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Perspectives in Education, 14(2)

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1993
University of the Witwatersrand
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Pendlebury, S. (Ed.) (1993, Winter). Perspectives in Education, 14(2).

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VOLUME 14 NO 2 WINTER 1993

PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION

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Type-setting & Design: Lesley Hudson

Printers: Natal Witness

Perspectives in Education is published twice a year by the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and incorporates the Johannesburg College of Education journal *Symposium*.

ISSN 0 0258 2236

PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION
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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14 No 2, 117-138

The Postmodern Challenge of Introducing Past to Present: Teaching about Memories and Monuments

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The Journal of American History, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, USA

The article explores how postmodern theories and practices challenge history teaching. In particular, it explores how different perspectives on the ways we remember the past and different practices of historical commemoration can help our students become more competent and confident users of the past.

The postmodern revolution has challenged history teachers to rethink how we make sense of the past. It reaches all the places where we recover the past on a continuum that stretches from the personal memory of our individual experiences to the founding and consolidating myths of our whole cultures. The challenge is profound: Instead of concentrating on the content of what happened in the past, we are now called on to concentrate on the needs and processes through which we in the present 'remember' and use that past. Instead of viewing memory as the retrieval of a record, we are asked to see it as the active construction of a story that meets the needs of the teller. Instead of seeking an objective account, we are taught in a postmodern world to respect all individuals' stories and all cultures' perspectives. In place of a single narrative, we have multiple voices and narratives. Historians have contributed to this postmodern agenda by seeking and presenting more diverse voices for their stories, by looking at events and processes from the bottom up as well as the top down, by helping groups to recover their own pasts to provide identity and instruction for their struggles in the present.

The postmodern challenge has entered schoolrooms, at least in the United States, most obviously through issues of who gets to tell the national narrative, or, more precisely, what will be included and excluded from that narrative. Will schoolchildren learn about a past that has workers, African Americans and lesbians, a past that includes many voices and that was contested then and is contested now, or will they be taught a single narrative that serves those with the most money, guns, interpretive authority, in short, power? This noisy conflict has obscured similarities among the contestants and has masked the more profound challenge that postmodernism presents to the history curriculum. Champions of a conventional curriculum agree with those of, say, an 'Afro-centered' curriculum that the pedagogical challenge is to teach students the visions – racial pride, pride in national expansion or whatever – intended by tellers of the story. From a postmodern perspective, however, the pedagogy promoted by both sides is the same

– and wrong: Instead of reading a 'text' the same way, students bring different experiences to that text and will 'read' it differently. And by calling on us to shift attention from the content of the past to the process of interpreting in the present, postmodernism basically encourages a pedagogy that starts by teaching about what people bring to encounters with the past and how and why people tell their stories, not the content of stories.

Postmodernism challenges us to reconcile historians' traditional respect for witnesses and sources from the past with the new emphasis on respecting the authenticity of all stories. We face basic questions: Should all accounts of the past be treated as equal free-floating inventions that need bear no relation to realities of the past they describe, or do realities or witnesses from the past (or present) get to contest our inventions? How is that done? How can our need for a history that is authentic in the present be reconciled with our traditional commitment to an accurate picture of the past? George Orwell warned that the accuracy of people's memories is the best safeguard against propagandists like Big Brother who would get their way by dumping realities from the past down a 'memory hole'. How can we insist that remembering must be an act of assuming responsibility (or guilt or shame) for actual deeds that one (or one's regime) did in the past, while we also encourage people to make up stories about the past that meet present needs? Even if we abandon national narratives, are there any larger patterns into which we can make sense of individual stories?

These questions cannot be asked, let alone answered, as long as we continue to use the terms 'memory' and 'remembering' as though they precisely describe a single phenomenon. Historians will only be able to respond to postmodern challenges when we separate the very different processes that are traveling under the term 'memory'. By distinguishing among different uses of 'memory', we can define the larger psychological, cultural, and political – and ultimately historical – issues that are at stake in each of these approaches to 'memory'. In the spirit that led literary scholars to teach about postmodern challenges to traditional canons of literature by making the controversy itself the topic of instruction, I will suggest very different ways of envisioning 'memory' and its relationship to 'history'.

After introducing different perspectives on 'memory', I will observe how the postmodern spirit has challenged the ways we commemorate the past in our public monuments and memorials in ways that parallel (and thereby clarify) the challenges it has posed to 'memory'. I will illustrate how different people have brought and negotiated different understandings of memory at a single public memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington. Public uses of that memorial illustrate how a single 'text' about a major historical 'event' can provide the space for people to present different perspectives on 'memory' and, from those diverse uses, give us confidence that we can develop curricula that will encourage students to see different ways of 'remembering' the past. Before turning to the places where

commemorations trigger different uses of the past, we need to consider different perspectives on memory.[1]

MEMORY

1. Memory is constructed, not retrieved

Evoking the origins of history in storytelling, psychologists, oral historians, folklorists and anthropologists have reconceived memory in recent times. No longer a process of retrieving some record of an earlier occurrence, remembering has become for postmodern thinkers an active process of constructing a story about the past that will meet our needs in the present. A memory becomes not a fixed or fully-formed record of a past reality but an invention that can be assembled with many contents and styles. What matters is not the story's accuracy as a report of the past but its authenticity for teller and listener in the present.

Scholars have applied this postmodern faith in the constructedness of the past to explore motives, conflicts, and negotiations that surround the writing of school texts, the making of national myths, the commemorating of national events, and the inventing of stories that politicians, corporations and the powerful tell about the past to consolidate their power.

We need to ask what the teller – individual or institution – has added, subtracted, and changed to meet the circumstances of a story's construction, how the teller has narrated the same event differently to satisfy different audiences. And we should explore the ways we construct our own 'memories' in everyday life, why we 'remember' things differently in different circumstances.

2. Remembering is a means for individuals to develop confidence, competence, and thereby autonomy

Memories define our individual lives. The process of remembering and the content of our memories are our ways of defining who we are in the present, of framing choices for the future, of finding solace from immediate troubles, of defining where we have been and where we are going, of building competence and confidence as interpreters and participants in our everyday relationships.

The making of memories is, in short, the making of autonomy. Since personal needs, often growing out of intimate relations with people around us, drive the construction of memories, we 'remember' as a means or byproduct of satisfying those needs. Since people decide what to 'remember' and 'forget' according to what will meet each circumstance and need, the making of memories becomes the way to participate in intimate worlds we share with others. Remembering is an active and experimental process in which the teller tests a conclusion first with one person, then with another, gaining and losing confidence as the memory takes

shape, pausing first here, then there, continuing to 'remember' until the present need is met.

By the active process of making memories first with people around us we experience empowerment and participation as alternatives to the deference and resignation that modern cultures of competition, hierarchy and mass manipulation instill in their citizens. The invention of usable pasts is a crucial arena in which social movements make claims on the larger society.

We need to ask: How do people use memories as they interact with those around them? How does constructing memories empower tellers with feelings of personal autonomy and confidence? How is a particular memory empowering for its inventor?

3. Remembering encourages individuals to locate themselves in groups, negotiations over memories give groups their changing identities

Individuals select circumstances from their pasts and then negotiate with others to form collective memories in which people who share circumstances and traditions recognize their own pasts in a group's shared memory. The search to find one's authentic roots has made genealogy the third most popular hobby in the United States. Scholars have not paid enough attention to why individuals begin searches of the past and why they identify with one fact of their backgrounds or circumstances – say, gender over race or occupation or religion, or, say, their family over their nation – and how that selection varies between people and across time. We know little about why an indiviudal chooses to identify with a particular circumstance – the fact of Italian ancestry, of employment in a steel mill, of a sexual preference – as they shape the voices in which they present themselves to others, and indeed to themselves.

Once they identify with a particular circumstance, individuals rely on others to help them decide which experiences to forget and which to remember, what interpretation to place on an experience, and what a particular social identity should mean. Fred Davis observes that the cautious and mutual discovery by two people of shared memories "is in itself the very elixir of friendmaking".[2] New spouses make an identity for their families, writes Maurice Halbwachs, through "a great mutual effort full of surprises, difficulty, conflict, and sacrifice" by which they choose which memories from their earlier separate families they will make defining features of their own new identity.[3] Since collective memories are constructed and modified by individuals who must be able to recognize their own pasts in the group's shared memory, we need to explore how individuals selected, reinterpreted, and abandoned particular memories in order to feel part of a shared identity as 'Irish' or 'woman' or 'teenager'. The struggle within a group over which memories to select and how to interpret shared experiences of a group is the core of the struggle by members to define what they will mean when they call themselves

'African Americans' or 'lesbians' or 'Democrats'. Those labels must be sharp enough to mean something to members and vague enough for different people to be able to recognize their own experiences.[4]

Individuals turn to their memories to guide their choice among possible identities and then use those memories to try to persuade others to join them. To identify as an American, for example, is to be able to choose between the authority of a Declaration of Independence that proclaimed all people to be equal and a Constitution that specifically sanctioned the slave trade and counted each Native American as three-fifths of a person. By mobilizing a nation behind the proclamation of a "war to make the world safe for democracy", Woodrow Wilson encouraged mass movements at home that appalled him with their demands to end racism and sexism. Americans have shaped and mobilized memories – often of earlier wars – to declare which identity they wanted the nation to assume in the future. As he heard northern and southern white politicians increasingly agree over the late nineteenth century that the Civil War should be remembered mainly as a time of great heroism by soldiers on both sides, Frederick Douglass tirelessly insisted that the Civil War be remembered instead as a struggle to end slavery and that its legacy would only be fulfilled when racism was rooted out. The nation's commitment to racial justice in the present depended on whether its citizens remembered the Civil War as a time of military heroism or abolition of slavery.[5]

From this perspective, people have real choices in the identities, the content for those identities, the individual voices in which they present larger social identities, and the values they want to proclaim by the way they recognize, choose, interpret, and present memories. If memories are fluid and choices are real, people can choose to change how they want to see themselves and their groups or nations.

4. Memories are crucial weapons and battlegrounds in social and political conflicts

Groups assemble and mobilize their versions of the past as weapons in their struggles with other groups. Indeed, their inventions of the past often become the very terrain over which groups try to dominate the present. Since in this Nietzschean or Foucaultian vision history reduces to the story of struggles by one group to dominate others, people make up versions of the past that will advance their drives to dominate others. Or they nurse ancient grudges. The war between Serbs and Croats often seems defined by memories of outrages the other side committed in the Second World War and even in the Middle Ages.

Since groups and the state appeal to the past in order to legitimate their claims in the present, people who would contest their authority rely on their own memories as means to challenge official and dominant stories. Some call this contest a struggle between Memory and Counter Memory, between 'official' memory and 'oppositional' or 'vernacular' memory.[6] While there are differences in style and

process – as well as power – between how dominant and subordinate peoples tell stories, there are also struggles among those with power over how and what to present as 'official' versions. Groups try to control television stations or public commemorations or school textbooks that provide the means for telling their stories or excluding their rivals' stories.

From this perspective, we must ask of a memory: Whose story is being told here? Who is being excluded? How does this story advance one group's (or the state's) claims in the present at the expense of others?

A major source of confusion in current discussions of memory is that the individual or psychological perspective that explores how individuals make memories with people around them has not connected effectively with the political perspective that explores how groups and the state use 'collective memories' to battle each other. Asked to cover both the meeting of personal needs and the contesting for power between groups and the state, the word 'memory' is being stretched to describe two very different processes. On a political level, the individual perspective boils down to how individuals meet needs when they select and define voices and identities, and the collective perspective reduces to how groups mobilize individuals and battle other groups. It is the difference between whether to focus on participation or on power and domination, whether autonomy and empowerment are ultimately individual or collective qualities.

5. 'Memory' connects individuals with folk traditions across time, while 'history' distances people from their pasts

The real conflict in the uses of the past is between processes of 'history' and processes of 'memory', argues Pierre Nora in his massive study of French 'collective memory'. History emerges when people lose their natural connections with their pasts, when those pasts recede from the capacity to pass on living traditions from past to present. According to Nora:

> Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name... History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. Memory, insofar as it is affective and magical, only accommodates those facts that suit it; it nourishes recollections that may be out of focus or telescopic, global or detached, particular or symbolic responsive to each avenue of conveyance or phenomenal screen, to every censorship or projection. History, because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism....History is perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to destroy it....[7]

Although Nora laments the passing of French ''ollective memory', he does believe that there remain sites where memory persists. For him, "memory attaches itself to sites, whereas history attaches itself to events". Those memory sites generate an endless capacity for 'metamorphosis' and 'recycling' of meanings.

While Nora may have greatly exaggerated the loss of what appear in American culture as collective memo*ries*, he has identified an important distinction that people make in their everyday lives between 'history' and 'memory'. Americans of all social backgrounds find 'history' to be academic and much more remote than 'memory' or, as they sometimes call it, 'heritage' or 'tradition', according to pilot research for a survey of how Americans understand and use the past. History happened to famous people in the past; it is the province of professionals who tell about it in schools and museums and has little to do with ordinary folks. The distinction between history and memory is the distinction between whether the beholder feels something from the past to be immediate or remote. "I don't really think that I fit...in history. History involves significant facts and I am not a significant person," declared a college freshman. Paying attention to connections between memory and history heeds Friedrich Nietzche's warning that "if the historical senses no longer preserve life, but mummify it...then the tree dies, unnaturally, from the top downwards, and at last the roots themselves wither. Antiquarian history degenerates from the moment it no longer gives a soul and inspiration to the fresh life of the present".[8]

We will appreciate the workings of memory better when we map how people understand and use the past in countless ways every day. One 52-year-old woman from Phoenix reported in this pilot research that her most cherished tradition – one she learned from her father – was to take her sons and grandsons to wrestling matches. A 25-year-old Native American woman reported a family tradition of making tamales for Christmas. From family traditions to family histories to family reunions to a simple talk between children and their grandparents, Americans make living memories within their families. And when they sought out and fixed memories they could return to, they did it with photographs that marked important times of life, like weddings, births, and graduations or with collections of souvenirs that marked significant places they had visited.

From this perspective, the important question is whether a particular use of memory made the past remote or immediate: Does this story connect with or release living and popular traditions? Is its topic and treatment of topic one of 'history' or of 'memory' (or 'memories'), to use Nora's distinction? We can connect personal with collective by looking at sites where 'history' connects with 'memory'.

6. Memories are yardsticks to evaluate change

Inspired by E. P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class,*[9] social historians have told how people used their traditional ways of living and working as yardsticks to evaluate changes introduced or imposed by people with more jobs, money, guns, power. Whether following Herbert Gutman in emphasizing the cultural traditions of workers or David Montgomery in emphasizing their workplace

traditions, American historians told the stories of change and of resistance and accommodation in work and community in narratives that repeated how the desire to preserve old ways inspired movements to challenge the powerful.[10]

Business and political leaders developed rhetorical uses of memory to evaluate change, but they drew opposite conclusions. They used memories to tell how things were evolving, progressing, getting better. By the standards they recalled from the past, Americans in the present had more money, more possessions, more rights, more education than those who went before them and should consider themselves fortunate.

When we shape memories of an experience we decide whether the event marked a change in the way we see ourselves or reflected our essential core identities. Since individuals, groups, and nations can present their lives as stories of change *or* continuity, we can explore how they use memories by seeing whether they construct a memory of an event as a story of change or continuity. As we commemorate a moment of change, we often tell its story as a moment of 'discovery', 'invention', 'revolution', or 'improvement'. Swept along by winning the top competition in his craft, the Wimbledon tennis tournament, Andre Agassi explained: "So I'm a different person now".[11]

From this perspective, the issue is how people use memories to evaluate changes in their own lives. What was good or bad about the old values or events or lives, and how have we gained or lost because things have changed? How can memories evaluate change? How do we decide what is new, a discovery, a break with the past? How do we decide what part of our pasts and identities constitute our unchanging cores?

7. Memories are accurate representations of the past

In a postmodern world the accuracy of a story is less fashionable than its construction, but there remains a strong tradition of using the accuracy of a story as a means to confront the lies and evasions of the powerful. Historians particularly believe that some stories are more accurate than others. Our craft has come over the past century or two to be associated with concern over accuracy and 'objectivity' and with the use of methods that allow us to tell more accurate stories than people who lack our training. We place accuracy ahead of celebration, for example. Like lawyers and journalists, historians value testimony by two independent witnesses in assessing the accuracy of an account.

People negotiate among themselves whether to believe an account of the past they have just heard, whether a story about a fishing trip from a friend or an account of a battle by a government. Our most intimate memories will confirm that arguments between versions of experiences can be intense.

The ideology of accuracy carries heavy political content: It permits us to challenge the powerful with the truths the mighty thought they had disposed of

down Big Brother's 'memory hole'. In a world in which the management and manipulation of opinion are increasingly tools for commercial success and political legitimacy, the truth can be an increasingly subversive challenge to public relations and advertising. And the past talks back – with bits and pieces, with sources and witnesses and physical evidence – forcing us to confront its traces as we make our memories.

Perhaps the most difficult test in the exploration of memory is how to weigh our desire for an accurate account of the past against our desire to respect the storyteller's need for authenticity in the present. How can and does the past constrain the stories we tell about it?

8. Memories carry responsibility, pride, and guilt for things done in the past

Memories of events from the past provide the means by which people assume, or can be cajoled into assuming, responsibility for things they have done as individuals or that others have done in the name of their family, their group, their nation. They are sources of personal and collective pride and shame. But, as Steven Knapp[12] has argued, the question of whether people take responsibility for what they or their group did in the past is really over whether a person feels appropriately in the present – pride, remorse, guilt – about what they did in the past. In other words, are we persuaded that the person will act appropriately when facing a similar circumstance in the future?

The acknowledgement in the present of the darkest secrets of the past poses a desperate paradox. On the one hand, the discloser is embarrassed to tell of something bad he or she did in the past. On the other hand, the disclosure or confession of sin and error have long been important ways of creating greater intimacy and candor between individuals and can provide the basis for conversion and redemption, for forgiveness and healing, from fights and wounds from the past. "I'm sorry," may be the most profound commentary people can make about their pasts.

The issue of responsibility takes shape when individuals 'forget' what they did or when regimes lie about or refuse to accept responsibility for their actions. In some cases the past may be so contested or the crimes so horrible that parties make the political choice to forget by declaring amnesia to be an acceptable form of responsibility. They declare an 'amnesty', a decision to forget. In other cases a secret may have been so deeply buried or horrifying that individuals may need psychoanalytic help to recognize and retrieve it.

The issue of the accountability of individuals for things done in their name has taken modern form ever since Germans (and others) failed to prevent Hitler from ordering the systematized genocide of millions of innocent people. In Germany this debate has been probing and painful, raising the question of just who should be responsible and in what ways and to whom for the Holocaust. The case of Kurt

Waldheim, whose wartime activities were well known by both American and Russian leaders at the time they made him Secretary General of the United Nations, illustrates how even former foes could find it convenient to 'forget' truths. Are people who were born after the bad deed responsible? Should African Americans be held as responsible as European Americans for slavery? Should immigrants who came to the U.S. after Emancipation be responsible? And in Washington – as Richard Nixon could testify – malefactors are punished for trying to cover up, to deny responsibility for, what they did, not for what they actually did. For example, the hope for finding out whether the Reagan Campaign of 1980 conspired with the Iranian Government (to keep Americans held as hostages until after the presidential election) hinges on the belief that those who know what happened are more afraid of being tried for perjury, for lying in 1992 about what they knew or did, than for what they actually did in 1980.

Across a spectrum that ranges from religious conversion to political commitment many people try to carry their earlier activities into their later lives. Many former participants in New Left movements continued over subsequent decades to try to live their lives on the basis of moral and political commitments they made as part of their 1960s activism.[13]

From this perspective, the issue is whether a memory encourages people to think about how they might be personally implicated – through responsibility, pride, sorrow or shame – in the thing that is being remembered. And it asks: What is being left out, evaded, 'forgotten', lied about, in the story that is presented? What silences will we tolerate – even promote?

Until we have a fuller map of how people create memories to connect pasts with futures, of how those uses vary between groups and cultures, we must recognize that these different uses of memories overlap in some territories and are incompatible in others. We need to apply them by the standards of their own worlds. The need for personal authenticity might either deepen or challenge the need for accuracy. The need for celebration might either deepen or challenge the need for truth. From the perspective of those who see memory as a means to empowerment, the debate between right-wing government officials and left-wing professors over whether students will be required to study Shakespeare or Alice Walker, to memorise the date of the Montgomery Bus Boycott or the Nixon Doctrine, is mostly irrelevant to whether they will learn how construction of memories can be empowering. We will not have created a more democratic culture by celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday in the same way we do George Washington's. Until we explore better how history professors understand and use the past in similar and different ways from genealogists or Civil War re-enactors, how history conferences are similar to and different from family reunions, how photograph albums are similar to and different from monographs, we must simply recognize that memory opens unbelievable opportunities for creating a more democratic history but also for creating unprecedented conflicts.

MEMORIES AND MONUMENTS

We can get some clues to how people connect history and memory, personal and collective, by exploring how the postmodern temper has reshaped public commemorations and monuments and more particularly the way people use them. Changes in public monuments and their uses provide a superb place for students to observe different ways that scholars, visitors, and policymakers use the past. In truth, changes in monuments and commemorations have reflected the same revolution that has challenged history with new perspectives on memory.

Before the postmodern revolt, before the 1960s, historians assumed that monuments, like memories, were representations of the past inscribed in the past. They could be visited or retrieved at any time after their inscription and would appear to the beholder – except for loss from the ravages of time – more or less as they were first inscribed or built. Since it was *the* most visible monument to Abraham Lincoln the Lincoln Memorial would fix for all time the way he would appear to those who came after. All visitors would 'read' or appreciate the same text in the same way. The present was the present, and the past was the past. And memorials and memories were timeless truths for those who followed to memorize and perhaps feel inspired by. We could ignore or fail to memorize them accurately, but we could not actively reinterpret them.

Within a decade democratic movements began to make monuments into battlegrounds to determine whose story would inspire future generations. As social movements of the 1960s empowered different voices from those of white male elites who had dominated history textbooks, they demanded that monuments celebrate their heroes and their perspectives. African Americans and friends of the once-despised ragtime music placed a memorial in Sedalia, Missouri, to mark the Maple Leaf Club that Scott Joplin had immortalized in his 1899 ragtime composition that became the best-selling piece of American music up to that time. Monuments came into the line of political fire. In Chicago friends of 'law and order' had erected a statue to commemorate the policemen who lost their lives when someone threw a bomb in their midst at the Haymarket Square in 1886, but in the 1960s the statue was bombed by people who remembered the police over-reaction to that bomb, the Haymarket Riot, as an example of 'police brutality' against organized labour. They bombed replacement statues. In fact, the Haymarket Riot is still so deeply contested between friends of the police and friends of labor unions that neither side will allow the other to place a marker to commemorate this seminal event in American labor history.

By the late 1970s, when social movements no longer challenged 'the establishment' so directly, citizens expressed their criticism of the powerful in less direct ways. Instead of insisting on their own markers and voices, they began to find multiple meanings, multiple objects of commemoration, in the memorials

created by elites. On commission from a local bank, a University of Missouri professor sculpted a semi- representational depiction of five people that the bank prominently placed in front of an entrance. A little sign told visitors the statue's name: "People". But when the sculptor was among friends he revealed the name that he had given in his own mind to this collection of people as he had sculpted them: "The Run on the Bank". People could read different meanings in the same text.

By the 1980s the study of commemorations and memorials had shifted from monuments to their visitors, from what the maker had in mind at the time in the past when it was made to how the visitors experienced it in the present, from the idea that it bore a single message to the idea that different visitors would give it different meanings. Symbols or texts were important precisely because they could be read in many ways. As with new interpretations of memory, what mattered was the need in the present that readers were trying to meet and the construction that they gave the monument in the present. Instead of a message fixed in the past, the monument would be reinterpreted by different people at different times. What mattered was why visitors came to the monument. What did they expect? What did they take away? Memorials became not markers with single meanings from and about the past but objects for 'dialogue' or 'negotiation' between the monument as it appears in the present and the visitor who beholds it in the present.

As public monuments became places not to mark the past but to invest with meanings from the present, citizens gave new meanings to memorials that had been erected in the past to commemorate different messages. Created in the aftermath of World War I by officials who valued Abraham Lincoln as the savior of the Union, the Lincoln Memorial initially had little to do with civil rights. After the Park Service in 1939 offered the Memorial to Marian Anderson as a place for her to sing a concert that the Daughters of the American Revolution had barred from Constitution Hall because Anderson was black, the Lincoln Memorial quickly became the national focus for the civil rights movement, the place where Marches on Washington ended in rallies in the 1960s, the place where Martin Luther King, Jr., proclaimed "I Have a Dream".[14] And in Warsaw the postwar memorial to commemorate the 1943 uprising by Jews against Nazis became the rallying place for Solidarity as it increasingly over the 1980s challenged the Polish government.

Monuments in a postmodern world have become places where people with different memories can feel respected, where people with different values can negotiate and find common ground. The story of a monument has become the story of how visitors experience it and give it meaning for themselves. We now assume monuments elicit ambivalent and diverse readings and embody tension between one part of a text and another. In a postmodern world that cherishes the authenticity of all memories, the most effective monuments are those that can elicit many meanings.

These diverse strands of memory and monuments came together in the spectacular success of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial that opened in Washington in 1982. If ever there was an event that Americans wanted to forget it was the Vietnam War. It divided Americans bitterly for a decade. It ended in military defeat and with memories that included war crimes and systematic napalming of innocent people and nature. Some believed American participation was folly because the cause was morally unjust, politically untenable, and militarily unwinnable. Others believed American participation was folly because Americans themselves – sometimes presented as the antiwar movement, sometimes as Congress – lacked the will and failed to provide the resources to win. Veterans returned home to find that people were embarassed by or indifferent or hostile to their service and their sacrifice. The basic memory of the war was: No More Vietnams!

The movement to memorialize the war began with individual soldiers who wanted a place where they could bring their personal experiences and find some appreciation for their sacrifices. From the perspective of veterans "there was no such thing as 'the war in Vietnam'," recalled rifleman Jan Scruggs who started the movement for the memorial, "There had been many wars. The people back home had fought about Vietnam while their soldiers fought in Vietnam. And the soliders themselves had vastly differing opinions and experiences." The discovery at the core of the memorial was indeed that war reduces to individual memories – pride, shame, sorrow, guilt – of participants on the battlefield and at home. Maya Lin designed a memorial that brilliantly allowed those with large policy agendas and those with intimate private memories to come together. She envisioned a simple black wall of shiny granite on which would be engraved the names of Americans who had died in Vietnam. To those with policy agendas the sheer number of names was an overwhelming reminder of the war's folly. To veterans the names triggered a different scale and kind of memory: "If I can touch the name of my friends who died," wrote a former infantryman, "maybe I will have time to react. Maybe I will end up swearing, maybe crying, maybe smiling, remembering a funny incident. Whatever it is, I will have time and the focal point to do it now. There just wasn't the emotional time in Nam to know what happened."

The Memorial has become first of all a place where people remember the most intense experiences of their personal lives or where people grieve for the individuals whose names are here. We hear the most profound ways people connect personal memories to large-scale events. They left letters for the people whose names are on the wall:

> Dear Michael: Your name is here but you are not. I made a rubbing of it, thinking that if I rubbed hard enough, I would rub your name off the wall and you would come back to me. I miss you so.

> I've struggled in your absence. I've been so angry that you left me. I miss you so much! I've looked for you for so long. How angry I was to find you here – though I knew you would be. I've wished so hard I could have saved you.
>
> So here I am again, left with empty arms and memories. But as my tears fall, I am thankful to God for having had you for 21 years and all the remembered love and happiness we shared. I will hold you in my memories and wait for another night when I dream of you again. Mom
>
> Cary, I'll always love you. Linda

People bring and leave things they have kept to remind them of those who died: teddy bears, ID tags, pictures, clothes.

But the wall was also a place for the living to bring out their buried memories, to share them, to find what it took to carry on when adversity struck. A woman told how her vet husband always came to The Wall when he felt most helpless, regardless of weather, regardless of time of day. In this spot that reminded him of the most intense experiences in his life he felt best able to think through problems in the present. Here they could remember, as one war veteran said, what it felt like to feel the life pass out of a wounded comrade, to see starving Vietnamese children fight over a handful of rice, to smell the stench of death that hung over a napalmed village.

But The Wall holds a powerful impact over those who are unacquainted with Vietnam veterans. Watching others touch names, standing lost in remembrance, perhaps crying, looking at the things friends and family leave, others recall intimate memories of their own pasts, their griefs, connecting with this intimate outpouring for the warriors and their friends and their families. As we look at a name, perhaps with a wildflower stuck into one of its letters, we see our own reflections in The Wall's shiny surface. We wonder: What have I to do with this person whose name is engraved before me? And as our reflection follows us as we walk the length of The Wall, we wonder what we had to do with this war and the overwhelming numbers of names that are engraved here and what we could do to prevent another one. We see the names not as the larger-than-life heroes who overshadow so many monuments, but as people like ourselves, people we know, people for whom we are responsible.

By engaging our most intimate vulnerabilites, by forcing us to recall feelings we had buried, The Wall forces us to engage, not 'forget', the past. And by dissolving the public debate into intimate memories and grief we can all share, it has become a meeting ground that simultaneously opens questions and promotes healing and reconciliation. The Wall calls us to imagine what our most intimate, defining memories have to do with the claims of a Cause or a Flag. Describes one veteran:

> We are all Vietnam veterans – soldiers, conscientious objectors, politicians, protesters – everyone whose life was torn apart by the war. When we stand before the wall, all triviality vanishes. When we complete the circle, the dead on the wall become so much

> alive, reaching out to the living with this lesson: We all belong to life! That's how the wall heals.

