

5. FIFTH CYCLE - CAN OUR COMMUNITY HELP TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION WITHIN OUR SCHOOLS , CONTRIBUTE TO CULTURAL RENEWAL AND RECONSTITUTE WHAT COUNTS AS EDUCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATIONAL THEORY?

I find our community contributes to my enjoyment of life and my sustained commitment to productive work in education. Members of the community revitalise my spirit by their warmth, sustained commitment to educational enquiry and the pleasure of their company and communication. In developing this fifth cycle I am conscious of the crises in legitimation and representation in qualitative research as discussed by Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln¹ and the recent discussions in the Journal Educational Action Research, on the criteria of judgement for action research accounts². I have also been impressed with recent work on story³ in educational research and with Eisner's⁴ call for greater experimentation in finding different forms of representing educational research.

There are two papers I would like to show you. The first is related to the action research and educational theory case study collection in the School of Education of Bath University. The paper is a proposal for funds to the Research Committee of the School of Education. This in turn is based on a proposal to the Economic and Social Research Council which was considered by the Council in 1994. It was accepted as worthy of support in principle, but no funds were made available. The Research Committee of the School of Education have so far committed £2000 to employ Peter Mellett for 20 days or so to produce two publications for submission to refereed journals. In terms of the contribution our community could make to reconstituting educational knowledge, I wonder if you can think of any ways of taking this, or a similar proposal forward.

The second paper is still in draft form. It is a discussion paper for a three day seminar (March 14-17 1995) organised by Peter Reason of the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice (CARPP) in our School of Management. In trying to understand what constitutes Quality in Human Enquiry, I have outlined why I think my educational enquiry is a good quality human enquiry. I have tried to communicate something of the nature of the human values which, for me, constitute my enquiry as good and the immanent dialectic within the values are given practice form. I have also included some notes from Ilyenkov's work on dialectical logic to show where my understanding of the history of dialectic is grounded and why I think our community as a creative contribution to make to present debates. These follow in the appendix. I would appreciate your responses and help in taking my enquiry forward within our community. I am particularly interested in exploring the significance of our community's enquiries for cultural renewal as well as continuing with my commitment to improving pupils' learning, the professional development of teachers, school improvement and reconstituting educational knowledge and educational theory.

¹ Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (1994) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. See pages 10/11. Sage.

² Lomax, P. (1994) Standards, Criteria and the Problematic of Action Research within an Award Bearing Course. *Educational Action Research*. Vol. 2, No.1. pp113-126.

³ Carter, K. (1993) The place of story in the study of teaching and teacher education. *Educational Researcher* Vol.22, No.1, pp 5-12.

⁴ Eisner, E. (1993) Forms of Understanding the Future of Educational Research. *Educational Research*, Vol.22, No.3.

A REQUEST TO THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH INTO THE NATURE AND GROWTH OF EDUCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATIONAL THEORY

From the Action Research in Educational Theory Research Group
Convenor Jack Whitehead 2/1/95

The following proposal, with minor amendments, was submitted to the ESRC last year. It was rated highly but was not one of the research proposals which received funding. Since submitting this proposal the ESRC project on Teacher as Researchers has been judged as one of six Centres of Excellence for Action Research based on peer review.

BACKGROUND

Since the publication of the first issue of Educational Theory in 1951 what counts as educational theory has changed several times. In the United Kingdom in the 1960s, philosophers of education established the disciplines approach to educational theory (Peters & Hirst 1970). The theory was held to be constituted by the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. The majority of senior academics in educational research established their reputations in one or more of the disciplines of education. Educational researchers were trained in the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of these disciplines. Programmes of professional development for teachers were influenced by this view of educational theory.

In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s educational researchers in the U.K. experienced a paradigm crisis because of the breakdown of the disciplines approach. In 1983 one of the originators of this approach (Hirst 1983) acknowledged his mistake in believing that educational theory was constituted by the disciplines of education. Following this acknowledgement he went on to advise educational researchers to focus their attention on operationally effective practical discourse as the basis for generating and testing educational theory.

The practitioner researcher movement in the United Kingdom, began to exert an influence in educational research in the early 1970s. The most significant strand of this movement is now informed by action research approaches to educational enquiry. In these approaches, practitioners claim to know their own educational development as they attempt to improve their practice, their understanding of their practice and the social context in which their practice is located (Kemmis and McTaggart 1983, Altrichter 1991).

There is also a world-wide growth in the practitioner and action research movements (Elliott 1989). However, they do not appear to have created a new form of educational theory from which it has been possible to clarify its epistemological and methodological underpinnings (Fals-Borda & Rahman 1991). It may be that the ESRC sponsored seminars (Hamilton 1992 and 1993) with their focus on methodology and epistemology in educational research may contribute to this clarification.

THE THESIS TO BE TESTED in this proposal is that educational theory is being constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners are producing for their own educational development. Different forms for presenting action research accounts will be analysed and the standards of judgement for testing the validity of claims to educational knowledge will be explicated.

LOCATING THE PROPOSAL IN THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

This proposal is located within the field of educational action research (Altrichter, Kemmis, McTaggart & Zuber-Skerritt 1990) and related to wider reading. The Proceedings of the First and Second World Congresses on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management (Colins & Chippendale 1991, Bruce & Russell 1992), show the extent of the interest in action research but give few examples which analyse the methodological and epistemological assumptions of the action researchers claims to know something about the quality of their own learning. Indeed Henry (1991) in his evaluation of the First World Congress pointed out the failure of many contributors to make these assumptions explicit and to understand the principles of action research.

The growth of the action research movement in the United Kingdom over the period (1976-1992) can be followed through the publications of the Classroom Action Research Network, (Somekh 1992). There is however still criticism that the action research movement has failed to produce enough high quality case studies (Adelman 1990) by practitioners from which to create educational theory.

An analysis of research on teachers' knowledge reveals that the majority of the work has been carried out on student teachers (Calderhead 1988, Korthagen 1988), with little action research carried out by postgraduate education students on their own educational development as teachers. Shulman (1992) appears to have moved his focus from analysing the knowledge of student teachers engaged in a transmission style of teaching. He now recognises the need for an understanding of the ways in which learning to teach becomes a form of enquiry and scholarship engaged in by new teachers in order to leave a legacy of cases of future teachers to work with, learn from, and begin to build into their own landscape. An increasing emphasis on the rhetorical power of narrative in research on teaching (Connolly & Clendenin 1991, Clendenin 1992, Ely 1992, Carter 1993) has not however been accompanied by an analysis of the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of the claims to educational knowledge made in the stories (Lomax 1994a & b).

Recent work on the nature of practical rationality (Bernstein 1991, MacIntyre 1990) has stressed the importance of creating dialogical communities in which beliefs, values, commitments and even emotions and passions (Grene 1993) are shared. However, this work at no point examines the researchers' learning, in their own attempts to create such dialogical communities within their own workplaces.

Fenstermacher's (1987) work on practical argument in educational theory connects research to practice by attempting to show how research can be used to alter the truth value of existing empirical premises. The practical arguments serve as an analytic device for understanding how teachers think about what they do, for helping teachings gain a sense of the basis of their actions, and for helping teachers to use defensible theory and good research to advance their pedagogical competence. His logic however remains propositional and with a focus on statements rather than enquiries. Fenstermacher does not examine the significance of question formulation in creating educational theory and in linking research and practice.

In addition to the above work, which stresses practical rationality, there is an interest in education as a form of art in which individuals are giving an aesthetic form to their existence through their own productive work (Foucault 1979). There is also a substantial literature which acknowledges the Buberian I-You relation as a basis for educative relationships (Buber 1923).

THE DATA BASE FOR THE RESEARCH

Following Ryle's (1949) aphorism that efficient practice precedes the theory of it, an Action Research and Educational Theory Case Study Collection has been produced at the University of Bath from practitioner research. The case studies (see Appendix) have been awarded Ph.D., M.Phil. and M.Ed. (modules plus dissertation) degrees and Advanced Certificates and Advanced Diploma's in Professional Development. In addition the Collection also contains some fifteen special studies from postgraduate and undergraduate education students (1990-93) who carried out action research studies in their teaching practices. It also contains an analysis of the nature of the growth of an academic's educational knowledge and educational theory over the period 1973-1993.

Thus the data for analysis consists of a range of case studies of practitioner researchers, across different curriculum areas and educational concerns, as they ask questions of the form, 'How do I improve the quality of my teaching and learning?'. They include studies from secondary schools in improving pupils' learning in technology, humanities, English, French, history, personal and social education and science, and studies of teaching improving pupils' reading and writing in primary schools.

METHODOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Two fundamental questions in epistemology are, what is to be judged?, and, how can the validity of a claim to knowledge be tested? That is, we need to know the unit of appraisal and the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of a claim to educational knowledge. The unit of appraisal in the thesis to be tested is the individual's claim to know their own educational development.

The first stage of the analysis of the standards of judgement will explicate the principles used by the teachers to explain their own educational development (their personal educational theories). The hypothesis to be tested is that the principles will include spiritual, aesthetic, ethical, scientific logical values, cognitive and economic values (Whitehead and Foster 1984 and Denley 1988 - see data base above). The analysis will focus on the explanations given by teachers to explain their development as they attempt to improve the quality of learning with their pupils. The second stage of the analysis will seek to determine if the explanations have a shared form and content which can be understood in relation to:

- i)** The spiritual value of the I-You relation in Buber's (1923) work on education.
- ii)** The aesthetics of existence (Foucault 1979).
- iii)** The ethical principles of freedom, justice, democracy, dialogue, truth and knowledge in relation to the work of Peters (1966) and McIntyre (1990).
- iv)** The scientific value of the systematic form of action reflection cycle. I experience a concern when some of my values are negated. I imagine a way forward. I act and gather data to enable me to make a judgement on my effectiveness. I evaluate the effectiveness of my actions. I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations.
- v)** The logical standards of a dialectic in relation to the work of Ilyenkov (1977) and MacIntyre (1990).
- vi)** The cognitive standards in the National Curriculum
- vii)** Economic awareness of the world of work.

Following Foster (1982 - see MPhil Thesis above) the methodology for the analysis will be that of an immanent dialectic. Value-words, such as, I-You, freedom, justice, integrity, autonomy and knowledge, will be located where they are used by the teachers to point to their value-laden practice through their texts. The value-judgements used by the teachers on the quality of their pupils' learning and their own educational development will also be located. Then the meanings of the teachers' values will be clarified in an analysis of their emergence in practice as they answer questions of the form, 'How do I improve my

practice?'. The explanations given by the teachers will be analysed in terms of the above standards of judgement.

The analysis will test the claim that a teachers' personal educational theories can be understood in terms of the spiritual, aesthetic, ethical, scientific, logical, knowledge and economic values which structure their explanations for their own educational development. It will also test the claim that the teachers' personal educational theories have a shared form and content in terms of the I-You relation, an aesthetics of existence, the ethics of the educators, a scientific form of practitioner research, a dialectical logic, the National Curriculum and economic awareness.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- i) The creation of educational theories which can be directly related to the processes of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools.
- ii) Knowledge of the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of the claims of individual practitioners to know their own professional practice.
- iii) The application of the standards of judgement to the Action Research and Educational Theory Case Study Collection to establish what constitutes 'good' quality case studies of the lives of professional educators. These case studies will be made accessible to teachers and researchers through the Resources Centre of the School of Education.

DISSEMINATION

The wider dissemination and testing of the claims to educational knowledge and educational theory will be organised through;

- i) A seminar at the American Educational Research Association in April 1995,
- ii) a regional seminar at Kingston University in November 1995,
- iii) A proposal for a national symposium at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference in August/September 1995

The seminars and symposium will focus on the explication of a new form of educational knowledge in which the epistemological and methodological assumptions of educational theory could be related directly to teachers' professional practices. (Note - Funding has already been obtained for these presentations and seminars).

BENEFITS

A) FOR THE RESEARCH SELECTIVITY EXERCISE

Two draft papers for refereed, American educational research journals already exist. A priority would be the preparation of these papers for submission.

B) APPLICATIONS TO OTHER SOURCES OF RESEARCH FUNDING.

Further funding would be sought to support the work of the Action Research in Educational Theory Research Group.

C) OTHER BENEFITS

It is difficult to overemphasise the importance of educational theory. In the first issue of Educational Theory, Kilpatrick (1951) describes it as a form of dialogue which has profound implications for the future of humanity.

i) The teaching profession could enhance its professionalism with the development of a knowledge-base which could be related directly to the processes of improving the quality of teaching and learning within our schools.

ii) Educational administrators, and politicians concerned with educational policies, their implementation and evaluation, could benefit from a view of educational knowledge in which they could judge the validity of their own contributions to educational theory in terms of the above standards of judgement.

FINANCE

£14,000 for the employment of a Research Officer for 3 days a week and for the costs of reprographics (£300). There will be no space requirements as the Officer will share accommodation in 1W 4.31.

If the application is successful, the Action Research and Educational Theory Research Group will seek similar funding from the University Research Fund for the appointment of a second Research Officer for 3 days a week to concentrate on the publication of research from the Group.

REFERENCES

- Adelman 1990 The practical ethic takes precedence over methodology, in Carr,W. (Ed) Quality in Teaching. Falmer.
- Altrichter, H. et.al. (1990) Defining, Confining or Refining Action Research?, in Zuber-Skerritt,O. (Ed.) Action Research for Change and Development.Brisbane. Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching.
- Bernstein, R. (1991) The New Constellation. Polity Press.
- Bruce, C.S. & Russell,A.L. (1992) Transforming Tomorrow Today. Proceedings of the 2nd World Congress on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management.
- Buber.M. (1923) I and Thou. T. & T. Clark. (1970)
- Calderhead,J. (1988) Teachers' Professional Learning. London. Falmer Press
- Carter,K. (1993) The Place of Story in the Study of Teaching and Teacher Education. Educational Researcher, Vol.22, No.1, pp 5-12.
- Clandenin,D.J. (1992) Narrative and Story in Teacher Education, in Teachers and Teaching: From Classrooms to Reflection. London. Falmer.
- Connelly,F.M, & Clandenin, D. J. (1991) Narrative Inquiry: Storied Experience in Short,E.C. (Ed) Forms of Curriculum Inquiry, pp 121-154. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Colins,C. & Chippendale,P.(Eds) (1991) Proceedings of the First World Congress on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management Vol.1, Acorn Press. Australia.
- Elliott,J. (1989)The Professional Learning of Teachers: an overview. Cambridge Journal of Education. Vol.19, No.1.
- Ely.M. (1992) Write on: Stories about telling it. Keynote Address to the International Conference of the Classroom Action Research Network. Worcester College of Higher Education. September 1992.
- Fals-Borda, O. & Rahman,M.A. (1991) Action and Knowledge. New York. Apex Press.
- Fenstermacher (1987) A Reply to My Critics. Educational Theory. Fall 1987.
- Foucault,M. (1979) History of Sexuality, p11. Pelican Books.
- Greene,M. (1993) The Passions of Pluralism. Educational Researcher, Vol.22, No.1, pp 13-18.
- Ilyenkov (1977) Dialectical Logic. Moscow. Progress Publishers.
- Kemmis,S. & McTaggart,R. (1983) The Action Research Planner. Deakin University Press.
- Kilpatrick (1951) Educational Theory. Vol.1. No.1.
- Korthagen, F.A.J. (1988) The influence of learning orientations on the development of reflective teaching, in Calderhead,J. (Ed). Teachers' Professional Learning. London. Falmer Press.
- Laidlaw, M. (1994) The Democratising Potential of Dialogical Focus in an Action Enquiry. Educational Action Research. vol. 2, No.2. 223-241
- Lomax, P. (1994a) Standards, Criteria and the Problematic of Action Research within an Award Bearing Course. Educational Action Research, Vol.2, No.1 113-126.
- Lomax, P. (1994b) The Narrative of an Educational Journal. Inaugural Address. Kingston University.
- Peters,R.S. (1966) Ethics and Education. Allen and Unwin.
- Henry, C. (1991) If Action Research were Tennis, in Zuber-Skeritt,O. (ed) Action Learning for Improved Performance. Brisbane. Aebis Publishing.
- Hamilton 1992 and 1993 ESRC Sponsored Seminars on Epistemology and Methodology in Educational Research at the University of Liverpool.
- Hirst,P.H. & Peters,R. S. (1970) The Logic of Education. London. R.K.P.
- MacIntyre,A. (1990) Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry. Duckworth.
- Ryle,G. (1949) The Concept of Mind. Penguin.
- Shulman,L. (1992) Knowledge integration and Application in Teacher Education: Development of Cognitive Flexibility in Complex Domains. Address at AERA 1992 Conference, San Francisco.

