

When Richard (Winter 1991), you write about learning from experience and the six principles for the conduct of action research I looked for evidence of your educative relationships with your students. I wonder if your enquiry might be moved forward by gathering evidence on your own rigorously conducted case study on your own professional practice in which your use of your own principles can be seen, in your students' own voices, to have influenced their educational development.

I am hoping that you will by now have sufficient evidence to judge the validity of my idea that educational theory should be conceived as being constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their own educational development. What I have in mind is the idea that each individual who wishes to contribute consciously to the future of humanity through education should offer their own educational theory in the form of an explanation for their own educational development, for public criticism. I have given some examples above on how this can be achieved. The British academic who has done most, along with Jean McNiff, to publicise this idea and to make her own original contributions is Pamela Lomax (1989, 1991, 1992) , a Professor of Educational Research at Kingston University. Pamela has been extending the action research approaches to professional development into educational management and is one of the leading academics in educational action research in the U.K.

Robin McTaggart is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education of Deakin University. In his address (McTaggart 1992) to the Second World Congress, he explored his concerns about Western cultural imperialism in Aboriginal Australia and located his concerns in the global contexts of the influence of aid and development in the Third World. He questioned the assumptions behind the forms of economic rationalism espoused by the IMF and World Bank.

Nevertheless, the new 'economic rationalism' is a worldwide phenomenon which 'guides' not only the conduct of transnational corporations, but governments and their agencies as well. It does so with increasing efficacy and pervasiveness. I use the term 'guides' here in quotes to make a particular point. Economic rationalism is not merely a term which suggests the primacy of economic values. It expresses commitment to those values in order to serve particular sets of interests ahead of others. Furthermore, it disguises that commitment in a discourse of 'economic necessity' defined by its economic models. We have moved beyond the reductionism which leads all questions to be discussed as if they were economic ones (de-valuation) to a situation which moral questions are denied completely (de-moralisation) in a cult of economic inevitability (as if greed had nothing to do with it).

Robin (McTaggart), I agree with your analysis, but could not understand how you were integrating this analysis into your own action research. Given that you are feeling the de-valuation and de-moralisation in your workplace, what has been your response to this experience? How are you continuing to struggle to live out your values in the face of the structural problems you outlined in your analysis? I identified with your views of economic rationalism because I experienced the direct influence of economics on my work at a staff meeting on 17th June 1992 in the following proposal to quantify teaching loads.

We need an income of £1m next year to stay afloat. Allowing for bought in teaching and administrative loads, this means we ought each to be earning in the region of £ 50,000 - £55,000 over the year. This can be earned either by teaching or by buying oneself out. £50,000 approx. can be earned by recruiting and teaching 15 full time

equivalent students (bearing in mind not all students are fully funded.) This is roughly equivalent to 450 hours contact time (i.e. an average of 12.5 hours teaching per week over a 36 week year.

My contract with the University from 1976 makes no reference to earning money for the University. I earned some £ 22,000 from the University for 1991/92. It appears that next year I am expected to earn some £50,000 - £ 55,000 for the University. It will be interesting to examine the economic pressures on my educational development, knowledge producing research, and teaching in the years to come.

Colin (Henry 1991) , I agreed with your evaluation of the First World Congress in which you asked action researchers to take care to understand the principles of this form of research. In my contribution to the Second World Congress I was conscious of accepting your points and I took some care to heed your advice. In your evaluation of the Second Congress you reiterated the point that it is important for those who claim to be action researchers to recognise that there are defining characteristics of this form of research which they should use in judging their claim. I appreciated the care of your first evaluation. I may be being unjust in pointing out the following omission, but your second evaluation did not contain any evidence that you had examined the published proceedings of the Second Congress to see to what extent your evaluations of the First Congress had been accepted or rejected or acted upon.

In your evaluation of the Second Congress I identified with your suggestion that we should be evaluating our effectiveness in producing a participatory form of knowledge which is more human, rational and liberating than the dominating knowledge of today. I think that I have done this in the case study presented to the Second Congress (Whitehead 1992). Do you agree? I also acknowledge and accept your stress on the importance for action researchers of locating their work in the global context of improving the world by reducing war, starvation, poverty and corrupt government. I think my own work is failing to address the issues of starvation, war and poverty and that the development of my action research should be judged by the extent to which I am beginning to show some contribution in these areas. As I write, the civil war within the borders of the republics of the old Yugoslavia is killing, injuring and destroying. In Somalia, the horror of poverty and starvation are there for all to see.