From the start The Wall has had critics who insist that it does not appropriately value either the heroism or sacrifice of these individuals. Criticized most memorably as "a black gash of shame", The Wall likewise offended people because it did not visually depict wartime service. It asked people to bring their own memories instead of giving them a text to memorize or a scene to appreciate. The Wall's capacity to elicit different responses added up to 'brown-bag aesthetics', declared sculptor Frederick Hart: "I mean, you better bring something, because there ain't nothing bein' served." But it was precisely the 'brown-bag aesthetics' that appealed to the makers of 143 state and local memorials for the Vietnam War. They, too, wanted postmodern aesthetics that called on visitors to bring their own memories and carry on a dialogue with other visitors, with individuals who served, and with the experiences of this war.[15]

MEMORY-MAKING IN ACTION

The spectacular success of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial illustrates how public monuments and memorials provide superb places to watch people engage their personal memories and needs with texts and symbols that mark or evoke the events we more conventionally call history. The places where individuals engage traces, symbols and markers of the past are superb places for watching people converse with history. We can best evaluate the different perspectives on memory by seeing them in action, by watching people engage what they bring from their personal experience with the formal texts and appeals that monuments present, in short, where they make meanings and 'learn' about the past. Monuments are places where people bring memories, interpret public texts, and carry away new understandings and uses of the past. In this section I will suggest questions we might ask as we try to watch memory-making in action at public historical sites.

Monuments are particularly good places for history students to observe how people use the past because they are recognizably about 'history'. In addition, the skill of probing what we bring to, reinterpret, and take away from encounters with traces or markers from the past is one that is easily transferred from monuments to more conventional texts in history classrooms, textbooks, documents, illustrations, movies. And yet encounters with monuments evoke – and therefore open up for observation – different experiences and needs from textbooks or formal history classes and thereby make clear what is unique to different places – monuments, classrooms – where people make meaning about history.

Monuments provide superb places to develop autobiographical and ethnographic skills of observation that, taken together, help students reflect on how people understand and use the past. The most accessible source for observation is ourselves. By asking students what they themselves bring to encounters with

'history' texts and what they take away from those encounters, we can hone their skills of autobiographical reflection. How, we can encourage them to reflect, did their decision to enroll in this history class, read this book, visit this monument fit into other parts of their lives? How did they use the past with their families at the dinner table? They can explore their own cognitive processes to see how personal needs, relationships with others, features of their cultures and backgrounds, and previous teachings helped to shape their encounters with a new text.

Students will better develop their capacities to use their own experiences if they simultaneously develop the capacity to observe how others make meanings. Monuments provide a great place to develop the ability to understand what others are doing when they encounter texts. While specialists in museum visitor studies have developed elaborate ethnographic techniques to understand what happens in dialogues between visitors and exhibits about the past, we can at least encourage students to develop simpler ways to explore basic questions.[16] Why did people choose to come to this particular monument at this particular time? More specifically, what are they looking for in coming here? What do the bring to they encounter? How did they reach their preconceptions about the piece of the past that is the topic of the story at this monument? What do they hope – and perhaps fear – they will experience here, both with the people who are accompanying them and with the text of the monument? Once they arrived, how did they approach, observe, use and then tell about the encounter? What intrigued or bored them? How did they use other people – the ones who accompanied them, guides, guidebooks or other literatures, or simply other visitors – as they encountered the monument? How did they react to unfamiliar perspectives or information they encountered here? What did they take away personally and cognitively from the encounter? What did they think was missing from the story told at the monument – voices, details, perspectives? (The same questions, of course, could be asked about encounters with texts in history classes.)

The significance of the experience of individuals only becomes clear when it is compared with experiences of others. How are individuals similar and different in the ways they select, retrieve, and reinterpret their pasts and in the ways they recognize and turn shared events into bases of their family and larger social identities (of gender, or generation, or race, or religion, or ideology)?

The questions for observation can be turned from the 'reader' to the 'text', and we can ask what about the text – as in the Vietnam Memorial – evokes what in the 'readers'? Who might have had a different experience if the story were told differently? What range of interpretations and conversations did the monument stimulate in visitors? Indeed, memorials and museums can actively invite visitors to connect their experiences with texts at the sites. Following a visit to an exhibit on the history of play in New York in the late 1980s, the Museum of the City of New York invited readers to draw 'memory maps' that depicted the places they played as children. And the tradition of critiquing public memorials like the Voortrekker

Monument or Lincoln Memorial, of course, is a rich one that antedates studies of how visitors 'read' those texts.[17]

Whether using ethnographic or autobiographical approaches, we can begin observation with several starting points that characterize the ways people use the past on every level from the individual to the nation, in every place from a diary to a monument. All remembering begins in a need in the present, includes the search for relevant materials from the past, the selection and assembly of them to meet the present need, and the reinterpretation and telling of them as a story in a very specific context in the present.[18] We can compare similarities and differences in how individuals mark birthdays and nations mark their anniversaries, in how racial, religious and neighborhood groups reshape common experience so as to build an identity that can hold members in the present, in how families and nations fight over and agree on founding and consolidating myths by which they identify themselves to each other and to strangers. Whom do different people trust in what ways as authorities for stories about the past?

Since there are similar processes but different conclusions in the ways people understand and use the past, we can encourage students to research and imagine (and, ideally, museum curators and monument-makers to create examples that illustrate) how different people or groups remember the same event. A monument to the Battles of the Little Big Horn or Blood River should show how Cavalry and Sioux, Trekkers and Zulu, experienced – and remembered – these battles differently as they have had to incorporate those events in the cultural narratives they pass on to their children. If we want viewers to probe what an event means to them, we should present that event from the perspectives of different participants and thereby let visitors see how memories can be constructed differently. By emphasising how memories are made and contested, we emphasise not who won the battle, but how different people have remembered it differently.

The Royal Greenwich Museum in London commemorated the Bicentennial of the American Revolution in 1976 with an exhibit that interpreted the same features of that story from a British point of view on one floor and from an American point of view on a different floor. On one floor visitors discovered why the British Parliament imposed taxes to meet British imperial needs, and on the other floor they learned why Americans revolted against those taxes. They learned why British citizens had come to revere the Monarch and why Americans aimed their Declaration of Independence against that Monarch instead of the Parliament and in the process evolved a republican ideology. And the two floors opened at the end of the exhibit into a single room featuring a presentation in which the monarch and republican, the Crown Prince and the United States Ambassador, described the "special relationship" the two countries had evolved since 1776.

We can add missing voices to monuments with documents or slide shows or even brochures. Guides might be dressed to represent two points of view about an event and appear to confront today's visitors with their different perspectives about

what it meant at the time and means now. What if a Zulu warrior appeared to challenge the story of the Voortrekker Monument?

We can imagine and build monuments around relationships, not celebrations. We could commemorate a process that meant very different things to different people. One nation's 'discovery' can become another's 'invasion' to be commemorated in the same place. The 'March of Civilization' or 'White Man's Burden' or 'Manifest Destiny' are favorite myths that one race invented and told its members repeatedly. A monument could show how the master story got created, how its builders selected some elements and reinterpreted others, and projected it as a means to silence their critics and promote their goals in the present. And then the monument could allow the less powerful to tell how they created a different memory in response. Movements of peoples from one place to another open great opportunities to depict the past as a story of relationships between cultures and places and experiences.

The Museum of the City of Vienna mounted a model of how to depict themes in "Dream and Reality, Vienna, 1870-1930" that it displayed in the late 1980s. It presented major cultural and political developments in that city as a tension between a surface dream and terrible realities that the dream tried to suppress. Beginning with Johann Strauss's glittering operetta about deception, "Die Fledermaus", the exhibit progressed to show how Vienna generated modern Zionism (in Theodor Herzl) and Anti-Semitism (among others, in Adolf Hitler) out of complex, often evasive, negotiations of identity between Jews and others; how Gustav Mahler's modern elaboration of dramatic operas paralleled Sigmund Freud's discovery of how people used dreams to cover what really bothered them (and featured an account of a conversation between Mahler and Freud about these very matters); how national pretensions of glory were threatened by class conflict at home and ethnic conflict abroad that Viennese wanted to ignore. Through a stunning display of great Austrian paintings – Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka – the curators vividly illustrated this creative tension between dreams and realities. And the exhibit climaxed with a spotlight that drew our eyes toward the still-bloody coat that Franz Ferdinand wore that day in 1914 when he was assassinated at Sarajevo. War was the conclusion to the practice of inventing dreams to hide realities. But, good socialists, the curators led us out of the exhibit through a different way the story could have ended, in facing reality, with a final room that depicted Red Vienna of the 1920s, public health and public housing that addressed the real needs of most people. Of course, the challenge to face a different, more recent Austrian past as reality, not dream, had very special meaning to museumgoers in Kurt Waldheim's Vienna of the late 1980s.

Museum exhibits or monuments can challenge visitors to consider how they are implicated in decisions made by their predecessors. If we envisioned remembering as a means of dialogue, not domination, of conversation, not monologue, if we encouraged visitors to interact and engage, not merely appreciate, we could start

challenging conversations just by bringing the simplest embarrassments to the surface. Our responsibility in the present for events of the past stimulates people to make active use of memory to connect the individual with the public.

In a lecture hall at Indiana University hangs a painting, "Social History of Indiana", by Thomas Hart Benton. It depicts, among other things, the Ku Klux Klan burning a cross as part of its domination of state politics in the early 1920s. In the late 1980s some African American students complained that having to see the KKK every day in class created subtle feelings of intimidation, and they feared that their white classmates would have racist feelings legitimated by the mural. Some blacks proposed that the mural be taken down. Other blacks insisted that it stay as a reminder of a reality of Indiana's past. In the end, the university kept the mural but provided pamphlets that told of the Klan's role in the past and told how the mural had got to this room. The mural challenges visitors to explore how they are implicated in darker sides of the past and what kind of responsibility they have to the present as they make sense of the past.

In the 1850s Stephen Foster wrote "My Old Kentucky Home", a song that Kentuckians have honoured as a state anthem, even singing it before the Kentucky Derby. Foster began:

> Oh, the sun shines bright on my old Kentucky home. 'Tis summer and the darkies are gay.

Eager not to offend black Kentuckians, the state legislature in the 1980s *rewrote* Foster's words for all official occasions:

> 'Tis summer and the people are gay.

A few years later the University of Kentucky printed several thousand copies of a university yearbook with Foster's, not the legislature's, words. Mortified, the university destroyed the books and printed new ones. I have puzzled ever since why the university did not seize this occasion to open dialogues on campus about why certain words and ideas were fashionable and official in 1857, why they are not today, and what we should do today when we encounter embarrassments like this from the past.

Monuments can provide traces and witnesses from the past to challenge the accuracy of our stories about the present. By revealing the evasions and distortions surrounding the topic that is being commemorated, monument makers can simultaneously illustrate the universality of these distortions and explain that the past leaves traces that may sooner or later constrain dishonest and inaccurate memories. These traces constrain individual stories and national myths alike.

Finally, children could choose topics and create their own monuments as an opportunity to consider how to present the past to the present. An American group, Odyssey of the Mind, invites nine-year-olds in their fourth-grade classrooms to design and build monuments to mark things from the past the children think are important. The idea of encouraging children to think about what criteria and

selections they would make in deciding what parts of the past they want to fix with a 'monument' and then how they want to present it would be a superb opportunity to explore how to connect 'memory' and 'history'. Perhaps this exercise could be done by students at age nine and then again at age fourteen. At age fourteen they could be challenged to tell the story from at least two perspectives and to show how the story was different at two times in the past. The challenge to memorialize concentrates attention on what we want to preserve from the past and why. It is the same impulse that leads individuals to take pictures and then select and display them in photo albums. It is the same impulse that led South African township residents spontaneously to create popular parks or to name their neighborhoods as ways to commemorate moments and leaders in the struggle against apartheid. And children could discuss why others had chosen different topics, themes, or representations from the past.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 139-156

Reconceptualising the Nature and Extent of Special Educational Need in South Africa

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Under conditions of widespread social and educational disadvantage, such as apply to the majority of South Africans, special educational need is conceptualised as both intrinsically and extrinsically generated. Under these conditions the extent of intrinsically, extrinsically and reciprocally generated special educational need is considerably greater than it is in advantaged social and educational contexts. Referring to research evidence around the reproduction of intrinsic (disability based) special educational need under conditions of poverty, and available statistical indicators of the extent of extrinsic (system based) special educational need, both conservative and, possibly, more real estimations of the extent of the need for specialised educational support in South Africa are calculated. Assumptions that special educational need can be ignored or that it is peripheral to the concerns of mainstream educational reconstruction are challenged on the basis of these estimations.

INTRODUCTION

Both historically and in terms of current educational initiatives emanating from the state, the issue of special educational need in South Africa has been relegated to the periphery of educational concern. In all departments of education the provision of specialised educational services has lagged behind the estimated need and recent cut-backs and retrenchments have followed and exacerbated this pattern.[1] Further, the pattern of racial inequality of provision in general education has applied with particular severity to this area such that the current inadequacy of provision for African children with special educational need, whether through the mainstream or through specialised facilities, is extreme. Over the past decade the degree of this inadequacy has repeatedly been documented.[2] More specifically, and of particular relevance here, Van Der Westhuizen[3] has recorded the severe shortage of facilities for African persons with moderate to severe mental handicap – a particularly pressing need – and Kriegler[4] has argued the inappropriateness of a model of "specific learning disability" in South Africa where this excludes services to the majority of those who have special learning needs in the mainstream of education.

Various reasons for this marginalisation of special educational need could be hypothesised. Most likely is that the relatively high cost of providing specialised educational support has not been seen as justified in relation to the perceived economic return. The almost complete neglect of special educational provision in African education would appear to confirm that this has been the view within a social system where capital has overtly served the apartheid order.[5] As Lea and Foster[6] point out, both conceptualisation and practice in relation to mental handicap

in this society reflect "the central role of social, political and economic factors" in the disempowerment of mentally handicapped persons. The operation of social relations of power is not limited to this group however. It is as transparent in the economic marginalisation, systems of labelling and categorisation and relative educational neglect that have applied to all children with special educational need – but *particularly* to the disenfranchised majority.

A further and not unrelated reason can be found in the perception that meeting special educational need has little to do with the effectiveness of mainstream education. This perception is based on the assumption that children with special educational need are relatively few in number and that ignoring this need will therefore have little overall effect on the productivity of the mainstream. It is because of arguments such as these that needs for special educational support have been seen as dispensable within the broader educational initiative – again, particularly within the hegemonic structure of apartheid education.[7] If this marginalisation is not to persist into the process of educational reconstruction in South Africa then this sort of conceptualisation needs to be challenged on fundamental moral, social, educational and economic grounds. In order to do this, however, it is necessary to examine more closely the real nature and extent of special educational need in South Africa.

RECONCEPTUALISING THE NATURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED IN SOUTH AFRICA

Brennan's definition of special educational need is fairly typical:

> A special educational need exists when any disability (physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional, social or any combination of these) affects learning to the extent that any or all of special access to curriculum, special or modified curriculum, or specially adapted conditions of learning, are necessary if the pupil is to be appropriately and effectively educated.[8]

In most developed contexts such a definition is neither inappropriate nor unacceptable as a basis for identifying those who have special educational need: It is relative rather than categorical in its emphasis and it stresses the obligation of the system to adapt to the special curricular needs of the individual pupil without removing the individual from the system. Despite these liberal attributes, such a definition is problematic in a context like South Africa.

First and most important, it is premised on the assumption of disability. This matches the common notion that special educational need is created where there is a deficit or disability within or *intrinsic* to the learner. But in South Africa it is questionable whether the majority of children with special educational need have any intrinsic disability at all. As will be argued below, possibly the most extensive special educational needs exist for structural and systemic reasons that, by definition, are *extrinsic* to the children concerned and their capacity for learning.[9]

Under such conditions, where severe and widespread social and educational disadvantage have operated, special educational need manifests as the need for special educational support in the acquisition of basic educational skills that have been delayed or denied to learners through lack of access to, or inadequacy of, the existing educational system.

Second, definitions such as Brennan's assume that the relative degree and nature of the special learning need can be accurately and specifically matched to curricular or other adaptations which might have to be made. This is appropriate where the specialised personnel, the psycho-educational instruments and the physical facilities exist for making such specialised assessments. Where these are lacking or inaccessible – as they are for the majority of South African children[10] – then definitions such as the above are of little practical value: We cannot act on them nor do they help us to define who, or how many, have special educational need.

Third, and given the assumption of disability, such a definition would, in advantaged social and educational contexts typical of North America, Western Europe and indeed of the privileged sector of South African society, suggest that special educational need refers to a relatively *small* section of the school-going population. For South African society as a whole, however, this needs to be challenged on two important counts.

In contexts of widespread poverty and disadvantage such as exist in South Africa, evidence indicates that *intrinsic disability* may be created at up to double the rate of incidence than is the case in more privileged contexts.[11] This relates to cycles of reproduction whereby factors related to poverty, health and health-care access interact to produce disproportionately high incidence rates of disability and special educational need. The number of children with intrinsic physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities – and hence special educational need – is thus not small but may constitute a significant proportion of the school-age population. Evidence for this will be reviewed more extensively below.

In addition, the heritage of social and educational disadvantage under the system of apartheid has created what appears to be a very large group of children with *extrinsically generated special educational need.* Although it is difficult to define the precise extent of this group, it is reflected in excessively high drop-out rates, failure rates, and evidence of widespread underachievement in relation to potential in, particularly, African education. As will be estimated below, the existence of this group together with the high incidence of intrinsic disability and the reciprocal interaction of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, makes up a total group of children with special educational need who are far from a small minority in the current South African school-age population.

On these grounds reconceptualising special educational need as a *continuum* might prove helpful in accommodating some of these aspects of the South African reality. Adelman,[12] for instance, has consistently advocated a transactional model in the learning disability field which is premised on the notion of a continuum from

individual dysfunction to environmental disadvantage with "the reciprocal interplay of individual and environment"[13] in the centre. Extending this notion of a continuum to the whole area of special educational need has particular relevance within the South African context.

At one pole of the continuum would be those with clear *intrinsic* disabilities of a physical or neurological nature whose educational need is usually for highly specialised educational resources and assistance on a relatively permanent basis. Included here would be many of those children with severe and chronic *physical disabilities, sensory loss, neurological disabilities, moderate and severe mental handicap* as well as *multiples* of these.

At the other pole of the continuum would be those with clear *extrinsic* socio-educational disadvantage whose need is primarily for special educational support of a relatively temporary nature.

Across the broad centre of the continuum there would be an overlap and *reciprocal interaction* of both intrinsically and extrinsically generated special educational need that would vary in severity, chronicity and the sorts of resources that need to be provided. *Mild mental handicap, learning disability, speech and language difficulties and emotional and behavioural problems* (including *multiples* of these) might fall into this range. These are all areas of special educational need where the boundaries of definition are necessarily diffuse and relative in relation to both aetiology and manifestation. Thus, particularly in the South African context, both the causes and the solutions to these problems need to be seen as the intrinsic dimension in reciprocal interaction with the extrinsic, socio-educational dimension.

This would not necessarily solve all the problems of definition outlined above. What it *would* do is contextualise special educational need within this particular society: It would acknowledge that such needs are not independent of the social and educational contexts in which they occur; and it would re-insert special educational need into the concerns of the mainstream of educational reconstruction. What is still left, however, is the problem of establishing a more precise indication of the extent of the need. Without such an indication, policy decisions regarding the distribution and deployment of scarce resources are unlikely to be influenced and, no matter how cogently the conceptual arguments are put, meeting special educational need may continue to be seen as a peripheral issue.

ESTIMATING THE EXTENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED IN SOUTH AFRICA

Establishing the incidence of special educational need is always problematic. First, because special educational need is itself a relative concept depending on the manifestation and circumstances surrounding a particular problem, it is only possible to establish the exact extent of the need on a post hoc basis. In other words, establishing the numbers of children who have special educational need can only be based on those who have been *found* to have such need. This in turn

depends on the facilities and services for assessing and accommodating such needs. As indicated above, where such facilities and services do not exist or are inaccessible for the majority it is extremely difficult to establish or even estimate how many children have such needs.

In practice what is usually done is to estimate the numbers of children who have disabilities that commonly give rise to special educational need. Not only is this problematic in terms of the relativity of actual need but it excludes all those whose need is *not* based on intrinsic disability. In addition the reliability of incidence estimates arrived at on this basis in underdeveloped contexts is again notoriously poor. Not only are general census statistics unreliable but diagnostic services, and therefore epidemiological data, are frequently just not available. In two relatively recent South African reports for instance, incidence of disability has been estimated on the basis of international rates taken in conjunction with whatever local information was available.[14] In both of these reports it is stressed that estimation is intentionally conservative. However, as already indicated, the *actual* incidence for disadvantaged communities is likely to be considerably higher for all categories of intrinsic disability than is given in these estimates. Thus Garmezy[15] points out that children born into poverty are twice as likely to suffer one or more disabilities than their more privileged counterparts and Wiesinger-Ferris (1989), quoting from UNESCO sources, estimates that whereas disability in first-world contexts is accepted to be at approximately 10% of population, it is likely to be nearer 20% in third-world contexts. Reasons for this are not only based on incomplete statistical information but are quite concretely related to a multiple interaction of socio-economic factors in disadvantaged communities.

Where extrinsically generated special educational need as the result of socio-educational disadvantage – and the related reciprocal interaction with intrinsic disability – is concerned, the problems related to establishing incidence are even greater. For obvious reasons information generated in developed contexts is of a different order and cannot be used as even a conservative basis for estimating the incidence of need in this domain. Equally, information from other underdeveloped contexts that might be used on some comparative basis is simply not available. Estimating the extent of the need in this area therefore must rely on a necessarily crude process of extrapolation from whatever information *is* available around such phenomena as school drop-out, failure, underachievement, and so forth. The alternative to making such estimations, crude as they might be, is to exclude this area of need in any analysis of incidence. Given that the existence of the need is beyond doubt and that its implications for the total national pattern of needs for educational reconstruction are substantial, it would be a gross distortion of reality not to include it in an overall estimate of incidence.

INTRINSICALLY GENERATED SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

Based on the declared "conservative" incidence rates as given by Hattingh[16] and school enrolment figures for 1990[17], Table 1 reflects the estimated numbers of disabled school-age children in the categories, defined earlier, as most likely to result in intrinsic special educational need.[18]

TABLE 1

Estimated Incidence and Number of School-Age Children with Intrinsically Generated Special Educational Need in South Africa, 1990

	Incidence % of population	Number of school-age children affected				
		African (7 654 270)*	White (932 181)	Coloured (841 387)	Indian (233 101)	Total (9 660 939)
Hearing Impairment (Deaf & Hard of Hearing)	3,5	267 899	32 626	29 449	8 159	338 133
Visual Impairment (Blind & Partially Sighted)	0,36	27 555	3 356	3 029	839	34 779
Intellectual Impairment (Moderate & Severe Mental Handicap)	0,50	38 271	4 661	4 207	1 166	48 305
Neurological Disability (EG C.P. & Epilepsy)	0,45	34 444	4 195	3 786	1 049	43 474
Physical Disability	1,63	124 765	15 195	13 715	3 800	157 475
TOTAL	6,44	492 934	60 033	54 186	15 013	622 166

*School Enrolments, 1990 (Du Pisani et al, 1991)

As indicated, these figures must be taken as a conservative estimate. The reproduction of disadvantage in impoverished communities would suggest that the incidence of intrinsic disability is likely to be considerably higher. Thus, people who are subjected to poverty are inevitably more prone to the health risks associated with malnutrition, disease and infection than are those who are not.[19] *What is important in the present context is that many of those health risks associated with poverty commonly result in cognitive or sensory impairments that are likely to create special educational need.*

In South Africa this has been amply verified in a number of studies that, *inter alia*, have consistently demonstrated the damaging cyclical relationship between malnutrition and cognitive development[20] and the relationship between diseases that are particularly common under conditions of poverty (for example, tuberculosis, pneumonia, gastro-enteritis and measles), secondary cerebral infection and resultant disabilities such as cerebral palsy and mental retardation.[21] The impact of the current AIDS epidemic on vulnerability to diseases such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, and so forth, is of further and immediate concern in this

reproductive cycle. In addition lack of access to appropriate health services[22] and the inadequacy of basic health screening in schools[23] compounds the problem.

Under such conditions it is likely that the number of children with intrinsic disabilities and special educational need may in fact constitute a significant proportion of the school-age population. If Garmezi's[24] and Weisinger-Ferris's[25] estimated 'double' incidence in contexts of poverty is taken as a rough benchmark, then a total of at least 10% for these disabilities in at least the African community, which is subject to the most widespread poverty, may be a more accurate reflection of reality. This would give a figure of 765 427 African children with special educational need as the result of intrinsic disabilities and the national total would shift to 894 659.

EXTRINSICALLY GENERATED SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

As indicated earlier, extrinsically generated special educational need does not imply a deficit within the learner. The need is structurally and systemically created and although it results in learners not acquiring basic educational skills this is not because they have any intrinsic deficit or impairment in the ability to learn. Despite intact ability however, the need for special educational support is very real. In almost all cases the learners who are being considered here have, for one reason or another, not acquired adequate basic educational skills – related most essentially to literacy and numeracy – at a time in their development when this should normally have occurred. *It is the fundamental relationship of these skills to all other dimensions of the curriculum and the inability of these learners to progress, or to be motivated to progress*[26] *without these skills that creates the need for special educational support.* It is certainly possible for this support to be provided within the normal mainstream classroom. What is *not* possible however, is for these children – who are mostly considerably older than the average first-time school entrant – to acquire these skills at a late stage of development in the same way as younger children might. In addition, to expect this to occur in an overcrowded and under-resourced classroom with an underqualified teacher who has no back-up special educational support or access to the required special methods and materials would be an impossibility.

What can readily be seen from this is that there is a necessary interdependence between improved general educational conditions and special educational support. Either one without the other would not address the requirements of those with extrinsically generated special educational need.

Although this need commonly manifests as outlined above, the causes are complex and various. Amongst these are *structural* educational factors such as shortage of schools and classrooms, high pupil-teacher ratios, teacher underqualification, and lack of essential teaching materials and resources.[27] There are also complex *systemic* factors – such as the language of instruction issue and its

relationship to early reading skill[28] and issues around curricular content and a rigidly instrumental process of teaching[29] – all of which have contributed to widespread underachievement and the failure of many children to acquire basic educational skills in African education.

In addition, apart from these directly educational factors, there is a range of socio-economic factors that have contributed to the extent and severity of the problem. Amongst these are factors that have contributed to the high drop-out rate in education, to the widespread breakdown of both nuclear and extended family structure and to the number of children who economically are forced to seek work before acquiring even the basic educational skills.[30]

As indicated, a lack of information makes it difficult to establish the precise number of children who might experience this sort of need for special educational support. However, a number of indicators are available that would suggest that the need is substantial – particularly in the context of African education and if primary schooling is to become compulsory.

The first of these is the school drop-out rate. In African education, where the educational disadvantage referred to is the most severe, pupil outflow or drop-out rates for 1990 as reported by the Research Institute for Educational Planning[31] were in summary as follows.

TABLE 2

Pupil Outflow in African Education

Level	Enrolment	Pupil Outflow	% of Enrolment	% of Total
Sub A	1 218 606	207 100	17,0	28,7
Sub B	912 509	45 200	5,0	6,3
Std 1-5	3 519 251	220 000	6,3	30,5
Std 6-9	1 733 180	199 300	11,5	27,7
Std 10 (without pass)	270 724	49 100	18,1	6,8
TOTAL	7 654 270	720 700	9,4	100,0

Drop-out is a complex phenomenon.[32] Clearly it is determined by a number of factors other than non-achievement as the result of educational disadvantage. In the South African context it is likely that the single most influential factor is the economic constraint where either parents can no longer afford the costs of schooling or children are required to leave school in order to earn.[33] Nevertheless, although research is required to clarify the relative influence of the different factors determining drop-out in the South African context, it is clear from the statistics above that the major drop-out occurs in the first year of schooling – the critical period for the acquisition of the basic educational skills. Thus, whatever the reason for the drop-out the fact remains that children who have dropped out during this

period are unlikely to have acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills. If, with compulsory primary education, such children are to be re-incorporated at age appropriate levels into the schooling system then special educational support will be required to help with their re-integration and the late but essential acquisition of basic educational skills.

Thus, although drop-out at subsequent levels may also constitute a problem, the most conservative basis for estimating the number requiring special educational assistance must assume that it is those who have dropped out in the *first* year of schooling who are least likely to have acquired the basic educational skills. Taking the Sub A drop out rate for each year and applying it to Sub A enrolments from 1984 to 1990,[34] it can be seen from Table 3 that as at the end of 1990 there were approximately 1 252 936 African children who had dropped out at Sub A level – and who were still of primary school going age – who would be likely to require some form of special educational assistance if they were to be successfully re-incorporated at that point.

TABLE 3
Drop-Out in Relation to Sub A Enrolment in African Primary Education, 1984-1990

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	Total
Enrolment: Sub A	1 029 799	1 041 551	1 067 992	1 134 116	1 168 204	1 183 570	1 218 606	
Drop-Out: Sub A	161 678	160 399	165 539	171 252	189 249	197 656	207 163	1252 936
(% of enrolment)	(15,7)	(15,4)	(15,5)	(15,1)	(16,2)	(16,7)	(17%)	

It should be noted here that although a proportion of these drop-outs may well have returned into the system during this period and although it has been claimed that such a pattern of drop-out and later return reduces the seriousness of the apparent drop-out problem,[35] this does not alter the estimation of special educational need. *All* children who have not acquired the basic educational skills at the appropriate level and need to learn them at a later stage would be in need of some degree of special educational support. Even at this stage – without the enforcement of compulsory schooling – this problem is causing widespread concern amongst teachers. It has become known as the problem of children who are ''out of age' and teachers are expressing concern and frustration at the numbers of children involved and their inability to help them without some form of back-up support.

A second indicator is the school *failure rate*. Again this problem is not limited to African education but the extent and severity of the problem in this context is such that it must be taken as the main area of concern. Children who fail and have to repeat classes frequently represent those who have special educational needs that have not been met. Again, some of these may be children with intrinsic disabilities where there is a reciprocal interaction with extrinsic educational disadvantage.

However, given the apparent high proportion of repeaters, particularly in the lower grades, it is likely that many more are children who have no intrinsic disability but whose need is generated by sheer extrinsic educational inadequacies.