Somekh, B. (Ed) (1992). Bulletin No. 12 of the Classroom Action Research Network. University of East Anglia.

Whitehead, J. (1989) How do we improve Research-based Professionalism in Education? A question which includes action research, educational theory and the politics of educational knowledge. BERJ, Vol.15, No.1, pp 3-18, 1989. Presidential Address to BERA '88.

Whitehead, J. and Foster, D. 1984 Action Research and Professional Development. C.A.R.N. Bulletin No.6. University of East Anglia.

APPENDIX

ADVANCED CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Budd, P. (1992) How can I support change in a way which fits my belief in equality of opportunity?

De Cet, D. (1991) How do I improve the quality of my pupils' writing? How can I develop my teaching of poetry to my GCSE classes? (Secondary).

Corbey, M. (1991) Thinking Through Emergent Writing. (Primary)

Fawcett, J. (1991) Writing Journeys. (Primary)

Jackson, S. (1991) The Nature of Action Research : How do I improve my educational management. (Primary)

Johnson, M. (1992) How can I improve the performance of lower and higher attaining pupils in Humanities through the use of differentiated learning materials?

Siebert, P. (1992) How can I develop and improve reading strategies within the national curriculum for my secondary school pupils?

MED ACTION RESEARCH MODULES

Bailey, S. (1991) An action research enquiry into my role as an advisory teacher working with teachers of mathematics to pupils with special needs.

Baskett, S. (1992) How do I improve the quality of group work in the classroom?

Jefferson, L. (1991) How do I improve my understanding of the teaching of technology?

Kok, P. (1991) Re-discovering education through an action research experience.

Lewis, J. (1993) A story of my educational development.

Lin, C.C. (1993) An unexpected assignment from C.C.Lin and *Herselves*.

Mellet, P. (1991) An account of my own educational development.

Stephens, J. (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?

Wheals, J. (1993) How do I improve the quality of the teaching and learning in a group with discipline problems?

Williams, J. (1993) An account of the attempts to implement a fully structured and timetabled Personal and Social Education Programme in a local comprehensive school.

Yeaman, K. (1993) How do I improve my teaching of science? (Primary).

MED DISSERTATIONS

Forrest, M. (1983) The Teacher as Researcher- the use of historical artefacts in primary schools.

Hazlewood, A. (1994) Educative Conversations in Classrooms

Kok, P. (1991) The art of an educational inquirer.

Mellet, P. (1994) Moving Beyond Technical Reason and Formal Rationality

Preston, G. (1987) A review of the teaching and learning strategies used in the teaching of history at Bath College of higher Education.

Stephens, J. (1994) Ways of Knowing

MPHIL THESES

Eames, K. (1987) The growth of a teacher-researcher's attempt to understand writing, redrafting, learning and autonomy in the examination years.

Foster, D. (1982) Explanations for teachers' attempts to improve the process of education for their pupils (MEd by research now called MPhil)

Hayward, P. (1993) How can I improve the learning of myself and my pupils as we work through the Design Process? An action enquiry to construct and present the development of my own professional practice.

Jensen, M. (1987) A creative approach to the teaching of English in the examination years.

King, R. (1987) An action inquiry into day release in Further Education.

Larter, A. (1987) An action research approach to classroom discussion in the examination years.

PHD THESES

Gurney, M. (1988) An action research enquiry into ways of developing and improving personal and social education.

McNiff, J. (1989) An explanation for an individual's educational development through the dialectic of action research.

Denley, P (1987) The development of an approach to practitioner research initiated through classroom observation and of particular relevance to the evaluation of innovation in science teaching.

PGCE SPECIAL STUDIES

Black, C. (1991) How can I make 'Far from the Madding Crowd' more accessible, enjoyable and interesting for my Year Ten group? (English)

Blofeld, A. (1991) How can I ensure that I give 50% of my time where appropriate, to the girls in my mixed ability Year Ten group? (English)

Gentry, S. (1992) On Becoming a Teacher. A Study of my Educational Values.

Hocking, J. (1992) How can I make learning about Nazi Germany more enjoyable for my year ten group? (History)

Norwood, K. (1992) How can I enable my Year Twelve group to take more responsibility for their own learning about Chartism? (History)

Smith, D. (1992) How can I differentiate with my mixed ability Year Seven class in order that all pupils fulfil their own individual potential? (Modern Languages)

Southgate, S. (1992) How can I ensure that my Year Eight actively engage in their French lessons without me having to threaten them into it? (French)

Stansfield, I. (1992) How can I establish a good enough relationship with 9B to enable them to engage fully with the novel 'Roll of thunder: Hear my Cry', and the issues available in the novel? (English)

Stewart, R. (1992) How do I improve my science lessons?

Watkins, Z (1991) How can I ensure the respect from the pupils in Year Nine exactly when required whilst still maintaining the classroom atmosphere and upholding my educational values, i.e. treating them as equals? (Biological Sciences)

A further 5 studies from the 1993/94 cohort are also available for analysis.

**LIVING MY EDUCATIONAL THEORY IS A GOOD QUALITY EDUCATIONAL AND
HUMAN ENQUIRY.**

IS THIS A GOOD QUALITY EDUCATIONAL AND HUMAN ENQUIRY?

**Jack Whitehead
Educational Researcher
School of Education
University of Bath
Bath, U.K. BA2 7AY
February 1995**

**A discussion paper for participants in the seminar, Quality in Human Inquiry, to be held
at the University of Bath 14-17 March 1995.**

To

Juanita Campos; Björn Gustavesen; Willis Harman; Rupert Chisholm; David Hamilton;
John Heron; Blythe McVicker Clinchy; Judi Marshall; Ilja Maso; Ineke Meulenberg-
Buskens; Peter Reason; Thomas Schwandt; Adri Smaling; Bill Torbert and other
participants.

In preparing this discussion paper I am bearing in mind the autobiographical notes and the
critical issues which you have mentioned in your notes that you would like to hear
discussed at the seminar.

INTRODUCING MYSELF AS AN EDUCATIONAL ACTION RESEARCHER , TEACHER EDUCATOR AND CITIZEN

I am hoping that you will feel some passionate engagement with my claim that the enquiries I describe below constitute a good quality educational and human enquiry. I think you will find a number of your concerns explicitly addressed in my claim to know my educational development in a form of living educational theory.

Blythe, I think you will see that my account tries to hold together your useful distinction between connected and separate knowing. Bill, I think you might see my educational research as a form of your development action inquiry in which I can be seen to have moved through your seven scientific paradigms into the creation and criticism of living educational theory for professional development and cultural renewal. Ineke, I too was pushed into understanding the significance of the issue of power in research and would like you to see my account as one possibility for extending the concept of research methodology to accommodate the dimensions of "being and doing in the world".

Björn, I agree with the significance of your four issues of constituting ourselves in action research, of the need to achieve a combination of innovation and agreement, of the question of creating an interactive relationship between theory and practice and of the need to develop knowledge and understanding. I would value your judgement on whether or not you see my living educational theory as grounded in practical questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', as being of any use in helping to see how your four concerns can be integrated within an educational enquiry. Jennie, I am most concerned not to ignore what you call the "validation" dilemma and to answer criticisms that educational action research is not a 'rigorous' form of research. Perhaps you could let me know if you think that the procedures I have used in my own research fulfil the standards you use in defining good quality research (and human enquiry).

Willis, I also want to understand what you mean by "truth-telling". My own concern with truth-telling is related to Jennie's concerns with validity. I experience most difficulty in communicating my truth when I try to express those spiritual, ethical and aesthetic qualities within what I know and understand. I felt a tentative understanding of what you meant by Creative Force, and will try to develop a deeper understanding of what you mean.

Rupe, I think you will hear me struggling to move my individual action enquiry into community and collaborative relationships which can embrace your pragmatic view of the need to *improve the total effectiveness of organizations and systems to deal with many key problems as we hurl towards the 21st century*. I would like to work with you on the question of, 'What constitute valid indices of positive system development and how do we devise a process of inquiry to determine and generate data of these?'

Adri, I was stimulated by your ideas on open-mindedness, open-heartedness and dialogical openness. I accept that the quality of my educational and human enquiry should be judged in these terms. I am also striving for dialogical intersubjectivity and for doing justice to the researched. I accept these as indicators of good quality human enquiry and would like you to check my claim that my account fulfils your standards of judgement.

David, I'm looking forward to seeing you again. Given your responsibility for helping to secure my tenure at Bath I'm wondering if your effort was worth it! I hope you are willing to give me your judgement on the quality of my educational enquiry into the reconstruction of educational theory and its potential for cultural renewal. I know you are still committed to the enlightenment project and hence might find my individual enquiry insignificant in the grand order of things!

Ilja, I do agree that my living educational theory should seek not only to capture what that life means in my own terms and my natural setting but that it must also study the *'scientific and non-scientific theories about that reality as well as what informants tell about it'*.

Thomas, I did enjoy your paper on criteriology. So much of my research has been focused on epistemological questions concerning the appropriate standards of judgement for testing the validity of an individual's claim to know their own educational development. I have also given a priority to exploring what it means to cultivate dialogical communities in which we engage in practical discourse. Hence I am hoping that you will see, in the creation of my living educational theories, a balance between contributing to the creation and sustaining of dialogical communities for professional development and cultural renewal and a commitment to debating the merits of various sets of epistemological criteria for sorting out the legitimate from the not so legitimate methodology or interpretive claim to a good quality human or educational enquiry.

Peter, I was engrossed by the ideas and case studies in the new book you edited, *Participation in Human Inquiry: Research with People*. I sense that I still have much to learn in a, *'future participation will mean a very different experience of the self, an ecological self distinct yet not separate, a self rooted in environment and in community'*. I have asked two of my colleagues, Bill Scott and Chris Oulton for some help on these issues. The co-convene our Environmental Education Research Group. You explored two themes in the book which you see as quite distinct yet highly interconnected. "One question asks, 'How do you practice research in a collaborative fashion?'; and the other asks, 'How can we articulate a world-view which fosters an experience of participation with each other and with you planet?'. I would like to find a way of asking my question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', in the context of trying to improve my contribution to a good social order and cultural renewal, within an educative community. In your book you describe an important starting point for co-operative inquiry as 'an extended epistemology, which includes experiential, practical and propositional knowledge. I like John Heron's recent addition of presentational knowledge as a bridge between experiential and propositional knowledge. I will use these ideas in my account of my own educational development below.

Yvonna, I have been using, with my research students, the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* you recently edited with Norman Denzin. I liked the way you described the changes over the last century in terms of the five phases of the traditional, moderist, blurred genres, crisis of representation and the present. I do agree that new epistemologies from previously silenced groups are emerging to offer solutions to the problem of representation. I was wondering why you thought that more action-, activist-orientated research is only on the horizon. My own readings in the history of action research would indicate that educational action research and participatory action research has exerted a influence in many contexts around the world and already made a significant contribution to resolving the crises of legitimation and representation. It has certainly influenced my own research for the past twenty years as I hope to show in the following brief outline of the case study into my own educational development.

THIS IS A GOOD QUALITY EDUCATIONAL AND HUMAN ENQUIRY.

IS THIS A GOOD QUALITY EDUCATIONAL AND HUMAN ENQUIRY?

In a film called *Educating Rita*, Michael Caine played the part of a University tutor of a working-class girl, played by Julie Walters. In response to Rita's question about what a university lecturer had to do to be sacked from his job, the tutor replied, Bugger the Bursar! In 1973, when I am beginning my story, the University of Bath had no Bursar but as the communications which follow from the Personnel Office, and the Secretary and Registrar show, I was certainly perceived as having done something metaphorically close to Buggering the Bursar.

I'll begin with three questions and three statements which ground my enquiry as an educational researcher, a teacher educator, and a citizen with a commitment to examining the meaning of the values such as social justice, academic freedom, the power of truth, respect for some others and for democratic forms of social order for my life in education.

By beginning with questions, I want to emphasise the dialectical ground of my educational enquiry. By dialectics I mean a process of coming to understand and know through question and answer. In this process, I exist as a living contradiction, and the meanings of my values emerge through time and practice within an immanent dialectic. I will show below what I mean by an immanent dialectic as I clarify the meaning of the value of academic freedom. I want to show you the practice of freedom in a way which partly constitutes both my development as 'educational' and my enquiry as 'good'.

The three statements below contain judgements by others on the quality of my enquiry. These judgements were supported by the full force of institutional power relations and I experienced their pressure as oppressive and constraining. In my practice of freedom I transcended these pressures and continued my enquiry. I think I can show something of the meaning of freedom to me, in helping to constitute my development as 'educational' and my enquiry as 'good'.

My first question is *'How do I improve my practice?'*. I am thinking of my practice as an educational researcher who is trying to reconstruct educational theory in a way which can produce valid descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals. I think the enquiry has moral significance because of the values which constitute a practice as 'educational'. The enquiry also has epistemological significance because of the way 'I' is included as a living contradiction in my claim to know my own educational development. The idea of a living contradiction is related to my second question.

My second question is from Ilyenkov⁵, in his book *Dialectical Logic*. It grounds the logic in my epistemological enquiry within the dialectical logic of question and answer.

Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites in the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category..... but no small difficulty immediately arises as soon as matters touch on 'subjective dialectics', on dialectics as the logic of thinking. If any object is a living contradiction, what must the thought (statement about the object) be that expresses it? Can and should an objective contradiction find reflection in thought? And if so, in what form? (Ilyenkov 1977, p 320)

My third question is grounded in my educative relationships with my students and professional colleagues, This is the question *'How can I help you to improve your*

⁵ Ilyenkov, E. (1977) *Dialectical Logic*. Progress Publishers: Moscow

learning?'. I have asked this kind of question from the time I began teaching in 1967. The question can be seen to be at the centre of the first research project I undertook on joining the School of Education at Bath in 1973. My research report, 'Improving Learning for 11-14 year olds in Mixed Ability Science Groups'⁶, began with a teacher's concerns and imagined solution, described below which was taken from transcripts of our conversations. This was later accepted by the group as the solution we should try to implement.

I've a number of ideas I try to achieve. I try to base my relationship with my pupils on mutual trust and respect. From this I try to provide the opportunity to explore thier own ideas and help them to feel confident enought to be able to face the insecurity and ttry their ideas out with my guidance and counselling..... I think that I need some trolleys and trays and cabinets in the classroom. If I was following a certain theme on the combined sciences, then I would like to have in my classroom sll the core apparatus necessary for maybe a month's work, so that the basic stuff is inside the room. There would cards, workbooks, etc. which would relieve the teacher of class teaching and I'm certain, well I know that I and many other teachers could train the children to work through a basic core of work, get their own apparatus, start off their own experiemtns and work along their own lines of enquiry, when and where that came in and at the end of the lesson, when the bell went, they could put it all back in some form of order. (p. 4-6, ref 1.)

In the booklet I say that the account includes descriptions of how the teachers came together to work out ways of overcoming their problems, the difficulties they encountered in their relationships, the production of resources, the selection and arrangement of resources and the evaluation of their own and their pupils' work. It also shows how some progress has been made and how the organisation of in-service support in the area gives reasonable cause for optimism that the improvement will continue.

What this booklet also shows, in its form of representation, is an action reflection cycle in which concerns are expressed, action plans formulated, actions taken and data gathered to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions, actions evaluated by the group and the concerns, plans and actions modified in the light of the evaluations.

I think that this is a good quality human enquiry in that it is grounded in a desire to help others to improve the quality of their learning, as well as my own. It adopts a systematic form of action enquiry cycle which values both learning from experience and a willingness to benefit from the ideas and evaluations of others in a forum for (democratic) evaluation within which individuals submit their judgements to the power of better argument within a community.

I think you will see in the story of my educational development 1973-1993⁷ that I have regularly submitted my accounts to public criticism within the annual forums of the British Educational Research Association, in Journals and more recently in the annual forums of the American Educational Research Associations as well as three World Congresses on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management. I think this submission of one's account to one's peers together with the evidence that one has listened attentively and critically evaluated the responses are characteristics of a good quality human enquiry.

The following three sets of statements were made by others in judging the quality of my research, teaching and behaviour in the context of my workplace. I would like you to bear in mind that it is only recently that I have reconstructed my explanation of my educational

⁶ Whitehead, J. (1976) Improving Learning for 11-14 year olds in mixed ability science groups. Wiltshire Curriculum Centre.

⁷ Whitehead, J. (1993) The Growth of Educational Knowledge: Creating your own living educational theories. Hyde:Bournemouth.

development, within my living educational theory⁸, in a way which has acknowledged the significance of the meaning of these statements in the context of the the power relations which sustained them. I hope that you will vicariously feel the pressure, exerted over years, which I have been subjected to by those with institutional power to enforce their judgements. I hope that you will identify with my commitment to transcending such pressure (whilst understanding their nature), in the name of freedom, justice and truth. Furthermore I think you will experience the struggle to transcend such pressure, in the name of such values, as a characteristic of a good quality human enquiry. Do please bear in mind that the 'good' human enquiry I have in mind has lasted some twenty three years and that you might need to see further evidence for my claims within Whitehead 1976 (ref.2) and Whitehead 1993 (ref. 3.)

STATEMENTS AND JUDGEMENTS RE-INFORCED BY THE TRUTH OF POWER

1) ATTEMPT TO deny me tenure and to TERMINATE my EMPLOYMENT - March 1976 from the University Personnel Officer following a recommendation to terminate my employment by the University's Academic Staff Committee which were accepted by Senate:

iii).. there is an absence of evidence to suggest that you have pursued research of sufficient quality for the assessors to be assured of your ability to perform adequately the duties of a University Lecturer; the objectives being to make acknowledged scholarly contributions to the advancement of your subject as well as to perform proper teaching and other administrative tasks.

Offer of tenure - February 1977 from the University Personnel Officer

I am writing to inform you that Senate recently approved a recommendation from the Academic Staff Committee that you be offered a permanent appointment in the University with effect from the 1st September 1977.

My inclusion of this kind data in my living educational theory and my acknowledgement of these pressures and how others helped me to overcome them, only began some ten years after they had occurred. This inclusion follow the demial of my originality in two Ph.D. submissions, the instruction that I could not question the competence of my examiners, and my experience of the disciplinary power of the University in 1987. I hope you will feel the pressure being exerted in the institutional power which supported the truth of the judgements below.

I think that this acknowledgement of the influence of power on what counts as valid and legitimate knowledge is part of the quality of my human enquiry because, through using the ideas of Foucault⁹ and Habermas¹⁰, I have shown how my understanding of these influences on my educational development has been extended. Like Richard Peters¹¹ I agree that extending one's cognitive range and concerns is a condition of education. I attempted to extend my understanding of the nature of educational theory and educational knowledge in two Ph.D. submissions to the University of Bath and encountered judgements sustained by power relations which attempted to prevent me enquiring.

⁸ see 2.

⁹ Foucault, M. (1977) Intellectuals and Power - A conversation between Michel Foucault and Giles Deleuze, in Bouchard, D.R. (Ed) Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice; Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

¹⁰ Habermas, J. (1976) Communication and the Evolution of Society, Routledge; London.

¹¹ Peters, R. (1966) Ethics and Education, Allen and Unwin.

2a) First Ph.D. rejection, October 1980 *‘Educational Practice and its theory - an analysis of a research programme on the enquiry, “How do I improve this process of education here?”.*

2b) Second Ph.D. rejection, November 1982 - *“A Dialectical approach to Education”.*

The two sets of examiners were agreed, in judging my separate submissions that:

i) I had not shown an ability to conduct original investigations and to test my own ideas and those of others.

ii) my thesis did not contain matter worthy of publication.

iii) I should not be permitted to re-submit my thesis.

In relation to my claim to have engaged in a good quality human enquiry, it isn't these academic judgements I want to focus on but the power relations which sustained the following instruction to me, from the Secretary and Registrar, in response to my request that care should be taken in ensuring that my examiners were competent to judge my thesis.

Once the examiners have been appointed, their competence cannot in any circumstances be questioned.

He re-iterated this claim in a letter of the 14 November 1980:

I must re-iterate that no question may now be raised about the competence of the examiners.

I am pleased to report that the Regulations of the University of Bath were changed in 1991 to permit questions to be raised about the judgements of examiners of research degrees on the grounds of bias, prejudice and inadequate assessment. This was not to operate retrospectively!

My book on the growth of educational knowledge¹² contains the evidence of my continuous questioning of the legitimacy of a procedure which did not permit questions to be raised under any circumstances about the competence of examiners, once they had been appointed. The reason I think that this questioning is part of a good quality human enquiry is that it shows a commitment to uphold the principle of academic freedom in the 1988 Education Reform Act that:

“academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at their institutions.”

In the following judgements on my research I experienced the full disciplinary power of the University.

3) Disciplined, following complaints by two Professors of Education - June 1987. The meeting held under the authority of the University Council was constituted by the University Solicitor, the Personnel Officer and the Secretary and Registrar. The Secretary and Registrar of the University wrote to inform me, following the hearing, that among other things:

¹² Ref.3.

Your activity and your writing so far are regarded as a challenge to the present and proper organisation of the University and not consistent with the duties that the University wish you to pursue either in terms of teaching or research.

In 1989 I submitted papers to the Board of Studies of the School of Education to show some of the pressures I had been subjected to in carrying out my research and in publishing my ideas. In 1990 a Senate working party was set up to look into 'A Matter of Academic Freedom. It reported to Senate in 1991.

4) Senate working party on academic freedom acknowledges 'pressure' - May 1991

The Senate Working Party reported on a claim made by the Board of Studies of the School of Education that there was prima facie evidence that my academic freedom had been constrained.

The working party did not find that, in any of Mr. Whitehead's seven instances, his academic freedom had actually been breached. This was however, because of Mr. Whitehead's persistence in the face of pressure; a less determined individual might well have been discouraged and therefore constrained.

By placing any contributions to educational theory and educational knowledge I may have made, within the power relations which made, sustained and modified the above judgements, I want to emphasise the importance of dialogue, language, meaning, power and practice as they are expressed in both the judgements of others and in my responses. By representing my educational development in relation to such communications my aim is to show the dialogical and social nature of my educational development and claim to educational knowledge.

I now want to focus on two intimately related issues. The first is an understanding of the process of an immanent dialectic in which my educational standards can be comprehended and used to test the validity of my account. The second concerns the nature of the educational standards for judging the validity of my claim to educational knowledge.

It sometimes helps to understand an issue through its history. I use Ilyenkov's analysis of dialectical logic to help me make sense of my own immanent dialectical procedure and educational standards of judgement.

Ilyenkov pointed out that Hegel criticised traditional logic and counterposed to the assertions, rules, and basic propositions of logic not some kind of opposing assertions, rules and basic propositions but **the process of the practical realisation of its own principles in real thought** which he called an 'immanent dialectic' (Ref. 1, p.187)

Ilyenkov explained that Hegel's conception of thought preceding action was reversed by Marx and Engels when they claimed that practice, or production in its broadest sense, mediated between nature and thought. My view is that Ilyenkov could not see a way of answering his question about living contradictions because he was still trying to 'write' logic, rather than comprehending the nature of a living logic in answers to questions of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing?' or 'how do I live my values more fully in my practice?', or 'how do I improve my practice?', or 'how to I help my students to improve the quality of their learning?'

One way I make sense of my educational standards or values, is within the dialectical form of their emergence is practice. The Growth of Educational Knowledge was produced within the context of the power relations described above. It documents my educational

development between 1973-1993 as I tried to make an original contribution to educational theory. I show the gradual emergence of the meanings of the educational values which I use to test the validity of my claim to educational knowledge (and to have participated in a good quality human enquiry).

It is not the case that the meanings of my educational standards of academic freedom, the power of truth, justice, democracy, truth, knowledge and education remained static and were clearly defined at the beginning of my enquiry. The meanings changed as part of the process of education itself. The meanings of academic freedom in my educational development for example, became clearer as I responded to the pressures of having the validity and legitimacy of my ideas on the nature of educational theory and educational knowledge challenged in the above judgements, not in open and fair debate, but rejected in relation to the truth of power.

I recognise that everything I am claiming about what constitutes the good in my human enquiry rests upon a relationship between the values I attach to education. I see education as a value-laden practical activity. I cannot distinguish something as educational without approving the value of what has been learnt. This means that what counted for much of the education of the Hitler Youth during the 1930s, was not, for me, education, because of what I perceive as its affirmation of the negation of human values and basic humanity. This stance has political implications because I am living my educational values in a social context. My educational values matter to me and whilst, as Judi Marshall¹³ advocates, I hope to show that I can 'hold my ideas lightly', I also recognise that value-conflict is a historical and political truth which I must acknowledge and if at all possible, peacefully resolve. Hence your judgements matter to me in the sense that I am submitting my account of my professional life to you for your critical evaluation as to whether it constitutes a good quality human enquiry. I hope that, whilst we may be passionate about our values and academic standards, the quality of our conversation will demonstrate a good quality enquiry in action.

My purpose in asking you to engage with my account is to see if I can communicate what I mean by a living educational theory and to ask if you think it has any significance to developing our understanding of what constitutes a good quality human enquiry. In defining my educational goods, which I see as those values which I use to give meaning and purpose to my life, I want to show you these values as the educational standards I use to test the validity of my claim to know my own educational development. I hope to show you these values in the course of their emergence in practice. In other words, I am showing you the meaning of the values in my educational development through an immanent dialectic. In this dialectic, practice precedes the theory of it, and the meanings of my educational values, are expressed, clarified and developed through time, practice, reflection and the ideas and relationships of others.

In communicating these educational standards, I want to justify my claim to be living a good quality human inquiry. In doing this I hope to demonstrate the power of a educational action research project for strengthening human communities and making a contribution to a good social order and cultural renewal. A modest little agenda in a few pages of prose!

LIVING EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

Living Educational Theories

¹³ in Reason, P. (1994) *Participation in Human Inquiry*, p 36. Sage.

In 1973 I accepted an appointment as a lecturer in education at the University of Bath. This followed six years teaching science in London Comprehensive Schools running concurrently with four years part-time study of the philosophy and psychology of education for a higher degree. I came to Bath with a commitment to reconstruct educational theory because the dominant view did not appear to me to be adequate to the task of describing and explaining the educational development of any individual. The dominant view, known as the 'disciplines' approach was constituted by the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. I rejected this view because it could not produce an adequate explanation for my educational development and the development of the pupils I taught. I have sought to replace the view that educational theory is constituted by the disciplines of education with the view that educational theory is constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners produce for their own educational development as they answer questions of the kind, 'how do I live my values more fully in my practice?'. I have called this view, 'living educational theory', because I see it as an explanation of a present practice in terms of an evaluation of the past together with an intention to create something which is not yet in existence. It is the inclusion of an intention, in the sense of a commitment to project oneself into the future in a way which is believed will improve matters, which constitute the explanation as 'living'.

My Values as Educational Standards of Judgement.

i) community standards in my educational judgements

i) community standards in my educational judgements

This is perhaps the weakest of my educational standards of judgement. At this point I simply want to present four communications within which I feel a sense of belonging to an educative community. The first is from Tom Russell, a teacher educator at Queen's University, Kingston Ontario. The second is from Terri Austin¹⁵ a teacher in Alaska who is part of the Alaskan Action Research Network the third is written by Dawn Bellamy as part of her special study as a novice teacher, the fourth is from MH, a teacher educator. Tom Russell has written on the importance of the authority of experience¹⁶. He has also researched his own teacher educator practices. What I see as his great contribution to my education is his capacity to hold people in mind and communicate that they matter to him and that their contributions to education are of value to him and others. I experience Terri Austin and MH expressing a similar capacity for relationship and community and I feel this sense of belonging to an educative community in the following communications through the internet. I simply offer the dialogical form of the e-mail communications below and of Dawn Bellamy's reflections to show that I am working at strengthening and at understanding my contributions to an educative community.

In the following e-mail, K refers to one of Tom's students, a nurse educator who has produced an action research assignment I rate highly. A copy of the assignment was sent to me via the internet and I immediately used it with my own students. J contacted me from an Australian action research e-mail list and explained that she was having problems getting a university research committee to accept an action research format for the presentation of her higher degree. The following e-mail shows a sense of support developing through the e-mail community.