You made a point at the Second World Congress which I accepted without question at the time. You were reticent about criticising directly the work of colleagues who appeared to be supporting action research. Given your important role in helping participants in the World Congresses to evaluate the content and process management, I invite you to criticise my own action research because I value the insights which you have already shown.

Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit has worked as a senior consultant in the Tertiary Education Institute, University of Queensland. Her publications (1990, 1991a, 1991b) include, *A theoretical framework for action research in the context of professional development in higher education*. This prompted my own paper to the Congress .

The point I made to Ortrun in the presentation of my case study was that the publication of the theoretical framework for action research in higher education as a separate text from the case studies could encourage a separation between theory and practice which I had tried to overcome in my holistic presentation in the case study of my own educational development. Ortrun responded by explaining that there was another text which was the story of her own development and which was due to be submitted for a further Higher Degree.

Having introduced the idea of a living educational theory in the Australian context of two World Congresses it will be interesting to see if any action researchers from this context both offer a description and explanation for their own educational development as individual learners and find it useful to relate the explanation to the development of their living educational theory for the future of humanity. It should be possible for the Third World Congress at Bath University, 6-9th July 1994 to offer a fuller response to Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit's work based on the theoretical framework, case studies and story of her own development.

My reflections on the possibility of creating living educational theories from action research in an Australian context is Brian Fay's (1977) advocacy of an educative model and rejection of an instrumentalist conception of theory and practice.

According to the educative model, theoretical knowledge is useful to the extent that it informs people what their needs are and how a particular way of living is frustrating these needs, thereby causing them to suffer; its goal is to enlighten people about how they can change their lives so that, having arrived at a new understanding, they may reduce their suffering by creating another way of life that is more fulfilling. In the instrumentalist model, social theories increase power by providing appropriate knowledge in terms of which one can manipulate the causal mechanisms that characterize a certain social order so that a desired end state is produced; in the educative model, social theories are the means by which people can liberate themselves from the particular causal processes that victimize them precisely because they are ignorant of who they are.

At the end of his paper Fay asks the important question, *can one elaborate an account of how radical social change can occur given the conceptual resources of the educative model?* He says that this question must be answered if, in the end, the viewpoint of critical theory is going to provide us with a model of how social theory can inform social practice that is distinctive, realizable, and truly liberating. He ends with the point that to his knowledge, in 1977, no such account exists.

The publication which should provide an answer to this question is the third edition of the *Action Research Reader*, edited by Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart and published in 1988. Whilst it omits the idea of a living educational theory and contains no contributions from the Bath Action Research Group it is still the most impressive collection of papers available on the history of action research and it offers international perspectives from North America, The United Kingdom, Continental Europe, Australia and The Third World. Both Kemmis (1993) and McTaggart have

explored the implications of the view of critical theory in the above context with impressive integrity. I think they have explored the **conceptual** possibilities of critical theory to its limits. They are however, in my view, limiting unnecessarily their contribution to educational theory by permitting their conceptual understanding of critical theory to impose its structure on their analyses, in a way which may be preventing them seeing the significance of producing their own case studies of their own educative relationships in the workplace. I am thinking of case studies which contain the emancipated voices of their students in stories of their own educational development.

If living educational theories from action research are to be created by the above researchers they may find it necessary to study their own educational development in the context of their own workplace as they show how they are responding to the social pressures made explicit in their critical analyses. Colin Henry (1991) appears to be moving in this direction in his work on human rights education, where he accepts a view of educational research as a practical activity concerned with the resolution of educational problems and the improvement of educational practice. He concludes his analysis of the programme with the point that it is the will and capacity of teachers to reform educational practice and to contribute to the renewal of our educational institutions which is enhanced by their participation in curriculum development, research and evaluation.

Whilst his paper contains some fascinating data from a teacher researcher and pupils, it does not show the educational development of any pupil through time. As with all the contributions, from the critical theory stance, to the action research planner, the academic analysis is focussed on critical theory, rather than on making a creative contribution to educational theory. From my viewpoint as an educational researcher, the analyses lack the first person engagement of the participants in trying to live out their values more fully in their practice, trying to understand their development and trying to improve the social context in which the practice is located. I wonder if their work fails the test of applying one of Fay's criteria (1977) for testing the truth of a critical theory. That is the considered reaction by those for whom it is supposed to be emancipating. As Fay says:

This is because a critical theory is one that offers an interpretation of a person's actions, feelings, and needs and interpretations must be tested against the responses that those being interpreted make to them. When a person does not, under any condition, accept a social theorist's account as giving the meaning of his behaviour, providing an accurate description of what he feels, or revealing his "real" purpose or desires, then this is prima facie evidence against the correctness of the account.