Once again, current and complete information is not available. Metcalfe[36] gives average repeat rates over all primary classes of 8,6% and 11,2% for Lebowa and Kangwane respectively in 1990. For Bophuthatswana in 1988 the equivalent figure was 12,2 %.[37] More disturbing, a study by Frets Van Buuren, Letuma and Daynes[38] found a 28% repeat rate for Sub A in a large sample of 25 schools in KwaZulu and, according to APEX[39] calculations, this is not atypical as this method of estimation records a 30% repeat rate for Sub A across the full spectrum of African education. However, these figures do contrast with Taylor's[40] who reported an average Sub A repeat rate of 15,2% over nine African departments (but excluding the major Department of Education and Training) for 1982. From informal reports by teachers in rapidly urbanising areas like Khayelitsha in Cape Town however, it is clear that a high repeat rate in the lower grades is not uncommon and is certainly cause for concern.

From such information it is not possible to determine current national repeat rates in African education with certainty. However, given the general pattern revealed above, a conservative assumption would be that at least a 10% repeat rate applies in general African primary education. In relation to the enrolment figures for 1990 (5 650 366; Table 2), this would imply that at that stage there were at least 565 000 primary repeaters. Taking into account that some of these may be included in the figures in the "reciprocal" cluster of special educational need and that not all repeaters would necessarily require special educational support, this could be further conservatively reduced to 50% of all repeaters – or 282 000 such children having extrinsic special educational need in 1990.

It is important at this point to stress that the methodological bases for determining both drop-out and repeat rates are subject to some contention. Different methodologies produce somewhat different rates.[41] Nevertheless, even if there is some variation in these rates, the estimation of special educational need which is the purpose of this article – remains conservative on grounds that have already been given. Beyond this, there are other areas where extrinsically created special educational need could be expected to manifest and which, for lack of information, have not been included numerically. Examples would be the number of children who have never attended school at all or the related and growing phenomenon of street children.[42]

It should also be noted that estimates in this domain have been limited to African children and to those of primary school age. This should not imply that extrinsic special educational need does not occur for other children and also at secondary level. However, the need for special educational support in this domain is undoubtedly greatest for African children at primary level and, as has been

consistently argued, would have particular urgency and applicability under a system of compulsory primary education.

With all the above conservative reasoning therefore, a figure of 1 500 000 would appear to be a rough, if minimal, estimation of the number of children who might be expected to have extrinsically generated needs for some form of special educational support with the advent of compulsory schooling.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED AS A RECIPROCAL INTERACTION OF INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FACTORS

Determining incidence rates for mild mental handicap, speech and language impairment, specific learning disability and emotional and behavioural disorders is particularly problematic. This is not only for reasons already given but also because there is a wide variation in the literature on the definition – and therefore the incidence estimates – of these conditions even in developed contexts. In disadvantaged social and educational contexts this is further complicated by the reciprocal interactive effects of the extrinsic factors. This, however, is extremely important in clarifying the extent of the need.

Central to appreciating the need that is generated in this area is the notion of 'risk'. Children who, for whatever reason, have even mild intrinsic disabilities are at risk for developing needs for special educational support. Given this risk, it is those with the *least* supportive and facilitative social and educational environments who are most likely *not* to cope and to need special assistance if they are to be appropriately and effectively educated. For example, the relative reciprocal impact of socio-educational factors on a child with, say, a mild intrinsic learning disability will depend on the severity of disadvantage. Where this *is* severe, the result would almost certainly be a child who manifests with special educational need. Where it is *not*, the child could well cope unassisted in a well run mainstream. The net effect is that children with even mild intrinsic disabilities or impairments in this category, who also suffer extrinsic social and educational disadvantages, are more likely to manifest with special educational need – and the overall incidence rate for this group is likely to be higher.

Beyond this, notions of developmental vulnerability and risk have repeatedly emphasised a multiplicative and reciprocal interaction of factors as creating the highest risks for developmental pathology.[43] *In this case, the development of special educational need is increased not only by the synergistic, reciprocal interaction of extrinsic socio-educational disadvantages and existing intrinsic disabilities, but also by those factors that have been shown to increase the risk of developing intrinsic disabilities in the first place.*

For all these reasons, the incidence rates applied in Table 4 cannot be taken as absolute. First, they are no more than estimates, although each has been determined in relation to a representative range of sources (including local estimates; Human Sciences Research Council[44]; Hattingh[45]; Robertson and Berger[46]; as well as

international estimates; Rutter, Tizard and Whitmore[47]; and others). Second, they are intentionally conservative in so far as they do not attempt to include the multiplicative effects described above.

TABLE 4

Estimated Incidence & Number of School-Age Children with Special Educational Need in the Interactive Cluster in South Africa, 1990

	Incidence % of Population	Number of School-Age Children Affected				
		African (7 654 270)*	White (932 181)	Coloured (841 387)	Indian (233 101)	Total (9 660 939)
Intellectual Impairment (Mild Mental Handicap)	2,5	191 356	23 305	21 035	5 828	241 524
Speech & Language Impairment	2,5	191 356	23 305	21 035	5 828	241 524
Specific Learning Disability	3,0	229 628	27 965	25 242	6 993	289 828
Emotional/ Behavioural Disorder	2,0	153 085	18 644	16 828	4 662	193 219
TOTAL	10,0	765 425	93 219	84 140	23 311	966 095

*School Enrolments, 1990 (Du Pisani et al, 1991)

Although it is difficult to quantify the multiplicative effects of reciprocal interaction it is almost certain that the incidence rates for Africans, in particular, are underestimated on this count. An adjustment of the total rate for Africans in this cluster to 15% is possibly more realistic – although still likely to be conservative. On this rate the total number of African children affected in 1990 would be 1 148 140 and the overall total would shift to 1 348 810.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this article has been to challenge the marginalisation of special educational need as it has occurred in the past and as it may yet occur in the process of educational reconstruction in South Africa. Central to the argument has been a conceptualisation of the need as *context dependent*; as generated as much through extrinsic socio-educational factors as through intrinsic disability; and as perpetuated and exacerbated through the reciprocal, synergistic effects of poverty and socio-educational disadvantage. The challenge implicit in this conceptualisation is that the *extent* of special educational need in a country like South Africa is considerably greater than in more advantaged socio-educational contexts and, given this and the nature of the need, it cannot be marginalised or divorced from the concerns of general educational reconstruction.

In support of this challenge, two forms of estimate of the extent of the need have been presented. In the first instance it is recognised that planning has always, and

will probably continue to be, based on conservative estimates of incidence. This is particularly true where hard and consistent statistical evidence is not available such as is the case in estimates of special educational need. Conservative incidence estimates have been presented therefore not because they are believed to be accurate but because they represent a *minimal* estimate for planning purposes.

In the second instance it is also recognised that the very factors that create and reproduce higher rates of special educational need under conditions of poverty and socio-educational disadvantage are the most difficult to quantify. To ignore them for this reason, however, would be a gross distortion of the real situation. The second form of estimate therefore has attempted, within the most rational basis possible, to accommodate these factors and to reach at least global estimates of the *real* need. The purpose of these estimates is to highlight what is possibly a more realistic indication of the need in communities and contexts that have the least resources.

In summary, on both the conservative and the more real basis, Table 5 presents the totals over all domains of special educational need for South Africa in 1990.[48]

TABLE 5

Summary of Estimated Special Educational Need in South Africa, 1990

	African	White	Coloured	Indian	Total
Intrinsic:					
Conserv.	492 934	60 033	54 186	15 013	622 166
Real	765 427	60 033	54 186	15 013	894 659
Interactive:					
Conserv.	765 425	93 219	84 140	23 311	966 095
Real	1 148 140	93 219	84 140	23 311	1 348 810
Extrinsic:					
Conserv.	1 500 000	-	-	-	1 500 000
Total:					
Conserv.	2 758 359	153 252	138 326	38 324	3 088 261
Real	3 413 567	153 252	138 326	38 324	3 743 469

There are five fundamental implications from this summary table. First, special educational need is proportionately greatest for those who are the most disadvantaged: *For every 100 children conservatively estimated to have special educational need, eighty nine are African.* On the more real estimate, ninety one are African. Given the severe lack of special educational services in departments of education that have thus far served the African community the urgency and extent of the need to develop such services cannot be over-emphasised.

Second, as indicated there is a real danger that special educational need will continue to be seen as peripheral in the process of determining policy for

educational reconstruction. On even the conservative estimates it should be clear that the numbers of children in need of special educational support are substantial and cannot be ignored. Moreover, if the fundamental principles of redress and equity are to be applied to educational reconstruction in South Africa then it must be acknowledged that *all* children with special educational need are disadvantaged and 90% of these children have been *doubly* disadvantaged. Redressing this double disadvantage is an imperative on the most basic moral and equity principles.

Third, from both the overall extent of the need and the degree to which it is determined and exacerbated by social factors, it should be clear that it is as much a social as it is an educational concern. In addition, those direct effects of poverty, health and health-care access on the creation of intrinsic disability that have been referred to in this article reinforce this concern. It follows that the responsibility for preventing the development of special educational need must lie as much in the health and welfare domain as in the educational domain – and that co-ordination rather than separation of such services in this endeavour should become a priority.

Fourth and equally, the responsibility in the educational domain cannot be limited to the provision of specialised services but must extend into the structural and systemic dimensions of educational reconstruction at *all* levels. As has been emphasised, the problem of meeting and preventing special educational need involves restructuring the mainstream – from resources to the curriculum; and from pupil-teacher ratios to the systemic factors that determine the processes of teaching and learning. But it also involves the provision of specialised services as an extension to and, most important, as a back-up support for teachers in the mainstream. One without the other will inevitably fail.

At this point it is important to re-iterate that the inclusion of children with extrinsically generated special educational need in the overall pattern of need does not imply that *all* children who have been socio-educationally disadvantaged require special educational support. Certainly all require a radically reconstructed mainstream. But what has been consistently emphasised is that it is a specific ''out of age' group of children, who have not acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills, who would *also* need specialised support – in the form of special learning materials, special adaptations to methodology and special modifications of pace and motivation. All of this *could* happen in the mainstream but could *not* be expected of most mainstream teachers under present conditions or without substantial back-up support. The need is also premised on the institution of universal, compulsory primary education. If this is phased in over a period of years, the concentration of the need would be considerably reduced. In short, the argument has not been for an unrealistic expansion of a special educational mode to the whole educational enterprise – desirable as some might find this. It has been for specific needs under specific conditions requiring specific expertise and resources.

Finally, the assumption that the neglect of special educational need has little effect on education as a whole and that this neglect is either educationally

defensible or economically justifiable can now be challenged. In relation to both the nature and the extent of special educational need, what should be clear is that neglect of this need, particularly under conditions of compulsory primary education, will produce and perpetuate a crippling effect not only on substantial numbers of individual children but also on general classroom practice, the morale of teachers and therefore on the effectiveness of the process of education as a whole. In addition, the social consequences of such neglect would be to create dependencies that would affect parents, health and social services as well as, ultimately, the economy. Given even the conservative incidence estimations it is clear that ignoring special educational need would involve ignoring the educational, social and economic development of a substantial proportion of the South African youth. The short-term economic savings in such a policy will surely not outweigh the long-term losses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This article has been developed from an unpublished report entitled "Estimation of the incidence of special educational need in South Africa" produced for the National Education Policy Investigation, March 1992.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 157-180

Teaching to Rule: Wittgenstein's Rule-Following Considerations and Educational Practice

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As its title indicates, the general aim of this paper is to demonstrate the relevance of Wittgenstein's thoughts about rules and rule-guided action to the practice of education. Within the framework of this overall project, three connected aims may be distinguished: There is, firstly, an attempt to present a survey of the contemporary debate about the exegesis of the rule-following considerations. This presentation does not try to settle, but does endeavour to clarify the issues which divide protagonists of the so-called 'community view' from those who favour an individualist reading of Wittgenstein's writings on this topic. In pursuit of further clarity, the discussion turns, secondly, to an examination of Wittgenstein's career as a schoolteacher in rural Austria and arguments are presented to the effect that this period in his life is far more germane to the development of his philosophy than some commentators have been prepared to allow. Finally, some suggestions are offered and argued for regarding what the the terms 'individual' and 'community' may have meant to Wittgenstein and how these meanings might influence our perspectives on what is involved in teaching persons to follow rules in educational settings.

INTRODUCTION

Uncontentiously, Wittgenstein's thoughts concerning what it is to follow rules lie close to the seemingly inaccessable heart of his later philosophy. It is equally undebatable that his reflections on this topic bear directly on the philosophy of education, being intended as they are to elucidate the whole issue of meaning and understanding. The connection is easily exemplified: Teachers of infants are nowadays accustomed to distinguish what is called 'rote-counting' from what they style 'meaningful counting'.[1] These terms of art are meant to distinguish degrees of mastery, qualitatively different levels of understanding. Clearly disagreements might arise as to when a child is counting 'meaningfully' and when it is counting by rote. There might be argument too regarding what tests are appropriate for determining which of the two modes of rule-following are in operation, and, insofar as these disputes were about conceptual matters, a correct account of the relation in which rules stand to their application would be prophylactic against sceptical despair of ever attaining certainty. To take another case, some educationists, influenced, perhaps, by Piaget, have held that it is futile to try to teach children certain facts and conceptual skills before they have gained a given stage of mental development. Often the protagonists of this point of view argue as they do because they think of concepts as things which are acquired at and only at particular phases of normal human development. Here some clarity may be achieved by allowing the

language of rule-following to substitute for the language of concept-acquisition. For it will then become apparent that concepts are not things we are given but things we do and are taught to do. Another arena of debate in which attention to the nature of rule-governed practices may prove rewarding is the topic of inter-disciplinary studies, or rather the issue as to what philosophical justifications may be offered for the fusion of two or more intellectual disciplines into a single area of study.[2] To treat such disciplines as patterns of rule-guided activity is to render perspicuous such enigmas as arise when we ask, for instance, what licences our treating, say, geometry and algebra as branches of one and the same discipline. Such a treatment invites fine-grained descriptions of both convergences and discrepancies between the practices under scrutiny.

These illustrations show, decisively it seems to me, that Wittgenstein's remarks about rule-following, particularly those he makes in the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI)[3] are germane to the philosophy of education. There is nothing like consensus, however, about their correct exegesis, and the contest between 'Communitarian' and 'Individualist' readings of the rule-following considerations which began in the mid-nineteen eighties continue to be a salient feature of Wittgenstein studies. Thus, while the relevance of his cogitations on this matter to education is established, the directions in which they beckon, the perspectives they obliterate or open up are, as yet, shrouded in mists of controversy. Getting clear about them – and getting clarity of the requisite sort – is, as I hope to show, of cardinal importrance. For the issues ultimately at stake in this debate are the ethical status of individual agency and the relations which distinguish a genuine community from a mere collectivity.

From the educationist's point of view the rule-following debate translates into an exchange between advocates of the doctrine that education is, or ought to be, a process of self-discovery and self-realisation and those who hold that the educator's main task is to produce conformity with communal norms. Doubtless, resolution of this dispute depends on finding a median between an individualism quite unanchored in the norms of *Sittlichkeit* and a draconian barracks-style collectivism. In the context of multi-cultural societies, like South Africa, the mean will lie somewhere between utopian liberalism, on the one hand, and an obsession with cultural diversity which ends in apartheid, on the other.

The present essay has several related aims: It aspires to throw light on the exegetical difficulties posed by the rule-following considerations by arguing that these have arisen because the importance of Wittgenstein's career as a schoolteacher has been underestimated and the connections between the philosophy of the *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus* (TLP)[4] and his later work misunderstood. Additionally, I propose to make some observations on the educational implications of what I believe to be a properly Wittgensteinian account of the connections between theories and practices and between individuals and the communities to which they belong. I shall begin by outlining what I take to be the main lines of

argument advanced by Communitarians and Individualists in respect of the rule-following remarks, before going on to consider in what ways Wittgenstein's life as a teacher may have influenced his thinking on this topic.

As may already be apparent, my overall enterprise is driven by a conviction that the internal connection which binds the categorial twins, 'understanding' and 'meaning' – the ineffability of which has generated so many enigmas for students of Wittgensteinian semantics – is set in an appropriate light by viewing it through the prisms provided by the categories of 'teaching' and 'learning'. But behind this belief stand other thoughts of a more inchoate kind. They are something to the effect that what Wittgenstein may ultimately have understood by the notions of 'teaching' and 'learning' and their cognates is bound up with a religious vision which informed his life as well as his thinking on all significant matters; that this religious disposition, although some of its origins may fruitfully be sought in Augustine's neo-Plutonism, is not readily accessible to philosophers working in today's scientistic culture, that is in times which Wittgenstein himself regarded as 'dark' and that it is, in any case, unproductive of the kind of sharp, manageable distinctions and definitions of educational processes which that culture has conditioned us to expect.

A philosopher's writings ought to conform to the canons of clarity and comprehensibility and I do not mention the incipient character of these thoughts so as to try to make a virtue out of a disability. Rather, I am trying to allay misapprehensions and to quell false expectations as to what the ensuing discussion is intended to achieve. It is not intended to 'sort out' confusions in any once-and-for-all sense and so the arguments on which it relies need not be thought of as knock-down arguments, nor (for the most part) are they. I have not sought to present a definitive exegesis of the Wittgensteinian passages I discuss, still less have I tried to say anything about education which might be construed as definitive in either a prescriptive or descriptive way.

INDIVIDUALISTS AND COMMUNITARIANS

Because Wittgenstein's discussions of rule-following feed directly into his arguments against the possibility of epistemically private languages (justly regarded by many commentators as being the centrepiece of the *Philosophical Investigations*), and because the former are also essential to a proper grasp of his philosophy of mathematics, it is crucial that we are able to give a correct exposition of them before undertaking the labours of interpreting and criticising his thought. Nonetheless, the importance of the task of reconciling or deciding between rival readings of what Wittgenstein had to say about rules should not blind us to what is of greatest moment here. For there is a sense in which the rights and wrongs of the controversy matter less than seeing what gave rise to it and caused it to assume the shape it did. Although this is really the matter towards which I am making my way,

it is worth remarking here on the tendency in Wittgenstein's later writings, particularly in the *Investigations*, of concepts to form clusters rather than to be introduced in linear sequence in the style of the *Tractatus*, so that what is meant by a 'rule' and the activity of following it tends to depend on one's understanding of other key-notions such as 'language-game', 'family resemblance', 'agreement' and 'form of life'. None of these conceptions, moreover, are sharply deliniated and spelt out. The sort of perspecuity sought after in the *Tractatus* is not to be looked for in the *Investigations*. Thus it is a mistake, born of a failure to take seriously the very real methodological differences which mark the two books, to try to extract a univocal and clear-cut significance from Wittgenstein's descriptions of rule-following. A parallel, yet contrasting, error is to under-emphasise the powerful current of continuity which unites the earlier to the later texts and thus fail to notice that the later Wittgenstein's preoccupation is, just as it was in the *Notebooks*[5] of 1914 – 1916 and in the *Tractatus*, primarily a concern with logic and the limits it imposes; that it is just these limits which concern him when he asks which actions can and which cannot be allowed to count as actions in accordance with a rule; that the term *Lebensform* has been replaced but not supplanted by his earlier use of the expression 'logical form' and that the boundaries imposed on thought and language by logic are identical with the borders set on right action by the sphere of absolute religio-ethical values. An adequate exegesis of the rule-following remarks, therefore, requires the performance of a refined intellectual balancing act and we may anticipate that such misreadings as may be contained in the Individualist or Communitarian interpretations of them have their source in imbalances in one direction or the other.

Well balanced or not, the first salvos in the exchanges between the two schools were fired, on behalf of the Communitarians, first by Crispin Wright,[6] in his pioneering study of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics, and later (quite independently) by Saul Kripke.[7] Fire was returned on behalf of the Individualists by Gordon Baker and Peter Hacker of St John's College, Oxford,[8] whose effort later enjoyed support from Colin McGinn.[9] It is noteworthy that Wright's initial intervention was tied to an attempt to associate Wittgenstein's name with the then fashionable anti-realist doctrine, whose cetral theses were the claims that 'truth' depends, not on any verification-independent fact of the matter but on our recognitional capacities – that is, on what we cannot help but think true.

On Wright's showing, therefore, Wittgenstein's later thoughts about rules can be pressed into the service of defending a broadly empiricist theory of knowledge. Whether Wittgenstein himself would have recognised the provision of such a defence as forming any part of his enterprise is another affair entirely. So far as this goes, it is both relevant and fair to record that Wright, while continuing to espouse a version of anti-realism, has, in his later interventions,[10] moved a considerable distance from his earlier position on the interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy and that the latter standpoint was never, in any case, on all fours with Kripke's. The

latter's account purports to discover a 'Sceptical Paradox' at the core of Wittgenstein's treatment of rule-following as well as a 'Sceptical Solution' to that paradox which is supposed, in its turn, to underpin Wittgensteinian ideas about privacy, the self-ascription of sensation states and communal agreements. Kripke and those persauded by him rely on passages like the following:

> This was our paradox; no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action could be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there could be neither accord nor conflict here. (PI, i, sec. 201)

A schoolroom example should suffice to bring out the predicament suggested here: Suppose a pupil is being taught to write the series of even integers and continues satisfactorily writing 2, 4, 6 ... until he passes 100, at which point he writes, not 102, but 103. When challenged, however, far from accepting his teacher's correction, he responds by giving an interpretation of the rule he was set to follow which, however eccentric, is entirely consistent with his subsequent performances. He says, perhaps, that what *he* means by the locution add two is add an extra integer to all numbers in the series after passing 100, or that numbers in the series 102, 104, 106... do not count as integers in *his* numerical system. Once this example impresses itself on the philosophical imagination with sufficient force and vividness to allow the sceptical paradigm to get its grip, it will come to seem as though numerous explanations are available to the pupil which will allow him to present his behaviour as conforming to a rule. The paradigm permits, as it were, the shadow of interpretation to fall between the arithmetical rule and the activity in accordance with it which would display the pupil's understanding of his tutor's instructions. Once this happens, it will be possible to extend the scenario indefinitely so that successive interpretations of the rule on the part of the instructor are met by reinterpretations defended by the pupil, leading to the conclusion that all and any behaviours which can be presented as conforming to the rule can equally be portrayed as deviations from it.

But can this alarming position really be derived from an accurate reading of the above-cited passage? Powerful evidences suggest that it cannot. Not least of these is the fact that the text invites us to consider, not a genuine possibility, but a 'paradox' – that is, a proposal which precisely conceals an absurdity – and Wittgenstein would hardly have used this word had he been asking us to take seriously some form of scepticism. Talk of paradox in this context is surely indicative not of real possibilities but of conceptual confusions which need to be cleared up. This view is supported by the very next sentence in the passage from which I have quoted as Wittgenstein goes on to argue that the paradox rests on a misunderstanding by appealing to the circumstance that one interpretation of the rule after another is presented in serial display as if each offered momentary contentment. This, he says, shows that there is a non-interpretative way of grasping a rule which is exhibited in actual cases of compliance or failure to comply with it. This, surely, is an argument designed to dispell scepticism, not to induce it. The whole emphasis of the

discussion, here and elsewhere in the *Investigations*, is on practice and on the primacy of practice over the sort of speculative theorising which is the seed-bed of metaphysical scepticism. This emerges graphically in the immediately subsequent remark:

> And hence also 'obeying a rule' is a practice. And to *think* one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule. Hence it is not possible to obey a rule 'privately' : otherwise thinking one was obeying a rule would be the same thing as obeying it. (PI, i, sec 202)[11]

This trenchant conclusion, echoing as it does an observation in *Zettel* (Z, 290)[12] in which Wittgenstein espouses the idea of an identity between action and word, appears to put the kibosh on the sceptical exegesis by short-circuiting the explanatory process which allows interpretation to play so prominent a part in the story of how someone evinces understanding of a given rule. It would, however, be quite wrong to imagine that an impression of Wittgenstein's intentions in this matter, gained by able and reflective readers, can be so easily dispelled. There are, after all, other passages in the later corpus of texts – particularly in the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (RFM)[13] and in *Zettel* – which can be read as allowing more scope for the role of interpretation and hence for the sceptical explanation than those so far considered. A telling instance is an exchange between Wittgenstein and an imaginary interlocutor in the context of a discussion of the status of mathematical propositions:

> But am I not compelled, then , to go on the way I do in a chain of inferences? – Compelled? After all I can presumably go on as I choose! – "But if you want to remain in accord with the rules you *must* go this way". – Not at all, I call *this* "accord". – "Then you have changed the meaning of the word 'accord', or the meaning of the rule". – No; – who says what 'change' and 'remaining the same' mean here?
>
> However many rules you give me – I give a rule which justifies *my* employment of your rules. (RFM, I-113)

A fair gloss of this dialogue would surely have to convey the sense it gives of the arbitrariness of rule-construction. One rule, it seems, can always find support in some other antecedent rule in an indefinite justificatory series. There is no talk here of spades being 'turned' or of having reached 'bedrock', (PI, i, 217) nor is mention made of practice. The only 'practice' that is implicitly appealed to is that of supplying justifications for particular employments of whatever rules may be at issue. In other words, the appeal is to a variety of possible *interpretations* of normative formulations. This rendering finds support in another observation where Wittgenstein is considering the analogy between the rules of mathematics and the working of a pre-set machine:

> I want to say: the working of the mathematical machine is only the *picture* of the working of a machine. The rule does not do work, for whatever happens according to the rule is an interpretation of the rule. (PFM, IV-48)

Considered in the light of these citations, the following extract from *Zettel* takes on an aspect which appears to be plausibly reconcilable with the sceptical interpretation:

> Why don't I call cookery rules arbitrary, and why am I tempted to call the rules of [logical] grammar arbitrary? Because 'cookery' is defined by its end, whereas 'speaking' is not. That is why the use of language is in a certain sense autonomous, as cooking and washing are not. You cook badly if you are guided in your cooking by rules other than the right ones; but if you follow other rules than those of chess you are *playing another game*; and if you follow grammatical rules other than such-and-such ones, that does not mean you say something wrong, no, you are speaking of something else. (Z, 320)

Now it is not my aim to arbitrate between the two points of view at this or any other stage of the discussion, although honesty compells me to say that I do not think the case for the sceptical exegesis can be sustained. Rather, my objective has been to show that the differences between these two construals of Wittgenstein's intentions are not as easily settleable as some partisans on both sides appear to believe. The difficulties involved have partly to do with the fragmentary nature of some of the texts usually appealed to by the disputants, but they stem chiefly from the subtlety and striking originality of Wittgenstein's own thought and method of making his case. The point is of some importance. For the sceptical reading, whatever its merits or demerits, represents the most plausible argumentational foundation for the Communitarian approach so far constructed. It should come as no suprise, therefore, if the Communitarian/Individualist dispute turns out to be no easier to decide than the debates out of which it grew.

If, however, we assume, for the sake of argument, that Kripke is right in taking Wittgenstein to be proposing a Sceptical Paradox, that assumption ought to predispose us at least to take seriously the Sceptical Solution he believes Wittgenstein is offering us. That 'solution' necessitates the repudiation of the idea that the sense of a locution or a practice is given by truth-conditions and its replacement by the doctrine that sense depends on assertability conditions which are tied to acceptance by a community. The assertion-conditions for someone meaning N by the name 'N' will be his propensity to use 'N' as he does and the circumstance that the rest of his community use it in the same way. Thus, in the case of the pupil who writes 103 instead of 102 when told to list a series of even integers, all that can be done to correct him will have been done once he has been given all the evidence he could have that this is not how the community of numerates performs the operation he has been set to perform. Protestations on his part to the effect that he has a different concept of numeracy can be countered by pointing out that his conception does not accord with the way the community of, say, English-speakers use 'number', 'numerate' and related words.

But this pleasing exit from the sceptical impasse is secured at the cost of conceding that it is impossible *ever* to make sense of the idea of correctness in carrying out practices or using language except by reference to securable communal

concensus. All coherent practices, if the Communitarians are right, must be treated as social practices and the whole expanse of language becomes a social phenomenon.

Some philosophers have been heartened by this result and have resisted Individualist attempts to break its soothing spell. Robinson,[14] for instance, charges, Baker, Hacker and McGinn with having revived the 'spectre' of the pre-social abstract individual which he (Robinson) and a nameless 'many' took to have been dealt 'a death-blow' by the later Wittgenstein. Interestingly, and fairly typically, Robinson sees Wittgenstein as belonging to a tradition stretching from Aristotle to Marx which emphasises the social character of human thought and action in a fashion which appeals to Collectivist intuitions, partly, I suspect, because both Aristotle and Marx offer theories of social self-knowledge which seem to meet our need for a self-understanding which is both organic and highly general.

If Wittgenstein's later thoughts are set in such a context (and this is certainly *one* of the contexts in which it might be possible to set them), then it becomes difficult to see how someone might come to speak a language by themselves or devise rules for themselves unless the correctness or otherwise of their practices can be tested against criteria ernshrined in communal acceptance. The thought here is that a practice carried on within the boundaries of individual solitude stands in need of a justification from outside those boundaries in order to establish its status as a normative regularity. Support for this position will, perhaps, be sought in Wittgenstein's objection to the possibility of someone keeping a private mental diary for sensation-symbols. (PI, i, 258) That objection hinges on the argument that, in the absence of an *external* criterion of correctness, the distinction between a right and a wrong application of the symbols is elided. Equate what is 'external' to the island of solitude with the realm of the 'social' and you have all that you need to ground the Collectivist case. Thus understanding and meaning will seem to be founded on social practices and in a consensus which underpins such practices.

The Collectivist standpoint can be further strengthened by emphasising that rules generally and, *a fortiori*, the rules of logical grammar, are in no sense innate or implanted in our makeup at birth by a munificent Creator. The following of them is something taught by instruction, example, exhortation, guidance and persuasion, and such teaching presupposes a social setting inasmuch as the presence of at least two persons is required for the process to be set in motion. More usually, the repository of techniques on which the acquisition of rule-following skills depends is vested in a host of traditions, customs and institutions with distinctive developmental histories, bound up inextricably with everything we are accustomed to attribute to the social history of some or other human collectivity. The Collectivist will argue that it is this central facet of the phenomenon in question that Wittgenstein brings into focus when he points out (PI, i, 198 & 199) that such rule-governed activities as following sign-posts, making reports, giving orders or playing chess are customs, uses, institutions.