¹⁴ Austin, T. (1994) The Well-Dressed Alaska Teacher Researcher. *Teacher Research: The Journal of Classroom Inquiry*. Vol. 1, No.2. pp 66-81.

¹⁵ Austin, T. (1994) The Well-Dressed Alaska Teacher Researcher. *Teacher Research: The Journal of Classroom Inquiry*. Vol. 2, No. 1, pp 66-80.

¹⁶ Russell, T.

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 95 19:18:08 EST
From: RUSSELLT@qucdn.queensu.ca
To: jmbell@unixg.ubc.ca, kcathcar@loyalistc.on.ca
Cc: a.j.whitehead@bath.ac.uk
Subject: Introductions!

Dear J and K,

May I introduce you to each other! K, I've chatted a few times with J after we made contact through Jack Whitehead. J is doing a thesis (is it PhD?) at ****, and she's getting a hard time from her committee about deviations from "rigorous format and style" (my words).

K, I hope you hear from Jack soon, because he has mentioned the nurses' reactions several times to me, as quite positive. Jack told J about your paper, so she e-mailed me to ask for it. I took the liberty of sending it, since it had been OK for the UK nurses to see it (but I promise not to let this get out of hand). J has now printed your paper and says she is enjoying it very much. She has asked for your e-mail address so that she can write to you directly, so this note serves the purpose of giving you each other's addresses. I assume it's J's move to write first!

Yours,
Tom

Terri Austin is an Alaskan teacher researcher registered at Bath. In the following communications we are beginning to focus on issues of validity and the spiritual dimensions in the growth of community.

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 1995 22:15:18 -0800
To: a.j.whitehead@bath.ac.uk
From: Terri Austin <arcftla@northstar.k12.ak.us>

Jack, by now you have about 1,000 messages. This program stores all the ones that can't be sent and then at the first opportunity - sends them all! Sorry for crowding up your mailbox. This weekend is the ATRN winter meeting. I'm off to snowy Anchorage after school. I'm taking lots of stuff we talked about this summer. We're going to tackle the topic of validity. I'm excited about the possibilities. Will write when I return.

Love, Terri

21 Jan 1995
To: Terri Austin <arcftla@northstar.k12.ak.us>

Terri - I got all your messages! It's always good to hear from you. I hope the weekend on validity goes well..... Could you try to get hold of a book called *Lighting the Lamp: The spiritual dimension of nursing care* by Ann Ballard. It's published by SCUTARI PRESS in 1994 - this is the publishing company of our Royal College of Nursing. I think you will enjoy it. Jack.

Dawn's reflections below, on some of her first experiences of teaching, attracted me because I wanted to help her find her own voice from the point where she 'had' to take on some of my ideas.

I knew that my enquiry had to involve other people - a self-centred enquiry would not be enough - but I was unsure whether I could make that move. I wrote in my journal (22/2/94):

I worry about my ability to complete an enquiry.

It all seems too self-centred at the moment...Will I be able to complete an enquiry that will be of value to anyone other than myself...So, the story so far is confusion, panic, despair, anger, frustration, disappointment, bitterness, doubt...what is it that keeps me going?...Sometimes the light switches on and I catch a glimpse of the future and I feel as if everything will be alright. The existence of the constant dialectic means that this positive feeling cannot last forever. The negative, the questioning, will inevitably start to chip away at the image. So can I do it? Who knows?

Two days later I was still feeling the pressure:

So it looks like I'm stuck with this bloody journey. I'm beginning to wish I'd turned back before the beginning. I really hate myself, the way I'm thinking, the way I'm feeling, the way I'm behaving towards the people around me. If only I could get rid of this self I seem to have developed - the self that wants to challenge, to question...All the time I'm writing this there's a voice inside my head screaming that I can't give up. It keeps telling me that the only way for me to go on living any sort of life that will be in any way worthwhile is to get back on my journey, hold on tight and hope that things improve soon...

Mike Newby, in a paper entitled, Towards a Secular Concept of Spiritual Maturity (1994), writes about the desire for self-understanding and says:

As we are aware, the pursuit of this desire leads to painful self-criticism, yet also to the exposure of bias, unwillingness to imagine things otherwise than we wish them to be, and valuable insights into our capacity for self-deceit. (p.8)

This seems particularly relevant to what I was experiencing at the time of these two journal entries. My growing awareness of the ways in which I had deceived myself, and therefore others, in the past was incredibly disturbing. What sort of a life had I been leading? Before these entries, on February 18, I had written:

It is harshly disturbing to realise that everything that has gone before has been a mere facade. The paradoxical juxtaposition of joy and pain is integral to the human condition. It is part of our becoming and, as such, should be recognised and not denied. By refusing to acknowledge the whole it seems to me that the full potential of our existence will never be realised.

I suppose that in the two later journal entries I was acknowledging the pain, although I am not sure that I was accepting it as calmly as I was suggesting that people should in the entry dated February 18. Whatever the discomfort, I could not turn back. I returned to my search for a question...

**“And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well...”**

I knew that I had to wait until I got back into the classroom for my enquiry to begin in any practical sense. My Complementary School was an 11-16 mixed comprehensive in Swindon, and until I got there I could not know anything about the future of my enquiry. I did not even know if English was taught in mixed ability groupings - perhaps the focus of my enquiry would have to change immediately. In order to produce a valid enquiry I would have to conform to the principles of an action enquiry as set out by Whitehead in 1980 (and included in his book - 1993):

- 1) I experience a problem because some of my educational values are negated.*
- 2) I imagine a solution.*
- 3) I act in the direction of the imagined solution.*
- 4) I evaluate the actions.*
- 5) I modify my actions/ideas in the light of my evaluations. (p.38)*

I knew that to begin with I would have to discover myself to be a ‘living contradiction’, to hold educational values but to negate them in my practice. If, as it seemed, one of my values is that all pupils should be given the opportunity to learn within an environment that stretches them and enables them to realise their full potential, and, in particular, that the exceptionally able should not be left to fend for themselves, then I would have to find myself in a situation in which there was a possibility that I might negate such values within my practice. From my experiences in education I was aware that classrooms cannot be engineered to fit the requirements of a researcher - and even if they could I would not want that to happen - I wanted to follow McNiff’s (1988) definition:

*Action research is research WITH rather than ON
people. (p.68)*

That had been one of the problems with the PGCE course requirements - the University seemed to expect things to happen in schools at particular times - and it was not a situation I wanted to revisit. I was conscious of the need for flexibility from the start. I had already described Justine’s report as “the fulfilment of a dream within a dream” and I prepared myself to adapt to my new context, ready to work towards the fulfilment of any dream under the dream umbrella which asks the question, posed by Whitehead (1989):

*How do I improve this process of education here?
(1993 book - p.69)*

I was still slightly unsure of my ability to complete a valid enquiry. The whole thing still seemed a bit daunting. But I set off for my Complementary School undeterred and full of curiosity.

**“The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.”**

**EXTRACT FROM MH E-MAIL TO A GROUP OF 6 TEACHER EDUCATORS,
FEBRUARY 5TH 1995.**

I am teaching a graduate level class ..(and) .. have taught this class for at least 5 semesters and I really enjoy doing it. We talk about teaching and the foundations upon which teaching is built. That means that I use traditional text (Eisner) as well as not-so-traditional text (Apple) and several books in between.....much to my dismay, however, I discovered that I was only using male authors.....I had ethnic diversity but not gender diversity.....I am surprised at the oversight on my part.....and will make amends next semester. (And yes, I have already pointed it out to my students.) In this class we are seriously engaged in a discussion of the change process and how we can facilitate the process in the schools. This class has 27 students with a wide age range (22-55?), is mostly female, has 2 African-American students, etc, etc. I am enjoying it immensely because we are questioning lots of issues.

Through this class I have learned a deep lesson that I am very sorry I didn't learn before.....as a matter of fact I am very embarrassed by the lesson because it forced me to look at myself as I am.....and not how I'd like to be. I would like to be open-minded and understanding and informed and sensitive to the times. I would like to think that I am in rhythm with the moment and certainly attuned to the world as it is now. However, as I learned last week-end, that is what I would like to be, not what I am. I am a member of a socially-constructed universe where there is evil everywhere and I am a potential victim. I hated realizing that I am contributing to the universe out there that perpetuated the underclass, the have/havenot....and I got to see that I am contributing heavily to this perpetuation because I am not working hard enough to dispel it.....that my little action keeps locked. What happened? Not much really. I walked from my hotel to the Mall (Where the Smithsonian is) in Washington DC. As I walked, alone, through deserted streets, I saw homeless people, drugged-out people, and a wide-range of people - like the ones I talk about in my classroom. And as I walked those 7 - 10 blocks, I got to think about my talk and experienced incredible discomfort, no, terror about being alone on a street..... As I looked around, I realized that for all of the causes that I champion, for all of the good talk that I have - I have no real, in-the-bones, experience! Perhaps someone could say that I have empty words. And, within this realization, I came to understand the importance of interweaving theory and practice. Without blending theory and practice (action) we have nothing - but hollow, empty information....that doesn't really count for much.

This was a hard lesson, an embarrassing lesson. I would wish for me to be more aware and more conscious, but clearly I have learned my lesson about that.

What else? I have been thinking about tenure and the tenure process. I am very conscious about how my feelings and thinking has changed since I have submitted my materials. I understand why tenured faculty members forget.....it is easy to forget. Why? Because it's over. Although I still don't know the outcome, I don't care. I am not worried, it is out of my hands. What's more, I can see what I have neglected in my involvement with the process. How could I let it get ahold of me like that? Actually, as I write these words, I see that I do still have strong feelings and I am convinced that we need to change the system to a more empowering one. Is there a tenure-process system that is empowering? Are we the few who see problems? I'd like to know.

Part of my response February 11, 1995.

Doesn't your 'I' exist as a living contradiction in your graduate class where you experience your values of being open-minded, understanding, informed and sensitive to the times, in rhythm with the moment and certainly attuned to the world as it now is, held, **together**, with the negation of these values in the presently structured universe and culture where there is evil and you and I are potential victims if we don't try to do something about living our values more fully in our practice and helping each other along the way? (bit of a long sentence that one!).

I liked what you said about blending theory and practice. I reckon that you will find increased significance in your contribution to educational theory and educational knowledge as you create your own living educational theory (an autobiography of your own learning which contains an intention -action plan- to improve some aspect of your practice and its social context- to live your

values more fully in your practice). I see your theory as living because you can explain your present practice in terms of the evaluation of your past learning and the imagined improvement you are projecting yourself into, as you try to help your students to improve their own learning. You might also find yourself engaged with the existing power relations within your culture in an attempt to support the power of truth against the truth of power. I think your response to the tenure process is part of this struggle. We are trying to to change our tenure process at Bath University to a more empowering one. I'm vice-president of our local association of university teachers and yesterday our AUT committee was in negotiation with the vice-chancellor (who is very supportive) to find a more empowering process for tenure. I'll send the proposals on to you when they are ready next term.

ii) I-You relationships as spiritual standards of judgement

In asking you to judge the quality of my enquiry I'm wondering if you will bring into your judgements any religious and/or spiritual qualities. In asking for a spiritual judgement I am thinking of the expression of a human spirit in a quality of human relationships within which the unity of humanity appears to be possible. For example, Paul Denley, a colleague of mine in the School of Education, sent round the following message to all staff. I know Paul is a committed Christian and can recognise the spiritual commitment to the humanity of others, which underpins the following concern and action.

Message #1: 24 Hour Famine from Paul Denley

Date 10/2/95

Subject 24 Hour Famine

From Paul Denley

To Jack Whitehead

Subject: Time:3:01 pm

*OFFICE MEMO 24 Hour Famine Date:3/2/95
Along with many others including my daughter, I will joining in with the 24
Hour Famine organised by World Vision UK on Friday 10 February.*

*Money raised will go to support children in Rwanda, Mozambique and Senegal.
There is a sheet in the PG/UG Office if anyone would be prepared to sponsor me
for as little or as much as you like!*

Thank you.

In particular I am asking you to judge whether a commitment to I-You relationships appears in my work in a way which helps to constitute a good human enquiry. I experience a mystery at the core of my being. I can bear witness to having experienced that ontological despair which, as Paul Tillich¹⁷ has pointed out, questions the meaning and purpose of existence. I can also bear witness to the negation of this despair in the life-affirmation experience of what Tillich has described as the state of being grasped by the power of being itself.

You may relate your spiritual qualities to a theistic faith. I have no such faith but I do believe that without the experience and commitment to being life affirming, I could not justify being professionally engaged in education. At the core of this engagement is a commitment to bring into educative relationships those qualities of human relation within which the unity of humanity appears to be possible. I imagine that we will differ in how we express our spiritual qualities yet I am hoping that you will affirm that the quality of the human relations which I try to bring to my educative relationships can help to define a good quality human enquiry. The closest linguistic expression to what I mean by my living

¹⁷ Tillich, P. () *The Courage to Be*. Fontana

spirit in my human relations and educative relationships is the poetically inspired I-You relation in Martin Buber's¹⁸ I and Thou. I experience this spiritual quality in many teachers' relationships with their pupils. I had a conversation with Martin Hyman, a teacher I worked with in 1976/76. This followed one of his lessons in which I had just experienced this quality of relationship and still felt it when he said,

*By the time they come to us a lot of people have lost their trust, confidence and eagerness to learn. We have to start trying to get it back and we succeed only partially. All the children, even the non-exam children are bound by the constraints of teachers who feel obliged to cover exam syllabuses. I think this is where the confidence goes.*¹⁹

In much of my writing I think you will feel the absence of this quality of human relationship. Nevertheless I want it to be at the heart of judging the quality of my educational enquiry. I think you will experience this quality in the form and content of my representation of the lives of the teachers I worked with in the mixed ability project in 1976²⁰. I think it next emerges in 1991 in an educative conversation with Peggy Kok²¹, a Singapore Chinese academic I tutored for her Masters Dissertation. Peggy experienced a conflict between the values of excellence in training within her own culture, and the values of freedom, justice and democracy she rightly felt were at the heart of my communications with her. There is a moment in our conversation where I think you can feel the quality of Buber's I-You relation and what he calls the special humility of the educator who subordinates his or her own structured view of the world to the educational needs of the student. Do try and read the whole conversation and focus on the point where I say,

What you could do is simply leave the ending of your dissertation where you are at the moment, that is, the recognition that there are different value positions within your own commitments and in the commitments of this group here, couldn't you? (The full conversation is reported in Ref. 3. p.170)

What I experienced at this point was the humility of the educator who, as Buber point out, subordinates one's own structured view of the world, to the educational needs of the learning. I hope you can feel the presence of the I-You relation at this moment.

iii) aesthetic standards in my educational judgements

As I write this I have little idea of the meanings you give to the words, good, truth and beauty or indeed whether or not they have any significance for you in your educational judgements. I find my emotions engaged by some poetry, film, drama, painting, sculpture and nature. I do find aesthetic qualities are significance in my educational judgements. Many individuals have given different meanings to the word aesthetic. I use it in relation to the art of the dialectician in holding together both the one enquiry and many enquiries. I am thinking of an educational enquiry in which the art of living is expressed by individuals as they form their own lives with positive regard for qualities of relationship and action which are contributing to some extent to bring human values more fully into the world. In judging the quality of my enquiry with this aesthetic standard I hold my one enquiry together with the many enquiries which I have undertaken in response to my commitment to reconstruct educational theory onto a dialectical base and into a living form. In considering art to be the giving of form and content to whatever medium the artist is working with, I am working at giving form and content to my own life in education and

¹⁸ Buber, M. (1923) I and Thou. T. & T. Clark.