If action researchers associated with a school of critical theory fulfil Colin Henry's criteria for judging action research then we could expect to see accounts of their own educational and social development in the context of their workplace. Given the nature of critical theory the implication for the lives of these action researchers is that they would experience themselves as living contradictions within the political

economy and values of their workplace. I can see no such accounts in the Action Research Reader. It may be that future editions may acknowledge the importance of such accounts in creating living educational theories from action research for our humanity.

Orlando Fals-Borda is an Emeritus Professor at the National University of Colombia. Some 20 years ago he left his University post, feeling dissatisfied that the knowledge in the academy did not adequately reflect the practical knowledge of the peasants. He left to work with them on land reform and developed a participatory approach to action research. His book with Rahman (1991) on Action and Knowledge, contains international contributions on Participatory Action Research (PAR). This is in the collection. It contains papers from researchers working in Peru, Nicaragua, Columbia, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Tennessee and Sri Lanka. Fals-Borda and Rahman set out the theoretical assumptions of participatory action research and in a section on the meaning of dialogical research. Fals-Borda explains how the reconstruction of knowledge for the purpose of furthering social progress and increasing people's self-awareness takes dialogue as its point of insertion in the social process. (This dialogical position is identical to recent work in the Bath Action Research Group and developed independently).

The generation of (scientific) knowledge does not require the method of detached observation of the positivist school. Any observation, whether it is detached or involved, is value-biased, and this is not where the scientific character of knowledge is determined. The scientific character or objectivity of knowledge rests on its social verifiability, and this depends on consensus as to the method of verification. There exist different epistemological schools (paradigms) with different respective verification systems, and all scientific knowledge in this sense is relative to the paradigm to which it belongs and, specifically, to the verification system to which it is submitted.

In this sense the people can choose or devise their own verification system to generate scientific knowledge in their own right. An immediate objective of PAR is to return to the people the legitimacy of the knowledge they are capable of producing through their own verification systems, as fully scientific, and the right to use this knowledge - including any other knowledge, but not dictated by it - as a guide in their own action. This immediate objective is an integral and indispensable part of the objective of dual social transformation - in the relations of material production and in the relations of knowledge.

Orlando's keynote address to the Second World Congress (1992) in July 1992, focused on the contribution of PAR to the action research movement. What I found interesting, as an omission in the above text was any dialogue. The researchers were speaking on behalf of those they had researched with rather than allowing the voices of their co-researchers to be presented in the text. The form of presentation seemed to deny the dialogical principles espoused in the text.

Another contribution from a developing country was Arphron Chuaprapaislip's paper (1991) on Action Research in Nursing Education in Thailand. This was presented to the First World Congress and is in the collection. Arphron develops an action research spiral to illustrate the way in which the learning process was enhanced through its incorporation with Buddhist teaching. In her conclusions she says

This study is just the beginning of a journey forwards into the realm of lifelong learning. It is influenced by events of the past and, in itself, provides a focus for future events. By fully gaining insights from the past and by contemplating on the present (using emancipatory wisdom) and by taking responsibility for the future, we gain the force to drive forwards by drawing fully upon our experiences. This is illustrated by the Buddhist Mandala which links cause and effect that are related and leads to continuous change (Paticcasamuppada, The Dependent Origination). The result is not permanent, but will be transformed to another form. Knowledge and technological changes are related through the interaction between person (mind and body) and the environment. To borrow from Buddhist terminology, productive contemplation, supported by Virtue will ultimately lead to Wisdom. To the participants, the researcher and readers of this study, the Mandala Wheel which is based on changes in cause and effect allows us to move forwards in seeking ways to learn from experience.

I was struck by the similarity between the insights in this quotation, of the relation between the past, present and future, and the inclusion of such a relationship in the creation of living educational theories. I see the creation of such theories as a process of lifelong learning. I agree that this process *is influenced by events of the past and, in itself, provides a focus for future events. By fully gaining insights from the past and by contemplating on the present (using emancipatory wisdom) and by taking responsibility for the future, we gain the force to drive forwards by drawing fully upon our experiences.* I would add that we also have the opportunity for creating living educational theories for the future of our humanity.