To all this, it is open to the Individualist to respond by saying that there is abundant textual evidence to show that Wittgenstein took seriously the possibility that a solitary individual could (as all physically and psychologically competent human individuals surely can) devise and consistently follow rules independent of the society of others. In the *Blue Book*[15] dictations of 1933 – 1934 Wittgenstein allows that it is conceivable that all processes of understanding, obedience and so on "should have happened without the person ever having been taught the language", although he adds elliptically that this "seems extremely paradoxical". (BB, 12) He is more forthright in an as yet unpublished MS which falls somewhere between the *Blue Book* and the final draft of the *Philosophical Investigations*. There he says quite explicitly that a solitary caveman could devise a picture-language or even develop a spoken language for his own use.[16] He is as emphatic in the *Investigations* itself in saying that a human being can encourage, give orders to, obey, blame, punish, question and answer himself (PI, i, 243) – and this in a context where he is concerned precisely to distinguish such things as the possibility (which he acknowledges) that there might be people who spoke only in monologue from the private linguist's fantasy of a language hermetrically sealed off from the possibility of epistemic access by others.

Such texts, Individualists will claim, are underplayed or even ignored by Collectivists because the latter have failed to notice that Wittgenstein takes into account, not one but two sources of sustenance on which the possibility of following a rule may draw. One of these is the central, but mysterious, notion of 'agreement in judgements', (PI, i, 242) which certainly is held to be a prerequisite for all rule-following required for communicative interaction between persons. The other source is constituted by such natural, as contrasted with normative, regularities as allow for what David Pears calls "callibration on standard objects"[17] – which is all solitaries would need to invent and abide by their very own rules just as they do in Crusoenades and Wolf-Child sagas.

Wittgenstein's recognition of this second source of stabilisation comes out in his discussions of mathematical certainty and the so-called 'inexorability' of logic. Reflecting on the former topic, he resists saying that the certainty of mathematics rests on the reliability of paper and ink but concedes, nonetheless, that calculations with ink and paper which were subject to queer changes would be impossible. (PI, i, 226) He deals with the question of the inevitability of logical upshots by drawing attention to the variety of uses to which the adjective 'inexorable' may be put, then he says:

> There correspond to our laws of logic very general facts of daily experience. They are the ones which make it possible for us to keep on demonstrating those laws in a very simple way (with ink on paper for example). They are to be compared with the facts that make measurement with a yardstick easy and useful. (RFM, I-118)

It is fruitful for Individualists to point out that this mention of a yardstick or ruler (*MaBstab*) does much more than hint at a powerful strand of continuity between the

Tractarian Wittgenstein's talk of a picture being laid against reality like a ruler (TLP, 2. 1512) and the later Wittgenstein's thinking about the rules of mathematics and logic. His remarks about rulers may be used as reminders that it is human persons and only they who can callibrate in this way and relate their practices to brute-natural realities in this modality; that, short of this capacity, notions of communal consensus are helpless to explain – even in a very weak sense of the verb 'explain' – our mastery of, or failure to master, rules for communication or any other sort of activity. Communitarian notions cannot do the job because what was enigmatic about the rule-following abilities of a solitary individual in some fancied 'state of nature' is no less puzzling if we picture an entire community in the same state. The move in question does not constitute a 'Sceptical Solution' to the rule-following dilemma, unless we are prepared to dignify with the title, 'solution', a device which merely pushes the problem one step further back. Of course, this objection will not impress hard-line Communitarians, who will simply reply that in this case no other option is available and that it is precisely this impasse which is signalled by their use of the qualifying adjective 'sceptical'.

Nobody will pretend that Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* provides anything like a clear-cut path to the resolution of this dispute. Sometimes he writes as if social backdrops had always to be part of the stage-setting for rule-guided activity, while at other places he seems content to leave out the social props and to focus on such other prerequisites as regularity, repeatability and the reliability of the link between a rule and its application, alias the internal connection between theory and practice.

There can be no pretence either that the requirement of agreement in judgements on which Communitarians lay such stress does not play a central role in Wittgenstein's thinking about this matter. However, as Pears perceptively notices,[18] the two passages in the Wittgensteinian corpus in which this notion is introduced (PI, i, 240 - 242 and RFM VI - 39) both include the same important qualification – namely that agreement in judgements is a necessary condition for following rules *in those cases where language is to be used as means of communication.* There is no suggestion here that we follow rules *only* in order to communicate and thus no stipulation that communal resources must be available in all and any cases where rules are being followed. Thus the possibility is open for the genus of rule-following practices to be split into two species - one where communal assent is preconditional and another where it is not.

In something like the spirit of this division, T.S. Champlin has proposed a distinction between normative and non-normative rule-following,[19] where the former category embraces such things as customs and institutionalised practices involving communal agreement in judgements as to what distinguishes 'right' from 'wrong' performance, whereas the latter covers accustomed, but not customary, practices such as a desert-island solitary might very well go in for. Failure to make this distinction explicit has resulted, Champlin thinks, in Individualists and Communitarians talking past one another, with each camp finding examples which

are clear instances of rule-following and corresponding Wittgensteinian texts to support their respective cases. What each side fails to notice, on this view, is that the examples brought and texts cited by their opponents do not threaten their own position. The illusion that such a threat is offered is the by-product of a failure to give due weight to what distinguishes the locution "she did what it was her custom to do" from "she did what it was *the* custom to do".

Will this proposal end the embroilment between the two schools of thought? I fear it will not. The chief reason why it will not is that the master-issue in this debate is what is to *count* as following a rule, and tough-minded Communitarians will simply deny that a non-normative practice, however regular and repeatable, ought to fall under the rule-following rubric. Individualists, for their part, will be reluctant to concede that the community is the sole source of normativity and will paint rather compelling scenarios in which a solitary practitioner both invents rules (for a simple game of catching pebbles, say) and corrects his performances. But even if the point about the source of normativity is conceded, there will still be crucial questions about the relationship in which normative rule-following stands to the non-normative variant and thus ultimate questions about how individuals relate to communities. The deadlock will not be broken until we have a better insight into how Wittgenstein's own perspectives on these topics developed, during a period when he was himself a solitary, sometimes beleaguered, individual, living in tightly knit and tiny rural communities, teaching peasant schoolchildren to master many kinds of rules and struggling at the same time, as always, to gain mastery over himself. It is to this matter that I now turn.

A TEACHER'S LIFE

Because Wittgenstein published no fresh philosophical works after the appearance in 1921 of the *Tractatus*, seems to have temporarily dropped his habit of recording his reflections on the subject in notebooks and, also, because the period 1920 – 1926 appears to have been one of marked isolation and unhappiness, his years as an elementary schoolteacher are apt to be dismissed as philosophically barren. Thus, in a paper expressly devoted to the relevance to education of Wittgenstein's philosophy, D.W. Hamlyn[20] observes merely that Wittgenstein "hated the work, disliked his colleagues and was even sued by a group of parents who thought that he treated their children with undue severity". Hamlyn makes no attempt to assess what influence these years of intensive interaction with schoolchildren may have had on the development of the later philosophy, contenting himself with the remark that whether any of the experience adds confidence to claims for Wittgenstein's status within education and its philosophy "must be a matter for judgement".

This bleak picture of unremitting emnity, futile employment and intellectual aridity is badly distorted. To begin with, it is simply not true that Wittgenstein unreservedly "hated" schoolteaching or that he disliked his colleagues without

exception. On the latter score, as Ray Monk reports,[21] Wittgenstein found encouragement and support from such active enthusiasts for the Austrian School Reform Movement as Josef Putre, whom he came to know while teaching at his first post in the village of Trattenbach and who later became head of the school in Otterthal, where Wittgenstein taught after his spell at Trattenbach. The relationship between Wittgenstein and the district school superintendent, Wilhelm Kundt, also seems to have been cordial and supportive. These men certainly deserve to be thought of as Wittgenstein's friends, as does the music teacher at his last school, Puchberg, Rudolf Koder, the two meeting regularly to play duets for clarinet and piano.[22]

As far as his attitude to teaching is concerned, while it is true that Wittgenstein found the task of instructing peasant children from impoverished backgrounds in remote communities in the Austrian Alps both frustrating and enervating, it is also the case that he displayed extraordinary dedication and ingenuity in trying to teach (especially his more able pupils) mathematics, literature, astronomy and biblical studies at a level well beyond the requirements of the official curriculum and in a fashion which is scarcely consistent with the attitude of one who 'hates' his calling. The efforts he expended on giving extra tuition to his Trattenbach pupils, Karl Gruber, Emmerich Koderhold and Oskar Fuchs, despite parental resistance, provide ample evidence of his commitment.[23]

The verdict that these years of sacrificial effort were philosophically sterile is, at best, superficial and, at worst, falsificatory. Nor is it the case that Wittgenstein was denied any contact with persons capable of stimulating his reflections on philosophical matters. Perhaps the most significant of these contacts was the visit to Puchberg in September of 1923 of the brilliant young Cambridge mathematician, Frank Ramsey. Ramsey stayed for about a fortnight, during which time the two devoted five hours of each day – begining at two o'clock in the afternoon, when Wittgenstein finished teaching at the school – to line-by-line discussions of the *Tractatus*.[24] These discussions were to be resumed on Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge and academic life in 1929, a year before Ramsey's untimely death at the age of twenty-six. When one remembers that the Introduction to the *Investigations* describes the helpfulness of Ramsey's criticism of the Tractarian doctrine as being scarcely estimable, the importance of the Puchberg exchanges can be seen in its true light. Recall as well that the two years prior to the Puchberg meeting had seen Wittgenstein preoccupied, not only with his teaching duties, but with the tasks, firstly, of getting the *Tractatus* published and then of overseeing C.K. Ogden's translation of the work into English. Additional stimuli were provided by correspondence and encounters with Russell and by Wittgenstein's visit to England (including a stay in Cambridge) during 1925.

But even had these energising influences been absent, it is ridiculous to suppose that a philosopher of genius and one who had just completed a book which changed the shape and direction of modern philosophy could, even had he wished to do so,

have ceased to cogitate upon issues which had been the central concern of his adult life. The ground for the supposition is, of course, Wittgenstein's own claim in the Preface to the *Tractatus* to "have found on all essential points the final solution of the problems". On the strength of this remark, the usual opinion has a war-worn, nervously-exhausted but intellectually self-satisfied Wittgenstein relinquishing all philosophical activity in the belief that he had solved the discipline's major difficulties, until around the time of his attendance at L.E.J. Brouwer's famous lecture on "Mathematics, Science and Language", delivered in Vienna in March 1928.

This story has only to be told for its intrinsic implausibility to emerge. In order to believe it, we should have to envisage a Wittgenstein who had undergone a post-war personality change so drastic as to be inconsistent with the searching self-criticism which culminated in the *Philosophical Investigations*. The legend of Wittgenstein's six-year sojourn in an intellectual desert is really cousin to the discredited myth of the 'two Wittgensteins', one a youthful logicist and mystic and the other a mature protagonist of a commensensical philosophical semantics, with each being pictured as author of entirely different works of genius. Both fables fail to describe the *process* of his development because they exaggerate ruptures and discontinuities while ignoring continuities and conjunctures.

But what kind of contribution are we to think of schoolteaching as having made to the evolution of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in general and the account he was to give of rule-following in particular? Any search for a credible answer to this question must begin with a proper understanding of Wittgenstein's attitude towards teaching as a vocation and the way in which this complemented his notion of the philosopher's calling. As far as teaching is concerned, Brian McGuinness[25] is quite correct to observe that Wittgenstein tended to see all education as moral education. As to philosophy, there is ample evidence that he viewed the activity in the same religio-ethical light. The point of the *Tractatus*, he wrote to Ludwig von Ficker,[26] was an ethical one, for the book delimited the ethical 'from within, as it were,' by remaining silent about it. The Tractarian doctrine (if it may be called that) accords with this claim. The book's main concern, as its title indicates, is with logic. Its chief critical preoccupation is to rebutt the Fregian thesis that the logical connectives are names for 'logical objects' or (as Russell had thought) 'complexes' of such objects. For Wittgenstein, the logical operators, '.', 'v' and so forth, were not names of objects, since there were no such objects, but of operations such as conjunction, disjunction and implication. Rather, logic was 'transcendental' (TLP, 6.373-6.374) and in this respect bore the same transcendent character as ethics and aesthetics (TLP, 6.421).

But, before drawing the conclusion that Wittgenstein saw the activities of teaching and philosophising as services of obedience to the selfsame moral and religious imperatives, it must be noted that the above construal of his intentions in the *Tractatus* is not uncontested. By comparison with the extensive treatment of

logico-semantic matters, the remarks concerning the ineffability of the ethical in the so-called 'mystical' sections of the book appear to be extremely laconic and under-argued. This led Hacker[27] to complain that the ineffability thesis rests only on the bare assertion of the non-contingency of the ethical and that ethical pseudo-propositions, although not classifiable as senseless in the way Wittgenstein thought tautologies and contradictions to be senseless, are not classifiable as formal concepts either. Were they so classifiable, Hacker maintains, it would be clear why they are treated as pseudo-propositions, but then they would have to incorporate variables taking objects of a given category as their values and the *Tractatus* says nothing about what the substitution-instances of such variables might be. What this objection comes to is that Wittgenstein fails to investigate such questions as what would stand to the concept of ethical value as 'red' stands to the concept of colour or 'two' to the concept of number, as we would have a right to expect him to do if his claim in the letter to von Ficker about the ethical thrust of his philosophy is to be taken seriously.

This argument is not, it seems to me, strong enough to endanger the link I am trying to establish between Wittgenstein's attitude to his teaching and his way of doing philosophy, because it is not rigorous enough to licence our dismissing his own stated and never retracted view of his own work. The impulse to disregard that view is odd in so trenchant a defender of the Individualist reading of the rule-following considerations as Hacker has been. For, as we shall see, the case for Individualism in that regard has its ultimate roots in a conception of the individual human person which makes little sense outside of the particular form of moral absolutism that Wittgenstein espoused, both in the *Tractatus* and in his "Lecture of Ethics", prepared for delivery at Cambridge between September 1929 and December 1930.

That aside, it is difficult to see why, in order to believe that the main point of the *Tractatus* is an ethical one, we should anticipate a discussion of possible instantiations of the ethical. Is this not precisely what Wittgenstein cautions us *not* to expect when he says that ethics cannot be put into words?[28] Such a discussion would indeed be in order if what were on offer were theoretical accounts, putative explanations of the values which make sense of our lives or if the values in question were mundane and relative ones. But just as, for Wittgenstein, there is no such thing as a 'science of logic' (there being no logical objects to constitute the subject matter of such a science), so there can be no 'theory of ethics', because ethics enjoys the same transcendental status as logic. Absolute values are what make sense of the world. But what constitutes the sense of the world must lie outside it,[29] and there is no making explanatory sense of that on which all sense-making depends.

This parity in attitude towards both teaching and the philosopher's art is evidence that it was Wittgenstein's rather singular Tolstoyan moral religion and not the social democratic principles of the Austrian School Reform Movement which induced him to become a teacher. Indeed, he seems to have shared the reservations

concerning the Movement of his friend from his prisoner-of-war camp days, the teacher, Ludwig Hansel, a conservative Roman Catholic and a well known figure in Viennese educational circles.[30]

But if there was much in the new *Schulreform*, led by the Austrian Minister of Education, Otto Glockel, that Wittgenstein rejected in a spirit of religious individualism, there was also much which must have engaged his sympathy as a protagonist of Tolstoyan egalitarian and communitarian ideals and as an educationalist. Particularly significant is the fact that the new system departed from the traditional pedagogy's emphasis on passive rote-learning and stressed instead the need for teacher-innovation in thinking through the presentation of each lesson with the aim of helping pupils to acquire new skills through practical participatory activity. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Ludwig's father, the hard-headed industrialist, Karl Wittgenstein, had always been critical of the old school system on the grounds that it did nothing to prepare scholars for the practicalities of modern life. At all events, all the historical evidence indicates that Wittgenstein excelled at the new mode of instruction. Practical exercises played a large part in his teaching. His pupils were taught astronomy by scrutinising the night sky, anatomy by assembling the skeleton of a cat. They were taken on country walks and made to identify plants as part of their botany course an on and excursion to Vienna that they might learn to identify architectural styles.[31]

Of special interest are his efforts to help his pupils master the rules of spelling, to 'awaken the orthographic conscience' as he put it.[32] He began at Puchberg by getting the children to compile their own vocabulary books. This involved the laborious process of writing words on a blackboard and seeing that the class copied them correctly into their books. The books were then sewn together and bound between cardboard covers so that each pupil has his or her own self-made dictionary. These labours culminated, after he moved on to teach at Otterthal, with his preparation in 1924 and publication the following year of a dictionary expressly designed for Austrian children at the elementary school level. Significantly, the dictionary omits perfectly standard German words which were not used in rural Austria but includes some expressions in Austrian dialect. It was designed as a practical aid to a specific form of rule mastery.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Enough, I hope, has now been said to establish the point that the prioritisation of practice over theory or interpretation which distinguishes Wittgenstein's later account of rule-following from his earlier Tractarian thoughts on the topic has its origin in his life and labours as a schoolteacher, although those labours were the product of the same religio-ethical vocation and quest which issued in the *Tractatus*. In that great work the rules which make understanding and meaning possible are the ineluctable rules of logical syntax. These constitute the hidden logical structure of

language, camouflaged, as it were, by the outward appearance of our natural forms of expression but perspicuously displayed by logical analysis. The vehicle for such analysis is, of course, the symbolism of modern function-theoretic logic and the rigid structure of the rules thus uncovered is given by the propositional and predicate calculi.

The new emphasis on practice changes all this in three important ways: Firstly, since practices are public or, at minimum, potentially publicisable things, rules can no longer be treated as hidden essences of language or anything else. Even silent exercises in mental arithmetic must be revealable, even if they never are revealed, if they are to count as instances of following a rule. In this respect, at least, Rule Scepticism can get no grip. Secondly, the cessation of the quest for an occult logical essence issues in an awareness of the immense variety of rules and ways of complying with them that are open to our view. Because no single unifying essence, no one common feature, unites all these practices (PI, i, 65-66) we are driven to conclude that such commonality as exists between them is shown by shadings of similarities of various kinds, best characterised as 'family resemblances' (PI, i, 67). Finally, the substitution of what might be termed a practico-anthropocentric approach for the logical essentialism of the *Tractatus* puts flexibility and mutability in place of rigidity and immutability. The notion of logical form is not abolished but is transmuted to become the idea of a form (or forms) of life. Thus the Tractarian calculus is replaced, initialy by the *Satzsystem* or system of sentences of the *Philosophical Remarks* and, finally, by the 'language-game' conceit which makes its first appearance in the *Blue and Brown Books* and plays a central role in the philosophical semantics of the *Investigations.*

The dramatic character of these revisions, coupled with the admissions which the notorious intractability of the colour-exclusion problem forced Wittgenstein to make concerning errors contained in the *Tractatus*, tends to obscure telling strands of continuity connecting his old with his new approaches. One such strand has already been mentioned – namely the importance attached to the circumstance that certain rules, like the rule which makes the length of a certain bar of platinum in Paris the length of the standard metre, can be set beside objective reality and used as methods of projection and calibration for scientific and other purposes. I had also remarked that human beings and only they were capable of setting up rules of this criterial kind. In a sense this thesis is implicit in the *Tractatus.* But it is made explicit by the anthropocentrism of the later writings and in the way the notion of agreement in judgement is severed from the idea of agreement in opinion and connected instead to agreement in form of life.

One result of making the capacity for drawing up rules for standardisation and calibration definitional of what it is to be human is to distance one's philosophical anthropology from a distinction, of Cartesian parentage, which makes pure sensate consciousness the point of demarcation between animal and human existence and to reconnect with a Platonic and Aristotelian tradition which makes the ability to

articulate and act in accordance with the claims of reason the limit which segregates human from sub-human ways of being.

With this re-demarcation goes an accentuation of the connection between rules qua standards and the *authority* which sets, upholds and embodies such standards. An intimate link is thus established between the domain of rules and rationality and the dominion of ethical values. That connection too is implicit in the *Tractatus*, because the rules of logical syntax occupy the same transcendental region as do the absolute values of Tractarian ethics. But the relation only emerges in its full significance once the focus shifts to the field of human activity, as it does increasingly in the later writings, and away from the theoretical and scientistic preoccupations of the *Tractatus* which, despite Wittgenstein's own strictures against importing the methodology of science into philosophy (TLP, 4.111 - 4.112) were made virtually unavoidable by the method of logical analysis he employed during that period. Equally inevitably, the more attention was concentrated on giving fine-grained descriptions of the actual practices whereby rules are instituted and sustained in operation, the more the phenomenenon of human authority and its preservation engaged his concern. It is not at all accidental, therefore, that his death-bed cogitations *On Certainty* (OC) should raise – in precisely the context of a discussion of the role yardsticks play in enabling us to form judgements – the possibility that we must recognise 'certain authorities' in order to make judgements at all. (OC, 493)[33]

Now authorities may appear in all manner of guises, from platinum rods in Paris to particular persons and the patterns of their lives. As the Parisian standard metre may (if we choose to recognise it) determine the response of our consciences with respect to accurate calculation, so the lives of figures like Jesus or Socrates (if we decide to adopt a particular attitude towards them) may serve as standards which we strive to emulate and incorporate into our lives as volitional and rational creatures. Notice how this way of putting matters, by foregrounding the role of human agency, portrays the internal bond between the rule or standard which is constitutive of the agent's reason for acting as being impregnated with volitional content. This means that when agents give reasons for acting in accordance with whatever rules may be in question, those reasons will crucially, if only implicitly, include the circumstance that they chose so to act. Of course, reasons of this kind may never be given, but they must be giveable if the distinction between rule-guided activity and mere random behaviour is to bear any weight. Such reasons have to be potentially available because for a behaviour to qualify as action in compliance with a rule – indeed for it to count as an action at all – it has to count as a human action, and it can do that if and only if it comprises both rational and volitional features. This constraint is a direct logical consequence of the Wittgensteinian move mentioned earlier which consists of a refusal to make consciousness *simpliciter* the defining characteristic of humanity but insists instead

on a return to the Classical stipulations which define human action in terms of intellect and will.

The above argument, if sound, must have profound implications for both Rule Scepticism and the Communitarian/Individualist dispute. It illumines the former problem by drawing attention to volition and, hence, to the different kinds of volitional acts there are, thereby making us sensitive to the very real difference between *obeying* a rule and *recognising* a given rule as authoritative. What these distinctions bring out is that, while scepticism in respect of rules is certainly possible, it is scepticism on a very different model from that proposed by Kripke. For I can indeed choose to adopt a sceptical attitude towards someone or something's putative authority even when others recognise it and this choice of mine may have been preceded by deliberation. But, in such a case,the volitional act itself will be of that subtle kind which entails a gestalt-switch in our perceptions of how things are as when, for instance, I choose to see certain patterns and not others in the clouds, this and not that image in the flames, a duck and not a rabbit in a drawing which permits both possibilities. It follows that someone may act in perfect compliance with a rule and yet refuse to make the gestalt-switch which would necessitate their seeing it as authoritative, just as they might refuse to comply with it while rightly believing that this refusal did not constitute defiance of an authority. In the former instance, we should speak of a refusal to comply with the *spirit* of a rule, while in the latter case a defiance of both spirit and letter has occured. Clearly there is an important difference in the phenomenology of the volitional act of disobeying a rule (the authoritative status of which one may or may not accept) and the act of refusing to accept the rule as authoritative. This is shown by the fact that the former lends itself to behavioural observational tests in a way that the latter does not. For, if I allow that to follow a rule is essentially a practice, then I may be sceptical as to whether someone's act is in accordance with the rule and whether he has mastered it for just so long as his observable behaviour in compliance with it does not render me vulnerable to the charge that I am now rejecting all the evidence I could have. But if I am sceptical on the score that the agent himself may harbour a sceptical attitude regarding the authority which the rule should exercise while, nonetheless, making his observable behaviour conform to the rule's demands, it is by no means obvious that my doubts are so readily settleable. Kripke has, in my view, conflated these two connected but distinguishable cases and so produced a far weaker foundation for and defence of the Communitarian position than he might otherwise have done. But it will, I trust, be apparent that saying this in no way commits me to Communitarianism or to the view that scepticism directed towards attitudes to authority is incorrigible.

I have made so much of the part played by volition in the anatomy of the rule-following process partly because of the importance I believe Wittgenstein to have attached to it and also because I believe it to have been underplayed, even ignored by Individualists and Communitarians alike. Perhaps because they have

taken the continuities in his thought less seriously than they might have done, the disputants appear to have forgotten that Wittgenstein's earliest speculations were inspired by Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*. This neglect has bred a defective understanding of what he might have meant by an 'individual' and by a 'community'.

As the foregoing examination of the relation between authority and volition in Wittgenstein's thoughts about rule-following has been designed to show, an individual person is, for him, defined and delimited by their will in a world which is independent of its operations in a manner somewhat analogous to the way in which a geometrical point is defined by the Euclidean space that surrounds it. (TLP, 6.373 - 6.374) Perhaps the point is missed because he does not treat the will as a *faculty*, owned, so to speak, by a 'Self', but rather as inseperable from what the 'Self' is. It is this position that the arguments about volition in the *Investigations* aim to establish (PI, i, 611 - 632). In fact Wittgenstein prefers to speak, not of a self, but of a soul and of adopting 'an attitude towards a soul' (PI, ii, 178), thus inviting us to think of an individual as being ensouled by its will in a modality that sets absolute limits to what may be done to that being at the will of others and to what that being itself may do to creatures similarly ensouled. Accordingly, a community will be a communion of ensouled beings in which communication is made possible by agreements touching on which rules will be commonly held to be authoritative.

It cannot be too often stressed that the agreement spoken of here is no hypothetical affair, arrived at by contracting parties after due deliberation has resulted in a consensus. Although it may well be described as deliberate, it is not grounded in the kind of deliberation which has a conjectural structure, but in an attitude which recognises in the being of others – in the very otherness which is a mark of their presence to us – a living form which is shareable. Once the issue is seen in this light, it is obvious that there can be no point in prioritising individuals over communities in the style of so-called 'methodological individualists' or of putting the community 'above' the individual, as a certain tendency in socialist doctrine is prone to do. We can, if we wish, say that ethical individuals are 'social beings', meaning that they are capable of following those rules which make communal intercourse possible, so long as we recognise that they may refuse to enter into the spirit of such rules and thus deliberately fail to communicate while giving an appearance of doing so. Surely that possibility is something which we all (at least in our non-philosophical moments) acknowledge to be a real option.

LIVING AND LEARNING

Labels are not easily or very profitably attached to a philosopher of Wittgenstein's stature and originality. Tags like 'idealist', 'empiricist', 'Kantian' or 'anti-Cartesian' only marginally assist our grasp of his endeavour when justly applied and, when misapplied, issue in confusion and misunderstanding. The

influences he himself acknowledged – Russell, Frege, Loos, Ramsay, Weininger, Sraffa and Spengler – must be treated as Rorscharch-blobs, partial and undefinitive accesses to the growth of his philosophy. It is, however, fair and not entirely pointless to state that if his studies at Cambridge as an undergraduate research student and grueling war experience had made him a neo-Kantian transcendental idealist and a logicist, his work as a teacher had transmuted these features to produce a philosophy which betrays affinities with both Christian neo-Platonism and a peculiar brand of Hegelianism. What he seems to have learned from his pupils in the Austrian Alps – whom he sometimes tyrannised with his face-slapping and hair-pulling - is that the rules of logic and of language, of mathematics and of morality form a vast and varied fabric which is indistinguishable from the fabric of our lives. The new vision deserves to be called Christian because it represents the spiritual principle of the will as *incarnated* in visible, describable, fleshly human lives. It may be called neo-Platonic because it makes room for the Socratic notion that each individual is a unique soul and it can be called Hegelian because it treats logic as being immanent in a world governed by change and not merely as a set of formal 'laws of thought'.

A cautionary thought about education and its philosophy can be extracted from all this: Many (although by no means all) rules which pupils in a modern educational system are taught to master are themselves keys to mastery over various facets of the world they inhabit. Often such rules can appropriately be thought of as points of entry into communities of various kinds, so that access to some or other power-begetting technique becomes equivalent to gaining entry into a community. The rules of arithmetic may be seen as providing access to the community of calculators, those of map-reading and map-drawing to the companionship of cartographers and so on. But, as has been argued, the fact that pupils produce performances which are in perfect conformity with such rules is not sufficient to warrant the conclusion that they have entered into the spirit which informs the rules, still less that they are participating in the spiritual life of the communities into which their instructors sought to initiate them. It may be that, contrary to the accepted behavioural indicators and due to nothing that might be called ineptitude or inability, the scholars refuse to genuinely assent either to the authority of the rules or the communal life those rules determine; that they offer in respect of both a kind of resistance of the spirit, an opposition of the will which sets itself against the ultimate objectives of the educational plan and the powers it promises to confer.

It must be clear that nothing psychological but something logical is intended by this use of the term 'resistance'. Although psychological phenomena may well accompany, they are not essential to resistance in my sense. This proviso at once raises the question which has so far been deliberately left open as to how the resistance is to be detected, if indeed it is detectable. Only a suggestive answer can be offered here: It is that the logic of the resisters' encounters within the whole gamut of communal interactions in which they are assumed by their mentors and

others to be engaged will, on close examination - and an examination which goes well beyond a mechanical scrutiny of the behavioural responses they exhibit in complying with the rules they have been taught – betray a certain lack of *naturalness*, a kind of artificiality which does not blend with what they are doing, in something like the way computer-speak fails to match the logic of natural language.

Unavoidably, the possibility of this kind of resistance raises pressing moral issues. Can any ethical justification be brought to legitimate attempts by educators to overcome this stiffening of the will? Do such attempts not constitute presumptious infringements on the integrity, even attempts to 'break the spirit' of those who resist in the way I have tried to describe? Do utilitarian considerations having to do with the powers and prerogatives certain forms of rule-mastery confer licence attempts to invade the boundaries set by an individual will for the student's 'own good'? Answers given to questions like these will show where the respondents set the limits which seperate education and propaganda and segregate exhortation and persuasion from indoctrination.