¹⁹ See 2. p.4.

²⁰ See 2.

²¹ See 3. p. 170.

like Foucault, recognise the importance for my educational development of my aesthetics of existence. I am not sure whether the good and true are held together in a synthesis through my aesthetic and spiritual capacities but I imagine, in making a wholistic judgement on whether my enquiry constitutes a good quality human enquiry, you will feel yourself making an aesthetic judgement on the quality of my art as a dialectician and my form of life in education.

iv) ethical standards in my educational judgements

In sharing with you my claim to be living a good quality human enquiry and asking for your judgements, I feel that I am making this claim not for myself but as a contribution to educational knowledge and educational theory. I want to see the practical knowledge of professional educators legitimated at the highest level possible in the Academy. Like Richard Peters, who dedicated so much effort to creating a view of educational theory which got rid of the 'undifferentiated mush', which passed as educational theory, I want to see educational theories, as I defined them above, given high status in order to raise the social standing of the vocation of education and to enhance its power for good. Like Richard Peters²² I value, freedom, justice, democracy and worth while activities and forms of knowledge. I also value I-You relations and the power of truth. Unlike Peters, who used a Kantian form of transcendental deduction to justify his ethical principles, I ground my principles in my personal knowledge in Polanyi's²³ sense that I have made a decision to understand the world from my point of view as an individual claiming originality and exercising his judgement, responsibly with universal intent. As a teacher I accept this responsibility. I am also open to submitting my ethical standards to social validation in Habermas' sense that my communication should be comprehensible, it should be explicit about its normative background, it should be authentic in that you can see over time that I truly believe what I say and that I should back up my propositional claims with appropriate evidence. I feel close to what Bernstein²⁴ calls MacIntyre's provisional conclusion about the good life for man, although I prefer to write for men and women rather than accept the generic term 'man' to embody both: "the good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man, and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life for man is".

In my text, *The Growth of Educational Knowledge*, I think you will comprehend the meanings of my ethical standards as they changed in the course of my educational development through practice and reflection. For example, I think the existence of this paper shows that I am continuing to exercise my freedom of enquiry into what constitutes a good life, in the context of Bath University. This enquiry has emerged from the pressures described above. The meanings of freedom and truth in this enquiry cannot be separated from the pressures associated with the truth of power and the power of truth in the context described above. It is my contention that this enquiry is constituted as a good quality human enquiry through its practical commitment to freedom of enquiry and through its practical support for the power of truth against the truth of power.

I am also attached to the value of dialogical communities which have the educational intentions of helping individuals to improve their learning and their social contexts. I think the fullest expression of this value, in my practice, can be seen in the 1975/76 enquiry into improving learning for 11-14 year olds in mixed ability groups. It is just beginning to emerge again in my work with students and staff as part of a research consultancy at

²² See 8.

²³ Polanyi, M. (1958) *Personal Knowledge*. R.K.P.

²⁴ Bernstein, R. (1986) *Philosophical Profiles* p.131. Polity Press: Cambridge.

Kingston University with Pam Lomax²⁵, in my collaboration with colleagues in The Education Council with Kevin Eames and in the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice with Judi Marshall and Peter Reason.

v) logical standards in my educational judgements

I wonder if you value logic in your educational judgements. If you do then what logical standards will you use to judge the quality of my enquiry. I associate logic with rationality, comprehensibility and correct argument. My own logics include propositional and dialectical logic. I was struck by the way Plato's²⁶ dialogues embraced contradiction as the nucleus of dialectics, whilst Aristotle's²⁷ logic rejected contradictions in correct thought. I followed Popper's²⁸ rejection of dialectical logic as based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of thinking and entirely useless for constructing theory. I followed Marcuse's²⁹ acceptance of contradiction in dialectical thinking and his point that propositional knowledge tended to mask knowledge of reality. In my own dialectic I have focused on Ilyenkov's question concerning contradiction and used Kosok's³⁰ ideas in taking the view that the non-linear dialectical process of my educational development could be linearized through time in a way which can hold propositional claims to knowledge as transition structures in the processes of the transformations which constituted my educational development. For example if you wish to test the validity of these propositional claims I am making about my logical standards of judgement I think you will have to study the evidence I have presented³¹ to show how my dialectical logic can hold propositional logic within the transition structures of a process of transformation.

Hence I am hoping that you will see that I have adhered to comprehensible logical standards of judgement in the dialectical sense that I am showing an immanent dialect at work which is revealing and clarifying the meaning of values and logic in the process of their emergence in practice. I am also including in this process a respect for propositional logic at the points where propositional claims to knowledge are made and I am concerned to reveal contradictions and to test the propositional assertions in relation to appropriate evidence.

vi) methodological standards in my educational judgements

In claiming that my enquiry is a form of educational research I am committed to the view that I should be showing that I am using systematic forms of action/reflection cycles in expressing concerns, producing action plans, acting and gathering evidence, evaluating the effectiveness of my actions and modifying my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations³².

²⁵ See Pam Lomax (1994) *The Educational Narrative of an Educational Journey*. Inaugural Address as Professor of Educational Research. Kingston University. U.K.

²⁶ Plato - Phaedrus. In *Five Dialogues of Plato on Poetic Inspiration*. Everyman's Library 1931.

²⁷ Aristotle - *On Interpretation*. Aristotle ii. The Great Books. University of Chicago, 1952.

²⁸ Popper, K. (1963) *Conjectures and Refutations*, See pages 316-336 on *What is Dialectic?* R.K.P.

²⁹ Marcuse, J. (1964) *One Dimensional Man*. Abacus.

³⁰ Kosok, M. (1976) *The Systematization of Dialectical Logic for the Study of Development and Change*. *Human Development*. 19: 325-350.

³¹ Whitehead, J. (1985) *The analysis of an individual's educational development*, in Shipman, M. (Ed). *Educational Research: Principles, Policies and Practice*. Falmer.

Whitehead, J. (1982) *Assessing and Evaluating an Individual's Educational Development*, in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. Vol.7, No.1, pp22-47.

³² See (2)

I am also concerned with the validity and rigour of my action research and claim to submit, as a methodological principle, my accounts to regular social validation in a range of academic and professional contexts. When considering the rigour of my research I submit the accounts to a critical evaluation using Winter's³³ six principles of dialectical and reflexive critique, multiple resource, plural structure, risk, and theory practice transformation. As a teacher in a University I also use these standards in judging the quality of my student's research. For a good example of where these standards have been integrated within an educational enquiry with a student, see Peggy Kok's³⁴ account of her art as an educational enquirer. With the present crisis in qualitative research concerning representation and legitimation I have found some confusion in the minds of research students about their use of methodological principles in giving some form of order to their claims to knowledge. Without wishing to constrain, through the impression that a methodology is to be imposed on an enquiry, any individual's creativity in finding their own form for expressing their claim to educational knowledge, I have tried to show in references 2 and 29 where my methodological principles can be seen to exist within my living educational theory, not as constraining structures, but as values which help me to order my enquiry into a disciplined form and to test the validity of any claims to knowledge I may make. In judging the quality of my human enquiry I hope that you will see that my methodology is subordinated to the exercise of my creativity in finding an appropriate form of representation for my claim to know my own educational development.

vii) use-value as an educational standard.

One question keeps being asked in conversations about action research. This relates to generalisability. 'If action research is focused on researching questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?', does the enquiry have any potential for generalisability? If it doesn't have general significance, how can it contribute to theory? Rather than seeing generalisation as an attribute of the conceptual language I use to communicate my living theory, I see generalisation both in terms of the use-value of my living educational theory to others as they make sense of their own experience and make a contribution to education, and in terms of the significance of the living theories of others to my enquiry. I have also integrated the ideas of many others, such as Foucault, Habermas, Bernstein, MacIntyre and Simon, in extending my cognitive range and concern and I count these extensions as constitutive of a good quality human inquiry. For example, I think Jean McNiff, Pam Lomax, Moira Laidlaw, Peter Mellett, Kevin Eames, Tom Russell and Karen Brooks-Cathcart³⁵ amongst others, have acknowledged their use of some of the ideas from my research in their publications as I have acknowledged theirs. I can affirm that I have found use-value in my research as it does help me to give meaning and purpose to my life. I also find affirming, the acknowledgement of its use-value by others. If you find no use-value in my living educational theory and contributions to educational research then I would ask you to acknowledge that the enquiry has been a 'good' one for my point of view and from the points of view of those others who have acknowledged its value. I will acknowledge that it has no use-value from your point of view.

viii) economic standards in my educational judgements

³³ Winter, R. (1991) *Learning from Experience*. Falmer.

³⁴ Peggy Kok (1991) *Action Research 1 Module*. University of Bath.

³⁵ See Jean McNiff's (1988) *Action Research: Principles and Practice*, Macmillan; Pam Lomax, ref. 11. ; Moira Laidlaw (1994) *The Democratising Potential of Dialogical Focus in an Action Enquiry*, *Educational Action Research* Vol2. No.2. pp 223-241. Peter Mellett (1994), MEd dissertation, University of Bath; Kevin Eames (1988) *Evaluating a Teacher-Researcher's choice of Action Research*, in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, Vol.13, No.3, pp 212-218; Tom Russell and Karen Brooks Cathcart (1994) see *Learning within Circles of Care a Master's Assignment at Queen's University, Ontario, Canada*.

I want to acknowledge an omission in my account of my educational development and in defining my educational standards of judgement. The omission is that the influence of economic standards should be more strongly acknowledged. I know that they are fundamentally important. The economic security provided so far by my tenured appointment has provided me with a context within Bath University from which all my research has emerged. As part of my present attempt to test the validity and extend the influence of some of the above ideas I am trying to obtain money to pay for the time of research assistants. I simply want to acknowledge the significance that my economic security has had on my knowledge producing activities. Joan, my partner, is also in full time employment and her economic contribution to our family life as well the more important contributions of love and care, has removed any economic pressures I could so easily have felt if I had had to find other ways of earning money for food, housing and our other material necessities. I make this point to deflect any criticisms that I do not value wealth creating activities. I see them as necessary in sustaining and extending the 'goods' in human existence and necessary for sustaining life in education. How the wealth created should be distributed and used is a matter I will submit to the controls of a participatory democracy.

ix) political standards in my educational judgements

I think that I can show a commitment to democratic forms of government and social order in my educational research. This is not to say that I accept a democratic decision of a majority in relation to the truth, as I see it, of my personal knowledge. However, I am committed to submitting my accounts to public evaluation within a democratic forum, in the sense that the forum supports the power of truth against the truth of power and recognises the rights of minorities to be heard. For reasons I have given above I think a commitment to questioning the basis of the decisions of those in authority and of submitting their decisions to critical evaluations in a democratic forum, is a central value of a participatory democracy. I also think that MacIntyre³⁶ is right when he says that the rival claims to truth of contending traditions of enquiry depend for their vindication upon the adequacy and the explanatory power of the histories which the resources of each of those traditions in conflict enable their adherents to write.

I think this commitment to providing a history with explanatory power for public criticism can be seen in the 1976 report of the first research project I described above. This project was driven by the dual desires to provide support for teachers who wanted to improve the learning of pupils in mixed ability science groups and to understand the educational processes of improving pupils' learning and teachers' professional development. I worked with a group of six teachers for two years. We agreed that I should use a democratic form of evaluation in the process of evaluating our effectiveness and I produced three research reports. The first contained the data I gathered for evaluating the effectiveness of our actions. The second explained our actions in terms of models of innovation, models of teaching/learning styles and models of evaluation. The teachers rejected this explanation on the grounds that they couldn't recognise themselves in the language. They asked me to go back to my data and reconstruct my description and explanation. I produced the third report (Ref.1) and the teachers accepted its validity as a description and explanation of our collaborative enquiry. What this report shows is a focus on helping teachers to improve the quality of learning with their pupils and on understanding the process. It shows little awareness of the social context in which the enquiry was located but it does show a willingness to listen and act on the force of better argument within a dialogical community.

³⁶ MacIntyre, A. (1988) *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*: Duckworth: London.

In judging the quality of my enquiry in terms of its practical political values, I ask myself the following questions. Do I show an increased understanding of the power relationships which support the truth of power and other social injustices in my workplace and beyond? Do I show a practical engagement in contributing to transcending them through supporting the power of truth and social justice? Do I also show that I am holding these practical commitments to living values of,

- i) democratic forms of social organisation,
- ii) collaborative enquiry,
- iii) dialogical communities,
- iv) the power of truth,
- v) participating in my workplace and wider society in contributing to the development of an educated citizenry.

x) cultural standards in my educational judgements

It may seem to be giving too much significance to the life of an individual in relating an individual's living educational theory to cultural renewal. However, I have recently begun to focus on the importance of cultural renewal in the sense of a culture which is concerned with the full expression of practical values such as freedom, justice, care for others, democracy and the power of truth. Hence my interest in exploring the potential of living educational theories for cultural renewal and of judging my enquiry in terms of its contribution to this renewal.

Edward Said³⁷ drew my attention to the relationships between cultural and imperialism and I want to extend my understanding of the ways in which living educational theories can make a contribution to cultural renewal³⁸. When I think of my culture I think of the influences of some fifteen years of conservative government. In particular I am thinking of the way in which market forces have, as a matter of social policy, been pushed as a dominating principle of what constitutes a good social order. In the social policy dominated by market principles, freedom is seen to be dependent on the choices which wealth creation brings. Competition in the market place is seen as the regulator of efficient production. It can take years to see the practical influence of a particular set of social policies on a culture and I think the influences of these policies are now being experienced in our health and education services, in the experience of crime within our local communities and in the standards of public life currently being investigated by Lord Nolan. We can also see the influence of the market in the huge pay rises currently being paid to Directors of what used to be our culture's public utilities, whilst millions are still unemployed. We can see the influence of the market on the rhetoric which persuaded many hundreds of thousands to take out huge mortgages to buy a house in the late 1980s only to find it an increased source of debt or repossessed in the 1990s.

In beginning to work on understanding the relationships between living educational theories and cultural renewal I will be focusing on enquiries such as those of Cathy Aymer, a black lecturer in a London College who is also working in the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice at Bath University. Cathy is analysing black experience in the context of celebrating the achievements of blacks in the context of a cultural renaissance. I will also be joining with Peter Mellett and other colleagues and students in exploring what it means to strengthen our dialogical and educative communities for cultural renewal.