If educational theory is a form of dialogue which has profound implications for the future of humanity and if such a theory is being constituted by personal educational theories I expect to hear and see evidence of dialogues and action through which individuals and groups are learning something of value in the context of the future of their humanity. In the contributions from developing countries however there were no examples of such dialogues. Where is the evidence from those espousing participatory action research of their dialogical principles in action?

I asked this question of a researcher who had been conducting research in the context of a developing country and who had circulated a draft paper before presenting his findings to a European audience. I asked about the omission of dialogue in his paper and about the nature of the educative conversations he had experienced in the developing country. When he described some of the problems of conducting the research I asked why these problems did not appear in the paper. He explained that if he were to be honest about the problems then the continuation of the funding would be unlikely to be forthcoming because they would reveal corruption in those responsible for funding. I asked about the problems of being economical with

the truth. These were acknowledged but the paper was still presented to the European audience with no acknowledgement of the real problems of working in the developing country. I wish to stress that I do not believe that such problems are restricted to developing countries. If we are to take Henry's evaluations seriously such problems must be addressed, wherever they are found.

In the context of a political economy of action research I was struck by Susan Noffke's (1992) analysis at the Second World Congress. What I have tried to do is to include my experience of political economy in the story of my educational development below. This has led to real conflict in living out my educational values in the workplace. Is there not something incongruous about academics continuing to gain promotion after promotion, for their analyses of political economy, often from an explicitly neo-Marxist perspective, whilst the subjects of their analyses are getting poorer and being subjected to continuing and sometimes increasing forms of oppression? In this context I asked a similar question of Michael Apple, who was advocating a strategy of refusal, in a lecture to the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco in April 1992. I asked if he had any evidence of a systematic analysis of the implications for his own educational development of such a refusal in his own workplace. He provided no evidence.

I continue to ask Geoff Whitty a similar question given his advocacy (Whitty 1989) that American and Australian Sociologists of Education should show how their work was benefiting those in whose interests it was being put forward. My reason for feeling so critical of neo-Marxist perspectives is not that I have rejected all marxist thinking. I continue to use Marxist dialectics as the most powerful logic for understanding human development. It is the 'Grand Narrative' of historical materialism that I reject. I am suggesting that the creation of living educational theories for the future of humanity may offer a way of integrating insights from the traditional forms of knowledge whilst at the same time showing the educational development of those whose interests the creation of living educational theories was meant to serve, that is ourselves and each other.

To show what I mean by this I now want to focus your attention on what I have learnt in my educative relationships with three teacher researchers, Erica Holley (M.Phil. programme), Moira Laidlaw (Ph.D. programme) and Peggy Kok (M.Ed. programme). In the extracts from the papers with Moira and Peggy it is a pleasure to return to the quality of educative conversations I was interested in researching in the 1977 paper above. I feel that I have emerged from my interests in methodology, epistemology and the politics of truth, older, wiser and a little battered but still with my enthusiasm for education undimmed. I am pleased to share some of the experiences and understandings which are keeping it alive. With Erica I am learning about the importance of retaining a focus on the educative relationships with individuals and whole classes of pupils in schools, and a caring and professional relationship in accounting for oneself with colleagues who are being appraised. Whilst there is no evidence in Erica's contribution of a relationship with me I want to direct your attention to her work at Greendown School in Swindon because of the way she retains a focus on the quality of relationships with both pupils and staff. From Erica I

am learning more about the nature of educative relationships which can help pupils to form their own enquiries. This was a focus of my original research.

From Moira I am learning a similar lesson in relation to education students in a University as she shows how she helped a group of postgraduate students to engage in their own enquiries and produce descriptions and explanations for their own development. I have already presented Moira's feedback to her students as part of the above collection. From Peggy Kok I learnt about the art of an educational enquiry which included a struggle to reconcile different values. In the extract from Peggy's work I think that she provides the evidence of my educative relationship in which I can be seen to be respecting her integrity in Buber's sense that I show the humility of an educator who subordinates his or her own view of the world to the particular educational needs of the student. Finally I will present an account which breaks this feeling of harmony by acknowledging that market forces are beginning to penetrate the story of my educational development. They have done this most forcefully in my work supporting action research with a group of senior managers from Avon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. In order to preserve the delight and quality in the accounts which follow I think we will need to protect ourselves and education from any further penetration by these forces.