It is worth remarking that were all rules that ought to engage the attention of educators of a sort which are supportive of and conditions for entrance into the life of a community, the ethical dilemma raised by resistance to them could not be posed as I have posed it. For even if we suppose the resistance to be inspired by allegiance to some *other* community's way of doing things - counting, perhaps, or constructing a calendar – such alternative techniques do not constitute the maxim which informs the individual communard's decision to resist and which displays itself in that decision. The maxim is not, unlike the set of alternative rules it defends or the set whose claims it resists, a rule for communication. It is precisely the inspiration of a decision *not* to communicate, while giving the appearance via a select set of prescribed behaviours of doing so. As such, it cannot, on pain of generating a vicious regress, be classified as a rule for communicative or communal interaction. Thus it cannot strictly be called a 'reason for acting', because reasons are either stated or stateable, things we communicate. Rather it *shows* itself for what it is in the decision not to participate and is integral to the will and selfhood of the agent who so decides.

It must be an open question as to whether a public and professionalised educational system, such as the one in which teachers today or Wittgenstein himself laboured, ought actively to try to cultivate this kind of ethical individualism. Certainly teachers, particularly in countries like South Africa which have histories of individuals being classified willy-nilly in terms of their real or supposed membership of communities or what are alleged to be communities, ought to be careful in its presence and respectful of its claims. But we have now come a long distance from the Athenian temples and market places where Socrates taught and tried to bring to birth the true souls of his interlocutors. Until we can learn to teach and to philosophise in something akin to his spirit, there will be times when the right thing to do is to do nothing.

I am aware that this last injunction will disappoint those educationalists who have been waiting to be told how Wittgenstein's extradordinary insights can be applied to the quest for solutions to the various 'crises' in education which have mushroomed in this country and, indeed, over the entire face of the globe. I can offer them little comfort. Despite the importance of his conception of volition to an accurate grasp of his philosophy of personhood, such ethical and educational precepts as may be extracted from his writings are not calls to action but curbs on activism, geared to still enthusiasm and not to stimulate it. They are best treated as mnemonic devices, intended, not to instruct us in how to teach others to gain intellectual dominance over nature or social circumstances or even over themselves, but to bring us to a sober recollection of the limits set and the moral restraints imposed by the kind of values which impregnate our best thoughts about the ends of education. Such cautionary counsels are unlikely to gain wide acceptance in an age so devoted to social engineering and the building of blueprints for better or best-possible worlds as our busy epoch has been. Yet, I suspect, they have more to say to it than our intellectual engineers and architechts are willing or able to hear.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 181-190

The Arbitrariness of Fundamental Pedagogics

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Defenders of Fundamental Pedagogics appear to believe that it has a role to play in a changing South Africa. This paper argues that Fundamental Pedagogics is not capable of playing such a role. It is not because its procedures of 'critical scrutiny' are arbitrary and contradictory. While Fundamental Pedagogics claims to be phenomenological, its practioners engage in a kind of etymological analysis. Etymological analysis as practiced in Fundamental Pedagogics precludes the possiblity of phenomenological analysis.

South Africa is at present going through a process of political, social, economic and educational change. In the face of such change a question that must be asked is: what are the paradigms by which the changes should be understood? Are the paradigms by which the everyday reality of South Africa has in the past been understood themselves part of that which is subject to change? Or do these paradigms remain an unchanged basis from which to view change?

This paper will address the question of paradigm change in the context of an analysis of Fundamental Pedagogics. Certainly Fundamental Pedagogics, with its emphasis on separate education systems for children of different cultures, seems to be part of the system which needs to change. Yet defenders of Fundamental Pedagogics seem to believe that this paradigm has a role to play in a changing South Africa. As recently as 1991, P. Higgs has claimed, in spite of much argument to the contrary, that Fundamental Pedagogics is a science which has much to contribute to a changing South Africa.[1] The scientific and critical nature of Fundamental Pedagogics, Higgs claims, will allow it to play a constructive role in a changing South Africa:

> Fundamental Pedagogics seeks to serve the cause of education by submitting to constant critical scrutiny and review, society's educational institutions, policies, goals and value systems in order to safeguard human values.[2]

In this paper I shall argue that what is called Fundamental Pedagogics is not capable of performing the task Higgs wishes it to perform. It is not capable of submitting educational institutions or anything else to 'critical scrutiny and review' for, as I shall argue, its procedures of 'critical scrutiny' are arbitrary and contradictory, generating conclusions which are subjective and thus have no 'scientific value'.

My argument will proceed as follows: Firstly, I shall argue that Fundamental Pedagogics contains contradictory perspectives on the nature of research. On the one hand, Fundamental Pedagogics claims to be phenomenological; on the other hand, its practitioners engage in a kind of etymological analysis of the origin of

words. They do not offer a coherent account of the relationship between these two forms of explanation. Secondly, I will argue that Fundamental Pedagogics is characterised by what it calls 'ideological bias or distortion'. This means that it masquerades its own 'prescientific' assumptions as if they were scientifically derived conclusions. Finally, I shall argue that although Fundamental Pedagogicians spend much energy on writing about phenomenology, the nature of their research practices suggests that there is no place for phenomenology in their actual procedures of research.

I

Proponents of Fundamental Pedagogics articulate two methods of scientific inquiry: phenomenological and etymological.

1. As phenomenologists they claim to proceed from an analysis of the everyday situation or reality in which the phenomenon of education manifests itself to an understanding of the essence of the phenomenon of education. Thus de Vries writes:

> When the phenomenological method or approach is used, the educationalist takes his point of departure in the phenomenon of education itself as the latter reveals itself in the education situation ....[3]

It is important to note that for the phenomenologist essences can be revealed only after an analysis of the everyday context in which education takes place: "Only when the phenomenon is described as it actually is, can its essence be brought to light".[4] The first step in phenomenological analysis is an analysis of the ways in which the phenomenon of education appears in the 'educational situation' and the last step is the revelation of the essence of the phenomenon. Essences are revealed through a process of phenomenological reduction known as 'bracketing'. To bracket something is to suspend belief in the existence of that thing. By suspending a belief the researcher frees himself from any bias or prejudice, thereby allowing himself to see the thing objectively:

> The aim (of phenomenological reduction) is to gain access to the phenomenon as it is originally given. In order to be able to do this, one first of all has to get rid of prejudices, opinions, personal interpretations .... by bracketing them, or temporarily rejecting their actual existence.[5]

2. On the other hand, in another context de Vries claims that the first stage in the analysis of the phenomenon of education is an etymological analysis of the word 'education'. "The educationalist will immediately begin with an etymological analysis of the word 'pedagogic', since every word has an historical origin".[6]

Instead of describing the nature of the education situation, the first step is now an analysis of the Greek or Latin root of the meaning of the term education. The reason that De Vries gives for this is that "every word has an historical origin".

De Vries does not show the significance of the historical origin of words. He implies that the idea of the 'historical origin' is a significant basis upon which to build a study, but offers no discussion of the idea of an 'historical origin'. It seems to be a free floating phrase, a phrase whose meaning needs to be contextualised yet no such event ever takes place. De Vries gives the phrase no phenomenological significance.

Why is it that just because a word has an historical origin, the historical origin of the word must serve as the point of departure for an analysis of the phenomenon of education? And what is the relationship between phenomenological analysis and etymological analysis?

De Vries does not even entertain these questions. He does not write about the relationship between these two forms of explanation. They are both seen as aspects of Fundamental Pedagogics but are not brought in relationship to each other. It seems then as if de Vries's description of Fundamental Pedagogics does not form a coherent whole: the parts do not stand in an integrated relationship to each other and thus the discourse is fragmented. Two different methods are being articulated as though they were one.

An author in the tradition of Fundamental Pedagogics who does situate the two forms of explanation in relation to each other is W. Landman. He claims that etymological analysis is the first stage in phenomenological analysis. His reason for this, as in the case of de Vries, is that every word has an historical origin. But he goes further and implies that an analysis of the historical origin of the word is a means by which to reveal the essence of a phenomenon:

> What may be achieved by starting with an etymological analysis? Etymology is already an aspect of phenomenology as every word has an historical origin and also every word is a manifestation (appearance) of that which is (an aspect of reality). This means that by putting it into words an essential is allowed to manifest itself as it is. The correct word will indicate the substance of that which appears in reality ... Words and that which is cannot be separated. An etymological study of a particular word, for instance the pedagogic, is in fact the initial phenomenological analysis of the particular reality which needs to be put into words.[7]

What Landman seems to be claiming is that because there is a relationship between words and things, to describe a thing is to describe the word that names a thing; for example, to describe education the researcher must begin by describing the word that describes education, he must begin by defining the word 'education'.

Landman's argument presupposes an understanding of the relationship between language and the world in which it is shown that to describe the world is to describe the language used to describe the world. He does not offer a detailed phenomenological or etymological conception of the relationship between language and the world. The only account that Landman offers of this relationship is the following: "Heidegger: that which is cannot exist when it has not been put into words because the correct word gives substance to that which is" (*sic*).[8]

Even if this were a correct interpretation of Heidegger, this explanation does not explain what Landman wishes it to explain. More importantly, Landman has not accounted for his most crucial move – the move from the intimate relationship between language and things to the description of the language used to describe a thing as the initial stage of the phenomenological analysis. That there is an intimate connection between language and things does not mean that to describe a thing is to describe the word that is used to describe that thing. It is not self-evident or by definition true that to describe something is to describe the meaning of the word which we use to name that thing. Landman has offered no rule by which to claim that to describe something is to describe the word that names that thing.

It is as though his account of scientific method is not structured or bound by any rules of logic – phenomenological or etymological. It thus seems that Landman's work is characterised by the same fragmentation as is the work of de Vries: the parts do not fit together. He has given no basis upon which to claim that etymological analysis is the first stage of phenomological analysis. His account does not bring etymological and phenomenological analysis in relation to each other. He simply says that etymological analysis is the first stage in phenomenological analysis but does not show that it is. He has given no phenomenologically appropriate reason for beginning with etymological analysis.

Another issue which is worth focusing on concerns the lack of objectivity in etymological and phenomenological analysis. As I have already mentioned, one of the crucial stages in phenomenological analysis is the practice of 'bracketing'. The purpose of bracketing is to allow the researcher to ensure the objectivity of his study by suspending his own belief and prejudices.

No such activity seems to be part of etymological analysis. There seems to be no procedure which guarantees that an etymological interpretation of a word is free from the bias of the researcher; that his interpretation does not reflect his own interests or philosophy of life. In fact, although Landman and all Fundamental Pedagogicians use etymological analysis as the first stage of analysis, none of them offer a description of the method and procedures involved in etymological analysis. It thus seems as if their interpretations are both arbitrary and subjective.

It seems futile to introduce a criterion of objectivity at the second stage of analysis (phenomenological analysis) when the first stage is subjective and arbitrary (etymological analysis). This suggests that the whole study will be guided by an analysis which is biased and subjective.

An example of this can be found in the definition of education advanced by Fundamental Pedagogicians. They claim that education is a process through which a child is led by an adult to adulthood. This definition is not derived phenomenologically but etymologically, through an analysis of the Latin word for education. Viljoen tells us that "The term educate comes from the Latin word which means to lead out. This suggests the leading forth of a person from the sphere of childhood towards that of adulthood".[9]

This definition serves to orientate the whole of Viljoen's and other pedagogicians' inquiry into the nature of education. But it itself has not been shown to be derived objectively. If the definition itself is not objective – and because pedagogicians have not specified any procedures for etymological analysis there is every reason to believe that it is not objective – what is the point of doing phenomenological research (that is, research which claims to be objective) that is orientated by this definition?

Furthermore, if etymological analysis were to be the first stage in phenomenological analysis it is arguable that phenomenological analysis becomes redundant. Landman does not give an explicit account of the aim of etymological analysis but it seems that the product of etymological analysis is a description of the essence or the definition of the term under discussion. But, as was said earlier, the revelation of an essence is supposed to be the end result of a phenomenological analysis. With etymological analysis, it seems that the essence has been revealed prior to the start of the phenomenological analysis itself, that is, the analysis of education in its everyday situation.

This can be quite clearly seen in terms of Viljoen's definition of education given above: we know before even engaging in the process of phenomenological research that education is a process of being led to adulthood. Surely this definition should be the result of phenomenological research? For the essence is supposed to be revealed at the end of a study. It is in fact the aim of a phenomenological study to reveal this essence. Thus it seems absurd and contradictory to begin a study with a knowledge of the essence.

It seems that Fundamental Pedagogicians cannot be both phenomenologists and etymologists. Phenomenology and etymology have not been shown to form a coherent whole. Furthermore, because they have offered no methodology for etymological analysis, their interpretations of the meaning of words are vague, subjective and arbitrary.

II

I wish now to argue that one of the implications of seeing etymology as the first stage in phenomenological research is that the research takes on an ideological character. This will again emphasise the lack of coherence between etymology and phenomenology.

From the perspective of Fundamental Pedagogics, an ideologist is anyone who begins an analysis of the phenomenon of education not with a description of the everyday reality of the educational situation but by imposing their own definition on the everyday reality. By imposing a definition on the everyday reality of education, the researcher is prevented from gaining access to the phenomenon as it is – the thing itself. Instead, the researcher will produce a distorted concept of education.

He will produce a concept of education which suits his own assumptions or philosophy of life but which may not be true to the nature of education.

Different ideologies have different kinds of definitions which they impose on everyday reality of education. In the case of Fundamental Pedagogics it seems that pedagogicians impose an etymological definition on the nature of education thus preventing themselves from understanding the nature of education and, in their own terms, suggesting that they are imposing their own assumptions on the nature of education.

An example of the ideological nature of Landman's approach can be seen in the following quotation:

> Paidagogia means leading or accompanying a child (Pais = child; agein = to lead; paidagogein = to lead a child or show him the way; paidagogos = leader of children). The pedagogician knows that he has to turn to the life-world in order to be able to observe the leading of a child. It may thus be said that he applies the category 'child accompaniment' in his investigation of the life-world. He will then observe that the child is led (accompanied) by an adult.[10]

This definition shapes the approach of the researcher to the life-world. The idea 'leading or accompanying of a child' determines what in the life-world shall be looked at and what should not be looked at, that is, everything that falls outside of the idea of a child being led to adulthood is not part of the study of education. What is excluded, is excluded not by phenomenological analysis but by definition. This definition serves to shape subsequent analysis. This is phenomenologically inappropriate.

Furthermore in the life-world what is found is only what is put there by the definition, that is, that a child is led by an adult. Landman admits this when he says that in the life-world "He (the researcher) will then observe that the child is led (accompanied) by an adult".[11] This is a matter of seeing only what the definition allows the researcher to see.

Nothing of what is observed in the life-world can change or call the etymological definition of education into question. From the beginning of the study until its conclusion education is always a matter of a child being led to adulthood. This concept of education is itself never in doubt. It guides all research but is itself never the subject matter of research.

It is precisely in the nature of what Fundamental Pedagogics calls 'ideology' to find in the everyday world what is put there by definition. It thus seems quite appropriate to claim that Landman is, in his own terms, an ideologist – one who distorts the nature of education to fit into his own conception of it.

Freud has coined a term to describe the process by which people accuse others of doing precisely what they themselves are doing. He calls this projection. Projection is a "process by which ... aspects of the self ... are imagined to be located in some object external to oneself".[12] Fundamental Pedagogicians, in accusing

others of being ideologists, when they themselves are ideologists, can be described as 'projecting'.

It seems that to begin with an etymological analysis is from the phenomenological perspective of Fundamental Pedagogic to fall into the trap of ideology. It is ideological because it shapes and moulds the analysis of the everyday rather than using the everyday as its point of departure.

III

All this suggests that Pedagogicians must surrender either phenomenology or etymological analysis. In this section I wish to argue that in the research practices of Fundamental Pedagogics there is no place for phenomenology. I wish to show the that way in which Pedagogicians like Landman undertake research suggests they need a theory of deduction rather than a theory of phenomenology.

Having defined education as an accompanying of the child to adulthood, Landman claims that the researcher will now turn to the life world where he will

> observe that the child is led (accompanied) by an adult. There is a child and an adult: in the accompaniment of a child there is a relationship between the child and an adult. The pedagogician, by applying the category 'child accompaniment' has *observed* one of the first pedagogic essentials i.e. pedagogic relationship ....(my emphasis) [13]

It seems, however, that there is no need for observation to arrive at the idea of 'pedagogic relationship'. It is contained in the definition of education as a leading of the child by an adult: by definition this is a relationship. The logical procedure known as deduction is a sufficient condition in terms of which to claim that a leading of a child by an adult implies a relationship: from the idea of a child being led by an adult, we can deduce that there is a relationship between them. There is no need to talk about an observation of the everyday and there is thus no need to talk about phenomenology in order to arrive at this assertion.

It is arguable that none of the claims made by Landman have anything to do with the everyday: the definition of education as a leading towards adulthood and the implications of this definition are not rooted in observation of the everyday. What this suggests is that Landman's view of education has nothing to do with the everyday reality of education. It has nothing to do with education as it takes place in the world. It has everything to do with drawing out the implications of a definition drawn from an arbitrary interpretation of the roots of a Greek word.

There seems to be no place for phenomenology in Landman's account of science. If this is true we are confronted with an absurdity: one of the first claims that any Fundamental Pedagogician makes is that he is a phenomenologist whose primary concern is the analysis of the phenomenon of education as it manifests itself in the everyday world. Yet as I have shown – at least in terms of Landman's example – there is no place for phenomenological analysis in their practice of science.

Viljoen is an example of Fundamental Pedagogician who writes about phenomenology but practices etymology. In the text co-authored with Pienaar, Viljoen spends approximately thirty pages outlining the nature of phenomenology. When, however, he embarks on an examination of the nature of education he offers an etymological analysis of the term: "The term 'educate' comes from the Latin which means to 'lead out'. This suggest the leading forth of a person from the sphere of childhood towards that of adulthood".[14]

He does not account for this way of proceeding at all. The only explanation of the place of an analysis of words is a single paragraph which itself does not make sense:

> Language is regarded not only as the means of communication between people, but also, and primarily, as the cultural heritage of the past: accumulated knowledge which forms an essential part of the life world. Language and its components are therefore sources of truth available to us. But language is also a means of revealing the phenomenon so as to get to the truth concerning it ...[15]

This latter sentence does not explain why he claims to be a phenomenologist and yet embarks on a process of etymological analysis. There seems to be a contradiction between what Viljoen does and what he says. He says that he does phenomenology but what he does is etymological analysis. He never accounts for the relationship between what he says he does and what he does. I would like to call this contradiction between doing and saying an ontological or existential contradiction. It is an ontological rather than logical contradiction because it is not so much a contradiction between two statements but a contradiction between a statement and an activity, between a 'saying' and a 'doing'.

What such a contradiction suggests is that Viljoen is not able to give a proper account of what he does: he is not able to 'say' what it is that he 'does'. It seems that he lacks insight into his own activity and that his description of what he does – Fundamental Pedagogics – is not based on an analysis of his actual practices. It seems that he has denied himself the capacity for self consciousness. For anyone familiar with the Freudian notion of projection this come as no surprise. Denial of self reflection is the motor of projection: instead of self reflection, projection manifests itself as an accusation of others. Thus in Freudian terms, to be in the grips of an ontological contradiction is to be unconscious of what one is doing.

It must be pointed out that it is not only Landman, de Vries and Viljoen who are guilty of the existential contradiction and of projection. It can be found in all of the texts written by Fundamental Pedagogicians. Furthermore, the existential contradiction is not limited to their definition of education: a random survey of most of their concepts will indicate that although they claim to be phenomenologist, they proceed by etymological analysis.

It seems then that before pedagogicians can offer anything to a changing South Africa they need to undergo a process of self-examination; they need to resolve the existential contradiction and fragmentation which shapes their discussion of

scientific method. To do this they need to give substance to both their concept of etymological and phenomenological analysis.

Fundamental Pedagogics cannot be used as paradigm to understand change; it needs itself to undergo change.

ACKNOWELDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Penny Enslin, Wally Morrow and Shirley Pendlebury for discussion and argument which lead to the crystallisation of many of the ideas in this paper.

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7. The essay must be related to issues in South African education.
8. An independent panel of judges will adjudicate the essays. Their decisions are final. The judges reserve the right not to award a prize in cases where no suitable entries are received.
9. Members of the editorial board, regional and associate editors of *Perspectives in Education* are not eligible.

Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 191-198

The Context and the Content of Educational Policy Analysis: Some comments on the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) Framework Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

On any criterion the National Educational Policy Investigation (NEPI) has been a remarkable achievement. It is difficult to think of anywhere else in the world where it would have been possible to bring together over 300 researchers, activists and practitioners and produce thirteen extremely clear and well thought out reports covering a very wide range of educational policy issues within six months of the end of the project. Together the reports provide a framework within which to set educational policy debates that could not be more opportunely timed. For such a project to have been inspired by the National Education Coordinating Committee, with its origins in campaigns of mass action and boycotts, and as an organisation with many members committed to the armed struggle and some who have been imprisoned or killed, is even more remarkable. Its genesis from the struggles of the democratic movement is a major example of how slogans can be tranformed into practical politics; something which, internationally and no doubt in South Africa, liberation movements find so difficult. NEPI is but one example of why many of us continue to believe that, despite its past (and elements of its present), tranformation to a democratic non-racist South Africa is still possible.

How the balance was achieved in the research and writing, between an emphasis on the democratic process and consultation on the one hand, and the need for expertise and the constraints of time on the other, will be something that only those directly involved will be able to judge. What is in little doubt is that the democratic movement would be in a much weaker position in the forthcoming negotiations without the framework of alternatives offered by NEPI with which to counter the stream of proposals that are emerging from government departments. Inevitably they have their limitations and these will become apparent as they are discussed and debated; the important thing is that they represent a beginning basis on which debates can build. The best tribute to all the hard work of those involved will not be a debate about either the membership of the NEPI working groups or the way that NEPI formulated options, but the development of practical proposals.

By publishing the reports and by making available the papers that were commissioned by the research groups, NEPI has created a unique set of resources

for students, teachers and politicians. What makes the reports certain to have more than passing value, regardless of their substantive conclusions, is that the NEPI working groups resisted the urged to come up with definitive policies which could so easily become out of date, or just the pet hobby horse of a particular interest group. Instead they concentrated on making explicit their shared value positions, these implications for the different areas of educational policy and how they differed or were similar to those reflected in government and opposition policies. Lastly they concentrated on presenting the options that would be open to a future South African government.

As an outsider who was privileged to have a small role in one of the research groups (on Human Resource Development) I do not intend to discuss any of the individual reports in detail. Others in South Africa will be much better equipped to do this. I shall however comment briefly on the model of policy analysis as described in the Framework Report, draw some comparisons with the UK and conclude by making one or two suggestions about a post-NEPI future.

2. MOVING BEYOND THE CONTEXT OF APARTHEID

NEPI was inevitably shaped by the circumstances of South African educational history; three aspects of that history appear to have been especially significant in shaping the NEPI approach:

(i) The gross distortion of education in apartheid South Africa in favour of the white communities.
(ii) The secretive and bureaucratic approach to policy making, even from the point of view of those who have benefited from apartheid, of the many ministries involved in policy making.
(iii) The lack of experience, on the part of any of those involved in the democratic movement, of exploring and devising policy options let alone of any involvement in the implementation of policies.

What makes NEPI distinctive and has lessons well beyond South Africa is how it addressed these legacies of the apartheid era. In this section I shall refer to and comment on three aspects of the NEPI approach.

The requirement that working groups start with a realistic assessment of options and the recognition that some aims, though equally worthy of support on value grounds, may be, at least in the short term, in conflict with each other.

With understandably high expectations among the disadvantaged communities of what a democratic government could offer, the development of such a principled

basis for making choices will prove vital. This is not to say that the democratic movement should engage in self-censorship – realism can be limiting and utopias will always be necessary. The issue is one of balance and context and of course time – of which there is not much. The great merit of the NEPI approach is that the options they present are clear; this gives any group the chance to debate them.

The priority given to democratising access to policy analysis capabilities

In western democracies such as the USA and the UK there are a wide variety of 'think tanks' of the left, the right and the centre which engage in policy analysis. However it is only rarely that such skills and capabilities become part of the resources of parent action groups or student or teacher unions, let alone of individual schools and colleges. In a country like South Africa which has such a history of secrecy and lack of consultation and where extreme inequalities have been officially endorsed in the name of apartheid, many harsh decisions are going to have to be made by the first democratically elected government. If such decisions are not to be a source of alienation and disenchantment with the democratic process, the capacity for policy analysis will need to be extended to the staff of every school. In South Africa as elsewhere, education is delivered not through policy but through its schools, colleges, technikons and universities. It will be in those institutions and in the communities to which they are accountable, no less than in government departments, that difficult decisions will be taken, and where a shared strategy will need to be developed to cope with the inevitable conflicts. The NEPI process has made a start; some groups will have involved a wide range of practitioners more successfully than others. It is the next stage that will be vital, when parent organisations and unions begin to formulate substantive proposals and criteria for their involvement in the Educational Forum at the national and no less importantly at the regional and local levels.

The recognition of a key role for the organisations of civil society

The recognition of a key role for non-government and community-based organisations is important for the future of education in South Africa but has much wider significance for the kind of democracy that South Africa could become. In the absence of a democratically elected parliament or any form of local government democracy, these organisations have played an important provider role in education and other social services, largely by being a channel through which donor agencies could by-pass the apartheid government. With donor aid likely to dry up or to be channelled through the democratically elected government in the future, decisions will have to be made as to whether the NGOs and CBOs still have a function.

Lessons from the UK suggest that they should. In the last 10 years, successive conservative governments have reduced the responsibility of local government on

the officially stated grounds that the local authorities were too much in the hands of professionals and not close enough to the needs of parents. There is no doubt that local government was bureaucratic and too wedded to survival for its own sake. However, the new model based on parental choice and schools as businesses turns out to be equally flawed. When teachers and parent organisations have begun to assert their newly discovered autonomy, government complains that they are not representative.

Educational needs do not come from atomised individuals making choices in a market. The UK experience suggests that neither the market nor elected local government can satisfactorily mediate the educational needs and priorities of students and parents. A truly popular and effective educational system is going to need community-based organisations that are in touch with people's needs at the local level. Instead of operating separately or even in opposition to government, such organisations will have to learn quite new roles. Though no one would imagine that education in a democratic South Africa is going to be without conflicts of interest, community organisations will have to develop a more strategic approach involving partnerships between themselves and state funded provision.

3. FROM A CONTEXT OF THE PAST TO A CONTEXT OF THE FUTURE

In this section I want to consider the implications that follow from how NEPI defines its key policy concepts, policy option analysis and policy planning. In particular I want to suggest that the NEPI definitions lead to an underemphasis on some aspects of the context of educational policy making and implementation that will be important in the future.

Policy option analysis is a valuable idea because it makes clear that value positions are inescapably involved in any educational policy option. The problem is that the options posed sometimes appear unnecessarily abstract and formal. Let me take an example from the options presented in the report on curriculum.[1] The example is only illustrative of a more general point and not in any way intended to single out the *curriculum* group.

The report on *Curriculum* has a number of sets of policy options of which I shall only refer to the first – that between *centralised* decision-making, *decentralised* decion-making and a *combination* of both. With its history of division and centralisation, it is understandable why the issue of location of power is so crucial in South Africa. If, however, we stand apart from South Africa for a moment and look at curricular questions on a world scale, we see a pattern emerging that is rather different from these options, and which looks much more like convergence as the *Curriculum Report* suggests. Countries with centralised models like Sweden, France and Japan are looking for ways of pushing decision making away from the centre, whereas those like the UK – which in the past have given considerable autonomy to individual schools – are trying to claw back control to the centre. In

the process, the UK government is finding that there is a contradiction between developing a highly qualified and professional education service with high performance criteria and the attempt to maintain tight control at the centre. Hesistantly, at last, there are some signs of a loosening of the reins of centralised power.

The *combination* option, therefore, is not really an option at all, but the only way for the future; options and priorities will come in the balance between central guidelines and local implementation. What is happening, I suggest, is that in many different countries, and with varying degrees of openness and explicitness, the curriculum is responding to common global changes. There are increasing economic pressures on countries to design their curricula to deliver high levels of achievement for the majority: this is particularly true in elitist systems, such as that found in England and Wales, which, in the past, have invested so much of their educational resources in a high quality education for a minority. The issue of transforming a minority system is an acute problem for the UK, but one that will be increasingly experienced in South Africa as it "climbs back into the world economy". The tranformation of a minority education system will need to be a central concern for the first democratic government in South Africa. However, the issue is not only about education; it is a cultural, economic and political issue. Whereas Sweden in the 1920s and 1930s is said to have "educated itself out of a recession" other countries like India and Ceylon became stricken by the "diploma disease" in expanding their education systems after independence.

It is understandable that the dominant context shaping the NEPI research groups was the legacy of an educational past dominated by Bantu Education and Christian National Education Principles. However an educational system, and more particularly a curriculum, is not only a way of distancing ourselves from our past, it is also a design for the future. As we move towards the end of this century, this will be an inescapably common global future. The curriculum issue will be to identify the knowledge and skills which those in school now are going to need when they are citizens and employees in the possible South Africa of the next century. What I am suggesting is that in debates that follow NEPI, there is a shift of emphasis from the context of the past to the context of the future. This could provide a way of considering more substantive policy options, and still retain the value positions that are so distinctive of the NEPI approach.

4. POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICE

The NEPI *Framework Report* defines policy planning as a process that "formulates the concrete implementation stages of a policy ... and designs its execution".[2] This definition is useful in that it emphasises a feature of the South African education system which it shares with many other countries, though maybe in an extreme form. I am referring to the separation of a number of key functions or roles – state

officials, academic researchers and practitioners, which in democratic system would need to be related. Through their isolation, the first group, the officials, focus only on implementation, treat analysis as negative critique, and see practitioners as only delivering what they, the officials, have designed; the second group, the researchers, are often skilled in critique, rarely have experience of actually designing policies and take little account of the practical contexts where teaching and learning take place. Lastly, there are the teachers who veer between subservience and resistance to both the other groups, and rarely take responsibility for their own analysis.