I have also been working with public sector managers in a context being penetrated by great force by market legislation. I am interested in how to keep the values of public service

³⁷ Said, E. W. (1993) Culture and Imperialism. Chatto and Windus

³⁸ McNiff, J. et.al. ((1992) Creating a Good Social Order Through Action Research. Hyde:Bournemouth.

alive and fully supported within my culture. Working with David Sims, now Professor at Brunel University, enabled me to begin an exploration³⁹ of the potential of living educational theories for keeping the values of public service fully alive within our culture. I would like the quality of my enquiry to be judged in terms of its contribution to keeping the values of public service fully alive and supported within my culture.

xi) Cognitive standards

I am assuming that you will apply a traditional standard of education to my enquiry. This is the extent to which my knowledge and understanding are increasing. Space is too limited to acknowledge all those whose ideas have helped to extend my cognitive range and concern in a way which helped to define my enquiry as 'educational'. I have mentioned some of these ideas above and I will briefly describe one concern which is at the heart of my enquiry into the potential of living educational theories for cultural renewal. This is my concern with the relationship between education and social change and the historical analyses of David Hamilton and Brian Simon.

David Hamilton's⁴⁰ analysis of schooling is presented in terms of those institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce repressive ideologies, social inequalities and hierarchical forms of control. He explains that it was the self-conscious and reactivity of human beings that helped to turn education into schooling and teaching into school-teaching. Whilst I was struck by David's commitment to the Enlightenment Project I wondered about alternative answers to his question, '**What can I practice?, other than reflection**'. I think questions of the kind, 'How do I help my students to improve the quality of their learning?', are good alternatives and can lead to the creation of living educational theories which can engage with the transformation of school-teaching to teaching and schooling to education⁴¹. I feel supported in this stance by Brian Simon's⁴² analysis of the influence of the teacher researcher movement:

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.

I also agree with Simon⁴³ that there is no simple answer to the question as to whether education can effect social change.

The relation between education and society varies over time, and in respect to different circumstances. Nor is there anything fixed or determined about this relationship. There is then, considerable scope for human action in determining development - and this is the important point to bear in mind.

I am bearing this in mind as I submit my claim that my living educational theory constituted by the above values is a good quality human enquiry for three reasons. The first is because it shows a sustained commitment to bringing educational 'goods' more fully into the world. The second is because it is contributing to an understanding of the

³⁹ Whitehead, J. (1994) How do I improve my management?', Management Learning.

⁴⁰ Hamilton, D. (1990) Learning About Education - An Unfinished Curriculum. Open University Press.

⁴¹ For a practical context where this is being demonstrated see the work of Moyra Evans and the action research team at Denbigh School, Milton Keynes, reported at the Conference on Sharing Good Practice at Denbigh School 11th February 1995.

⁴² Simon, B. (1992) What Future for Education?; Lawrence and Wishart: London.

⁴³ Simon, B. (1994) The State and Educational Change. p.14, Lawrence and Wishart.

processes which constitute a good quality human enquiry. The third is become it is enhancing the quality of the social context in which the enquiry is located. Do let me know how you judge its quality in relation to your views on what constitutes a good quality human and educational enquiry?

Jack Whitehead 12 th. February 1995.

APPENDIX

NOTES FROM ILYENKOV'S DIALECTICAL LOGIC (PROGRESS PUBLISHERS 1977)

The central problem of any philosophy is the problem of the relationship of 'thought' to the reality existing outside it and independently of it. It is the problem of the coincidence of the forms of thought and reality, i.e. the problem of truth or, to put it in traditional philosophical language, the 'problem of the identity of thought and being'. p20

Descartes (1596-1650) distinguished and separated spirit from body and in his "I think, therefore I am", sustained a view of spirit as immaterial in that it thinks. The dialectical fact that 'thought' and 'being outside thought' are in absolute opposition, yet are nevertheless in agreement with one another, in unity, in inseparable and necessary interconnection and interaction (and thus subordinated to some higher law- and moreover, one and the same law), created the mind/body problem associated with Descartes. The Cartesian school capitulated before theology and put the inexplicable (from their point of view) fact down to God, and explained it by a 'miracle', i.e. by the direct intervention of supernatural powers in the causal chain of natural events. p25.

Spinoza resolved the problem of the dualism of mind and body by claiming that there are not two different and originally contrary objects of investigation - body and thought- but only one single object, which is the thinking body of living, real man, only considered from two different and even opposing aspects or points of view. Living, real thinking man, the sole thinking body with which we are acquainted, does not consist of two Cartesian halves - 'thought lacking a body' and a 'body lacking thought'. In relation to real woman both the one and the other are equally fallacious abstractions, and one cannot in the end model a real thinking woman from two equally fallacious abstractions. p31

The brilliance of the solution of the problem of the relation of thinking to the world of bodies in space outside thought (i.e. outside the head of man), which Spinoza formulated in the form of the thesis that thought and extension are not two substances, but only two attributes of one and the same substance, can hardly be exaggerated. p43

Kant (1724-1804) moved dialectics forward through his understanding of the necessity of **contradictions (or antinomies)** in thought. It was the tension of the struggle between opposing principles, each of which had been developed into a system claiming universal significance and recognition, that constituted the 'natural' state of human thought for Kant. The 'natural' actual, and obvious state of thought, consequently, was just dialectics. For Kant all judgements of experience, without exception, have a synthetic character. The presence of a contradiction in the make-up of such a judgment is consequently a natural and inevitable phenomenon in the process of making a concept more precise in accordance with the facts of experience. p84

Hence Kant also drew the conclusion that there must be a logic (or rather a section of logic) that dealt specially with the principles and rules of the theoretical application of thought or the conditions of applying the rules of general logic to the solution of special theoretical problems, to acts of producing universal, necessary, and thus objective judgements.... It could and must serve as an adequate canon for thinking that laid claim to the universality and necessity of its conclusions, generalisation, and proposition. Kant conferred the title of transcendental logic on it, i.e. the logic of truth.p91. Analysis consisted in acts of arranging existing ideas and concepts, synthesis served as an act of producing new concepts. p92

Kant was the first to begin to see the main logical forms of thinking in categories, things including everything in the subject matter of logic that all preceding tradition had put into the competence of ontology and metaphysics, and never into that of logic. p93.

Categories were thus those universal forms, (schemas) of the activity of the subject by means of which coherent experience became possible in general, i.e. by which isolated perceptions were fixed in the form of knowledge: Since experience is knowledge by means of connected perceptions, the categories are conditions of the possibility of experience, and are therefore valid a priori for all objects of experience Any judgement therefore, that claimed to universal significance, always, - overtly or covertly - included a category: 'we cannot think an object save through categories...' p94.

Kant set himself the task of discovering and formulating the special 'rules' that would subordinate the power of thinking (which proved in fact to be its incapacity) to organise all the separate generalisations and judgements of experience into a unity, into the structure of an integral, theoretical schema, i.e. to establish the legislation of reason. Reason, as the highest synthetic function of the intellect, 'endeavours to carry out the synthetic unity, which is thought in the category, up to the completely unconditioned.p103.

For Kant understanding falls into a state of logical contradiction (antinomy) here not only because, and even not so much because, experience is always unfinished, and not because a generalisation justified for

experience as a whole has been drawn on the basis of partial experience. That is just what reason can and must do, otherwise no science would be possible. The matter here is quite different; in trying fully to synthesise all the theoretical concepts and judgements drawn from past experience, it is immediately discovered that the experience already past was itself internally antinomic. Of course if the experience was taken as a whole and not some arbitrarily limited aspect or fragment of it, contradiction, may be avoided. And the past experience is already antinomic because it included generalisations and judgements synthesised according to schemas and categories that are not only different but are also directly opposite.p105

The tragedy of understanding is that it itself, taken as a whole, is immanently contradictory, containing categories each one of which is as legitimate as the other, and whose sphere of applicability within the framework of experience is not limited to anything, i.e. is as wide as experience itself.p107

It was, in fact characteristic of the old, pre-Kantian metaphysics, delivering itself from internal contradictions simply by ignoring half of all the legitimate categories of thought, half of all the schemas of judgements with objective significance; but at the same time the question arises of which category in the polar pair to prefer and keep, and which to discard and declare a 'subjective illusion'.p 108

So, if I determine a thing in itself through a category, I still have no right, without breaking the principle of contradiction, to ascribe the determinations of the opposing category to it. p109

Kant's analysis showed that dialectics was a necessary form of intellectual activity, characteristic precisely of thinking concerned with solving the highest synthetic problems and with constructing a theory claiming universal significance, and objectivity (in Kant's sense). Kant thus weaned dialectics, as Hegel put it, of its seeming arbitrariness and showed its absolute necessity for theoretical thinking. p112

It was not surprising that contradictions and the flaws of antinomies appeared between understanding and reason, and, furthermore, within reason itself. But in that case the very concept of thinking, of the subject, I, was made senseless from the very beginning, i.e. was made contradictory within itself. All the fundamental categories of logic proved to be concepts that denoted not only different but diametrically opposite objects of thought. So we got the position that there were two different Is in every person, in every thinking individual, in constant polemic with each other, One of them contemplated the world and the other thought. Correspondingly, it was suggested, there were two different worlds, the contemplated and the thought of, although they merged into one in direct experience and in real life.p118

Fichte moved our understanding of dialectics forward by interpreting the object and its concept as two different forms of existence of one and the same I, as the result of self-differentiation of the I into itself. What had appeared to Kant as the object or 'thing-in-itself' (object of the concept) was in fact the product of the unconscious, unreflecting activity of the I, since it produced the sensuously contemplated image of the thing by virtue of imagination. A concept was the product of the same activity, but taking place with consciousness of the course and meaning of the activities themselves.p121

The job of thought as such thus consisted in understanding its own activity in creating an image of contemplation and representation, in consciously reproducing that which it had produced earlier unconsciously, without giving itself a clear account of what it was doing. The laws and rules of discursive thinking (i.e. of thinking that consciously obeyed the rules) were in fact nothing more nor less than the conscious laws (expressed in logical schemas) of intuitive thinking, i.e., of the creative activity of the subject, the I creating the world of contemplated images, the world as it is given in contemplation. p122

All change was a matter of empirical views and not of theory. Theory, constructed according to the rules of logic, must give a picture of the object withdrawn, as it were, from the power of time. ... A concept therefore always came under the protective cover of the principle of contradiction.

But how did matters stand if the object represented in theory (in the form of a theoretical schema constructed according to the rules of logic) **began to be understood not as something absolutely unchanging but as something coming into being, if only in consciousness**, as with Fichte? How did it stand with the principle of contradiction, if the logical schema had in fact to picture a process of change, the beginning of the becoming of a thing in consciousness and by virtue of consciousness? p130

Fichte pointed out that what is impossible and contradictory in the concept actually happens in the intuition of space. If therefore, you came up against a contradiction in a logical expression, the thing was not to hasten to declare that it could not be, but to return to the intuition, the rights of which were higher than those of formal logic; and if analysis of the act of intuition showed you that you were forced of necessity to pass from one determination to another, opposing one in order to unite it with the first, if you saw that A was necessarily transformed into not-A, you would then be obliged to sacrifice the requirement of the principle of contradiction. Or rather, that principle could not then be regarded as the indisputable measure of truth.p131

Could a person become aware of herself, of the acts of her own consciousness, of her own constructive activity? Obviously she could. She not only thought, but also thought about her thinking, and converted the very act of thinking into an object; and that exercise was also called logic.p132

The system that **Schelling** chose was expressed in the following principle: 'My vocation in criticism is to strive for unchangeable selfness, unconditional freedom, unlimited activity. This system could never be completed, it must always be 'open-ended' in the future - such was the concept of activity. Activity when completed, embodied, 'fixed' in its product, was already not activity.p135

Practical activity was the 'third' thing on which all mutually contradictory systems came together as on common soil. It was there, and not in the abstractions of pure reason, that the real battle raged that could and must be won. That was where the proof lay that one party, unswervingly following its principle, defended not only its own, egoistic private interest, but also an interest coinciding with the universal tendencies of the universe, i.e. with absolute and unconditional objectivity. p137

Kant demonstrated in his last works that the arguments of practical reason must all the same tip the scales in favour of one system or the other, although on a purely theoretical plane they are absolutely equal.p138

One of the clashing logical conceptions must still prevail over the other, its opposite, and for that it must be reinforced by arguments no longer of a purely logical, rather purely scholastic quality, but armed with practical (moral and aesthetic) advantages as well.

For Schelling "A system of knowledge is necessarily either a trick, a game of ideas .. - or it must embrace reality not through a theoretical ability, but through a practical one, not through a perceptive ability but through a productive, realising one, not through knowledge but through action." p140

Fichte freed himself from the Kantian form of antinomies but reproduced them all intact in the form of contradictions within the very concept of 'activity'. The problem was simply transferred to the sphere of the individual psyche and so made completely insoluble.I.p 144. Schelling and the young **Hegel** believed that this all that led to one thing, namely, to comprehending that it was ultimately necessary to find the 'common root' itself of the two halves of human being from which they both stemmed and could be understood. From that was born the idea of the philosophy of identity. p 145

Schelling turned to poetry, metaphors and a kind of aesthetic intuition "Only because the logic that he knew and recognised did not permit the uniting of opposing contradictory predicates in concepts of one and the same subject. He, like Kant, held it sacred that the law of identity and the principle of contradiction were absolutely unbreakable laws for conceptual thinking, and that breaking them was tantamount to breaking the laws of thought in general, the forms of scientism." p147

Schelling sought the way out by developing the concepts of mechanics and organic life from one and the same truly universal principle, which led him to the idea of representing nature as a whole, as a dynamic process in the course of which each successive stage or phase negated the preceding one, i.e. included a new characteristic. p152.

The identity of the laws of the subjective and objective worlds could only be realised in the act of creation. But creativity did not submit to formal schematising. Identity cannot be comprehended or communicated through description, and not at all through conception. It can only be intuited. Here intuition was all powerful, the inspired intuition of creative insight, intellectual and aesthetic intuition. Thus it was, therefore, that Schelling's system culminated in and was completed by a philosophy of art. p157.

Schelling came directly up against the narrowness of the Kantian logic, which attributed to the law of identity and the principle of contradiction the character of the absolute premise; of the very possibility of thing in concepts. For there was no room within these rules for the moment of the transition of opposites into one another, and it broke them.

Schelling, while agreeing that there was self-destruction of the form of thinking here, was forced in fact to conclude that real truth could not be caught and expressed through a concept. In his eyes therefore art and not science represented the highest form of mental activity. p 158

So Schelling confirmed dialectics as the genuine theory of scientific knowledge, but then broke all its links with logic. His position once more returned logic once more to the pitiable condition in which it had been before the attempts of Kant and Fichte to reform it in accordance with the needs of the time.

After Schelling the problem consisted in uniting dialectics as the true schema of developing knowledge and logic as the system of rules of thinking in general. What was the relation of the rules of logic to the real

schemas (laws) of the development of understanding? Were they different, mutually unconnected 'things?' Or was logic simply the conscious and deliberately applied schema of the real development of science? If it was, it was all the more inadmissible to leave it in its old, primitive form. **At this point the torch was taken up by Hegel.** p 161/2

All definitions are of little value. 'In order to gain an exhaustive knowledge of what life is, we should have to go through all the forms in which it appears, from the lowest to the highest. And later: 'To science definitions are worthless because always inadequate. The only real definition is the development of the thing itself, but this is no longer a definition. p 166

Hegel (1770-1831) had doubts about the fact that it was the rules of logic that prevented understanding of the process of the passage of the concept into the object and vice versa, of the subjective into the objective (and in general of opposites into one another)., He saw in it not evidence of the organic deficiency of thought but only the limitations of Kant's ideas about it. Kantian logic was only a limitedly true theory of thought. Real thought, the real subject matter of logic as a science, was something else; therefore it was necessary to bring the theory of thought into agreement with its real subject matter. p170

Hegel was critical of the view that 'the completely conscious thought that all the old logic had in view really assumed language, speech, the word, as its outward form of expression. In other words thought achieved awareness of the schemas of its own activity precisely through and in language. p 174

Let us note in passing that all schools of logic, without exception, having ignored Hegel's criticism of the old logic have shared this old prejudice to this day as though nothing had happened. It is most outspokenly professed by Neopositivists, who directly identify thought with linguistic activity and logic with the analysis of language.

From Hegel's standpoint the real basis for the forms and laws of thought proved to be only the aggregate historical process of the intellectual development of humanity understood in its universal and necessary aspects. The subject matter of logic was no longer the abstract identical schemas that could be found in each individual consciousness, and common to each of them, but the history of science and technique collectively created by people, a process quite independent of the will and consciousness of the separate individual although realised at each of its stages precisely in the conscious activity of individuals. p177

This process, according to Hegel, also included, as a phase, the act of realising thought in object activity, and through activity in the forms of things and events outside consciousness. In that, in Lenin's words, he 'came very close to materialism'. p 177

In considering thought as a real productive process expressing itself not only in the movement of words but also in the changing of things, Hegel was able, for the first time in the history of logic, to pose the problem of a special analysis of thought-forms, or the analysis of thought from the aspect of form.

Before Hegel such an aim had not arisen in logic, and even could not have..... Logicians before Hegel had recorded only the external schemas in which logical actions, judgements and inferences functioned in speech, i.e. as schemas of the joining together of terms signifying general ideas, but the logical form expressed in these figures, i.e. the category, remained outside their sphere of investigation, and the conceptions of it was simply borrowed from metaphysics and ontology..... And since logical form, about which Marx spoke in the first edition of *Das Kapital*, was understood as a form of activity realised equally well in the movement of verbal terms and in the movement of the things involved in the work of the thinking being, there then for the first time only, arose the possibility of analysing it specially as such, of abstracting it from the special features of its expression in some partial material or other (including those which were linked with the specific features of its realisation in the fabric of language). p178

p181 Thought, in fact, included the human determination of sensation, intuition, images, ideas, aims, obligations, etc., and also thoughts and concepts (thoughts and concepts here have the meaning of the old, purely formal logic). Thought in general thus appears at first not in the form of thought as of feeling, intuition, imagination - forms that are to be distinguished from thought as form. The thought-form as such appears to us only in the course of thinking about thought itself i.e. only in logic. But before woman began to think about thought, she had already to think, though still not realising the logical schemas and categories within which this thinking took place, but already embodying them in the form of the concrete statements and concepts of science, engineering, morals, and so on. p 181

Logic finally became a real logic of the understanding of unity in variety, and not a scheme for manipulating ready made ideas and notions; a logic of critical and self critical thought and not a means of the uncritical classification and pedantic, schematic presentation of existing ideas. p 186.

Hegel criticised traditional logic, and the thinking appropriate to it. By the same 'immanent procedure' that was one of his main conquests, namely, he counterposed to the assertions, rules, and basic propositions of logic **not** some kind of opposing assertions, rules and basic propositions **but** the process of the practical realisation of its own principles in real thought.p.187. He showed it its own image, pointing out those of its features that it preferred not to notice and not to recognise. Hegel required only one thing of thinking in accordance with logic, namely uncompromising consistency in applying the principles adduced, And he showed that it was the consistent application of these principles (and not departure from them) that had in fact led inevitably, with inexorable force, to negation of the principles themselves as one-sided incomplete and abstract.p187

This historically unavoidable defect of Kantian logic was that it pedantically schematised and described a mode of thought that led to a bringing out and sharp formulation of the contradictions contained in any concept but did not show they could and should be resolved logically without shifting this difficult task onto 'practical reason', onto 'moral postulates', and other factors and abilities lying outside logic.

Hegel, however saw the main job facing logic after the work of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, as precisely in finding, bringing out, and indicating to thought, the means of intelligently and **concretely resolving the contradictions** into which it inevitably fell when consciously guided by the traditional, purely formal logic. That, too, was the real distinction between Hegel's conception of thought and logic and all preceding ones.

The old logic, coming up against the logical contradiction that it itself brought to light just because it rigorously followed its own principles, always balked at it, retreated to analysis of the preceding movement of thought, and always strove to find an error or mistake in it leading to the contradiction. For formal logical thinking contradictions thus became an insurmountable barrier to the forward movement of thought, an obstacle in the way of concrete analysis of the essence of the matter. It therefore also came about that 'thought, despairing of managing by itself to resolve the contradiction into which it had got itself, turns back to the solutions and reliefs that were the spirit's lot in its other modes and forms.' It could not be otherwise, since the contradiction did not develop through a mistake'. p188

Hegel also suggested that a contradiction should be resolved as well as disclosed, and resolved by the same logical thinking as had brought it out when a definite concept was being developed.

He treated both the origin and the mode of resolution of logical contradictions differently. Like Kant he understood that they did not arise at all through the negligence or carelessness of individual thinking persons but unlike Kant he understood that they could and must be resolved and must not always be preserved as antinomies. But so that it could resolve them thought must fix them sharply and clearly in advance, precisely as antinomies, as logical contradictions, as real and not imaginary, contradictions in determinations.

Dialectics, according to Hegel, was the form (or method or schema) of thought that included the process both of elucidating contradictions and of concretely resolving them in the corpus of a higher and more profound stage of rational understanding of the same object, on the way toward further investigation of the essence of the matter, i.e. in the course of developing science, engineering, and 'morality', and all the spheres he called the 'objective spirit'. p190

When Hegel formulated a programme for the critical transformation of logic as a science, he posed the task of bringing it (i.e. thought's awareness of the universal schemas of its own work) into correspondence with its real object, i.e. with real thought, with its real universal forms and laws.

The last-named do not exist in thought simply or even so much as schemas and rules of conscious thinking, but rather as universal schemas of objective thinking that are realised not so much as a subjective psychic act as the productive process that created science, technique and morality. p 194

If we looked on logic as investigation (cognition) of thought-forms, he wrote, this investigation 'must also unite the activity of thought-forms and their critique in cognition. The thought-forms must be taken in and for themselves; they are the object and the activity of the object itself; they themselves inquire into themselves, must determine their limits and demonstrate their defects themselves. That will then be that activity of thought that will soon be given separate consideration as dialectics...'

The subject matter of logic then proved to be those really universal forms and patterns within which the collective consciousness of humanity was realised. The course of its development, empirically realised as the history of science and technique, was also seen as that 'whole' to the interests of which all the individual's separate logical acts were subordinated.

And inasmuch as the individual was involved in the common cause, in the work of universal thought, he was continually forced to perform actions dictated 'by the interests of the whole' and not confined to the schemas of 'general' logic. He would naturally not realise his actions in logical concepts, although these acts were

performed by his own thinking. The schemas (forms and laws) of universal thought would be realised unconsciously through his psyche. (Not 'unconsciously' in general, but without logical consciousness of them, without their expression in logical concepts and categories). p197

In this connection Hegel introduced one of his most important distinctions between thought 'in itself' which also constituted the subject matter, the object of investigation, in logic, and thought, 'for itself' i.e. thought that had already become aware of the schemas, principles, forms, and laws of its own work and had already worked quite consciously in accordance with them, fully and clearly realising what it was doing, and how it was doing it. Logic was also consciousness, the expression through concepts and categories of those laws and forms in accordance with which the process of thinking 'in itself' took place. In logic it also became the object for itself.

In logic thought had consequently to become the same 'for itself' as it had earlier been only 'in itself'.

Hegel therefore also formulated the task of bringing logic into line with its real subject matter, with real thought, with the really universal forms and laws of development of science, technique and morality.

In other words he wanted to make the subjective consciousness of thought about itself identical with its object, with the real universal and necessary (objective) forms and laws of universal (and not individual) thought. that also meant that **the principle of the identity of the subjective and the objective must be introduced into logic as the highest principle, i.e. the principle that the real forms and laws of thought must be delineated in logic exactly, adequately, and correctly.** The principle of the identity of subject and object signified nothing more, and did not signify any 'hypostatisation' of the forms of subject thought because one and the same thought was both object and subject in logic, and it was a matter of the agreement, coincidence, and identity of this thought (as a consciously performed activity) with itself as unconsciously performed productive activity, or as activity hitherto taking place with a false consciousness of its own actions. p198

Hegel saw the true difference between the real laws of thought and the rules that the old logic had promoted to the rank of laws. Man can break rules, unlike laws, and does so at every step, thus demonstrating that they are not laws. Because laws cannot be broken, they constitute the determinateness of the object, which cannot be omitted without the object itself, in this case thought, ceasing to exist. p 202

But the constant negation of the rules established by conscious thought for itself got out of control, was not aware of itself, and proved to be a fact outside thought, although it took place within the latter. Thought had this fact 'in itself' but not 'for itself'. But as soon as this fact was recognised as a universal and necessary - logical - thought - form, it was also transformed into a fact of consciousness, a fact of conscious thought, and the latter became consciously dialectical. p203

But if logic was to be a science, it must be a critical, systematic investigation that did not accept a single determination on faith, and unproved by thought, i.e. without being reproduced by it quite consciously. In this investigation criticism of the thought-forms known to cultivated thinking was only possible and thinkable as self-criticism. The schemas, rules, forms, principles, and laws of his thought were here subjected to criticism not by comparing them with some object lying outside them, but solely by bringing out the dialectic they included in themselves and which was discovered immediately as soon as we began in general to think, rigorously and fully realising what we were doing and how we were doing it. Logic was nothing else (or rather should be nothing else) than the proper apprehension of those forms and laws within which the real thinking of people took place. The identity of thought and the conceivable, as the principle of the logical development and construction of logic signified nothing more. p204

Categories were only discovered and demonstrated their determinations through the historically developing, scientific, technical, and moral 'perfecting' of the human race, because only in it, and not in the experience of the isolated individual, did thought become 'for itself' what it had been 'in itself'. p205

Categories manifested themselves in the individual's own experience (were revealed in action, in processing of the data of perception) not in the whole fullness and dialectical complexity of their composition and connections but only in abstract, one-sided aspects. It was therefore impossible to derive them from analysis of the experience of the isolated individual. They were only discovered through the very complex process of the interaction of a mass of single minds mutually correcting each other in discussion, debate, and confrontations, i.e. through a frankly dialectical process that, like a huge centrifuge, ultimately separated the purely objective schemas of thought from the purely subject (in the sense of individual, arbitrary) schemas of activity, and as a result crystallised out logic, a system of determinations of purely universal, impersonal, and featureless thought in general. p206

Categories were thus universal forms of the reconstruction, reproduction, in the consciousness of the individual of those objects that had been created before him by the collective efforts of past generations of

thinking beings, by the power of their collective, impersonal thought. In individually repeating the experience of humanity, which had created the world of spiritual and material culture surrounding him from the cradle. This individual also repeated that which had been done before him and for him by the 'universal spirit' and so acted according to the same laws and in the same forms as the impersonal 'universal spirit' of humanity. That means that categories appeared at once as universal schemas of the scientific formation of the individual consciousness, rising gradually from the zero level of its erudition to the highest stages of spiritual culture at the given moment, and as schemas of the individual mastery (reproduction) of the whole world of images created by the thought of preceding generations and standing opposed to the individual as a quite objective world of spiritual and material culture, the world of the concepts of science, technique and morality. p207

This world was the materialised thought of humanity, realised in the product, was alienated thought in general; and the individual had to de-objectify, and arrogate to herself, the modes of activity that were realised in it, and it was in that the process of his education properly consisted. In the trained mind categories actually functioned as active forms of thought-activity, forms of processing the material of sense impressions into the form of a concept. When the individual had them in her experience, and made them forms of her own activity, she also possessed them, and knew and realised them, as thought-forms. Otherwise they remained only general forms of the things given in contemplation and representation, and counterposed to thought as a reality existing outside it and independently of it. p 208

Practice, the process of activity on sense objects that altered things in accordance with a concept, in accordance with plans matured in the womb of subjective thought, began to be considered here as just as important a level in the development of thought and understanding, as the subjective-mental act of reasoning (according to the rules) expressed in speech. p209

Hegel thus directly introduced practice into logic, and made a fundamental advance in the understanding of thought and in the science of thought.

Since thought outwardly expressed itself i.e. 'alienates itself', 'makes itself something outside itself) not only in the form of speech but also in real actions and in people's deeds, it could be judged much better 'by its fruits' than by the notions that it created about itself. Thought, therefore, that was realised in men's actual actions also proved to be the true criterion of the correctness of those subjective mental acts that were outwardly expressed only in words, in speeches, and in books. p 210

Feuerbach (1804-1872) began the materialist transformation of the Hegelian dialectic in his claim that as a matter of fact, the so-called philosophy of absolute identity was a philosophy of the identity of thinking in itself; as before there was an unfilled gap between thought and being outside thought. **The problem seemed to be resolved only because conceivable being, i.e. being in the form in which it had already been expressed in thought had been put everywhere in the place of real being.** Under the grandiose, profoundly thought out construction of the Hegelian philosophy, therefore, there was hidden as a matter of fact an empty tautology; we thought the surrounding world as and how we thought it.

So the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel had not, in fact, established any identity of thought and being and not just an 'absolute' one, because 'being as such' - free, independent, self-sufficient being existing outside and independently of thought - had simply not been taken into account in it, and remained something wholly immaterial and undetermined.p212

The whole problem thus boiled down to resolving whether thought could, in general, be distinguished from man as a material, sensuously objective creative, and to fixing it and considering it from the very beginning as something independent, in contrast to everything corporeal, sensuous, and material; or whether thought should be understood as a property ('predicate') inseparable from human beings. **Feuerbach considered the decisive argument in favour of materialism to be the arguments of natural science, medicine, and on medicine and physiology.** p215

Thought was the real function of the living brain, and was inseparable from the matter of the brain. If we had brain matter in mind, then it was quite ridiculous in general to ask how thought was 'linked' with it, how the one was connected with the other and 'mediated' it, because there simply was no 'one' and 'the other' here, but only one and the same thing; the real being of the living brain was also thought, and real thought was the being of the living brain.p 216

Feuerbach did not reproach Schelling and Hegel at all for having recognised in general the unity (identity) of thought and being in the thinking woman, but only for having tried to depict it as the final unity of opposites, as the product of the joining together of an insubstantial thinking spirit and unthinking flesh. **He reproached them with thus having tried to stick together a picture of the real fact from two equally false abstractions, of proceeding from illusion to fact and from abstraction to reality.**

The materialist, Feuerbach affirmed, must proceed in the opposite way, taking as his starting point the directly given fact, in order to explain the origin of these false abstractions that idealist uncritically accepted as facts.