Although I have no doubt that the NEPI researchers are very aware of this problem, their model does not entirely overcome it. The reasons may be partly, as the report itself states, because of the extreme reluctance, at least until very recently, for state officials to engage in any dialogue at all with researchers or academics. This reluctance may of course not have been entirely one-sided. However the separation of research, policy and practice may also be a feature of the NEPI model which as Maureen Robinson says in her very useful review is more likely to "appeal to policy-makers and academics than to teachers and students".[3] She goes on to say that NEPI's interests "would be well served by popularising the debates within individual sectors, so that discussion on policy can indeed become part of the daily reality of everyone connected with education".[4] While I agree entirely with this sentiment, it may be that the term 'popularising' oversimplifies the problem of developing the three-way relationship between policy analysis and proposals, implementation and practice.

The NEPI model of policy planning tends to equate the work of implementation with the work of state officials. I want to suggest that though in the apartheid regime this equation was formally so, even then implementation involved practice, and very often it was practice that was at odds with the design of the policy. It was this autonomy which meant that, even in a deeply ideologised system such as Bantu Education, what went on in classrooms was often very different from the intentions of policy makers and sometimes took unpredictable and genuinely emancipatory ways. The lesson I draw is that a democratic model of policy implementation has to build on the fact that the delivery of policy in the schools and elsewhere always has some autonomy over its design; in other words, implementation is the work of practitioners as well as officials. The opportunity is there to use this often hidden work of teachers as a resource, and not just, as in the past, to treat it as a form of resistance.

In the kind of democratic regime to which NEPI is committed for a future South Africa, the relationship between state officials and teachers will be based on collaboration and negotiation. If this is to be so, ways must be found of bringing the practical knowledge of teachers into both the design and the implementation of policy, not just implicitly as before through forms of active or passive resistance, but explicitly through consultation. In this way, to use the language of modern

management theory, schools will become learning organisations, increasingly responsible for managing and monitoring their own affairs and drawing on state officials and researchers for support. Policy design and implementation will not only be the preserve of state officials, but of all those involved in education, whether professionals or not. This is not a utopian proposal. It is a way of maximising the educational value obtained from schools and colleges.

5. A CONCLUDING NOTE

In this brief paper, I have suggested that there are two aspects of the context of educational policy which need to engage researchers, teachers and policy makers in the post-NEPI era: the context of the future – by which I mean South Africa's cultural and economic and political future – and the context of practice or where the teaching and learning takes place. NEPI has begun this process. The next stage will be to regionalise and localise the discussions and widen the range of people involved, taking into account both teachers and government officials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank Ghaleeb Jeppie, Ronnie Swartz and Elaine Unterhalter for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 199-208

Education Policy in a Climate of Entitlement: The South African Case

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1. Absence of research on procedures for primary/secondary transition

One of the issues that is conspicuous by its relative absence from the hundreds of pages of National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) reports is any coherent account of how children move from primary to secondary schools (and especially how parents seek access for their children to the 'better schools'). In a situation where the university dilemmas about selection are the consequence of the allegedly gutter education in the basic cycle, it is really remarkable that not a single volume of the twelve NEPI reports is dedicated to Primary Education or to Secondary Education. Comments on these crucial sub-sectors have to be pieced together from different reports. The resulting insights are distinctly patchy. The outcome is that it is very difficult to learn what mechanisms are available to teachers and schools *during* the twelve year span that can confirm and exploit pupil motivation. Nor is serious attention apparently given to new structural arrangements that would give access to high quality secondary education, on the basis of achievement. Provisionally, it would appear that there are few if any hooks for the attachment of academic achievement during the twelve years of basic school. In their absence particularistic criteria will doubtless continue to operate in such matters as transition from primary to secondary school.

2. Mechanisms and metaphors supportive of merit

Understandably, the policy work on education has taken as a starting point a democratic framework that is driven by the language of redress, access, and affirmation. The starkness of the apartheid statistics on exclusion and failure translates readily into a discourse of inclusion and openness that cannot easily accommodate traditional criteria and conventions of selection and excellence. Selectivity and excellence were traditions so intimately entwined with discrimination as to find themselves now almost illegitimate categories of discussion.

In this situation there appears to be a fundamental lack of research and policy attention to teacher, student and parental motivation – and to the mechanisms the world over that reinforce, in different ways, student *achievement* and *aspiration.* A

little research on the low predictability of DET matriculation grades has produced at least two very different kinds of response (AARP – Alternative Admissions Research Project; and UWC lottery arrangements). But the key research may well be on the impact in schools of these very different kinds of selection additions to the regular system. Without knowing more about the basis of AARP, it's difficult to estimate its likely influence in reinforcing teacher and student motivation in high schools. But in combination, these new selection arrangements reinforce the view that one of the only mechanisms – the matric – for the assessment of educational achievement in the twelve years of schooling is illegitimate.

The debate about the differential credibility of existing arrangements needs rapidly to lead to a single national matriculation system in order to cut at the root of the allegations about the worthlessness of passes and exemptions from particular departments. But, on its own, this single leverage point for the reinforcement of student learning will be inadequate.

3. The danger of jettisoning popular symbols of excellence in the search for comprehensive educational renewal

There are few enough popular symbols of educational achievement and excellence, and the longstanding tradition of matriculation is probably one of them. In such a situation as the present (prior to any re-unification of matric), it has been tempting for the democratic movement's key thinkers on post-secondary education to explore the fundamental reform of education and training arrangements. And there is no doubting the attraction of the vision of an integrated education and training system that would at the same time recognise and accredit informal knowledge and skill while acting for youth and adults as the regular allocator of certification. There is some additional attraction in the flexibility of the modular building blocks that would be collected in different education and work locations. The sheer length of the development programme to deliver such a comprehensive reform (let alone accredit the existing workforce) would suggest that there would be many years of uncertainty at the very point where it would be helpful to have continuity.

In the NEPI process, no substantial attention appears to have been given to laying out the advantages of revising and diversifying the existing arrangements versus exploring completely new structures. Nor does there appear to have been much critical attention to some of the sources of new ideas (in Australia and the UK). But this is doubtless due to my not yet having come across this essential background.

It seems entirely possible that *versioning* the present matric (in the manner of versions of the French baccalaureate) would exploit the hard currency attached to the notion of matriculation whilst taking into account the strong pressures to 'technicise', 'commercialise', 'scientise' and 'vocationalise' this form of certification.

4. The language of vocationalism, made illegitimate by the reports of the 1980s, is likely to return rapidly to ministerial agendas after the transition

With the stark reality of educated unemployment for standard ten leavers with poor semi-academic matriculations, within a very few years, vocationalisation will return to the political agenda as it has done, for example, in the bulk of all Commonwealth countries during the 1980s. This is not to argue for vocationalisation now, but rather to underline the point that there are a number of initiatives that are being proposed or rejected now in the time of temporary transition that are almost entirely conditioned by the immediate politics of what seems legitimate or illegitimate. More generally than the issue of vocationalising, it might be said that in a protracted period of transition to majority rule, much needed education reform initiatives will continue to appear illegitimate unless much more visibly identified with the democratic movement.

5. The agenda of entitlement

It is entirely understandable that the NEPI framework of non-sexism, non-racism redress, democracy and a unitary system should emphasise the *agenda of entitlement* in the face of a highly discriminatory past (and present). But the pursuit of entitlement needs to handled in a way that does not make worthless the achievement of what was previously unobtainable. This applies especially to many of key hurdles in education and training system: certification, matriculation, promotion, and accreditation. At its most basic, the pursuit of entitlement confronts the issue of what it means to 'pass' and to 'fail'. But it also raises questions about the meaning of quality (a term which, incidentally, does not appear as a separate item in the index of the NEPI Framework Report).

6. The agenda of comprehensive inclusion

Very specifically, the legacy of historical exclusion can translate to an *agenda of comprehensive inclusion.* The past, with its unequal provision and highly uneven achievement, can imply the need to suspend judgement about present quality. Current measurement of achievement needs to incorporate concepts and factors of redress, affirmation and compensation. Examples of these can be seen in the academic development and support programmes of tertiary education. These programmes perhaps need careful analysis from an entitlement perspective; they are not all founded on the same assumption, though there is evident convergence now between the different models. But, judged from an entitlement perspective, it would be argued that there is a strong thread in these programmes that would

indicate that it is the lecturer, the curriculum and the university that need to change – not the student. The sheer scale and cost of these academic support and development programmes, and the extra time allowed for black students to make up for past deficits, may suggest that they are predicated on assumptions of individual student success for which the university must take major responsibility. From a research angle, it would be important to know whether students who agree to enrol on such programmes develop a different view of the universities' obligations towards them (including their ultimate graduation) than those who enrol on the conventional courses.

7. The critique of 'failure' as a legacy of apartheid

Arguably, the whole education and training system fails blacks. It has made 50% illiterate as adults provided only a handful of matric exemptions at an A aggregate. If failure is what apartheid has done to blacks, it is not difficult to argue that passing (or success) must become a feature of any new policy regime that reflects the NEPI principles. This is not to say that this is made explicit in the current policy development process, but it may nevertheless increasingly become what students expect of a fair system. Indeed, there is already no shortage of anecdotal evidence – in schools, teacher training colleges and in universities – that some students regard it as the 'lecturers' job to see we pass! In this context it may be quite important to analyze the extent to which – if at all – the mechanisms of credit accumulation, carrying forward failures from one year to the next, and exclusion are being affected by what may be termed the *new politics of entitlement to succeed.*

8. Understanding student perceptions of the relations amongst empowerment, entitlement and academic achievement

The student movements (COSAS and SASCO) are, for very good reasons, more articulate and active in South Africa than elsewhere. To a degree unimaginable in many other contexts, they have successfully challenged traditional authority, identified anomalies, and acquired in the process the right to be listened to. What has been somewhat less evident in the excitement of the marches, protest and continuous actions is the longer-term students' perception of a reformed school system. It may already be well-known to research, but there does not seem to have been much publicity given to student and pupil positions on selection, access and the measurement of academic achievement. The rhetoric of 'pass one; pass all' is a very suggestive slogan, and is one that strongly confirms the redress and entitlement agendas. More importantly it identifies a strain in one version of South Africa's Education-for-All lobby that is not just concerned with *equal access* to education for all, but is also looking for some kind of *equal outcome*. In this situation, a valuable research task would be eliciting student association views on the shape and

articulation of the education and training system, especially at the secondary and post-secondary level.[1]

9. New conceptions of teaching, learning, standard-setting and location in post-compulsory education

Part of the enthusiasm about the schemes for integrated approaches to post-compulsory education is that they radically challenge the conventions about who can teach where and to what level, and who can be a learner for how long, and in what location. The attractions of what is often termed in South Africa the *high skill: high participation* model is precisely that; it implies not just flexibility but very major access for both young people and older workers. There are currently not many detailed versions of this unified system proposal, but one of them is particularly interesting for its discussion of the new shape of the unified arrangements. For one thing, there is no radical break between the end of compulsory primary and secondary schooling and the continuation in post-compulsory education. Access to the next level of certification would truly be open to all in different institutional and work contexts:

> After compulsory schooling learners should *all* embark on a programme aimed at achieving a National Higher Certificate. Such a Certificate would be the *same* regardless of who or what age the learner acquired it – be it working at school or technical college, through unstructured experience or in some other way (emphasis added).[2]

Modules are the building blocks of the unified system, and it is again illustrative of the new entitlement agenda that the development of this common currency is not a monopoly of the education profession ('Any group in society is free to develop courses ...).[3] Similarly, there is very greater flexibility in the notion of who may teach a course, and where such a course can be delivered. Understandably, also, there is resistance to the notion of conventional entry requirements. Thus, it is proposed, there will not be 'traditional' entry requirements, such as a General Education Certificate, for entry to the National Higher Certificate; it will only be necessary to meet the minimum prerequisites for entry to a particular module. This will then allow for multiple entry of school leavers, adults, 'the lost generation' and others into any of the courses, provided that the learners have the minimum entry requirements for that module.[4]

A final comment is on the shape of what is often represented as an education and training pyramid. It may not be intended to imply anything beyond a sequencing of qualifications, but it just so happens that the size of the National Higher Certificate box is the same width but much more inclusive than the primary and secondary and adult basic education box. (See figure 1.) To a casual reader, an impression might be gained of ready access for all to all levels of education and training; and there is a powerful sense in which that is intended.

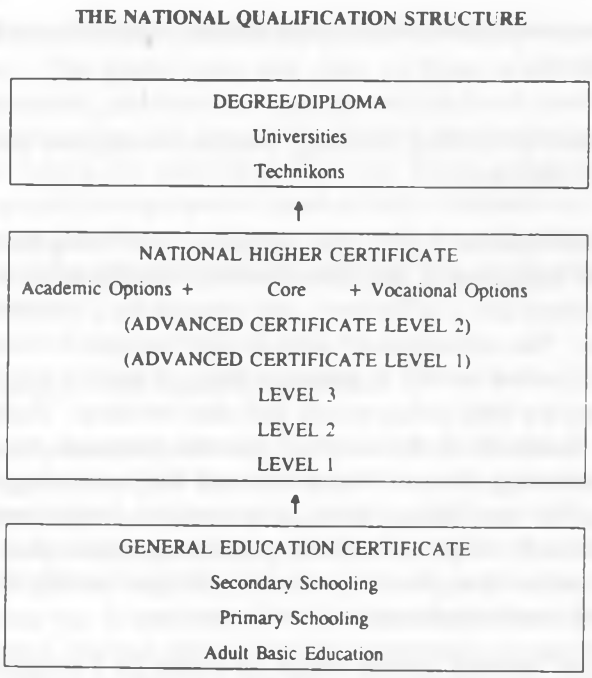


Figure 1[5]

What of standards and examinations in this new unified regime? Here, too, there could be a much wider debate about the role of examination in societies that are anxious to seek rapid redress for the excluded majority. But at least one strain in thinking about the need to move from a technicist to a much more democratised concept of standards is evident in this same document. It is worth quoting it in full since it is entirely possible that the examination itself (rather than the fees to be allowed to sit it) may become quite naturally a target for the student movement:

> What constitutes a standard is not a technical exercise. Just as knowledge is socially constructed so must standards be. It follows therefore that those groups with a special interest in particular standards should be represented at the forum which determines the standard. This is fundamental to democratisation of the system, to transparency and relevance to the different contexts in which skills and knowledge are to be applied.6

10. Pressures to pass students in tertiary education

There are a number of pressure points in universities that may need careful monitoring in terms of their possible impacts on students and staff aspirations. First, apparently, the basic state funding formula has a built-in payment-by-results dimension (success with 50% of student-related funding being tied to examination

success). Second, there are powerful student forces organised around the agenda of continuation (for example, to Higher Diploma of Education) when the previous degree has not yet been completed. The tendency to discuss this type of issue in terms of *exclusion* rather than *examination failure* underlines the fact that it is being perceived in part as entitlement. Third, there would appear to be something of a tradition of taking longer than the minimum time laid down to complete a degree. This tradition precedes by a long way the arrival of academic development and support programmes which have introduced the need for more time for one particular community. Taken together these pressures and traditions about degree length probably combine to make it difficult to enforce a view about average completion rates.

11. A culture of high skill:high success rather than high skill:high participation

The challenge for the many different popular groups engaging in the education debate may be to try and shift the terms of the argument from *participation to performance.* Given the current appeal of the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) to many of the groups reformulating education and training approaches in South Africa, it may be worth underlining the fact that what characterises the high skills economies of South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan (not at NIC), Taiwan and so forth, is not so much participation as *a powerful, popular drive for academic achievement.* What makes this East Asian experience well worth closer attention is that East Asian countries share a very widespread culture of achievement – one that is generally shared by teachers, parents and students. One of its characteristics is a high level of aspiration amongst students, and a confidence that hard work will translate into success. It is not therefore a question of participation in education and training institutions, but rather of performance.

12. Mobilising around educational self-reliance and academic achievement

In the face of pupil and student protest, there has been a temptation to talk of the need for *discipline* among the youth and to warn about the dangers of low-skilled employment or unemployment. By contrast, it would appear that the challenge is to unleash the community and individual aspirations of the majority of ordinary parents for improved educational opportunities. Without making tertiary education free (which is probably unsustainable), there is a clear need for national Talent Highways right through the education system (the example of India may be relevant here.)

13. The university as a focus for massive research and action on school quality

The expedients that relate to selection and university quality need to be associated with much more fundamental research and action by university faculties on the issue of school quality. Currently there is very little South African research that is focused on schools, despite the constant reference to their deplorable conditions. A role for universities in school improvement research, especially one that is targeted at the most disadvantaged thousand schools, would have the chance of changing the associations of quality from elitism only to meanings that are such more directly related to the framework of NEPI and the democratic movement. Chile's 900 *Schools Project* is of the direct relevance to such proposal. Not least because of its attractiveness to external development assistance on a large scale.

14. External aid and development research in education

There are compelling reasons for aid to be attracted to some of what has been mentioned above: The World Conference on *Education for All* has emphasised the importance of universal primary *achievement* for all as opposed to old-style universal primary education; the World Bank and several donors have been attracted by Chile's scheme (which could also be an example of South-South research collaboration); and Rockefeller was for twenty years identified with examinations research in Kenya. Most important, such a programme would confront the university dilemma about quality access by dealing with the issue at source.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kenneth King was in South Africa from 1 to 21 May 1993 at the invitation of the University of the Western Cape. During this time, he was attached to the Education Faculty, the Education Policy Unit, the Academic Development Centre and the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education. He also spent two days at the University of Cape Town. The above article derives from two sets of comments made for meetings of university staff during his visit. Kenneth King's visit to Cape Town was supported by the British Council.

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1. Since writing the 7 and 8 above, it has been possible for me to talk through the merit agenda with a group of university student activists. It persuaded me that, as I had suspected, there was an extremely articulate critique of the position of students at the national political level as well as a very detailed commentary on the parallel 'disenfranchisement' of student opinion at university, faculty, departmental and classroom levels. The commentary on teaching methods, processes of

curriculum development, and what is termed 'the social relations at classroom level' was all thoughtful. They identified both students and teachers as 'vacillating between two sets of values': the academic achievement/performance values and the entitlement agenda. They admit that there is a tendency 'not to be satisfied' with passing the matric, let alone passing very well, because in many ways the content of the matriculation syllabus is so unreformed, and the process for acquiring it so driven by rote methods and fundamentally 'disempowering'.

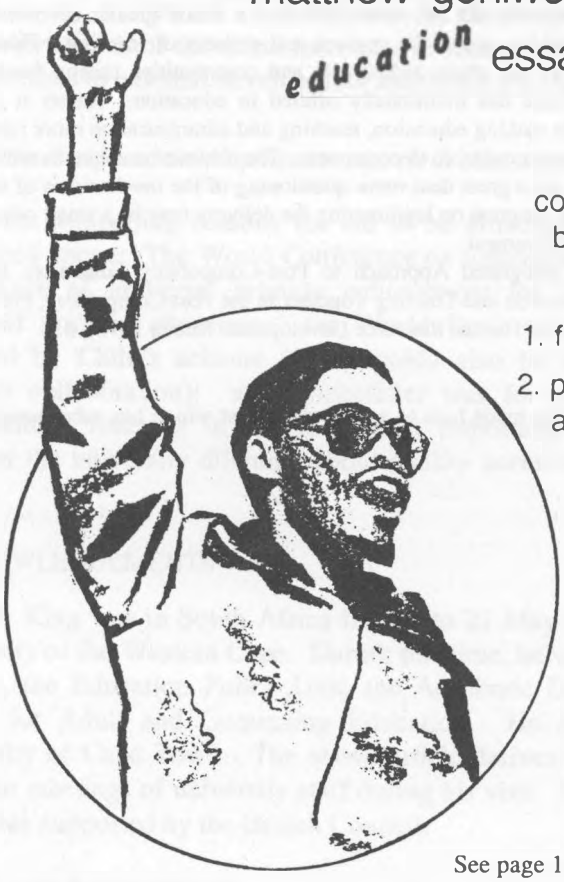
By contrast with so much that needed change, there had been progress: on the Parent-Student-Teacher-Associations (where as student voice was now institutionalised), on free text books, and on several other areas - through student actions. There was also a coherent view of the financing of higher education, and readiness to accept loan schemes.

In general this short discussion with students confirmed a feeling that the potential of students to contribute to education policy reformulation had not been grasped. What is probably at issue is whether the achievement agenda can be reconciled with a much greater involvement by students in discussion and deciding upon the content and process of learning. Educational self-reliance in South Africa is not about individuals and communities raising funds to do identical things to what the state has traditionally offered in education. Rather it is about demanding the right to assist in making education, teaching and administration more relevant to the new South Africa, and more accountable to consumers. The achievement agenda will need to be predicated, in other words, on a great deal more questioning of the mechanisms of delivery. But it is just possible that some progress on legitimating the delivery may be a small price to pay for legitimating educational achievement.

2. G. Elliot and A. Bird, "An Integrated Approach to Post-Compulsory Education: Bringing Vocational and Academic Education and Training Together in the Post-Compulsory, Pre-tertiary Sector", (NEPI Working Group on Human Resource Development March 1993), 6.
3. *Ibid.*, 7.
4. *Ibid.*, 10.
5. It is to be noted that reference is made here to a draft document which has subsequently been modified in discussion.
6. *Ibid.*, 12.

PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION

matthew goniwe south african education essay competition



In its first year the competition is open to black students in the following categories:

1. final year graduates,
2. post-graduates up to and including Masters level,
3. post-graduate PhD candidates

See page 190 for details.

Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 209-214

Gender and the NEPI Exercise

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Non-sexism, a tenet of People's Education, and one of the five NEPI principles, is a term which is all embracing and embodies the good intentions of creating a society in which women's various forms of subordination will disappear. However, such an expression often becomes an end in itself, as though the mere statement of resolve will achieve these aims. This, unfortunately, appears to have been the case with much of the NEPI exercise in regard to gender differences. Indeed it is shocking that this impressive exercise failed so abysmally to address one of its five guiding principles.

To attempt to achieve equity and to formulate policy options which could impact positively for women, ideally each working party should have been given some guidelines about the structural conditions relating to women's subordination and how these articulate with all facets of education. Addressing sexism has, after all, only recently surfaced in South Africa, and, no doubt, many members of the working groups themselves needed to be educated in this matter. It is not surprising, therefore, that policy options were remarkably absent on how equity could be attained or what forms of redress could be adopted in regard to women.

The *Curriculum Report*[1] is the exception. The problems relating to formal schooling are enormous due to its parlous state as a result of apartheid with its "racial differentiation and a complex network of different bodies [which] characterize the governing structures of the curriculum". The report recognises the necessity of considering "the gender implications of all curriculum policies and developing special redress policies where necessary" and concludes that specific curriculum policies are needed, even though the problem extends beyond the boundaries of schooling. It would have been helpful to signal how the particular parts of the curriculum could approach this question. Secondary education – involving, amongst other things, skilling and training in preparation for the labour market – occurs at a particular time during which gender definitions take on new meaning and are reproduced by the schooling system and gender specific roles are reinforced simultaneously. These have consequences for the future of women, and educationists need to be aware of the complexity of these processes.

But it is also outside formal schooling and tertiary education that so much work needs to be conducted, as the working groups on Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Education (AE), and Human Resource Development (HRD) have demonstrated. At the bottom of the scale functional literacy, including numeracy, is

generally assumed to be a prerequisite for a society wishing to become economically viable. But in South Africa, with approximately 60%-70% black illiterates, it is estimated that less than 1% are provided with any service. As the *Framework Report*[2] deprecatingly emphasises, drawing on the *Adult Basic Education (ABE) Report*, the provision of literacy is "unco-ordinated", "inadequate", with "high unit costs", no universal standard, and "does not lend itself easily to coping with large-scale literacy work". Literacy training, as the *ABE Report* says, is abysmal.

Literacy provision is made both by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and industry. With NGOs there are a number of different options, but there appears to be a consensus amongst many employers for a national system of ABE, a view shared by COSATU which has set its sights on a nation wide scheme of ABE for "workers as well as the wider community". Here COSATU has extended its aim to include illiterates outside of the labour market, but who comprises the "wider community"?

The *Framework Report* is concerned with the struggle by NGOs to maintain their autonomy and their very existence, but the report comes down strongly in support of a co-ordinated structure to promote ABE facilities under the state, provided it is committed to equity, and this as discussed below is itself problematic. The authors of the *Framework Report* favour "an ends-based view" which they see as dominated by "a largely market-regulated system [which] could provide the threshold of basic skills required to build a competitive and growing economy".

The reports tend to regard illiterates as an homogeneous group, united in their overarching need to be functionally literate in contemporary society, although *ABE* does point to rural differences and, in terms of gender, to the fact that more women than men are learners, and that, unlike third world countries world-wide, the illiteracy rate between men and women is almost equal.

Overall, women face increasing burdens in terms of supporting children and dependents, eking out a subsistence in the rural areas, engaging in the informal sector in the urban areas, and employed at the lowest levels in the labour force. The labour force is segmented on a gender basis. The major source of employment for black women is domestic work. The extent of illiteracy amongst this category of women is not known, but those who are illiterate may well be passed over in any scheme. Women who work in the service industry have such low status and skill that any initiative taken by industry or the trades union movement is also likely to by-pass them unless special measures are adopted to reach them in an ABE programme.

As envisaged by the *Framework Report* the skills on which functional literacy could be built may not operate for women in the labour market, and if women do not acquire these then their progress through the labour market must necessarily be heavily curtailed. Yet the *Framework Report* emphasises the ABE programme and

the need for addressing functional literacy amongst the underprivileged, almost to the exclusion of other AE provision. While the AE sector is seen as

> not unimportant; but under the circumstances it is likely to remain the least articulated, and most decentralized and most diverse sector...[which] will impact more on the quality of life than on equity, the formal system, or formal employment chances.[3]

If the NEPI recommendations carry weight and help to determine future policy, given the emphasis on a coherent, centralised literacy programme, then women's recruitment into literacy programmes would have to be carefully monitored, and specific measures would have to be taken to assist them, a point ignored by all *ABE*, *HRD*, and *Framework Reports*.

Other aspects of compensatory education for adults and retraining the already existing labour force fall under the aegis of AE, while skilling the new generation of the labour force is the responsibility of the formal education system. This latter category is not being considered here. *AE* does not deal systematically with programmes relating to employment apart from detailing all the provisions that are available, demarcating the various arms of the state which provide some AE services – including prisons and "manpower" education sectors from the corporate sector which deals mainly with ABE, professional on-going training, universities, NGOs and religious and political organisations. The report concludes, almost with a tone of incredulity, that

> There is a surprising amount of AE being provided in South Africa. This is being done by a rich variety of government departments and non-government institutions, organizations, and agencies... AE is also in many respects a marginal... sector[4]

This working group appears not to have taken account of the gendered population for whom this "surprising amount of AE" caters, or the specific needs of women. Nor does the report take account of the relationship between AE provision and the labour market. Its reference point is on literacy when it points out that not more than 30% of the South African population can be taken to be functionally literate. The report is dominated by data on the providers and not the relationship of provision to the needs of the population with particular reference to earning some kind of living.

Unlike the *AE* and *ABE Reports*, the starting point for the *HRD Report* is the economy. It distinguishes between "high-participation, high-skill" models of HRD strategies, characteristic of the successful nations, "exporters of high-quality, and increasingly high-tech, manufactured goods" and the "low-participation, low-skill" nations. *HRD* is, correctly, critical of both COSATU's and ANC's strategies to move to the "high-participation, high-skill" model. They anticipate problems. The range of vocational training interests is diverse in that they span the formal, informal, and unemployed sectors of the economy. This in turn reflects the "high degree of class and racial inequality". The *HRD Report* argues that such training may inadvertently increase the divide between skilled and non-skilled workers and may indeed increase inequity. Although *HRD* elsewhere speaks about the gendered

nature of the labour population, it fails to take this into account when talking of the hazards associated with the "high-participation, high-skill" model.

Where *HRD* makes reference to gender differences, these concern economically active people, particularly in the informal sector. This latter sector is obviously an important one given that "it is estimated [it] now employs one in four economically active black people" and is particularly relevant to women, which *HRD* signals.

> Even though women comprise the majority of workers in many informal sector activities, most support programmes have failed to recognize their special needs. In particular, because women are heavily concentrated in areas of activity which are extensions of their household and reproductive tasks, informal sector enterprises run by women are generally smaller and less viable, with the result that women tend to earn a lot less than men working in the informal sector.
>
> Training can help women to expand their range of activities, but other support services (especially child-care) also need to be provided so that women can take advantage of training and employment opportunities.[5]

This focuses on women's child-care responsibilities, obviously an important facet of women's lives, and exacerbated by the rapid increase of women-headed households with an approximate 1.9 million such households in South Africa.[6] But child-care is only one element which is specific to women. The training approaches *HRD* identify for this sector of the labour market *do not* take account of a whole range of factors specific to women's needs and the restrictions imposed through the structural differentiation located in the labour market, in the family formation, and reinforced by ideologies relating to women's role in society. There appears to be a blanket acceptance of women's work as an "extension of their household and reproductive tasks". What they fail to consider is that changes can occur, but these can only be achieved under certain circumstances. The history of women's labour world-wide is peppered with examples of their working in traditional male-type occupations when the need has arisen. This occurred when agreements were reached with the trades unions, as in the U.K. during World War II, and when specific training facilities were created for women, as in the Soviet Union in the 1950s, and in the reduction of domestic labour for women, as in the kibbutzim in Israel, to mention just some of the specific measures that have been adopted in the past.

The overall failure of the NEPI exercise to address seriously issues relating to sexism may well be the result of the enormity of its task which involved deconstructing the legacy of the systematic exclusion, particularly of Africans, from the education system as a whole, and the devastation inflicted on the country by years of apartheid. Unfortunately the specificity of the problems relating to girls and women became absorbed into the overall problem of most of the working parties which probably assumed that working towards equity would somehow deal with the inequities that operate between the genders.

Perhaps the concept of equality needs to be probed. Equality is an elusive, abstract concept and the *Framework Report* signalled the difficulties experienced in the NEPI exercise in relation to this. There was no consensus between individuals in the working groups. They represented different sectors of educational activities which themselves were structurally differentiated historically and were engaged in quite disparate debates. Thus

> The orientation taken by research groups, or by subgroups within research groups, has been shaped by the specific historical path of the educational sector concerned, by its relation to the system as a whole, and by the personnel who came to be active in the various groups.[7]

This had consequences for the interpretation of the NEPI principles, their discrete definitions, and what they prioritised.

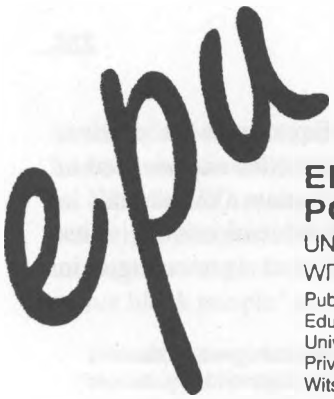
Furthermore given the massive inequalities existing in South Africa, the problem of equity is even more difficult to resolve. If the starting point to achieve equity is in an already democratic society the resolution may be more straight forward.

> A new society that is built on an old society that, within its limits, has reached a certain level of equality clearly is a better starting point than one that must build on a society predicated on privilege and unchallenged oppression.[8]

South Africa is "predicated on privilege" but oppression has been and is being challenged. Yet the inequalities in South Africa span every section of society. The majority of women, viz. black women whose life chances are still at the bottom of the pile, are absorbed into what is seen as the greater problem. And it is these differences which the NEPI exercise failed overall to address. Strategies for redress cannot succeed if the proposed beneficiaries are not clearly defined and furthermore the conditions responsible for women's oppression in the family and at home, in the work place and on the farms, must be specically addressed.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 215-220

Product, People or Process: NEPI as a Research Training Process

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INTRODUCTION

The training of researchers has been much debated. The National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) process raised the challenge of redressing imbalances in the research skills of participants in a major policy research initiative. This paper will highlight this challenge and the obstacles to meeting it in a collective research process. The experiences of the Support Services Research Group in NEPI will be used as a case study and reflected upon to gain insights into, and raise concerns about, the complexity of relationships within the research training process.

NEPI FRAMEWORK

The NEPI brief was to present policy options to assist progressive political players in formulating education policies for a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist education system. The principles of democracy, equality, redress, non-racism and non-sexism provided a critical framework for the twelve research groups. If this initiative was to have any legitimacy it needed to be guided by the struggles, values and aspirations of the oppressed majority of this country. The most pertinent concerns in education, as seen from the perspective of the deprived and dispossessed in the country, needed to be addressed. It was crucial to utilise methodology and processes that would promote the legitimacy of the policy options and the transformation of education.

From the outset, the dire need for trained and confident black researchers to get involved in NEPI was obvious. Debates raged around why many black researchers were not trained and the role and scope of NEPI in providing the necessary training. There was also debate about the factors that prevented academically qualified black researchers from taking on leadership or active roles within a research project committed to the principles of redress and democracy. Over 300 progressive researchers, administrative personnel and political representatives were drawn together in this education policy initiative. What was significant is that the researchers responsible for the final product were predominantly white academics.

The NEPI experience thus highlights the ways in which inequalitites may be perpetuated in the process of an initiative committed to redress. This experience should serve as impetus to develop appropriate ongoing, research training programmes.

EXPERIENCES IN THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING RESEARCH GROUP

This paper focuses on the experiences of School Guidance and Counselling Research Group. Group members came from various backgrounds: as academics, guidance teachers and students, as well as a fieldworker from a non-formal career and information centre. The group adopted a collective/collaborative approach to accommodate and draw from the wealth of experiences, knowledge and backgrounds of group members in the design, implementation and evaluation of the research process. The term 'collective research' is understood in this paper to be "research which is conducted by more than one researcher; where responsibility for the process and product of the research is a collaborative one".[1]

It was recognised that adequately trained researchers are predominantly academics, many of whom are removed from the practice on the ground. The opportunity to incorporate all interest groups involved in guidance and counselling into the research project was unique. It was an opportunity for community-based organisations and practitioners take responsibility for impacting on the research process instead of merely being critical of the work of academics. Involvement in the policy research group was also seen as a chance to develop some appropriate research skills in a real research initiative.

However, research training possibilities were constrained by a number of factors:

i) A limited time-frame of eighteen months.
ii) The people involved in the work were not full-time and had to undertake research and related NEPI tasks in addition to their existing commitments.
iii) The perception of our limitations and abilities influenced the level of confidence with which tasks and responsibilities were assumed. This was especially the case in relation to the conceptualisation of research and the integration of findings into a research report.

DYNAMICS IN THE RESEARCH GROUP

The Guidance and Counselling Group tried to create a democratic working climate and to set up norms that gave all group members the space to share ideas, raise questions and make contributions. Each brought his/her individual experiences, insights and expectations to bear on the discussion of policy research processes and the functioning of the group.

Upon reflection it was evident that although a good working relationship was fostered, it camouflaged a range of contradictions and ambiguities underlying much of the interaction. Implicit assumptions and expectations in the group pressurised the more skilled and experienced white researchers to take on the more complex tasks. The black researchers in the group volunteered for less complex tasks that utilised their skills and which they felt more confident in performing. The ability and confidence needed to articulate ideas, challenge proposals or even edit work reflected inequalities in members' exposure to research, experience in writing and experience in collective work. These inequalities were masked in the group, as a conscious effort was made to uphold democratic practices and encourage participation of all the members. The inequalities largely reflected the present country-wide concentration of research skills, experience and confidence among the more experienced and confident researchers. By not recognising this and consciously debating this issue we created a situation of false equality. Since we were not sufficiently confident to take on new roles and tasks, we reinforced these inequalities.

Thus, although we allowed for maximum utilisation of the existing skills in the group, we also reinforced the historical legacy of research skills being monopolised by whites in South Africa. By not taking responsibility for the more complex tasks within the group (despite the writers of this paper having had some previous research experience), we colluded in reinforcing our lack of confidence. We stifled an opportunity to practise and develop our writing skills. Although the NEPI project was a learning experience for all involved, the question remains: 'Who benefited the most from NEPI? Was it those who had been deprived of exposure, training and development or those who could build on their already advanced level of skills and knowledge?'

This question attempts to uncover the complex dynamics in which the oppressed reinforce their own oppression and shirk their own responsibility for redressing imbalances. It also exposes the processes whereby the privileged unwittingly maintain their privileged position by not confronting group members to take greater responsibility and develop more complex skills. The principles and rhetoric around affirmative action and redress emphasized by NEPI were constantly raised, yet the group itself did not sufficiently apply these principles to its own functioning. The levels of research knowledge and skills that individual members brought into the group were not assessed and analysed. Although a "willingness of the more experienced researchers to share their skills and insights with their colleagues"[2] was present, the specific educational and developmental goals of each group member were not conceptualised as part of the research process. Learning and development that did take place were more incidental than a result of a conscious learning process.

The extent to which group members utilised the training and development potential of the research group was influenced by their level of confidence, their

preparedness to take risks and the level of resistance to change. For example, policy research was a new experience for all group members, yet some were prepared to accept the pressure to offer leadership in the conceptualisation of the research and to write the research report, while others' research experience did not take greater responsibility either for leadership or for the final product. Why was this the case?

The concept of a hierarchy of research tasks and related skills needs to be discussed to provide greater insights. The skills needed to do the literature search and review, to organise consultative forums and to do the administrative work differed in quality and complexity from the more advanced skills needed to conceptualise the research process and to integrate a range of information in a written report. Less confident group members opted for 'new' but less complex tasks. They were prepared to risk taking responsibility for these 'new' tasks because they could draw from similar, related past experiences. For example, the guidance teachers involved in the literature review drew from past experiences of having to consult literature when designing their school guidance programmes or doing assignments at university. The skills utilised in these circumstances gave them the confidence to further develop these skills within the new context of a research project. We would therefore argue that the extent to which group members were prepared to accept responsibilities and roles within the School Guidance and Counselling Research Group was related to their perceived ability to perform these tasks, based on the confidence that they had built up from past experiences.

This underlying, complex sets of relations is exaggerated in a collective research process where democratic principles can be utilised to resist or promote growth and development. The apparently 'harmonious' collective research experience masked many of these underlying tensions within and among group members.

How can the collective research process serve to empower rather than disempower research participants? Our reflection on the case of the NEPI Guidance and Counselling Group suggests a number of guidelines. Firstly, the tasks and skills needed for the research process need to be collectively identified. Secondly, the skills and related past experiences of group members need to be reflected on and discussed. Thirdly, both the product/research goals and individual learning goals need to be identified and the tensions between these negotiated. In these ways the group could be used as a valuable tool in challenging and supporting members to take on new tasks and roles. The success of this process depends on the commitment of all group members to the research product, to the research process, and to affirmative action in order to redress imbalances of skill, knowledge and confidence – especially of black women researchers. For the effective management of the process an external facilitator may be necessary. Significant attention to both product and process, especially where there are greater gaps between members in terms of confidence and skill, will require more time and a dual commitment of all

the members. The stipulated time-frame of NEPI imposed major constraints on the possibility of addressing both process and product issues.

Many of the issues discussed in this paper were not as apparent while concentration was focused on policy research – a new, challenging and stimulating process for all members of the group. The insights gained were derived from collectively reflecting on this experience and emphasised the value of a collective research process. The contradictions and ambiguities that played themselves out in the collective research process provided valuable opportunities to reflect on those intangible forces that reinforce inequalities. Confrontation of these dynamics was difficult, yet with persistent challenge and a supportive environment the initial resistance was overcome. This paper is a result of that reflection.

This paper has attempted to illustrate the potential for the collective research process to redress the imbalances in training and development. Emphasis was placed on the reflection process as a mechanism to challenge group members to take responsibility for their own and others' empowerment in the research process. The inevitable tensions between product and process issues were raised as opportunities to acquire knowledge about research, research skills and develop confidence. It was emphasised that ongoing training and development of especially black, women researchers should be placed on the agenda of the research planning process.

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AFRICA PERSPECTIVE



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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 221-228

Intellectuals and Education System Change

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What can the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) tell us about education system changes in South Africa and, in particular, the role of intellectuals in the formulation of policies for change? This brief paper conceives of NEPI as a movement, dominated by a heterogeneous grouping of intellectuals, that attempted to play an interpretive and mediating role in education within the context of a society attempting to overcome a history of conflict between the extreme oppositions of class, race, gender and geography that emerged from colonialism and Apartheid. The origins of NEPI lie in the 1980s, in the contestation between the state and a broad array of oppositional forces.[1] One feature of this resistance was a strong relationship between university-based intellectuals, organisation-based intellectuals and national and street leadership;[2] this relationship is perhaps best symbolized by the November 1985 conference that led to the creation of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) and the resolutions that provide a definition, albeit abstract, of People's Education.[3] This abstract definition was complemented by a broader theory of people's power at the second conference, particularly in the keynote address by Zwelakhe Sisulu.[4]

The conferences and, more generally, the resistance to apartheid education in the 1980s, was concerned primarily to resist the state's attempts to continue to administer apartheid education. This resistance emphasized the negative: People's Education was not-apartheid education. An ideal was constructed as the opposite of what existed, reflecting a binary-based value perspective. The use of stark oppositions makes good sense in a period of struggle against a clearly defined target: we (the good people), from an epistemological standpoint based on the clear moral superiority of our experience of oppression, can pass judgment on the dominant other (the evil state). A binary-based perspective reflects a competitive struggle for control of the instruments of domination, a struggle understood as being a matter of life or death, with a victor and a vanquished.

Sisulu's paper conceives of the shift from negative resistance to the construction of a positive alternative as a three-step movement: from state power to ungovernability to people's power/government. The attempts to put this into practice, in the period from 1986 to 1990, were scattered and partial with little possibility of fulfillment but, in contraposition, the state was unable to restore legitimacy or control in most of the schooling system. This impasse between state control and street resistance continues to the present; one consequence of this

impasse was that People's Education became more of an object of study and speculation in the academy than a practical struggle in the schools; another, is the continuing deterioration of education within the schools as students, staff and administration become locked into local struggles. The importance of the conferences as a point of origin for NEPI is that they were forums that attempted to mediate intense conflicts over and within education, albeit from the perspective of creating a unified movement, to provide a coherent oppositional force to the state. The concept of forums, as "... site(s) where the civic, intellectual and political functions can engage with each other...(as) essentially mechanisms of mediation",[5] became central to the conception, process and products of NEPI as a large-scale project to take forward the project of people's education, to recreate the earlier moments of a unifying alliance between intellectual and activist, but with a changed purpose, a shifting of focus from resistance to reconstruction of the existing education system.

While 2 February 1990 should not be regarded as a rupture with the past, it does provide a convenient marking of a change in the process of change: prior to this date, change in South Africa was framed by the opposition between the state and the people. The stark opposition of the two hegemonic blocs is reflected in an understanding of change as a replacement of what exists by its opposite, an affirming of the negation of apartheid education as a utopian alternative. After 2 February 1990, change becomes more ambivalent and uncertain: the two hegemonic blocs are displaced by a flux of multiple alliances and oppositions; education system change becomes a process of developing what exists in the direction of people's education. The change strategy is no longer to sink the old ship and build a new one, but to change the old ship plank by plank. The shift from resistance to transformation, from revolution to structural reform, brings policy-making to the fore as change becomes a matter of negotiated agreement, planning and management.[6]

Given that anti-apartheid intellectuals had no experience of policy work it is a tribute to a strong tradition of intellectual resistance to apartheid with a close relationship to social and political events that NEPI not only was conceived but implemented and completed within tight constraints during a period of considerable uncertainty and violence in a manner that maintained legitimacy and academic rigour. The structures, processes, debates and conclusions of NEPI can be seen as attempts to come to grips with multiple tensions in a variety of policy domains: conceptual, political, administrative and personal. The most important shift in focus is that the state is no longer the target; the daunting and malicious other has been replaced "...this investigation is not directed towards the state, and treats the state's policies as themselves representing the views of a powerful set of interests".[7] The purpose of the forum is no longer the construction of a counter-hegemony in a win-or-lose conflict with the state but the clarification of possible alternatives to the present system for use by political actors committed to the five principles.[8] NEPI

shows a nuanced cognizance of the multi-faceted nature of this project, of the need to replace previous binary oppositions with new conceptualisations that offer the possibility of resolving conflict through a process of rational compromises. The careful structuring of the reports as a movement from what exists to what is possible affirms a belief that it is possible to resolve conceptual and political disagreements in a progressive manner. The *Framework Report* provides a rearview mirror[9] of how this process of reconciliation and mediation unfolded during the course of NEPI and, in particular, how the concepts of articulation and forums characterize the processes and the products of NEPI: the processes are based on forums intended to join together (articulate) academics and activists; the products prioritize forums as the primary sites of decision-making and articulation as the guiding principle of education system change.

The purpose of the *Framework Report* as a guide to reading NEPI is to show the possibility of translating the conceptual options of NEPI into political positions. The distillation of the four systemic features of finance, organisation, differentiation and articulation provides a "lens through which to assess potential options".[10] The need for such an instrument arises from NEPI's conceptualisation of itself as an intellectual project within civil society, as an attempt to provide a rational perspective that avoids the advocacy associated with political bargaining. This distinction between discursive options and political positions is apparent in the framing of the conclusions of NEPI as options with a variety of tensions, inconsistencies and contradictions between them. NEPI is not so naive as to believe these options are neutral or objective; they are grounded in the values embodied in the five principles of: non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, unitary system and redress.[11] The role played by these principles within NEPI was that of having "... kept us honest, by serving as a constant reminder of the human communities to which the policy discourse is ultimately addressed".[12] To conclude with options is to avoid closure, and to accept that ambivalence " is not an 'enemy at the gate' any more. On the contrary: like everything else, it has been made into one of the stage props in the play called postmodernity".[13]

One way of evaluating this attempt to mediate the (known) old and the (unknown) new is to examine the attempt to articulate the tension between equity and development that arises from the application of the five principles to the possibilities of, and constraints on, education system change.

The demand for equity has its roots in the history of resistance to apartheid education and signifies the importance of redressing past inequalities. As a crucial tenet of People's Education, equity represents the elimination of capitalist norms of competition and individualism and a rejection of the unequal differences of apartheid.[14] The particular concept of development that is taken to be in tension with equity can be understood as economic growth and the integration of South Africa into a world economy dominated by a global capitalism fractured by extreme inequalities of wealth and power.[15] This integration is necessary if we are to

increase our collective wealth as a nation but has the consequence of requiring the allocation of scarce resources to groups privileged by their existing position (class, race, gender, region) in relation to the economy. The concept of development is biased towards a new form of dependency theory in which the development of the people of South Africa is dependent on our ability to modernize our economy and our education system. As Wolpe has noted, the question of education and training as a necessary aspect of economic development was not addressed sufficiently by People's Education; by contrast, in the *Framework Report* the pendulum swings the other way and the need for differentiated allocation of scarce resources in pursuit of development becomes the privileged side of the dichotomy.[16] The shift in focus from equity to development and the underlying assumption of a conflictual dichotomy are traces of the earlier dichotomy between the people and the state and their presence is indicative of NEPI's location in the space between the old and the new.[17] While actual outcomes will be determined by political processes it is possible to make "apparent the kinds of choices that have to made".[18] Broadly, the choices lie between the two poles of a means-end continuum: "Means-based models will emphasize equity, while ends-based models will stress development. Some kind of trade-off is inevitable".[19] From this perspective, equity expresses the needs-based popular demands of People's Education and development signifies the actual means for satisfying them in a negotiated restructuring of apartheid education within restrictive economic and political conditions.[20] The way forward provided by the *Framework Report* is to synthesize the contradictions into a means-end continuum and on the basis of extensive research and consultation produce options that broadly lie within the continuum. The binary oppositions and violent confrontation of the old order are displaced by changing contradictions into continuums and force into rational persuasion.

The means-end continuum is an example of the concept of articulation which is used to refer to relations and divisions between: concepts; the intellectual and political realms; interest groups in civil society; structures and processes within the education system. Articulation is also a key to the intellectual culture of NEPI. One of the original foundation stones of NEPI was the articulation between the intellectuals in the research groups and the People's Education committees of the NECC and their development of an Education Charter. This public discourse was intended to ensure that the final reports reflected a discursive engagement between those engaged in education in the classrooms and on the streets and the predominantly university-based intellectuals. The failure of this particular conception of joining (articulating) the research and development legs of the NECC within the research groups of NEPI reflected the disintegration of the type of community-based organisations (strong Parent-Teacher-Student Associations) necessary for the consultative forums to be as democratically inclusive as possible, with the result that the public discourses that emerged remained confined to a broad grouping of intellectuals from the universities, trade unions, and non-governmental

organisations (NGOs). This disintegration is linked clearly to the violence, but there is also a shifting away from the unifying homogenizing myths of the pre-1990 period and their replacement by shifting, multiple interest groupings. From this perspective the principles and recommendations of the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) and the options of NEPI are not in contradiction but are alternative positions within a unifying means-end contiuum. This is illustrated in the distinction between equity and efficiency: equity is defined as improved distribution of educational resources to disadvantaged communities and efficiency as maximizing rates of return on education investments.[21] Articulating the two concepts enables us to further sharpen the divisions on our means-end continuum. Applying criteria of efficiency will enhance our development potential: if we maximize our returns on education investment then the economy will grow faster and there will be more wealth to distribute to the poor. The policy challenge "...is to find ways of maximizing development while improving equity, to manage differentiation in such a way that the social programme of education equity is not seriously compromised".[22] The options at the end of each report are particular choices constructed from the perspective of each research group's interpretations of the means-end continuum. The role of the NEPI intellectual is clear: intellectual clarification of articulating relations and their application to the many dimensions of an education system is intended to facilitate the political articulation of these tensions within the appropriate forums of the political realm. For NEPI, the contours of an ideal process are clear: "Articulation becomes the most important means for facilitating equity under conditions of differentiation".[23] The surest guarantee of a transformation of the education system that will satisfy the needs of the poor lies in the development of an articulated system of governance that ensures the maximum participation of all interested parties in education decision-making. Over any particular issue the tension between means (equity and democracy) and ends (development and efficiency) can best be adjudicated within a public forum where partial resolutions will emerge from temporary agreements. An example of such an adjudication could be drawn from an appropriately adapted version of Moulder's indices of inequality in which a formula for the allocation of financial resources to an educational unit can be worked out taking due account of issues of redress/rectification.[24] Democracy is promoted by the adjustment of the formula on an annual basis through a forum open to public scrutiny and participation.

This picture of education decison-making forums and, particularly the discourse-framing role of the intellectual, reflects a Habermasian belief in the power of discourse to produce a form of reason that promotes a progressive development towards a just society: "The focus of investigation shifts...to communicative rationality ... and what is paradigmatic for the latter is ...the intersubjective relations that speaking and acting subjects take up when they come to an understanding with one another about something".[25]

The central role of the concepts of articulation and forums within NEPI is the source of its greatest strength and its most severe weakness. Within the context of a South Africa with a Government of National Unity based on inclusiveness and negotiated agreements, the NEPI options may well seem appropriate and useful to significant policy actors. What this picture silences, what are not articulated are the voices of those most likely to be excluded from the new system of education: rural people, women, unemployed youth. To be heard in the forums of NEPI one had to have either acknowledged intellectual skills or to be a representative of an organization with sufficient policy-making capacity to influence deliberations.[26] The danger of NEPI lies in its eurocentric assumption that the new South Africa will be a civil society within which education system change is dominated by a "mechanism of change" which privileges "the interaction of educationally dominant and assertive groups".[27] This is evident in the process of NEPI in the failure of the link to the People's Education commissions and the Education Charter campaign and in the products of NEPI in the failure to address the educational needs of those in South Africa who are part of a 'not-civil' society. The NEPI reports pay little attention to the education of the unemployed (with the exception of the Adult Education report) and to education in rural areas. This silence arises from the ambivalence embedded in options, forums and articulations. NEPI ends with the resolution of the people/state and equity/development dichotomies through the articulation of a means-end continuum involving a double shift from contradictions to continuums and from the streets to the World Trade Centre. This obscures the inevitable rise of new contradictions and struggles as the people/state opposition is replaced by a citizen-state (civil society)/ 'not-civil' society dichotomy where the order of the new South Africa is challenged by barbarism and anarchy.[28] For NEPI, the description of education is inconceivable outside of the tradition of the Enlightenment; any evaluation of NEPI should be aware that "the urge to tell stories of progress, maturation and synthesis might be overcome if we once took seriously the notion that we only know the world and ourselves under a description".[29] To maximize the emancipatory potential of NEPI and minimize the production of new inequalities and exclusions when choosing from the options it is necessary to locate education system change within the ensemble of power relations that permeate South African society.[30]

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 229-238

Chalk and Cheese: Reflections on Eductational Policy

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The resources of the mind are not commensurable with its ambition (Santayana).

The NEPI project has been an admirable one in many ways, not least in its publication on schedule of a compilation and synthesis of a large number of contributions. It has been a massive organisational and intellectual effort pursued with good faith. And yet, speak to members of its editorial group or read its mighty report and one senses and feels disappointment. It has also made very few inroads in the public arena. This letdown is neither just because these volumes are a necessary compromise of various voices, nor because NEPI fails to prescribe a single solution. Rather, could it be that the frustration we feel with NEPI is that it tries to do what cannot be done? Perhaps what most people regard as NEPI's single greatest achievement is actually the cause of its lying dead in the water – teaming up academics and activists.

Consider the possibility that academic theory and policy are different products of different social practices, and that they are fundamentally inapposite to resolving each other's problems. This is a difficult notion to accept for intellectuals raised on the basic premise that everything we know and do is socially produced, cultural. This truism is taken to mean that, because social practices share a common feature (or are related parts of a social whole), no distinctions can be made between them. Let us, for just a moment, contemplate a heresy: saying that academic work cannot be political in the sense of driving political strategies; there is a basic gulf between them. Trying to move politics with academic theory is like using to a walnut to crack a sledgehammer. The actual competence of academic theory is less obvious, and more subtle and long lasting; its contribution to politics, art, ethics, and so forth. is microsocial and oblique. Perhaps it is time to develop an argument around the specificity of social practices.

Before going into any detail to back up this claim, the point can be illustrated by perhaps more mundane activities – sport (A), gardening (B), and art (C). While one can accept that these practices are all cultural, we have little difficulty in understanding that they are distinguishable. Moreover, areas of articulation and overlap – between A and C (say, ice-skating) or B and C (flower arranging) – do not deny their relative autonomy, just as the existence of dusk does not deny the distinct periods day and night.

What does the specificity of social practices entail? Social practices – discourses, if the reader prefers – are efforts at transformation entailing specific

modes of production, each with its own types of raw and finished products. Economic social practices, for example, are to do with production, while political social practices are to do with the transformation of social relations. Each social practice operates according to its own time-scales and tempos. Social practices have their own features which, even if shared with other practices, are organised in particular constellations. And, social practices and their products have particular ways of being evaluated. There is a Monty Python skit which shows this when a university don (prating) and a (boxing) pugilist meet in the ring; the boxer knocks out the don, thereby becoming the next occupant of an Oxbridge chair. Academics engaging in policy work *qua* academics find themselves in similarly, although less obviously, absurd situations: like stating, against everything recent social theory says, that this educational theory is reactionary, while that pedagogy is democratic, as if meaning is eternally and unambiguously enscribed there. It has only happened once that South African educational theorists have developed a sophisticated model of domains of educational practice (from knowledge production to evaluation) linked by distinct nodes.[1] Unlike with modernist assumptions of extreme dislocations between domains, we are offered a postmodernist picture of multiple modes of order each with its own set of practices. However, even this admirable effort loses its explanatory power when in its conclusion it begins making claims about the public good and tries to reason its way out of what are political problems. Many suggest that democratic discussion fora in civil society will serve as ways of making academic knowledge the property of the people. NEPI can be seen as precisely such a forum. (One wonders what discussion can contribute to understanding of the hidden curriculum which is, after all, hidden.) If academic theory is a spade for the breaking up the compacted clay within us and within the social, policy work, and NEPI in particular, is how we cut the grass.

There is no space here to develop more than the outline of an analysis of academic and policy work and their relationship to each other. What must be made clear at the outset is that there is no essential difference between the two, but that each has its own constitutive elements arranged in particular ways. While the same elements may feature in more than one social practice, they stand in different configurations.

The development of theory-based knowledge by academics and the development of policy by politicians and bureaucrats are different types of endeavour. On the one hand, academic work has as the defining criteria of truth. Debates, whether articulated or not, about what is to count as truth, or even about the very possibility of truth, reside at the heart of academic theory, or the scientific endeavour. Policy, on the other hand, is a political social practice. It is not overly concerned, then, with the truth or otherwise of any activity or statement, but with its political usefulness. Besides having to be politically acceptable, policy has a modernist faith in the power of reason and the importance of reason for social progress. Not for nothing

is it called the new positivism. Academic theory can, we know well, adopt such a leaning, but ideas of rational progress are not inherent to it.

It is also the case that intellectualising leads away from action, while faith leads towards it; many will live and die for a dogma, no one will be a martyr for a theorised opinion. Dabblers in policy cannot claim to be driven by knowledge, they are driven by an assumption (of progress) which is a faith, and academics who choose to engage in policy work should, instead of dazzling people with their degrees and diplomas, identify themselves as fellow-believers. What is novel about NEPI is its project to use academic knowledge to produce policy options for a future government. In this way NEPI researchers hoped to keep politicians at arm's length. However, despite these efforts, a look at NEPI's policy options reveals little more than a compilation (underlaid by a particular notion of society and people) of what left educators have always supported. After all that work, the only assurances we have that centralised planning and regional curriculum development, participatory pedagogy and critical skilling, and so forth, are what we need are the dual facts that they resonate with political contingencies and principles, and that such policies are sellable.

There is a simplistic model behind much policy work: problem – research – solution. (NEPI's only modification here is to pluralise the last term). But, although things can be regulated for a while, say by the institution of a totalitarian state, social behaviour cannot be predicted or controlled, and its results can only be considered *post hoc*. We know by now that research is always piecemeal and that results are forever open to interpretation. How can such knowledge – no more than general orientations – possiblly lead to policy, or policy options? To provide just one example. If academic research into the development of the NECC produces a theory about its changing social role,[2] such a theory cannot tell us what is to be done. Should the NECC revert to its critical role? Should it function as an educational vanguard? Should it disband? Should it align itself more closely with political parties? If so, which ones? No answers to these valid strategic questions flow from the theory-based knowledge. The fact that academic theory is forced to pretend to lead to policy shows that policy is concerned not with the way things are, but with the way things ought to be. Unfair as it may seem, it is quite proper, then, for policy-makers to raid academic knowledge, but it is quite improper for anyone to claim this or that academic policy leads to these or those policy options. When intellectuals use academic knowledge to develop policy they present themselves as prophets, censuring society and mentoring it towards the future. Here is another difference between academic theory and policy; academic theory is principally aimed at explaining the past and the present (extrapolations into the future, as economics shows, are notoriously unreliable), while policy work looks primarily to the future.

Key terms mean different things in different discourses. When educational theorists speak of a syllabus excluding this or that text they mean, or should mean,

something related to, but different from, policy makers speaking of this or that excluded social group; texts and people are not excluded in an homologous way. Representation, too, does not mean the same thing in these two contexts. It would be wrong to claim that there is no interlacing of these realms, but to translate from one to the other is wrong thinking.

All this is not to suggest that the academy houses theory while policy makers conduct practice; this essay does not join in fatuous calls for the unity of theory and practice. Theory and practice *are* united. Rather, a model of social practices says that each social practice has its own theoretical and practical realm, and that these are always already part and parcel of each social practice. So academic theorising is itself a rule-based practice with a theoretical underbelly shaped around a concern with understanding. Its measure is plausibility and its product is theoretically-based knowledge. Similarly, policy work is a practice underlain by a theory of progress. Its criteria revolve around political utility and its products are policy options. It is true, then, that there is some correspondence between policy and academic theory. Both are supported by a populace which nonetheless has little respect for such work; both are pursued with a kind of narcissism and desire for fame; both contain the belief that they serve the common good. But there is no good reason to assume that academic knowledge has social utility; the instances of such prophecy actually exacerbating human suffering are legion. Intellectual analysis can call attention to social problems, but policy advice cannot simply be drawn out of such analyses to alleviate them.

As uncomfortable as it might be, it is necessary to deconstruct the obviousness of the fiction of the progressive academic. This should be undertaken not in a spirit of disillusionment (only those who dream of a rational and harmonious society should be depressed), but rather with irritation at the spurious and wasteful engagement of academics in policy projects. Arguments that unless we do it technocrats will, or that unless we engage in socially relevant research we are doomed to doing traditional academic research, are besides the point which is that we have no distinctive capacity in this regard – it is bogus to pretend that we do. A distasteful spin-off of academically justified policy work is that it can never be wrong; either the theory was incorrectly implemented, or outside forces hindered this implementation, or the theory should be modified. Even as they describe the failures of social policies, however, progressive academics around the world continue to demand progressive research by scholar-activists, and they continue to insist that theory and struggle shape each other. This last point may indeed be the case, but we only have very crude descriptions of how this actually happens.

It is crucial to appreciate that the fantasy of unifying academic theory and policy is based not on any evidence whatsoever that it is an intellectually or socially good thing; it comes from a prejudice, an article of faith, that this unity is in their fundamental nature. No-one can say anything much about how academic knowledge and policy relate to each other (the implication is that they are additive),

and in the field of education calls for high participation/high skills simply beg this question. It is preferable not to call this tendency a fallacy or category mistake as appeals to logic will only be met with scorn; it is better to see it as an anachronism as none of the scholars concerned will want to be seen to be tardy in adopting the latest trends. Progressive intellectuals, perhaps because ideas are the academic's *metier*, cling to the exaggerated and outdated idea that theories are dangerous – either oppressive instruments of the rulers, or the resistant weapons of the ruled. Marx insisted that the task of philosophy is to change the world, not to understand it, and before him Compte saw sociology as having real social usefulness. Traceable back at least to Plato, it is uncanny to see in the 1990s that a belief in the magical powers of philosophy survives. This despite very little evidence, evidence, indeed, which suggests that the actual influence of theoretical ideas is microscopic. So strong is the superstition on which the notion is based that to this day we read assertions like: the effectivity of leadership depends upon its own theoretical abilities.[3] But, if theory is far from dangerous in the academy, even the most harmless object can become the cause of public harm if it falls into certain hands. Like karate students at an anatomy lecture, policymakers take from academic theory that which pleases them and which is simultaneously marketable.

Why, it may be asked, are so many of our colleagues bothering with policy work? One answer is that, like everyone else, they are experiencing anxiety about social fragmentation. The policy document, serving to mediate between critical academic debate and perceived political conditions, appeases that anxiety. Academics, too, are not immune to nostalgia for totality, even if it is a totality of consensus of differences. But, the desire for unity in all things is a primitive and infantile impulse which, sensing our mortality, attempts to banish dread by longing for fullness and completion; life is bearable when we are part of something good. In NEPI the primacy of hope is rivalled only by the primacy of techniques. Romantic longing for oneness, unfortunately, hides the painful fact that change produces loss, mourning and symptoms for all concerned, oppressed and oppressor. Fear of death is itself an aspect of *thanatos*, the death-wish: when prey to it one either retreats to the peace of the womb (a state not unlike death), or one turns this anxiety into aggression (trying to kill the destabilising forces). Is it difficult to imagine that, when policies fail to solve educational problems, terror and dogmatism will take its place?

But there are also institutional reasons for this hubbub and activity. No-one is attacking the academic castle any more, it is tolerated listlessly. But other institutions are eating away at traditional activities of left academics. Academics are, or at least feel they are, being called upon by the public and by political leaders to justify social expenditure on the academy. In short, academics are losing a home. It should not be expected that this will be a good-natured departure. And politicians are constantly under pressure to prove that they warrant the public's confidence. We therefore see new alliances being formed[4] as members of both groups argue for

applied social research. Claims of usefulness are followed by policy investigations, which are followed by increased claims of usefulness, and so on in an expanding spiral. In this way legitimacy of perceived social utility is gained by both the new political and knowledge elites.

Ostensibly the effort to empower, even a project like NEPI cannot avoid elaborating a cult of victimhood at the same time as it relies on and perpetuates its mystique of expertise. Apartheid is a disease and South Africa's educational problems are among its symptoms; the only way to cure this disease is by expert help. However, if we can read this message, so can others, and now everyone claims to be democratic.[5] Anti-apartheid discourse is able to contain fewer and fewer dislocations and demands because what brought the anti-apartheid movement into existence is apartheid itself; when apartheid goes so does its *döppelganger*. Reading between the lines of the NEPI report, there is some awareness that traditional oppositional groupings in South Africa are losing, or may have already lost, their *raison d'etre*, but what grounds are there for trying to design another (except that it would somehow be proper and nice were it so)? Thus the routinisation of resistance.

Besides a basic belief in progress which it shares with all policy work, NEPI has another absent presence, an unspoken assumption about the nature of people and society. A mark of this is the endlessly circular problem of freedom versus democracy in NEPI discussions. Communities are understood as social groupings constituted by shared identifications. It should not be surprising that this is a common set of assumptions in NEPI; positive policy options can easily be formulated which are compatible with these assumptions, and positive policy options are what is called for. But a more convincing, if more unpalatable, conception is that societies do not exist in their own right, but that society is nothing more than a shifting tangle of reticulated groupings constituted by antagonisms;[6] so apartheid can only exist in relation to its Other: *die swart gevaar;*, so anti-apartheid can only exist in relation to its other: apartheid. As has been said above, the ultimate defeat of the Other results in identity death and fragmentation. It is absolutely pointless trying to intellectually develop new social subjectivities; internal identification and external tolerance will not do it. And to complicate the matter further, within any grouping there is always a tension between selfish personal needs and the altruistic demands of the group.[7] This alternative perspective suggests that racism is not wrong thinking or ignorance, but shared fear of the perceived *jouissance* or enjoyment of the Other; what we fear and hate about ourselves, what we envy and feel guilty about and therefore repress, returns as the detestable Other.[8] In a narcissism of minor differences, social groups do not despise those who are objectively their oppressors, but those closest to them. Despite the oversocialised theories of deconstructionists and other social constructivists, it may be that at the heart of society there is a non-discursive space concealing the cloven hoof of sex.

In other words, social conflict is internal to societies and necessary to their very existence. Critical theorists want to bridge the gaps between cognitive, ethical and political discourses, thus enabling a unity of experience. But such a unity can only be a dream, an illusory satisfaction of a wish. Our theories cannot come up with reality; reality is unrepresentable. All we can do is to invent conceivable stories about it. Unity of concept and the tangible, between knowledge production and strategies for implementation, comes about only with the terror of totalisation. Not only can we never regain the mother, the most we can hope to find is a temporary fullness, and that at a terrible price; who is to be the despised Jew of our 'anti-semitism'? According to this view, NEPI is a fantasy script written to fill an unfillable, formative internal vacuum, and one which denies the inevitability of external hatreds.

So much of policy work reads like inanities packaged as secrets benevolently revealed to the public; sometimes helpful or harmless, sometimes downright injurious, it mystifies the obvious. Running through the NEPI report is a view of people tailor-made to the special requirements of the faith that with good will and planning society will advance, that is, progressivism; schooling, if organised along X, Y, or Z lines, can socialise dispersed people into a South African nation. There is no understanding in the NEPI proposals of education as always being discursive self-formation within social ambivalence and inner conflict. Policy is about socialisation, it is true, but socialisation is always into existing psycho-social antagonisms. What we get in NEPI, though, is a simplistic understanding of socialisation as intellectual re-education; it cannot deal with the channelling of desire by social influences which turns the individual into a social subject. Locked into a discourse of human agency, progressive policy cannot imagine that human subjectivity is neither volitional individuality nor manipulable social roles, but that subjectivity comes into being when the constitutive void of society produces a comforting imagined fullness in relation to the Other. Lasting social change only comes about (unless via totalitarianism) through deep personal change, and this change of the self comes about in a state of cathexis. But NEPI policy cannot deal with emotions and irrationality; ultimately, it has too great a faith in the liberatory potential of critical rationality. What NEPI has been able to say is determined by politically agreeable tendencies. Without wanting to propose an alternative policy, one can argue that racism, sexism, and other prejudice cannot be reasoned away or untaught (precisely because they are unreasonable), and, if all our eggs are put into the critical thinking basket, failure of such policies will surely be followed by another rational strategy, keeping down. There is, to be sure, a definite anti-totalitarian strain running through some (but not all) of the NEPI reports, but this is without any feeling for how totalitarianism happens, or why people welcome it.

What happens when theory and policy are collapsed into each other? While disagreements between academics and activists can conceivably be negotiated

away, no amount of public discussion can solve the problems of academics trying to marry theory-based knowledge and policy. Policy, given its empirical concerns, is a resistance to theory even when it borrows from academic theory. Theory is in a sense the very opposite of consensus. Theory is what comes about precisely when social practices cease to be commonsensical; an attempt to preserve a consensus of community values and norms is a resistance to theory. Perhaps politically necessary, the democratisation of policy decisions should be seen for what it is: an agenda for a hoped-for unified culture, a wish based on a prejudice made at the expense of academic theory. Policy is a perverse combination of anti-intellectualism and a myth of expertise.

Zealous to be socially relevant, left academics are often constrained by prison-like similes. Once intellectually liberating, some central ideas have become stifling cliches. Entire debates are evoked with semantic economy. When everything is socially constructed/political/ideological, when critical thoughts are seen as being revolutionary acts, when democracy means the majority deciding on truth, then ideas become either reactionary or progressive, academics become policy advisors, and pedagogy becomes action research. But to draw up a new syllabus with its own canon is not to have begun considering the institution of the school or the nature of human change. Look what has happened to critical sociology of education now that its adherents have begun to propose policy; one of its most fundamental tenets is pushed far and harmlessly into the distance. Not the whole truth, certainly, but the most disturbing and counterintuitive finding of the discipline is that mass schooling produces and reproduces social inequalities. So unsettling has this vision been that many have tried to nullify its power by being balanced - by showing human resistance. Yet time and time again studies have defeated their own premises by revealing that, despite some popular opposition, mass schooling is reproductive. And now? Besides a caveat here and there, this basic tenet has been utterly silenced in the NEPI reports; critical faculties have been blunted. Why? Because this feature of schooling is seen to be pessimistic and therefore unmarketable. So we have a situation where the moment they change hats those who have devoted their academic lives to trying to understand the workings of mass schooling forget (repress) everything important they have learnt. Our colleagues have given up science for social programmes. This is not because they are dishonest; (except for those actively jockeying for government positions) these academics have, to mix metaphors, changed their tune because they are playing a different game.

What is to be done? This essay will probably not please its readers because it does only one of the two things intellectuals like doing most; it criticises, but it makes no recommendations. But it would be distinctly inappropriate, if the argument makes any sense, for an academic essay to engage in matters of strategy. Appropriate in the realm of policy, the question of performance is a modernist, technicist, and even infantile one which demands something of academics where I

have argued there can be far less. This essay is an intellectual product which does not require the legitimation of practical utility. It does not argue against this or that policy proposal, how could it? It comments on the ideology of academic engagement and its effects on our times. There are those who seek a way out of the dichotomy of Ivory Tower versus failed prophets. Unfortunately, while bureaucrats can and do journey from their offices to the academy, returning with gleanings, and although the political is on the route leading to academic work, one cannot get from the academy to policy; the road does not lead both ways. Theory-based knowledge may give some of the grounds from which policy proposals are to be inferred, but it does not validly try to infer them, not to mention reach such inferences. That is not its province. Some people may find it maddening to feel that academic theory has taught them so much, and yet not know how to help. Without offering relief, two things can be said in this negative conclusion. First, it seems clear that academics, at the risk of losing public face, should be far more aware and modest about what they can and cannot deliver. This means surrendering much of the significant political influence recently gained. Second, academics, like any other citizens have the right (duty?) to take up social issues. However, to do so *as academics*, wearing titles and qualifications as badges of special competence, is to commit a fraud; we have no such competence.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 239-242

The Formation of *Education International*: A Report from the South African Democratic Teachers' Union

RANDALL VAN DEN HEEVER
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INTRODUCTION

> We need a new world order .. not an order that keeps everybody in their place, but an order that makes a place for everybody.
>
> We need expanded unionism ... solidarity among the working people of all nations, tongues and origins. And we need unity in our own ranks ... sturdy bonds of respect and co-operation among all educators. We must never forget that the violation of the rights of any educator is a violation of the rights of every educator.

This is how Mary Futrell, the first President of the newly established Education International, emphasised the imperative of unity at the international congress in Stockholm, Sweden in January 1993.

The new Education International is the largest trade union and professional organisation in the world. It has nearly 300 national member organisations from some 140 countries, representing a total of 20 million teachers and other education employees.

SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION AT THE WORLD CONGRESS

The South African teaching fraternity was represented at the Stockholm International Congress by the President and General Secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), Shepherd Mdladlana and Randall van den Heever.

Mdladlana was a delegate to the Dissolution Congress of the former World Confederation of the Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) and van den Heever a delegate to the Dissolution Congress of the International Federation of Free Teacher Unions (IFFTU). The WCOTP and IFFTU Dissolution took place at closing congresses in Stockholm from 21 to 25 January 1993. On 26 January 1993, Mdladlana and van den Heever were delegates to the historic constituent congress of Education International (EI) in Stockholm. SADTU has been accepted as an affiliate organisation of Education International, heralding the Union's formal recognition by the organised international community of teachers.

Mdladlana addressed a special session on SADTU at the WCOTP Closing Congress, while Van den Heever introduced a motion against Apartheid at the IFFTU Congress. The final resolution adopted by the Stockholm Congress

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demanded the introduction of a single department of education in South Africa, and the recognition of SADTU by such a non-racial, national education authority.

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

The aims of the new Educational International are set out in a constitution that was adopted at the Stockholm Congress:

* To promote the status, interests and welfare of teachers and to defend their trade union and professional rights;
* To promote for all people and in all nations peace, democracy, social justice and equality;
* To seek and maintain recognition of the trade union rights of workers in general and of teachers and education employees in particular;
* To bargain collectively and to undertake industrial action, including strike action if necessary;
* To support and promote the professional freedoms of teachers and education employees and the right of their organisations to participate in the formulation and implementation of education policies;
* To promote the right to education for all persons in the world, without discrimination;
* To promote the political, social and economic conditions that are required for the realisation of the right to education in all nations and for the achievement of equal educational opportunities for all;
* To combat all forms of racism and of bias or discrimination in education;
* To give particular attention to developing the leadership role and involvement of women in society, in the teaching profession and in organisations of teachers and education employees;
* To promote unity among all independent and democratic trade unions both within the educational sector and with other sectorS; and thereby contribute to the further development of the international trade union movement.

IDEALS OF EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

In her presidential address to the Constituent Congress of Education International, Mary Hatwood Futrell said that the decision to form the Education International demonstrated that the ideals that unite teachers are far more important than the differences which divided them. She went on to make the following observations about the historic significance of EI:

* We declare now and forever, that when the issue is the liberation and education of the children of the world, we stand together.

* We want to make it plain to all the world that we are united in our commitment to education, to each other, and to the heritage of the Trade Union Movement.
* We cannot be silent while our planet is home to one soldier per 43 people and to one doctor per 1030 people ... while more than 900 million adults are illiterate, two-thirds of whom are women ... while governments around the globe seek to escape the results of their own foolish fiscal priorities by advocating the privatisation of education ... while worldwide, only one citizen in four has the unrestricted right to vote .... while each day 25 000 children die from hunger ... while the apartheid of gender has become just as brutal as the apartheid of race.
* With the formation of the Education International, we have grown in numbers. More important still, we have grown in clout, in conviction, in courage.
* We say to all the leaders of all the Governments of the World that we are determined that children and unions shall be free ... free from violence and free from exploitation, free from fear and free from intimidation.
* We demand – unconditionally – the working conditions, the compensation, the status, and the respect we deserve as education employees and as trade union members.
* The new Education International will enhance our capacity to reach out to save teachers and union leaders from the imprisonment and torture so many of them are suffering in countries with repressive governments.
* The creation of the Education International is a commitment to the world's children. And it is a commitment to a new kind of education, to Global Education in the most comprehensive, most authentic sense.

CONCLUSION

The formation of Education International delivers the potent message that trade unionism for teachers is a reality that governments, administrators and even teachers themselves have to accept. And through teacher trade unions the international community of teachers will demand the best in education for themselves, their pupils, their communities and society at large.

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Perspectives in Education, 1993, Vol 14, No 2, 243-248

Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1910-1990

By KEN HARTSHORNE, Oxford University Press, Cape Town (1992),
ISBN 0195707125, 394 pages.

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This is a book of wide scope and awesome detail by the doyen of South African education. It will be welcomed by students and academics of alike. Particularly people who think there are no answers to the problems facing black education will find Hartshorne's infectious (but realistic) optimism uplifting and thought-provoking. As the title suggests, the book holds promise for people with differing interests. For present-minded policy makers, there will be expectations that the major educational problems facing South African education will be analysed and various policy implications explored. For those with their minds focussed more on the past, there will be hope that the history of black South African education will be enriched with new facts, re-interpreted or, more modestly, reviewed in ways rendering it more accessible. This hope will be tinged with the excitement that comes from the realization that Hartshorne was himself an influential actor in the development of black education. Before making an assessment of how well this book succeeds in these two aims, I want to take a brief tour through Hartshorne's own fascinating life as educator, offered for our edification in Chapter 1. Hartshorne grew up of working class parents in Britain, experiencing his schooling in the pre-war years and finishing at the University College, London, in 1937. His early political experiences of politics were of Trade Union power and Labour dominated local politics. His own political maturation followed this trajectory, with a period of anti-fascist radicalism as a university student giving it some edge. As time went on, his politics were influenced by university teachers, but also by his experiences of teaching, initially in the United Kingdom and later (from 1938 on) in South Africa. The book reflects many of the values one would expect of a person of this background. Nor is Hartshorne unique in this position; William Ballinger came out from Britain in the 1920s to work in the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU). Like Hartshorne, he was a white occupying a senior position in a black world. This was not always comfortable and his contribution to the ICU is still debated.

Yet I wonder whether, for all the strengths and insights Hartshorne's particular path into 'politics' has given him, it has not failed him. For *Crisis and Challenge* is in the end a book without a theory. It resounds with exhortations to democracy, with pleas for justice and understanding and even with the conviction that education problems have to be solved collectively. It reviles authoritarianism and 'politically-biased' decision making. To this extent the book is very like the liberal offerings of two decades ago. Without wanting to revive the tired radical-liberal

debate, it is necessary to repeat some of its hoary outcomes. As with the old liberal interpretations, Hartshorne's book is 'theoretically' neutral. The analysis of politics and power is really reduced to the bad and ignorant politicians (especially the post-1948 Nationalist Party), the noble professionals attempting to steer a straight course, and the victims of the system – the black students and teachers. This is a caricature but I can assure you that it is not too far off the mark. I think at one level this is a crippling fault – it allows Hartshorne to avoid some exceedingly difficult questions about, for example, youth and teachers. Youth really deserve a separate chapter, instead they are treated piecemeal, for the most part as the major victims of a vicious, wasteful and neglected system. But there is a growing literature which shows that the youth were not just victims, they were actors themselves, today more so than ever before. They have a constant generational battle with teachers, they choose sides politically and criminally, they advocate values, they influence schooling. But Hartshorne ignores all this because his framework (Christian-inclined, politically-nursed and experientially sympathetic) does not allow him to engage in critical discussion here. He has chosen his ground.

Much the same could be said of his handling of teachers. Whilst he acknowledges difficulties and divisions, black teachers are generally described as victims, often of the noble variety. When they err (he notes the increasing instances of absence from school, drunkenness, lack of self-respect in the mid-1980s[1)] he ascribes this to state repression. He thus avoids looking at the class position of teachers (this is mentioned as a point of dispute only in passing, via a TUATA editorial quote[2)] and ignores the historical instances when black teachers have been less than absolutely devoted to teaching. The point I am making is not that Hartshorne should have been more judgmental. He should have been more critical, he should have problematized the actors and given them a greater historical contextuality and agency.

Another effect of Hartshorne's position is that he tends to have a great deal of respect for and belief in the capacity of private enterprise to impact on education. This is not to say that he thinks the system should be privatized, but his coverage of private educational interventions is uncritical.

But it is premature to tell the reader what Hartshorne did not do. This book really is most impressive on a number of scores. Its detailed coverage of educational areas ranging from primary schooling to secondary schooling, the rural and urban realms, in terms of data, the laws and the bureaucratic processes which brought those laws into life, is magisterial. The book has eleven chapters. The second is on primary education, the next two on secondary education. From here on, a range of topics of immediate interest to educators are tackled – language, educational policy making (a fascinating insider's account is offered by Hartshorne of the de Lange Commission), teacher training, teacher organisation, INSET. All are written with the assurance of somebody who has devoted his entire working life to education. If anybody know how 'the system' works, it is Hartshorne. *Crisis and Challenge*

covers a great many important policy problems: Numeracy and literacy, access to schooling, quality, what is education for, how long should children be in school to benefit, how can they benefit, how the poverty of rural education can be remedied. The list of important questions posed (and often answered) by Hartshorne is – and superlatives fail me here – superb.

As I was reading the book I frequently paused to think where I'd seen a particular point raised before. The answer invariably was in the NEPI reports (just published by Oxford University Press). It is clear, and very fortunate, that Hartshorne's knowledge was fed into that process and that many of his suggestions have been accepted (see, for example, his suggestion of the middle school) or at least have shaped the policy options suggested in the NEPI reports. Unavoidably some important issues of policy have not been covered. Can education proceed in the present climate of violence (a question raised by Nzimande and Thusi in an EPU publication of 1991)? How can a 'culture of learning' be created? And there is no discussion at all of the 'gender problem' or problems of the racial integration of the schooling system and multiculturalism. Yet despite these omissions, persons wanting to be better informed about education policy debates will have little cause for complaint.

For the historian of education, the rewards are not nearly as great. In general, the book lacks historical analysis. The narrative is unfolded unproblematically, with little reference to broader developments in the country. Policies are not located within contexts of struggle between various policy factions or as a result of 'pressure from below'. The reader is rarely exposed to differing interpretations and debate, though Hartshorne does cover most of the key areas, such as whether black education was to produce skilled labour, to produce obedient citizens or to establish legitimacy for the 'system'. But the history in *Crisis and Challenge* is really a history of the administration of South African black education. Maybe this was inevitable – Hartshorne being so close to developments, wrote about them almost as a constant participant. So each law and government gazette, each commission and parliamentary exchange has an immediacy about it which prevents the writer from standing back far enough to see how the whole picture hung together. There are two offerings on periodisation for historians to ponder: the first is the point that between 1947 (when the McMalcolm Commission sat to investigate student troubles) and 1949 (when the Eiselen Commission began its task of mapping out a new educational order), a major change occurred in educational politics. Whereas the former commission's membership reflected different political and racial positions, the latter's did not. Secondly, Hartshorne makes a major claim for the importance of the De Lange Commission (of which he was a part). Attempting to rescue it from the dismissive critiques by radicals who saw it as a lame reformist initiative on behalf of capital, Hartshorne asks that we accept it as "a major landmark in the history of education in South Africa".[3] And there are also many

memorable descriptions of events and trends, not least his description of the state's concern for primary education as an "iron rations approach".[4]

Being interested in gender issues, I was shocked to find no mention of women in the index and only scattered references to them in the text. Surprisingly, when Hartshorne begins a full discussion of teacher training, the problems of women teachers are not discussed. One can't help lamenting the absence of any reference to Shula Marks's, Not *Either an Experimental Doll*. This wonderful book would have been an excellent entree to the gender question. And there are other omissions which will ring harshly in the ears of scholars with different interests – no discussion of delinquency and reformatories nor of industrial education.

It is the absence of any contextual statement about the black (meaning African ('Coloureds' and 'Indians' are not discussed) education system which is the biggest weakness for the historian. The relationship of that system to the 'white' system is not explained. This makes it difficult to situate or evaluate his description of the development of the black education curriculum. We cannot compare and contrast the two (we are asked simply to accept that black education was bad) nor are we given enough information to fully understand why the black curriculum was as it was. There has been a lot of work on the development of twentieth century segregationist thinking in South African historiography over the last twenty years and Hartshorne really ought to have used this. The work of Martin Legassick, Paul Rich and Saul Dubow would all have been informative, and the work of Linda Chisholm and Brahm Fleisch on the development of education philosophies (with regard to reformatories and the trans-Atlantic connection respectively) would have made this a much fuller historical account. The failure to draw more heavily on the literature beyond the strict confines of history of education produces some unsatisfactory moments. The under-financing of black education from the 1930s onward[5] is put down to the tight-fistedness or racism of Afrikaans administrators and law-makers. There is no reference to the work of Deborah Posel and John Lazar about the struggles within the National Party and the volk over national policy, there is no or little sense of the economic crisis besetting the country during these years. Nor is there any reference to the debate about the growth of the Apartheid economy in the golden years of 1960s, most recently debated by Terence Moll.[6] In short the historical reasons and context for education policy are not properly provided.

For the historian of education, Hartshorne's book is disappointing in another respect. It does not adequately harness the existing literature. The field of history of education in South Africa has been ploughed with great vigour of late. The formation of the South African Comparative and History of Education Society (SACHES) in 1991 testified to this intellectual energy. Not all the work of the scholars active in this field has been published, but it is unfortunate that, for example, Krige's work on the 1930s, Kros's on Lovedale, Paterson's on independent and missionary educational initiatives and Vilardo's on teacher politics is not referred to at all. And two major doctoral theses by Chisholm and Hyslop are

not given the attention they deserve. In fact, the synthesis of South African education by Cross and Chisholm in Nkomo's book, *Pedagogy of Domination*, is a better place to get an understanding of the history.

It is possibly too early to expect post-modernism to impact on histories of South African education yet it should be noted that post-modernist perspectives could have been employed to interrogate the racial identities employed in the book. In *Crisis and Challenge* 'blacks' and 'whites' simply exist. It is important to show that these are not discrete categories but rather constructions which one can trace using conventional methodologies. How was the 'other' constructed? Asking such a question would have taken Hartshorne on a trip down through the erosion of African voting rights and the rise and fall of the 'Cape Liberal tradition'. These developments were *not* incidental to the development of Black education.

This is a large book and for the most part its structure makes it manageable. Yet I would question the wisdom of devoting Chapter 2 to primary education and Chapter 3 to secondary education. In practice, there is a lot of overlap between the two as the evolution of black education policy did not fall neatly into these divisions. The book is well written and readable (notwithstanding the many long quotes and plethora of tables). Penultimately, for people who think this book lacks humour, try this: Describing commissions of enquiry into education in the Homelands, Hartshorne writes "all of them were kicking against the pricks of Bantu Education".[7]

Crisis and Challenge is an important book that offers much. But my lasting impression will be of Hartshorne himself trying to explain his role in a maligned education system, and particularly, lamenting the fact that he was still part of that system when it erupted in 1976.

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Referees for Volume 14 No 1 and 2

The quality of a journal depends crucially on the critical judgments and comments of the referees. *Perspectives in Education* thanks the following referees for their reports on manuscripts submitted for publication in Volume 14.

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Notes for Contributors

1. Contributions should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of an A4 sheet only. Three copies should be submitted and one retained.
2. Title, author's name, full postal address and a biographical note should be typed on a separate sheet.
3. An abstract of 100-200 words should also be typed on a separate sheet.
4. **DISCS:** Where copy is submitted on disc, for computer based editing, text should be submitted with NO formatting, i.e. All text to begin flush with left hand margin. No indenting of text. One space (not two) after full stops, between sentences. No line spacing between paragraphs. No line spacing between headings and text. All headings in lower case. Tables without tabs or spacing. Discs must be accompanied by a typed copy which indicates paragraphing, table formatting and relative importance of headings (A,B), in pencil in the margin. The following word processing programmes are acceptable: ASCII, DCA, MSWord, Multimate, Wordperfect, Wordstar, Xerox Writer, Xywrite.
5. **TYPED COPY:** Submit typed copy in the style of *Perspectives in Education*.
6. **TEXT:** Dates thus: 1 January 1989. Double quotation marks only (except for "quotes 'within' quotes") to be used; all quotations of more than 40 words to be on new line without quotation marks (but indicated in pencil in the margin). Abbreviations to be given in full at first, then written without points, for example, United States (US).
7. **NOTES AND REFERENCES:** These are always at end of text, in order of appearance and numbered (...at schools".7) No separate bibliography to be given.

For reference to a book:
1. P. Kallaway (ed.), *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984), 2-5.

For a journal reference:
2. A. Simon and P. Beard, "Discriminatory Factors Affecting Women Teachers in Natal", *Perspectives in Education*, 9, 1 (July 1986): 59.

For a reference to a chapter in a collection:
3. F. Chikane, "Children in Turmoil: The Effects of the Unrest on Township Children", in S. Berman and P. Reynolds (eds.), *Growing Up in a Divided Society: The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 20.

For reference to work listed directly preceding:
4. *Ibid.*, 20.

For reference to a work listed above, but not directly preceding:
5. Simon and Beard, 61.

Unpublished sources:
6. Phillips to J.D. Rheinalt Jones, 10 September 1934, Ray Phillips Papers, A1444-1446, Church of the Province of South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand.

Published Government reports:
7. *South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1903-1905* (Cape Town, 1905), 71.

Newspapers:
8. *The Star*, 3 September 1986.

Unpublished theses and papers:
9. M. Cross, "Capital, State, Missionaries, and the Foundations of a Segregated Schooling System on the Witwatersrand, 1900-1924" (M.Ed. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985), 1.

Oral Interviews:
10. N. Ncube, teacher at Citrusdal Primary, interview with author, Citrusdal, July 1988.

Contributions should be sent to The Editors at the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, PO Wits, Johannesburg 2050, South Africa, or through Associate Editors.

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