Schelling and Hegel started from the thesis of the initial opposition of incorporeal thought and of flesh without thought in order ultimately to reach the unity of the opposites. That was false path of spiritualism. the materialist must proceed from the factual direct unity (indivisibility) of the human individual in order to understand and show how and why the illusion of an imaginary opposition of thinking and corporeal being arose in the head of this individual.

The illusion of the opposition of the thinking spirit and the flesh in general was consequently a purely subjective fact, i.e. a fact existing only in the head of the human individual, a purely psychological fact. It arose for a quite natural reason, precisely because the thinking brain was the same sort of material, sensuous organ as all of man's other organs. p217/8

Thus the logic of the struggle against dualism and spiritualism directly forced Feuerbach, in essence, to express a dialectical proposition to recognise that the living, thinking brain was an 'object' in which there proved to be directly identical oppositions, namely, thought and sensuously objective being, thinking and what was thought, the ideal and the real, the spiritual and the material, the subjective and the objective. The thinking brain was the special 'object' that could be properly expressed in philosophical categories only through directly identifying mutually exclusive determinations, through a thesis that embraced a direct unity, i.e. identity, of opposing categories.p219

And if by logic was understood not a collection of rules for the expression of thought in speech, but the science of the laws of development of real thinking, then, similarly , by logical forms must be understood not the abstract forms of sentences and expressions, but the abstract, universal forms of the real content of thought, i.e. of the real world sensuously given to man. p221. **From the materialist point of view it states that logical forms and patterns are nothing else than the realised universal forms and patterns of being, of the real world sensuously given to woman.p222**

The materialism consisted in this case in an unqualified recognition of the fact that thought was the mode of the real existence of the material body, the activity of the thinking body in real space and time. The materialism appeared, furthermore, in recognition of the identity of the mentally comprehended and sensuously perceived world. Feuerbach's materialism, finally, was expressed in man's being recognised as the subject of thought, that same man who lived in the real world, and not a special being hovering outside the world, contemplating and comprehending it 'from outside'. All those are fundamental tenets of materialism in general, and consequently also of dialectical materialism. p 223.

What then were the weaknesses of Feuerbach's position? In general, they were the same as those of all pre-Marxian materialism. The incomprehension of the role of practical activity in altering nature. Even Spinoza had in mind only the movement of the thinking body along the given contours of natural bodies and lost sight of this moment, a point that Fichte made against him (and so in general against the whole form of materialism represented by him), namely that woman (the thinking body) did not move along ready-made forms and contours presented by nature but **actively created new forms**, not inherent in nature, and moved along them, overcoming the 'resistance' of the external world.

Marx (1818-1883) claimed that, 'The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feuerbach's) is that the object, reality, what we apprehend through our sense, is understood only in the form of the subject or contemplation; but not as sensuous human activity, as practice, not subjectively. hence in opposition to materialism the active side was developed abstractly by idealism - which of course does not know real sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinguished from the objects of thought: but he does not understand human activity itself as objective activity. p224.

When, therefore, he faced the problem of where and how man (the thinking body) was in immediate union (contact) with the environment, he answered: in intuition, in the individual's contemplation, since it was the individual that he always had in mind. That was the root of all his weaknesses, because in contemplation there was given to the individual the product of the activity of other individuals interacting among themselves in the process of producing material life, and those properties and forms of nature that had already been transformed into the properties and forms of the activity of man, its object and its product. The 'nature as such' that Feuerbach wished to 'contemplate', did not, as a matter of fact, lie within his field of view, because this 'nature' the nature that preceded human activity, is not by any means the nature in which Feuerbach lives, not the nature which today no long exists anywhere (except perhaps on a few Australian coral-islands of recent origin) and which, therefore, does not exist for Feuerbach.p 225

Feuerbach's attention was also diverted from the real complexities of the social relations between theory and practice, from the division of labour that 'alienated' thought (in the form of science) from the majority of

individuals and converted it into a force existing independently of them and outside them. He therefore saw nothing in the thought idolised by Hegel (i.e. science) than a certain modification of religious illusions.p226

Marx, Engels and Lenin showed both the historical contribution of Hegel and the historically condition limitations of his scientific advances, the clearly drawn boundary across which the Hegelian dialectic could not step, and the illusions, whose power it was incapable of overcoming despite all the strength of its creator's mind. **Hegel's greatness, like his limitations, was due on the whole to his having exhausted the possibilities of developing dialectics on the basis of idealism, within the limits of the premises that idealism imposed on scientific thinking.**p227

Hegel ... also understood logic as 'absolute form', in relation to which the real world and real human thought proved to be something essentially derivative, secondary and created. p 229

Under the spontaneously developing division of social labour there arose of necessity a peculiar inversion of the real relations between human individuals and their collective forces and collectively developed faculties, i.e. the universal (social) modes of action were organised as special social institutions, established in the form of trades and professions, and of a kind of caste with its own special rituals, language, traditions, and other immanent' structures of a quite impersonal and featureless character.p 230

Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges.p 232

Thus Hegel saw in the word the form of the actual being of the thinking spirit in which the latter manifested its own creative force (faculty) before everything, before and independently of the real moulding of nature by labour. Labour only realised what the thinking spirit had found in itself in the course of utterance, in the course of its dialogue with itself. But in this interpretation the dialogue proved to be only a monologue of the thinking spirit, only its mode of 'manifestation.'. p240

The clue to Hegel's conception is not so very complicated. The idea that man thought initially, and then only really acted served as the foundation of his schema. Hence also the schema 'word - act - thing made by the act - again word'. p 241

It was the knowledge acquired by him as concepts immediately in the course of his education, i.e. in the form of verbal-sign expressions, which was for him the beginning (starting point) of his specific activity, and the end, its specific goal, its real 'entelechy'. p 244

Hence, from the real form of the life activity of the professional theoretician there also grow all the practically necessary illusions about thought and concept that were systematically expressed in Hegel's Science of Logic. The Hegelian logic described the system of the objective forms of thought within the limits of which revolved the process of extended reproduction of the concept, **which never began, in its developed forms, 'from the very beginning', but took place as the perfecting of already existing concepts, as the transformation of already accumulated theoretical knowledge, as its 'increment'.** The concept was always already presupposed here in the form of a jumping-off point for new conquests, since it was a matter of extending the sphere of the cognised, and in that the initial concepts played a most active role. p 247

But continued Marx, man, too, did not think in immediate unity with nature. Man only thought when he was in unity with society, with the social and historical collective that produced his material and spiritual life. Abstracted from the nexus of the social relations within and through which he effected his human contact with nature (i.e. found himself in human unity with it), he thought as little as a brain isolated from the human body. p 252

Thus it was along the path of development of logic that the problem of the ideal, reached its full stature.

The main transformation that Marx and Engels effected in the materialist conception of the nature of the ideal therefore related primarily to the active aspects of the relation of thinking man to nature, i.e. the aspect that had been mainly developed, as Lenin put it, by 'clever' idealism, by the line of Plato-Fichte-Hegel, and was emphasised by them in an abstract, one-sided, idealist way. p 255.

Between contemplating and thinking man and nature in itself there existed a very important mediating link through which nature was transformed into thought, and thought into the body of nature. That was practice, labour, production. it was production (in the broadest sense of the word) that transformed the object of nature into the object of contemplation and thought. 'Even the objects of the simplest 'senuous certainty' are only given to him through social development industry and commercial intercourse.p 257

Only practice, consequently, was capable of resolving which features of the object given in contemplation belonged to the object of nature itself, and which had been introduced into it by man's transforming activity, i.e. by the subject.

Therefore 'the question whether objective truth is an attribute of human thought - is not a theoretical but a practical question. Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the 'this-sidedness' of this thinking in practice'. Marx wrote in his second thesis on Feuerbach. 'the dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question'. p259

... production creates the form itself of woman's active practice, or the faculty of creating an object of certain form and using it for its purpose, i.e. in its role and function in the social organism. In the form of an active, real faculty of woman as the agent of social production, the object exists ideally as a product of production, i.e. as an inner image, requirement, and an urge and goal of human activity. p 260

Materialism in this case does not consist at all in identifying the ideal with the material processes taking place in the head. Materialism is expressed here in understanding that the ideal, as a socially determined form of the activity of man creating an object in one form or another, is engendered and exists not in the head but with the help of the head in the real objective activity (activity on things) of man as the active agent of social production. p 261

Determination of the ideal is thus especially dialectical. It is that which is not, together with that which is, that which does not exist in the form of an external, sensuously perceived thing but at the same time does exist as an active faculty of woman. It is being, which is, however, not-being, or the effective being of the external thing in the phase of its becoming in the activity of the subject, in the form of its inner image, need, urge, and aim; and therefore the ideal being of the thing is distinguished from its real being... p 264

The ideal, as the form of social woman's activity, exists where the process of the transformation of the body of nature into the object of woman's activity, into the object of labour, and then into the product of labour, takes place. The same thing can be expressed in another way, as follows: the form of the external thing involved in the labour process is 'sublated' in the subjective form of objective activity (action on objects); the latter is objectively registered in the subject in the form of the mechanisms of higher nervous activity.. p 265

Woman exists as woman, as the subject of activity directed to the world around and to herself, from such time, and so long, as she actively produces her real life in forms created by herself and by her own labour. And labour, the real transformation of the world around and of herself, which is performed in socially developed and socially sanctioned forms, is just the process - beginning and continuing completely independent of thought - within which the ideal is engendered and functions as its metamorphosis, idealisation of reality, nature, and social relations is completed, and the language of symbols is born as the external body of the ideal image of the external world. In that is the secret of the ideal and in that too is its solution. p 266

Without an ideal image man cannot in general exchange matter with nature, and the individual cannot operate with things involved in the process of social production. But the ideal image requires real material, including language, for its realisation. Therefore labour engenders a need for language, and then language itself. p 274

Without a constant re-idealising of the real objects of human life activity, without their transformation into the ideal, and so without symbolisation, man cannot in general be the active subject of social production.p 276.

The ideal, as the form of subjective activity, is only masterable through active operation with the object and product of this activity, i.e. through the form of its product, through the objective form of the thing, through its active disobjectification. The ideal image of objective reality therefore also only exists as the form (mode, image) of living activity, co-ordinated with the form of its object, but not as a thing, not as a materially fixed state or structure. p 281

A consistently materialist conception of thought, of course, alters the approach to the key problems of logic in a cardinal way, in particular to interpretation of the nature of logical categories. Marx and Engels established above all that external world was not given to the individual as it was in itself simply and directly in his contemplation, but only in the course of its being altered by woman: and that both the contemplating woman herself and the world contemplated were products of history.

The forms of thought, too, the categories, were accordingly understood not as simple abstractions from unhistorically understood sensuousness, but primarily as universal forms of social man's sensuously objective activity reflected in consciousness. The real objective equivalent of logical forms was seen not simply in the abstract, general contours of the object contemplated by the individual but in the forms of man's

real activity transforming nature in accordance with his own ends: 'It is precisely the alteration of nature by men, not solely nature as such, which is the most essential and immediate basis of human thought, and it is in the measure that man has learned to change nature that his intelligence has increased. The subject of thought here already proved to be the individual in the nexus of social relations, the socially determined individual, all the forms of whose life activity were given not by nature, but by history, by the process of the moulding of human culture. p283

The separate individual does not develop the universal forms of human activity by herself, and cannot do so, whatever the powers of abstraction he possesses, but assimilates them ready-made in the course of her own acquiring of culture, together with language and the knowledge expressed in it. p 284

Practice understood materialistically, appeared as a process in whose movement each object involved in it functioned in accordance with its own laws, bringing its own form and measure to light in the changes taking place in it. p 287

In subjective consciousness these laws appear as 'plenipotentiaries' of the rights of the object, as its universal, ideal image: 'the laws of logic are the reactions of the object in the subjective consciousness of man. p 288

Like any other science logic is concerned with explaining and systematising objective forms and patterns not dependent on women's will and consciousness, within which human activity, both material-objective and mental-theoretical, takes place. Its subject matter is the objective laws of subjective activity. p289

The ideal also appears as the product and form of human labour, of the purposive transformation of natural material and social relations effected by social woman. The ideal is present only where there is an individual performing her activity in forms given to her by the preceding development of humanity. Woman is distinguished from beasts by the existence of an ideal plan of activity.... The labour process ends in the creation of something which, when the process began, already existed in the worker's imagination, already existed in an ideal form. p 296

Contradiction as the concrete unity of mutually exclusive opposites in the real nucleus of dialectics, its central category. On that score there cannot be two views among Marxists; but no small difficulty immediately arises as soon as matters touch on 'subjective dialectics' , on dialectics as the logic of thinking. If any object is a living contradiction, what must the thought (statement about the object) be that expresses it? Can and should an objective contradiction find reflection in thought? And if so, in what form? p 320

I think the reason why Ilyenkov could not resolve the problem of reflecting a living contradiction in thought can be found in his assumption that,

The concretisation of this general definition of Logic consists of disclosing the concepts composing it, above all the concept of thought (thinking). To define this concept fully, i.e. concretely, means to 'write' Logic, because a full description cannot by any means be given by a 'definition' but only by 'developing the essence of the matter'. p 10.

Rather than thinking that 'writing' can reveal the 'essence of the matter' I believe that researching one's practice through a dialectical process of answering questions of the form, 'How do I improve my practice?' will, through the public discourse involved in testing the validity of one's description and explanation for one's own educational development, reveal the essence of the matter.

In my own attempts to resolve this problem I have suggested that we should be creating a living educational theory, grounded in our experience of ourselves as living contradictions in our educational practices, by producing descriptions and explanations for our educational development.

Habermas, in this work on The Theory of Communicative Action has proposed a break with the strand of Marxist thought known as historical materialism. Towards the end of Volume 2, Habermas acknowledges the vital importance of learning in social evolution.

When Paul Hirst acknowledged his mistake in advocating a view of educational theory which required the justification for educational practices in the disciplines of education, he advocated that we should now look for the justification for 'operationally effective practical discourse' in the work of Habermas and his critics. I explained at the time why I thought that his was a move in the wrong direction. I suggested that we should examine the implications for ourselves, as learners, of asking and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?'. I explained that I thought the move into Habermas' Theory was a mistake because of the propositional nature of his thinking. I do not doubt that Habermas has important contributions to make in developing our understanding of dialectics and social evolution. I have integrated some of his insights into

my own. As an alternative path to that followed by Carr, Kemmis, Elliott and Winter, I explained that by asking and answering questions which involved our own experience of our own 'I's as 'living contradictions we would begin to produce a living form of educational theory, on a dialectical base, which could generate adequate descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals.