ADULT EDUCATION AS PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being submitted as part of candidature for any other degree.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me and that any help I have received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

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Chapter Two:

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Chapter Three:

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Chapter Four:

Straining Training: The Epistemology of Workplace Learning. (1992) In *Studies in Continuing Education*. 14:2 130-142

Dancing With the Ugly Sisters: What Kind of Democratic Culture Should Adult Education Develop? (1993) In *New Zealand Journal of Adult Learning*. 21:1 77-98

Workplace Learning: Managing Cultural Change. In *The Workplace in Education: Australian Perspectives*. (1994) (eds. Crowther, Frank et al.) Sydney: Edward Arnold Australia/Australian Council for Educational Administration Ch. 27

Philosophical Underpinnings of the Integrated Conception of Competence. (1995) (with Paul Hager) In *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. 27:1 1-21

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Chapter Seven

Professional Practice for Educators: The Getting of Wisdom? (1995) In *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. 27:2 [in press]

PREFACE

In 1985, I was persuaded to give a couple of classes in the first tiny involvement which the then Melbourne College of Advanced Education had in adult education. Over the rest of the 1980s the teaching and intake grew, then I was asked to co-ordinate the course, now the Graduate Diploma in Adult Education and Training. As the 1990s unfolded, I developed Master of Education coursework, and commenced MEd theses supervision, all in adult education.

The University of Melbourne absorbed MCAE, on January 1 1989, and it was increasingly clear that adult education would be a priority in the new Faculty of Education. From January 1 1996, its home will be the new *Department of Vocational Education and Training*, with a Foundation Chair and staff initially based on the Hawthorn campus.

So this PhD effort rounds off one decade of accelerating involvement with adult education, and points me towards a stronger focus within the field, both in research terms and in graduate teaching, after 1995.

Three people have especially helped me in this transition. Dr Gerald Elsworth, Associate Professor Gabriele Lakomski, and Professor Brian Caldwell, through their leadership of what is now called the *Department of Education Policy and Management*, encouraged me with advice, some crucial study leave in 1993, and in many other tangible ways, to push ahead with research in this area. In particular, papers I gave at these gatherings helped crystallise the thesis:

- Annual Conferences of the *Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia*: Perth , September 1992 and Sydney, October 1993
- Fourth Biennial Conference of the *International Network of Philosophers of Education*, Leuven, Belgium, August 1994.
- Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation: *Conference on Argumentation and Education*, St Catherine's, Canada, May 1995.

Two other people have helped me outside my workplace.

Associate Professor Paul Hager, my supervisor at UTS , has carried out the supervision as a model of mentoring, and as an energetic and resourceful philosopher.

Denise Beckett, my wife, is wonderfully supportive of this research activity, and has managed her own work commitments, our responsibilities to our two very young children and our household most expeditiously. I am forever grateful to her.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Vera and Ralph Beckett, who taught me to value what Charles Wesley meant when he wrote of being 'lost in wonder, love and praise'.

David Beckett
Moonee Ponds, July 1995.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis will establish, through philosophical argument, particularly in philosophical psychology, that professional practitioners in adult education are those who see themselves (and indeed are also seen) as agents of the integration of

(a) adults' learning from their experiences (the *authenticity* aspect), with
(b) the values of 'education' (the *integrity* aspect).

That is, such practitioners employ 'know how' to bring such integration about, and they may ideally exemplify a kind of wisdom in 'knowing why' they act as they do. *We will call this the 'integrationist' model of adult education practice.*

This integrationist thesis, drawing mainly upon Wittgenstein, Kant and Aristotle:

- takes the very phenomenon of the practices of adult educators as its starting point, rather than analyse concepts or language *per se,* and treats ethical and epistemological dimensions of this practice as interwined and equally central in such phenomena;

- requires extensive treatment of the formation of the 'appropriateness' or efficacy of the ethical and epistemological ingredients of professional practice, and subsumes this 'know how' in the significance of sociocultural location;

- assumes such people are still 'students' in the broad sense that they are integratively learning from their practical experience and that socio-culturally located workplaces provide the most significant context for their practice (intentionality and competence are especially addressed);

- re-examines the emphasis in adult education on the role of experience and the self, and accordingly revitalises a constructivist approach more firmly based in ontological considerations;

- accordingly, moves beyond an atomistic conception of professional competence and the sovereignty of the agency of the individual practitioner;

- develops an emphasis on teleological considerations - adding 'knowing why' to a more holistic 'know how' and, in that sense, signals a retrieval of the notion of 'vocation', with an orientation towards the attainment of the 'rightness' of practical wisdom (*phronesis*) as the purpose of adult education as professional practice.

Integrationism is thus also constructivist: professionals in any field are expected to make a positive difference. There are general features of the analysis pertinent to any practice where adults' circumstances are up for amelioration.

INTRODUCTION

> ...when what I wrote was my own idea, the audience laughed. I tried to hold them in contempt for that, but could not quite succeed. So I tried to hold myself in contempt instead, but could not quite succeed at that either. It was already occurring to me that in these matters practice might be wiser than theory.
>
> If only everything had been clearer. If I had read Sartre at that stage I might have learned that the obligation to create one's life from day to day was an inescapable responsibility. Luckily I read Camus instead. Here was my first mature literary enthusiasm: instead of merely having my prejudices confirmed, I was disabused of them. Camus offered consolation by telling you that yours was not the only personality which felt as if it was lying around in pieces - every life felt like that from the inside. More importantly, he offered a moral vision that went beyond the self. 'Tyrants conduct monologues above a million solitudes.' I looked at a sentence like that until my eyes grew tired. It wasn't poetry. So why was it so poetic? How did he do it? And where could I buy a coat like his?
>
> - Clive James, *Unreliable Memoirs* (1980:155)

Clive James raises the big issues well. In this extract from his autobiography, he is reflecting, fairly ironically, upon his formation - in practice - as a professional writer and entertainer. What is striking is the intensity and honesty of that reflection, and the implicit priority given rationality and creativity, especially in the last four sentences. Furthermore, James is concerned about the responsibility to 'create one's life', yet with a 'moral vision beyond the self', even when, *simpliciter*, he agonises, at the footlights, over the kind of person he is, or was, or would like to be.

0.1 The Thesis

Now, in what follows, Sartre, Camus, and indeed Clive James, are all ignored, but the concepts and relationships adverted to just now are developed within the scholastic tradition of English-speaking academic philosophy. This has its own types of intensities: attention to the particularities of logic, sensitivity to

subtleties of meanings, and awareness of the centrality of context to both the cogency of logic and of meaning.

Like James, we address 'practice' - its formation, exercise and purpose in the life of the professional. Unlike James, our focus is the adult educator as a professional practitioner, but within that, we foreground that which he has stated of himself: a life based in practice (even, more specifically, constructed in performance), framed by reflection, rationality and creativity, not self-centred but 'self-directed' beyond oneself, and set within the broader socio-cultural context all professionals share. These are the key concepts for him, and for us. They are, for us, embedded in two overlapping kinds of discourse, adult learning and adult education.

Adult learning - of which James' autobiography is an entertaining and lucid example - can be said to involve all these concepts in various relationships, but the special responsibility of those who see themselves as adult *education* professionals is rather more complex. Their proficiency (of which more later) exists in the overlap between the two discourses, and, in a nutshell, consists in converting adult learning into adult education.

Within this nutshell, the notion of experience is problematic. Why is this so?

The transition of adult learning to adult education is identifiable not by chronology, psychology, sociology, policy or provision, but by a fundamental philosophical point of tension. The point of tension arises quite simply, and as follows.

On the one hand, adult education, as for education in general, represents an embodiment of ideals, and optimism about achieving these ideals, through which individual lives and human existence in general will benefit. 'Education' is an honorific. It carries with it improvement and growth as hope and expectation.

On the other hand, adult education, perhaps more than education in general, privileges the experience and motives of the learner, as a self-directing individual. Accompanying this is a respect for the power of groups of adult learners, especially as this is apparent in dynamics from the small scale of a classroom, to the massive claims and expectations of society-wide phenomena located in ethnicity, class and gender. Furthermore, groups of learners have

impact in the marketplace. If enough individuals want to learn the same thing, someone will want to try to teach it to them. This is true of groups as aggregates of individuals and as well as collectivities of shared directions.

The evolution of adult education as a field of study, and of practice, displays these two perspectives and the tension inevitably generated between them.

Put crisply, adult education, because it is *education*, has legitimate aspirations beyond the dynamics legitimated by experience. Yet, because the learning is *adult*, it is the power of experience which directs the quest for learning. There may be nothing honorific about such learning: in fact it may be miseducative, but it is still *my* learning, which gives it, at least at first blush, the stamp of educational integrity.

If there were to be a crisis in adult education, it would most likely centre on this point of tension between these two legitimations for learning - between, on the one hand, what is educationally significant, and, on the other hand, what is experientially authenticated.

Now, this thesis is not going to resolve this general point of tension, but it is going to address a particular manifestation of it and argue for a particular resolution. Adult education as professional practice presents a specific scenario for analysis even though adult educators, acting professionally, do so in the light of the relevant ideals visited upon both educators in general and professionals in general. There will be some derivative ideals, but the focus throughout the thesis is on the relationships of these ideals to the privilege accorded adults' experiences and hence to the nature of the engagement brought by adult educators to their work with adults as learners.

Indeed, the act of engagement is a convenient and significant focus for the particularities of professional practice. Right across the spectrum of occupations which claim a 'professional' orientation (of which more later), there is a fascination with the ways a client, a patient, or a learner - or groups of these people - can enjoy more effective use of professional practice. There is abroad a recognition of the responsibility professionals have to make their work accessible, not just available. The distinction rests upon an education ideal: *access to decision-making is more likely to generate a sense of ownership of the outcome.* A stronger version of this replaces 'access' with 'participation', and in many areas of professional practice, this is a high priority. In nursing and social work,

for example, the patient or client is increasingly imbued with an active interest in her or his well-being: taking increasing responsibility for improvements in well-being is integral to what that well-being consists in. Ownership-via-participation is, then, more than a political expedient. It is a central element in the achievement of successful practice for a certain kind of professional.

Adult education, it will be argued, fits this model because it requires that any claim to its professional practice gives priority to adult learners' ownership-via-participation. What marks out adult educational practice from other sorts of practice is the central interest in, and enthusiasm for, the integration of adults' learning from their experiences with the values of 'education'. And the properly 'professional' adult educator will therefore take responsibility for engaging 'ownership-via-participation' in adult learners.

The thesis will establish that professional practitioners in adult education are those who see themselves (and indeed are also seen) as agents of the integration of

(a) adults' learning from their experiences, with

(b) the values of 'education'.

That is, such practitioners employ 'know how' to bring such integration about, and they may ideally exemplify a kind of wisdom in 'knowing why' they act as they do. We will call this the 'integrationist' model of adult education practice.

The point of tension given specific adult education attention at (a) and (b) is probably generalisable across all professional work. There is an assumption that a practitioner in any field 'knows how' to bring about a situation desired by the client (using 'client' as catch-all term for all those who deal with professionals in a quasi-contractual or contractual relationship). But life is not as neat as the logic indicates it may be. Where clients are coming from - experientially - will be as crucial as what the professional brings to the judgement of desirability for that client. All is inevitably hedged about with ethical, epistemological and ultimately ontological notions of truth, richly elaborated by teleological expectations of human betterment.

Thus it is to be expected that the scene gets messy immediately - what Schön (1987: Ch1) calls the 'swamp' and Wittgenstein (1963; para 107-108) the 'rough ground' - and, as we must recognise at the outset, and deal with on the way, this is a feature of practice in any human endeavour. Schön contrasts the 'swamp' with the high ground of the 'plateau', indicating that the purity of theory in itself will not adequately capture the messiness of practice. Similarly, Wittgenstein contrasts the rough ground with the 'crystalline purity of logic' suggesting that we will understand ordinary life better if we start with what is less than ideal. The ice of logic is slippery and clear, 'but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk, so we need *friction*'.

In the midst of the swamp or upon the rough ground of ordinary life, let us assume, for the moment, then, that we make sense of what we do through the notion of 'know how', or practical knowledge. This will be a convenient point of entry to what we mean by practice, albeit for professionals' work.

The easy way through the swamp or across the rough ground is to regard the achievement of any (desired) situation as arising from the merely technocratic exercise of know how. In many professional settings, it will be quite suitable as a depiction of the relationship of the professional to his or her practice and to the ethical and epistemological bases of it. Prostitution, if a profession, can be regarded technocratically - perhaps that is one way to survive in it. The general point though is that under a technocratic model of practice, whatever expedites the arrival at a situation desired by the client is, by definition, good practice. The professional practitioner, on this very non-messy analysis, knows how the rules and procedures of that practice can and indeed ought to regulate novel and perhaps unique situations. The practice of X consists, it is naively thought, in the application of these as appropriate. There is a role for judgement, but it is regarded as a technique to be sharpened; admittedly, sharpened by experience, but not itself to be created or transformed by that experience. Certainly, under this model, the notion of judgement is not regarded as problematic. We can make clear immediately that adult education is not to be considered as this sort of professional practice. Why not?

We have already stated the thesis that adult education practice is located within the point of tension between two kinds of regard for adult learning - the experientially authentic, and the educationally significant. To ignore this tension, that is, to regard adult education practice as of a piece with technocratic models of practice, is to admit the possibility that the professional

adult educator be *beholden* to ownership of the learning situation residing totally with the learners. What is at risk there is what makes an *educational* practice, for a professional working with adult learners.

Conversely, the espousal of educational ideals can, it must be recognised, override any serious sensitivity to the particular values and dynamics of learning processes or the needs of the learners: education is a knowledge-based pursuit, and those who have a vision of Truth can lose their fellow-travellers on the way. We all live in Plato's shadow, even if we can extricate ourselves from his cave!

Professional practice for adult educators is then a curious phenomenon. There is no guarantee that both the ideals espoused by and through adult education practices, and the outcomes established or evolved by individuals or groups of adult learners will cohere. In other areas of professional activity - nursing, engineering, the law and so on - there is broad agreement on the purpose of the professionals' practice, if by this we mean a focus on the act of engagement in that practice. As we have noted, in some fields, a technocratic conception of that engagement will suffice. But this will not suffice for adult educators because their work is located within and by the point of tension we have just identified.

This tension between the significance of educational ideals and the significance of extensive experience is brought out in the following statement:

> Since the vast majority of students in adult education are already experienced practitioners, it may be pertinent to their education and the deeper understanding of adult education itself to utilise this resource as a way of elucidating and applying formal theories to practical problems. (Bright 1989:60)

This thesis, then, is an extended and multi-faceted argument for viewing adult education as professonal practice which:

- takes the very practice of adult educators as its starting point;

- assumes such people are still 'students' in the broad sense that they are in some sense learning from their practical experience (although this may not be very explicit);

• takes seriously Bright's suggestion that such experiences 'may be pertinent...[to a] deeper understanding of adult education itself';

• develops an emphasis on 'elucidating' rather than 'applying' theorisation to such experience;

• requires extensive treatment of the formation of the 'appropriateness' or efficacy of the ethical and epistemological ingredients of professional practice, and subsumes these in the significance of sociocultural location;

• nevertheless, leads to major revisions of a strong reliance on a sociocultural construction of experience;

• reveals the limitations of the re-construction of experience through self-directed learning;

• accordingly, moves beyond an atomistic conception of professional competence and the sovereignty of the agency of the individual practitioner;

• presents a retrieval of the notion of 'vocation', with an orientation towards the attainment of the 'rightness' of practical wisdom as the purpose of adult education as professional practice.

The intention throughout the thesis is to show that practice is a powerful basis for theorisation and for the development of what adult educators do, and, by extrapolation, could do better. The methodology is conceptual analysis, but not of the narrow linguistic usage model. Bright's 'application' of theory smacks of a certain 'foundationalist' approach to education, prominent some decades ago, and outlined in Chapter One, which has ever since painted into a corner the contribution to education theorising of English-speaking academic philosophy.

In this thesis, instead of the analysis of linguistic concepts, the emphasis throughout is upon the analysis of phenomenal concepts - what is actually going on when claims to professional practice are made or assumed. So a certain involvement with philosophical psychology, or philosophy of mind, within the English analytic tradition can be expected. The analytic argument unfolds with attention to many philosophers, but especially Aristotle, Kant and Wittgenstein. An irony worth noting is that none of these people had English as their first language - all 'traditions' are contrived, one may say.

In section 0.3 below, this general approach is outlined in greater detail.

0.2 The Field

Adult education has grown and developed as a field of practice, during most of this century, mainly untouched by conceptual debates and controversies, and certainly not determined by such engagements. The provision of adult learning opportunities has widened in response to practical and policy concerns, such as the skills required for employment, or the skills which give personal satisfaction for those not seeking employment. This has been true at the individual level, as well as for groups - hence the central concern in adult education for community-based learning , where individuals are regarded as culturally locatable, especially if such locations are socially marginal. The poor, women, the indigenous, and those whose language is not the dominant one are important examples of communities which have been and continue to be identified as specific cultures where adult learning provision should be particularly sensitive and appropriate.

Adult education is always located in particular contexts which call for the 'right' solutions to problems, and it this sense of what some writers have called a central emphasis on the 'socio-practical' which any research in the field of adult education should similarly display (Usher and Bryant 1989:Ch. 8).

How diverse is the field of practice of adult education? As the century has unfolded, the English-speaking world (to focus immediately) has seen a growing set of provision of adult learning, traditionally clustered around interest-based, non-award, and community-driven learning. Worker Education Associations, Mechanics' Institutes, university 'extension' courses and the like are examples of study opportunities which originated in the nineteenth century for adults and which were not linked to formal employment or education. These opportunties 'extended' what learning had gone before in an individual life. The related term 'continuing education' is still used in some quarters to indicate that the learning opportunities continue, or extend, those of childhood and adolescence. The prior assumption with both expressions is that learning, like life, is a continuum.

In the 1960s, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) developed an international policy on 'lifelong education', which again is intended to indicate a learning continuum. It avoids the criticism often made of 'continuing' or 'extension' as a descriptor, (which is that for many adults, the vitality of childhood and adolescence was destroyed by enervating schooling, and who needs more of that?), by emphasising the positive and reciprocal benefits accruing to adults as they move between employment, education and experience in various 'lifelong' admixtures. A related term is 'recurrent' education, where there is a desire to highlight the contiguity, rather than the latitude, of learning opportunities. In the latitudinal sense, the UNESCO policy was to regard the entire breadth of society as a longitudinal learning resource for each individual. Does this make life experience co-extensive with education, thereby enshrining (personal) beliefs at the expense of (public) knowledge? This, as we have just recognised, is a significant point of tension for the field, and is to be addressed throughout this thesis as the site within which professional practice is appropriately constructed.

Bagnall (1990) seems to agree the significance of this tension, albeit in the context of lifelong education. He gives an analysis of the implications of what he calls this 'maximalist' definition for the particular UNESCO program which ensued, based on an argument that the program is 'illiberal' and 'regressive' because it offers no way of distinguishing education from learning, nor from life itself. If so, he argues, we can conclude the program is deficient because people are effectively imprisoned within their experience, unable to move beyond the 'given'. Wain (1993), in defending maximalism, retorts that while life (that is, experience) certainly produces unintended learning, this does not equate with education. Unintended ('informal') learning is however educationally *relevant*, particularly to research programs such as UNESCO's, he concludes.

The point is central to this thesis, but the thesis is not concerned with 'lifelong education' *per se*. Our project, to repeat, is to show how professional practice in adult education is best identified through the work of those adult educators who can integrate adults' experiential learning with educational ideals.

And who are these adult learners? Take, as a convenient point of entry, the assumptions and breadth of scope of the recent Australian Parliamentary investigation, *Come In Cinderella* (Senate Standing Committee on Employment,

Education and Training 1991). Adult education, including community education, has emerged as the generic term for the education of those beyond formal schooling. Immediately, then, a chronological definition of adulthood is operative. Post-school institutions, such as technical and other further education (which we can combine as vocational education, whilst recognising that non-vocational studies are present in that sector) and tertiary education itself all will comprise adult learners, yet very little of these provisions will meet the traditional criteria of non-award, interest-based and community-driven learning opportunties. Whether tertiary education is a form of adult education may depend on whether the interest in it is focussed on the enrolment of those returning to study (in contrast to the school-leaver enrolment). Similarly, vocational education, sandwiched between schooling, but pre-tertiary, has a significant student population of enrolments from those who have returned to formal studies with a break following their schooling. In both vocational and tertiary education, students make considerable usage of part-time studies, of deferment and leave of absence provisions, and, increasingly, of mechanisms generating recognition of prior learning. Taken as whole, various and flexible structures provide articulable options that extend and enrich the relationships between, on the one hand, employment, travel and other experiential learning and, on the other hand, the formal opportunities afforded by the studies themselves.

These considerations suggest that the term 'adult' is sufficiently inclusive of both of these sorts of learning opportunities. Moreover, 'adult education' encompasses the massive growth in formal studies in recent decades which has accelerated because of both steep rises in schooling retention rates, and also by far greater numbers of mature-age adults (itself a way of separating school-leavers from non-school-leavers) who are returning to study. The descriptor 'adult' includes the notions covered by the terms 'continuing' or 'extension' without making assumptions about the value of individuals' prior schooling, and yet, after this *Introduction*, avoids the term ' lifelong', which normally includes some consideration of schooling. This thesis does not consider schooling.

Furthermore, during the 1980s, an accelerating national and international interest in the educability of adults arose as capitalism entered a new, more aggressive era. Humans, regarded as workers or potential workers, are a resource to be utilised maximally in the pursuit of market advantage, especially through value-added rather than extractive industries. Advances in technology,

and their penetration of traditional workplaces and practices, require matching advances in the educational sophistication of workforces. The extension of such sophistication beyond technological requirements into 'higher order' social and cognitive capacities has correspondingly generated policy imperatives aimed at increasing the number and type of adult learners-as-workers. Clever work requires clever workers, in a nutshell. So we have the imperatives of 'vocational education and training' emerging.

This thesis takes vocational education and training as central to the field of adult education, not least because it raises the most profound educational ideals in provocative fashion. Whitehead's famous comment (1929) comes to mind:

> Pedants sneer at an education which is useful.But if education is not useful what is it? Is it a talent to be hidden away in a napkin? Of course education should be useful, whatever your aim in life. It was useful to St Augustine and it was useful to Napoleon. It is useful, because understanding is useful. (2)

This insight, which will be regarded as axiomatic, in effect locates vocational education and training firmly within mainstream adult education theorisation. The thesis takes a closer focus on workplace learning (that much is apparent in the very notion of professional practice), but we want to maintain a broader 'Whiteheadian' view, particularly, in the latter half of the thesis, where understandings of experience and selfhood are explored. In the last chapter, an attempt to retrieve the notion of vocation from its currently arcane state is a made so that workplace learning is given more prominence.

This newer infusion of adult education activity also accords with the 'socio-practical' emphasis mentioned earlier. Adult learning arises in ordinary, daily experiences; it becomes adult education when these experiences are organised in some way so that the learning fits with some ideals, purposes, goals or outcomes which are, in some sense, desired. It is the processes involved in making sense of those adult experiences which make adult education the proper object of research, but the essential point is that the adults have already started to make sense of those experiences at the very moment of their occurrence. The case of adult education practitioners is but a sub-class of this general point. As Usher and Bryant state:

> The case we are seeking to make is that practitioners are always situated, so their way of making sense of their world of practice is

> always hermeneutic. This involves using practical knowledge in order to act rightly and appropriately within particular situations of practice. (1989:183)

This is not unique to adult educators. All manner of practitioners deal in practical knowledge, by definition. They do not necessarily articulate this, nor do they necessarily deal in such knowledge creatively or with initiative. It will be important to delineate what practical knowledge is, as opposed to theoretical knowledge and technical knowledge, both of which are also implicated in the work of a practitioner. For the present, suffice it to be understood as those abilities, attitudes and values which constitute *effective* practice, because, in the situation or context in which they are apparent, they are judged *appropriate:* that is, they are effective in that situation or context.

Practical knowledge is typically shown in the work of professionals, whether or not by 'professional' is meant a member of a recognised profession, or the wider sense of a worker who in the very conduct of her work is ascribed professionalism. The characteristics of a profession and indeed of acting professionally will need to be investigated, but for the moment it may be noted that adult education has a tradition of ambivalence on at least the former concept, that of a 'profession'. Taking the existence of a code of ethics as one characteristic of a profession, one writer has stated:

> Codes of ethics and their concomitant professionalisation ...are more oriented towards narrowness, profit and totalitarianism than toward enlightenment, client protection and democracy. Associated with such codes are politically arrived party lines of 'professional ethics', professional monopoly over the vocation by force of law, centralised control...a concentration of power in the hands of an elite who control the majority of practitioners and increased dependency upon the 'profession' by the public. (Carlson 1988:173)

By contrast, adult education workers are traditionally thought to be community oriented, and client-driven. There is a strong emphasis on the alleviation of social injustices, and on the provision of individually-fulfilling learning experiences, as was noted above. This tradition of voluntarism and a sense of vocation shines through in the attack on a 'professionalisation' based on adoption of a code of ethics, and echoes the more general criticisms of professions made in the 1970s by, for example, Illich (1977).

However, in the 1990s, with the heightened interest in, and much broader provision of, adult education, it is inevitable that the activities of adult education practitioners will be an object of research, not least because so much is expected of their efforts. If the ascription of the term 'professional' adds to the depth of the analysis, then the result will be a richer picture of an important slice of humankind's practical knowledge.

It will be helpful to bear in mind three particular fields of practice as examples of contexts (with associated cultures) where the 'integrationist' point of tension is a daily feature of the work. These are:

• Adult literacy, where community and further education, and the social justice tradition of adult education provision, both justifiable on 'liberal' grounds, are strong, but are meeting equally strong pressure to slot these in to instrumental or 'vocational' education outcomes.

• Nursing education has emerged from a hospital-based 'apprenticeship' model of workplace learning, and is seeking to maintain a nurturant ethic as the basis of professional development distinct from the dominant and positivist medical epistemology, but not so distinct that it cannot articulate with medicine - and science and technology in general.

• Corporate training has emerged from reactive and behaviouristic assumptions about adult learning at work, and is now dragged blinking and bewildered into a fast-moving 'enterprise' globalism, without much idea of what to do about strategically-focussed, non-classroom learning at work.

Practitioners in these three fields have more in common than just the integrationist thesis. They bring to their respective work contexts strengths in a substantive field other than education. Indeed it is typical of adult educators that they come from 'somewhere else'. They may have a range and depth of experience in some activity which is recognised as expertise, though usually without formal qualifications. In addition they may have developed a liking for teaching this expertise; again, this may be recognised, say, in a position description.

More formally, using our three examples above, first qualifications may be in the humanities, or applied sciences or commerce, perhaps. There may be, respectively, specialisations in applied linguistics or sociology, for literacy

teachers; in intensive or critical care, pediatrics or psychiatric nursing, for nurse educators; in applied psychology and management, for corporate trainers (or 'human resource developers'). The label 'adult educator' may be itself unhelpful to them in their thinking of their workplace, or even in what their workplace thinks of them.

Despite that, such groups of practitioners have many literally practical roles and tasks in common: they plan, resource and implement adult learning on a regular, perhaps daily, basis; they design programs or curricula; they evaluate those and the daily round of provision; they assess needs and their fit with institutional and organisational strategy; they are subject to policies of all kinds at all levels of political activity; they keep familiar with their substantive field so their teaching is relevant; finally, the best practitioners add to this list their own enthusiasm for their own learning, and are doing something about advancing it.

These are the archetypical professional practitioners of adult education we have in mind throughout this thesis.

0.3 The Approach

Philosophy contributes considerable elucidation to all the foregoing. Various approaches are possible. There have been attempts to canvass 'schools' of educational thought and theory (e.g. 'progressivism' 'liberalism') as these seem to have guided adult education prescription. There is also the traditional 'disciplinary foundations' approach to adult education as there has been to other education research and provision. A third approach, drawing on European philosophy, maps post-modernist thinking onto education. These are discussed in later chapters, but they are not the approach adopted in this thesis.

To show how the tradition of English-speaking academic philosophy is drawn upon in what follows, consider how it theorises certain prominent human phenomema.

There are, for example, and as a convenient point of entry, certain broad connections (Dewey 1916, 1938) now made between democracy, work, technology, community and adulthood which have found ready endorsement in national policy, and in institutional and organisational frameworks. People

learn at work, through their work, and in the multiplicity of other ways that their values impact upon them, and which they inevitably use in shaping life itself. In short, there is a fascination with what can be called the *cultural formation* of adult learning. Literatures, hitherto discrete, are converging on this concept. Organisational, and therefore managerial, behaviour is frequently analysed in the social sciences in terms of strategic values, leadership styles, individuality versus group allegiances and so on. From mainstream philosophy of social science, there is an abiding interest in the dynamics of group-mindedness - actions, reasons, causes - and from political philosophy, debate over the extent of the constitutive nature of the individual as a member of a community.

Both these fields of philosophical enquiry are increasingly sensitive to the role of semiotics, or symbolic meanings, in expressing group-mindedness. An inter-disciplinary field, cultural studies, draws on history, literature, the social sciences and philosophy itself to explore such cultural formation.

It behoves adult education, and education as a research area in general, to start with the knowledge its practitioners have, and investigate the cultural arenas upon which such practice takes place. Philosophy in the English academic tradition can contribute advanced scholarship given that one of the outstanding philosophers of this century, Wittgenstein, was occupied with issues central to these concepts. In his later work, of which the *Philosophical Investigations* (1963 orig. pub. 1953) is representative, he grappled with the basis of the authority humans assume our knowledge has, both for individuals and for groups. This bedrock epistemological issue can not be divorced from the value-ladenness of knowledge. How do we know what is to count as an 'appropriate' educational response? Revisiting what was stated at the end of section 0.1, it is not enough that the response be efficacious (we do what we find to be effective): it also has to be 'right'.

Getting our judgements 'right' in education is no less important than in medicine or the law. In adult education, as we have noted in section 0.1, adults bring experiential richness to learning. It is essential that this be engaged by educators who bring to that engagement clear notions of appropriate *and right* professionalism.

And here we have a serious and significant problem in adult education. It is manifest within the professional practice of adult education itself, and it is also

present in the practice of professions *per se*. The problem emerges from considerations of cultural formation, because, however helpful Wittgensteinian analysis is to the notion of 'appropriate' practice, it cannot provide significant help to the elucidation of what is 'right' practice. Let us expand on this.

Practice is, *inter alia*, a learning environment. When a professional is trying to do the appropriate thing, that is, act efficaciously, that person is bringing to the doing or acting not only pertinent *ethical* considerations (ranging from the most general human, to the most occupationally-specific, values), but also pertinent *epistemological* considerations. How has this knowledge been acquired? Fairly uncontroversially, it may be claimed as some amalgam of previous practical experience - hopefully as reflective as possible - along with the mastery of a substantial body of vicarious experiences. That is, other people's contributions to the evolution of knowledge (again ranging from the most general human, to the most ocupationally specific, knowledge) will have been presented in, literally, a traditional way, through formal learning and institutions dedicated to that evolution. Our practitioner will have had to show mastery of the pertinent traditions. He or she will continue to display this mastery in the course of professional work, as occurrent judgements of what is both appropriate *and* right.

A theory of cultural formation can account for epistemic appropriateness, but cannot adequately account for what is epistemically right. For 'epistemic rightness' is a claim on what is known to be true, not merely what is known to be efficacious. Learning is seeking truth, for any person, in any environment. Professionals' practice, whether in adult education or universally, claims the authority of knowledge beyond the experiences of the individual practitioner, and beyond the experiences of groups of practitioners, hence the conceptual inadequacy of a theory of cultural formation as a basis for knowledge. We need to look at the broader role of professionals' experience and their notion of selfhood in the context of society at large.

Furthermore, lest it be imagined that it follows from broader societal considerations that knowledge is definitively a *socio-cultural* construction, the second half of the thesis attacks this position as an inadequate basis for the epistemic authority expected of professional practice. It will be shown that while social constructivism (and two other varieties of constructivism, the perceptual and the creative) provide plausible and acceptable 'middle order' conceptualisations of adult learning, their claims beyond that stand in need of

deeper justification. This is largely because their assumptions about what is 'given', and about the extent of human agency, are overstated.

The general approach is thus a two-stage one.

First, formative or constructive roles which cultural and social phenomena clearly do have in ethical and epistemological considerations crucial to authoritative adult learning can and should be recognised. These roles flesh out what counts as 'appropriate', or efficacious judgement in particular contexts of professional practice. Chapters Two, Three and Four are concerned with this.

Second, these roles, while necessary, are logically insufficient bases for wise, as opposed to merely prudent, professional judgment. We need a professional teleology to establish the 'rightness' of professional judgement. Prior to that, we need a professional ontology, to show how practice arises in experience *per se*. Chapters Five, Six and Seven are concerned with these matters.

Further details of this two-stage approach are as follows.

In overthrowing the positivism which marked the social sciences, and science in general, for the first half of this century, and which required a battery of argument against what has become known as 'naive realism' (that the 'facts' of an objective world speak for themselves), socio-cultural constructivism has substituted what we can label as 'naive relativism' (that knowledge and truth in general are non-trivially social artefacts). The consequences of this relativism for professionals' practice *per se* would not be helpful. Professionals have responsibilities beyond the client-as-consumer model of practice, and beyond what is efficacious, that is, beyond what will achieve what the client-as-consumer requires. The consequence of a naive relativism in the professionalisation of adult education practice is already showing itself to be unhelpful, in that it moves practice too close to flirtation with market forces (the learner-as-chooser) as the sole arbiter of worthwhile learning. To the extent that this is the case, we can recognise the limitations of practice conceptualised only in terms of 'appropriateness' or efficacy. It is unfashionable, but essential, to move beyond efficacy as the arbiter of professional practice.

In doing so, we will provide a rationale for the 'rightness' of a certain model of professional practice by drawing upon Kant and Aristotle for more fundamental justifications of how professionals know to practice as they do,

and for what purposes they do so practice. The claim of the fundamental is not a claim for 'fundamentalism' - a kind of bedrock theorising which must be done before any practising takes place. On the contrary, this richer rationale for practice draws out the ontological (how professionals know to practice as they do) and the teleological (for what purposes they do it). In doing so, it acknowledges, but moves beyond, the socio-cultural constructivism of much current theorising.

What else does the thesis move beyond?

Since it is adult human learning experiences which are under the spotlight in the 1990s, any contribution to a more fundamental theorisation of aspects of adult education would recognise the legitimate interest in and current enthusiasm for 'self-directed' learning. But such direction implies a notion of the 'self'. In adult education literature, there is little current conceptual debate on this. Indeed, given that it is selves that have experiences (though not exclusively) the adjacent concept of 'experience' has escaped rigorous scrutiny until quite recently. While Dewey's work much earlier this century is seminal, it stood in need of development in the light of the new national and international policy agendas, mentioned earlier, with their twin emphases on adults' workplace learning, and the professionalisation of practice for a wider range of adult occupations. Boud et al. (1985a, 1985b) and Boud and Walker (1990, 1991) have done much to generate this new development, especially in the light of Schön's work (1983, 1987) on the reflective practitioner. This thesis attempts to build on those efforts, in ways that subsequent chapters will make plain.

The most intensive re-development of 'experience' takes place in Chapter Five, where a Kantian approach generates a critique of the contemporary social constructivist view of knowledge, particularly through the use of transcendental argument. This critique calls into question the assumption of an infinitely pliable human capacity for choice of experience. Similarly, in Chapter Six, the assumptions of some of the literature on adults' self-direction are discussed and found to lack epistemic authority, due largely to an inadequate account of the 'self'. The inadequacy is summed up in the idea of 'radical disembodiment' where what is the self is all 'mine': a self consisting of attribution. There is under this idea an under-nourished concept of my identity: what makes me, my*self*. In these ways, Chapters Five and Six are ontological analyses.

After the ontological, the thesis pursues the telelological. Having given more substantial attention to experience and selfhood, we arrive at Chapter Seven and the almost completely marginalised pursuit of 'rightness'. This is addressed in the retrieval of Aristotle's epistemological trichotomy. In the *Metaphysics* (Book VI), Aristotle states (McKeon 1978: 778) that 'all thought is either practical, or productive or theoretical', and on this structure he develops, respectively, *praxis, poiesis* and *theoria*. As Mackenzie (1993) puts it (in slightly different order):

> ...we need to spell out the trichotomy of theoretical, practical, productive (truth, goodness, beauty; head, heart, hand; Father, Son, Holy Spirit; science, art, play; there are lots of forms of it). The question is, what is the *telos* of your activity; or, by what standards are we judging it? And the claim is that there are at least three kinds of standards, the Theoretical (truth/head/science) one, the Practical (goodness/heart/art) one, the Productive (beauty/hand/play) one.

This thesis exemplifies *theoria*, although its subject matter is *praxis* and *poiesis* in adult education. Its central enquiry, that an 'integrationist practice' addresses and resolves the point of tension between the integrity of educational ideals and the authenticity of human experience, is generalised beyond that 'doing' or 'making' to advocate as a worthy purpose (or *telos*) for practice, Aristotle's *phronesis*, or practical wisdom.

All the foregoing establishes an approach to the 'integrationist' thesis which was itself stated in section 0.1. In the following listing, (b) and (c) show how the first stage of our two-stage approach, stated at the beginning of section 0.3, will be implemented; (d) and (e) show the second stage of this approach, with the Conclusion drawing the entire argument together.

Professional practice for adult educators will be informed by:

(a) what the adult education literature has been articulating about the field of practice and the field of study in the past thirty years, and what issues emerge central to such practice (Chapter One);

(b) sensitivity to the *ethical* (Chapter Two) and *epistemological* (Chapter Three) dimensions in which practice occurs;

(c) *contextuality* (locatable within a diversity of workplaces), containing a Wittgensteinian account of cultural formation (Chapter Four);

(d) a recognition of certain universal human characteristics in the nature of the *experience* which shows up in myriad daily workplace judgements, following a Kantian argument (Chapter Five);

(e) a reconstitution of the agency and autonomy of *selfhood*, providing a more socially sensitive and morally responsible professional person. (Chapter Six).

In conclusion (Chapter Seven), we briefly summarise 'integrationist constructivism' as a way of conceptualising the point of tension we outlined at the beginning of this Introduction. Penultimately, some methodological matters are discussed. The thesis finishes with a discussion, with some examples, of the significance which our theorisation has for the 'rightness' of the practice of adult education, in terms of Aristotle's practical wisdom (*phronesis*).

This, then, is our enquiry: professional practice for adult educators - What is it for? How do we know? How can we do it *better*?

CHAPTER ONE: ADULT EDUCATION AND PHILOSOPHY

1.1 Theorisation of the Field

> I waited for the manuscript to arrive with a mixture of anticipation and wariness. Would it be the usual punishing flailing of our field's philosophical backwardness? Would it exude ideological passion for one position? Would it be written in dull, strange (to me) philosophical jargon?
>
> I started reading the page proofs the minute they arrived and had a hard time putting them down to tend to other things that had to be done....

So wrote the seminal figure in adult education, Malcolm Knowles, on September 3, 1979. He was contributing the Preface for what seems to have been the first attempt to undergird contemporary adult education with a detailed survey of various philosophical approaches which can be identified in the conceptual breadth of the field (Elias and Merriam 1980). His candour concerning what has become known in the ensuing fifteen years as the 'under-theorisation' of adult education is echoed by Usher in 1991:

> Adult education has failed to theorise itself adequately as a field of knowledge in its own right. The professional curriculum required by adult education must selectively relate curriculum content to its world of practice. Andragogy represents the most consistent attempt so far but it is inadequate because it uncritically reduces theoretical knowledge to learning theory.... (1991:305)

At least the originator of 'andragogy', Knowles, recognised the problem of the inadequacy of conceptualisations of adult education, and, in encouraging contributions from wider sources such as philosophy, may have ironically laid the basis for the kind of demolition Usher undertakes on some attempts so far to theorise in the field. It is essential, however, to bear in mind that what, in practice, counts as 'the field' has changed a good deal since the late 1970s. If theorising has some catching up to do, 'the field' has moved on. Only with the

assumption of the dynamism of adult education practice can the fluidity of theorising make sense.

Yet this is not to regard theorising as an epiphenomenal activity. If theorising only consisted in tracking changes in practice, the teleological significance of ideals and other values in practice of any kind would be unexamined. In education endeavours in general, values saturate practice. To capture the richness of this saturation, we need to move beyond a dichotomous relationship of theory and practice. Neither has primacy, and neither in themselves represent appropriately what is going on when adult educators do something or think about what they are doing.

So, the central point of the 'under-theorisation' issue is not whether 'theory' and 'practice' are discrete terms of art, with 'theory' the sleeping partner. It is rather that there is one term of art, which we may call 'practical knowledge', which:

- characterises professional practice for adult educators,
- presents 'thinking' and 'doing' as complementary aspects, and
- is currently under-theorised.

It should be acknowledged immediately that practical knowledge, if it exists, probably describes a vast range of human endeavour, and certainly is not exclusively an epistemology of, or for, adult education. We will not be encyclopaedic about this, but we will maintain a broad purview across the activities of professionals, taking a fairly standard list of professions as a guide. 'Practical knowledge' should be apparent on a wide spectrum, with our specific interest in adult education being a substantial contribution to theorisation of practice *per se*.

It should also be noted at the outset that practical knowledge within the field of adult education has been systematically addressed over the past fifteen years other than through philosophical analysis. There is a body of research which has emerged, primarily in North America, which has taken seriously the need to advance adult education knowledge. In a survey of all types of adult education research over the fifty years up to 1980, Long in *Changing Approaches to Studying Adult Education* (Long, Hiemstra et al. 1980) states that there is

> ...a slowly accumulating body of knowledge that is expanding in breadth and depth [and is] contending with the negative pressures of a practice-

> oriented discipline, the immaturity of the field and some confusion about the source and existence of theoretical foundations in adult education. (21)

Against this background, there are nevertheless some connections between 'the field' of adult education and philosophy. The need to develop the theorisation of the field, through a well-based conceptual analysis of practical knowledge is recognised by Long in his *Adult Learning: Research and Practice,* (1983) where he quotes John Dewey. Dewey draws out the reciprocity of thinking and doing, by taking as crucial the notion of *experience.* It was Dewey who argued, in *Democracy and Education* (1916: 276), that experience, hitherto regarded as crude empiricism, divorced in its instability and explanatory incompleteness from the Platonic Ideal of 'true' knowledge, should be re-united with it. This forms knowledge which is

> ...primarily practical, not cognitive - a matter of *doing and undergoing the consequences of doing*....by realising that doing may be directed so as to take up into its own content all which thought suggests, and so as to result in securely tested knowledge. (Dewey in Long 1983:26) (emphasis added)

A research agenda with this epistemological orientation, which we identified as 'practical knowledge', would have a much broader range of methodologies than a narrow empiricism.

In the light of the growth and development of adult education as a field of study and of practice since the late 1970s, such criteria for selection of research methodologies as Long itemises (from Apps 1979) are particularly apposite. Adult education research should be marked by the following:

> 1. [A recognition that] knowledge does not exist apart from values.
> 2. [An examination of] research assumptions and mak[ing] them explicit.
> 3. [The conduct of] research that furthers the purposes of continuing education.
> 4. [The involvement of] the subject...in the process as opposed to being an object of research.
> 5. Results of research should be of assistance to those studied while having the potential for adding to a body of knowledge.
> 6. Practice and research should be linked.
> 7. Knowledge should be viewed broadly. (Long 1983:26)

The implications of this list have become more pertinent to adult education in the ensuing decade and a half. Every one of these criteria involve philosophical assumptions and arguments (and there is no suggestion that Long is unaware

of this), yet his book of fourteen chapters defers any consideration of philosophy as a manifest perspective on adult education until the penultimate chapter. There, he describes the reluctance many practitioners may have to exploring philosophical matters on the grounds, perhaps, that philosophising involves grand theories, presented *in toto*, far removed from the practical processes of adult education, and even more remote from the flux and dynamism of adult learning - from daily experience itself. While most individuals in the field would espouse personal philosophies, in the more informal, less systematic sense of 'philosophy', Long argues that they have been unwilling to submit these views to more rigorous attention because of what he calls the 'threat of the esoteric'. However,he adds, '[t]his is to caricature an honorable and highly useful discipline' (296).

It is time to move philosophy out from the shadowy support role it was once assigned. But we do not thereby sanction a static 'foundational' relationship between certain disciplines (philosophy, sociology, psychology for example) and 'the field'. This would enshrine the old 'theory-practice' dichotomy we identified earlier as unhelpful in elucidating practical knowledge. Territorial claims on knowledge, values and the like are not the way to proceed.

So in establishing a more intellectually productive and sensitive contribution to the field of study as a whole, we can, following Long, identify a helpful and a less than helpful role for philosophy. This will be apparent both in contributing to the theorisation of the field of adult education *per se*, and also in the closely-related research activities which have accompanied the evolution of the field. Less helpful contributions to theorising, arising from the 'foundationalist' model of the disciplines, will consist in what practitioners see as esoterica, mirrored in Knowles' sense of foreboding way back in 1979 when he opened a manuscript on philosophy and adult education. Similarly, researchers (who are really a species of practitioner if they are developing Apps' criteria in their work) will find philosophy less helpful than it could be if it does not deal in the concepts that inform their activities: 'practice', 'reflection', 'reasons', 'rights', 'purpose' are some examples of these.

What will a more helpful philosophical contribution present? The starting point will not be academic, but the very *diversity of practice* in the field of adult education. In the *Introduction*, some attempt to map this was undertaken. If the concept of practical knowledge, which this thesis will explicate and establish, has significance beyond its contribution to the theorisation of practice, it will be

because it encapsulates a broad range of practice contexts. Many practitioners who are not 'researchers' in the narrow sense may nevertheless be researchers in their own context of practice, since the field of adult education, theorised in the way it is in this thesis, encompasses an expansive view of the generation and justification of professional knowledge.

On the other hand, if *researchers* are practitioners, as we have already noted they are, then the intensity of their involvement with practical adult learning should apply to them, just as forcefully as it does to the practitioners (who are not primarily researchers). After all, both develop 'practical knowledge' in the very conduct of their work. In this way, 'professionalism' is a central elucidation of a broad spectrum of adult education work. And as a concept, it can be added to the list of powerful concepts which inform adult education activities and help to give the field of adult education some unity.

Much the same relationships are assumed by Usher and Bryant in the very title of their book *Adult Education as Theory, Practice and Research: The Captive Triangle,* and stated in its first paragraph:

> The authors are themselves practitioners *within*, and theorists and researchers *of*, adult education. Our underlying assumptions are that there is a *unity* between theory, practice and research, and that the need to constantly improve and enhance practice is best fulfilled by recognising that unity and being aware of the consequences. (1989:1)

Philosophy, then, remains committed to its traditional interest in general principles (such as the unity of phenomena which placing them under a concept entails), but in adult (and other) education endeavour, there is a legitimate expectation of all 'applied' disciplines that rigorous attention be given to immediate, even perhaps informal and capricious, phenomena. This reworks the sense that a discipline is 'applied'. Rather than the field under research being in a parasitic relationship to the 'host' discipline, via a conversion mechanism like a quasi- or sub-discipline such as 'educational philosophy', one can invert this: a discipline is applied to substantive issues in the field in terms set up by the field. Subsequent distinctions are parasitic upon the conceptual unity of the field as an object of study. We start with what is, as it were, 'given'. Even that term requires careful consideration - but only if it arises as problematic within the field itself.

The more helpful conceptualisation of the relationship of disciplines to practice could be summed up in the words of the early Wittgenstein: 'The world is all that is the case' (1961:1). Even if we are then led, as was he, beyond the conceptualisation of the world based on language picturing 'the facts', a respect for the facts of the matter is still the philosopher's point of entry to the world.

Our project is rather less than the encompassing of the world. We ask two questions:

- How can philosophy help make sense of adult education?

- In particular, how can the notion of professional practice in adult education be adequately conceptualised?

We proceed as follows.

The rest of this chapter discusses ways the first of these two questions have been approached in the past fifteen years. In undertaking that, Chapter One also gleans certain central concepts, some latent, some blatant, pertinent to the advance of professional practice in adult education. These will be shown to be pertinent in subsequent chapters, where an answer to the second question is presented, exemplifying a more productive relationship of philosophy to the field of adult education.

1.2 Philosophies of Adult Education

What would the literate reader expect to find in a book entitled *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education?* (Elias and Merriam 1980) Would it stimulate enthusiasm, as it did for Malcolm Knowles? If the reader was familiar with the use of the term 'philosophy' as argument to establish general principles, then this book has much to offer. It offers six approaches to such general theorising, namely: Liberal, Progressive, Behaviourist, Humanist, Radical and Analytical. The writers do not, however, engage in philosophical argument themselves except in the methodological sense that their first chapter is an argument for a genre of philosophy (or more aptly of adult education) called 'philosophy of adult education'. Indeed they claim:

> In writing this book, it is our belief that it is the knowledge of philosophy of education that distinguishes a professional educator from a para-professional or a beginning teacher. True professionals know not only what they are to do, but are also aware of the principles and the reasons for so acting. Experience alone does not make a person a professional adult educator. The person must be able to reflect deeply on the experience he or she has had. In this manner, the professional adult educator is more like the person of art who creatively combines experience and theory in the activity of teaching. (1980:9)

The boldness of the claim for philosophy of education, and for the professional adult educator is breathtaking; even more so is the assumption that 'knowing', 'awareness', 'reasons' and 'reflection' (deeply) will, in their passivity, nevertheless 'creatively combine' with experience, in the activity of teaching. There is an implicit assumption that prior knowledge of certain key concepts will trigger the 'right' actions, with 'creativity' the catalyst. In a sense, this last claim is accurate: there is an elusiveness about the 'right actions' in any account of the contemporaneity of them. It is easier with hindsight to explain, justify and so on. Similarly, it is easy with hindsight to criticise this initial attempt to theorise the field; after all, it contains many powerful concepts, even if they are rather glibly related. These will turn out to be significant components of the theorisation of practice which lies ahead.

After all, since 1980, adult education has come to give central but uneven attention to each of: experience, reflection and awareness, certain varieties of knowledge (particularly what can be gained by self-direction) and even what can be learned about professional practice considered as artistry, not as merely technique. All of these concepts figure in contemporary theorisations at several points, and a body of literature has emerged which, even if it does demolish earlier attempts at foundation-laying, has expressly used those attempts as something to improve upon.

An example of an emerging confidence in the field in its own right is Boyd and Apps' *Redefining the Discipline of Adult Education* (1980), which is 'organised on the premise that adult education has its own unique structure and function' and seeks to 'define the conceptual foundations of adult education' (1980:1). Boyd and Apps do not repudiate discipline-based approaches - the title of their book displays some support for the idea - but they argue that 'assistance in solving problems and answering questions' comes *after* adult education has its own identity. They start with the features of a context, or, to use a term much in need of investigation, the 'given': 'existing forces in a given situation are

important determinants of that situation' (1980:3). Adult education should not therefore consist in the generalisations other disciplines generate about adult education phenomena. Instead, in their view, the field must place the unique circumstances of the adult learner at the forefront of the field's own theorisations. Whether or not one wants to call this the basis for a 'discipline' remains a moot point. Practitioners in adult education are learners in unique circumstances: they presumably have learned or are learning how to teach or train. And, as Chapter Two will reveal, professionals in any field are often thought to stake their claim to such a label partly on their regular experiences with unique cases - such as in medical or legal consultations. Certainly, in education in general, no two classroom experiences are alike.

So there are some clues in this analysis for a stronger investigation of the theorisation of the field. Boyd and Apps can be regarded as a transitional attempt to theorise more appropriately in the field of adult education. They put forward a conceptual model, which contributors in their book develop. Briefly it consists in three dimensions:

1. Transactional Mode: 'the nature of the learner's situation: are adults working independently, in groups or classes, or as members of a community?' (1980:5)

2. Client Focus: 'who will primarily benefit from the educational activity - the individual, the group, or the community.' (7)

3. Personal, Social and Cultural Systems: here, the content of programs will result from their emphasis. Classes may have the learning of individuals (about themselves), or their group-mindedness (their socio-cultural experiences), or larger contextual values (such as a nation) as main focus. (9)

To call these emphases 'systems' is a little misleading, since only the third, most expansive, emphasis really admits systemic (as opposed to systematic) treatment.

Finally, Boyd and Apps want their model, structured as a matrix, to avoid inertia. They seem to be mindful that any education provision should make a positive difference to people, from which it follows that purposeful change is the necessary efflux of any educational model. Change is emphasised by Boyd and Apps in terms of growth: 'The paramount goal of educational enterprises is growth: the growth of an individual, a group or a community ' (1980:10). In

support of this, Dewey and Piaget are referenced, and thus an element of dynamism is apparent in the model. The authors claim that

> ...in every question related to adult education, these three dimensions... are clearly present. The model directs our attention to basic dimensions of adult education and, at the same time, offers us a framework in which to evaluate research and theory from various disciplines. The model allows us to view the field of adult education as central to our enquiry, rather than as subsidiary to such disciplines as psychology or sociology. (1980:12)

The model takes practice seriously. It also grapples with the diversity of adult learning provision. There are, as we noted earlier, a plethora of institutional arrangements, and many traditionally non-institutional arrangements, where adults learn. Their matrix at least maps what structures and functions may be unique to the field (a version of sociological analysis), and the reliance on a philosopher (Dewey) and a psychologist (Piaget) for central delineation of what the whole enterprise is for. The intention seems to be to show an application of parent disciplines to the field, whilst not itself defining that field.

The difficulty with their model is that matrices are inevitably contextual, particularly if they purport to display structural and functional aspects of social analysis, as does this. Another prominent writer in the field, Jarvis, takes issue with Boyd and Apps on this point:

> They were trying to isolate a social institution from the remainder of society in a manner which is both artificial and untrue to the structure of contemporary society. It is to this complex social structure with its interlocking disciplines of knowledge that recourse has to be made in order to understand the manner in which adult education knowledge has emerged. (Jarvis 1987b:4)

The relationship of adult education to disciplines, and the extent to which it is one itself, is therefore problematic. But Jarvis is undoubtedly correct to remind us that the contextuality of knowledge is a significant element in the power it has for humans. As the aphorism has it, 'no idea stands less in need of argument than an idea whose time has come'. We realise this is a falsehood, but it is instructively false.

Despite the contextuality issue, Boyd and Apps have asked the powerful questions: What is adult education? What is it for?

Eloquent and time-honoured responses to these questions have been presented in books which are not 'philosophy *of* education', but instead return us to the broad definition of philosophy which marked out Elias and Merriam (1980). Jarvis' comments on Boyd and Apps, above, appear in just such a book, *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult Education*. (Jarvis 1987b), in which several scholars present summaries and discussions of influential figures from North America, England and Europe. Jarvis develops his view that new knowledge emerges as a synthesis from hitherto discrete discipline bases, and that '[a]dult education knowledge is not a seamless robe of integrated knowledge but rather a variety of combinations of sub-disciplines' (312). The book is intended to exemplify this range of backgrounds; only in this very general sense can this be called philosophy, but it does address, in its diversity, what the field of study and of practice does, can and should aim for. Like Boyd and Apps, it asks, in effect, 'why' .

Similarly, in the companion volume to Elias and Merriam (1980), *Selected Writings on Philosophy and Education* (Merriam 1984), men (sic) of letters expound their general educational principles. Again, it is easy to be dismissive of soft argument and hard evangelism, but any field of activity needs its entrepreneurs, and the more reflective the evangelists, the more crisply the field can be identified. For example, Houle, an eminent American adult educator, reminds us that

> Education is a cooperative rather than an operative art. The distinction between these terms is an ancient one. An operative art is one in which the creation of a product or a performance is essentially controlled by the person using the art. The painter, sculptor, engineer, actor, shoemaker and builder are operative artists. A cooperative art, though no less creative than an operative one works in a facilitative way by guiding and directing a natural entity or process. The farmer, physician and educator are three classic examples of cooperative artists....The educator does not put ideas into the minds of learners, nor does he give them skills or sensitiveness. Instead he helps them learn these things for themselves, and, by the use of his art, facilitates the achievement of desired goals. (Merriam 1984:44)

This insight (which clearly requires more detailed justification based on classical Greek philosophy) nevertheless extends the metaphor of the artist we noted earlier, and it takes it further to develop the professional stance of facilitation, or non-didacticism. In using 'cooperation', Houle is suggesting the ineluctably social nature of education, and adds to the claim of creative professionalism the essential requirement that what is desired be achieved.

Outcomes are a legitimate expectation of all creativity, but their prespecificity has always been conceptually difficult. We feel that we have foreclosed on the means if we have specified the ends; more severely, we feel if we specify the means, we have determined the ends, or outcomes.

In education, as well as in chess-playing, painting and cooking, it is difficult to conceive of creative activity independently of creative achievement. But, following Dewey, we can dissolve the dichotomy between means and ends, and recognise that it is a unitary purposefulness which drives activity towards its realisation, which we call achievement. Outcomes, goals, purposes and achievements are richly overlapping concepts which contribute to human character - not just the exercise and building of it, but its very constitution. And that constitutive melding of means and ends is directly applicable to education.

What should not be confused with it, is the difference between an explanation of the origin of some entity or phenomenon, and its purpose. How something (such as a raindrop, or a promise) comes to be as it is gives no clue to its future, its purpose, its aims - or indeed any particular outcome. Running these two sorts of explanation together commits the Genetic Fallacy, and we will be especially mindful of the care to be taken in avoiding it, while embracing the 'unitary purposefulness' that dissolves means and ends distinctions. We shall directly return to this point in the final chapter.

The preceding discussion is illustrative of the way this broader perception of philosophy can, inversely, provoke a tighter analysis of important education issues - namely, the nature of practice(s) and the point or purpose(s) they have. Certainly the methodological approach taken in this thesis, drawing as it does on a broad understanding of Western academic philosophy, generates a series of quite specific arguments, aimed at establishing a certain solution to the thesis posed. In this sense, the notion of a 'parent' discipline has to be recognised - and along with that is an implicit professionalism - or 'disciplining' of approach. What is not claimed or implied is any territorial exclusivity or intellectual hierarchy in the exercise of that particular professionalism.

Houle is not a professional philosopher, but he and the other writers in Merriam (1984) have something significant to contribute to the theorisation of adult education. However, the book as a whole still fits a 'foundational' approach because it seeks to undergird practice with general, discursive theory. The knowledge legitimising adult education practice comes, as it were, discrete

and rock-solid, from elsewhere. The dissolution of the dichotomy is not engaged by the nature of the book, even if an individual contributor (an excerpt from Freire for example) does so engage it.

This section of Chapter One has shown various attempts to structure the field of adult education by reference to certain practices and purposes thought to be important. Purposes are value-claims; practices are about 'know-how'. Adopting the nomenclature of academic philosophy, we may ask: have there been attempts to reconceptualise the epistemological and ethical heart of adult education activity? We look now at some attempts to do just this.

1.3 Ethics and Epistemology

A promising blend of the practices (the epistemology) and the purposes (ethics) of adult education, which gives philosophy a more prominent and finely articulated place in both study and practice is *Adult Education: Foundations of Practice* (Darkenwald and Merriam 1982). A closer articulation of philosophical issues is found in a systematic emphasis on the content, contextual significance and production of knowledge. This epistemological perspective arises in the broadest treatment of educational ideals, early in the book. Taken as a whole, the book presents an attempt to show a 'constructivist' approach to adult education knowledge. But this emerges indirectly, and can be summarised as follows.

It is Darkenwald and Merriam's second chapter which is most significant. This is given over to a detailed discussion of the various manifestations of general educational principles. Instead of 'great thinkers', we read of the influential schools of thought (such as in Elias and Merriam 1980, mentioned earlier), but in a context of the diversity of provision, which the rest of the book illustrates. So, in this chapter, five emphases are identified:

1. cultivation of the intellect (conceptual analysis; liberal studies)
2. personal development (existential and humanist values)
3. social improvement (takes individual growth of 2. to groups)
4. social transformation (radical change to address oppression)
5. organisational effectiveness (efficiency of the workforce)

Across each of these emphases, three dimensions are applied: respective views on content, on the role of the teacher and learner, and on the nature of the instructional process. This seems to echo to a large extent the three-dimensional structure which Boyd and Apps (1980) used as a catalyst for 'redefining the discipline' of adult education: to re-visit, these were the importance of the teacher-learner 'transaction'; the 'client' orientation; and the assembly of content based upon a clearly-focussed context for learning. Darkenwald and Merriam also avoid the main criticism which Boyd and Apps' model attracted. This, it will be recalled, was Jarvis' point that contextuality is epistemologically problematic (not a matter of selective emphasis in a bland, choice-driven fashion) because *any* curriculum content will be value-laden.

The first four of Darkenwald and Merriam's emphases (in the list 1-5 above) outline philosophical assumptions well represented in the literature as a whole. There is a continuum in respect of the three dimensions which are applied across the range, such that, at one end, the purpose of the cultivation of the intellect is pursued through teacher-directed induction into a body of knowledge (in the narrow sense of 'discipline'). At the other end, the purpose of social transformation is pursued through a partnership of teachers and students where knowledge is a collective, even communal, creation, which arises in the recognition of socio-political oppression. In between these two are the individualistic and social reformist purposes.

All four emphases blend ethics and epistemology in the notion that knowledge is power; however, the continuum displays a greater and greater recognition of the place of context, or educational circumstances, in shaping that power. The cultivation of the intellect, the first emphasis, certainly seeks the empowerment of the learner, but ignores the learner's circumstances. Social transformation, the fourth emphasis, regards knowledge as a political construction, in which case it can be re-constructed to ameliorate oppression. In between, knowledge can empower individuals once their world-views are expanded and their choices and skills accordingly enriched; groups of such individuals can also achieve like-minded empowerment, and in that sense, society will be reformed (but not necessarily transformed).

The inclusion of the fifth emphasis, organisational effectiveness, in the early 1980s, was astonishingly prescient. By the early 1990s, no adult educator could ignore, nor hopefully would wish to ignore, the mushrooming interest in what has become known as workplace learning. This umbrella term brings together

what in Darkenwald and Merriam is discussed first as 'training and staff development' in private and public sector organisations, then as 'human resource development' and then, in recognition of the purpose of it all, 'organisational development'. The behaviourist nature of traditional human resource development is recognised, but the chapter directs the reader to the recent (and subsequently burgeoning) interest in more 'humanist' values - at least as far as learning strategies in corporate settings are concerned. It is stated that

> Sensitivity training, human potential seminars, non-directive counseling, self-guided learning, and so on emphasize personal growth and development, which in turn is important to the overall effectiveness of the organisation. One of the philosophical issues in employee training is, in fact, the extent to which individual development is or should be congruent with organisational goals. Argyris, in writing about this issue, looks at the nature of the adult and notes that there is a 'basic dilemma between the needs of the individual aspiring for psychological success and self-esteem, and the demands of a pyramidal structure'. (1982:67)

This and other references to Argyris are drawn from the 1960s, and Darkenwald and Merriam are able to use them to make a connection between emerging theorisation in the field of organisational development, and the emergence of the adult education theory of andragogy, in Knowles' work at about the same time.

1.4 Broadening The Field

Argyris argues that the following is necessary for adults in the workplace to feel empowered: supportive, employee-centred, group-based and more democratic decision-making. These would enhance individual self-esteem and contribute to a work-force with more of a sense of ownership over the practices and management of the site. In these ways, efficiency would increase, and this would contribute to the organisation meeting its strategic targets more easily. Knowles' andragogy consisted, at about that time, in a claim that adults learned differently from children because adults' greater experience of life generated a situational, or problem-centred approach to content (rather than a discipline-based one), and a participatory engagement with it (rather than a didactic one). Further, Knowles argued that the underlying motive for adults' pursuit of such learning opportunities was internal - to do with self-esteem, job satisfaction, quality of life and so on (Knowles 1970, 1984). He was able to draw on the work

of Rogers (1969), which developed the humanist perspective on adult education from the discipline basis of psychology.

In the ensuing two decades, these two fields of study, that of adult education and organisational development, have converged substantially in ways directly expressing broadly 'andragogical' principles. The first Australian corporate training and development book to take the new integrated approach to the area, *Training and Development in Australia* (Smith 1992), devotes six pages to what Smith calls the 'passive' learner, drawing on behaviorism, but follows that with seven pages on the 'active' learner, drawing on cognitive psychology. He then leads in to twelve pages on the 'adult learner', connecting the active with the adult by remarking that

> Adult learning 'is still a discipline in search of a theory' [Hartree 1986]....Much of what is described by the term is, in fact, theories of adult learning based largely on cognitive theories of learning and humanistic theories of psychology. (1992:26).

Smith connects summaries of Dewey's, Rogers' and Knowles' theorising and concludes

> The writings of these educators give the impression of being interlocking. They build on each others' ideas, and readily acknowledge their debt to Dewey. As a result, it is not surprising that a number of common themes emerge:
>
> **1. The role of the self**...the individual learner...is self-directing and the process of learning is the growth of self...
>
> **2. Experience**. Learners draw on...and learn from experience....Thus, the best instructional design must incorporate experiences which the learner undergoes in a self-directed manner rather than relying on traditional didactic techniques.
>
> **3. Facilitation.** The role of the teacher needs to...accommodate the emphasis on self and experience....The teacher/trainer becomes a facilitator, helping the students by clarifying their personal goals in the learning process, and creating the conditions for those goals to be achieved rather than directing the content and process of learning.
>
> These central ideas of adult learning have had a decisive influence in human resource development, especially in the areas of management development and organisation development. (1992:38-39)

Experience and selfhood are certainly central and, yet, relatively unexamined concepts in adult education. Facilitation is both a label for a pedagogical methodology, and an end in itself. Let it be noted immediately that this thesis develops a theorisation of experience and selfhood which, in effect, calls into question the adequacy of facilitation in both of its characterisations, across adult education practices, including the corporate context alluded to by Smith.

One decade after Darkenwald and Merriam included organisational development as an emphasis, that is, as a purpose, for adult education, there is evidence for it spilling over from the corporate setting and back-washing into a variety of organisational and institutional forms. An organisation, or institution, in either the public or private sector, is, after all, a group. To that extent, the contextuality of learning seems to be susceptible to analyses and insights gained through the maturation of the field of study known as organisational development. Indeed, literature now appears about the 'learning organisation' (Argyris and Schön 1978), and about 'facilitating learning in the workplace' (Watkins 1991). What and how adults learn at work decentres the individual learner, not by ignoring her, but by interpolating a powerful layer of structured experiences to provide an even more dense learning environment.

The contextual constituent in learning takes on a more powerful role, as more and more studies of the workplace recognise its dynamism and consequent opportunities for the personal growth of the worker. This is recognised in this thesis, where a lengthy and pivotal chapter (Chapter Four) addresses contextuality, or situatedness, in advancing a phenomenal approach to specific intentional action and a theory of cultural formation. If adult education is to engage the theorisation of practice, it must come to terms with all workplace actions and cultures, and their concomitant and reflexive psychological predicates - rationality, creativity, initiative, reflection, anticipation, trying, desiring and so on.

On the way, Chapters Two and Three outline how these predicates are integral to certain ethical and epistemological dimensions of professional practice. Chapter Four then shows how these can contribute to *integrated* professional actions and competencies, where contextuality is defined in terms of professionals' intentionality and cultural formation.

What kind of practitioner-as-learner is situated so specifically? Traditionally, and still the most powerfully, the learner in Western capitalist democracies is

an autonomous 'chooser' of individualistic purposes ('What do I want for myself?'). Schooling, to mention an obvious example, is most often justified by its capacity to construct personal autonomy - the learner who knows what he wants for himself. In this sense, what is called a 'liberal education' dovetails with a 'liberal democracy'. We as learners and as citizens choose what we want to have, and thus choice and consumption are intimately connected in both education and politics.

Nowadays, calibrated and legitimised by efficiency and productivity, there is increasing attention being given to the pursuit of personal learning outcomes within an organisational culture where some sort of broader structural learning is meant to be going on. Given this considerable emphasis on educational ideals within structural enterprise it comes as no surprise that we can identify the traditional value of an *individual's* knowledge as power, albeit a rather more quantifiable power. Corporate capitalism, and the ideals of liberal education which dovetail with it, privilege personal autonomy.

Excessively individualistic notions of the professional practitioner, and simplistic assumptions of what is 'given' in individual and socio-cultural experience, also dovetail with the ethic and epistemology of choice and consumption. Some recent adult education literature still implicitly assumes these notions (see Brockett 1991; Brockett and Hiemstra 1991; Curry et al. 1993). These will be attacked in Chapters Five and Six and a more communitarian - that is, less atomistically individualistic - model of the professional practitioner advanced, supported by the theory of cultural formation earlier put forward.

In this section of Chapter One, then, we have noted that the field itself has broadened. Furthermore, we have telegraphed the emergence of a more contextually-sensitive adult education epistemology and we have also discussed the diversity of those contexts themselves. Organisations and institutions are prominent sites of powerful learning, whatever one may think of the resort to the values of liberal education within these sites.

Debates about educational values implicit and explicit in such diverse situations have brought about a rethinking of the rather bland, but historically significant, characterisation of adult learning through the influence of empirical psychology in writings culminating in the theory of andragogy. Notions of the self and its direction, and some cluster of notions in philosophical psychology

(creativity, reflection, anticipation and so on) around 'know how' or practical knowledge are implicit in all of this, but, to reiterate, what we also need to pin down is the unexamined nature of human experience across such epistemological diversity. Not only is the field of practice broader, but that has brought about the need for deeper study of key phenomena, just outlined, now apparently 'given' in the construction of adult education as a field of study. We turn to these matters now.

1.5 Academic Constructivism and Experience

Let us go back a decade or so and come in from another angle. The contribution made to adult education theorisation from those philosophers of the linguistic analysis perspective which had a flowering in Britain in the 1970s should not be ignored. Far from embracing a contextualist epistemology, linguistic analysis denied its very possibility. Such analysis was linked to a particularly cognitive view of the epistemological basis of adult education: if you understood the logic of concepts such as, say, 'learning', 'autonomy' and 'creativity', based on how people used these terms, you would be suitably (that is, intellectually) equipped to practice. The role of philosophy was terminological clarification, it was argued. Contexts were only interesting insofar as they provided evidence of what ordinary usage of terminology consisted in. The real work was to map the logic of those usages: to outline what could and could not be meaningfully uttered. The powerful learners were those who had a mastery of this sort of analysis, who knew the boundaries of discourse - of what could be 'meaningfully' stated.

It can now be seen that such a role was more terminal than terminological. Jarvis (1987a), for example, is one of many to disagree with 'the high claims made by Paterson (1979) *inter alia* about liberal adult education' (194). He is referring to the connections made by linguistic analysts between cognitive development, 'ordinary usage' of concepts and the eschewing of any political implications for knowledge. This set of connections has typified the work of adult education theorists R.W.K. Paterson (1979) and K. H. Lawson (1979), and is represented more broadly in what is called the 'London School' of philosophy of education.

During the 1960s and 1970s, R.S.Peters, Paul Hirst (both based at the London University Institute of Education), R.F Dearden and others developed the

notion of 'liberal education' which concentrated on the virtues of attaining the highest stages of personal development: the increasingly autonomous person. This was however defined in cognitive terms, where the mind, seemingly divorced from social and affective determinants was refined by exposure to the traditional disciplines, each with their traditions of knowledge set forth in textual canons, and available to increasingly rational enquiry (in the narrow sense) under the didactic stewardship of those who had already been initiated into these traditions - the teachers. There have been many analyses of this emphasis, perhaps most powerfully for adult education in Carr and Kemmis (1986), where it is cast in what are called 'positivist' terms, and connected with a 'natural' philosophy of science.

Again, in Bright (1989), we find another discussion where Paterson restates and develops the discipline-based contribution philosophy can make to adult education, and a critique of this from Usher amongst others where Usher takes what he calls 'technical-rationality' to task. The expression is helpful here.

We can move beyond a technically-rational epistemology by drawing upon Bright's own 'Overview and Conclusions', (in Bright:1989) where the overall epistemological debate is framed in triadic fashion, like this:

• the **'conventional'** views of Paterson and Lawson (which we may call 'technically rational' views) stand in contrast to

• the **'radical'** view (which we may call the emancipatory reconstruction of theory and practice - based on the political nature of knowledge) and

•the **'epistemological' or hermeneutic** view (which we may call the emergent reconstruction of theory and practice - based on practical knowledge).

Both the radical and hermeneutic views, which we for convenience may group in a 'constructivist continuum', trace their intellectual lineage to interpretive theorists such as Habermas and Gadamer, and prior to that the Frankfurt School of critical theory. There is, beneath that, a substantial debt to Marx, especially the 'young' philosophical Marx (represented by his writing in the 1840s and 1850s, such as *The German Ideology* (1967), rather than the older Marx of *Capital*.

Usher provides a succinct and more recent discussion of the shift from the reformist agenda of hermeneutics, based on practical knowledge, to the radical agenda of critical theory, based on political knowledge, in his article 'Theory and Metatheory in the Adult Education Curriculum' (Usher 1991), where he again represents those who seek to distinguish themselves from the discipline-based approach of Paterson and Lawson:

> Disciplines are implicated in the power-knowledge relationship (Foucault 1977) where power leads to knowledge of 'truths' about the world, which serve as a warrant for regulation and control. The power of formal theory is not immediately apparent although, as we have seen in the case of the technical-rationality model, its power is nonetheless present through the way it provides definitions of practice which are 'scientific' and 'rational'. Here, it is clear, formal theory can be as distorting as any ideology - indeed it distorts *because* it is ideology. (1991:312)

Usher is opposing what critical theorists call the 'essentialism' and 'universalism' of academic philosophy, especially the English-speaking version. This tradition, it is thought, has exhausted the (modernist) project of the Enlightenment, based on Cartesian dualisms like mind/body, objective/subjective, knowledge/belief and so on, and needs to give up its pursuit of truth, science and rationality *sub specie aeternitatis* . The postmodern world is, by contrast, marked by 'truths', which ideologically present 'scientific' and 'rational' formal theory, displaying and distorting, in such presentation, diverse and inequitable power relations. The postmodern world decentres 'technocratic' science and rationality and affirms the value-laden contextuality of all claims to knowledge. This immediately makes problematic all truth claims since their universality beyond their context can be interrogated on their own terms.

We cannot deal in these massive matters in this thesis, but note in passing that the modified but integrationist constructivism developed in this thesis, from within that academic tradition of philosophy which could be regarded as essentialist and universalist, sits not uncongenially with the postmodern project.

The previous section of this chapter indicated that this thesis takes context as crucial, and sets practice as a text within it. It 'reads' practical knowledge for specific meanings. Thus it is a particularistic analysis, and makes claims neither of metaphysical truth, nor of epistemological certainty.

Nevertheless, it does use the technicalities of logical argument in a fairly narrow fashion. For example, and to conclude this present matter: in a nutshell, Usher's claim that truth is *necessarily* ideological (which may well be true) shifts to include its purported ideological *sufficiency* (which gives his views no greater claim on truth than any other, since his views must be defined by their ideologicality). This raises the traditional question of the clash between true and false consciousness, in that it generates the familiar paradox of all such claims: what is the logical status of the *un*distorted reality? How is *that* constructed, and by whom?

It was Marx's *The German Ideology* (1967; but originating in 1845-6) which raised this paradox endemic to all discussions of ideology since. Who has the true consciousness of the way the world is (constructed), as opposed to the distorted, class-based, false consciousness, and on what basis can the distinction be made? Rather than be drawn into a vast literature and accompanying incessant debate (see, for example, Lindley 1986: Ch10), perhaps it will suffice to recognise this paradox as an epistemological difficulty primarily for adult education theorisation at the emancipative end of the constructivist continuum, where the claim to re-cast human experience is made most sweepingly and dramatically.

It should be noted that one usage of the term 'ideological' covers *any* broad set of ideas and values which direct political action. Since 'education' is necessarily honorific, it follows that it will be ideological (that is, value-laden) in this broad sense, even if there is no agreement concerning the logical sufficiency of that ascription.

Thus, in this section, we have moved past the strictures and aridity of linguistic analysis *per se* and a hierarchial 'discipline' orientation, which approaches used to be regarded as paradigmatic philosophical theorisation in adult education. Instead, we have identified and begun to tease out some epistemological aspects of an 'integrationist constructivism'. This will continue throughout the thesis - in fact these aspects cohere as the methodological core of the thesis.

Immediately, and alongside the epistemological, we need to give prominence to the ethical. Values may be constructed too. We note that all attempts to lay bare the conceptual topography of adult education imply values, and that this Chapter so far has really been dealing with these as much as it has been dealing with epistemological considerations. The literature simply reflects diverse

recognition of the breadth and logical necessity of the value-ladenness of 'education'.

This was emphasised by John Dewey throughout his writings, no less so than on the penultimate page of his seminal *Democracy and Education*, where he argues that

> ...all the aims and values which are desirable in education are themselves moral. Discipline, natural development, culture, social efficiency, are moral traits - marks of a person who is a worthy member of that society which it is the business of education to further. (1916:417)

Here we notice the self-referential nature of Dewey's argument: what is desirable is what will contribute to social worthiness. Chapters Two and Three are 'twins': ethics and epistemology are sides of the single coin. They enquire: In what does the power and knowledge of the professional consist? How can we move beyond the elitist and self-referential smell of the whole idea? Chapters Four, Five and Six show how this can be done, addressing education concepts dear to the concerns of the English-speaking philosophy tradition, but eschewing, in their treatment, contextually-oblivious linguistic analysis.

We turn now to the concept implicit in all the foregoing, but which remains astonishingly elusive in education writing. The central contributor to the analysis of *experience* as an educational resource, as an ideal for learners of any age, and indeed as a constituent of what it is to be a human being, is Dewey. For Dewey, the conceptualisation of experience itself depends on the interaction of the individual with the environment, by which Dewey primarily means the social environment.

In a later work, *Experience and Education*, he defines experience in terms of social democracy:

> The statement that individuals live in a world means, in the concrete, that they live in a series of situations....interaction is going on between an individual and objects and other persons. The conceptions of *situation* and *interaction* are inseparable from each other. An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment. (1938: 43)

And the environment is ideally, for Dewey, a democratic one. He asks, rhetorically, why this is preferred:

> Is it not the reason...that we believe that mutual consultation and convictions reached through persuasion make possible a better quality of experience than can otherwise be provided on any wide scale? (34)

So a democratic social situation provides the opportunities for the inevitable discriminations we need to make between, say, educative and miseducative experiences. Democracy provides the environment for a more extensive and intensive participation in discriminatory activities, which hone our human purposes in the light of the imperative (borrowed from biology) for growth.

For Dewey, the twin principles which make educational sense of progressively-discriminatory experience are continuity (building on the past so that personal growth is achieved), and interaction (the social situation of the person). Again, the freedom to tap the past, and relate broadly across the present are attributed most bountifully to democracy. Within this ideological context, of particular interest to adult education and of all education professionals, is the significance of greater (that is, more richly continuous) experience in Dewey's philosophy. As he states,

> Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into. The greater maturity of experience which should belong to the adult as educator puts him in a position to evaluate each experience of the young in a way in which the one having the less mature experience cannot do. (38)

Dewey is thus centrally concerned with the quality of the experiences provided by educators for their learners - of any age:

> Experience does not go on simply inside a person. It does go on there, for it influences the formation of attitudes of desire and purpose. But this is not the whole of the story. Every genuine experience has an active side which changes in some degree the objective conditions under which experiences are had...Experience does not occur in a vaccuum... (39-40)

Here, Dewey links the principles of continuity and interaction in a socio-historical perspective. Beyond the individual life is a shared social history which inevitably shapes the situation the individual experiences. Roads, tools, technologies and so on have all shaped any present experiences, and in that way, they filter through in to future personal growth. The educative function consists in the ability of planned exposure to a situation, or context, such that the means for continuous learning are generated. This blends the social or

interactive, with the temporal continuum which in the thinking of other philosophers, and indeed of the Bloomsbury writers such as Virginia Woolf, is called our sense of a personal 'stream of consciousness', but without the latter's tendency to solipsism. Dewey refers to his socio-historical blend as the interception of 'the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience' (44). And the point of it all, he reminds the reader, is

> the instituting [of] conditions for the kind of present experience which has a favourable effect upon the future. Education as growth or maturity should be an ever-present process. (50)

The 'instituting of conditions', or what we may call the 'planning for learning' encumbent upon any educator, can be regarded as a general constructivism which, with specific emphases, has presented itself within adult education literature in a variety of guises. Much of the literature already referred to in this Chapter implies the institution of (learning) conditions conducive to various educational ideals: skills acquisition, cognitive development, personal transformation, sociopolitical empowerment and so on. But Dewey's argument, based on the quality of experience *per se* (to the effect that growth connects the present with the future, seamlessly and dynamically, for the individual), has been vigorously re-worked and developed quite recently.

We refer to the active and interactive account of experience, based on the reflective individual, found in the writings of Boud et al. (1985a, 1985b) and Boud and Walker (1990, 1991). Boud and Walker (1990) acknowledge that earlier work (Boud et al. 1985a, 1985b) concentrated on reflection *following* experience, rather than in the midst of it, and go on to say

> We now wish to develop our ideas further and broaden the focus of attention to (a) how it is that we learn through experience, (b) how learners can influence the experience, and, consequently, their own learning, and (c) how others might facilitate such learning from experience. (1990:62)

They do not identify the constructivism implied by these enquiries with a simple solipsism, based on a psychologising of human experience. On the contrary, what they call the 'personal foundation of experience' is 'partly acquired from the social and cultural environment, and partly forged by the learner's own awareness and efforts' (63). What is interesting for our purposes later in this thesis is their attention to 'noticing' and 'intervening'. Now professional practice is about just those phenomena. There is an intention to get

an appropriate, even 'right', judgment about the situation, as that situation *occurrently* presents - that is, amidst the moment(s) of its manifestation. Professional practice as 'hot action' is a crucial issue for adult educators, as well as for a range of other professionals. The nature of the intent attending the appropriate actions is thus highly significant, and Boud and Walker correctly link the dynamism of intent and action:

> A particular intent can be changed by a situation; it can become focussed or diffused, or even transformed altogether, according to what is experienced. More often, the situation has a greater influence on the strategies and use of resources brought into play by a particular intent than by the intent itself. (65)

The connection they wish to develop between the construction of meaningfulness in and through action, and the role of reflection in identifying what is 'appropriate' action comes out well as follows:

> Learners' construction of what is taking place in themselves and in the milieu is a necessary and crucial part of the on-going experience and the learning which flows from it. It is this interaction which lies at the heart of the on-going experience. Experience can be seen as a continuing, complex series of interactions between the learner and the learning milieu, *unified by reflective processes,* which assimilate and work with the learning potential of the environment, and can move the learner to take appropriate action within the experience. (66) (emphasis added)

These ideas will be taken up later, in Chapters Three and Four, when the nature of reflection-in-action, and its purported role in unifying occurrent experience, is subject to scrutiny.

This section of Chapter One has identified academic constructivism of the field of study itself. From the narrow conceptual and linguistic analysis derived from the 'London School' typified by Paterson, Lawson and more generally by Peters, Hirst and others, to the broad socio-political epistemology derived from the 'Frankfurt School' typified by Usher (1991), Mezirow (1991), Carr and Kemmis (1986) and more generally by Habermas (1974), Foucault (1977, 1980) and others, a spectrum of engagement is apparent. More significantly, it is with the latter end of the spectrum that we find an interest in 'constructivism' *per se* - that is, in the hermeneutics of human experience. This is broadly the approach shared by this thesis, but the discourse is that of English-speaking academic philosophy (suitably renovated), rather than the Continental tradition already well-represented in contemporary adult education literature.

In particular, in Dewey, we find a central engagement with the construction of human 'experience', ideologically located (within democracy), biologically driven, but educationally targetted. His contribution cannot be ignored, not least because recent work on experience, from Boud *et al.* and Boud and Walker, and by Schön (1983, 1987) continues to be so influential in shaping adult education practices. In later chapters, we build on this influence.

All-in-all, the centrality of experience to any notion of 'practice' in adult education, and the convergence here of several traditions of conceptual enquiry (pragmatism, critical theory, the 'London School', to name three) persuades us of the significance of a constructivist approach to adulthood and therefore to experience itself, and of the interplay between values and knowledge which is an essential element in such constructivism.

1.6 Constructive Practice

But there are significant intellectual difficulties ahead. Constructivist emphases in adult education have served as the bases for a wide variety of attempts to generate a conceptually-adequate research effort. By 'conceptually adequate' is meant research which takes as central the participatory, conscious and purposeful actions of the adults involved, whether they be researchers or learners (or even disregarding, as we shall see, this distinction).

Much of the literature is therefore rightly concerned with the extent that it follows that adult education practice - shown by access, participation and outcomes - will be to a large extent progeny of human intentions arising from self-direction. But the breadth of one person's self-direction, and its ubiquity across practitioners and learners alike provides a challenge for the theorisation of practice.

To put it more succinctly: what would the construction of more appropriate adult education practice have to include?

Underpinning this is an acceptance of two points which the previous discussion (in sections 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5) has revealed as intrinsic to any education provision:

• a key epistemological point: knowledge is power. The question is, whose knowledge is to count?

• a key ethical point: values drive what we want to learn and teach. The question is, what values frame which wants?

Such research wants to distance itself from the traditional empiricist model of research, in education as much as in any social science, which maintained a bifurcation between the subject and the object of knowledge. This bifurcation was modelled on mainstream philosophy of science, and on a linear view of the logic of explanation, and it has been superseded in mainstream philosophy of science by research that recognises human interests (caprice, invention, supposition, creativity, chance - in short, all the cultural and idiosyncratic aspects individual researchers bring to their work) as contextually constitutive of what counts as achievement.

In that sense, the 'paradigm shift' (a term which is itself part of the intellectual topography of the evolution of philosophy of science) in the conceptualisation of research in philosophy of science has been informed by intellectual effort in the philosophy of social explanation. So the old paradigm of what counted as research in the social sciences, namely, the empiricist model that the way the world is, is available to us unmediated by human perceptions of it, was in effect overthrown from within. The traditional research exemplar, the model of the natural or physical sciences, was shown by a combination of new social explanations and different epistemological assumptions (how scientists actually go about their work) to exist as, at bottom, a cultural product. This is not to regard science as any lesser achievement, for all that, but it does not any longer enshrine scientific practice as a body of quasi-sacred probabilities in search of certainty, of higher status than the merely 'social' sciences, themselves shackled by lowly 'indeterminacy' (minimal predictive capability). All science, and indeed all research worthy of the name is now regarded as necessarily *underdetermined* by facts, in which case the value-ladenness of theorisation has to be acknowledged in any attempt to understand how, or in what, the world consists (see Winch 1958; Hesse 1978; Outhwaite 1986, 1987). We bring to research expectations that the world will be, because we already construct it as thus-and-so; it is in this sense that we cannot but recognise the culture-bound, socially-endorsed nature of the scientific pursuit, whether the natural/physical or the human/social sciences are at issue.

Much of the most recent adult education literature starts from this standpoint. An important synoptic publication, *Adult Education: Evolution and Achievements in a Developing Field of Study,* (Peters, Jarvis and Associates 1991), builds upon a similar earlier work (*Adult Education: Outlines of an Emerging Field of University Study:* Jensen, Liveright and Hallenbeck, 1964 - colloquially known as the 'black book'). Peters and Jarvis note several changes over the intervening twenty-seven years, at least insofar as North American activity is concerned. Jarvis' list of issues which contrast with the earlier era includes the following:

> 1. 'the knowledge base in adult education is more substantive'
> 2. 'a greater emphasis on research and the different ways of thinking about research'
> 3. '[h]ere the disciplines are examined in terms of adult education, whereas adult education was examined in terms of the disciplines in the black book'
> 4. 'graduate programs have grown in number and their curricula have changed' [an eight-fold increase is mentioned]
> 5. 'the study of adult education has become truly international in scope'
> 6. '[T]he relationships between theory and practice differ in this book from those in the black book. The authors of the black book were interested in the applicability of formal knowledge to practice, but, for the most part, they envisioned theory as being applied *to* practice. They also saw practice as a source of knowledge for building theory, but they did not acknowledge the possibility that practitioners also theorise about practice, and they did not consider the political aspects of theory and practice. The editors of this book consider the relationships between theory and practice to be crucial to the study of adult education...'
> (1991:2-3)

Our interest lies mainly with item 6. In support of the importance of this item, we draw upon Chapter Two of Peters and Jarvis, entitled 'Changing Relationships Between Theory and Practice', where Cervero suggests an analogy with marriage. The relationship between theory and practice, and marriage, are both 'human inventions whose ideal and actual forms are historically developed, socially organised and culturally mediated...[and] must be negotiated by real people in actual circumstances that involve issues of power and status' (20). His chapter (19-41) then identifies and discusses four 'inventions', or, we may say, 'constructions', of theory-practice relationships, broadly as follows:

1. *Adult education without theory.* Civil rights, women's issues, environmental concerns and the like are examples of practical public education efforts, driven by the ideological commitment of those involved.

2. *Theory as a foundation for practice.* This 'scientifically-derived knowledge is seen from the outset as different from and better than the knowledge that arises through experience' (23). Cervero sets this model within the 'positivist' and 'functionalist' assumptions prevalent in North America during the 1950s and 1960s, when education was regarded as an applied science, dealing with given, 'objective' facts, value-free (politically neutral), by reference to which common-sensical practice could be improved.

3. *Theory in practice.* Here, 'theory can be used to help educators interpret their practical situations by uncovering the tacit knowledge and values that guide their work' (26). Practice is 'a social process in which ends and means are continually negotiated in changing contexts, not as an instrumental process to achieve fixed ends' (27). Cervero draws attention to the basis of this approach in an 'interpretive' model of human knowledge and action, mentioning its appearance in philosophy, the social sciences and education in general. He discusses a particular application, found in Argyris and Schön (1974), which argues for a new understanding of professional practice based on reflection. Schön (1983, 1987) developed this as 'reflection-in-action' where 'professionals use repertoires of practical knowledge to change indeterminate situations into coherent problems that can be solved' (Cervero 1991:27). Reflection-in-action has already been mentioned (in section 1.5) in connection with Boud *et al.* (1985a, 1985b) and Boud and Walker (1990, 1991), and we will be dealing with it extensively in later chapters. Schön re-appears then.

Similarly, another influential writer in adult education, Brookfield is quoted in emphasising the value of intuition and hunches as professional behaviours. Cervero has himself added to the literature on this topic (Cervero 1988) by arguing for the centrality of deliberation and choice in uncertain and conflictual work situations - frequently features of professional life.

Finally, Cervero (1991) mentions Usher and Bryant (1989) as 'the most complete statement of this viewpoint of the relationship of theory and practice...[in which they] make a case for the centrality of practical knowledge, which they call the mediation of formal or informal theory in the context of specific situations' (29). We shall return to their book in its own right shortly.

4. *Theory and practice for emancipation.* The strongest dissolution of the theory-practice dualism consists in the view that they are a single indivisible reality.

All knowledge is in some sense a social construct, particularly since the definitive question, under this view, is to ask whose interests are served by that knowledge. Cervero states the view as holding that all practice expresses a theory embedded in social relations, which themselves issue in cultural products (like adult education practices and their justification). This view 'challenges adult educators to understand the ideological bases of their practice by examining the rationality of those practices from historical and cultural perspectives' (30). One of the prominent writers is Freire (1970) who linked the socio-political construction of knowledge to learners' personal, and therefore political, emancipation. Further, connections with Marxist thought and the Frankfurt School of critical theorists have been enriched by literature from European philosophy (for example Habermas: 1974 and Foucault: 1980) and from feminist theory (Weedon: 1987). Carr and Kemmis (1986) have, states Cervero, applied these views to education.

To gloss: the common intellectual thread in all this is the inescapably contextually and politically determinant *construction of knowledge*. Practice in any situation requiring knowledge and driven by values is thus a dynamic phenomenon. It requires activity - the 'right' kind, so to speak - and it requires a view of human agency which recognises the apparently spontaneous decision-making endemic to practical effort as the product of epistemological and ethical sensitivities formed in a variety of ways. We need to explore what this may mean for professional practice, and we take this up in the next section.

1.7 Purposeful Practice

Let us narrow the focus. Cervero concludes his chapter by asking 'where it stands in relation to its own message' (35). He fits it under the second version: theory as a foundation for practice, because it does not develop a theory out of practice (the third version), nor does it seek to transform power relationships (the fourth version). But he does acknowledge this is now probably a minority position:

> In the 1990s, the university-based professions and academic disciplines exhibit a greater epistemological pluralism. Some theory and research is consistent with the views of theory in practice and theory and practice for emancipation....It should not be surprising, then, that adult education researchers have gravitated toward these newer conceptions of the relationships between theory and practice. (34-35)

In fact, these two 'newer conceptions of the relationships between theory and practice' find a point of convergence in the notion of professional practice: not just the practice of adult educators, however professionalised it may be thought desirable for this to be, but also across the broadest spectrum of the professions and those occupations aspiring to 'profession' status. Cervero generalises from his analysis of effective continuing education for the professions (1988), to the formulation of an 'integrated perspective', encompassing professional practice, learning and continuing education, in an important journal article of that name in *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (Cervero 1992). There, emancipative purposes are recognised (the fourth of the relationships identified between theory and practice) and coupled with emergent theorisation (the third of the relationships identified between theory and practice) in his statement that 'the goal of professional practice is wise action' because '[m]y bedrock assumption is that many of the shortcomings of continuing education are due to inappropriate choices about the ends to which the minds of professionals should be cultivated' (1992:92).

This teleology is central to professionalism, to adult educators' professionalism as a sub-category, and in the wider world, to the intelligibility of all human action. The actions of professionals are therefore examples of general human activities, marked out from such generality by complex and particularly value-laden imputation. If professional actions are illustrative of wisdom, and are judged by their appropriateness, no more profound yet specific set of activities presents itself under the broad umbrella of the analysis of human agency. Again, Cervero links emancipative purposes with emergent theorisation when he states:

> My view is that the distinguishing characteristic of practice is its action -orientation. Professionals reason toward the goal of wise action, rather than describing what it is....They attempt to put matters right, rather than uncover the truth. Thus, practice is a normative, not a descriptive, enterprise. If practice is normative, then wisdom must be seen as socially-constructed, taking its meaning only within the particular ethical framework of those who have the power to define wisdom for a profession. (1992:92)

In this argument, reason and action are driven by values, and the values are themselves contextually-locatable. Thus, professional practice is a sub-category of the larger debate in adult education (and indeed in education in general) concerning the purpose of learning, whether lifelong, or continuing, or

recurrent, insofar as it transforms individual perspectives on, or consciousness of, one's situation in life - one's 'selfhood'.

1.7.1 Selfhood and Society

The literature reflects this larger debate in, on the one hand, a concentration of interest in what has become known as 'self-directed learning', which can be essentially market-driven (whatever the learner wants to learn, will be 'facilitated'). But on the other hand, there is a refusal to let the market determine the purposes of (adult) learning: here the self-directedness is cast as an increasingly self-reflective analysis of personal growth possibilities. The former self-directedness emerges from Knowles' andragogy, and Rogers' humanistic psychology. Clearly if one argues for autonomy as the major goal, one should also accept and encourage the value of processes and programs which implement the pursuit of that autonomy. Such values have shaped an immense part of the knowledge base of adult education, especially in North America, in the most recent decades, but also implicitly in the United Kingdom and Australia, where for over a century, the ideal of adult education as personal fulfilment has driven provision such as public libraries, Mechanics' Institutes, Worker Education Associations, and Councils of Adult Education. It should be mentioned however that other education purposes are also evident in these provisions - a literate citizenry, a compliant workforce, and the juxtposition of these. That is, self-directedness may be congruent with other more collectivist educational purposes. A recent attempt to show this congruence (Candy 1991) is analysed in Chapter Six. Traditionally, this congruence has been a feature of adult education in the United Kingdom, but not in North America. Brookfield, himself a prominent writer on self-directed learning, contributes to what has become known as the 'epistemological debate' centred on the relationship between theory and practice when in this context he remarks on American 'paradigmatic plurality' in adult education:

> Put simply, adult education in the United States is held to be equivalent to the education of adults....[This] has considerable epistemological implications. It means that adult education is defined primarily in operational (rather than intrinsic) terms; that is, as the provision of opportunities for adults to acquire skills and knowledge in a systematic, purposeful manner. (1989:142)

He attributes this to a political culture of liberal democratic values in which adult education exists 'to enhance the individual's creative powers, aesthetic

capacities, and economic opportunities' and continues that 'it is striking just how much this latter concern with self-directed learning has dominated the adult education research agenda...whereas in the United Kingdom this phenomenon is only rarely researched' (148).

In the United Kingdom, adult education exists within a tradition of debate about the proper *purposes* of adult education activity. The work of Raymond Williams is illustrative of this (expounded by McKilroy and Westwood 1993). There is a strong strand of collectivist involvement which 'assist[s] oppressed groups in the process of their collective advancement' (149), but counter to that is the strand aimed at the development of 'cognitive outcomes of learning, [in which]...adult educators should remain politically neutral' (149). We noted these emphases earlier in this Chapter when we drew on the analysis of the field given by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982).

These purposes, whether collectivist or individualist, stand then as a contrast to the market-driven version of self-directedness. At the more collectivist, or socially-located, end of the polarity is the United Kingdom tradition of what we can call emancipatory adult education. This seeks to *transform*, rather than *reform* collectivities (workers, the poor, women), so that, as we noted above, minorities can come to own, and indeed create, their own learning, and in this sense be liberated from socio-political oppresssion. The influence of Freire is prominent here, as we also noted. But there is a more individualistic version of this view: still transformational, but starting with, as Mezirow puts it:

> the process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of our psychocultural assumptions...constrain[s] the way we perceive our world, of reconstituting that structure in a way that allows us to be more inclusive and discriminating in our integration of experience and to act on these new understandings. (1985:22)

Here, there is some debate about the likelihood of genuinely transformative learning. Long (1991:80-81) quotes a distinction made by Brookfield (1986) to the effect that the social construction of learning has impact on the *outcomes* of the process of learning, rather than on the process itself. If Mezirow seeks the transformation of individual consciousness - then the evidence for that transformation having occurred, if it has, must be present in different outcomes. In that sense, it is as open to social-constructivism as any other education change, because transformation only gets recognised via (public) evidence that individuals *in* society have available to them. This, it must be said, is redolent of

Wittgenstein's argument against private languages: if we understood how language works (via signs which are public and rule-governed in usage), we would not expect private versions. By analogy, perhaps, if we understood how transformation works, we would not expect a private version. Whether, then, this personal (private) change is transformative, rather than merely reformative, is to be established on socio-cultural (public) criteria. If Mezirow is able to fit this in to a liberal-democratic view of society, and not equate transformation with a socialist, or post-capitalist society, is not the point. Rather, it is how any *context* of Mezirovian transformation regards the evidence for changed outcomes which will determine whether transformation or reformation (or neither!) has occurred.

At this point, a strong conceptual link can be identified between the broad philosophical backgrounds of, on the one hand, the personal transformative emphasis (acknowledging its individualistic contextuality in North American adult education), and, on the other hand, Cervero's characterisation of the more socially-oriented epistemologies marked by 'emergent' and 'emancipative' human ideals. We turn to this now.

1.7.2 Ontology and Experience

This constellation of views has in common the ontological view that the world is a human construction, and that at some basic level, knowledge is as well. What varies amongst proponents is, first, the balance of involvement of individuals as opposed to groups, or sociality; secondly, and flowing from one's stance on that first point, the extent to which change, or epistemological reconstruction, is possible. But beneath these variables is a shared assumption that knowledge and 'realities' *are* constructions, and therefore malleable, informed by ideals of human betterment. The quotatives for 'realities' indicate the recognition of human diversity, to the extent of attributing *sui generis* realities, from which knowledge-claims derive their legitimacy.

Constructivist views, as we saw in section 1.5 above, start with respect for human experience, which is taken broadly to consist in the ineluctably practical way phenomena, including our own actions, have impact on us. It is certainly not a classical empiricist view - that is, that the sole basis of knowledge is the evidence of the five senses, which inscribe knowledge, according to John Locke in the seventeenth century, upon the *tabula rasa* of the mind. It is more subtle

than that. The constructivist assumption about the world and our place in it can be called 'phenomenological'. This view can be shown to arise, at least, for example, as far back as Kant's metaphysics, although its intellectual lineage since then has taken it far from his rationalism and idealism (see Stanage 1987). It should be pointed out that this thesis takes professionals' practical phenomena as its principal curiosity, since such phenomena (e.g. intentionality, competence) are amenable to constructivism, but does not locate itself within 'phenomenological' scholarship.

Kant puts the view we are interested in rather well, in an early work, the *Prolegomena* of 1783, where he states:

> We must then first notice: that although all judgements of experience are empirical, i.e. have their ground in immediate sense perception, yet all empirical judgements are not conversely for that reason judgements of experience, but that in addition to the empirical and in general in addition to what is given to sensible intuition, special concepts which have their origin wholly *a priori* in pure understanding must still be added, under which every perception must still be subsumed before it can be changed into experience by their means. (1953:56)

Thus far, Kant has raised the most basic epistemological question: how we come to *know* anything at all. He is setting the scene for a complex and sensitive analysis of epistemology and its connections with metaphysics: what *reality* there is to know. For those who derive education ideals and theories from the phenomenological authenticity of human experience, Kant's immediate explication of the foregoing is essential:

> All our judgements are at first mere judgements of perception, they are valid only for us, i.e. for our subject, and only afterwards do we give them a new reference, namely to an object, and want the judgement to be valid for us at all times and equally for everybody... (56)

Wrapped up in this statement, for the writers in adult education who espouse constructivist and reconstructivist epistemologies, is a metaphysic which, first, grounds individual reality in the facts of human experience; then, secondly, argues that, as Kant states, we 'want the judgement to be valid for us at all times and equally for everybody'. In other words, phenomenological approaches take the 'wanting', turn it into a prescriptive basis for certain desirable change, and assume that this provides a raft of metaphysical

universalisability upon which epistemological constructions can be erected and re-erected.

When the 'wanting' is recognised at this early but essential stage of the evolution of an (educational) ideal or purpose, it can be identified as an ingredient in any transformative learning, irrespective of how, in a polarisation of individualism and collectivism, the phenomena of human experience are to be regarded. That is, an individualistic transformation must assume that all humans as a collection of individuals are capable of such a transformation; we are all equipped with the potential to do things differently, if we can 'see' our circumstances afresh. Similarly, a social, or group-located, transformation must assume that our very group-mindedness ensures we individually 'see' that kind of membership as in our own interests as discrete humans. Both polarities implicate the existence of each other, and the shades of emphasis between them reflect various admixtures of each.

Overlaying this is the other variable: the kind of transformation which is desired. Here the polarities range from an ideal of enhanced cognitive understanding, (not even called 'transformation') to an ideal of political radicalism (which emancipates the learners in every way). Again, both these, and their admixture, implicate the other.

Stepping back from this analysis, and applying it to the two culturally-based identities for adult education which we identified earlier (in section 1.7.1), we notice immediately a congruence which produces tension between the market-driven and the transformational perspectives on why adults should learn. 'Self-directedness for self-fulfilment' argues that adults should learn because they clearly *want* to: 'self-directness for (personal) transformation' argues that adults should learn because they will be *better*. Self-directedness thus presents itself as a popular point of congruence because it is easy to conclude that what people want (that is, what the market will bear) will be what will make them better (that is, closer to an ideal). It is this which makes self-directed learning appealing. As Long states, in a chapter in Peters, Jarvis and Associates (1991):

> The persistence of self-directed learning as a topic of adult education knowledge is explained by several factors. First, as with andragogy, the concept is philosophically attractive to adult educators. It focusses on the learner rather than the teacher, and ascribes positive (adult) characteristics to the learner. Second it recognises an idea that many adult educators have long subscribed to: that their role is to develop self-directing learners

> whose dependence on or need for a teacher is reduced over time. Third, the concept provides for learning beyond a school environment. Fourth, unlike perspective transformation...many adult educators have done research on self-directed learning. (85-86)

Notwithstanding these explanations, it must be said that the congruence is overstated. In moral philosophy, one of the enduring and crucial issues is the extent to which what people desire is the same as what is desirable. A moment's consideration shows that people frequently desire that which is morally and prudentially undesirable. In like fashion, there may be many desirable aspects of life which are far from 'common goods' not least because few people recognise much less desire these aspects. Education ideals are but a sub-class of these general tensions, which are endemic to our status as moral beings.

The main value of a Kantian analysis is to bring out tensions between the question of what we are, and the question of what we would like to be. And this requires some consideration of what we can do about the gap. So we need a theory of human agency.

1.8. Human Agency

It may be thought that the constructivism which flows from a broad phenomenological understanding could provide adult educators with generative confidence sufficient for the achievement of agreed learning outcomes. But this fails to take sufficient account of the *human* nature we share, the intentionality of which has lately entered in to the paradigmatic revision of philosophy of science, and of social science. We noted earlier the socio-cultural contextuality of the sciences. Many writers move from the contextuality of human nature to what they regard as the necessarily human construction of human nature itself.

Human nature is, on this view, an implicated product of certain specific relationships to the non-human world, and, arising from the differential power that results, entire cultural superstructures are constructed which legitimise the status quo. It follows, on this view, that human agency itself is a construction. Human nature, and, for example, national cultural products such as certain approaches to adult education, are manifestations of the prevailing power relations in their respective societies. That much at least is implicit in the analyses discussed earlier in this Chapter which seek the emancipation of

oppressed people - either as individuals or as group members - from their hitherto 'natural' oppression. Their ignorance, and perhaps even their duplicity, in making their oppression seem 'natural', is to be confronted by a reconstructivism which overturns prevailing definitions of knowledge. There is not, on this view, an objective reality against which an individual can pit his or her self; the very fact of self-hood is a construct, and the identity we think we have can be reconstructed if we want to be different. The assumption is that humans, in wanting to be different, will want to be better. This requires that we have a self-consciousness, and an interpretation of the history of that consciousness, which will generate change.

Jarvis raises these issues towards the end of his book *Adult Learning in the Social Context*, where he states

> The position adopted in this book has been to recognise that both mind and self are social constructs, so that it is false to treat the person as if each one is totally individualistic without consideration being given to the social processes that underly the individual....Each person...brings to the learning and teaching situation a social past and this has to be recognised by the teacher....Therefore, learners have to be recognised as people who are not totally responsible for what they are, even though all people do develop their individuality as they mature, and with it a considerable degree of autonomy, depending upon their previous experiences and their social situation. (1987a:192-3)

Leaving aside the tautology implicit in the statement about 'people developing their individuality as they mature', Jarvis reminds us of two important educational points, which bear extrapolation:

1. '[L]earners...are not totally responsible for what they are...', in that we all carry a personal history (or 'stream') of consciousness which has shaped our identity, indeed, our sense of individuality. We are, to develop Jarvis' point, what we find ourselves to be. This is to be distinguished from the *individualism* of any one set of socio-cultural arrangements, such as the pluralism giving rise to market-driven adult education provision.

2. '[P]eople do develop...a considerable degree of autonomy...' but this needs to be distinguished from *liberty*, which is mere freedom to choose (or even not to choose) what one wants. Growing out of freedom, autonomy is self-authorship, not unwillingly subject to the will of others. In this way, it involves authenticity

- that my autonomy is actually mine. This requires a strong sense of selfhood, not driven by desires, nor constituted by choice.

Authenticity thus links individuality to autonomy, because it is literally true that we are what we find our *selves* to be, and this finding, or discovery, is part and parcel of the evolution of that self. This stronger sense of personal identity, not just teleologically, but also ontologically, removes it from too close an association with the rhetoric of rugged individualism endemic to late twentieth century Western democracies.

Kant's argument for autonomy, for example, requires that self-governed individuals place themselves under a universal moral law: the categorical ***duty*** to be moral entailed by the concept of morality itself. By contrast, a less severe, more popular, view requires that the individual as moral agent develop and pursue unique purposes. This has found resonance in educational thought, which has strongly emphasised the growth and development of the person in the two ways identified above.

But this thesis takes these two ways further in arguing for their convergence. We recall that Dewey is well-known for his dissolution of the distinction between the process of growing and the production of growth. In like fashion, 'authentic autonomy' emerges as the self reflects upon and plans its own experiences. Our identities are to be found in individual blends of what we have found and now find ourselves doing, along with what we want to do. This continuum, if articulable, is, we may say, evidence of authentic autonomy.

Jarvis goes on to remind us of the difficulties associated with aiming for the flowering of autonomy:

> However, all learning does not automatically result in growth, and some learning experiences result in the curtailment of the potential to grow, so that it has been recognised that people are to a great extent what they have learned. (193-4)

Now Jarvis is surely right to remind us that learning can be negative, and indeed he refers to Dewey's related discussion of the miseducative (192), but the main points to be drawn from this discussion are that if people are inevitably largely what they learned (and that learning has inevitably been socio-culturally contextual), and autonomy is an achievement (arising from

freedom, but beyond being free-to-choose), then the appropriate view of human agency must include the non-cognitive dimension of life.

People formulate their aims and purposes on the run, as it were, including in that formulation the expressly rational, that is, what they understand to be possible and required or desirable. But they also include the affective and social, that is, what they want, and what they want for others, and formulation 'on the run' is a recognition of the spontaneity of human decision-making. We find ourselves deciding to do thus-and-so, as much as we plan in a ratiocinative sense what we want. However, spontaneity does not indicate caprice. We are creatures of habit, evolution, compromise and weak will.

The point is we are not *exclusively* those creatures; neither are we mere flotsam tossed about by whatever capriciously comes along. There are grounds for balancing ratiocination (having an intention or a plan and then acting upon it) and caprice (random choice): we rarely do as much of either of these as we think. The middle way, which we may call 'reflective judgement' comes nearer what we do most of the time, and provides a sound basis for conceptualising the agency required by the exercise of practical knowledge in professional contexts.

In laying out, then, a viable concept of human agency, we need to bear in mind the limits to human flexibility when we choose our ends. We are all born into a context: our duty is to accept responsibilities presented by that context, our freedom is to develop our interests as we see fit. The balance between these is not entirely 'given' to us to ascertain. After all, and to reiterate, what is desired and what is desirable are frequently quite different, and have quite different provenance in both individuals and in the life of a group.

Authentic autonomy therefore requires a robust theory of agency. Agency provides the catalytic melding of the ontological with the teleological: we are (partly) what we find ourselves doing, and to have done, and to have been done to; we are also (partly) what we want ourselves to be. In daily life these twin dimensions are inextricable. We make our plans - our identities evolve - normally unselfconsciously.

We are, however, more likely to be aware of the import of knowledge and values in our actions. Clearly agency consists in epistemological and ethical considerations in the very acts of reflective judgement that make up the myriad

experiences of daily life. But those considerations will not *constitute* the self. They will contribute substantively to its formation, but they cannot, nor can any package of them in education provision, be said to construct or reconstruct a person. Persons, and the selves at their core, are ontological and teleological entities, albeit with epistemological and ethical dimensions.

1.9 Summary

There are, to repeat, two dimensions to human life which education theorising implicates in its attempts to understand practice. These are:

- that we are (partly) what we find ourselves doing, and to have done, and to have been done to (this is the ontological dimension);

- that we are also (partly) what we want ourselves to be (this is the teleological dimension).

Adult education literature is no less saturated with ambivalences and ambiguities when addressing these than any education theorising. Such investigative tension seems to centre on the extent of genuine, as opposed to misrepresented, congruence which could be argued for between these two. As we saw earlier, the research model espoused by Usher and Bryant (1989), and indeed the entire epistemological debate about theory and practice with which Bright (1989) is concerned, deals in congruence - or at least an attempt to do so.

This thesis, in giving overt attention to human agency, in particular the authenticity it is expected to possess, generates what will be shown to be a helpful approach to dealing with the congruence thought to obtain between the ontological and the teleological. We may call this approach broadly phenomenological. Apart from its helpfulness in conceptualising the phenomenon of practice as such, it also throws light on two permanent debates in education. One of these centres on the relationship of collectivism to individualism; the second is on the extent of the transformation in professionals' learning - reform? or revolution?

Given this approach, the problem with starting with Dewey's analysis of experience is that, whatever his sympathies with collectivism - and they are profound because he aligns experience with democratic values - in the ensuing decades since he wrote, self-directed learning has gained sway in adult

education, at least in North America. How and how far 'transformative' processes are possible, or even desirable, in such an aggressively individualistic society raises the philosophical question of the constitution of the 'self' which is thought to be under its own direction. In contrast to North America, there is strong support in certain adult education literature, especially in the United Kingdom, for associative, collective learning models. A substantial intellectual influence there and, to a lesser extent, in North America, in both the emancipative and the more reformist 'emergent' or hermeneutic emphases, (which we noted earlier) is the vast field of European philosophy, going back through the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School to Marx and earlier again to Kant.

One issue which presents itself in this Chapter is whether the adult education literature in the past fifteen years has been helpfully informed by English-speaking academic philosophy. If the only evidence is that clustered around the style and methodology of the 'London School' analysts, the response must be negative.

The contribution from narrowly-conceived linguistic and conceptual analysis has not produced a research agenda which generates interest in, or enthusiasm for, actual professional (adult) education practice. By persisting with an epistemology based on traditional discipline boundaries, and a hierarchical theory-practice relationship, such analyses have painted themselves into a corner. Changing and accelerating professional education practice has thrown up a multitude of theoretical considerations, not least of which is the very relationship of theorising to practice. The development of adult education theory informed by European philosophy in various ways, such as the broad hermenuetic-emancipative literature, is surely timely and helpful, in that it deals seriousy with this relationship - indeed it seeks to dissolve it. The present project also takes the relationship seriously, but more modestly, and in a related philosophical discourse, places a sliver of adult life under the microscope. Professional practice is rather uncontroversially a melding of theory and practice. All the big issues flow *from* that, and have implications far beyond an episode of education practice.

What methodological conclusions can be made at this point? The first overt connections between philosophy and adult education, about fifteen years ago, assumed that philosophy *in* education was mainly about the extrapolation and justification of general human principles - expressed either as a smorgasbord of

intellectual ideologies('-isms') floating context-free and seemingly yours for the asking, or as an initiation into the 'Great Ideas/Thinkers' - traditions for the trying.

At about the same time, at the opposite extreme, minute and supposedly apolitical logical analyses of education terms gave the impression that this was the proper role of a sub-discipline called 'philosophy *of* education'.

Now, we are in a position to move beyond both characterisations to one simply of philosophy *and* (adult) education. In so doing, we connect a revitalised English-speaking academic contribution to those who are already drawing their theorisations from European thought, via, for example the epistemology of critical theory. The result of such convergence may well be a more powerful conceptual model of the constructivism which is inevitable in any theorisation in education.

1.10 The Way Ahead

If there is a place in adult education for a contribution from English-speaking academic philosophy it must be able to demonstrate

- contextual sensitivity,
- intellectual rigor, and
- professional relevance.

This thesis tries to exemplify these requirements. In doing so, it hopes, first, to show a self-consciousness of its own contextuality within capitalist democracies, unlike the London School of linguistic analysis. In fact it takes issue throughout with both overly individualistic and market-driven conceptualisations of adult education. It can be argued (though not in this thesis) that a philosophical contribution to the elucidation of any field of human activity is quite capable of engaging its own ideological location without jeopardising the veracity of the contribution itself.

Secondly, it presents by way of rigour, argument drawn from mainstream ontology, epistemology, philosophical psychology and value theory (including ethics, aesthetics and political philosophy).

But, taking the first point (contextuality) and the second point (rigor) together, the thesis also tries to *show*, as well as argue for, a consistent and balanced application of Aristotle's epistemic trichotomy (*theoria, praxis, poiesis*) in adult education, as an intellectually worthwhile way to conceptualise professionals' practice.

How does it attempt this?

Aristotle recognises three different forms of knowledge, as we will develop in Chapter Seven; his point is that *each form has its own purpose.* Purposes are, in our philosophical idiom, context-specific. Thus, regarding phenomena such as experience, the self and indeed professional practice itself as contextually-specific is entirely appropriate. Epistemological underpinnings of these various phenomena may well diverge, and to at least some extent, what we make of them will also be significant. 'Making something of something' recognises human agency in coming to know that phenomenon as it is to us - this is the important Kantian modification to the often simplistic constructivism present in education ideologies to the effect that 'everyone can become what they want to become'.

In this important modified sense, then, support is given in the thesis to a constructivist analysis. Indeed, this rounds out what 'appropriateness' and cultural formation (cf. Wittgenstein) at bottom amount to: a recognition of a diversity of purposes in adult learning environments.

Apart from this main point that phenomena will present themselves context-specifically - and that there are limits to the diversity this entails, there is another main point to be gained from the Aristotelian trichotomy. This relates to practice specifically. Within the notion of human practices in general, *professionals* practice in environments which generate learning in each of the three Aristotelian forms of knowledge (*theoria, praxis, poiesis*). What does this mean? The following allocates some priorities.

• There is, in adult education at the moment, a concentration on the second of these, *praxis*, (or 'doing', 'acting') as the appropriate and right epistemic and ethical justification for professional practice.

• There is a lesser reliance on *poiesis* (or 'making', 'creating') as a justification for practice; this seems to present itself in the belief that the professional

involvement of the adult educator with learners should consist mainly in the facilitation of outcomes (i.e. the making of a product and the ownership of the process) they, not the educator, identify.

• Thirdly, there is resistance to involvement with *theoria* (or 'thinking' 'understanding') probably from the belief that there is no substantial body of formal theory available, especially in the light of the promises and premisses of simplistic constructivism.

This thesis is, simply, a contribution to *theoria*.

CHAPTER TWO: RECONSTRUCTING PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

2.1 Earning Power

This is a deliberately ambiguous sub-heading that introduces us to the complexity of the relationships between market forces and ethical integrity. In a helpful 'benchmark' statement, Illich provides a clear and unambiguous link between power and the professional. In his *Disabling Professions* (1977), he claims:

> Professionals tell you what you need and claim the power to prescribe. They not only recommend what is good, but what is right. Neither income, long training, delicate tasks nor social standing is the mark of the professional. Rather, it is his authority to define a person as a client, to determine that person's need, and to hand the person a prescription. (17)

> Professionals assert secret knowledge about human nature, knowledge which only they have the right to dispense....In any area where a human need can be imagined, these new professions, dominant, authoritative, monopolistic, legalised - and, at the same time, debilitating and effectively disabling the individual - have become the exclusive experts of the public good. (19-20)

We notice immediately the force and interconnection of ethical and epistemological concepts: 'secret knowledge' (the 'good'), is dispensed and justified *sui generis* (as the 'right') to the powerless 'client'. Illich's target is both the traditional mediaeval professions of medicine, the law and the church, and the emergent middle-class professions of teaching, nursing, engineering, accounting and the like which arose in the industrial revolutions in the West. Furthermore, he is keen to attack *professionalism*, if by that is meant any occupational group which carries on its work through what amounts to structural social oppression.

Adult education is centrally involved with these issues, because it can be argued that the professionalisation of education of any sort may marginalise

the integrity of the learner's experiences as a basis for planning teaching or training. Accreditation, credentials, registration, and the general emphasis on public accountability for educational provision are merely some aspects of the constant debate over the purposes of education, encapsulated most succinctly by the metaphor of a polarisation between the interests of the individual and the interests of society. As we saw in Chapter One, however, in the adult education literature this polarity has been elaborated in ways which express support for the values of the marketplace, on one hand, (at both individual and social levels of analysis), and, on the other hand, in ways which express support for deontological values, such as emancipative and transformative ideals.

Whether or not adult education is, or should be, a profession, there are concerns about professionalism and adult educators. Brockett, in his Preface to *Ethical Issues in Adult Education* (1988) expresses this as follows:

> At present, the field of adult education is struggling with the question of professionalisation. Convincing arguments are being presented both for and against the trend toward viewing adult education as a profession. A quick glance at the literature from several other fields with a strong service orientation, such as higher education, social work, medicine, counseling and law reveals that the topic of ethics is an important one, for it serves as a basic foundation for effective practice. Furthermore, ethical considerations lie at the heart of the discussions about the professionalisation issue in each of these fields. (1988:viii)

Provoked by Illich, then, we can ask what is the appropriate stance to one's field of practice. That is, in whose interests is the ownership of the knowledge endemic to that practice exercised? This ties both the ethical and the epistemological into the notion which Brockett calls 'effective practice', and which is then available to individual practitioners as a personal guide to action. Hiemstra, in a chapter in Brockett (1988: Ch 12) develops how philosophy in this sense can guide action. First he quotes Merriam (1982) in her view that philosophy provides ideals, a fact which in her opinion distinguishes professionals from paraprofessionals. While one would be wary of that basis, the idealism, if construed at least as a sense of disinterested commitment, seems a reasonable, albeit modest, claim.

More interestingly, Hiemstra then quotes Boggs (1981) where he states that philosophy provides the means for adults to 'not only get information, but also interpret it, organise it, and use it in making decisions and in taking action'

(1988:179-180). Hiemstra concludes that the main power of philosophy is 'its ability to help people better understand and appreciate what they do'.

This last point, concerning *understanding* and *appreciation*, has an expository significance far exceeding the consideration of ethical issues in adult education, and indeed far exceeding adult education as a focus of study. In fact, it provides us with a convenient point of entry to the structure of the philosophical argument with which the rest of this thesis is concerned.

2.2 Establishing Practice

A focus on understanding and appreciation raises the question of the profundity of experience itself: that is, of how humans come to know something and value it in some way. This is not meant at the level of literal or phenomenological consciousness in which we think through (that is, come to understand) what we are going to do prior to doing it, or reflect upon (that is, come to appreciate) what we have done or what has happened to us. We are not about to track prospective and retrospective self-awareness through the daily mire. We already know that humans plan, reflect upon and adapt their actions and circumstances. We already know practices evolve. Rather, our concern is with the conceptual constitution of the sort of awareness, or consciousness, that is displayed in professional practice. What establishes 'practice'?

Put more technically, *this thesis deals centrally (but not exclusively) with the philosophical psychology of the presentation and representation of awareness as it constitutes experience displayed in understanding and appreciation, and the implications this has for selfhood.*

The substance of such understanding and appreciation is professional work, specifically the work of adult educators. We ask what constitutes their practice, and, going further, how this may be improved.

Let us now develop this.

2.3 Understanding and Experience

A helpful point of entry is to ask: How are we to understand what 'understanding' is? Here, philosophy has a major role, not because it can map the usages of the term 'understanding' (although as we have seen in Chapter One, this linguistic analysis approach has been a significant influence in education theorising), but because substantive conceptual argumentation can elucidate significant human activities. The work practices of people who regard themselves as professionals, or who are regarded collectively as a profession, are examples of such significant human activities, so the substance of the argumentation consists in what it is such people do, why it is done, and how it may be improved. Adult educators provide one sub-set of such practice.

Understanding professional practice involves the more general question of understanding anything at all, because it should be easier to consider the specific case if the more general is clearer. The quite specific case of adult education has a further, even stronger, claim on general notions of 'understanding' since the very practice of any of the educator professions has as perhaps its chief aim the advancement of understanding in the learners.

Coming to understand such general understanding requires the acknowledgement of a sequence which later we will have rendered redundant. But at least such a sequence pushes the enquiry forward productively. The sequence is short and is simply stated: information, even raw sensory data presented as percepts, leads to knowledge, presented as concepts.

This sequence requires, and to a large extent already implies, a theorisation of the very nature of experience as manifest in multivariate sensory guise already underpinned by modalities like causation, time, space, negation and so on. A crude implication is that such modalities 'convert' raw sensory data to concepts, but this is unsatisfactory as it stands just because it begs the question. What *is* the nature of the relationship of such manifestations to the raw percepts? Do we, taking our visual sense as an example, 'look' and then 'see', or the reverse? Or both? It is unlikely that we do neither, not least because we are human.

Furthermore, because it is human experience which is our legitimate interest, we need to simultaneously consider how personhood (i.e. the 'self') is implicated in such relationships. We have a stronger stake in experience other than the mere experiencing itself. We recognise that humans are somehow

constituted by experience, at least partially; we also construct our experiences, at least partially. In education theorising, endless debate ensues about the veracity and extent of experience as a basis for all learning, if not for knowledge itself. In Chapter One, we noted how persistently adult education literature relies on such debates to generate conceptualisations of the field and of practice and provision. This is to be expected, since humans notice the value we collectively and individually place on the assimilation, organisation and control of sensory phenomena arising inevitably in every wakeful moment. But recall that we did not make a judgement about, or argue for, a sequential construction of 'understanding' from (raw) percept to (modal) concept. Neither do we make a judgement about, or argue for, a similar sequential construction of 'appreciation' from sensory phenomena to selective self-hood.

2.4 Appreciation and Selfhood

All we need, as a point of entry to the issue of the constitution of the self, is as follows. Humans, in brief, *appreciate* the sense we make of the world, but we make sense selectively. It is, however, the 'we' (or 'I') as stakeholder which is crucial. In valuing what we do value we imply a sense of self: we have experience, experience does not have us, we like to think.

So what is indicated about the self by the appreciation, or valuing, of experience? To put the question in the same form as we did of 'understanding': How are we to appreciate what 'appreciation' is?

A helpful way in to this is to take the idea of sensory phenomena quite literally. Restricting ourselves to the visual sense, and to the experience (sic) of digital image-making, at the computer screen, a person would manipulate, generate and transmit images. This inevitably engages aesthetic criteria. A string of judgements about the image at any one of a series of moments looking 'right' is really a sequence of activities (or 'doings') for which you are responsible, and which you call 'good'. Looking at the screen and judging it to be 'right' is judging the image as 'fitting'. Indeed, the fittingness of the image is what the classical Greeks called the *kosmos*. On Mount Olympus, all the gods have their place - they fit together, as cosmographical order. Our 'cosmetic' appearances are literally on the face, or image, of things, but this is not just a glib turn of phrase, lending itself to superficialities. It is a profound insight. As Hillman says:

> Aesthetic reactions are responses to this face, and moral responsibility begins in these responses of disgust, delight, abhorrence, attraction - the spontaneous judgement of the heart.
> ...An aesthetic response is a moral response.(1981:40)

We appreciate the beauty of the cosmetic because there is a beauty in order. Order and fittingness are perhaps the most basic aesthetic criteria, and they arise, in the senses, at first blush, or first gasp. Of course, they are amenable to rational discussion, but in the first instance, the aesthetic judgement is one of appeal, leading to appreciation and more considered appraisal. Appreciation and appraisal include criteria beyond the sensory and the imaginal. There are canons of criticism, and sensitivities to intentions and contexts, for example, all of which are extraneous to acts of perception, but which are legitimately brought to bear upon the assimilation of such acts into human experience. Thus the very aesthetic of one's work practice contributes to the ethic of it.

One is, as Aristotle discusses, practising with an end beyond the acts of practice (see Chapter Seven). This may be regarded as acting or performing-with-a-purpose; a little reflection shows an individual to be potentially as interpretive and creative as a musician or an actor may be. In all these cases, the script, the score and the data come from somewhere else. It is no denial of ethics to acknowledge the responsibility a practitioner has to animate and develop the material; in fact the integrity of the material depends for its integrity upon its expression. It is in being 'worked upon' that a practitioner's material actually assumes a heightened ethical dimension. When the material is human (say, learners, patients, clients) the integrity of the ethical dimension *constitutes* the nature of the relationship shared with the practitioner. The same cannot be said of a digitally-produced visual image. Yet underlying this range of relationships is an extrapolation of the imagination, begun first in aesthetic, cosmetic judgement, (as 'goodness') and transmogrified into ethical, cosmographical judgement (as 'rightness'). Practice is about recognising and developing the integrity of the material, whether it be humans or a visual image. For practice, 'integrity' sums up the wholeness of the values implicit in any human practice. Integrity envelops both aesthetic and also ethical considerations in a continuum that maintains the practitioner and the material as jointly integral to the value-ladenness of the relationship between them.

Another way to establish the point is as follows. When we say we 'like' something, or that we 'know what we like', this term, 'liking', represents the

coalescence of the goodness (the aesthetic) and the rightness (the ethical). When we see what we like, it is often explained as a (good) likeness. That is, there is something already in the world we match with what we have just encountered. We look, one can argue, to seek a likeness: we make sense of the world, visually, when we assimilate the present perceptions with the past. We expect the future to be like the past, and when we are surprised that it often is not, we retreat to increasingly remote conceptualisations to achieve the assimilation into our experience which maintains our sense of control and order over life. Creativity is indeed often explained as the sudden, surprising connection between two phenomena hitherto discrete. And creativity is integrative: it links two unknowns in making something new. Novelty itself does not produce the creative, but novelty in the establishment of something worthwhile is what we call creativity. And the judgement of what is worthwhile recognises the integrity of the elements of the new creation in their new context. It is the innovative conjunction of elements which surprise us. We call this creative if it is felicitous to us. Again, the integrity of the elements is enhanced by their new integral-ness, their new integration. This is a new 'fittingness' - both good and right simultaneously.

A similar point was made by Koestler (1975:Ch 1; 1978:110) when he describes that exquisite moment of aesthetic awareness as the 'aha' experience - connecting, in science, humor or art, the hitherto discrete. In the 1990s, we can say that digital technology provides something like 'exquisite cosmetic moments', where minute-by-minute (as on the stage or concert platform), particular judgements are made which carry forward the activity towards whatever purposes it is supposed to have. The phenomenon of an aesthetic 'aha' drives the ethical component of a judgement that the doing is proceeding aright. The epistemological component of such a judgement is dealt with later, in section 3.4.3, and the contextual significance of those judgements *per se* (arising in professional practice) is summarised further on again, in section 4.8.

With this example, we notice that the sensory phenomena present themselves as percepts, but do not determine the conceptual significance we find in our visual experiences. So the senses *cause*, but do not *shape*, our concepts. This important point will be developed in the Kantian analysis of experience undertaken in Chapter Five.

2.5 Ethics and Epistemology

Taking understanding and appreciating together, we recall the big questions. In doing so, we need to recognise the integration of epistemological and ethical considerations (or, more popularly, the areas of knowledge and values, that is, 'understanding' and 'appreciation'). As we noted in section 2.1, Boggs' (1981) integration of philosophy's informative and interpretative roles is helpful.

His contribution is the first chapter in *Examining Controversies in Adult Education* (Krietlow 1981), in which he canvasses various philosophical contributions to the concept of adulthood. The rest of the book is a series of debates on specific areas of controversy in the field, mainly concerning the justifiable extent of state involvement, teacher proscription, personal liberation, competency outcomes, certification and so on. So, while the major parts of the book deal in program, policy and provision aspects, the first chapter rightly emphasises, amongst other things, that

> All educational theories or systems are based on some view of man....Every educator has at least an implicit philosophical anthropology. Educational systems are but reflected images of philosophical creeds....A clear understanding of adulthood then becomes the basis for formulating criteria for judging the worth or value of educational efforts for adults. (1981:4)

These educational efforts are practical matters, as they are the actions instantiating the ideals and purposes which have been attributed to humankind. Boggs reminds us, in effect, that professional practice for adult educators is informed from the start with value judgements. We can broaden this point to include all professional practice. There will be some model of human virtue which will be a benchmark against which the practice is judged 'effective'.

The big questions remain: what constitutes human 'experience' and what implications are there for self-hood? But we have noted that both experience and self-hood jointly and separately display assumptions concerning knowledge and values. This leads to specific questions:

- What does an analysis of professionals' work experience contribute to an epistemology of adult education?

• What does an analysis of the self-hood of the professional contribute to an ethic of adult education?.

The ontological consideration of these questions will be developed later, in Chapter Five, as part of a detailed and emergent theorisation of adult education as 'experience'. On the way to ontology, we nonetheless treat ethical and epistemological considerations separately (in Chapters Two and Three respectively), and jointly in a contextual sense (in Chapter Four).

The rest of Chapter Two is therefore given over to ethical aspects of professional practice, with specific reference to adult education.

2.6 Ethical Practice

The immediate endeavour is to identify the benchmarks, or necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, of a practice which is professional. Michael Bayles in *Professional Ethics* (1989) puts it thus:

> Three central features have been singled out by almost all authors who have charcterised professions. First, a rather extensive training is required to practice a profession....
>
> Second, the training involves a significant intellectual component....Thus, providing advice or service rather than things is a characteristic feature of the professions.
>
> Third, the trained ability provides an important service to society. Physicians, lawyers, teachers, accountants, engineers and architects provide services vital to the organised functioning of society - which chess experts do not. The rapid increase in the numbers of professions and professionals in the twentieth century is due to this feature. To function, technologically complex modern societies require a greater application of specialised knowledge than did the simpler societies of the past....In short, professions provide important services that require extensive intellectual training. (8)

Bayles adds three less central features: credentialling (also known as registration, accreditation and license to practice), representative organisations, and individual work autonomy which involves the freedom to make discretionary judgements about specific work circumstances. While these may be present they are not sufficient indicators of professional practice, and, as Bayles notes, may show movement *towards* professionalisation even in non-

profession occupations (such as law enforcement officers in America, who, it seems, are emerging from the 'well-liked and elected' sheriff system).

Moreover, Bayles discusses the contrasts between the practices and obligations of self-employed professionals as opposed to those who are employees, and the overlapping contrasts between the client as an individual (a patient, a litigant), and the client as a group (a corporation, a classroom). In such a range of dimensions, many possibilities for confusion, if not outright conflict, of allegiance between specific interests and social values are generated.

Taking together the necessary and sufficient conditions, the additional features and circumstantial contrasts and the indisputable need for sophisticated expertise in contemporary society, we may conclude, with Bayles, that the monopolistic nature of the provision of that expertise, and the self-regulation of that professional provision combine to present a massive challenge to the legitimate and *prima facie* expectation of public beneficence.

An interesting trend in the evolution of the professions from their individualistic and fee-for-service origins is marked, according to Bayles, by the growth in team practice, by the use of knowledge from diverse disciplines, and by the greater numbers of salaried professionals (i.e. employees). Certainly, such a trend is evident in nursing and teaching, where fee-for-service has never been a feature of the work. But the appearance of such changes in medical, legal, engineering and accounting practices is interesting and hints at a need to look afresh at the ethical and epistemological bases of professionalism.

The contrast between traditional and contemporary analyses of professional practice shows up more dramatically when we consider the necessary and sufficient conditions established by Bennion about twenty-five years ago. Using examples from the United Kingdom, he argued (Bennion 1969:14-15) that the professions in the 'narrow' sense (where 'wide' meant 'any intellectual activity') were marked by:

1. An intellectual basis in a discipline which was tested
2. Private practice on a fee-for-service basis
3. An advisory then executive function, with full responsibility
4. A tradition of objective service
5. A representative institute (of 'members')
6. A code of conduct, or ethics.

His conclusion was that only individual private practice met these conditions, and that consequently the 'consultant professions' as he called such practice were, because of their freedom from, and independence of, the State, the best means through which 'qualities essential for society' are made available. The main argument for this hinges on the structural ethical ambivalence attributed to salaried professionals, which was mentioned by Bayles above. Bennion sees private ('consultative') practice as constitutive of professionalism, even though many professionals work for salaries in both State and private workplaces:

> ...qualities of independence, impartiality, discretion and so on may flourish in employed service if the conditions are right....[but] Employed service can only be a second best however...The present tendency of most sizable organisations...towards setting up their own professional departments is regrettable. Many of these employees have no experience of private practice or the values it inculcates. The spread of this type of salaried employment can only lead to the ultimate decay of qualities and attributes which are of great value to the public. (19)

The quarter-century since elapsed has indeed shown an increase in public sensitivity to, and even scepticism concerning, the qualities attributable to professional practice, but it would be the private practitioners in their individual consultancy who have been at the centre of public disquiet: physicians, lawyers, accountants, and the like have aroused accusations of incompetence and malpractice in terms of their private practices. This has not been a notable feature of those in salaried practice, even if we can balance the shielding effect of an organisational umbrella (e.g. for State employees such as social workers or teachers) against the sanctity of the private consultancy. What is prominent is the erosion of public confidence in the *expertise* of those very 'consultant' professions Bennion lists as paradigms. Indeed expertise is a curiously understated requirement for his paradigmatic professions. It does not feature in his list of conditions other than by inference from the first condition. Another understatement relates to his fourth condition - a tradition of service. While this is correctly outlined as objectivity, that is, as disinterest, and as such is surely the minimal requirement of a professional as opposed to an amateur, Bennion defines it further as 'serving the client in a manner *not inconsistent with* the public good' (15) (emphasis added). This is unlikely nowadays to be an adequate characterisation of the relationship of the professional to her or his social responsibilities.

Bennion, then, is helpful because his analysis and its deficiencies point to three contemporary developments in our understanding of the concept of professionalism:

1. Salaried, or non-fee professional practice must be considered as mainstream alongside traditional private practice not just because there are many more practitioners in that mode, but also because it highlights one major ethical consideration which may *clarify* the murky waters into which many private practitioners have sunk. This is the obvious point that salaried employment removes a central conflict of interest. Bayles quotes:

> Indeed, one author has stated that 'the ethical problem of the professions, then, is...to fulfill as completely as possible the primary service for which it stands while securing the legitimate economic interests of its members'. (1989:8)

2. Professional practice now rightly takes the notion of practice itself as central and problematic. What is the activity of practice, and what is its relationship to competence and expertise? Particularly pertinent for our analysis are the logically next questions: What counts as practical knowledge in contrast to thinking, on one hand, and mere behaviour, on the other? How may this be advanced? These are crucial contemporary issues.

3. Similarly, the relationship of professional practice to social and public values is closer than Bennion's minimal 'lack of inconsistency'. However, there is a difference in kind as well as proximity. While 'service', 'discretion' 'impartiality' 'responsibility' and 'integrity' are no less important than a generation ago, it must be said that these values are individualistic. What needs to be explored is a range of truly social values, even perhaps regarded as public virtues, such as mutuality, reciprocity, fairness, equality and even justice itself. An enriched list of what Bennion would call 'essential social qualities' could be a springboard for a reformed professionalism which locates specific professional practices in a broader ethical context.

Let us summarise the outcome of the preceding analysis:

It should be possible to show that

(a) across *a diversity of workplaces* (public and private, with individuals and groups etc), and

(b) given *the nature of the experience* which shows up in myriad daily workplace judgements,

(c) we can identify a new, more *socially sensitive and morally responsible* professional person.

How do these elements relate to each other? Simply put, the qualities of a professional will blend ethical considerations such as sensitivity and responsibility, with epistemological considerations such as reflective and creative experience at work, within a broader range of specific contexts.

Chapters Four, Five and Six will deal with *the diversity of specific contexts or workplaces*, and develop a theory of cultural formation, and a reconstruction of *experience* and, what follows, a more socially-sensitive self.

Immediately before us, Chapter Two will henceforth address *the ethical import of professionalism - socially-sensitive and morally responsible practice*. Chapter Three will take up the epistemological side of the notion we will use to meld knowledge and values - 'professional proficiency'.

2.7 Acting Aright

What is ethically important about professionalism? In a nutshell, the view towards which we are moving is well expressed by Kultgen, in *Ethics and Professionalism* (1988):

> Qualities of intellect and will are intimately connected. Certain intellectual abilities are necessary to make moral decisions and carry them out...I have chosen to label the complex of skills of the true professional *proficiency*. Proficiency is what distinguishes her from the amateur and the professional who does not practice the professional virtues. (356) (emphasis added)

Kultgen regards 'proficiency' as synonymous with 'expertise' and he notes that 'expert' and 'experience' are etymologically identical (the common root is *experiri* (Latin) - to try). Further, '...proficiency involves both technical and what may be called moral skills' (356), and it is therefore morally incumbent on the

professional to acquire, maintain and develop her specialised knowledge during her career. Even the term 'career' suggests a difference between professional and non-professional work. Greenwood mentions the centrality for the professional of

> ...a certain attitude toward work....A career is essentially a *calling* to a life devoted to "good works". Professional work is never viewed solely as a means to an end; it is the end in itself...Self-seeking motives feature minimally in the choice of a profession; of maximal importance is affinity for the work. It is this devotion to the work which imparts to professional activity the service orientation and the element of disinterestedness.... To the professional person, his work becomes his life....similar in some respects to entering a religious order. The same cannot be said of a non-professional occupation. (1982:30)

Unfortunately, Greenwood has claimed too much here. Any human activity can be regarded as an end in itself, and whether the kind of work undertaken by professionals is this sort of activity is a different sort of issue to the motivations of service and disinterestedness which Greenwood is keen to establish as over-riding, and therefore 'vocational' qualities. It is probably necessary to identify a minimalist notion of disinterestedness to mark professional from non-professional work, particularly from amateur activity in any field, but to elevate that to altruism, and to stamp altruism with deontological authority is, at least on the basis of the evidence presented in his argument, unjustified.

Greenwood's claim is illustrative of the larger methodological problem: do we define professional practice (and the ethic it inevitably contains) by what it is, or by what it ought to be? Brockett (1988:2) deliberately distinguishes his book, which is normative (to do with the actual ethical dilemmas of certain adult education practitioners), from meta-ethics (the study of the ways ethical principles and argument are derived and deployed). Similarly, Bayles remarks

> One may bias an investigation of professional ethics by using normative features (those saying how matters *should* be) to define and characterise professions. One common bias is to characterise professionals as primarily devoted to providing service and only secondarily to making money. (1989:9)

He does not wish to ignore considerations of motives people may have for their work, only that what counts as professional work is not to be defined by such empirical evidence. Nonetheless, the rigid distinction between discussions of what people should do and discussions of what it means to have a moral point

of view on anything at all has long been dissolving. After all, meta-ethical questions are generated by empirical curiosities. With the issue of professional (ethical) practice, the conduct and structures of certain occupations, and their evolution towards public and private perceptions of status and expertise is a rich and informative empiricial investigation. What it *does* all mean will openly include consideration of social values not least because the very empirics (or facts) will be value-laden. What practitioners and the public *say* ethical practice is, and what other evidence may be assembled to show what activities these practices encompass, will inevitably issue in normative considerations within a meta-ethical analysis.

Can this now enlighten the situation of a professional person within society? It will be remembered that Kultgen's concept of the proficient professional require technical and moral expertise, and that we want to be able to move beyond the traditional individualistic ethic of Bennion's consultant professional.

Bayles, for example, lists several 'social values' which he assumes are basic human desires, against which '[t]he role of professions in society should ultimately be tested' (1989:6-7): freedom and self-determination; protection from injury; equality of opportunity; privacy; minimal well-being. It is possible to build on Bayles' list by adding that a professional could be said to engage these values if he or she adopts a minimally-constituted disinterestedness, coupled with an advisory and executive function. People expect that a professional will support and encourage individual agency, in an equally-available but personally-tailored facilitation of individual interests. But is this adequately identified as the appropriate connection between primarily self-interest and *social* values?

Camenisch warns us of the limitations of individualistic morality, 'in terms of duties, rights and obligations between individuals only' (1982:57). But we have moved beyond that level, in the foregoing, in the recognition of certain universal human needs, and the expectations these generate of the professions. So these values are represented individually, but are also social values if they are common or, more probably, universal. The difficulty with this is that it falls rather short of the sociality of values without which a society would be the poorer; a group-mindedness more pervasive than the mere aggregation of the universalizable individual values. The latter gives us a social collectivity, which the professions are quite justified in engaging in the manner stated in the

preceding paragraph. The former gives us a collaborative, more co-operative, social *ethos* (not a collection of *ethics)*, and the question then is: what positive social virtues are present in the moral skills of the truly proficient professional?

Kultgen fleshes out what we have called a minimal 'disinterestedness' in this more social sense of professional obligation with the expression 'objective concern', where the objectivity springs from a rational and realistic epistemology, and the concern springs from an other-directedness. These, coupled, give the total fairness, and the lack of favouritism, which marks out what Kultgen calls 'public-spiritedness' in the professional. This is itself justified by the obligation of distributive justice:

> The professional is provided an interesting and satisfying career by society or, to be precise, by institutions supported by levies on everyone in society. A professional career, therefore, is a privilege, rather than a right, and the professional is obligated in fairness to provide benefits to all society in return. She cannot indulge in favouritism [such as to favour those who can pay, or have power to command]....The obligation to repay society is supported by the virtue of public-spiritedness, a commitment to improving society. (1988:348-9)

This, then, is the fully-fleshed professional proficiency. The practice of truly social virtues requires a moral commitment to the greater good, as a stance based on distributive justice. It turns the individualistic ethic of Bennion (the consultative, reactive stance where social values are 'not inconsistent with' private interests) inside out. The privacy and discretion of the individual practitioner with his client is parasitic upon the normative primacy of social virtues, one of which is individuality, and the autonomy which is its ideal outcome. The social virtues are no mere epiphenomenon. They provide the context, or situation, for a panoply of particular professional practices, the foremost of which is a certain public-spiritedness. This gathers up and moves with altruism, which is a transitional ethic, to a more general level of commitment where the motive for such altruism is the epistemologically well-based advancement of a vision of society in which professional proficiency is equally accessible.

Kultgen notes a distinction between helping professions, which ameliorate human suffering or injury, or the threat of it (medical and legal work, for example) and enabling professions, which promote positive benefits (engineering and education, for example). We turn now to further

consideration of social virtue, or public spiritedness, for education as an example of an enabling profession.

2.8 Social Virtues

Just how congenial and central such a perspective on professional practice is for educators is shown in Kasworm's analysis of adult growth and development as an ethical arena. In her article 'Facilitating Ethical Development: A Paradox' (1988), the paradox consists in the simultaneous seeking of stability and challenge in adult life, and the role adult educators have in facilitating both of these. There is cognitive, affective and social equilibrium and disequilibrium in all experience, and,

> [f]urther, during the course of maturation, each set of new experiences affirms or redefines the adult in relation to both personal identity and the identity of others....Education can be a catalyst, a facilitator, or the source of new understandings, meanings and actions. Education can provide a bridge as adults make a transition from a past perspective or life role to a new, unknown way of living and thinking. (1988:18)

She identifies three 'journeys', or developmental pathways, of which the first and third have direct bearing on the enriched social ethic which we are arguing should shape professional practice, especially for the enabling professions.

The first journey (the 'Maturing Adult in the Social Context') has the stamp of Dewey and Overstreet upon it. Kasworm remarks that ' (t)o both Dewey and Overstreet, educators and all social institutions are responsible for emulating democratic ideals' (19), and more recently Maslow and Knowles have added to the democratic imperative, the educative value of life experiences *per se*. The role of the professional adult educator, one is to infer, is to facilitate learning experiences to these ends. She concludes the analysis:

> All education experiences are based in a social perspective, premised either in supporting or creating more mature understandings of democratic ideals or in enhancing a world-citizen view for the learner. (20)

The third journey ('Adult Development as a Contextual Transformation') does not base change on social dimensions as does the first journey, nor on the fixed age-related periods of the second journey (not discussed herein), but on the 'internal...transformations of a person's cognitive and value orientation' (25). It

assumes, based on Piaget, that developmental stages can contribute incrementally to maturity as we broaden and interconnect more intensely our experiences and our thoughts and values. She draws attention *inter alia* to Kohlberg's theory of moral development and Gilligan's revisionist critique (1982) of such male-dominated developmentalism, in the light of psychological research suggesting gender-specific ethical perspectives. She concludes: 'What should be the role of the educator in a learner's pychosocial development and in relation to the learner's value-structure?' (30).

Her answer to this question is that educators provide, paradoxically, both the stability and assurance within which experiences can be integrated in patterns that make sense; on the other hand, educators 'rock the boat'. This much is a truism. However,

> [i]n addition, adult educators, according to Dewey and others, have an important role in developing a broader consciousness of the concept of the world-citizen who holds responsibility for the future of the world and for humanity. Learning experiences are not only person-centred; they are also world-centred. (31)

It follows from this that professional practice for adult educators reflects this social ethos, this 'public-spiritedness', but that like all professionals, we start with an assumption of the integrity of the individual learner (as 'client'):

> In this paradox, great care and respect is given to the learner. A dialogical experience with mutual respect and dignity is established. In this paradox, central issues of equity, equality, justice, truth, obligations and power are considered... (32)

Helpful as Kasworm's tripartite analysis of the facilitation of developmental adult learning undoubtedly is, we can ask if it moves beyond the rhetoric of the market-place. For example, Cunningham, in discussing the social responsibility of the adult educator, states quite bluntly:

> Adult education as practised in most of North America by those persons who identify themselves as adult education professionals is, for the most part, simply technology that can be bought in the marketplace by the highest bidder. (1988:134)

She goes on to expressly raise the Illichian criticisms of monopolistic professionalisation:

> [T]hrough mystification, (e.g. "scientific needs analysis') a technology is developed that forces the public to be dependent on the professional....The professional needs a pool of clients, better pay, a steady occupation. Clearly these "needs" can be met by "disabling clients", so that they become incapable of helping themselves and are dependent on the professionals. (134)

In considering, then, what Kasworm lists as 'central issues of equity, equality, justice, truth, obligations and power', where does the professional education practitioner draw the line between the access the economically powerful and articulate have to her services, compared to the ideally universally equal access which public-spiritedness entails? In short, is the adult education professional a seller in the market-place, where her learners are socially responsible but politically acquiescent consumers? In such a situation, ethical professional practice will be problematic.

The brief, but by no means superficial, response to these questions is to make the general point that in Western liberal democracies where the predominant mode of exchange is capitalism, all goods and services, of which professional educational services are an example, will display market-place values to some extent. That is, learning will be packaged as a commodity like any other product.

But from this it would be too swift to conclude that *all* education services are to be viewed in, or can be reduced to, this dimension. A more rigorous analysis of the professional adult education practitioner will address directly the *particular* social virtues we identified earlier; or, to put it synonymously, what public-spiritedness means in a society where the model of the market is the paradigmatic form of human association.

We can try to step back from this paradigm, and investigate growth in social contexts which are more likely to generate an ethos of collaborative learning. Even more paradoxically than Kasworm intended, this investigation requires re-visiting Dewey and re-emphasising Gilligan, and linking them in a stronger interpretation of the social ethos or public-spiritedness of the truly professional adult educator.

To do this, we need to distinguish some of the ways the recipients of, or participants in, adult education may be regarded. That this is substantially a cultural matter will be discussed in later chapters, but, for the moment, we can

acknowledge that perspective and then direct our attention to a deeper analysis of professional practice in its light.

2.9 Meaningful and Marginal Choices

The problem of marginalised participation in recent and contemporary society, despite universal formal access and established conventions of freedom of speech and association is one of the most contentious debates in any democracy. On one hand, such marginalisation is thought to be merely the efflux of the proper workings of democratic processes (people can choose to opt out); on the other hand, we can ask how we know this is a choice at all. The concept of 'meaningful choice' is thus central to any discussion of democratic participation in general, and in any social institution in particular. Adult education is not provided in anything resembling the scale or compulsion of schooling for children and adolescents; the consequences for professional practice are significant, as a good deal of adult educators' time-commitment and abilities are voluntary and informal. Thus, the force of the market-place has tended to shape provision, and the social values reflected in that provision have evolved in conformity with liberal education: individualistic, private fulfilment for persons who have the resources to consume such a product.

It is commonplace today to see individuality or person-hood and the closely-related and derived notions of self-identity and agency as social constructions. Apart from theoretical studies (for example, Berger and Luckman 1966), empirical evidence has identified many specific groups as having a low social profile. These include women and girls, the unemployed and unskilled, the disabled, indigenous minorities, those whose command of the mainstream language is slight and of course various combinations of these groups (for example, see Abu Duhou, Beckett and Hampel 1993). Until recently, such groups have been 'invisible' in sociopolitical and therefore educational participation at almost every level of provision. The argument is that if individuals or groups perceive themselves as attracting little positive attention, then this 'invisibility' defines and rigidifies the initial self-perception, thus perpetuating it. Professional practice is implicated in this 'invisibility', if the rhetoric of universal equal access to service or provision is not matched by actual inclusion.

Education professionals, in particular adult education practitioners, thus face an ambiguity over the characterisation of those who are the recipients of purportedly professional practice: such recipients are learners-as-clients, in the sense that in capitalist and democratic societies they are free to choose to go elsewhere for the satisfaction of their learning needs. But we know this is frequently not a matter of choice, or not a matter of meaningful choice, given the sociopolitical 'invisibility' of many of these would-be recipients. It is basic to the notion of a liberal democracy that individual choice be the norm against which interventions by governments and indeed all others be measured (save in matters where harm to others is threatened by the exercise of those individual choices). In this sense, the ideology of liberal democracy has driven both traditional notions of professional practice (as we saw earlier in this chapter provided by Bennion) and of educational ideology, which, beyond the compulsory years of schooling, has let market forces drive definitions of access and academic merit. In adult education, those most in need have been the least likely to have the individual means or merit to enter the market-place and succeed on its own terms.

The ambiguity faced by adult education practice (both for practitioners and organisational providers) is well set out by Bowles and Gintis (1986:Ch. 5) who take the liberal democratic notion of individual agency, or choice, and show how contextually-bound it is. Western societies are conceptually divided into public and private spheres, and also into groups of 'learners' and 'choosers'. They state:

> The status of chooser has always applied in liberal discourse to educated, propertied, white, male heads of households and variously through history to others. The status of learner has always applied in liberal discourse to children, prisoners, the "insane" and the "uncivilised". It has also applied variously to women, servants, and specific races and cultures which, by virtue of their biological constitution or social station, are deemed to be more or less permanently denied the status of rational agent. (124)

Australian society in the 1990s has no difficulty with the status and self-identification of a group of people who earn a living with the occupation of 'manager'. The efforts such a group make to 'professionalise' itself with a representative institute, higher qualifications, and therefore a body of expertise and an ethic are uncontentious. In contrast, we can consider the status and self-identification of a group of people who, quite apart from earning a living, see

their very existence defined as 'indigenous Tasmanians'. Such an effort to claim and advance a certain group-mindedness in the latter case is sociopolitically highly contentious. The choice available to the managers is not available to the latter group, who are frequently reminded that their self-identification is illegitimate, in mainstream terms. Thus their status as ignorant, or, more charitably (sic), as 'learning', is perpetuated.

Bowles and Gintis are able to generalise this:

> Liberalism relegates choice to an arena of personal autonomy ostensibly devoid of developmental potential. Although favoured liberal institutions - market and ballot-box - are praised as sensitively attuned to expressing the wills of consumers and citizens, this sensitivity fails to extend to a most central area of personal control; that is, the choices determining how individuals are to develop their preferences, their capacities for social participation, and their abilities to make informed decisions...liberalism is silent on how people might get to be what they want to be, and how they might get to want what they want to want. (125)

They urge the dissolution of polarised categories of 'learning ' and 'choosing' in favour of a melding, where individual agency is seen as 'becoming-by-acting'. For adult educators, this equates to 'learning how to learn'. Bowles and Gintis ask:

> How might the centrality of individual choice and the commitment to liberty and popular sovereignty be preserved, while at the same time the myths of the autonomous individual and the fully-formed chooser are rejected? (126-7)

The answer to this question, which will be developed in Chapters Four and Five, involves the rejection of the view that a person owns his or her capacities in isolation from their origins in social formation. In this view, the supposedly ultimate, atomistic individual is adequately characterised as a fully-formed package of capacities, propensities or dispositions which marketplace values will, by his or her shrewd choices, improve upon. Social values are derived from competitive market relationships (atoms reacting against each other), and the traditional basis of professional practice as a commodity exchange (however it is dressed up as altruism) is exposed. In section 2.10, we suggest an alternative basis for social values.

The second and consequent part of the answer to the question posed above can be outlined if we bear in mind certain tangible goals for adult learners who are

'becoming-by-acting'. These can include activities like making a livelihood, developing technical skills, planning to start, modify or finish something, contributing to developing relationships and so on - across the range of adult education provision, and requiring more often than not, the fully-fleshed professional proficiency we have argued for earlier on. These activities need not have material outcomes, but they will have tangible outcomes, and will have required a truly educational approach to aspects of the world. By this is meant the sensitivity to a broadened agenda of social virtues, or public-spiritedness. It is therefore incumbent on the appropriate professional education practitioner to display a richer array of proficiency than the concept of 'facilitation' indicates. Facilitation without social values centrally in place is itself literally and ideologically facile; it collapses into the technocracy which Cunningham has criticised in North American adult education, in section 2.8.

2.10 Social Values

If adult education practice is to supplant a reliance on the ethic of the marketplace, on one hand, and the ethic of technocracy, on the other hand, it can turn to Dewey. He links learning processes, education ideals and sociopolitical arrangements.

Dewey (building on the 'Social Context' journey that Kasworm identifies, discussed above in section 2.8) reveals strong support for the centrality of *democratic* social values for the professional educator:

> Since education is a social process, and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a *particular* social ideal. The two points selected by which to measure the worth of a form of life are the extent in which the interests of a group are shared by all its members, and the fullness and freedom with which it interacts with other groups. An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience. A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible re-adjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. (1916:115)

Here we see connections between, and advocacy of, many social virtues - mutuality, flexibility, communicability for example - and their encouragement in the particular form of social life of a democracy, itself marked by the values

of equality and freedom. In connecting such virtues with such values, this statement helps formulate the dynamism, ethical inclusiveness and sense of public-spiritedness of the best education professionals. Such a model should serve the enabling professions in general, and could be usefully applied to the helping professions as well.

Dewey saw the dynamism of change, especially as revealed through learning processes, in terms of growth:

> Since life means growth, a living creature lives as truly and positively at one stage as at another, with the same intrinsic fullness and the same absolute claims. Hence education means the enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensure growth, or adequacy of life, irrespective of age. (1916:61)

It is important to recognise that the growth which the professional educator seeks in his or her learners is clearly socially focussed. This moves us beyond the concept of facilitation *per se,* that is, without regard for the social, or indeed any particular, virtues. Professional practice has, ideally, certain social virtues as the arena upon which the facilitation of learners' growth is demonstrated. However, Dewey warns against a utilitarian definition of growth: professionals should base their practice in the social virtues, but whether learners display growth in terms of those social virtues is ultimately up to them:

> For it is assumed that the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education - or that the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth....We are not concerned, therefore, with finding an end outside of the educative process to which education is subordinate. Our whole conception forbids [it]. (117)

So, for Dewey, growth was the process and the 'end-in-view'; it was the point and purpose of assimilating new experiences, and as such, does not restrict learning to the outcomes or motives which professional educators may have in their engagements with learners. Democratic social values merely set up the conditions for learners' ownership of their purposes, subject to those purposes not impeding on anyone else's prospects of doing the same.

Recent work in political theory has developed certain democratic social values in a more intimate mode. Gould (1988: 285-299) outlines what she calls the 'democratic personality', as exemplified in initiative, tolerance, mutuality (considering the benefits to others), flexibility and open-mindedness,

commitment and responsibility and particularly reciprocity (returned respect for others). She emphasises the expression of these virtues in women's lives and values, and adds other traits 'not feminine by nature', but which as a matter of historically contingency have developed out of women's experiences (293). These are supportiveness, sharing and communicativeness. Phillips (1991) shows how these virtues can, in her phrase, 'engender democracy' more profoundly.

These 'alternative' readings of ethics should revolutionise moral philosophy, because they seek to de-centre some mainstream assumptions, amongst which are its atomistic outlook, its concentration on abstract principles, its disavowal of particularity and compromise, and its disdain for the priority of relationships. Massive attention given 'rights'-based normative ethics is a case in point. Mainstream metaethics assumes contractual obligation, duties, responsibilities and the like will mark out the terrain. Reciprocity, mutuality, cooperation - the ethics of covenant, rather than contracts - are not esteemed. Yet these latter perspectives are increasingly significant for human life on this planet, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Furthermore, they are prominent in human life, especially for women, even if they have not until recently figured in academic philosophy.

Not only that, more 'social' values have been recognised outside philosophy, and imported, as it were. A closer look at Gilligan (building on the 'Contextual Transformation' journey identified by Kasworm in section 2.8) shows interconnections between philosophy and psychology. Whereas Dewey established the link between social values and political values, Gilligan has been instrumental in awakening research enquiry into the relationship between a person's psychoethical development and certain social virtues of the kind we have identified as marking the mature education professional. She argues for a relational ethic (which shows mainly in the outlook of females) as a complementary ethic to the hitherto paradigmatic atomistic ethic (which shows mainly in the outlook of males). She describes these as follows:

> These different perspectives are reflected in two different moral ideologies, since separation [atomism] is justified by an ethic of rights, while attachment [relationalism] is supported by an ethic of care. The morality of rights is predicated on equality and centred on the understanding of fairness, while the ethic of responsibility relies on the concept of equity, the recognition of differences in need. While the ethic of rights is a manifestation of equal respect, balancing the claims of other

> and self, the ethic of responsibility rests on an understanding that gives rise to compassion and care. (1982:164-165)

And again, more recently:

> The values of justice and autonomy, presupposed in current theories of human growth and incorporated into definitions of morality and self, imply a view of the individual as separate and of relationships as either hierarchical or contractual, bound by the alternatives of constraint and cooperation. In contrast, the values of care and connection, salient in women's thinking, imply a view of self and other as interdependent and of relationships as networks, created and sustained by attention and response. (Gilligan, Ward and Taylor 1988:8)

Whereas the theories of human growth alluded to by Gilligan, such as Kohlberg's, Piaget's and Maslow's, impute individualistic autonomy to the most psychologically mature adults (and indeed *define* maturity in this way), her argument tips the developmental pyramids over, in suggesting that female ways of thinking, and ethical formation, are no less mature for being relational rather than atomistic.

Dewey's theory of growth, conceptually rather than empirically driven, and subsuming the purpose of growth in the process of growth, escapes Gilligan's criticism. In fact, yoking Dewey's 'growth' with Gilligan's relational ethic produces a strong framework for much educational endeavour, since it generates and supports a robust concept of the self in a social setting. Our current interest is in the selfhood of those in professional practice, and, not surprisingly, we note the importance of social virtues in the relational ethic Gilligan identifies as an essential complement to the individualism of the atomistic ethic. We can easily see the expression of atomism in the traditional view of private professional practice espoused, for example, by Bennion, a generation ago.

2.11 Broader Sensitivities

Now it would take this analysis beyond its current purpose to further discuss the nature and extent of the particular 'social virtues' we seek ideally in the best professionals. What has been established is a rich array of examples of these virtues and some emerging scholarship which shows sensitivity to the broader notion of social values, or public-spiritedness is central to education ideals. This

is especially pertinent to adult education, because perhaps the majority of adult educators are women, if we restrict the field to the non-vocational sector. But even when we include vocational education and training, we should expect to find women very strongly represented as practitioners through, for example, nursing. Since perhaps half the human race (mostly women) may naturally and certainly through experience own and exemplify these social virtues, it looks increasingly likely that the social interests, perspectives and obligations of the professionally proficient, in Kultgen's definition of that term, will be enriched by social values embedded in communitarian forms of association. It has been argued that these forms could readily include Dewey's democratic values, enriched by Gould's democratic 'personality' and Gilligan's relational ethic.

We shall see in Chapter Three what the implications of this notion of proficiency may be for epistemology *per se*. In Chapter Six, we can apply these in a more communitarian or relational notion of selfhood, and can conclude that Chapter with an outline of a new professional practitioner. In between are other considerations bearing upon the contextuality (Chapter Four) and experience (Chapter Five) of this new more socially sensitive and morally responsible person.

CHAPTER THREE: RECONSTRUCTING PROFESSIONAL EPISTEMOLOGY

3.1 Intelligent Proficiency

In Chapter Two (in section 2.6), we identified three elements of a framework for a new concept of professional practice. These were embedded in this claim:

> It should be possible to show that
>
> (a) across *a diversity of workplaces* (public and private, with individuals and groups etc), and
>
> (b) given *the nature of the experience* which shows up in myriad daily workplace judgements,
>
> (c) we can identify a new, more *socially sensitive and morally responsible* professional person.
>
> How do these elements relate to each other? Simply put, the qualities of a professional will blend ethical considerations such as sensitivity and responsibility, with epistemological considerations such as reflective and creative experience at work, within a broader range of specific contexts.

Chapter Two itself has developed the ethical element, and in this, Chapter Three, development of the epistemological element will be undertaken. In doing so, a bedrock assumption is that the very nature of what is required for and illustrative of professional practice is a species of knowledge. But to assume this is not to exclude epistemology from ethics: it will be recalled that the quotation from Kultgen early in Chapter Two links knowledge with values so that both may be purposefully informed and identified conjointly as 'proficiency'. Knowledge and values are separated only so that we may see the ingredients of professional proficiency more clearly.

Chapter Four locates proficiency as a whole in 'contextual formation' - a theorisation of proficiency as competence is advanced there.

Chapter Three is, then, about the epistemological ingredient in professional proficiency. What do professionals know and understand, and how do they come to, and advance, such knowledge and understanding?

A brief outline of our general direction is called for, and two assumptions identified, before we plunge into these questions.

Already, in Chapter One, we have noted the dynamism and centrality of the concept of 'practical knowledge'. One influential philosophical route into its delineation has been through Ryle's analysis of the relationships between thinking and doing, in *The Concept of Mind* (1949). Here, he argues against the Cartesian model of human psychology as the 'ghost' in the physical 'machine' of the body, driving and directing our activity in the sense that we think and intentionally apply our thoughts prior to doing anything. Cartesianism gives an epistemological priority to what Ryle calls 'knowing that x', where x is a proposition encapsulating a knowledge claim. The other, experiential, knowledge claim, 'knowing how [to] x' seems, according to the Cartesian tradition, a mere consequence of powerful ratiocination, rather than a knowledge claim of equal status to propositional knowledge. Ryle's book thus seeks to expose the vacuity of the ghost in the machine by arguing for the irreducibility of know-how claims to know-that claims. In doing so, he establishes the centrality of activity and therefore experience to our processes of knowledge creation. For example, the exercise of intelligence does not consist in mastering and then recalling Aristotelian rules of logic, before applying them. Rather,

> [the intelligent reasoner]...observes the rules of logic, as well as those of style, forensic strategy, professional etiquette and the rest...without thinking about them....He applies in his practice what Aristotle abstracted in his theory of such practices....The rules that he observes have become his way of thinking, when he is taking care. In a word, he conducts his operation efficiently, and to operate efficiently is not to perform two operations. It is to perform one operation in a certain manner, or with a certain style or procedure, and the description of this *modus operandi* has to be in terms of such semi-dispositional, semi-episodic epithets as 'alert', 'careful', 'critical', 'ingenious', 'logical' etc. (48)

Ryle defines the key term 'disposition' as a property which if possessed is a liability to change to another state 'when a particular condition is realised' (43). Thus, in his famous example, glass has the dispositon of brittleness, such that

when it is hit it will shatter. Now, for humans, the key dispositional properties are not what Ryle classes the 'single-track' variety such as the brittleness of glass. He does acknowledge humans' possession of this sort of disposition: we call them habits, in that they admit of a single, or perhaps we would say nowadays, a one-dimensional, exercise. He, and all interest since this analysis was put forward, centres on the wider multi-dimensional exercise of dispositional properties. Thus to argue intelligently is to possess the disposition of flexible rule-following (in ways that tap logic, style, strategy, etiquette and so on), which in certain circumstances is called forth. When that occurs we recognise a capacity to do x.

To broaden the point further, Ryle goes on:

> What is true of arguing intelligently is, with appropriate modifications, true of other intelligent operations. The boxer, the surgeon, the poet and the salesman apply their special criteria in the performance of their special tasks, for *they are trying to get things right*, and they are appraised as clever, skilful, inspired or shrewd, not for the ways they consider, if they consider at all, prescriptions for conducting their special performances, but for the ways in which they conduct those performances themselves. (48) (emphasis added)

Now the rightness which drives such purposefulness has an ethical dimension, in the case of the professional, which we have separated for closer analysis in the preceding chapter, and to which we will return. But an epistemological 'rightness' is a curious phenomenon, especially as a dispositional account requires a public judgement of a practitioner's capacity to do x. What presents as a private psychological predicate ends, under a Rylean analysis, as a public sociological one.

3.2 Holistic Proficiency: Two Assumptions

Two assumptions of types of holistic proficiency are necessary at this point to dissolve the private-public dualism and in doing so to preserve the richness of professionals' activity. These are as follows.

3.2.1 Institutional Situation

Consider the criticism that the very complexity of professional practice may not be captured by Ryle's concept of 'know-how'. His examples - bicycle-riding, speaking French, playing chess - are *singularly* practical: that is, they easily make a performative unit. And they are indisputably public. Professional actions are more fissiparous and private in nature. Their diversity eludes unity. Can we dissolve this public-private dichotomy?

Edel, discussing Ryle's two species of knowledge, calls 'knowing how' a 'very gross phenomenon, perhaps insufficiently understood, which will not support precise categorical distinctions' (1973:242). This is not to argue against know-how, only to insist that it is not a logically sufficient condition for knowledge. We do recognise that propositional knowledge ('knowing that...') is essential, especially in workplace activities, but it is the balance and dynamism between the two which is crucial. In emphasising experiential knowledge, Ryle, Edel, and this thesis all seek the redress of an imbalance. Edel's example of an apprenticeship supports the two species of knowledge, not a priority to know-how. Now, in the late 1990s, we would be more adventurous with our examples: mentoring, performance plans, quality circles and the like are strategies to pin down workplace know-how. We can, then agree with his conclusion that an accommodation of both Rylean propositional and experiential knowledge will be possible across 'institutional embodiments' or 'contexts'.

As the contexts vary, so does the proficiency of those within any one particular workplace. There is a continuum from novice to expert. At all stages on such a continuum, both propositional and experiential knowledge will be present, but the balance between these will change as experience becomes more reliable, and propositional knowledge becomes more applicable to practice. Propositional knowledge may be no less sophisticated for this, however. Ideally, contexts of practice will generate powerful research questions, requiring intense attention to propositional knowledge. These questions should, in turn, assist in organising the 'gross phenomenon' of experience, with rigor *and* relevance.

It is the task of Chapter Four, on cultural formation, to demonstrate and develop this point. Prominent in that chapter are intentionality and competence, two 'gross phenomena', resistant to categorisation. Yet if we go in

to investigate them *on a phenomenological basis*, we can make substantial and rigorous progress. Intentionality and competence present as private capacities: after all, individuals are 'intent' on developing their competence! But immediately these capacities are publicly contexted: sociocultural criteria separate intentional actions from mere behaviour (see section 4.6), and competence is properly a sociocultural inference (see section 4.14). Sociocultural context ultimately drives what we mean by proficient practice across the whole spectrum of human endeavour. What 'slice' of this spectrum is significant is identified occupationally, not by location on a public-private divide. Adult educators, like lawyers, accountants and so on, have their patch of turf, with all the ethical and epistemological intertwining that defines those specific contexts and makes their work more or less 'proficient'.

This conclusion supports our first assumption: *that adult education and indeed many other professional fields are sufficiently institutionally situated (that is, contextually individuated) to admit of a continuum from novice to expert.*

3.2.2 Individual Agency

The second assumption is simply that *humans possess a constitutive capacity for planning, and taking responsibility for, their activities*. Humans are individual agents, with ideals, and capacities to strive towards their realisation. Behaviour is essential evidence of these characteristics, but does not define them. On the contrary, the first assumption locates these characteristics in specific cultural contexts. It is these which give meaning to behaviour - both for the practitioner and for others encountering the practice. Attention is drawn to Chapter Four, especially in sections 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11, where certain cultural identities are examined, all of them predicated on this second assumption, that to some extent, humans create their own world(s).

The more immediate task, to be undertaken in the second half of Chapter Three, is to draw out how professionals' planning and striving has an epistemological basis - how, that is, a professional advances his or her knowledge.

3.3 Understanding and Practical Knowledge

Focussing, then, on human agency as displayed in diverse and complex professional practice, we return to Ryle's emphasis on understanding what to do and how to do it and note that he regards it as part of performative competence:

> Understanding is a part of knowing *how*. The knowledge that is required for understanding intelligent performances of a specific kind is some degree of competence in performances of that kind. (54)

Ryle does not just mean that the spectator must have a point of epistemological contact with the performer, to make sense of the performance. He also means that the rule-following, the striving to get things right, will connect diverse evidence with frequent attempts, both immediate and in the past:

> Roughly, execution and understanding are merely different exercises of knowledge of the tricks of the same trade. You exercise your knowledge of how to tie a clove-hitch not only in acts of tying clove-hitches and in correcting your mistakes, but also in imagining tying them correctly, in instructing pupils, in criticising the incorrect or clumsy movements and applauding the correct movements that they make, in inferring from a faulty result to the error which produced it, in predicting the outcomes of observed lapses and so on indefinitely. (55)

It seems, then, that wide reflection, interaction and inference are crucial professional characteristics (though not exclusively of professionals). These have particular purchase in the activities of those who work in education, or the enabling professions in general, where the know-how is substantially constituted by positive involvement with learners, students and clients. But in all claims to professional practice, communicability and sensitivity to individual circumstances are minimal dispositional requirements. Such know-how fleshes out the overall intention to 'get it right' - right in terms of appropriateness to the particular case, and also rightness in terms of the pursuit of social virtues we discussed earlier.

The use of the term 'right' for an epistemological claim as well as for an ethical claim is not semantic legerdemain. For Aristotle, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, knowledge in general, and the understanding to which it gives rise, are both indicative of intellectual virtues, the complementary aspect of moral virtues:

> ...for we say that some of the virtues are intellectual and others moral, philosophic wisdom and understanding and practical wisdom being intellectual, liberality and temperance moral. For in speaking about a man's character we do not say that he is wise or has understanding, but that he is good-tempered or temperate; yet we praise the wise man also with respect to his state of mind; and of states of mind we call those which merit praise virtues. (1941:952)

Virtues of both kinds are acquired, argues Aristotle, by first exercising them: 'we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit'. We learn by doing: 'men become builders by building and lyre-players by playing the lyre; so, too, we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts' (*loc. cit.*). He expects the virtues to emerge from experience, in practice, as it were. The intellectual virtues, specifically, are described by one commentator as 'active potentialities' (McKenzie, 1991:42-3), which 'reside' in me as states of mind to be actualised when needed:

> A virtue...is a power that can be used but need not be used continuously: it is something habitual. As Aristotle would say, a virtue is a habit of the soul. (*loc. cit.*)

So, following Aristotle, practical knowledge, or know-how, as distinguished by Ryle from propositional knowledge, looks not only dispositional (that is, called forth by the appropriate circumstances), but also value-laden. It is manifest in judicious decision-making. Aristotle links know-how, judgement and understanding as follows:

> For understanding is neither about things that are always and are unchangeable, nor about any and every one of the things that come into being, but about things which may become the subjects of questioning and deliberation. Hence it is about the same objects as practical wisdom, but understanding and practical wisdom are not the same. For practical wisdom issues commands, since its end is what ought to be done or not to be done, but understanding only judges. (1032)

So coming to grasp a truth is for Aristotle addressing the same intellectual object as may be regarded from the perspective of practical wisdom as issuing in activity - what ought to be done. Such as understanding may well be unvoiced; it is the expression of the judgement of understanding which gives practicality to the wisdom ascribed to someone who has acted rightly, or as Aristotle says, 'soundly' or 'well'.

The notion of 'know-how' is further refined and developed in an Aristotelian fashion by Oakeshott, in a well-known passage in his essay 'Rationalism in Politics' (1962), where he distinguishes between technical knowledge and practical knowledge. Drawing (without acknowledgement) on Aristotle's concept of *techne* (technical knowedge), he defines the former as rule-governed, precisely-formulated activities such as found stipulated in highway codes and recipe books. The latter, seeming to draw on Aristotle's concept of *phronesis* (prudential knowledge), he describes as entirely non-specifiable in terms of rules. Practical activities are mastered by doing them, even if there is a technical component to that doing (such as driving rules or recipes). Oakeshott never gives a definition more informative than this, except to say that practical knowledge is traditional or customary knowledge, and that, moreover, it is not to be regarded as esoteric. He states that '...the mastery of any skill, the pursuit of any concrete activity is impossible without it' (1962: 8).

In a common-or-garden sense, we immediately glimpse what Oakeshott's practical knowledge is: the daily multiplicity of unreflective judgements we make about and from within our manifold experiences. These are, surely, typically unspecifiable in regulative terms. They are frequently what Polanyi (1958:Ch 5) has identified as 'tacit' (assumed, unvoiced) knowledge, which has what he calls a 'latent' character, '...of which we are aware subsidiarily in our sense of intellectual power based on this knowledge' (103). In a section called 'The Educated Mind', Polanyi describes how we cope with change by learning to adopt an anticipative stance to experience. This enables us to assimilate and adapt the novel to the existent conceptualisations we have of experience. Furthermore, such a stance 'appears likewise akin to the power of practical skills, ever keyed up to meet new situations' (loc. cit.).

The 'subsidiary' awareness he refers to marks the deflected self-consciousness which occurs when we are attending closely to matters in hand, whether these be perceptual, physical or some combinations of these. If we are concentrating on them, our energies go into those experiences, rather than into the assimiliative experience itself. The assimiliation goes on, but it is after the event that we bring our awareness to bear on the assimilation process itself, since the *object* of that process quite naturally attracted our attention. As Polanyi says,

> Thus we do this [by] modifying, subsidiarily, our interpretation of sensory clues by striving for clear and coherent perceptions, or *enlarging our skill*

without focally knowing how by practising them in ever new situations. (112) (emphasis added)

This is the central curiosity of any concept of practical knowledge. If know-how is as ubiquitous as Oakeshott indicates, and if it presents as 'latent' or dispositional', then it should be obvious and unproblematic. Yet Oakeshott claims it is not itself amenable to regulative practice; Polanyi claims it is necessarily divorced from our immediate consciousness; and Aristotle's 'practical wisdom' requires an assumption of an appropriate understanding before a judgement issues in action. It seems practical knowledge is essentially cryptic but somehow definitive of human experience. In attempts to pin it down, it becomes, paradoxically, ineffable. Is this because analysis, rather than synthesis, destroys it? Is it, in other words, only apparent if regarded holistically - as 'fully-fledged' (co-extensive and co-terminous) as experience itself? And perhaps awareness of such capability is only explicable *ex post facto*?

Even when we address a specific manual skill, we do not get much beyond these mystifying features. In *Making and Thinking: A Study of Intelligent Activities*, Harrison (1978) relates a conversation he had with a Cotswold dry stone waller, in which he asked the builder to teach him how the job is done. There are, evidently, very few regulative principles - long, heavy stones tie short lighter stones in to provide massing and stability and so on. There are however no dressed stones, and therefore no straight edges, and of course, no mortar. Yet these walls stand for centuries: the Western Plains of Victoria, Australia, have plenty of these walls in good repair, still rabbit-proof, and already a century or so old. The builder states only two 'rules', continues Harrison: '...there are two things to remember, never, after picking the stone up, put it down except onto the wall, and that the stone decides the way for it to go.' (76)

Now this hardly demystifies know-how; in fact it adds to the elusiveness of the concept. Nevertheless, it does suggest an alternative path of investigation. Harrison mentions in passing that there are some 'traditional terms of art' associated with dry stone walling. It may be that attempts to lay bare know-how have assumed a universalizable explanation is available, perhaps in the way that we do conclude that propositional knowledge ('knowing that') is identifiable in terms of propositional logic (the compulsion of the syllogism). What, then, is a 'term of art'?

Etymologically, 'art' is any construction, or making, in which skill is exercised and evident. So an artefact, and an artisan are associated with skillfulness, and a term of art functions to carry or create a larger or more profound meaning. So 'works of art' are typically vehicles for aesthetic meanings. More generally, 'art' works or 'art' terminologies (such as 'id, ego, super-ego') exist as labels or signposts for significant aspects of human activities. Indeed the very conceptualisation of phenomena at all employs terms of art under which to place perceived similarities.

In the present context, we expect the concept 'practical knowledge' to indicate a similarity amongst human activities which involve professionals' judgements of what is the right course to pursue. We have already noted that this know-how is dispositional, is informed by certain social virtues, and quite possibly personal virtues (if Aristotle's moral virtues are broadly applied), and is not itself amenable to regulatory principles. It grows out of traditional customs, according to Oakeshott, which cannot be taught, only caught, as it were. What practices can we identify which flesh out the term of art: 'practical knowledge'?

3.4 Making Practical Knowledge

Practices involve doing, by definition; but they also involve thinking. Despite Oakeshott's disavowal of relection in moments of practicality, there is a central place for the conscious attention to the matter in hand which guides the hand, the eye and the heart of the practitioner. 'Art' is then both a denotation and a connotation. It denotes the construction of a response to a new situation, and it carries in the construction the connotations of making or manufacture.

We may recognise in a practitioner certain relevant professional skills (the *techne)*, but it is the appropriateness of the skillfulness at any one time, and for any one place which really draws forth the attribution of 'professional' to that practice. The practical knowledge constructs not just a successful, nor merely a novel, response, but a combination of these for a specific situation. Prudential knowledge (*phronesis*) is by definition, efficacious knowledge, and it is the complexity of the situation which requires individual flexibility, technical sophistication and social sensitivity in the practitioner.

Nozick, in an essay, 'Creating' (1989), outlines what seems to be an attentiveness to the world similar to Polanyi's 'participative stance':

> Creative people...are on the alert - but for something different: new projects, ideas that will aid them in their current projects, new combinations, elements, techniques or material they can utilise in their ongoing work. They scan the environment...often unconsciously, check the relevance of everything they encounter to a current task or a new project....By and large, this scanning and assessment takes place nonconsciously...(40-41)

There are many similarities between creativity and expertise, brought out fully when the richness of the terms 'art' and 'term of art' are jointly considered. Creativity and expertise both prize the ingenious rather than the ingenuous response. 'Ingenious' is ascribed to an inspired solution such as shown in a practical as much as in a theoretical setting: chess games, drama scripts, street theatre, are as illustrative of this as a painting, a logical proof or an academic argument. Similarly, what may distinguish the expert practitioner from the average practitioner may by the depth and range of the efficacious responses made to situations that are presented for appropriate action. Beyond the technical skill is evidence of a real talent for the 'rightness' of the response!

Cervero, most recently in an article 'Professional Practice, Learning and Continuing Education: An integrated perspective' (1992) summarises the empirical research literature on the nature of professionals' practical knowledge, or as he puts it, professional expertise. It is : '...deliberate action, which is the ability to analyse situations in the context of action' (97). The goal of such action is, following Aristotle, a form of wisdom:

> If practice is normative [i.e. not descriptive] then wisdom must be seen as socially constructed, taking its meaning only within the particular ethical framework of those who have the power to define wisdom for a profession. (92)

And the research across many professions indicates:

> There are two kinds of knowledge that are called variously: declarative and procedural, abstract and practical, and knowledge that and know-how. In practice, professionals use procedural or practical knowledge. This results from its defining characteristics: it is situated in time and context, and oriented toward action. Finally, because of these characteristics, it is acquired through practice or reflection on practice. (98)

Reflection is not, then, marginalised, as Oakeshott would have it. We turn now to the influential role of reflection in the theorisation of practice.

3.4.1 Reflection

Recent literature on practice has emphasised reflection, not in the in the sense of retrospective ratiocination (self-justification after the event), but in the deliberate consideration of purposes whilst engaged in the activity itself. Schön has written influentially on such matters (1983, 1987), drawing the distinction between between two types of what he calls 'professional artistry' (sic): knowing-in-action and reflection-in-action. Knowing-in-action is what Ryle and Polanyi mean respectively by 'know-how' and tacit knowledge (Schön 1987:Ch. 2); reflection-in-action is the central concept in Schön's analysis, and uses know-how to contribute to a continual personal construction, or perhaps 'reading', of the practice in which one is engaged. The definition of reflection-in action is never concisely rendered by Schön, but one way to unpick the term is through what he distinguishes as a 'constructivist' and extemporaneous epistemology from that which he calls the 'technical rational' model of professional practice. That traditional view he characterises as largely an inherited, objectivist (facts-based) set of *rules* for practice which are applied in individual practices.

By contrast, Schön's reflective practitioner lives in a phenomenologically-framed world, with his thinking and acting intertwined:

> In the constructionist view, our perceptions, appreciations, and beliefs are rooted in worlds of our own making that we come to *accept* as reality. Communities of practitioners are continually engaged in what Nelson Goodman [1978] calls "world-making". Through countless acts of attention and inattention, naming, sense-making, boundary-setting, and control, they make and maintain the worlds matched to their professional knowledge and know-how....When practitioners respond to the indeterminate zones of practice by holding a reflective conversation with the materials of their situations, they remake a part of their practice world and thereby reveal the usually tacit processes or world-making that underlie all of their practice. (1987:36)

Reflection-in-action can also be followed by reflection-on-action, Schön argues, which follows the slice of time he calls an 'action-present' - another term of art, intended to individuate time on the basis of efficacy of the action to the situation before the practitioner. So reflection-on-action occurs with hindsight; reflection-in-action is the hot and immediate slice of practice within which the professional can make a difference then and there.

Reflection-in-action thus includes a rich array of psychological predicates, as the quotation above includes. One commentator (Court 1988) draws attention to Dewey's remarks on 'deliberation' as an inclusive term for such diversity of reflection, because both deliberation and reflection involve 'thoughtful thinking' and some element of 'time out' to do this thinking (see Dewey 1950:198). This point takes issue with Schön's identification of immediacy with interactivity. It is indeed hard to conceptualise both the thinking and the doing separately, so that they then coalesce in an extemporaneous judgement that thus and so is the 'right' action. After all, no amount of such elaborately outlined reflection need improve anyone's circumstances, least of all the practitioner's own circumstances, if there is no context of judgement within which creative response are made. Another commentator (Gilliss 1988) makes this point:

> ...there is a danger in the reflection-in-action approach of creating wholly idiosyncratic practitioners whose primary way of operating is to invent unique solutions to problems that (to them at least) are unique. Uniqueness, carried to extremes, is a barrier to the development and sharing of knowledge. (50)

Schön has however dealt with this objection to a large extent. He leads into the 'artistry' of such extemporaneous judgements by emphasising, following Oakeshott, that *professional* practice is part of a communitarian tradition of expertise. He mentions the 'extraordinary knowledge' of the professional, and how this is bound up with a 'bargain with society': a mandate to practice autonomously, but in the common good. He mentions (1987:32) John Dewey's term, 'the traditions of a calling' - media, languages, tools, institutional settings, units of practice (cases, visits, lessons) and the like. This prepares the practitioner for the boundary-setting and other elements of world-view construction which make individuated reflection-in-action specifiable as artistry.

Let us combine the two main points discussed above. First, the breadth of the central concept. Schön's 'reflection-in-action' is intended to capture the seemingly *sui generis* nature of professional practice. In thinking and doing what is right, the professional makes (that is, creates as if an artist) a response which turns out to be providential. Second, the context of that 'making'. This is shaped by the particular professional expertise, ethics and presumably personal reading of social values which the individual practitioner possesses. He or she

inevitably participates in a traditional professional culture, even if it is characterised as an iconoclasmic or infinitely malleable tradition.

Smyth (1993) draws our attention to this latter point. He wants to support reflective approaches to teaching, but warns that the concept is in danger of becoming 'colonised' . This may occur when it becomes part of general education rhetoric (like 'quality', 'excellence' and 'relevance'), or when it carries a narrower purpose connecting good teaching to national policy outcomes, or community values, or individual teachers' guilt-avoidance. He advocates reflection which is contextually-sensitive - not wedded to prevailing circumstances, but able to see through and beyond them - and ethically informed. Smyth's analysis and argument can be summed up as advocacy of clarity of purposes in educational practice, without specifying the nature of those purposes except they be framed by appropriately holistic reflection, most notably:

> challenging the dominant myths, assumptions and hidden message systems, implicit in the way teaching and education are currently organised; [and]...creating improvements in educational practice and the social relationships which underlie those practices.... (1993:16)

This seems quite acceptable: it is after all an engagement with Dewey's 'traditions of a calling', and even fits Oakeshott's communitarian sensitivity, provided 'reflection-in-action' includes a critical perspective on those traditions and sensitivities. We have, however, argued all along that professional practice is by its nature partly traditional and partly extemporaneous. Getting the balance is what Aristotle meant by his definition of virtue: the middle way between extremes, acquired by practice (as habit). This is learned, as it were, by doing and thinking in *reflective* association, we may now say.

Taking this emphasis on both breadth and contextuality, we observe that it strengthens Schön's analysis against the formidable objection that he subsumes under one term of art (the reflective practitioner as artist), a multiplicity of practices marked more by contrast than similarity. This objection emerges in Selman's article 'Schön's Gate Is Square: But Is It Art?' (1988). That is, reflection may well be broad, and contextual, but is it rational?

We consider now the extent to which reflection endorses rational action.

3.4.2 Rationality

Selman disagrees that *technical* rationality should be the conceptual whipping boy - the target of Schönian displeasure. There are varieties of rationality, and he argues that Schön's deployment of a range of terms of art based on reflection as artistry only replaces one reductive epistemology for another. A gloss of Selman's argument goes like this: No reductivism is justified if it obliterates distinctive features of professional practice, especially if the reduction results in a banal characteristation of the phenomena with which it began. As he says:

> ...bees build hives, photocopiers create copies, and we all make mistakes. The fact that some product (or performance) is designed, planned or constructed is a very general sort of claim which does not narrow the field in a very informative way....It fails to point to anything distinctive about the professions.... (181)

Selman goes on to quote Kant and Wittgenstein to the effect that the context of, say, aesthetic judgements (such as presumably Schön's design studies and, indeed, artistry in general consists in) is more of a determinant of the nature of those judgements than the concepts they employ. Selman agrees that practice-specific concepts, rules, theories and generic principles like 'carefully', 'creatively' and so on can all be applied to and find expression in 'a way of doing things which can make the difference between good practice and ordinary practice' (182). He disputes, however, that professionals are as free to extemporise expertise as 'reflective artistry' seems to require:

> If one reads 'artistry' as referring to the special manner which is associated with skillful practice, the argument for the special significance of the design studio is unfounded. Many educational practices are typically employed to bring about skillful performance, including performance at typing, operating a table saw, playing chess, public speaking, analysing data, and evaluating epistemological theories. (183)

What will count as 'skillful' will be practice-specific, concludes Selman, not just through the application of aesthetic criteria. He then reconstructs Schön's example of building the gate, showing that in the 'reflective actions' that guided Schön's eye, hand, and materials, he was also utilising a considerable

traditional legacy of 'technical rationality' - but misdescribing it as extemporaneous judgement.

But Schön is not oblivious to the epistemological legacy of a particular tradition of practice, as we noted previously. He may, nevertheless, have overstated his analysis as a distinct 'epistemology of practice'. He focusses on the resort to traditional knowledge in a unique situation - one, paradigmatically, which a professional has not come across before, but which is within the purview of that practice. Aesthetic criteria are frequently applied to non-art activities. The very claims of 'appropriateness', 'prudence' or 'providence' as qualitative evaluations of outcomes of professional judgements are as much amenable to aesthetic connotation as ethical connotation; and these pronouncements, in either mode of value-ladenness, do amount to an assessment of 'fittingness' - to having got it 'right'.

Furthermore, Schön has, as we saw, an expansive notion of reflection, perhaps analagous to Dewey's 'deliberation', where the focus is on the immediacy of the action which such reflection, literally, reflects. Coupled with his sensitivity to the cultural milieux of practitioners in general, and therefore to the epistemological traditions these embody, it seems he is able to maintain his reliance on 'artistry', if it is understood as a *variety* of rationality, not as divorced from rationality. Let us then conclude this section by developing jointly these two points in the light of Selman's criticisms.

Rationality is already present in reflection-in-action; practitioners know how to go on - their 'know-how' partly constitutes this, so presumably this must be attributable to their rationality. But it also draws upon their creativity.

3.4.3 Creativity

Practitioners, like artists, are in charge of, or at least can lay claim to, productive processes which will result in outcomes. An influential argument in aesthetics (Tomas 1968) lends itself to extrapolation outside art activity at this point. Tomas develops the rationality of the artist as 'conscious critical control': that is, the moment of inspiration is immediately elaborated as something coherent by the critical judgement of the artist. The creative process binds inspiration and elaboration as one experience, a conscious and controllable one with what the artist or practitioner in general will judge as worthwhile outcomes reflecting

(sic) the process undertaken. But at any stage through these processes judgements about worthwhileness so far will have been made. We take up this key point in considerable detail in section 4.6.

Both Selman and indeed Schön himself recognise the contribution a tradition of expert practice will have to that reflection. It follows that rules, conventions, techniques and the like will have been understood at some level for the tradition to have been retrieved at the crucial moments of action so that, in Rylean terms, this (propositional) knowledge becomes experiential knowledge, and will be known by the practitioner as such. That is, the relevance of the knowledge to the case in hand will be itself an exercise in rationality. Extemporisation is not improvisation, nor, worse, mere happenstance. It arises in the present, but is driven by the past towards an outcome perhaps only vaguely specifiable. The professional practitioner wants to make (sic) a difference, and wants to make the *right* difference.

In these respects, then, it should not be overlooked that Schön emphasises 'a *repertoire* of examples, images, understandings and actions' (1987:66) available to the practitioner in his or her personal history. This is a dispositional matter:

> Whan a practitioner makes sense of a situation he perceives to be unique, he *sees* it as something already present in his repertoire. To see *this* site as *that* one is not to subsume the first under a familiar category or rule. It is, rather, to see an unfamiliar situation as both similar to and different from the familiar one, without at first being able to say similar or different with respect to what. The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or...an exemplar for the unfamiliar one. (1987:67)

Connecting what seems initially or hitherto discrete is an exercise of creative rationality which we expect of artists. It is also a feature of creativity as such, as Koestler (1975, 1978) has argued: what he calls the 'aha' experience. This was mentioned earlier in connection with the spontaneity of aesthetic awareness available, for example, in the contemporary usage of digital technology (section 2.4). We return to this point in section 4.8, in the development of an understanding of cultural formation.

Koestler is helpful because we can argue, by analogy, that there is a sense of being driven or compelled by the inner logic of an artwork not unlike a practitioner's immersion in professional activity. Both artists and professionals are to a large extent choosing to be bound up in, and bound by, the constraints

of a context. Now the expertise of the artist and of the professional will flower not despite these constraints, but because of them. Powerful responses are compelled and even propelled by the unique exigencies which engage the artist and the professional alike. This is the point of the 'conversation' metaphor Schön uses (31) which in the case of painters is described as their 'reflexivity' with the canvas (Curtis 1989). For Schön's reflective practitioners, it is rational to recognise the dynamics of the relationship they have with their learners or clients; it will also be rational to recognise the constraints such a relationship must have (both epistemological and ethical); and finally, what a creative response might be may not be specifiable (by definition) early in the practical process. Again, this is a rational recognition of a logical feature required by the process itself.

3.5 Foreseeing Practical Knowledge

At 3.2, we stated two assumptions of 'holistic proficiency', both of which are intended to dissolve any dualism between the public and the private worlds thought to be attributable to Ryle's theorisation of practical knowledge, or 'know-how'. Such a dissolution would also, and importantly, preserve the ethical and epistemological richness of professional practice, these two dimensions being interwined in actual practice.

The rest of this chapter will be taken up with the consideration of the second assumption (at 3.2.2), namely:

> ...that humans possess a constitutive capacity for planning, and taking responsibility for, their activities in the most fulsome sense imaginable. Humans are agents, with ideals, and capacities to strive towards their realisation.

This is a deliberately ambiguous but informative claim, in that the 'realisation' relates as much to humans as to their ideals. Adult education in liberal democracies in particular is strongly influenced by the notion of self-fulfilment. Rhetoric combines the two in the slogan that you can become what you want to become, and a large part of the social justice agenda in adult education is therefore about broadening access to such fulfilment. So attention must be directed to the way practitioners in, say, adult education advance their knowledge.

Accordingly, we turn now from the establishment of practical knowledge, albeit creatively through reflection and rationality, to the identification of epistemological priorities. What is it to advance our practical knowledge? What makes an 'advance' anyway? We can run these two questions together, and enquire, overall, what are the appropriate (or 'right') purposes of changes in practical knowledge for adult educators?

There is an immediate and facile response available to this question. Let us get it over with. On the market model of adult education, the right purposes of such changes will consist in whatever serves the needs of the learner-as-consumer; on the closely-related facilitation model of adult education, the right purposes of such changes will consist in whatever expedites an outcome the learner(s) desire.

We have noted earlier that, while these are influential models of adult education provision (especially in North America), they are not an adequate basis for professional practice in adult education.

On the contrary, the model of professional practice being developed in this thesis takes as serious and central the value-ladenness of all practice, all claims to 'professionalism', and all provision of adult education. This trichotomous ethical array is interwoven with epistemological priorities so that, all-in-all, we can claim that the conjunction of these three features of work life generates powerful perspectives on what is worth knowing.

Thus, a more profound response to our question moves in time from the past and the present - appropriating through rational and reflective processes creative 'know-how' - to the future. Humans in all fields of endeavour plan, strive and attempt to realise themselves in their ideals. The epistemological slant on this asks, in the particular case of adult education practice, what is worth knowing about the future.

The general point is that we cannot entertain an unlimited or randomised view about worthwhile knowledge, in any time frame. We already know this by reference to the ways we conceptualise the past and the present. The very practice of the historian is based on a justifiable selectivity about the past. In section 4.10, we develop some Australasian examples of these culturally-specific stories (some say 'myths') which help explain how the past has shaped the present. In like fashion, we have in the first half of the current chapter,

argued for the intelligent and creative construction of practical knowledge as occurrent (i.e. present) justification of what we do as professionals.

Now we turn to the epistemological future, recognising that in dealing with this issue, we are nonetheless bound by the imminence of the present. Our privilege, or perhaps our burden, as humans and certainly as practitioners, is inescapably the here and now. We have feet of clay but our vision lies beyond: we investigate now not so much a foresight saga, as foresight sagacity.

3.6 Anticipation

Foresight is not forecasting or predicting (Slaughter 1994). It is the rather more involved notion that, whether or not something is expected to happen, is it what we *want* to happen? This is an epistemological matter because it assumes knowledgeable extrapolations from broad trends currently identifiable, and interwoven with ethical considerations about desirability. Humans are in some senses constructing the future now, but is it the future we want? All educators need to address this (since learning changes lives and lives are temporally extended), but adult educators' claims to an appropriate professionalism have a particular purchase on this question. What adult learning is *for* implies views of worthwhile purposes. These cannot but consider the tangible evidence for certain sorts of life, implicit in the present, forseeable in the future.

It is important to devise a conceptual framework for a future-oriented perspective and the one proposed is intended to supplement the notion of *reflection* (outlined at 3.4.1). Reflection, as we saw, is directed to action completed (reflection-on-action) or action occurrent (reflection-in-action). By contrast, and building upon reflection, a new framework for future action will arise from the psychology of *anticipation*.

Let us expand that a little here, and telegraph its development later in the thesis.

What is required is a a kind of pro-active anticipation which recognises and gives epistemological privilege to the interconnection of phenomena. Instead of looking for analysis, with its tendency towards atomisation, such a cast of mind looks for synthesis, with its tendency towards holism. Indeed, the quest for synthesis can already be discerned in some recent work on 'reflection-in-

action'. In section 1.5 of this thesis, reference was made to Boud and Walker (1990) in their attempt to engage reflection as the integrative force in the midst of learning experiences. The key point is worth re-quoting:

> Experience can be seen as a continuing, complex series of interactions between the learner and the learning milieu, *unified by reflective processes,* which assimilate and work with the learning potential of the environment, and can move the learner to take appropriate action within the experience. (66) (emphasis added)

We can ask: what is there about reflection-in-action which provides the unity or synthesis of experience, and learning, and action? Boud and Walker go on to mention that perception is 'processed' during 'reflective activity', that previous knowledge is integrated with this and may be 'tested in the event', and that reflection is 'on-going', and can 'if desired be made more explicit and more ordered' (66). What is odd about all this is that in seeking to explore the occurrent nature of learning experience - what is actually happening in the here and now, consciously and deliberately - Boud and Walker cannot avoid a linear analysis of what is occurrent (A>B>C), whilst asserting that reflection is co-temporaneously integrating such a linear progression. Is this plausible?

To be fair, they have a cyclical model, rather than a linear one, in mind, but the shape of the model is not as significant as the inability to specify what is integrative about reflection *apart from the assumption of its omnipresence.* They seem to acknowledge their difficulty:

> The idea of a simple cycle does not capture the idea of reflection as inextricably linked with what takes place throughout, but it does highlight noticing and intervening as two important aspects of the learning experience which are necessary to the on-going reflective process. (68)

Noticing and intervening are undoubtedly important, and in section 4.6, we will be returning to those. But the substantial difficulty remains: if occurrent action is really capable of generating learning experiences, a more rigorous account of the relationship between 'knowing how' to go on (practical knowledge) and one's awareness of one's desires *in the act(s) of going on* is called for. After all, most human action is occurrent. It is what we find ourselves doing which we can then reflect upon, that generates powerful learning. Reflection-on-action is clearly linear, integrative and can be holistic. These are, literally, the benefits of hindsight. What is problematic for reflection-in-action is how to conceptualise an epistemology of occurrent action which leaves the

power of human purposes intact. We act because we *want* (that is, desire) to. But we also act because we *have* to. Both of these phenomena are central to professionals' practice. In that practice, as in ordinary life, we more often find ourselves doing something, than planning to do something. So a focus on occurrent action is essential, but it looks at this stage implausible that reflection-in-action can serve the epistemologically integrative role that Boud and Walker have identified for it.

Having flagged this doubt, we will, in section 4.6, undertake a detailed analysis of occurrent (intentional) action, locating a firmer basis in philosophical psychology for what is, undoubtedly, a significant catalyst for experiential learning.

Chapter Four does however acknowledge the significance of reflection-*on*-action for the cultural formation of professional practitioners: an awareness of contextual sensitivity generates powerful workplace leadership and learning (sections 4.12 and 4.13) and contributes to ascriptions of competence (section 4.14). Nevertheless, since we will show (in section 4.6) that reflection-*in*-action cannot provide an adequate basis for the phenomenal unity of practice, and that it is mainly occurrent (i.e. present) action that drives future action, it can be expected that a better account of future action should be provided. Section 4.6.6 deals with an outline of what is called 'anticipative action', which is a more promising way of underpinning future action. It is acknowledged that ethics and epistemology are intertwined in such an outline. Purposes, such as ideals, are rightly central to any human action, but it is not until Chapter Seven that action and purpose are expressly re-united, this time in Aristotelian fashion.

For the time being, we may ask: If a concept of anticipative action were to to be successfully established, providing a better basis for the phenomenal unity of occurrent action than does reflection-in-action, what specific human purposes might it engage? Whether or not purposes are ideals is another matter, best left to Chapter Seven, but some purposes do need to be identified now, as the 'content' which fleshes out much contemporary anticipative action. The content discussed below engages adult education ideals very firmly: what kinds of future are desirable for humans?

A helpful way to characterise the scale of the rethinking necessary to answer this question is available in *Education for the Twenty-First Century*. Here, Beare and Slaughter (1993) remark:

> ...the Western/industrial world-view was based on certainty, predictability, control and rationality, all outgrowths of modern science, and its necessary concomitant, scientific materialism. They concentrated on those narrow aspects of reality which can be subjected to empirical examination and measurement. Equally, however, scientific approaches tend to be sceptical about core values and beliefs, about magic and enchantment, about mythologies and religious experiences. Yet these domains have their own intrinsic qualities, not least of which is integration, the knitting together of diffuse pieces of knowledge into a wider and more coherent pattern. (42-3)

These statements have profound implications for prevalent epistemological paradigms; they may even point to a Kuhnian 'paradigm shift'. Note that there is no denial of the explanatory and liberating power of the knowledge based on empirical investigation, just an argument for the development, via anticipation, of connectedness or integration. Principles of integration may be drawn from a variety of forms of human experience. Professional adult educators would need to consider the distinction, stated in the Introduction to this thesis, between the veracity of learning based on human experience, and the honorific nature of education *per se*. Not all claims to the former will be endorsed by the latter, nor should they be. Professional practice for adult educators is largely about the practical wisdom acquired on the middle ground between the two.

So an anticipatory integration of the parts (the empirical explanations of phenomena) with the whole is an essential psychological factor in the process of 'practical action-becoming-practical wisdom'. Even more briefly, anticipation turns 'knowing how' into 'knowing why', where the why-ness is developed in inter-connectedness, networks, and more holistic explanation. All of section 4.6 builds a logical and psychological acount of intentionality (the 'why-ness' of 'hot' or occurrent action) aiming to show that anticipative action is a more adequate conceptualisation of the role of phenomenal judgements in professionals' practice. Indeed, all of Chapter Four shows that such judgements are at the heart of the whole (sic) notion of the contextual formation of practice, *per se*.

Embedding practice in the cultural formation of that practice makes human purposes more explicit. In particular, whether we want to continue towards savage enviromental degradation, or pursue an alternative so aetherially impractical should not exhaust human capacities for foresight and choice, nor for the construction of foresight and choice (which, to reiterate, is the educators'

special interest in human purposes). The essential point, in this, Chapter Three, is that 'anticipation' enriches the notion of professional proficiency because it draws attention to the proactivity required of all practice, especially insofar as any actions now connect with others in the future, in ways we might not, in the present, see as desirable. This Chapter closes by developing some particular current, but future-oriented, dilemmas, showing what anticipation will need to contend with.

For example (and recalling section 2.4), it is quite apparent that digital technology (like all technology) possesses astonishing capacity to demystify the human condition, in the sense that we can be helped to see more clearly what we are doing to the planet in the name of progress and development. It is particularly prominent in re-shaping visual imaging, in establishing new possibilities for creativity and conjecture. The impact of what are effectively new standards of visual truth has closed the epistemological door on 150 years of technological support for the maxim that 'the camera cannot lie'. Images can be cleaned up, manipulated, manufactured and transmitted anywhere, at any time. Unfortunately, outside the arts, the new technology is predominately apparent in the 'infotainment' and leisure industries, and is used to heighten the imminently sensational, and the glibly marketable. There is, in short, a fascination with the possibilities of the glossy gee-whiz image.

Beyond technology, the larger issue is growth itself. In this ephemeral and capricious 'reality', the assumption of infinite growth on this finite planet is swift and almost everywhere unquestioned. Our reliance on technological and therefore technocratic 'solutions' is built on this assumption. Sontag (1977) argues that capitalist society requires a culture based on images, to stimulate productivity, keep order and make war, basically by generating consumption. Cures for cancer are just a bit slower in turning up but they will; other carcinogenic pathologies such as crime, poverty and oppression, it is thought, similarly admit of technocratic solutions. Humans await the answer. But in awaiting only technocratic answers, abilities to devise creatively anticipative responses to our planet's problems atrophy.

Here, the ethical and epistemological comes to this: what part do adult educators play in the continuation of a potentially catastrophic technological determinism - where whatever excites or sells, or technocratically solves our problems, is justified - instead of a developing an anticipatory stance where out of a range of possibile futures, we actually identify what it is we *need*.

What is significant here? After all, the accelerating literature on what we can baldly call the 'growth versus sustainability' issue centres on the responsibility humans have for their futures, without predicting what these futures should be. The literature is re-constructionist, in that we are facing dire circumstances on this planet and human activities must be therefore be reappraised. Birch, in *Confronting the Future* (1993) is able to comment on the greater attention being given these matters:

> Since *The Limits to Growth* in 1972 [Meadows et al. 1972; succeeded by Meadows et al. 1992], and since the first edition of this book in 1976, many people have seen the writing on the wall and have taken up the challenge to change. Phrases which did not exist twenty years ago are now commonplace; ecological sustainability, sustainable development, sustainable agriculture and biodiversity. (3)

If humankind is now beginning to come to terms with the consequences of exponential random growth, it is plain that different purposes need to be conceptualised, and strategies evolved for achieving them. Education is of course central to these activities. Birch goes on to distinguish between four types of 'chaos': within the self, socially, environmentally, and metaphysically - this last being 'the sense of separation from the "whole scheme of things" because we have no conviction that there is any scheme of things or abiding value in the universe' (287). We are all, he says, subject to various forms and degrees of 'disintegration, separation, alienation, disengagement, non-involvement, and...estrangement' (*loc. cit.*). In the face of such confusion, and, ultimately, degradation, it may well be part of the education professional's brief to, first, point this out, and, second, to do something about it.

Of course, it should be recognised immediately that *anyone's* professional practice should have enough of the anticipatory stance about it to countenance a variety of outcomes. The hot issue revolves around whether those outcomes are to be determined by what is desired (what we want) or by what is desirable (what we need). This is a microscopic version of the global dilemma, because it deals in the re-construction of certain quite specific human activities within, say, the practice of law, medicine, education, nursing and so on. Any professional practitioner is keen to distinguish between wants and needs. Resort to a practitioner frequently occurs because we want to know what we need. In education, as elsewhere, it is important to recognise this distinction, not to ossify it, but to build upon it. As the Introduction to this thesis has made

clear, professional practice for adult educators is marked by the ability to integrate these two motives for learning - the experientially authentic (how we learn what we want), and the educationally significant (how we learn what we need).

What we can learn from the futures literature, and adapt via the notion of professional 'anticipation', as the twentieth century draws to a close, is:

• humans need to make the simple but crucial transition from consideration of the consequences of their actions as mere *outcomes,* to the consideration of them as *purposes*; and

• these purposes are to be identified non-reductively, that is, as interconnected elements in structures of meaning, informed by empirical knowledge, but *integrated* nonetheless as values that make sense holistically.

Sustainability may be one such candidate for holistic worth; wisdom may be another; ecological sensitivity yet another; virtue, one more; and so on.

Anticipation gets these sorts of considerations up as desiderata for any practice claimed as professional: the cultural formation of professionals (outlined in Chapter Four) locates the meaningfulness of practice as much in the wider world as in the traditionally excessively individualistic world of 'the professional'.

3.7 Summary: Chapters Two and Three

This is the place to summarise both Chapters Two and Three, and direct attention to the purposes of Chapters Four, Five and Six.

The first half of Chapter Two (sections 2.1 to 2.5 inclusive) established relationships between ethical and epistemological perspectives on the educational ideals of understanding and appreciation, and outlined how these relate to experience and selfhood. This was intended to provide a methodological structure for the body of the thesis.

Put more technically, philosophical analysis would be conducted in regard to these matters, throughout the thesis 'centrally but not exclusively with the

philosophical psychology of presentation and representation of awareness...' (section 2.2). These conceptual structures and approaches were to prepare the way for substantial discussions of the role of ethics, that is, values, in professions, in practice, and in society in general. This occurred in the second half of Chapter Two (sections 2.6 - 2.10 inclusive).

It will be recalled that these discussions noted the traditional individualistic notions of the professional, and the endemic debates about power and status. Then more contemporary material drawing on work on social values and virtues, from political theory and feminism, helped break the grip of traditional notions of professional ethics, and disposed us towards epistemological considerations in Chapter Three. The linking concept was Kultgen's idea of 'professional proficiency' - knowledge and values intertwined in the knowing why one does as one does.

Chapter Three opened with a reminder that the emergent structure of the body of the thesis was addressing *a diversity of workplaces,* with implications for *the nature of experience*, and with the hope of *a more socially sensitive and morally responsible professional person* .

Ethics and epistemologies are implicit in each of these. So Chapter Three dealt with the construction, and reconstruction, of 'practical knowledge' in the light of the work of Ryle, Oakeshott, Polanyi and Aristotle. Each enrich 'know-how', particularly Aristotle's theorisation of practical wisdom ('*phronesis*') as a credible purpose beyond doing and making. Chapter Seven returns to *phronesis* in some detail, because it seems to offer rich integrative possibilities for practical knowledge.

Another contemporary and potentially integrative aspect of philosophical psychology is of course Schön's reflection-in-action. This was discussed at some length, but what was also recognised was the need to conceptualise the future. We propose anticipation as a fruitful, but embryonic, attempt. Anticipation arises in occurrent action, but we telegraphed that Chapter Four will show that it does so more adequately than does reflection-in-action . Reflection-on-action and anticipative action, that is, both past and future actions, are constructed in the present. This much is straightforward. Both are given substance by a heightened awareness of the process of coming to know something, and both start with the experientially imminent and pursue the epistemologically transcendent. How this can be laid bare is problematic, but for any practical

knowledge with aspirations to broader social and ethical sensibilities, it is essential to 'map' the ways we occurently deal with the full spectrum of time. We must know where we are coming from although, in the episodic nature of practice, it is the circumstances 'here and now' which call forth right judgement. Similarly, we must know where we are going. No work has been done on the philosophical psychology of anticipation, yet it is an essential element in professionals' judgements that thus-and-so is the 'right' action. Chapter Three introduced this element to practical knowledge, rounding out the epistemological analysis, and pointing towards ontology - or, what there is, that we know, through practice (and therefore in doing and making).

Any epistemology of professional practice in adult education therefore leads to, or implies, an ontology of such practice. Here we can start to link Chapters Two and Three with the rest of the thesis.

What is there, that human experience constructs as knowledge? It will be seen later that a more modestly stated view of constructivism preserves the ontology of what we find ourselves doing and making (acting in and with the world), as opposed to the overstated but prevalent view in education and the social sciences in general that all experience is up for reconstruction. While this has enormous rhetorical appeal, especially in adult education, it will be seen that it assumes there are no 'givens'. This enables re-construction relatively readily. But, following Kant, if there are some ontological 'givens', there is knowledge available of and through them that we are not free to reconstruct. We can, however, as we have seen in Chapters Two and Three, reconstruct aspects of our knowledge in the light of changing human purposes: that is, as human values vary.

Getting those purposes out on the table, as it were, is the task of both reflection and anticipation. Here, human values are legitimately prominent. With reflection, creativity is the particular manifestation of human needs which drives action. With anticipation, the pursuit of ideals of our own choosing (inevitably future-oriented, and hopefully increasingly integrative) again express and shape human needs and therefore also drive action. Rationality, broadly construed, is the justification we provide to support these endeavours: it often comes after the event, despite the myth, in Western thinking that our reasoning presages our action!

We can then, like the Delphi oracle, 'know' ourselves more fully: what we have done and are doing and could do, established by attention to psychological processes which make our actions explicit to us. However, the 'us' is crucial. Humans share these processes, both in the sense that these are common (they help define 'ourness'), and also in the sense that they are communal ('we' share them). The rest of the thesis, outlined below, is really about this simple statement.

In the pivotal Chapter Four, our sharing is regarded as contextual formation, and the argument seeks to establish this as the contextuality of sharing - certainly as far as professional practice is concerned. In particular, an integrationist conception of competence, preceded by an integrative intentionality, is advanced.

In Chapter Five, going beneath and beyond contextual formation, sharing is addressed through the analysis of experience - our common awareness of life - and a broader and deeper theorisation of constructivism set forth.

In Chapter Six, sharing is further addressed through an analysis of selfhood, particularly once the inadequacies of individualistic agency and autonomy are exposed. A communitarian model of selfhood is developed which draws together the ontological emphases of both Chapters Five and Six.

In this way, Chapters Five and Six complement Chapters Two and Three, which, as we have seen, have concentrated on ethical and epistemological analyses of the notion of professional practice.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONTEXTUAL FORMATION

4.1 Professionals' Workplaces as Contexts

> The doctor has a little, though not much, time to reach a decision as the queue in the waiting-room lengthens. The lawyer preparing a brief has more time, as does the clergyman visiting a bereaved person; although both have to be prepared to meet the unexpected. But the teacher has no time at all to reflect: choices made during the preparation of teaching may be decision-governed, but those made during the course of teaching are largely intuitive. The pressure for action is immediate, and to hesitate is to lose. The whole situation is far less under control. To adapt a metaphor of Marshall McLuhan's, action in the classroom is *hot action*, while action in the consulting room is usually much cooler. (Eraut 1985:128)

Against Eraut, a robust argument for professional practice which included rational notions of reflection-in-action would recognise that teachers, and education professionals in general, can make sense of their 'hot action' even whilst feeling the heat. Nevertheless, he is correct to draw attention to the diversity of the professional workplace - the here and now will range widely depending on the individuation of the unit of work (the lesson, the briefing, the consultation) and the extent of the commitment to the recipient of that practice (a series over months, a single unit, a spasmodic or random involvement). In short, contexts of practice will vary enormously. Eraut goes on:

> Where the action is hot, however, people have to develop habits and routines in order to cope; and self awareness is more difficult as there is little opportunity to notice or think about what one is doing. (128)

It is this feature of teaching which gives reflection-in-action a foot in the door. The opportunities for self-awareness, and the development of productive and supportive habits and routines are two beneficial outcomes of a more reflective practice, particularly relevant to the 'heat' of performative practices such as those of educators. We would not rest easy with intuition as the sole descriptor of the life of the mind in the heat of the moment, and the suspicion is that Eraut would be loath to describe the hot surgical action over an operating table as

'intuitive', even though it could be said to match the intensity of classroom life for teachers.

But his general point is that the diversity of professional contexts, or workplaces, is countermanded by a unanimity of professional expectation. It consists in the individualism, pragmatism and uncertainty of all professional practice. The here and now requires an immediate and appropriate response, in a 'what ought to be done' environment. 'The aim is not knowledge, but action', Eraut states (127), '...[s]o there is a certain subjectivism in the approach, a scepticism about 'book learning', and a belief in the individuality of each distinct case.'

It is important to link this expectation with certain *modes* of knowledge usage. Eraut endorses Broudy's catalogue of four modes:

1. *Replication:* routine transfer of knowledge from one setting to another. Supposedly a feature of vocational education, not the professions.

2. *Application:* the selection via rules of certain replicable knowledge in a specific setting. Again, not professional, but technical knowledge is intended.

3. *Interpretation:* the understanding of the situation dictates the perception of what knowledge will best fit it. This is professional knowledge.

4. *Association:* semi-conscious, even intuitive, selection of knowledge often via metaphors and images (as 'carriers for theories') which seem to fit the situation.

This is a series of progressively 'looser' couplings of Schön's notion of technical rationality with the phenomena of experience, or at least with the practitioner's reading of that experience. Such technical rationality is ultimately replaced by the ingenious, or at least by the suggestively novel, in the mind's eye of the practitioner. While there may not be a logically necessary role for reflection-in-action at either the interpretative or associative stages, it lends itself as a catalyst in the freeing up of the professional imagination. Metaphorical associations (one way, we noted in the previous chapter, of conceiving of creativity) present themselves when the mind can 'play' with familiarity in unfamiliar situations. 'Bringing to the surface' the (tacit) knowing-in-action is itself a metaphor for a relationship between conscious and semi-conscious human behaviour, in which the implicit assumption is that it is better for

individuals to 'own' their motives rather than be subject to them. We have argued that reflection-in-action requires *conscious* critical control, which is a feature of human rationality, and the outcome of this for the 'associative' mode in particular is that intuition and semi-conscious mental phenomena are ingredients in, but not sufficient for, professional creativity.

Eraut, in drawing attention to Broudy's series of modes of usage of knowledge, is trying to map professional knowledge more sensitively. In similar spirit, if we can build connections between the rational form of reflection-in-action we identified in the previous chapter and reiterated above, and the particularities of what must be diverse workplaces, then a richer account of the creativity professionals value in their discretionary activities (that is, their judgements) can be given.

So there needs to be an investigation of the interpretative and especially the associative modes of knowledge, as these present jointly as *professionals' relationships to epistemologies*. There is an equally important additional component here: *those relationships will be inevitably particularistic, that is, context-bound*. As Eraut has observed, above, what counts as the 'here and now' will range diversely across professions. But he also reminds us that there are certain convergent expectations of practice as such, namely, individualism, pragmatism and uncertainty. These are value-laden, as to some extent are all expectations, and so they raise the ethical issues discussed early in the previous chapter of the public-spiritedness of professionals' social obligations, or, even, of social virtues.

The recognition of the contextual nature of professional practice, therefore, will interweave with how professionals relate to epistemologies, and with ethical questions. Such an articulation of a cluster of complex questions is especially pertinent to education, and adult education in particular because education is both a knowledge-based and a knowledge-generating enterprise, and it is ineluctably value-laden, as we outlined in Chapter One. If adult educators are to enable, they need a model of professional practice which clearly and centrally locates worthwhile knowledge and values. Educators, after all, should enable only to enoble.

4.2 Leading Workplace Learning

An elucidation of an increasingly diverse and complex set of professional practices requires an analysis of the nature of the contemporary workplace from an education perspective, and, because workers will typically be adult, this will be a perspective on the adult learning which occurs at and through the workplace. It will be essential to include current examples of national policy which are shaping the provision and expectations of workplace learning. Equally important will be some analysis of the broadest international context from which these national policies find much of their force, and, by contrast, at the enterprise-specific level, some examples of the 'best practices' or qualitative imperatives driving changes in workplace learning, and, of course, in the structure of the workplace itself. Our focus in the workplace will be upon management (cf. *Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills: Report 1995: 'Karpin'*), as a convenient and crucial focus for generalisable argument, because

- there has been a recent *inclusion of educative functions in management work* specifications, as organisations across public and private sectors in Western capitalist democracies have shed 'middle level' employment;

- *who managers are* now includes the traditional floor 'supervisors', rebadged as frontline managers;

- the adult workplace is seriously taking up values and practices centred on the *'learning organisation';*

- *leadership* is regarded as central to, and integrated with, each of the above points.

Traditionally, workplace learning for all the workforce, including management, was identified formally through a narrow training function, where specific skills were encouraged, typically, through 'in-house' and 'in-service' provision of repetition and role modelling. This amounted covertly to little more than enculturation based on behaviourist principles. The more sophisticated version of these moved from overt didacticism to a facilitation mode of training, where the aim was not so much the right answer, as the arrival at the right answer for reasons the participant (sic) was able to recognise as her own, because she 'owned', that is, had some choice in, the process of learning, these answers (Laird 1985).

Nowadays, training and development is increasingly conceptualised more broadly, with the interest mainly in the entire 'human capital' of the enterprise, especially as this enterprise is directed towards an explicit strategic mission (White 1991; Cacioppe, Warren-Langford & Bell 1992).

Thus, if a hospital aims to be the best in the world in some respect, or a government department aims to deliver policy in as user-friendly a fashion as possible, or a firm aims to minimise customer complaints, or a school seeks to develop individual excellence, there is an active role for the staff development operation, across the entire workforce, which will take a broader view than traditional training. Such broader views may start with assumptions such as these:

- It may be thought that a flatter, less hierarchical management structure would improve consultative, and even collaborative decision-making ; or

- perhaps the enterprise itself is not heading in the same direction as its publicly stated strategy purports; or

- perhaps there is no agreement about what the strategy amounts to across the various work units of the enterprise.

Consideration of enterprise-wide issues such as these requires, it is now thought, a holistic approach to learning in the workplace, hence the more general term for the old training and development function, 'human resource development' (HRD).

Within the tradition of critical theory, which recognises and takes issue with the purpose of the corporate enterprise in requiring and reproducing a compliant workforce, in the interests of capitalism, HRD is problematic. A current writer puts this view as follows:

> Let's take "HRD" as one instance of adult education which has become a powerful and increasingly hegemonic discourse amongst the discourses of adult education in this country..."HRD" is typically articulated as primarily concerned with the "strategic" management of organisational change in the workplace through processes of "training" and "development". These processes are "driven" by a "goal orientation" - usually a demand for performance effectiveness, productivity and efficiency. An "HRD" practitioner often serves as the "outside" "facilitator" of these changes.

> Clearly, "HRD" is discourse linked to the discourse of economic rationalism in the first instance. And secondly it is functionalist and conservative in its politics, despite the rhetoric of change. As functionalist discourse, "HRD" is about adaptation, fitting so-called "human resource factors" to the assumed "needs"and "goals" of the organisation. Functionalism appeals to...neat and tidy "roles" and "functions" into which work and people are supposed to be slotted. To draw on the language of cultural theory, functionalism has no "subject". Real workers as "HR factors" have no agency. They can't act. (Johnson-Riordan 1994:13)

Now we do not propose to enter into debate about this series of assumptions. It is important to take up, however, the general point with which the passage concludes. It will be argued in this chapter that human agency is a central and compelling feature of work life, and that current workplace reforms advance the capacities of more people for more involvement in work life than previously. Further, there is no need to shy away from the vocabulary of workplace discourse (via "shudder" quotes) if the nature of power distribution in corporate enterprises is under overt discussion. This chapter is such an overt discussion, but it is not written from within the tradition of critical theory. Rather, it assumes that workplaces can and do provide rich and rewarding experiences for workers. So, for the moment, acknowledging the criticism of 'compliance', but intending to overcome it, at least insofar as decision-making structures can be reformed in corporate workplaces, we move on to the details of contemporary workplace learning.

HRD is increasingly affected by the competencies movement: the skills, or, more holistically, the 'skills formation' required of an enterprise across all its human resources, will be informed, first, by entry-level standards, second, by restructuring and subsequent articulation of promotion possibilities, and, third, by the sophistication of what are increasingly becoming known as the higher-order social and cognitive skills, which are expected to be most in evidence in the management of the business or enterprise. It is this third aspect, manifest in the increasing professionalisation of management competencies (in the light of the national and international policy agenda) which is an appropriate focus for some analysis of workplace learning.

Our concern, then, is with the conceptual analysis of the professional practice required of those responsible for the management of an institution or organisation (taken together as an 'enterprise', to capture a market orientation now regarded as essential), whilst such people are active in that management. More crisply: *how do, and should, the best leaders learn while leading?* The use of the term 'leader' is deliberate. Schein claims 'the only thing of real importance that leaders do is create

and manage culture' (1985:2). If the best leaders can do this, we can sensibly enquire how it has been achieved. This chapter uses insights and argument from the humanities, rather than the social sciences to make that enquiry (Reed and Anthony 1992, by contrast, use sociology and political analysis; Lyles and Schwenk 1992 use social psychology). We begin with some straightforward identification of current leadership qualities. What is *desired* in the best leaders?

4.3 Leadership Qualities

The higher-order social and cognitive qualities required of contemporary management are relatively easy to list. The following list is taken from an Australian newspaper (*The Age*, July 18 1992). Managers and the like are presumed to be competent in 'people' skills, so we read of 'consultation, participation, team work' and 'customer focus...and...presentation and communication skills', and intertwined with these are the more 'personal' virtues of 'experience, energy, enthusiasm, dedication' and so on. Contemporary sensitivity to the way work constructs interpersonal relationships, and therefore carves out identities to a large extent, is shown by the best leaders to be grounded in considerations of gender, class, ethnicity and disability. These prescriptions constitute an education agenda far beyond the traditional training and development roles, and it is clear that they exemplify a definition of 'competency' which underlines the futility of the mere listing of tasks. In brief, such a definition has become known as the three-dimensional, or 'integrated' approach, which recognises the *task* (what people do at work), the *attributes* (what people bring to those tasks), and the *location* (what is site-specific about the work) (National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition 1990a, 1990b, 1992). The implications and some criticisms of the integrated approach will be further discussed in section 4.14, but for the moment it will serve to capture the totality of the experience of competent professional work.

Underlying such competent leadership, is an assumption of dynamism. Senge (1990) represents perhaps the most influential of the current crop of corporate analysts on this point. His description of the possibilities of the 'learning organisation' is positively evangelical. But we need go no further than the employment advertisements. Dynamism is evident in position descriptions which deal in terms like 'culture change', 'growth', 'high calibre' 'energy', and 'philosophy of continuous improvement', all of which require a personal stance of (pro-)activity, and a sensitivity to reading the culture of the workplace. Reading the culture assumes, for such leadership, the 'management of meanings' that arise, or ought to

arise, in that workplace (Hopfl 1992). Even stronger is the claim that 'individuals possess the capacity not only to adapt to, but also to challenge and depart from cultural rules' (Golden 1992:1). There is thus the expectation of individual leaders that continuous change will require their cognitive expertise in problem-solving, the generation of initiatives, and, indeed, a general creative involvement in work and its products and processes.

Even the term 'quality', representing a highly-articulated approach to maximising market competitiveness through a regime of intense organisational navel-gazing (most commonly known as Total Quality Management, or 'TQM'), makes a virtue of the relational nature of such a value judgement by locating itself site-specifically. Vacancies appear for 'Quality Controllers', and 'Quality Managers' *per se*. Notwithstanding those positions, the concept of 'quality' represents holistic corporate competence at its most optimistic, and requires that staff everywhere within the enterprise will be involved in the decision-making which the strategic mission requires (or the changing of that mission). It follows that management appointments instantiate, microcosmically, what is an integrated competence to lead (NOOSR 1990a). Hence the essential assumption of dynamism, both for the individual, and for the workplace. This seems to be the 'Total' part of the TQM approach (Fox 1991).

Given all the above, traditional conceptualisations of workplace learning (based upon the behaviourist model of 'training') are inadequate, even if HRD has become the preferred, more generous descriptor. But at this point it is important to revisit a hallowed distinction, if only to re-cast it. The consequences for the conceptualisation of workplace learning will be profound.

4.4 Training and Education: the Intrinsically Instrumental

Training (or HRD) is paradigmatically instrumental learning, in that it is learning motivated by other than educational ends: traditionally, it is contrasted with intrinsic learning, which is learning engaged in for its own sake, for the sheer satisfaction it brings. This is developed by the notion of a liberal education, espoused by Aristotle, Aquinas, Newman, and Maritain amongst many others in the Western intellectual tradition, and discussed by Ewens where he states:

> There is no doubt that the central concern of traditional liberal education as exemplified by these writers is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. It is informed through and through by a desire (*philia)* for theoretical

> knowledge (*sophia*): its goal, its central purpose, its overriding aim is, in Newman's exact phrase, 'philosophical knowledge'...This is the truth which frees one not only *from* the enslavements of ignorance...and the merely pragmatic concerns of the workaday world but also *for* an examined life...whose transcendent values and possibilities of realisation have been recognised, examined and thought through.... (Ewens 1979:161)

But we are dealing with, and in, the 'workaday world' and finding plenty of evidence that its 'merely pragmatic concerns' call upon an astonishingly rich array of human attributes, exercised ideally to a superlative extent, and, moreover, infinitely flexibly in any single workplace, and transferably over a range of workplaces. Because this cannot be intrinsically-motivated learning, it could not, in terms of provision, then, fit the liberal model of education. Neither should it be expected to fit. It is, after all, instrumentally-motivated learning if anything is, and its historically-hallowed provision is as vocational education. The curiosity however, is that the very qualities required 'on the job', (and by the job), are the traditional qualities which constitute intrinsic learning, that is, learning undertaken for the sheer love of it.

This presents quite a challenge for educational thought. After all, there is a traditional polarisation of the purposes of learning, well brought out by Collingwood, writing on aesthetics. He draws on Aristotle, in stating that:

> To create something means to make it non-technically, but yet consciously and voluntarily...it should be clear that when we speak of an artist as making a poem, or a play, or a painting, or a piece of music, the kind of making to which we refer is the kind we call creating...[T]hese things are not made as a means to an end; they are not made to any preconceived plan; they are not made by imposing form upon a given matter. Yet they are are made deliberately and responsibly, by people who know what they are doing, even though they do not know in advance what is going to become of it. (1938:128-9)

Part of this is clearly fallacious. Creativity in the arts has all manner of ends in mind: religious and nationalistic ideals; portraits of patrons; moral messages derived from Greco-Roman mythology and so on. It is therefore not true that artists are a polarity apart from the utilitarian 'making' displayed in craft activity. Collingwood does, however, accurately set out the deliberative, initiatory know-how present in all creative activity. Creating and initiating are clearly examples of

learning processes highly valued for their intrinsic merit. Now this connects with the liberal-vocational education polarisation as follows.

The values of intrinsic learning were traditionally formally available mainly through a liberal education, with an assumption of the transferability in some way of this learning to vocational settings. Similarly, modifying Collingwood, the virtue of artistic creativity is transferable in some way to a range of instrumental ends, like portraiture. In both aesthetics and education, the recognition of this dynamic is to do no more than acknowledge the obvious point that people have multifarious intentions. The claim in this Chapter is that it is the *diversity of contexts* which animate some intentions rather than others.

What is curious is that this dynamic is, in the current policy climate, working in reverse: the espousal of creativity and initiative (that is, intrinsically-valuable learning processes; 'knowing for its own sake'), within the provision of more holistic *vocational* experience (instrumentally-valuable learning processes: 'knowing as a means to other ends'). This will change in deed (literally) the very nature of peoples' experience of learning at and through work, and therefore of their forms of life - their cultures.

4.5 Workplace Experience

Does the dissolution of the traditional dichotomy between liberal and vocational learning gain support from workplace experience itself? Here, it is important to note the contribution of Dewey to the analysis and re-invigoration of vocational education. His theory of inquiry, the heart of pragmatism, invests human agency with the dynamism we have noted as a feature of workplace learning. Dewey advances our analysis by emphasising the essential unity of human experience. We do not, he argued, learn in discrete modes, just as we do not in ordinary life go about our business conscious of, and much less guided by, a series of dichotomies or dualisms. Traditional philosophical dualisms, such as theory and practice, thinking and doing, facts and values, minds and bodies and so on, are, argues Dewey, experientally inseparable in the flux of life. He suggests we have put the cart before the horse: if humans are active, that is, are responsible for their lives and the living of them, it is perverse to allow philosophical constructs to set up what have become hierarchies of knowledge, rather than recognise that it is our common integrative experience which makes sense of life.

There is plenty of evidence, beyond and around Dewey's argument, that most of us want our lives to have an equilibrium, a unity and a coherence. In this light, his conclusion that vocational education and liberal education are one and the same has considerable force. There is growth and dynamism in all learning: people learn at and through work irrespective of its proximity to particularly hallowed workplaces, for example, academia (Dewey 1916, Garrison 1990, Wirth 1991, Hager 1994).

Taking together current national policy directions, and these philosophical considerations, what seems to be valuable in workplaces such as we have picked from job descriptions, are competencies in the integrated or holistic sense, the development of which is not the sole responsibility of tertiary education. There has emerged a strong debate over the *outcomes* which a liberal university education is traditionally meant to produce, compared with those which can be shown to be produced in the workplace, and which are increasingly highly valued by the workplace. Not surprisingly, these outcomes in both cases are the 'higher order' social and cognitive qualities we have identified above: those personal and interpersonal characteristics which enable prompt and effective decision-making, assimilation of details, innovation and initiative, creativity and the like, all available across a diversity of workplace contexts in general, and in professional work in particular.

The traditional expectations of such outcomes are clear. Training is, as we noted earlier, process-based; education, by contrast, is content-based. With the latter, there are, it is traditionally argued, sacrosanct disciplines which give foundational studies to any erstwhile professional practitioner, so much so that well beyond one's student days, the outcome will consist in the ability to 'learn how to learn'. With this, the student-turned-worker will be *able,* that is, will show competence in, a range of higher-order social and cognitive skills as he or she engages with what must be the capricious and ephemeral nature of the workplace, especially in a more competitive environment. But this argument is illogical. The distinctive, time-based and normally didactic nature of university professional preparation is, by its very nature, *content-driven* (concerned with what propositions are important). There is no necessary connection between mastery of a body of propositions, and the achievement of highly transferable learning which is *process-driven* (concerned with what skills are important). There is, in short, great dissonance between what traditional educational epistemologies promise, and the terms under which they deliver it. It is even questionable if they do deliver it at all.

By contrast, traditional training has never pretended to be content-driven. HRD people are process-driven, and are, as was outlined earlier, increasingly 'user-friendly', adopting facilitation models of training, and becoming increasingly strategic in that they adopt enterprise-wide Training Needs Analysis techniques. Their content comes from the needs and strategies of their enterprise, and we have already listed (in section 4.3) the qualities most sought in their learners. More pointedly, these may displayed on the job, irrespective of HRD intervention. Whichever way these are evident, these characteristics fit under the same umbrella as those arising from the studies of the liberally-educated: both groups of people have learned how to learn, as shown by their responses to the capricious and the ephemeral, and their pursuit of the innovative and the creative. It could also be fairly concluded that such people can take responsibility for their own learning, in that there is plenty of evidence that their leadership positions involve the facilitation of learning in others.

These, then, are the educational strengths of the higher order social and cognitive qualities identified above, irrespective of whether the formative learning experiences are through education or training provisions, or reveal themselves at work itself. The way work may bring about this revelation carries powerful epistemic authority, and the role of professional leadership is crucial. We turn to this now.

4.6 Acting Intentionally

If, following Chapters Two and Three, professional practice can be conceived of as a continuum of knowing-in-action (with concomitant responsibilities for those in leadership positions), learning can be said to result from continuous reflection upon that activity whilst amidst it. Boud and Walker (1990), also basing their analysis on intentionality or what they call 'intent', have concentrated upon this Schönian 'reflection-in-action', and the previous chapter discussed how this can be fleshed out with recognition of the roles of rationality and creativity (in section 3.4).

Reflection-in-action, it will be recalled, is significant for professional practice. In section 1.5, the origins of reflection in experiential learning were identified. Now, in the case of workplace learning, occurrent reflection is perhaps the most prominent current conceptualisation of that deliberative (or 'intent'-ful) sense of controlled judgement made amidst McLuhan's metaphorical 'hot action'. Eraut, in section 4.1, alerted us to this. But *is* there such a phenomenon as 'reflection-in-action'?

To investigate this question more fully, we need better clarification of the episode of practice, such that an appropriate contextuality is preserved. We turn to this first.

Let us remind ourselves of the diversity and complexity of the professional workplace - the here and now will range widely depending on the individuation of the unit, or episode, of practice (the lesson, the briefing, the consultation) and the extent of the commitment to the recipient of that practice (a series over months, a single unit, a spasmodic or random involvement). In short, contexts of practice will vary enormously. We will assume a common unit of action, called an episode, which will continue a discussion of some aspects of philosophical psychology, raised in Chapter Three. Later, in section 4.6.3, a way of going about a sub-episodic analysis will be shown. Finally, an integration of both the episodic and the sub-episodic will be achieved, in section 4.6.5, where a more powerful analysis of acting intentionally will be identified. This will then be applied to reflection-in-action.

Another useful assumption (which we first used in section 3.4.3) is that there are parallels between the 'conscious critical control' of the artist and that attributed to the professional practitioner. Of the artist, Collingwood reminds us that

> [W]hat our painter is saying, then, comes to this. The painted picture is not produced by a further activity upon which he embarks, when his aesthetic activity has already arrived at completion, in order to achieve by its means a non-aesthetic end. Nor is is produced by an activity anterior to the aesthetic, as means towards the achievement of aesthetic experience. It is produced by an activity which is somehow or other bound up with the development of that experience itself. (1938:304)

And, targetting what it is to be 'bound up' with that experience:

> The activity of thinking or intellectual activity always presupposes the activity of attention, not in the sense that it can only happen after it, but in the sense that it rests upon it as a foundation. Attention is going on concurrently with intellection... (204)

Attention to the situation is then as much a feature of human doing (or action) as it is a feature of human reflecting: people do not just learn by doing, but by doing and thinking in some reciprocal relationship - what Dewey seems to have meant by deliberation. The reciprocity is emphasised if attention, or the stance of attending, is

grafted to intentionality. Boud and Walker (1990) explicitly develop this with their notion of 'noticing'. It is, as we identified earlier, essential to recognise the dynamism of the workplace as the milieu in which process-based learning occurs. In epistemological terms, this is the generation of 'know how' in settings where social and cognitive interactions are intense, frequently spontaneous and often decisive (that is, other actions flow quickly from such interactions, and their rerouting, or retrievability, is minimal). Again, Boud and Walker develop this with their notion of 'intervening'. Even if this sense of immediacy is lessened, forward planning, or longer-term goals, may themselves be formulated in a time-frame of fluctuating forces containing most of the elements just listed.

In short, concentration on work, at work requires the psychological concept of *attending to the matters in hand* (that is, the thinking and doing taken together) and this is manifest in particularly purposeful ways. When we find ourselves attending to something it is usually for some purpose, even if we cannot, when pressed, actually identify that purpose in advance. The subtlety of human purposefulness has direct and helpful bearing on the nature of workplace learning, and this turns upon a certain distinction (found in Davis 1979) between two kinds of human intentionality (or purposefulness), and, most specifically, upon 'trying', and 'desiring'.

Consider human activities: there is a person who acts, and an action which is brought about. When my arm is raised, an item of behaviour is observed. This behaviour is frequently inferred by others as an action, on my part (literally 'on my part'), from which a further inference is made that I intended, or wanted, my arm to rise. It is this ascription of wanting to do something which turns an item of behaviour into an action. The wanting, or desiring, is another term for having a purpose, arising from and expressed through, attending to the matter in hand, and wanting to make a difference in the way things are, in the light of some goal. The episodes of attending to the matter(s) in hand can be further broken down into sub-episodic actions of the kind Wittgenstein mentions.

Wittgenstein (1963) discusses 'what is left over if I subtract the fact that my arm goes up from the fact that I raise my arm?'(para 621), and we reply that there is a wanting, or a desire. But, sub-episodically, our interest is not in the concept of the 'wanting', as such. Instead, the application of this in his next statement (622) is apposite: 'When I raise my arm I do not usually *try* to raise it.' Wittgenstein reminds us that most of our actions are of this kind: *it is what we find ourselves doing which*

illuminates human purposes, rather than the common, but erroneous, view that most actions we take are planned.

Workplace learning, as we have analysed it, is an example of what we find ourselves doing, which we can call 'acting intentionally' rather than 'acting with an intention'. A more behaviouristic outlook on work which regards learning as more reactive, would find this latter intentionality (that is, acting with an intention) a better conceptualisation of instrumental knowledge. If there are clearly tangible, quantifiable statements of the ends of training ('what observable behaviour is there?'), the skill of trainers in bringing these about is the chief criterion of their competency. Similarly, classical or Newtonian management will be judged competent to the extent that the chain or line of command meets the targets set previously. This is *not* the model of intention which fits our more dynamic workplace, nor our more dynamic workers - in this case, the professional practice of managers or the leadership in general of the enterprise. In contrast to traditional intentionality, this concept of 'acting intentionally', shows up in certain psychological characteristics such as those in the following sub-sections (4.6.1 - 4.6.4 inclusive). In sub-sections 4.6.5 and 4.6.6, a new integrative intentionality, leading to a new concept of anticipative action, are developed.

4.6.1 Purposefulness

It has already been noted that dynamic workplace leaders typically find themselves acting intentionally: that is, in the course of their practice, they attend to the matters in hand. These matters will be typically capricious and ephemeral, as we have recognised earlier, but our more dynamic leaders expect to make a (positive) difference in the manner in which these matters are dealt with. In acting intentionally, their behaviour may appear spontaneous in that they do not work towards a final, pre-conceived end, except in a general strategic sense. However, they are nonetheless acting purposefully, whilst admitting no greater (pre-conceived) purpose than that they seek to come to terms with the challenges confronting them. Success in this will not *consist* in the instantiation of certain higher-order qualities. Rather, the achievement of the substantive strategic goals of the enterprise will be what the workplace will aspire to, and the qualities which the better leaders, such as managers, will display, will be the evolving means towards those goals. What seems to be spontaneous practice, on closer, contextually-sensitive reading, will be extemporaneous practice: a freeing up (*ex tempore*: out of time) through a looser, associative, linkage of knowledge with activity, more akin to

artistry than technique. This is not to marginalise technical knowledge, nor, at the other polarity, intuition, as we shall now see.

4.6.2 Creativity

Although we have captured the active nature of the professional workplace, there is still a flavour of traditional, technocratic instrumentalism, in that 'goals' of one's practice could still comprise a complete set of *pre-specified* activities. Here, however, it should be recalled that the current national policy and specific enterprise agendae are open-ended, and that relational terms like 'quality', 'excellence', 'world leadership', 'bench-marking', and so on, are the currency of workplace practices. 'Enterprise' itself reveals the primacy of the metaphor of the market-place, whether it be material or intellectual property on offer. This metaphor requires that creativity retain its intrinsic open-endedness, not become a determinant of other ends. Again, following Dewey (1916), we can remove the technocratic flavour of such a 'means-end' distinction, by subsuming the recognition of X (where X is a desired characteristic of workplace practice or learning) in the very achievement of X. Dewey's argument applied specifically to 'growth', which he rightly took from biology as an organic concept: growth will be both the end and the means by which an organism changes. Taking this, we can now accurately specify the organic epistemology of the new dynamic workplace: 'creativity' and 'initiative' (as open-ended as 'growth'), will be apparent as some of the best practices of an enterprise where the results reveal just these characteristics in the market-place (in whichever way this is defined by the substantive strategic mission; for example, greater market share). Intuition will be valued as centrally as purposefulness if it generates creativity and initiative in this non-dichotomous sense.

Following Dewey, the conclusion so far is that purposeful creativity will be a feature of professional practice. The ends of and the means by which this practice is pursued will be a single phenomenon - a unitary experience. This will be more obvious if the episode of practice is more than a few moments in duration. In those conditions, opportunities for creative intentional action abound. Certainly, Schön's architectural draftsperson (his benchmark reflective practitioner) has hours, days and perhaps weeks to get the problem formed. So do most professionals. We recall (from section 3.4.1), that Schön calls this process of engagement 'artistry', and this seems plausible, largely because the judgements involved on this scale of intentional action are embedded in what Tomas (1968), has called 'conscious critical control'. We detailed this in the

discussion of the linkage between rationality and creativity (section 3.4.3). Professionals stay with the problem: they worry it, it worries them. And there is often the time to engage problems in the normal course of practice. One of the aspirations of professional life is a large measure of freedom over the conditions of practice, including the time available to actually practice.

But often there is *not* that time. There are prolonged episodes of practice during which the requirements for successful judgements are moment-by-moment: in a classroom, an operating theatre, a courtroom and so on. Here we need to develop the notion of the 'sub-episodic'.

These typical 'working day' episodes admit of further discrete 'sub-episodic' analysis, since it is frequently through incremental and aggregational assimilation of a series of judgements that, overall, problems of practice are solved. Attending to minutae, moment by moment, as it were, reveals an overall intention to get a problem solved. That much is clear. However, *the actual resolution of the problem is approached without a specific solution in mind, only with 'acting intentionally' in time-frames which are both uniquely episodic, and sub-episodic*. The professional oscillates between the two time-frames in practices which are constitutive of an intentional engagement with the problem. It is the logic of the fine judgement required in such 'acting intentionally' which is our focus. More epigrammatically: how, within the discrete, do we practise our discretion?

The immediacy of the conscious critical control in sub-episodic practice is analagous to the creativity of the painter, as we remarked in section 4.1. Indeed fine judgement is partly constituent of the 'fineness' of fine art. Effort *is* required to decide to continue thus-and-so. That is itself perhaps the most significant judgement made at the sub-episodic level, moment-by-moment, in practice - something to the effect that 'I am committed to finding a solution here'.

It is true that we find ourselves acting intentionally: pushing on, as it were, with a series of judgements that thus-and-so is the right action to take next. But that is part of a broader commitment to solving a problem. So it is curious that we cannot catch ourselves in a state of 'trying'. Nor can we identify an event called 'trying'. The experience of acting intentionally in intimate and reciprocal engagement with a problem resists further atomisation, yet a sequence of 'tryings' is exactly what may give a solution to the problem before us. Painters,

trying to get the artwork 'right', know when to stop, and when to give up. They know when their judgements at the canvas are 'right' ones. And they can pick an error - but they have to *make* the right and the wrong judgements, to recognise them when they appear! In these matters, *phronesis* grows out of *poiesis*.

We must turn, then, to the pecularities of the intention to continue to seek a solution. In short: what is 'trying', and how does it reveal our desiring to achieve a practical and practicable outcome?

4.6.3 Trying

However, this is too cosy. Wittgenstein (1963) makes a crucial point (at para 622, and re-inforced at 623:) ' "At all costs I will get to that house" - But if there is no difficulty about it - *can* I try at all costs to get to the house?'

He means that there must be an obstacle against which effort is warranted, and that therefore the action may be unsuccessful. Given the globalisation of the market-place, with the consequent competition, there are many obstacles against our workplace enterprise and the model of leadership it requires. In fact, a whole education industry, 'adventure education', colloquially known as risk-taking, has sprung up around trying to overcome obstacles to improved efficiency in the workplace, in as much as as these involve certain leadership practices (Gall 1987; any issue of the *Journal of Experiential Education* or the *Journal of Environmental Education)*. The ability to persevere, that is, to maintain trying, and to engender this in the trust other workers may have in your leadership, are two of the key values in such leadership adventures. Again, such qualities are open-ended, and are apparent in both their attempt and their achievement. In Dewey's terms, they, like growth, are manifest as single human phenomena. The unitary nature of trying is further revealed as follows.

Thalberg (1972) discusses four types of trying all of which have some impact on workplace learning: (examples added)

(1) **exertion:** using energy (e.g. practising to get it right)

(2) **causal:** bringing about an effect (e.g. taking lessons to gain a skill)

(3) **procedural:** going through a process to achieve something (e.g. a pre-test, or enrolling)

(4) **initiatory:** 'Here no spatial or temporal crevasse divides attempt from accomplishment, as in causal undertakings. If a hiker succeeds in his attempt to scale a precipice, reaching the summit is a *terminus*, rather than an effect, of his climbing.' (1972:90)

Now the risk-taking, whether at the workplace as part of daily life, or in a training setting on a cliff-face with a group, may have the purposes of corporate team-building, or trust-generating, or decisive leadership, and may therefore require all of: exertion, an efficacious cause, certain procedures, and, most interesting for our analysis, the assumption of initiative.

But initiatory trying is unitary, unlike the other three kinds. More than this, the wholeness of it is greater than the sum of its parts. There will be for any new situation a grappling with the minutae, when the individual learner seeks mastery over the first and perhaps foremost components. The sense of mastery grows incrementally, until the steps form a sequence, and confidence grows to itself contribute to the achievement of the whole. The central point is that what is displayed on the way through, as it were, may not be expressed as an intention (that is, pre-specified). The worker (regarded now as much as a participant as a learner) is in a position of intelligent judgement, where what is required to continue is perhaps improvisatory and probably extemporaneous. The justifications come, literally, after the event(s), with hindsight, and in the light of propositional knowledge. In the heat of the moment, these have less impact on understanding how to go on, but that does not leave any lesser a role for intentionality, in the sense of the primacy of 'acting intentionally'.

4.6.4 Desiring and Desiring to Try

Clearly, then, some belief about what is required for practical efficacy is essential. One cannot try A (an action) unless one desires, or wants, to try A. The desiring of A, or to put it more specifically, the desirability of A in terms of one's professional context, arises, in the case of immediate judgements, simultaneously with the action.

In current work on intentionality, this has become known as the 'component' view, because although the causal relationship between an intention, or acting intentionally, and the action-event itself is recognised, it is not that of two phenomena, external to each other, in linear succession. Adams, in a recent issue of the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (1994a), acknowledges that

> Intentions and attempts can form at the speed of thought. They need not involve deliberation. This theory [the component theory] does not require unrealistic bouts of mental energy to be spent prior to each intentional act or attempt. The formation of many intentions is routine, habitual, instantaneous and without effort (as the intention and attempt to duck a punch or answer a ringing phone).
>
> Further, the theory holds that tryings are complex, not simple. They involve intendings causing things - intentions at work, as it were....
>
> The theory also says that intending is not brute or isolated, but requires other mental states to form; specifically beliefs and desires of the appropriate contents...The contents of the beliefs and desires must match the nature of the attempt. The elegance of this theory lies in *the match* between the contents of the contentful states (beliefs, desire, intentions) and the contents of the descriptions under which the action or attempt is intentional. (617)

Now it must be recognised that the component view is controversial because it accommodates both causality and conativeness (desiring, wanting) under the single ('elegant': Adams 1994b) theory. Adams and his sparring partner, Mele, disagree on the adequacy of the component view in this respect, although they agree, in earlier joint writing that there is no conative entity called 'volition' which drives action. Mele (1994) states

> If the view attributed to me is that tryings have desires (or intentions) as components, Adams has misspoken. The view we advanced [in Adams and Mele 1992] is that 'tryings are effects of the normal functioning of appropriate intentions[1992:326]'. The idea that tryings essentially have events of intention-acquisition as causes should not be confused with the distinct idea that tryings essentially have such events - or the intentions themselves - as *components*. (629)

But Mele's disagreement with the component view of intentional action, based on counter-examples to the effect that one can be indifferent to A-ing, and still try A (in which case A is caused, but without an intention to bring it about) are rather remote from our 'hot action', where the nature of professional practice prevails upon the practitioner to seek efficacious outcomes.

4.6.5 Integrated Intentionality

We propose a genuinely integrated intentionality which is also holistic, in that it preserves the sum of the parts without reduction in fidelity to the integrity of phenomenon of professional practice. This strong claim is based on the following argument which melds Adams' 'component' view of intentionality, (especially the preservation of the unitary nature of 'desiring') with Thalberg's 'initiatory trying', in these ways:

1. The *ontological reflexivity* of initiatory trying fits what goes on in episodes of professional practice. The component view does indeed provide that there need be, in Thalberg's words, 'no spatial or temporal crevasse' which 'divides attempt from accomplishment, as in causal undertakings'. Now Mele can certainly explain the coalescence of attempt and accomplishment, but at the risk of understating their jointly exhaustive role in acting intentionally. Adams' more inclusive theory gives trying and desiring to try equal and co-extensive prominence, because the accomplishment of A arises from both.

2. The *phenomenological significance* of initiatory trying is preserved. The accomplishment of scaling the precipice is recognised incrementally, from one grappling-iron grasp to the next, and thus the arrival at the summit is indeed the summit, but also the summation, of the climb, for the climber. It is hard to see what is 'causally' significant about such a description of an achievement, in terms other than those which are intimately connected to that achievement. The component view acknowledges the meaningfulness of the continuum of effort.

3. The *integrative utility* of initiatory trying unites the occurrence of 'hot action', when professionals find themselves acting intentionally, with more dispositional and deliberative acting-with-an-intention. Mele's separation of causality from the component view lends itself to deliberative action where the deliberation precedes the action. This is less congenial to the analysis of professional practice at sub-episodic level, where, as we noted earlier, a judgement to go on will be framed by what is justified as efficacious. This must be invoked (albeit momentarily, and minimally) by the professional disposition to persist with the practical problem.

For these reasons, the current component view of intentionality is to be regarded as a useful development of Thalberg's identification of initiatory trying, over twenty years ago. It fleshes out Thalberg's claim that such trying is 'unitary' - indeed *it shows how professional practice at the episodic and sub-episodic levels can be related*. It integrates intentionality, and it does so by advancing an appropriate holism.

Armed with this, let us return to the enquiry concerning the existence of reflection-in-action.

Professionals' judgements about how to go on (or 'knowing how' to go on) are best conceptualised if there is a built-in recognition of the spontaneous oscillation between episodic and sub-episodic intentionality. Sub-episodically, that is, moment-by-moment, by incremental attention to the matters in hand, professionals' actions are guided by the single judgement that it is appropriate to go on - that is, the action they find themselves doing is efficacious.

But this is only half the story. At the same time, the episodic location of those actions (a longer time frame, such as during a lesson, a consultation, a cross-examination, an operation) gives a context to the sub-episodic. Across such episodes, initiatory trying takes place, with the virtues of ontological reflexivity, phenomenological significance and integrative utility, as detailed above. At the heart of initiatory trying is the component view of intentionality, where trying, desiring and desiring to try are causally and conceptually related in a single theory.

This theory has a rich role in contextualising the sub-episodic because it links, or integrates, the practitioner's attempts (tryings) to accomplishments (desiderata). But it does this in three ways:

• It does not merely link what could be regarded as *inert* beliefs, desires and purposes to actions intended to bring these about - although it does at least do this.

• Nor does it restrict its intentionality to *deliberative* (but not necessarily inert) situations - although it does also do this.

• But, further, it connects the reflexive dynamism of the attempting (both episodically and sub-episodically) to the accomplishing. In this way, it most

closely maps what we find ourselves doing in the 'hot action' - having a general idea of where we are going, not having a clear idea of how to get there, but *undertaking a series of actions intending to attempt an accomplishment.*

So, is there such a phenomenon as Schön's reflection-in-action?

The short answer must be that there is not.

At sub-episodic levels, we are not reflecting at all; rather, we are making a judgement to go on. This is analogous to the painter finding that thus-and-so is efficacious, once the marks are on the canvas. And we have established that the episodic level of professional judgement relates reflexively to the sub-episodic, but not reflectively. On the contrary, the dynamism is shaped by attempts (tryings) towards accomplishment. This is what makes the action 'hot'. Extemporisation, for example, is a manifestation of initiatory trying: it is literally, showing (or making, or taking) an initiative. But what the evidence is for such an initiative is revealed by the doing, not by 'reflection-in-action'.

4.6.6 Anticipative Action

Accordingly, a better theorisation of professionals' 'hot action' will de-centre reflection, and instead concentrate upon anticipation. *Anticipative action* is really what hot action is about. Adams come close to it when he states

> Beliefs play a role, with desires, in mapping out and coordinating goals to pursue and means of satisfying desired goals. Beliefs represent the world, its current states, and the lawful ways in which actions and behaviour affect the current state of the world and bring about future states. (1994a:619)

The last phrase - the bringing about of future states - opens up a conceptual can of worms. We have already dealt with this, but it important to revisit it briefly. In section 3.6, we explained some purposes currently exercising human planning on a global scale: sustainability, ecological sensitivity, wisdom and virtue were mentioned. Now, some education professionals are directly addressing these matters. In education writing, and through UNESCO, for example, increasing attention is being given to what is becoming known as 'futures studies' (Beare and Slaughter 1993). But how does it fare in terms of professional educators' practice? In the planning of programs?

It is difficult to see how 'futures studies' gets much purchase in the planning and practices of education professionals - especially school-teachers - if it is not phenomenologically prominent. That is, does a 'futures' perspective figure readily and practically in a teacher's planning and'hot action', the way, say, an historical perspective does? However much 'futures studies' are acknowledged as desiderata, getting such perspectives out of curriculum documents and into the heads of practitioners is difficult if something so open-ended does not connect with the 'action-present'. Anticipative action might start to unlock an overly reflective and historicist perspective - valuable though these are for judicious practice - because anticipation identifies the phenomenal pro-activity necessary for more purposeful *phronesis*.

If one remains wedded to a 'feedback' view of *phronesis*, where the equation is about where the practitioner wants to be, informing how she will get there, then there has not been much movement beyond the limitations of Schönian reflection-in-action. Adams' 'bringing about of future states' concerns the *emergence* of accomplishment, but seems to imply that the intentionality required to provoke that emergence is captured by feedback mechanisms, albeit elegant ones.

On the contrary, the analysis throughout section 4.6 suggests that the dynamism and unitary nature of initiatory trying, and the holism of the component view of desiring, can be productively integrated. This in turn makes available reflexivity between attempting and accomplishing, and *this* invites serious reconsideration of the hold that feedback, or 'means-end', judgements have on human reasoning. The project ahead is too big to advance in this thesis, but the issue is simple: can a concept of 'feedforwardness' change the nature of accomplishing, as much as 'feedback' is expected to change the nature of attempting? In a truly reflexive relationship, this should be possible.

Not only that, but the analogy with creative art seems to indicate this is already part of our human experience. Painters change their 'vision' once they get started; they do not merely change the attempts to accomplish a vision (however blurred it may be). Similarly, in professonal life, all manner of practical beliefs edge into our intentions. Ethical responsibility (to the environment, to various socio-cultural groups and so on) and epistemological authority (mediated by scholarship, bench-marking and so on) are prominent and vigorously dynamic dimensions of this continual redefinition of 'accomplishment'. Now in the face of this, it seems anticipative action is

impossible - how could any practitioner anticipate the way things might be panning out for her particular area? The response must be that all practitioners are skill-laden players in the game, and that reactive ethics and epistemologies are, like reflection-in-action, inadequate conceptualisations of bases of judgements that thus-and-so is the right action. Practitioners-as-players bring to the action their core of skills, but also a penumbra of attitudinal, dispositional and, in short, culturally formed perspectives which shape what makes these skills, skills (see Siegel 1993 for this 'character' view, as it is commonly called). Indeed, Chapters Two and Three are predicated on this. The question throughout the thesis is: how and to what extent can this model be reconstructed?

In closing section 4.6, we are, then, mindful of the constructivist assumptions made by Schön, stated earlier in section 3.4.1. We are, he says, 'remaking' our practice worlds. Even if the ontological bent of these remarks is worrisome, the ethical and epistemological import is significant: he wants a reflexivity between our selves and our experiences of the world (including other selves). This is commendable, and indeed is essential for learning anything at all. But the 'conversation' Schön wants, in advancing the reflexive is *reflective*. We have seen that this is only partly adequate in that reflection-in-action does not capture the strength of judgments made to continue: reflection is insufficiently pro-active. It cannot adequately generate practice when the action is hottest.

By contrast, an *anticipative* conversation with our practices is closer to what goes on in 'hot action'. Section 4.6 has argued that there is a rigorous argument, advanced through philosophical psychology, which shows that the phenomenology of professional practice can shape *phronesis* in creative ways. We return to the broader significance of that in Chapter Seven.

4.7 Professional Leadership

We are now in a position to summarise the analysis of the professional practice of workplace leaders.

Acting intentionally for the best practitioners is at the heart of a process of learning where the outcome is the summation of the purposefulness required to arrive at such an outcome, plus the ascription of success to an outcome which is prized by the context of the learning. In the current national policy climate, the workplace

context will typically value creativity. Thus, leadership in such a workplace will best be conceptualised in terms of *purposefulness, creativity* and, because such practice is beset by challenges and difficulties, the specifically initiatory *trying* coupled to a component view of *desiring*, outlined above. Thus we hope to have established a solid basis for an integrated and holistic account of phenomenal action. Human action, anywhere, anytime, is a combination of knowing and doing. The preceding sections show just how these are combined in professionals' particular practices.

Given, then, that knowing and doing are, as we saw, intimately connected, we noted plenty of evidence earlier in this chapter that creativity (and initiative) are identifiable in policy and workplace terms as two of the 'hottest' higher order qualities a practitioner can currently possess.

In this individualistic sense, we have been able to draw out, rather paradoxically, some universal expectations of professional practice derived from the full diversity of 'know how'. In section 4.1, we noted Eraut's description of the 'individualistic, pragmatic, uncertain' professional workplace. This was examined from the perspective of those responsible for workplace learning - the new strategically-focussed, 'best practice' practitioner (whether or not he or she is an 'educator' in formal terms), who leads change processes.

For such people, the workplace is the immediate context in which their learning and that of the workforce as a whole is set. Experience of work is seamless, like life itself, in that one's working day does not normally divide into discrete roles and routines. For professionals, at any rate, work consciousness is holistic. Certain integrative qualities required of the workers and of the leaders in particular, such as problem-solving, conflict resolution and time management only make educational sense if the dimensions of the context as a learning environment are displayed in an appropriate philosophical psychology. That is what this chapter has achieved so far.

4.8 Enculturation and Language

It is now important to move beyond the qualities of the individual. Wittgenstein reminds us of the crucial role which the context, situation or circumstances have for converting knowing and doing, one to the other. In the workplace, we do what we know to do, but the boundaries of both 'knowing' and 'doing' are never fixed, and

the workplace is typically a social environment. For professions, the sociality of the workplace is reinforced by the membership of a professional body with its peer influences over practice (entry, development, adherence and sanctions all being part of this influence). The open-endedness of creativity and initiative, when these are values prized by a particular workplace, are nevertheless shaped by the environment of the enterprise. So, not just anything will count as a creative response to a workplace challenge. Workplace and professional knowledge in general is inevitably context-bound, as was remarked earlier. In addition to that, however, is the sculpting, sifting and sorting of work experience by the norms, beliefs, and attitudes of the workplace environment itself. These will show themselves in rituals, rules and conventions as much as in the formal statements of mission. The culturally-powerful people do not just 'read' their workplace culture, but direct it. How is this done? As Virginia Woolf said: only *connect*.

The best practitioners will find themselves creating aspects of culture in the form of new images that harness, or connect, their own and others' hitherto inchoate experiences. Where experience cannot immediately come up with a familiar image or metaphor to make sense of some new phenomenon, an opportunity for creativity and initiative is made available. Even then, as we saw, people will try to build on what they know, to assimilate the new to the old. But the truly novel is exhilarating.

The exhilaration arises because novel connections between the hitherto unconnected strike us as creative, in any beneficient endeavour, if the way forward is made clearer or more compelling. We first mentioned this in section 2.4, considering the ethical component in instantaneous judgement, and again in section 3.4.3, considering the epistemological component in such judgement. To recall, this is what Koestler (1975:Ch1; 1978:110) labels the 'aha' response - it is the centre of his triptych entitled 'the domains of creativity', flanked on the left by the comic simile of 'ha-ha', and on the right by the metaphor of 'ah....'. The metaphorical is a new way of seeing something, a realisation ('ah...'), or, we may say, an image-construction that symbolises a different relationship between entities or aspects hitherto unconnected. The metaphorical has this feature in common with humour, where what makes us laugh ('ha-ha') is the surprising and frequently incongruous connection of the hitherto unconnected. Making these connections confers an identity where there was not one prior to the act of creation.

Being able to connect is thus the beginning of being able to *go on* , and this implies an understanding. In the *Investigations,* Wittgenstein remarks:

> The grammar of the word 'knows' is evidently closely related to that of 'can', 'is able to'. But it is also closely related to that of 'understands'. ('Mastery' of a technique) (para 150)

And he goes on, in a famous passage, to discuss how a person understands the continuation of a number series, where there is a pattern. His conclusion is that it is 'particular circumstances' which justify a person saying they can go on (para 154ff), and that, in general, it is the language-games which express particular forms of life which give our actions their meanings. Wittgenstein's 'language-games' are synonymous with our workplace situations, in the sense that every workplace has its own rules, rituals and conventions. We call this its 'culture'. These are the particular circumstances which make certain actions 'creative', certain trying 'initiatory' and, therefore, legitimise certain human purposefulness at work as 'knowledge'. By this is meant that the cultural context tends to justify beliefs which are demonstably true, and the standard definition of knowledge is that which is justified, true, belief.

Workplace contexts are culturally quite specific; these are 'forms of life', so to speak, and within these, the language games as exemplified by current Australian national employment and vocational education policies serve as metaphors for what to do in the workplace, and, more important, what to do next. National policies, and particular enterprise strategic mission statements are basically exhortations to 'try'. Such overtly culturally-expressive documents invite workers into a language game where the stakes are personally quite high, and are quite open-ended about what counts as achievement. The measurement of that achievement is public and quantifiable, but the exemplification of that success will be, to a greater (even global) extent, up to the enterprising.

Alongside formal policy documentation are the equally powerful but covertly cultural determinants: rules, rituals and convention. These lend themselves to the metaphor of the language-game even more fully, not because they appear in their intangibility all the more capricious, but for quite the reverse. Their intangibility makes them elusive, and their elusiveness tends to mask their power. Cultural determinants by definition start right under our noses, with what we say and the way we say it - and our ability to conceive of our daily beliefs, values and attitudes otherwise than through what we find familiar is very difficult. Polanyi (1958) puts a helpful *caveat* on culture, without using the term, as follows:

> Modern writers have rebelled against the power exercised by words over our thoughts, and have expressed this by deprecating words as mere conventions, established for the sake of convenient communication. This is just as misleading as to say that the theory of relativity is chosen for convenience....Our choice of language is a matter of truth or error, of right or wrong - of life or death. (113)

Polanyi goes on to discuss the problem of the open-texturedness of language-games: how can the same term apply to a series of indeterminately variable particulars, if its meaning is merely convenient? In cultural contexts, we may similarly ask how the same rule, ritual or convention can carry any determinate meanings for any people who share the culture. Polanyi however does want to preserve the regulative force of language, and, by inference, of culture in general:

> My own view admits this controlling principle by accrediting the speaker's sense of fitness for judging that his words express the reality he seeks to express. (113)

This moves the locus of justification to an ontological, if not metaphysical basis, and while it seems to remain individualistic, opens the way for a socially-situated meaningfulness for individuals whose epistemology is inevitably contextual. Professional activities reflect this model, and professional practice is, as we have seen in various ways, a continuum of judgements of 'fitness' as well as an implicit endorsement of the practitioner's 'fitness for judging' how the world seems to be. Such judgements are saturated with values, and in that way, they are not only context-bound, but culturally-driven. These two aspects jointly colour the ontology (what there is) and the epistemology (how we come to know it) of a professional's judgements.

Polanyi alerts us to two dangers. The first lies in the identification of certain symbolic aspects of human experience (rituals, rules, conventions, for example), as *determinants* of culture whilst ignoring the *function* of any such symbol. A symbol stands for something, so, in this case, these aspects have determinate meanings only because of their functions in expressing the values, beliefs and attitudes shared by a group. At this next stage of analysis, it should be possible to *constitute* the group-mindedness through the shared expression of the values themselves, but that is not to identify the symbols *as* the values. The symbols point to the values.

A further and more profound danger consists in the identification of culturally-constituted group-mindedness as the determinant of reality and of knowledge. This takes cultural relativism and overstates its ontological and epistemological

implications. When groups of people share values, it does not follow necessarily and sufficiently that their perception of reality (of what there is) and of what counts as knowledge (of how we come to understand what there is) is constituted by culture. Culture expresses shared values, with which people identify, but underlying such expression and identification are continuing assumptions and expectations of objective truths about a continuing world and of common human experiences in it. In brief, cultural analysis is a middle-level activity. It begins with the meaningful phenomena of daily life and ordinary humans, and it deals in the ways we express and identify our, and others', meanings. A fascination and respect for the diversity and particularity of these instances and combinations of diversity should not obliterate the shared experiences of the world we have as humans, irrespective of how our cultural memberships provide access to that world. (This point will be developed further in Chapter Five.)

4.9 Cultural Analysis

Cultural analysis takes seriously the meaningfulness of the human condition, as does any humanist study, but its specific interest is in the networks of common meanings (values, beliefs, attitudes) which constitute cultural groups, as these are expressed in rituals, rules and conventions in ordinary life. These expressions can be 'read' for meanings. The prominent Welsh adult educator, Williams put this most general point as inclusively as possible:

> Culture is ordinary. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is a finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact and discovery, writing themselves into the land. The growing society is there, yet is also made and remade in every individual mind. (1989:4)

Here he emphasises the whole and the parts of social change. Individuals' cultural meanings will have some personal dynamic, and these will stand in some symbiotic relationship to the larger social allegiances and forces which we encounter in life. There will be sub-cultures in all of this, and we dip in and out of these in the course of our lives. The arts (one use of the term 'culture'), ethnicity (another usage, as 'multiculturalism'), and academia (the pursuit of sound scholarship) are examples of different expressions of shared meanings. Society at large values the arts, ethnic diversity and scholarship, but expresses these values in specific ways, and those

expressions are symbolised in particular sub-cultures. In like fashion, professionalism is valued by society, and there are sub-cultural expressions with particularistic meanings. These may be symbolised in the rituals, rules and conventions of, say, the traditional 'consultant' professions as stereotypical of all professional practice. We saw in the previous chapter how difficult it would be to maintain such a stereotype in the face of the growth in 'salaried' professions. Again, the rituals, rules and conventions expressing the (sub-)culture of salaried professionals will vary from the 'consultant'. The important point is that the stereotyping is inevitable, and that one central purpose of cultural studies is to show how dominant expressions get to become dominant - or more broadly, how expression and identification of cultural meanings is dynamic.

4.10 Images and National Identity

Take for example the very expression and identification of what it is to be an Australian. Here is Horne's seminal attempt to show what he believed was the dominant image (that is 'typical symbol') in the 1960s:

> On an Australian beach, on a hot summer day, people doze in the sun or shoot the breakers like Hawaiian princes on a pre-missionary Waikiki. The symbol is too far-fetched for Australian taste. The image of Australia is of a man in an open-necked shirt solemnly enjoying an ice-cream. His kiddy is beside him. (1964:16)

Horne's lucky Australian is a male, sitting as far from the arid, inhospitable interior of the continent as is possible - on the beach, and at leisure, with his family and innocence intact. Such a fellow has a certain knockabout charm, but he is not too articulate beyond the simple egalitarian pleasures of the outdoor life where sport is perhaps the greatest pleasure of all (curiously inegalitarian when you want to win!). There are variations on this stereotype: Chips Rafferty and Paul Hogan have frequently played film characterisations; Steele Rudd's Dad and Dave, and C.J. Dennis' Sentimental Bloke are literary classics; the 'Golden Age' landscape painters of the late nineteenth century (Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, etc) who sought images of picturesque and romantic rural life.

In such image-making the implicit attitude to work is minimalist, muscly and practical, a response perhaps to the vulnerability white settlement felt in a vast, isolated continent. This has helped to produce an ambivalence to authority, where, on the one hand, collectivism has been an essential survival strategy (producing the

strength of unionism), but, on the other hand, an expectation of paternalistic government in key infrastructure provision (transport, communications, education).

At first glance, this image seems straight-forward enough, in that it is currently recognisable in 'larrikin' activities at certain sporting venues (on the Hill at the Sydney Cricket Ground; on the public lawns at Flemington on Melbourne Cup Day), and in 'mateship' rituals like Anzac Day and the much-remarked tendency to gather around the keg at parties to the exclusion of the company of women - who may have their own version of 'bonding' rituals. All these examples of that typical image are presented by the media as 'the boys' having a bit of fun. But *which* boys? The image in these contexts, above, is based on the working class at play. Against this can be set a middle-class image more akin to Horne's passive and homespun beach-sitter with his kiddy. The contrasts are interesting: conspicuous alcohol consumption versus sobriety; physical prowess and exuberance versus sedentary interests like gardening and barbeques; male bonding versus marriage; recklessness (like gambling) versus respectability (like saving for a home). Examples of this middle-class image of the Australian are found in the work of the brilliant satirist, Barry Humphries. He draws out this image most sensitively in his character, Sandy Stone (of Gallipoli Crescent, Glen Iris), and most savagely in 'Dame' Edna Everage (of Moonee Ponds), housewife superstar. Both represent an exploration, perhaps even a celebration, of Protestant propriety, and an elevation to iconic status of the 'little Aussie battler', albeit in class terms.

Even, then, within the one nation, and simultaneously, two images of the typical Australian can co-exist, depending on what values are thought to be the desirable ones. And adjacent to Australia, in New Zealand, can be found similarly ambivalent and ambiguous image-construction. Twenty years ago, the New Zealand sociologist McGee quoted Horne's view that 'the "home" occupies as central a position in Australian life as land in a peasant community', adding

> I would hold that these observations are also true for New Zealanders. The suburban bungalow has become the unquestioned idea - the dream milieu of 'home' and 'family'. We are, together with the Australians, a nation of suburban peasants. (1973:23)

Central to suburbanisation is what other New Zealand writers have called 'a carefully cushioned calvinism, a society of protection' (Ritchie and Ritchie 1973:88), where New Zealand life is a cycle between the violence and the vitality of the

frontier mentality, and the need for conformity and control. A current writer, Phillips puts it thus:

> Two powerful traditions have been at war in Pakeha [white] society. One tradition was established in the exclusively male communities of the colonial frontier - a tradition of physical strength, mateship, drinking and gambling. The other tradition, born of the Protestant middle class, became increasingly dominant at the end of the nineteenth century. It was the battle to make the male respectable. (1987:80)

Ordinary Australians and New Zealanders are thus characterisable, despite a recent recognition of ethnic diversity, as typically suburban, but wistfully rural, male, English-speaking, brawny rather than brainy, laconic and 'matey'. So close are the experiences and history of Australians and New Zealanders in, for example, white settlement, treatment of the indigenous people, war, education, law and the arts, that it should come as no surprise to find certain common image-making, and certain common explanations of those images. What the foregoing has done is merely alert us to the dimensions and depth of that commonality. This is therefore an example of the pertinence and persistence of objective epistemological and ontological considerations, against which culturally relative and diverse experiences can be 'read'.

'Australianness' and 'New Zealandness' are thus locatable in specific times and places as explanatory devices (even as 'terms of art') which make meaningful the experiences of the image-makers at those times and in those places. The image-makers are those individuals and groups who have the economic clout (land-owners, publishers etc) or intellectual force (artists, scientists, academics) to tell their stories, or have their stories told, which reflect their justifications for the way the world seems to them to be. (see White 1981: Introduction; Burgmann and Lee 1988a, 1988b; Whitlock and Carter 1992)

This is how language-games are made determinate, and cultures powerful. To revisit Polanyi: dominant image-making will reflect 'the speaker's sense of fitness for judging that his words [or images] express the reality he seeks to express' (113). In all this, it is essential, and, given the epistemological and ontological imperative made clear earlier, inevitable, that a careful respect for 'the facts' be maintained. What counts as a fact will be context-bound and culture-driven, but this will not erode the veracity of the factual, only sensitise the cultural analyst to the constructivism of meaningfulness. People, as individuals and as group members, will look to confirmations rather than disconfirmations of what they do or want to

do. Until recently, the history of Australia, for example, was written in accordance with the dominant groups' perceptions of that experience. That is, how it seemed to be for them. The facts, it was thought, spoke for themselves: what was obvious and factual was normal and typical. It was therefore universal. This was doubly inductive (this sample of facts leads to this definition of normality leads to this universality) and gave partial and conjectural conclusions, which were nevertheless the dominant accounts of Australian history. For example, it was a fact that the blacks were discovered in 1788 or thereabouts, but it was a context-bound and culture-driven fact. From a black perception, a white history presented without sensitivity to the cultural context of neither the facts nor the learners is based on facts used in a pseudo-objective way. The facts of that white history were filtered through a mechanism which legitimised some epistemological and ontological phenomena. Culturally relative perceptions did not create such phenomena, but they presented these in a universalised form which appeared to be endorsed objectively. The blacks effectively learnt that their experiences were marginalised to the point of invisibility. Similarly, white cultural history traditionally marginalised women. Traditional history was literally 'his story', in that it legitimised the supremacy of the Australian 'digger' image (and to some extent the New Zealand image as well - see Phillips 1987), in the trenches, the goldfields and, not surprisingly, on the beaches with his kiddy.

4.11 Images and Corporate Identity

The self-referential formation of identity is shown more strongly in the corporate sector where a concentration of interest on the culture of enterprises in recent years has been brought about by a perception that a crisper articulation of workplace values will elicit enhanced pursuit of corporate goals (whether these be private or public sector, commercial or service-oriented or some admixture of these). One popular statement of self-referential cultural identity is 'the way we do things around here'. Having quoted this definition and given its provenance, Deal and Kennedy go on:

> Every business - in fact every organisation - has a culture. Sometimes it is fragmented and difficult to read from the outside....Sometimes [it is] very strong and cohesive: everyone knows the goals of the corporation and they are working for them. Whether weak or strong, culture has a powerful influence throughout an organisation; it affects practically everything - from who gets promoted and what decisions are made, to how employees dress and what sports they play. Because of this effect, we

> think that culture also has a major effect on the success of the business. (1988:4)

Their second chapter is titled 'Values: The Core of the Culture', and they spell out the often inarticulate, tacit nature of the values which inevitably drive day-to-day behavior; in fact, they claim that specific operational sets of values give purpose to the entire workforce of that enterprise, and that 'shaping and enhancing values can become the most important job a manager can do' (22).

In the decade since Deal and Kennedy published their book, managerial work has embraced this role more fully. Drennan, in his book *Transforming Company Culture* (1992) also states that culture is 'the way we do things around here', but the 'we' is, for Drennan, the managers: he intends managers to be the agents of cultural change, and for them to direct this from above, as it were, in the interests of every worker and therefore of the enterprise itself.

However, this seems a naive analysis of cultural change. If the values of an enterprise endorse and maintain consciously hierarchical change, then that in itself is a basis for a model of culture, albeit one marked by imposition. All cultural change is value-laden, as Deal and Kennedy rightly emphasise, but the conscious pursuit of cultural changes by a power hierarchy, such as senior management, which has as its outcome the perception in non-management that the changes are foisted upon them, is itself an ingredient in a changed culture which is unlikely to lead to a happier workplace. People cannot be said to *be* empowered, if that is the desired outcome of a corporate culture which enshrines power in a managerial hierarchy. They may be able to *claim* empowerment, but this results from substantive changes to decision-making and resources, from which values leading to a happier workforce (such as collaboration, conflict-resolution) can be derived. Culture, as Williams has reminded us, is 'ordinary', even, and especially, in daily paid work; it is inevitably grown from the grass-roots, and is not a hot-house transplantation from Head Office.

This is a serious and current point of tension in the re-organisation and re-structure of the corporate enterprise (whether it be private or public sector), which we will need to expand upon.

What we want to continue to give prominence to is the immediacy of the decision-making that the new globally-oriented enterprise requires. This has, however, a presence beyond the experiences of the workforce as collections of

individuals, as was outlined earlier. Beyond the personal and the social is the structural or organisational level of action which is itself susceptible to and enmeshed in, the pace of change. Quick responses to market opportunities are required by the structures, as well as by the workplace individuals (both the leaders and all participants). How then can structures become adaptive to change? In a recent issue of *Harvard Business Review*, an impatience with many recent and innovative structural changes was stated as follows, along with an argument for a retrieval of a certain kind of management:

> Many managers felt that the emergence of new managerial ideas during the 1980s signalled the rejuvenation of US business. By readily adopting innovations such as total quality programs and self-managed teams, managers believed that they were demonstrating the kind of decisive leadership that kept companies competitive.
>
> ...Off-the-shelf programs addressing quality, customer satisfaction, time-to-market, strategic focus, core competencies, alliances, global competitiveness, organisational culture, and empowerment swept through the US corporations with alarming speed.
>
> ...In the majority of cases, research shows, the management fads of the last 15 years rarely produced the promised results.
>
> ...What accounts for such disastrous results? We believe it is the failure of US management to address its most serious problem: a lack of pragmatic judgement...managers rel[ied] on ready-made answers instead of searching for creative solutions....[M]anagers must start by reclaiming managerial responsibility.... (Nohria and Berkley 1994:128-9)

Here we note an exasperation with what is perceived as managers' pursuit of creativity-as-novelty. Instead, the writers urge a return to a more pragmatic, contextually sensitive, and, ultimately, a more interventionist, managerial style. Efficacy, improvisation and uncertainty are key aspects of this style, it is argued. But what is omitted is a commitment to more participative decision-making, as might be expected to show up in a facilitative model of leadership. This approach is submerged (e.g. in 'empowerment') in the list of 'off-the-shelf' programs, now to be jettisoned in favour of what can be taken as a return to Fordism - hierarchical, adversarial management.

Couple this conclusion with the recent notion of 're-engineering' (Champny and Hammer 1993). In another article. this is described as 'the task of reconstructing [business] processes to achieve radical improvements in effectiveness' (Barrett 1994:5). How to go about it? Let us take Total Quality

Management as an example of an 'off-the-shelf' participative and potentially empowering management approach. Barrett criticises TQM, which

> concerns itself with *how well* things are done. The presumption is that the process is essentially correct, and that many small refinements will lead to the optimum process....Re-engineering challenges the process itself by questioning *what* is done.
>
> What is required is a view of the total process concentrating on the value that it adds. The relevant Business Process Re-engineering principles are *take a high level view* and *focus on outcomes.* (Barrett 1994:5-6)

Re-engineering thus seems to push pragmatic managerialism further down the interventionist path. It does this by assuming that TQM cannot deal in the shaping of strategy because (a) it only refines the status quo, and (b) it cannot move fast enough.

However, TQM need not be characterised this way. Regarding (a), it may be claimed that participative decision-making seems as likely to produce both qualitative and quantitative changes, as not to produce them. If you broaden the base of the pyramid, it can reach higher. The status quo could then be transformed if the vision altered. Regarding (b), again, there seems nothing about participative decision-making that precludes rapid change, if the groups involved have a sense of ownership of the outcomes of the decisions they have made. With both (a) and (b) there is a powerful adult learning principle at stake: where people are affected by changes, they should be involved as fully as possible with the change process.

Participation then should be seriously addressed in any organisation seeking powerful cultural changes. Creativity and initative are not the exclusive preserve of management; the trick is to structure an organistation so that these qualities are encouraged universally, and rewarded. To make the same point: despite the descriptor, there seems nothing intrinsically elitist about the so-called 'higher-order' generic competencies of problem-solving, conflict resolution and the like which puts their exercise beyond the capacities of the workforce at large. So, the immediate educational question is: can a facilitation model of workplace learning achieve quantum change?

4.12 Leadership of Learning

Here we have a difficulty. Sheldrake, at the Australian Institute of Management, has recently stated:

> Learning as facilitation is a key issue for us in the adult learning field. We have moved from the model of the trainer (the teacher as didactic presenter), which is discredited, to the facilitator. However, I think the facilitator role is also becoming discredited, because it is seen as an approach whereby learning is a process owned by the participants only, and you stand away from it and become uninvolved...I think a better model is that of the guide...learners are going off on some kind of trek, and you need to go with someone who knows something, who has some idea of the terrain, and who does know you need to wear boots...someone who has relevant knowledge. A good guide is a person who does that, who guides, who does not tell. (1992:63-64)

What is at issue is the leadership of workplace learning, and what is at stake is the ownership of workplace learning. A more directive role for the leader - say, as a guide - need not infringe the sense of ownership a group or an individual may have of their learning. Such direction should be apparent in presenting the values and vision of the work environment even if these are up for reform. In short, a more directive, less facilitative role for the leadership of workplace learning depends for its veracity on contextual sensitivity. After all, it is, inevitably, a specific organisational setting which is animating generic human competencies.

This is another way of asking *what workplace learning is for*. If Shein is right that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is create and manage culture, re-engineering may imply a return to the traditional workplace culture in which, to be brief, workers learn that they do not act, but instead are acted upon. This is a culture of repression, well and justly criticised as we saw earlier (in section 4.2: Johnson-Riordan 1994), as job-slotting, or, in our terms, compliance. But is may also be accurate that blind faith in the mere facilitation of participative structures generates unrealistic expectations across the workforce about the ownership of the workplace and the direction of the work itself. This is a culture of frustration.

Leadership of workplace learning, in the more directive sense summed up by Sheldrake as 'guidance', is delicately positioned between the two polarities just

outlined. In cultural terms, a certain amount of ambiguity comes with this new position. On one hand, an organisation wants to involve all the workforce in participative structures which improve the quality and quantity of the work; on the other hand, the same organisation wants to identify and advance its strategic advantages. Only some people will be in a position to articulate this in the time frame available to maintain an advantage. Structures will need to be flexible and adaptive, but will also need to take seriously, that is, inclusively, the experiences of the workforce.

Given all the above, it is suggested that an appropriate metaphor is one of *layering*. Certain circumstances will require a traditional training model, because there are always specific skills which lend themselves to a behaviourism, such as certain information technology skills. Other circumstances will require a facilitation model, where group-based and -owned outcomes generate a cohesion and a purpose for the organisational unit (such as a TQM process produces). Yet other circumstances will require a more sophisticated model, centred on directive leadership. Aspects of this may be mentoring or coaching (analagous to 'guidance').

In this way, layering will just reflect more of the diversity of the workforce. Whether or not it engages a variety of learning styles is another debate we cannot enter here. The point of the diversity will be structural and strategic: if an organisation can be called a 'learning' entity it is not that the entity learns, but that the learning that inevitably goes on is educational. This means that it is positive, encouraged, and purposeful. Specific learning experiences will be specifically appropriate: workforce organisational units (such as a 'team') will be able to see their setting within the overall structure of an enterprise, and not expect that a team's activities *per se* will range across the entire organisation.

This is not an argument for acquiescence or compliance ('everyone knows his/her place...') but, rather, a recognition that change management has to be serious about power. It is quite possible for small participative work groups to consult, to co-opt, and to collaborate. This may be entirely internally, about matters inclusive to that group's operations. More interestingly, an organisational structure may foster a culture of consultation, co-operation or collaboration between work groups. Now what admixture of these three very different power relationships is available will be a variable which ought nonetheless be settled from time to time so everyone knows what expectations of power (what share of the decision-making) can be legitimate. It is the mismatch between the organisational 'espoused' values and the 'values-in-

use' (to use Argyris and Schön 1978) which is a source of the miseducative workplace learning experience for individual workers, and therefore the beginning of the end of an enterprise's claim on being a learning organisation. Corporate culture - the 'how we do things around here' - cannot then manage change other than by coercion.

4.13 Cultural Formation

A more sensitive deployment of the same succinct definition of culture comes from Hargreaves (Education, Cambridge). In 'The New Professionalism: The synthesis of professional and organisational development' (1994) he observes

> ...cultures do not change because people think about it then choose a new one....The *culture* of teachers (that is, their values, beliefs, preferences, routines, and practices - "how we do things around here") is interwoven with the *structure* of their social relationships with one another (the distribution of power, pattern of status, systems of communication, physical location). (425)

It follows that educators, whether they be teachers of adults in educational institutions, or workplace leaders with educative as well as managerial roles, demonstrate a propensity to 'read' their professional context for its cultural significance. Once this commences, the individualism which has typified what professional practice consisted in - the traditional one-to-one consultancy model - can be seen in a social context, coloured and filled in by the particular cultural values of the profession concerned. In education, and many parts of the workforce itself, the emerging evidence suggests more collaboration, based on an appreciation of the strengths of shared abilities. Hargreaves (1994) sums it up this way:

> At its core, the new professionalism involves a movement away from the teacher's traditional professional authority and autonomy towards new forms of association with colleagues, with students, and with parents. These relationships are becoming closer as well as more intense and collaborative, involving more explicit negotiation of roles and responsibilities. The conventional classroom focus of teachers' work is now set within a framework of whole-school policies, and the planning and implementation of agreed priorities....Teachers are not merely working more co-operatively: they feel a stronger obligation towards and responsibility for their colleagues. (424)

This new professionalism, generalisable from school-teaching to the teaching of adults, with the rider that institutional structures are far more variable in adult

education, requires a comprehensive overhaul of the tri-partite characterisation of professional practice (summed up by Eraut, in section 4.1) as endemically individualistic, pragmatic and uncertain. First, while the learners, clients and patients may present individually, the strongest resources for dealing with such cases may be pooled ones. Second, the pragmatic orientation of practice can be refined by shared reflection-on-action. Third, the uncertainty of the professional judgement can be reduced if more practitioners make connections between their critical cases and other practitioners' critical cases. A new, more collaborative professional practice does not shed any of the individual responsibility practitioners have for their work, nor does it entail any less discretion, nor discreteness, but it should bolster an eclectic epistemology. Professional knowledge, both propositional and experiential, will be conceptualised more as a social product as much as its current status as an individual practitioner's achievement. New professionalism will need new images of its relationship to cultural contexts. And to generate *those*, professionals will need to be able to 'read' their own workplace in broad social settings as well as for the particular values pertinent to their profession. They will need, in short, to look beyond their work, as well as look intensively at its values. What will count as 'facts' as the grounding of any epistemology will be recognised as having filtered through a reading of the location and purpose of any practice. The argument is that such filtering, or mediation, is as much a social process embedded in evolving power relations, as it is an individual's reading of the context and culture of his or her work. Professionals have always powerfully shaped society (in conjunction with other forces) but they also are shaped by it, and increasingly are coming to see the benefits for more robust and responsible practice of reading contextual and cultural considerations more closely.

What is in train in contemporary professional practice is an emergent concept of *cultural formation*. Professionals are becoming more involved in locating their professional values and knowledge in broader social settings, instead of inheriting, replicating and distributing a professional heritage. The heritage necessarily exists, but is itself mediated by the individual's reading of the context of his or her practice, and, as we have seen, this is now more likely to include richer social purposes and epistemologies resulting from collaborative association amongst one's peers.

This process is deliberately and simultaneously to lay oneself open to cultural formation, and to participate in it. However, the extent of the cultural arena will be perceived variously. Some practitioners and their peers will concern themselves with a professional culture, within broad social and public values they

acknowledge but wish to keep at arm's length. For example, legal and accountancy practices may be increasingly collaborative, but have no greater sense of broader purposes other than the amelioration of injustice, corruption and inefficiency. These are assuredly social virtues, but they do not require for their fulfilment an activist stance; they fit an epistemological and ontological framework already in place. Education and nursing, by contrast, lend themselves to a wider arena of social involvement. The territory of practice comes contested to the individual practitioner when the field is entered, and he or she has to set the epistemological and ontological boundaries, mainly because the pursuit of social virtues is open-ended. The 'enabling' professions lend themselves to broader activism, albeit in the new collaborative forms of association.

Thus the reading of contextual factors will be a universal feature of professional practice, but to move beyond that to a recognition of one's own profession's location (or 'situatedness') is to acknowledge a symbiotic formative process. What such a culturally-formed professional practice looks like will vary depending on the perception of the extent of the arena of social involvement, as has been briefly indicated. But wherever the profession is, on a spectrum of such perceptions, the new professional will be adept at learning from, and contributing to, collaborative peer association. In brief, the new professional recognises and contributes to his or her cultural formation. This means his or her practice is more likely to overtly display an eclectic epistemology, and a sensitivity to a shared ontology. So we may conclude that this new professional will own his or her workplace identity in a rich and substantial sense, because it will connect individual practice with social and cultural phenomena at several levels, and in manifold modes.

4.14 Integrative Inference of Competence

Cultural formation is the best way to approach practice. Or, to put the same point even more forcefully, cultural formation is the way to approach 'best practice'. This pursuit of quality performance is usually found in the sort of policy analyses and social commentaries which outline the international competitiveness now expected of Australia and all other similar nations (see, for example, Penington 1992, Collins 1993). Earlier in this chapter, we noted the increasing concentration on national education and training policies as significant aspects of a revitalised national economy, and, within that, the need for more sophisticated leadership qualities (see section 4.3). A central characterisation of these qualities was mentioned in the reference to 'integrated competence' (NOOSR 1990a, 1990b, 1992) which moves

beyond the mere listing of tasks (what is done in the job), by adding the cataloguing of attributes, (what is brought to the doing of the job) and finally including the location (where the job is done). Cultural formation, then, is an enlightening approach to best professional practice, because it deals centrally and holistically with the complexities and dynamics of values, both individual and social, which, as we have shown, form epistemological and ontological judgements for professionals.

But the whole approach hinges on the integration of the three essential dimensions of workplace performance, which, taken together, justify the *inference of competent practice*. The inference is important.

Two criticisms result if the inference is dispensed with:

• firstly, the integrated approach collapses, without the inference, into a naive behaviourism, because all that is observable *is* behaviour.

• secondly, the inference of generalisable or generic competence is unwarranted, because the practices are particular, and the probability of transference beyond the particular can, like all inductive argument, only give probability, no stronger warrant of existence.

Let us develop these two points, as they are substantially a single point.

For the integrated approach to professional practice, the problem is: it may pin down the specific outcomes (on which inference is based) so succinctly that professional discretion is eliminated from the requirement to make unique judgements. This in turn means the *sui generis* nature of much professional action is also eliminated. A professional could only retreat (in Eraut's statement of Broudy's modes of knowledge; see section 4.1) to a 'replication' or 'application' mode, rather than the freer 'interpretative' or 'associative modes'. In this situation, not only naive behaviourism (replicating or applying a body of knowledge), but also the inability to justify generalisable competence (and hence remaining with the 'here and now') exhaust whatever experiential richness the integrated model of competence was intended to capture. We are left with mindless role-modelling: not the image of the professional in any century, nor in any field of practice!

Professional competence, construed in the integrated sense, is, according to this central, united criticism - that of mindless role-modelling - nothing more than closet

behaviourism, concerned with what is observably being done right here, and right now.

4.14.1 Closet Behaviourism

Taking , first, the closet behaviourism tangent, Walker makes the following contrast:

> [O]ccupational competence cannot be distinguished in principle from competence in the knowledge base, the values, attitudes and philosophy of the occupation. These may not be sufficient for each and every occupational competency, but they are necessary. They are part of, not separate from, occupational competency, whether the separateness is postulated in terms of a base or anything else....Holists have fallen into the trap of accepting sufficient of the behaviourist trap to reinforce the distinction. (Walker 1993:20)

He goes on to argue that the integrated model is circular because it defines competence in terms of competency, and, if that is not intended, nevertheless

> ...it reinforces the gap between theory and practice that behaviourism trades on to eschew theory, and that technicist versions of occupational (including professional) competence use to reject wider doctrines of professional responsibility. (20)

How could the integrated or holistic model be defended against these claims of technicism, circularity and, ultimately, closet behaviourism?

All three claims can be engaged and overcome through the deployment of the analysis of professional practice as cultural formation. In this, we noted that particular professions will evolve a filtering, or mediation of their epistemological and ontological frameworks, and that practitioners will develop their individual versions of these as specific workplaces (or 'locations') are made sense of in the daily round of decision-making and judgements which substantially constitute the acting intentionally of professionalism. Furthermore, prior to this, we identified certain qualities thought, at least currently, to typify certain workplace leadership. And, finally, the new professional was marked out by collaborative forms of association learning from and contributing to the very shaping of professional practice for the individual and his or her peers. This detailed and rich display of socio-cultural phenomena and some of their inter-relationships can generate its own judgements of what is, in Kultgen's terms, 'professional proficiency'. What

makes a right judgement thus and so? In the broad and inclusive sense that proficiency consists in the technical skills, the social virtue and the ability to make appropriately justifiable decisions, 'integrated competence' is what an informed and reflective profession's peer group says it is. The inferences that are made from observable criteria to the ascription of competence are identical in logical form to those made in academia of a student's learning, from the evidence of outcomes such as theses, essays and tutorial presentations. In practical work (laboratory classes, field trips, practica and micro-teaching assignments) the inference of educational competence from observable behaviour is even more direct, and incontrovertible. Indeed, one of the staunchest reasons for the persistence of public examinations is so an individual can be seen (sic) to be doing his work - that is, can 'show' the extent of his competence. Similarly, in the judicial system, demonstrations of remorse and admissions of guilt are key behavioural influences on the calculation of the likelihood of recidivism, and therefore in sentencing. On a lighter note, when a convicted criminal, off to imprisonment, makes the riposte to the judge to the effect that 'that's only your opinion, Your Honor', we laugh. In the context of the law court, His Honor's opinion in the authoritative one. And when a football commentator announces that the Hawks were 'the better team, on the day', we should immediately recognise that the context of the football field during the game is, literally, the appropriately authoritative arena for deciding an evaluative outcome like a football trophy.

So what do the critics of integrated competence want? It seems that there is available some other way of deciding professional competence other than through a philosophically sensitive, collaborative and particularistic methodology, but we do not know what it may consist in. Meanwhile, the richness of the approach we have, summarised as integrated professional practice, and supported by an analysis of cultural formation is neither technicist, circular nor behaviourist. It is acknowledged that technical knowledge, observable (i.e. public) behaviour and definitional integrity are all components of this view of competence, but the same can be expected of any complex human activities, such as academic learning, judicial process and sporting prowess. In all cases, we infer qualities which can be derived from the nature of the activities themselves. We even tend to identify the qualities by their appropriateness to the activities: scholarship, remorse and athleticism are all inferred at the right time and place, through technical knowledge, behaviour and at least implicit definitional agreement. Integrative competence and cultural formation as complementary and explanatory analyses of professional practice, do no violence to the 'facts' of best practice. On the contrary, they justify not merely the particularities which are judged the 'best' by

professionals, but also the practices from which value judgements like that can be drawn.

Walker, re-read, can only agree with this conclusion. He wants holism to work: the preceding discussion has shown that it can. And in another document (Walker 1992) he expressly supports a 'performance model' of competence for the teaching profession, which emphasises the actions of teachers in making 'situational judgements'. The similarity of this performance model to the integrated model of competence is noted by Hager (1994), drawing on Kerr and Soltis (1974), who state:

> ...one applies the adverb 'competently' only to those movements which a person *intends* as a *particular* type of activity....Thus, while it is possible to describe teaching, or any other human activity, as either *action,* which necessarily involves intended activity and appeals to a person's reasons and goals to explain the activity, or as *behaviour,* which can be specified directly in terms of observable movement, and appeals to causes for explanation, our interest in competency advises an action description. (4-5)

Walker himself draws upon the well-known adult educator Houle (1980) and on Nowlen (1988). In using the performance perspective (1992: 97-100), which concentrates on professional practice as intentional action (or more accurately, we argued in section 4.6, on 'acting intentionally'). Walker could be dealing with the more dynamic workplace leaders (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 above) when he writes

> Thus in planning professional education and professional development account needs to be taken of the importance of the environments and cultures of organisations and groups, and of the desirability of promoting the capacity for organisational as well as individual learning....Given this practical human and organizational context of professional development, and the need for the professional to develop the capacity for judgement within it, sound professional performance will require knowledge of applied human relations and life skills as well as critical skills of mind. (1992:98)

He is keen to identify teaching's generic competencies, which provides us with a link to the second tangent of the overall criticism that integrated competence collapses into mindless role-modelling.

4.14.2 Generalisability

It will be recalled that the particularistic nature of the integrated approach cannot generate any valid generalisable, or generic, competencies, because it can only deal with the right here, right now.

Here, the response to the criticism seems to depend on the scope of the generalisability of the competencies. Walker, for example, states

> ...we can identify, within a structure of competence, generic competencies present in good teaching in all teaching roles and sectors, though they will be combined and exercised in different ways and by different teachers with different teaching styles....Not all competencies are generic. There are specific competencies relevant only to specific teaching setttings. Generic competencies have meaning and value in all settings, but are not necessarily by themselves sufficient for competent performance in any setting. (95)

Recent empirical work on practical intelligence has shown, regarding intelligent functioning, for example, similarly generalisable, but occupation-specific, combinations of competencies. Klemp and McClelland ask

> Does what we have found among managers relate to intelligent functioning in other occupations? The answer to this question is most certainly yes...we have found considerable consistency in the applicability of certain competencies. Outstanding performers in the helping professions - physicians, counselors, social workers, teachers - all rely on a high degree of planning/causal thinking and diagnostic information seeking in collecting and interpreting observations and data and making recommendations on the basis of their conclusions....[etc.] But what makes successful senior managers different from successful people in these other occupations is the specific combination of intellectual and other competencies that they require and the behavioural manifestations of these competencies in the appropriate context.... (1986:49)

Wagner and Sternberg, investigating tacit knowledge as an aspect of practical intelligence, note limited but clear empirical support for this type of distinction:

> The evidence in support of a general ability for practical tasks will be more convincing when generalised individual differences similar to those found in the two career pursuits examined here [academic psychology and business management] are found for other career pursuits... (1986:77)

Similar scepticism about the breadth of the generalisability of competence is expressed by Marginson:

> Research being conducted at the University of Melbourne's Centre for the Study of Higher Education suggests that the claim about universal transferable generic skills needs critical scrutiny. Employers are using the same words in very different contexts. (1993a)

He is mainly concerned with the academic-to-work transferability we discussed in section 4.4 above, but the substantive point holds: different contexts have different cultures: what counts as skill, even as a generic skill (like 'oral communication') in one context (say, a tutorial) may appear as a deficiency in another (say, a workplace team meeting) (Marginson 1993b).

Generic competency, which includes skills in the fully-fleshed sense of Kultgen's 'proficiency', then, is a shaky construct beyond the practice or even performance which assembled it. There seems to be empirical and conceptual support for generic competency within a professional field, with limited prospects for transferability. Part of the evidence for that is the agreements professional peers can and do reach about 'best practice'; there are individuals we have in mind when we make these generalisations. The humbling aspect of this is that we have different individuals in mind, even if there is substantial overlap if we start naming!

The professional judgements made as best practice will vary across the range of best practitioners, and, as we have remarked before, this is to be expected and esteemed as evidence of the discretionary freedom professionals exercise. But the freedom is both bound by and bound up in the cultural formation of those practices. It follows that the integrated model of competence can produce generic competencies, but it would be wrong, in so doing, to move beyond the culturally-characterised practices in which these competencies, diverse and discretionary as they hopefully are, can flourish.

The development of an 'integrated' model of professional competence, in section 4.14, can now be summarised.

We have dealt with two tangents of the single central criticism of the integrated model of professional competency. These were, respectively, that the inference from behaviour to competence was unsupportable as it was 'closet behaviourism', technicist, and definitionally circular; and that the identification of generic or

generalisable competence was not warranted on the basis of specific practices. Both of these tangents meet over the central area of professional discretion - the judgement-in-individual-cases - where it is essential that interpretative and associative modes of knowledge be retained as constitutive of practice. The dissolution of this single central criticism was accomplished by the extrapolation of how professionals' cultural formation supports practice, by both enabling collaborative peer negotiation of 'best practice' and also by marking the boundaries of generalisability of particular practice. These imply an integrated, or holistic, understanding of professional competence.

4.15 Summary

What, then, has this Chapter achieved?

In the latter half of the Chapter, the grafting of *a theory of cultural formation* to *an integrationist analysis of competence* serves to underpin professional practice more substantially. And underpinning integrationist competence is the development, in the first half of the Chapter, of an *integrative intentionality*. This was an examination of the phenomenalism of professional action, given the dynamism of one form of practice (the leadership of workplace cultural change), especially in the context of national policies aimed at globalised competitiveness. A key element of this intentionality was a recognition of the limits of reflection-in-action, and its replacement by a theorisation of what was called *anticipative action*.

Chapter Four, then, has addressed the contextual formation of professional practice by emphasising both the immediacy and dynamism of phenomenal *action*, and the constitutive nature of the sociocultural formation and ascription of *competence*. It has done so by developing integrated approaches to both.

It is to the detailed integration of *these*, in experience *per se*, and for selfhood, that is the business of Chapters Five and Six.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPERIENCE

5.1 Reality

> Philosophers of education in recent times, so far as I have discovered, have not spent much time or energy on any fundamental consideration of experience itself, yet this has been one of the central problems of philosophy. (Simons 1985:1)

In Chapter One, the crucial significance of experience in adult education literature was identified, and its relatively unexamined state noted. Now an attempt to rectify this will be made, shaped by a discussion of experience as the 'given' apprehension of human awareness.

What experience is *of* (as distinct from what it is *for*, such as adult learning) is the primary issue. Our considerations will deal in logical, ontological and epistemological perspectives, on which judgements of the value of various experiences - say, for adult learning - depend for their cogency.

If we assume, as a point of entry to these considerations, a 'given' ontological objectivity, a 'real' world out there for us to experience, which assumption sounds an uncontroversial and conceptually modest starting point, we immediately generate logical and epistemological puzzles of the utmost philosophical profundity.

Consider, in this respect, the following statement by Elliot Eisner, in *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Enquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice* (1991):

> How can we ever know if our views of reality match or correspond to it? To know that we have a correspondence between our views of reality and reality itself, we would need to know two things. We would need to know reality as well as our views of it. But if we knew reality as it really is, we would not need to have a view of it. Conversely, since we cannot have knowledge of reality as it is, we cannot know if our view corresponds to it. (45)

Eisner is too swift in concluding that 'if we knew reality as it really [sic] is, we would not need to have view of it'. Surely we would need a way of knowing that it *was* reality we knew, and further, that we would maintain a view of it, but know it to be a *true* view. Viewing reality directly is nonetheless still a view of reality, not a dispensable phenomenon.

If Eisner's first conclusion is false, his second claim is also false for the same reason. He states that '...since we cannot have knowledge of reality as it is, we cannot know if our view corresponds to it'. Surely an inability to view reality *as it is*, is still a view of reality. If we decide we cannot view reality directly, then just that *is* our reality, not some other 'real' state, to which correspondence is the proper relationship. Our reality is what we take to be real. Immediately a layer of interpretation (how we access reality) starts to determine 'what is', then ontology is supplanted by methodology.

This chapter, then, will strive to avoid the trap that Eisner seems to have fallen into. There is a good prospect of doing this, if it is borne in mind throughout that our focus is 'experience', that is, how reality (whatever that may be) is *presented* to us. If experience - defined initially as the 'given' apprehension of human awareness - is discussed in the light of its contribution to our access to reality, we tread close to the trap that has claimed Eisner. The *presentation of reality in the form of experience* is a more specific and less overtly metaphysical project.

In the first half of this chapter (sections 5.2, 5.3, 5.4), an argument will be developed which unravels the ontological, logical and epistemological perspectives implicit in the notion of experience as 'given', and reassembles these in a more sophisticated structure.

The second half of the chapter (sections 5.5, 5.6 - a summary section, 5.7, 5.8) identifies a less helpful and then a more helpful concept of human agency. The less helpful concept of agency is found in some writers for whom:

(a) the 'given' is conceptualised simplistically, that is, without regard for its ontological implications; and,

(b) it is thought to follow from such conceptualisations, that individual humans can choose their experiences from across an exceptionally wide range.

This is reflected in educational ideologies which exhort learners to 'make what they want of themselves' and in the common assumption that, say, school leavers should have a plan for their lives ('what do you want to be when you grow up?'). Adult educators and all professional practitioners are subject to this ideology through the expectation that one's work life is up to oneself to shape. In all these cases, what is driving exhortations to make, plan and shape 'what one wants' is an assumption that the world is one's oyster. The freedom that professionals traditionally enjoy to make the discretionary judgements required by unique individual circumstances is thought to generate the autonomy to appreciate and pursue experiential richness from amongst a bewildering variety of possibilities.

In a nutshell, the rationale for these views is attacked forcefully in Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter Five concludes with some suggestions for a more helpful notion of agency to accompany the more sophisticated account of experience. Agency is addressed in greater detail in Chapter Six, where the individualistic selfhood and atomistic autonomy required for extravagant and potentially selfish professionalism are questioned and reconstituted in ways that are more communitarian.

Chapter Five will establish, contrary to (a) above, that a sophisticated concept of the 'given' is available, and therefore, that, contrary to (b), the breadth of the range of choice of experiences is overstated.

5.2 The Given

Williams in *Groundless Belief* (1977) quotes Lewis (1929/1956) when he writes:

> The idea that there is a given element in experience reflects one side of a distinction which Lewis regarded as 'one of the oldest and most universal of philosophical insights'. He put the point like this:
>
> > There are in our cognitive experience, two elements, the immediate data such as those of sense, which are presented or given to the mind, and a form, or construction, or interpretation, which represents the activity of thought. [Lewis 1956:38]

> I shall call the view that Lewis is alluding to 'the two components' view. He is surely right that epistemological theories embodying a distinction along the above lines have had a long run of philosophical popularity. The two components of knowledge are the sensuously given and the pure concept. (Williams 1977:26-27)

Williams notes that Lewis thought this distinction was obvious:

> If there be no datum given to the mind, then knowledge must be altogether contentless and arbitrary; there would be nothing it must be true to. And if there be no interpretation which the mind imposes, then thought is rendered superfluous, the possibility of error becomes inexplicable, and the distinction of true and false is in danger of becoming meaningless. (Lewis 1956:39, in Williams 27-28)

Williams goes on:

> It is not difficult to see what Lewis is getting at. Our knowledge of the physical world must have a foundation in perception or observation. It cannot all be a matter of theorizing or inference: there must be some data on the basis of which to theorise or to make inferences, if the result of such activity is not to be 'contentless and arbitrary'. (28)

In contrast to this 'two components view', consider the way recent and current philosophy of social science is heading. In *New Philosophy of Social Science: Problems of Indeterminacy* (1991), James Bohman makes these introductory points:

> The social sciences should be empirical in the broad sense of being verified or falsified by evidence. But in the absence of neutral description, establishing the data and explaining them often go hand in hand...(6)
>
> The proper form of explanation in the social sciences is both non-reductionist and non-determinist, treating phenomena that are not only diverse and irregular, but intentional and complex. (6-7)
>
> ...actions are doubly indeterminate: they are performed by reflective and knowledgeable actors in interaction with other reflective and knowledgeable actors. (7)

Like Lewis, we do want to avoid the 'contentless and arbitrary', and we do want to claim the support of objectivity for our inference and theorising. Yet, following Bohman, it is inescapably the case that human activities, social and individual, are 'doubly indeterminate', the result of diverse, complex

interactions, where what is fact emerges from and is embedded in human experiences and explanations of those experiences.

In brief, what counts as 'the given' is problematic, especially for education as a branch of the social sciences, and even more so for adult education because of its emphasis on starting with and staying 'true' to human experience as a touchstone of sound learning and teaching practice.

As we discussed in the preceding chapter, a full and central recognition of the contextuality or 'situatedness' of knowledge and truth has become the way to resolve this dilemma, especially in the light of approaches to contextuality such as Wittgenstein's. To recapitulate: for him, meaningfulness arises from the usage of language within 'forms of life'; that is to say, within culturally-shaped communities.

But even here, the epistemological dilemma reappears, as shown by the emphatic rejection of the Wittgensteinian program by another philosopher of social science, Trigg. First, however, Trigg notes the hope of enlightenment which Wittgenstein's approach offers:

> How far does the later Wittgenstein's theory of meaning help the practice of social science? At first sight, the intertwined trinity of the public, the social, and the contextual, provides an important rationale for social science. When meanings are not just public property, but enmeshed in the nature of a society so that they may not be understood apart from it, it seems to be the social scientist who may provide the key to such understanding. When society is given such prominence, social explanation is going to be of primary importance. Individuals derive their role from wider patterns of life and do not come to society preformed. We do not enter society with ready-made ideas or beliefs, or with any prior understanding of anything. Society made us. Thought apart from language is to be ruled out. (1991:214)

From this exposition of the Wittgensteinian approach, Trigg argues that this implies humans can never reach beyond their situations, their current understandings, and indeed, the metaphysical *status quo:* all we can know is the internal relations of the 'given'.

In particular, he accuses Wittgenstein of

> [t]he refusal to distinguish between the subject and the object of knowledge, the implicit attack on the possibility of unprejudiced reason,

> the removal of the possibility of truth as a standard - all of this adds up to a direct assault on the very possibility of rationality, [and will]...result in a paralysing relativism....[E]thnocentricity becomes inevitable. (1991:218-9)

He goes on:

> For knowledge to be possible in the field of social science, the nature of society, or social reality, has to be regarded as distinct from the investigator. (220)

These are basically Lewis's points revisited: there has to be an independent, epistemologically objective, reality because if there is not, then sociology has no point. Social enquiry is either totally enmeshed in the world of the participants in that enquiry, or totally irrelevant to it. Yet, Trigg concludes, we do expect to get beneath the surface of human interaction: 'the understanding of the participants may not tell the whole story' (222). To investigate human life, social scientists 'must use a reason unconstrained by the factors of a particular language-game...Our ability to reason about reality lies at the root of our intellectual endeavour'. (222)

The development of an argument against Trigg's criticisms begins with the identification of the question-begging nature of the determination of (reasoned) understanding by resort to the 'facts' of reality. He can not be permitted to assume that an objective material world (of 'facts') provides, *prima facie*, the solid epistemological foundation which is to underpin social science research, when, as Bohman recognises, human life is marked by 'doubly indeterminate' interactions between 'reflective and knowledgeable actors'. This must include social scientists as much as anyone. Thus it can equally be assumed that the facts *under*determine reasoned understanding, including the efforts by social scientists to theorise about any aspects of human life.

Bearing in mind that our interest in ontology is fuelled in this chapter by how what we call 'reality' is *presented* to us in experience, rather than in what reality is, we can move promptly beyond what can be called Trigg's dogmatic realism. His realism assumes that the existence of an objective world is sufficient basis for the generation of knowledge about it; we must acknowledge early in this chapter that experience of that world (whatever is 'objective' or not about it) arises for humans in ways that frequently produce confusion, error, and conflict. The knowledge (and indeed the fragile but crucial distinction between knowledge and belief) arising through, and presented in, experience is already

filtered in ways we have little or no awareness of, much less control over. It is for this reason that experience as a basis of learning immediately clashes with the ideals of education (and of science and a whole range of human activities where 'truth' is an ideal).

We have a daily unreflective commitment to experience and its deployment in any methods of enquiry (it is often called common-sense), but of course common-sense is frequently neither so common nor sensible. It is particularly problematic for truth-claims. More reflective analysis, such as we find ourselves undertaking in philosophizing, and in professional practice in general as outlined in Chapters Two and Three, occurs after the phenomena have themselves been 'given'. Even Schön's contemporaneous 'reflection-in-action' needs a 'given' - an experience. It is this 'givenness' which gives epistemic authority both to facts (facts are items presented as experience 'in' the world, which seem to speak for themselves), and also to beliefs and judgements (beliefs and judgements re-present experience, that is, with the benefit of hindsight).

But it does not follow from that that the very factual *framework* of our experience is epistemic. We have no common-sense access to the framework of spatio-temporal concepts in itself - we just find ourselves committed to the use of these concepts in the myriad causal and spatio-temporal phenomena which constitute experience. Thus the framework of experience is accessible only insofar as it is manifest in those experiences themselves. The experiences are created as experiences by the framework; put around the other way those experiences are our sole access to the framework. They make the framework manifest in their very existence. Stepping back a little, and considering the logical form of the argument, we can claim we have explained humans' commitment to the framework of human experience by appealing to a transcendental argument - *we have gone beyond experience in explaining how experience itself is constituted*. Can a transcendental argument do the work required of it in this context? It requires, as we shall see, logical and epistemological distinctions which cut across the common view that humans can and indeed should choose their aims and activities from a bewildering, even seamless, range of possibilities: that we can make ourselves what we want to be.

5.3 The Transcendent

Dewey, for example, did not accept transcendental argument, because for him it does not preserve the seamlessness of experience. He deals with its definition in connection with the criticisms he makes of Froebel who

> conceived development to be the unfolding of a ready-made latent principle. He failed to see that growing is growth, developing is development, and consequently placed emphasis on the completed product... (1916:68)

Dewey goes on to criticise what he characterises as the aetherial remoteness of transcendental argument, which, in his view, purports to fit with the open-ended unfolding of human capacities as shown by growth, but ends up (literally) too far from the immediacy of the actual growing and developing:

> A remote goal of complete unfoldness is, in technical philosophical language, transcendental. That is, it is something apart from direct experience and perception. So far as experience is concerned, it is empty; it represents a vague sentimental aspiration rather than anything that can be intelligently grasped and stated. This vagueness must be compensated for by some *a priori* formula. Froebel made the connection between the concrete facts of experience and the transcendental ideal of development by regarding the former as symbols of the latter. To regard known things as symbols, according to some arbitrary *a priori* formula - and every *a priori* conception must be arbitrary - is an invitation to romantic fancy... (1916:68)

Dewey's critical target is the 'romantic fancy' he saw as the metaphysical idealism of the nineteenth century, which with Hegel, culminates in a self-justifying and completely dominant Absolute, with educationally and politically pernicious implications, at least for Dewey's democratic society. Prior to Hegel, Dewey is prepared to recognise

> the efforts of a whole series of German writers - Lessing, Herder, Kant, Schiller, Goethe...which destroyed completely...the psychology that regarded 'mind' as a ready-made possession of a naked individual by showing the significance of 'objective mind' - language, government, art religion - in the formation of individual minds. (69)

What is 'arbitrary' here? Dewey states that 'every *a priori* conception must be arbitrary', but if by 'arbitrary' is construed as 'contingent', he lays himself open to the charge that he has misrepresented Kant and an entire philosophical debate Kant generated which centres on what about human experience is necessarily, *not* contingently, constitutive of it. We cannot settle that charge here (Dewey's depth of philosophical scholarship makes the charge tentative), but it does provide a convenient point of entry to the ontology of experience.

Kant states very early in the *Critique of Pure Reason:* 'But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience' (1929:41). He goes on to ask himself

> whether there is any knowledge that is thus independent of experience and even of all impressions of the senses. Such knowledge is entitled *a priori*, and distinguished from the empirical, which has its sources *a posteriori*, that is, in experience. (42-3)

So, for Kant, *a priori* knowledge is certainly not, *pace* Dewey, arbitrary. On the contrary it is 'analytic': such knowledge could not but be true independent of experience. Philosophical debate over the ensuing two hundred years centred on whether *a priori* knowledge establishes anything non-taulologous which is interesting about experience (for example, 'can a surface be red and green all over at the same time?'). The analytic was contrasted with the term 'synthetic', that is, a synthesis or fusion of knowledge given by the senses, much as we today describe the apprehension of our awareness of consciousness as given experience. The power and persistence of these distinctions is derived from the implications for human knowledge of their veracity. The quest for secular epistemic certainty, generated in the seventeenth century by the Cartesian *cogito*, fuelled by rationalism and humanism across the Western intellectual landscape in the eighteenth century, finally, at least to Dewey, foundered on the excesses of German romanticised idealism in the late nineteenth century.

Dewey took Occam's Razor to the Kantian project. In arguing, conclusively, against the arbitrary Absolute, and the educational conformity and repression that he detected it produced, he threw the metaphysical baby out with the bathwater.

If we are to deal satisfactorily with the notion of the 'given', we will, despite Dewey's rejection of Kantian idealism, revisit Kant's question of how the given may begin with, but not arise from, experience.

We therefore need a more productive way to address this than Dewey seems to permit. To enquire afresh of what is *transcendentally* 'experience' is to ask about the generation of an active constructivist self, albeit framed by universal characteristics of personhood. As Kant asks: where does the given come from if it does not arise from experience, and if its beginning with experience is a merely genetic (that is, temporal) explanation. In brief, what do humans find about themselves in what is 'given'?

Peacocke, in his 1989 inaugural lecture at Oxford, offers a useful definition of a transcendental argument, not unlike Dewey's, as follows:

> For our purposes a transcendental argument will be any argument with a certain type of premiss and a certain kind of conclusion. The premiss must state that experiences, perhaps of a specified type, occur. The conclusion must entail some proposition whose truth does not require the existence of experiences at all. The more modest transcendental arguments have as their conclusions certain propositions about a mind-dependent world. I call these "truth-directed". The more ambitious arguments have a further goal: that of establishing that subjects of the experiences mentioned in the premisses are in a position to know certain truths about a mind-dependent world. Such transcendental arguments I will call 'knowledge-directed'. (1989:4)

Our interest is in the more modest 'truth-directed' usage of transcendental argument. We want to identify how experience presents what we take as reality to us, and we want to recognise that common-sense (our unreflective conceptions of what is true) is often in error. Certainly, in the education business, we must move beyond unreflective knowledge!

So what (modest) propositions about a mind-dependent world arise via transcendental argument? Let it be recalled that the Kantian categories, such as spatio-temporaneity or causation, through which we *cannot but* experience the world can be regarded as mind-dependent because they present the world to us. Categories are ontological requirements, epistemologically available to us via experience. We come to know the world through a mental apparatus, as it were, which is as it is.

Given this logical analysis (the reciprocity of the ontological and epistemological) we can, in Peacocke's sense of 'truth-directedness', transcend the experiential. We possess a framework which marshals and processes experience in the very presentation of it. New experiences are manifest in this framework in the ways that older experiences are - this is our only access to the presentation of them. Kantian categories enable us to see what we take as reality in ways that give continuity to experience in general and contiguity to series of specific experiences. We can see our lives as having a unity (so I can learn from experience *per se*: it is the same 'me' that learns and experiences), and our specific experiences have a sequential significance which I can then order and re-order in the light of my values. I can pick out similiarities, repetitions and gaps, and make patterns from these, leading then to knowledge-claims. And this is where education as the pursuit of, say, truth, gets a toe-hold in the daily flux of life. Do the claims hold up? Who says? Why?

In all this there is a central place for common-sense explanations for the way the world is, but not only common-sense. Articulating a more reflective response to the functioning of common-sense in daily life is also possible. The import of a modified Kantian transcendental argument, adapted by the more modest 'truth-directedness' of Peacocke's analysis, in melding experience and learning, is highlighted in the following example.

Wittgenstein wrote, using 'pain' as a common experience:

> Now the answer of the common-sense philosopher - and that, *n.b.* is not the common-sense man, who is as far from realism as from idealism - ...is that surely there is no difficulty in the idea of supposing, thinking, imagining that someone else has what I have. (1958:48)

Wittgenstein is developing a transcendental argument based on a framework (or more accurately a network) of language usage. To claim 'his toothache feels like mine' is to engage in language usage which defines the meaning of the pain-bearing for my mental content. It is not to make an experiential claim, but an epistemological claim: 'I understand that his is the experience of the toothache', and the act of saying this (i.e. joining in the network of language) perhaps with associated 'body' language such as pointing and wincing, helps to determine the public nature of 'pain' discourse. Now of course toothaches occurred irrespective of anyone having access to language, but the articulation of the pain - how it becomes a public phenomenon, and thus, to a large extent

how the sufferer regards himself, and is regarded by others (as a recipient of sympathy, etc.) is framed by a language network *to which humans find themselves committed*. For Wittgenstein, language works horizontally across human experience, defining and shaping it. Only in reflective attitudes can we draw back from the daily flux and examine the diversity of situations, and their meanings, which display the richness of experience to us.

In this example, Wittgenstein's analysis of the mental states of pain behaviour - both the sufferer's and the observer's - relies on a transcendental argument that operates via initial premisses (pain and the observation of pain behaviour) based on experience, and leads to a conclusion not based on experience, but on other 'framework-driven' facts. In this case, the facts of language usage, given such usage is an ineluctably human practice, generate a culturally-locatable network of meanings. The general point is that experience can be transcended but only on its own terms, and that these terms are what we find ourselves committed to in being sensate, reflective beings.

Similarly, for Kant, the transcendence of the 'manifold of experience' occurs through categories we are bound by. However, unlike Wittgenstein's 'meaning-as-(linguistic) usage' epistemology, in which what we know is what we say, Kant's meanings are ultimately metaphysical - what we know is what is presented to us. Kant postulated the Reality of a noumenal world, as opposed to phenomena, and his categories are intended as metaphysical gatekeepers for that ideal realm of things as they really are (sic), about and beyond which not much is knowable. Given that the categories *form* what is knowable, it follows that the unknowable is psychologically inaccessible and probably therefore unintelligible. Kantian 'transcendental idealism', as the further reach of his metaphysics is called, has therefore always been susceptible to that seemingly fatal objection. But his more immediate epistemology - that is, what we *can* know - is profoundly important for an understanding of human experience. Peacocke's resort to a transcendental argument is successful because it moves beyond experience, using a quasi-Kantian framework, in establishing the reliance upon experience for mental content, but requires only of that framework that it individuate that content. Wittgenstein's analysis of language similarly operates to individuate experience and enform its meaningfulness at the same time. Both these examples of transcendental argument, presenting the world as reality, rely upon the very experiences of that presentation to frame the commitment we have to certain content. This content starts with our human commitment to a place in this world, and we experience that place (as content)

via its individuation by the very framework of our experiences. These may be categoric (following Kantian metaphysics), or linguistic (following Wittgensteinian epistemology). Other possibilities are surely available.

Drawing on mainstream metaphysics, it has been possible to show, utilising Wittgensteinian and Kantian transcendental argument, as reworked through Peacocke's Principle of Discrimination:

(1) that the presentation of reality is itself an aspect of our knowledge of reality, and

(2) that human experience is constituted by the presentation of reality, and

(3) therefore, human experience simultaneously contributes to and is shaped by that knowledge.

Thus, in this more sophisticated sense, we can conclude that our experiences are constituted by the way the world is presented to us. We can call this what is 'given' us. This will be developed in section 5.4 below.

Implicit in the argument so far has been the view that the strength of our commitment to human agency is derived partly from the intensity of that engagement with experience, which presents reality for us. Without this agency we would not be constituted as humans. If residual (i.e. non-human) phenomena were indistinguisable from our own immersion in our surroundings, there would just be a bland environmental continuum in which what was 'us' was capriciously the 'other'. But we can individuate ourselves from the other, that is, from a place we have in the world. We do have a strong sense that life does commit us, regarded as 'selves', to interaction with that world. Indeed we find ourselves in this interaction every conscious moment.

Furthermore, this individuation entails a commitment to a material, objective world of entities and relationships amidst which we interact, and are acted upon. What has been under discussion so far is the existence of the framework for that interaction.

5.4 The Commitment

At this point it will be helpful to summarise what the above argument has achieved. Earlier, we relocated transcendental enquiry from its idealist home to within the realm of the 'active, constructivist self' intending to re-work its explanatory power in a more congenial intellectual milieu.

Accordingly, stripped of the metaphysical accretions to which Dewey, for example, was opposed, the enquiry nonetheless asked the very Kantian question: what do humans find about themselves in what is 'given'?

Our answer to this centred on the strength of the commitment humans have to what experience presents. We are both *in* the world, as the potters, and *of* the world, as the clay. We expect and apprehend interaction with a world we find we simultaneously shape, and also are shaped by. It is this rich concept of experience we call the 'given'.

Human experience thus renders phenomena intelligible. It does not, however, create the world after the human perception of it: that is a phenomenological analysis which has not been supported by any of the foregoing. The emphasis all along has been on the universal commitment we have to an ontologically-prior world, in which and to which we find ourselves committed through common interaction.

Here, however, must be noted what does *not* follow from this argument. It does not follow that we constitute the world; nor that the world is constituted by us. Both of these smack of the phenomenology we have found unsatisfactory a little earlier, and for the same reason.

Furthermore, while it is true that the more sophisticated notion of the 'given' which has been argued for here does not specify any substantive content for human experiences, least of all for easy 'rational' or 'objective' solutions to human problems, it enables debates about, and research enquiry into, what is to be established as truth. It does not endorse the perceptually veridical as the foundation of knowledge.

These metaphysical polarities are identified not to show that we are arguing for some middle road, but that we are on quite a different road. Regarding the nature of reality, this chapter has nothing to say!

Rather, building on the common framework of experience (as such) in a Kantian sense, it preserves the diversity of specific experiences (these are 'truth-directed' in Peacocke's terms) and can cultivate their value in a pool of potential evidence for knowledge-claims. Education, amongst other truth-directed activities, will draw upon this.

To clinch the point, and work the 'pool' metaphor a little: we may claim all humans are swimming in the pool of experience (different strokes for different folks, we raffishly say), but the size, shape and depth of the pool is 'given' to us only through our perpetual immersion in it. Far from being contentless and arbitrary, our experience will be given by the context, that is, by circumscribed fluidity. We know and can be committed to no other.

5.5 Making

It is inevitable that humans know reality from the 'inside', as it were. After all, experience is what we have to go on, and an assumption of the 'givenness' of experience, as a basis for learning, enables a prompt progression to other interesting and subsidiary human characteristics, such as agency, self-direction, autonomy and authenticity. The rest of Chapter Five deals with agency.

However, to get to that consideration of agency, there are at least three other varieties of the 'given', each constructed or made for specific human purposes, which we must examine. Each, however, overstates the agency they require. In identifying their shortcomings, we will be better placed to deal with agency in the light of a modified experiential constructivism.

5.5.1 Sociologically Given?

First, the sociologically given. In Berger and Luckman's influential book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966), the authors, who are sociologists, take pains to distinguish their enterprise from philosophy:

> One could say that the sociological understanding of 'reality' and 'knowledge' falls somewhere in the middle between that of the man in the street, and that of the philosopher. The man in the street...takes his 'reality' and his 'knowledge' for granted... (14)

The sociologist is 'forced by the very logic of his discipline' to consider whether social diversity implies multiple realities; the philosopher is concerned with the clarity of terminology like 'reality' and 'knowledge', so that one can 'differentiate between valid and invalid assertions about the world' (14).

But philosophy has moved beyond an exclusive focus on the analysis of language, as we noted in Chapter One, and, in the philosophy of social science, now centrally addresses just the discipline-based distinction required by Berger and Luckman to justify their purpose, which is 'that the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality'. They wish to investigate how 'a taken-for-granted reality congeals for the man-in-the-street' (15).

This is another way of enquiring after the formation of experience, since we now understand that any notion of the given (what is common-sense, or 'taken for granted') has ontological and epistemological implications. But the first half of this chapter has tried to establish a more sophisticated notion of the given by using a constructivist logic, rather than a constructivist empiricism. Berger and Luckman, in pursuing the 'social construction of reality' deal in the facts of social and therefore cultural diversity. They are rightly not concerned with the logic of ontological and epistemological considerations, but it does not follow that social constructivism is immune from such considerations.

Furthermore, social constructivism has been and continues to be influential in the social sciences and especially in education, where less reflective thinkers often conflate social diversity and cultural relativism, on the justification that individuals (or 'empowered' groups of individuals) can make of the world what they will.

Now whatever the desirability of political or educational autonomy as an ideal, it is manifestly not the case that all humans can achieve whatever we individually choose to achieve, via a process we authenticate as our own. This is no more a likelihood in the social realm. Our present purpose is not to discuss this further, but to note the persuasiveness of a social constructivist argument. A large part of its intuitive appeal is its parasitic relationship to a robust model of human agency, in which an individual is maker of her or his own destiny, and this in turn fits with the consumerist ethos of late twentieth-century Western society. We noted (in Chapter Two at section 2.9) Bowles and Gintis' distinction between the 'chooser' and 'the learner' and how they showed

this to be socially constructed: middle-class, English-speaking males are in the strongest position to 'construct' knowledge. Women, children, non-English-speaking working-class people, by contrast, are relatively weakly placed to construct knowledge. Furthermore, in Chapter One, we identified how adult learner provision and outcomes are shaped by a socio-cultural context, perhaps via the market-place (as in North America) or via a milieu of mutualism (as in the United Kingdom).

In these ways what 'congeals' for the man-in-the-street is a received (that is 'given') or common-sense view that the purpose of learning, and by implication the contribution of individual experience, is largely up to the individual to construct. Humans are their own makers, it may be thought.

We have just noted that there is a sociological sense in which this is accurate. But almost all the distinctions made by Berger and Luckman are now regarded as problematic, especially the fascination with 'multiple realities' as a *sociological* given separate from philosophical analysis. It is just this point which Bohman (1991:106), developing Anthony Giddens' terminology, calls the 'multiply hermeneutic', where what is constructed are self-interpretations and interpretations of interpretations. From within this social context 'to refer to a belief as a reason for acting requires that we know what it is like to act upon it as a reason and thus to interpret it as one'. There is, then, a 'sociological given', based on the interpretative diversity and subsequent Quinean problems of indeterminant translation. Without going in to the details of this, we note its origin in a socially constructed epistemology which assumes a species of the given. We also may conclude that the human agency implied by Berger and Luckmann's 'multiple realities' - that people can make and unmake their lives - is an over-generous and rather glib depiction of the place of the will in daily life.

5.5.2 Perceptually Given?

A second area where there is a substantial literature developing the notion that human experience is of our own making or construction is the psychology of visual perception, or what we may call the 'perceptually given'. Let us recall some of the discussion on this in Chapter Two. There (in section 2.4), drawing on the notion of the *kosmos*, we argued that human perception appreciates 'fittingness' in both aesthetic and ethical domains - the order and wholeness

attributed to both domains show in our term 'integrity'. Aspects of the perceived world are more or less well integrated; someone of integrity stands as a person with a wholesomeness of character about them. In such matters, humans make patterns to try to 'fit' present experiences with the past. When this is successful, we place positive value judgments on the phenomena under appraisal. The inevitability of this 'patternmaking' exercise leads us to regard it as a legitimate example of what is humanly 'given' in perceptual experience, of which the eye is merely the first component.

Can we apply this to agency? Bohman asks about the way humans typically generate the 'given':

> [D]o existing explanatory patterns lose anything by avoiding reference to meanings, to agent's self-interpretations? The answer is most certainly 'yes'... (1991:107)

In art, as in life, meanings are vital. That is part of the power and ambiguity of the term 'culture'. It can be used inclusively (of life), and exclusively (of art), as was discussed in Chapter Four, in section 4.9. Meanings in both cases are *sui generis*; they are so culture-bound that their explanatory power cannot survive a relocation outside their own location. What is required and individuated by the cultural context *defines* the cultural context. Eisner is worth quoting at length on this, because he is able to link a broad definition of perception to social and educational frameworks in a Kantian fashion:

> Perception of the world is influenced by skill, point of view, focus, language, and framework. The eye is not only part of the brain, but part of a tradition. How shall teaching be perceived? It depends on what I think counts. If I am interested in 'wait time' then I will look for it. The clarity of the language, the teacher's relationship and rapport with students, the significance of the ideas presented, and the teachers's personal style, warmth and enthusiasm are all candidates for attention. Which to choose depends on the framework. *To paraphrase Kant, percepts without frameworks are empty, and frameworks without percepts are blind.* We secure frameworks through socialisation, professional and otherwise. What we come to see depends upon what we seek, and what we see depends, as Gombrich has pointed out, on what we know how to say. Artists, Gombrich reminds us, do not paint what they see, they see what they are able to paint. An empty mind sees nothing. (1991:46) [emphasis added: also see Gombrich 1963:9]

The perceptually-given, however, like the sociologically-given, overstates human agency. If human physiology wires the eye to the brain in a certain way (and universal visual experiences suggest this is so) then the pursuit of pattern-

making as such is out of human control, save the decision to open the eyes or not. We cannot help ourselves looking. We cannot help ourselves 'seeing-as... '. The interest ought to be solely in the meaningfulness of the patterns we identify, not in the individuation of certain patterns rather than other patterns, athough of course even that is a curious perceptual phenomenon. Particular patterns are produced which depend on the life history of that set of perceptors but that is a legitimate empirically causal matter. It is how we are made, not a matter of our making. This is a similar, though individualistic, point to the 'multiple realities' assumption of sociology. But we share the universal capability of travelling about and inevitably acquire different life-histories, since we each occupy one (transferable) spot on the planet.

Consider together, now, these two versions of the 'given'. We claim uniqueness amongst diversity, in both the perceptually- and sociologically-given cases. Both cases imply or even require a footloose and rather fancy-free agent replete with a choice of experientially-identified action-plans (the artist at the easel, the man-in-the-street, etc). This enthusiasm for constructivism is therefore underpinned by a model of humankind as chooser. And this simply begs the ontological and epistemological questions which a thorough-going transcendental argument for a 'logically-given' analysis of experience, such as the one presented in this thesis, can not only raise, but answer.

5.5.3 Creatively Given?

In the third version of the given, there is much less question-begging, but, curiously, starting from more substantial logical considerations, an outcome of rampant choice results. Here what turns out to be 'given' is raw creative capability.

Simons (in an article 'Learning to experience':1985), argues for what we may call the 'creatively given'. He starts well enough, in demonstrating a sophisticated sensitivity to the logical presentation of experience:

> To what extent is the principle-governed maker of human experience justified in the belief that he is in some sense in contact with reality and that the statements resulting, which purport to describe the world, are 'true'? (4)

Simons' answer to this question revolves around the public criteria of productivity, coherence and repeatability. These, he argues, are apparent to me as indicative of my own subjective experience, but the essential logical point is that these criteria are 'accessible to any other operator who cares to learn...'. He points out that his is not 'one true world' description:

> The kind of 'truth' revealed is relative, but it is relative to the system in use, not merely to the individual who happens to be operating it now. (4)

Simons thus agrees with a neo-Kantian 'system' (or framework) for human experience, and emphasises its contingency by building in socio-cultural diversity, whilst preserving universality:

> Yet the over-riding rule remains in force throughout. For any experience to count, it must be generally accessible in principle....That world experiences vary is obvious, but human systematic ways of creating experiences are apparently universal. (5)

So far, so good. Allowing for his use of 'access', where we have argued for the 'presentation' of reality, he seems to support the universalisation of human commitment to it provided by the analysis of the ontological and epistemological implications of a logically-given account of experience, in sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 above.

Unfortunately, Simons then overstates the constructivism at the heart of his 'creatively-given' experience:

> The dissection of experience leads to some conclusions of value for educational theory. First of these is the primacy of systematic creativity. We make experience, it is not given to us. In this sense, each of us creates the world from which we learn, and we learn how to construct the world before we do anything else. Even if the machinery and programme are built in to the human animal, it might not be operated effectively. The experience created may be very limited, possibly disjointed, may be even incoherent and inconsistent unless the systemic principles are rigorously observed. (1985:8)

But if a neo-Kantian approach like Simons' is to be followed consistently, humans cannot operate their 'systemic principles' *ineffectively*. Nor can we 'learn how to construct the world before we do anything else'. The logical constructivism of the first half of this chapter outlines what humans find themselves committed to, and to which we all have access: a world which is simultaneously presented by, and as, certain objective content. This is not to

deny choice, merely to acknowledge the logical (and therefore epistemological and ontological) limits to choice. We make our world in regard to group-mindedness as it presents as 'sociologically-given'. We also make our world in regard to the uniquely individualised 'perceptually-given'. But these both contribute to what is 'logically-given': what we cannot but engage in considering the whole notion of human experience - its logical structure.

Simons, having slid into an empirical sense of constructivism (the 'creatively-given') when his argument did not support it, sinks in conceptual quicksand:

> It now seems clear that the essential starting point...is the creative commitment which has to produce something before any description or investigation can proceed....Synthesis precedes analysis. Nothing, *no thing*, is there waiting for us to attack it, until we have made it....I confess myself here to be much influenced by Gombrich's famous remark with respect to the visual arts, that making must come before matching. I should apply this to everything we humans do and think. (9)

But this claims too much of Gombrich's argument (1963) against the 'innocent eye'. His 'perceptually-given', we noted earlier (in section 5.5.2), requires common human knowledge of reality, if, for example, the communicative function of the arts is to be achieved. Simons, however, when he states that '[p]hysiology reveals the nature of what we rely on, when we make the experience from which we learn' (2), runs the risk of divorcing empirical bases for choice (i.e. physiology) from our *experience* of such empirical bases for choice (i.e. psychology). Now Gombrich was never guilty of that! Simons, read this way, claims too much for 'reality', and not enough for our experience of it. Clearly, if our experience is of anything, it is of reality. It must be said, though, that Simons has available to him the response that he would wish to include the empirical *within* experience, and in that sense, recognise some parameters to his quite sweeping endorsement of the availability of universal and unilateral choice. If he can not make that modification he falls into the same trap as Eisner at the beginning of this chapter.

Arguments for the ways experience presents reality to us (which are ontological - about what there is) are not necessarily the same as arguments about what reality is (which are metaphysical). On the latter, this thesis is silent, but on the former, it is important to recognise that views about what reality is, will colour how experience is regarded. Since experience is all we have to go on, it must include views about the nature of reality.

Nevertheless, Eisner and, now, Simons, in conflating ontological and metaphysical considerations, confuse and overstate what constructivism can contribute to an understanding of experience, and effectively underplay or ignore certain logical features of experience in favour of optimistic views of the range and diversity of human agency. Human physiology, if it 'reveals the nature of what we rely on' in any sort of experience (even free-range creative choice), is part of Simon's ontology, and should be recognised by him as a parameter amongst and around what counts as creativity. But he seems to present this as a metaphysical claim, without sufficient argument.

The specific dilemma for Simons is this. What he claims as *a priori* is probably empirical, and what he claims as empirical is probably *a priori*. This basis of his confusion is demonstrated as follows.

The *a priori* knowledge Simons seeks throughout his argument has not been established, because he is looking for it, *contra* Kant, in the physiological; that is, in the empirically contingent. Kant, and neo-Kantian argument, does not assume that the empirical will reveal reality other than as the point of origin of our knowledge. The entire point of a transcendental deduction is to move beyond the empirical, not to commence and stay with it.

Conversely, Simons' argument that our commitment to constructivism is 'creative' is surely an *a priori* claim, not an empirical one. There is *prima facie* plenty of evidence that our perceptually-given experiences need not be creative, and that is probably as likely of non-perceptual responses to the world (such as the affective, cognitive, social etc.). Hackneyed, banal, and arcane 'makings' frequently occur across these spectra of human experience. Humans copy what works, habitually or not. We cannot rule out the repetitious and mundane as constructions under Simon's 'creatively-given'. At the other extreme, we can rule out the merely novel, yet we know that this too is often an inadequate response to changed circumstances. It seems then that Simons' 'creativity' becomes a generic term for making (it allows too broad a constructivism) whilst overstating a Gombrichian aesthetic (it requires an assumption of artistic appropriateness). Consequently, if making our world in this generic sense is something we *cannot but* do, then it looks a feature of human experience prior to any particular content. Again, we noted, as Kant did in the first paragraph of his *Critique*, such implicit temporal succession explains

how knowledge, and therefore experience, originates, but not how it presents itself to us.

Let us summarise the argument so far, in section 5.6.

5.6 Experience Emerging

Chapter Five stated at the outset that experience is a relatively unexamined notion in philosophy of education - it is taken as 'given'. The first half of this chapter (sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3. 5.4), provided a transcendentalist development of the notion of the 'given' which takes the ontolologically-given as constitutive of apprehension, and as a necessary but not sufficient condition for our daily experience of conscious life. It was important to examine other analyses of experience, with their associated 'givens'. Accordingly, we identified (in section 5.5) the sociologically-, the perceptually-, and the creatively-'givens'.

Recall, too, that each of these givens works with a concept of human agency which was termed, in section 5.1, 'less helpful' for these two reasons:

(a) the 'given' is conceptualised simplistically, that is, without regard for its ontological implications, and

(b) that it is thought to follow from such conceptualisations, that individual humans can choose their experiences from across an exceptionally wide range.

We will need to develop a theorisation of human agency more helpful to the richer and more sophisticated concept of experience now emerging in this chapter. For we are able to combine all four notions of the given to arrive at a powerful analysis of experience. In doing so, we have a more modest view of constructivism, but one now more firmly established, and standing in need of an appropriate account of human agency.

The addition of the three 'givens' (cf. section 5.5) to the ontologically-given (cf. sections 5.2, 5.3, 5.4) provides the necessary and sufficient conditions for that of which we have already been *made aware*. So we have established a Kantian framework as a basis for the apprehension of 'made awareness'. The next stage is to show how this made awareness operates to *match* present interpretations of experiences with the past.

In the sociologically given and the perceptually given, we were able to identify a tendency to overstate the human constructivism legitimately present in the very idea that humans literally *make* sense of reality. Similarly, we have examined the concept of the creatively given, and regrettably found its early explanatory potential confused by the overstated human agency required to generate any epistemology at all.

This is the point of entry to a discussion of the next stage in more sophisticated constructionism: *matching what we are made aware of,* by initial reference to visual perception.

5.7 Matching

We need to be clear about what the relationship of the making, or logical construction, of experience is to the matching of it.

Central to any such discussion is Wittgenstein's famous 'duck-rabbit' discussion. Of seeing as an experience of 'seeing as...' in the *Investigations* (at II:xi), he writes

> I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I *see* that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience 'noticing an aspect'.
>
> Its *causes* are of interest to psychologists.
>
> We are interested in the concept and its place amongst the concepts of experience. (1963:193)

Using the 'duck-rabbit' illustration, Wittgenstein draws out the contrast between 'continuously seeing' an aspect of a figure, such as a face, and the 'dawning' of a new aspect. Can one catch onself with an inner activity matching the new realisation that the head of the duck is 'really' the head of a rabbit? Even to talk of a realisation assumes there is a change in one's awareness in the direction of greater fidelity to the way the world 'really' is. But Wittgenstein wants to oppose this on, first, the ground that the ontological evidence is constant (the same drawing is still there), and second, that a new perception has 'dawned':

> But what is different: my impression? my point of view? - Can I say? I *describe* the alteration like a perception; quite as if the object has altered before my eyes... (195)

Of course the object has not altered, but even perception is little help:

> 'Now I am seeing *this*', I might say...This has the form of a report of a new perception.
>
> The expression of a change of aspect is the expression of a new perception, and at the same time of the perception's being unchanged. (196)

Third, and most interestingly, there is no inner or mental item or activity which has itself produced the revelation of a new aspect:

> The concept of the 'inner picture' is misleading, for this concept uses the 'outer picture' as a model... (196)

So Wittgenstein concludes that ' "[s]eeing as..." is not part of perception', that it is partly like seeing and partly not like it, and that therefore 'the flashing of an aspect on us seems half visual experience, half thought' (197). From this he builds what can be called a contextually-determined (or usage-specific) approach to interpretations of meanings. A face may be regarded as such when the lines approximate a smile. Smiling is not a defining feature of a face, but there are contexts in which we expect to 'read' such a grouping of lines in a drawing as a smile, thereby 'making' a face from a set of scribbles. And of the duck-rabbit, Wittgenstein asks:

> ...how can the eye - this *dot* - be looking in a direction? - *'See, it is looking!'* (And one 'looks' oneself as one says this). But one does not say and do this the whole time one is looking at the picture. (205)

We do not simultaneously hold more than one aspect in our awareness. Wittgenstein reminds us that 'seeing as...' has constant temporal succession, even in ambiguous cases, when the rabbit dawns on us from the seeing of the duck. They are successive experiences. Furthermore, most of life is *unlike* these ambiguous cases. Wittgenstein's rich array of cases are 'what if...' exceptions which informally prove the experiential rule that humans normally get it right, that is, that perceptual experiences are successfully assimilated. From this, however, it is perhaps too swiftly concluded that non-perceptual experiences (cognitive, affective and so on) are also readily assimilable. If this were so, there would be no need for education, if by education we mean a systematic selection

and delivery of planned learning experiences. Clearly many experiences are undesirable (such as those which harm others). Whilst we frequently learn from and inevitably within experience, it does not follow that such learnings are desiderata. Even if such experiences are easily assimilable (and especially if so), it does not follow that they are desirable.

But Wittgenstein's main argument is experientally integrative. In this section of the *Investigations*, he identifies the logical, ontological and epistemological features of visual perception as a form of human experience. In brief, he spells out what he regards as *that which we find ourselves doing*.

Human experience is contexted through the 'given' which was developed in the previous sections of this chapter, but built on it is an integrated model of human agency. To the extent that we construct our world, we do so in the awareness of ourselves as actors simultaneously constrained and liberated by thinking and speaking. Just as 'ouch' is a manifestation of pain behavour, and as such publicly and contextually defines 'being in pain', so is the duck-rabbit seen from one aspect rather than the other on public and contextual evidence.

As in his discussion on pain, Wittgenstein reaches the conclusion that it is the contextual-dependence of experience which gives meaningfulness both to our language and to what we do (and of course to the relationship between what we say and what we do). He also integrates an objective, material world, and our apprehension of our awareness of that world into the act of perception. These three dimensions of 'matching' work together to assimilate present experience to the past. It is the 'acting', or dynamic, dimension which is the key to Wittgenstein's experiential integration, but it is important that this dynamism not be construed naively, as capricious creativity.

To counter naive caprice, we need to preserve the sense of action as undergoing (what we find ourselves doing) as much as the sense of action as undertaking (what we go ahead and do). We are 'made aware' as much by what we undergo as by what we do, but it is the latter which has inspired Berger and Luckman, Gombrich and especially Simons to overstate the role of constructivism in their respective accounts of human experience.

That most experience is what we find ourselves undergoing, rather than what we undertake is implicit in Wittgenstein's remarks on our awareness of specific actions:

> It would have made as little sense for me to say 'Now I am seeing it as...' as to say at the sight of a knife and fork 'Now I am seeing this as a knife and fork'. This expression would not be understood. - Any more than: 'Now it's a fork' or 'It can be a fork too'.
>
> One doesn't *'take'* what one knows as the cutlery at a meal *for* cutlery; any more than one ordinarily tries to move one's mouth as one eats, or aims at moving it.' (195)

In the context of a meal, what counts as cutlery is settled. One doesn't consciously experience the usage of it; nor does one normally decide to use it thus and so. The public criteria of table talk (including not talking about cutlery usage!) are *taken as given*. Since we cannot normally find ourselves inwardly or outwardly perceptually confused in such a context, it is an overexpectation of human agency to conceptualise it in terms of constant creativity.

As we have noted in the specific quotations from the *Investigations*, where Wittgenstein considers in turn three candidates for change agents, even the 'dawning' of a changed visual aspect (now a duck, now a rabbit) is not underpinned by corresponding and determinant logical, ontological or epistemological change. Changes in aspect arise when the context varies, and this begins as an empirical matter. However, the burden of the argument of thesis throughout Chapter Five establishes that variations in the empirically 'given' are themselves neither logically necessary nor sufficient as an account of human experience. Wittgenstein's discussion works within the recognition that it is what we find ourselves doing when we match the present with the past, shaped empirically and non-empirically, which together enable human agency and therefore 'make' experience.

5.8 Undergoing

Let us summarise the argument so far. The preceding sections have argued that the given is, following Kant, logically an ontological category with epistemological dimensions. Empirical evidence, such as the sociological, perceptual and the creative activities of humans, rounds out the transcendental argument so that together the empirically-given and the logically-given supply the necessary and sufficient conditions for experience.

It is in this way we can be said to construct, that is, to be 'made aware', of experience. This more sophisticated constructivism was developed in the light of a need for an account of more modest human agency. We do believe we can change through experience, but being 'made aware' of experience is not the same as 'making experience'. It was argued that this 'making' lends itself to an overgenerous concept of agency, wherein experience centres on what we undertake. The three accounts of the given in section 5.5 are susceptible to this criticism, which arises out of their overstatement of the possibilities of constructivism. Although this 'undertaking' is clearly a given feature of human life, its evangelical and wide deployment culminates, paradoxically, in the view that *nothing* is 'given': we entirely 'create' our world or worlds. This conclusion was shown to rest on a confusion between the *a priori* and the empirical.

In contrast, a more modest view of agency can better encapsulate being made aware of experience: what we *undergo* (or find ourselves doing) is just as significant a feature of experience as what we *undertake* (go ahead and do). Undergoing is, for example, implicit in a Wittgensteinian analysis of the relationship between thinking, perceiving and doing, especially when we are confronted by a new experience, such as visual ambiguity. The matching of experiences that inevitably goes on was investigated to ascertain the basis of that inevitability, and the conclusion established an integration of logical constraints upon and within human agency, with ontological and epistemological dimensions, coupled with empirical evidence. This last ingredient, the public empirical context, provides the explanation for changes in meanings (in the case of visual ambiguity, changes in aspect).

However, an explanation of a change in meaning is not the same as the experience of the meaningfulness. Recalling Wittgenstein's point that the 'flashing of an aspect on us seems half visual experience, half thought', we note that what dawns on us at that moment is richer than the variation in a specific change of aspect. We have experienced the realisation that our experience is both 'whatever is in our visual field' and also that that experience (of 'what ever is in our visual field') is *interpretative* . My perception has presented certain content to my awareness (say, of a duck), but a change in contextual circumstances lead me to see it as a rabbit. I have experienced 'seeing as...' at two levels, the content (empirically)-driven level, and the logically-given level, whereby I 'see' the content as an interpretation, under an aspect, not as directly veridical. We can rely upon the rightness of such interpretative experience, too. Wittgenstein suggests that human experience is not normally 'aspect-blind',

because the occasions when we experience ambiguity - that is, seem to be 'aspect-blind', or at least 'aspect-confused' are obvious. To illustrate that, he reminds us (1963:214-5) that some people do not have a 'musical ear', that it makes no sense to have no way of deciding an appropriate usage for a word, and that often certain literary or musical interpretations 'suggest themselves', and are even, we may say, 'forced upon us'. In all these cases, when the 'aspect' is ambiguous or erroneous, the context determines what we undergo - and we normally get the cues 'right'. In summary, the exceptions prove the rule!

Thus, these examples develop the argument that we normally 'see' interpretatively, that is, under an aspect, and that we can be aware simultaneously from the context that that is what is happening. Furthermore, experience is logically *intentional*, Wittgenstein claims (214). This seems to indicate that the meaningfulness of experience is thus located in our expectation that aspectual knowledge is inevitable and logically sufficient. It gets us where we want to go, but it does not require of us that we know where we intend to end up. That is, it is not a claim that experience is exclusively what is undertaken (in the fulfilling of an intention), but a more subtle neo-Kantian transcendental claim. It amounts to Eisner's point (1991:46): ' To paraphrase Kant, percepts without frameworks are empty, and frameworks without percepts are blind'. What we are discussing now is tantamount to an application of the central argument of the *Critique*. It comes to this: we cannot but 'see' (perceive) our experiences as meaningful, but simultaneously we cannot but be made aware of the interpretative status (framework) of such meaningfulness.

The epistemological and ontological efflux of this development of the 'logically-given' is the same as earlier in this chapter: it attacks the inadequacy of the naively relativistic view that we know and need no other than the public (that is, socio-cultural) experiences we undergo in the material, objective world. These empirical considerations do help shape agency and identity, but they are of themselves insufficient for the generation of individual and social expectations that humans can and will undertake whatever they intend (that is go ahead and 'construct' their worlds).

We have shown that these expectations are overgenerous and insufficient, in that they require certain logically prior 'givens', available through transcendental argument about, and reflection upon, the commonality of human experience. Furthermore, and perhaps a little paradoxically, we have

shown that ontological givens are in fact implicit in the claim that the only givens are empirical and also implicit in the stronger claim that there are no givens at all. So not only are those two claims an inadequate, because insufficient, account of the bases of constructivism (requiring ontological supplementation as argued), but they are also false as they stand.

We are now, in Chapter Six, well-placed to reform selfhood (with the implications this has for 'self-direction' as a key element in the theorisation of adult learning), since the traditional justification for wide-ranging and radically individualistic choice - the prevalent ethos of becoming whomsoever you want to be - has not been until now supported by a theory of experience which recognises ontologically-common constructivism. Now that we have a more sophisticated account of constructivism ,we can see that attention to what we all find ourselves as humans undergoing as experience will rein in and redirect the more extravagant claims made of and for the self-directedlearner.

Thus the reconceptualisation of appropriate professional practice in adult education will include fundamentally new ways of regarding social sensitivity and moral responsibility: this was telegraphed in Chapter Two (in section 2.6), and developed from then on. By the end of Chapter Six (in section 6.7), we will have been able to show how profound this reconceptualisation should be.

CHAPTER SIX: SELFHOOD

6.1 The Constructed Self

Candy, in a significant and ambitious book, *Self-Direction for Lifelong Learning* (1991), remarks in the Preface:

> In recent years, the notion of self-direction has...attained something of a cult status in the literature of adult education. It has been claimed as a central construct in the theory and practice of educational endeavours of almost every imaginable form and ideological hue, and has influenced much recent discourse about both the form and function of educational programs. (xviii)

He goes on to outline the scope of his approach to the study of self-direction (xv): it will recognise self-direction as a product and as a process, and as implying both individual and social learning; it will reconcile and integrate ideas and practices, across a variety of historical and geographical situations; and, most interestingly for our purposes, it will develop these dimensions through 'constructivism':

> ...a branch of philosophy concerned with how people individually make sense of their worlds and how they create personal systems of meaning that guide them throughout their lives. (xv)

Much later (252-257), he outlines the 'cluster of perspectives united by underlying similarities in world-view', listing philosophical traditions going back to Plato, but mentioning briefly the recent paradigm shifts in philosophy of science, now 'concerned with the relativity of knowledge' (e.g. Feyerabend, Kuhn, Popper), and the social sciences, which have 'all emphasized how people invent, organise, and impose structures on their experiences' (e.g. Berger and Luckmann). He gleans from these 'parent disciplines' that 'knowledge is essentially a social artifact', but concludes this is not well understood by many educational researchers.

To make clear what constructivism is, Candy states

...at what might be called metatheoretical level, constructivist thought usually manifests some combination of the following assumptions:

1. People participate in the construction of reality.
2. Construction occurs within a context that influences people.
3. Construction is a constant activity that focusses on change and novelty rather than on fixed conditions.
4. Commonly accepted categories or understandings are socially constructed, not derived from observation.
5. Given forms of understanding depend on the vicissitudes of social processes, not on the empirical validity of the perspective.
6. Forms of negotiated understanding are integrally connected with other human activities.
7. The 'subjects' of research should be considered as 'knowing' beings.
8. Locus of control resides within the subjects themselves, and complex behaviour is constructed purposely.
9. Human beings can attend to complex communications and organise complexity rapidly.
10. Human interactions are based on intricate social roles, the rules governing which are often implicit rather than overt. (256)

Candy then draws out the significance of these characteristics for educators, particularly adult educators (259-262). In summary, there are five implications, which seem to follow a sequence:

- self-constructing people tend towards autonomy;

- autonomy emerges in the 'dynamic' exercise of self-constructing;

- autonomy is therefore not given to learners, but claimed by them;

- such claims result from the 'inner life' or central beliefs around which self-constructions are organised, and which give intention and logic to behaviour;

- finally, it behoves educators to enter into such individual learner perspectives as far as possible.

Candy clearly identifies self-directed learning as an important component of adult education. In doing so, he maintains the general prominence in Western educational thinking of the ideal of autonomy. Furthermore, he details the various 'common assumptions' of constructivism which underpin the pursuit of that ideal, rightly drawing attention to their ubiquity.

However, there are conceptual difficulties with both the list of 'common assumptions' and with the notion of autonomy.

Taking first the list of assumptions and unpacking them, it will be shown that propositions 1,2,6,7,8,9 and 10 are, in logical terms 'true but trivial', and that propositions 3,4 and 5 are 'false but significant'. Candy in a way invites such a bifurcation of his list because the latter group (propositions 3,4,5) have at least the common curiosity of being phrased by exclusion (they each assert what is the case, and what is therefore not the case) and what they exclude is much the same. The former group (propositions 1,2,6,7,8,9,10) do not have this logical form - they merely assert that something is the case. Of course, Candy may not have expected such a bifurcation but the logical form of his propositions, just outlined, invites closer scrutiny for that reason alone.

It should also be borne in mind that even 'true but trivial' propositions can be helpful and informative. For example, any introductory program in adult education, such as a formal tertiary course, would need to deal seriously with the first grouping of propositions; the second grouping of propositions, because they are *significantly* false, deserve even more prominent treatment in adult education programs at any level.

We turn now to the details of these groupings of Candy's 'common assumptions', leading to some conclusions about the construction of the 'selfhood' in adult education. This is followed, in section 6.4 by an exploration of the Western educational and political ideal of autonomy, with, again, some conclusions about the broader notion of selfhood in liberal capitalist democracies.

6.2 True But Trivial

Propositions 1,2,6,7,8,9, and 10 are unproblematic because they are innocuous. Let us briefly show this.

It is true that people *participate* in the construction of reality (proposition 1), and Chapter Five has established the logical basis for that relatively modest claim, in the face of the overstatement of naive ontological relativism that multiple 'realities' are ours for the construction. People are contextually located and are

significantly influenced by that in their participation in the construction of reality (proposition 2). Chapter Four showed how central that is for the formation of professionals' cultures. Negotiated understandings are presumably connected with other human activities (proposition 6), not least because those activities - for example, making and doing things to satisfy needs and enrich our experiences - provide the stuff of life over which we must negotiate to achieve anything at all. The self is a self-aware agent, with the potential for autonomy (to gloss propositions 7 and 8), and, finally, agency is capable of generating complex communication, underpinned by implicit sociocultural norms (to gloss propositions 9 and 10). Indeed, the claims in propositions 6-10 have been the basis of much of the detailed argument in Chapters Two to Five, addressed in the light of professional practice in general, and that of adult educators' in particular.

What Candy is successful in doing in compiling such a list of innocuous 'common assumptions' is directing our attention to the need to begin with what philosophers of social science and social theory call *Verstehen*, or interpretive understanding. Humans are meaning-makers, and are immediately implicated in and by the meanings we make; that is to say, we are both 'subject' and 'object' of our understandings (sections 2.4 and 3.2). In the previous chapter, we have drawn attention to the problem of indeterminacy (section 5.1 esp. Bohman). Social science methodology has to deal first and foremost with the matching of meanings between humans, when the very attempt to identify these implies a location within a set of understandings about that activity. Participation is thus a multi-level affair: as subject, as object, as participant in both of those, and as spectator upon either.

To get self-directed learning established within this milieu, Candy has to acknowledge *Verstehen in* his practice as well as in all adult educators, so he lists, propositionally, some of the dimensions that it has. As Outhwaite, in *Understanding Social Life: The Method Called Verstehen* (1986), states

> Few people would deny, though some would consider it uninteresting, that the *starting-point* of social inquiry is some sort of inter-subjective understanding. This is not merely to affirm that ordinary language is the ultimate meta-language of any science...; it is rather that we begin in the *Lebenswelt*, talking 'everyday language' and using 'everyday accounting procedures'. This initial situation, I would argue, has a different significance for the social than for the natural sciences....Where social scientists have strayed too far from 'common-sense' constructs, the result has not been greater sophistication, but trivialisation. (111)

Outhwaite is concerned, as the preface to this second edition of his book makes clear, to emphasise that the 'proper place of an interpretive method in social theory involves fundamental choices about the proper purposes of such theories' (111) and, amongst quite a list of purposes, he suggests:

> Do we want knowledge for the sake of prediction and control, or for the intrinsic pleasure of cultured contemplation, or to orientate the political action of a social group or movement? (*loc. cit.*)

Now professional practice is inevitably political, as Illich reminded us at the very beginning of Chapter Two, and it is with that purpose that Candy is also grappling. He wants to embed self-directed learning within a framework of *Verstehen*, and risks trivialisation in doing so, because the phenomena that both practice and self-direction deal in, namely ethical and epistemological considerations, are constituted in experience and agency. We want to get beneath the sloganisation of experience and agency (which his propositions 1,2,6,7,8,9, and 10 really amount to), to the logical and ontological specificities; This and the preceding chapter are attempts to do so.

Outhwaite draws our attention to the ordinariness of social phenomena. This echoes Raymond Williams' definition of culture as 'ordinary' life (cf. section 4.9), and relates to the Wittgensteinian exposition of the place of language in shaping experience (cf. section 5.2). Intersubjectivity needs its relational nature, and the consequent possibilities of reciprocity and community, to be glued together by something, and language is that glue. The human propensity to make meanings via communicative acts is thus rightly emphasised in most contemporary work in philosophy of social science and social theory, and of course in philosophical psychology, and we need not for the present rehearse any more details of it. The immediate question for Candy's 'true but trivial' propositions is: do they lead as they stand to self-directed learning? This seems unlikely. They cohere as a useful set of underpinnings for a *Verstehen*-sensitive approach to human learning in general, because they draw attention to experience and agency, as we noted. So they are, following Outhwaite, examples of purpose-built social theorisation - knowledge-claims for a specific education ideal - but they are logically insufficient as they stand.

To winkle out Candy's notion of self-hood, we must turn to the other, more contentious, group of propositions.

6.3 False But Significant

Propositions 3,4, and 5 are confusing and contradictory, and indicative of the naive relativism which was discussed and disputed in the previous chapter.

On the one hand, 'construction is a constant activity focuss[ed] on change and novelty rather than on fixed conditions' (proposition 3), yet, on the other hand, constancy itself is a fixed condition, surely. Moreover, its fixity, or constancy, shows up in lists like this list of propositions where experience and agency are amenable to 'given [sic] forms of understanding' (proposition 5). Constructivism is thus itself a given, constant basis for theorisation upon the dynamism of learning. Chapter Five has argued for logical, rather than sociological, constructivism for just this reason: there needs to be a way of recognising and advocating dynamism in human learning, mediated by experience and agency, without recourse to naive relativism. Candy's propositions here are predicated upon a Cartesian duality which divorces 'empirical validity' (proposition 5) and 'observation' (proposition 4) from the 'socially constructed' (proposition 4) and the 'commonly accepted' (proposition 4), and then privileges the latter. Indeed, the 'vicissitudes of social processes' (proposition 5) are what 'given...understanding' depends on. But we have just noted that such a 'given' is 'constant' - constructivism is to be regarded as a permanent feature of human experience and agency. It seems, however, that such a feature excludes sense-data - the empirically valid. How, then, do we make sense of ourselves and what we do? All we can conclude is that this process is entirely individualistic and idiosyncratic. You do it your way, and I do it mine. Whatever you package as 'experience' will be your entitlement to do so; likewise for all other human agents. If you *think* you are thus-and-so, you *are* thus-and-so. The Cogito is revisited.

Now this is ontologically incoherent: it does not just deny the body, it dispenses with it. It takes Cartesian dualism to the extremes Descartes grappled with in his *Dialogues* concerning the possibilities of deception in dreaming, or by an evil demon. And such dilemmas are about as far from what Candy wants as is possible. The result for his project is the de-construction of the selfhood he wanted for his analysis of self-directed learning. The self has collapsed into one side of a dualism from which it derives no public (that is, social) possession. Furthermore, the other side of the dualism is entirely vestigial: a purely formal

category - ostensibly the empirical, or sense-data in general - without any ontological existence. At least Candy's support for 'vicissitudes' is accurate, but these, unfortunately for his argument, are actually the private happenings of a dynamic self which knows no reference points other than its own. Language, and communication in general, will not be available in any sense of common discourse, for such a self. And we are mindful of the Wittgensteinian argument against the possibility of a private language for such a self (cf section 5.2).

So Candy's common assumptions are in trouble. These three (propositions 3,4,5,) are, as a group, false, because in their contradictions, they produce a conclusion not at all inherent in the premises. Are they separately, nevertheless, sound? If we wish to resurrect Cartesianism, yes, but Candy wants constructivism to *connect*, even meld, the self with the social world, not disconnect it. His emphasis on socio-cultural phenomena throughout his ten propositions shows his sensitivity to contexts, and how powerful they are in nesting individuals' meanings. But his aspirations to an integrationist or holistic ontology are unsupported by these three propositions, which are as a group 'false but significant'.

Their significance lies in their aptness as catalysts for considering the limitations of naive relativism. Initially plausible as statements of how humans make sense of experience, closer and interdependent scrutiny of these three propositions reveals many contradictions, even though, as a group they give prominence to important features of constructivism: its dynamism and malleability, and its under-determination by experience. They do not, however, as we have seen, present these in a logically-coherent fashion, so the conclusion must be that on the grounds afforded by these three propositions, 'constructivism' the way Candy wants it, is false.

Perhaps this is too severe. Even if they are 'false but significant' as a group, they may have significance if we regard them separately. After all, each does partially express something significant about constructivism. Unfortunately, the penalty is that each is unsound. Let us develop the analysis a little.

Earlier it was stated that these three propositions, unlike the other seven in Candy's list, are exclusionist in logical form: 'If X then not-Y'. But, for any value for X, there are many possibilities other than the exclusion (the not-Y) each proposition contains. The values for 'not-Y' that are stated, namely,'fixed conditions' (proposition 3), 'non-observational categories' (proposition 4) and

'non-empirical validity' (proposition 5), certainly do not exhaust the contrasting circumstances Candy wants to emphasise to throw his constructivism into starker relief. He does not *need* contrasting circumstances to make the points he wishes. And he certainly does not need to limit the exclusions to 'Y' cases, none of which have any logical connection with 'X' cases.

Our argument throughout Chapter Five and hitherto has been designed to show that such exclusions, such contrasts, are ontologically otiose, and that what requires recognition is a logical constructivism we do not choose but find ourselves undergoing. We do not want exclusions, but inclusions. If humans' experience and agency is as rich a resource for self-hood, and by extrapolation, self-directed learning as adult education claims, then we want ontological inclusion, or assimilation, not apartheid.

More sophisticated constructivism avoids naively relativist analysis, and the dualism this seems to require, by maintaining a broader, integrative perspective, thus including more and deeper possibilities for learning based on that constructivism.

In summary, Candy over-reaches his warrant, relegating to 'second eleven' status logical and empirical evidence he needs to underpin selfhood appropriately. In this sense, his three significant propositions are not only false (syllogistically invalid) but also unsound (inaccurate). A lot of what we call experience and agency would on his analysis fall off the education wagon as it self-directed up a *cul-de-sac*: more a case of constrictivism, really.

6.4 Autonomy

We turn now to an exploration of autonomy, a hallowed Western educational ideal for generations, towards which the provision of a liberal education is directed. Autonomy promises much, as an ideal should, but in the past twenty years, literature has arisen exploring tensions between that ideal and the practices of capitalist democracies themselves (for example, Bowles and Gintis 1976, 1986; Lindley 1986). Indeed, as intimated in Chapter Two, whether or not the relationship is one of tension or of congruence is part of the dynamic of the literature.

In brief, and revisiting Chapter Two to some extent, it has been shown (for example, by Macpherson 1968, 1973, 1977) that the freedoms espoused by capitalist democracies are as much a requirement of the efficacious marketplace as they are of an informed, participative citizenry. In the former, people are regarded primarily as free to choose to produce and consume as they individually desire; in the latter, people are regarded as free to choose whatever ends they individually desire and to enjoin (but not harm) others in the sharing of these ends. The conceptual intimacy between these two ideals goes beyond 'freedom to choose', however, because people are regarded not just as choice-laden individuals, but also as constituted by the consequences of their choices. People, in acting to achieve what they desire, become what they want to want. A liberal education tries to provide a wide range of open-ended opportunities for the formation of personal choices, or wants.

Now clearly these wants are desirable in the tautological sense of 'desirable' (that is, as desiderata). In this, Chapter Six, the more urgent and ontologically formidable question is: should individuals' desiderata constitute their very being? Or, to put it in terms of our purposes, is autonomy - or self-government - an adequate educational ideal? Whether one supports the 'tension' or the 'congruence' version (or melds them), autonomy itself can be regarded as the individualisation of the relationship in capitalist democracies between liberty (or freedom) and equality. Ultimate political power is with the people, so the democratic ideal goes, but it is exercised individually, with vastly discrepant participation and influence.

Enter educational idealism, which reflects microcosmically the same dynamic. Excellence is thought to result from the competition of the marketplace, in which all individuals are equally participants. Individuals are 'free to choose' what they desire. It follows on this argument that autonomy is literally 'self'-justifying. In this way, you or I are regarded as the cause of our circumstances because the resolution of the tension between liberty and equality in our cases is our own. After all, we (as individuals) chose it, so we (as 'free choice bearers') own the outcomes.

Autonomy as an educational ideal thus reproduces a model of the individual constituted by

- atomism, ontologically prior to holism
- choice, ethically prior to obligation.

The educable 'self', under the predominant view of adult learning as self-direction, arises in the combination of these two aspects. This entails, minimally, that what an autonomous individual wants to know (i.e. 'freely chooses to learn'), or has already learned, constitutes 'selfhood'.

But this 'selfhood' is epistemologically untenable: past and present knowledge possessed by that individual has only escaped solipsism by the legitimisation (or not) of that individual's beliefs in the public arena. Put more strongly, 'selfhood' defined by the priorities of the atomised free chooser, entrenches *belief* at the expense of *knowledge*. Any educator must object to this consequence of learning, since, by definition, education is the advance of knowledge in the face of ignorance (or false belief, or prejudice and so on). Knowledge may well be retarded by beliefs and will be shaped by them, but that process only arises when beliefs are testable beyond the experiences of an atomised individual.

Similarly, and subsequently, choices are enriched as and when their social significance is established. After all, what counts as more or less worthwhile knowledge is, for educators, an essential, permanent and public debate. This thesis is a contribution to that debate: it is not a chronicle of the writer's beliefs but a public engagement with a series of questions endemic to all education enterprise, albeit from within the sociocultural context of the Western intellectual tradition.

Choice itself is a meaningless act if the options are identical, as all consumers (who expect definitions) and producers (who expect to define) know of the marketplace, no matter what size the field of choice may be. Choices of desirable learning outcomes cannot generate knowledge in the sense that interests educators if there is no arena established already to sort truth from false knowledge-claims. Educators therefore have a legitimate involvement in ontological, ethical, and of course epistemological questions. This is why attempts to locate meaningful choice in broader experiences and sensitivities, such as shown in some current work in democratic theory and psychoethics are important (section 2.10).

The concern in Chapter Six is ontological. It is that the ideology of self-direction does not sufficiently peel back its own assumptions about the 'self', preferring the inevitability of individuals' experiential diversity to define what an appropriate theorisation of adult education should consist in. That theorisation

has driven, and continues to drive, many practitioners' understanding of their work - as we outlined in Chapter One. We believe self-direction is an inadequate basis of an understanding of adult education.

How, then, does all the foregoing fit with a more coherent and cogent theorisation of adult education practice?

6.5 Reconstructing Selfhood

We saw in Chapter Five that a more logically- and ontologically-constructed account of human experience moved analyses of adult learning as social, perceptual or creative constructivism on to a more substantial basis for the epistemic authority all education requires. We have provided an account of the *construction* of 'experience', specifically suitable for adult education, where there was no such detailed account before. We took issue with the naive relativism implied by theorising arising from, and remaining with, psycho-perceptual and socio-cultural assumptions, even when these (correctly) shed education theorising of both its positivism and its naive realism.

Now, we propose the *reconstruction* of perhaps the most popular element in Western adult education, the 'self', attacking what may be called a naively relativistic approach, similar to the relativism of social constructivism discussed earlier. This naive approach regards the 'self' as constituted by immersion in and attribution of personal characteristics: desire-driven, where what is 'mine', produces 'me'. It is congruent with naive social constructivism because both overstate the role of human agency: that people have an almost infinitely flexible capability to determine their ends, and that society is the deliberate (although evolving) construction that results from all these personal choices and activities.

Instead, a reconstructed self starts with what is common experience, and builds in what is communal. To borrow from Mouffe (1993), in her discussion of 'radical democracy',

> ...such a task requires the creation of new subject positions that would allow the common articulation, for example, of antiracism, antisexism and anticapitalism. These struggles do not spontaneously converge...

> Political philosophy has a very important role to play in the emergence of this common sense and in creation of these new subject positions, for it shapes the 'definition of reality' that will provide the form of political experience and serve as a matrix for the construction of a certain kind of subject. Some of the key concepts of liberalism, such as rights, liberty and citizenship, are claimed today by the discourse of possessive individualism, which stands in the way of the establishment of a chain of democratic equivalences. (18-19)

Mouffe's 'common sense', 'form of political experience', 'matrix' and 'chain of democratic equivalences' are integrative metaphors and devices, by which she seeks some mapping of hitherto marginalised power. She expects these to unite in the presentation of experience (as a 'definition of reality'), so there is a reconstructive holism about the ontology of the subject.

By analogy, our reconstructed 'self', or subject, also does not resurrect dualism. Equally important, our practitioners are not to be contexted individualistically, but through cultural formation, as set out in Chapter Four. Dewey, Ryle, Polanyi, Oakeshott and Schön, as we have seen in Chapter Three, have advanced integrative approaches to practical knowledge (paraphrasable as 'it is the doing and the thinking together') and therefore to the notion of experience itself. Stepping outside philosophy, we note that adult education has been significantly influenced by humanistic psychologists such as Rogers and Maslow who similarly reject the dualism of public, observable behaviour and a ghostly inner life to which our private access gives epistemic authority.

But now, a warning. In attacking Cartesian dualism, the danger is, instead and in reaction, the embracing of a too-holistic monism, where everything is connected to everything else, and the universe is the answer to everything - and therefore the answer to nothing. This thesis is not in the metaphysics business! And even if it were, monism is not entailed by integrationism. After all, or perhaps more accurately, prior to all else, an integrative or communitarian approach to professional practice does not entail that *my* sense of selfhood is known in quite the same way that I know you or that you know me. One writer poses the issue thus:

> The immediacy of self-knowledge eludes us in the apparent objective rigor of self-perception and deludes us in the solipsistic Cartesian position that starts with the 'I'. How can we avoid the elusion and the illusion of self?

> The upshot...is that the meanings of the words like *self, agency, action, personal causation* and so on...[is] contained within the structure of our ways of communicating - our language, our everyday scheme of things which we more or less agree upon as a basis for adequate communication. (deCharms 1987:28)

This marks the crux of the connection between the formation of selfhood and the formation of society; that is, it reminds us of the Wittgensteinian insight into the meaningfulness of experience through culturally-specific action and language usage, discussed in sections 4.6, 5.2 and 5.6. It correctly locates selfhood within (inevitably) public communication, which expresses the 'forms of life' of the participants.

Other writers make this connection and push it towards adult education:

> As a theoretical construct of beliefs about individual agency, power and identity, the self takes on the meanings of the culture and family in which it has been developed...
>
> In North American and European cultures, the concept of self includes an array of attributions that focus attention on what we call autonomy, self-regulation, free will and the independence of the individual. We create ourselves in a context of belief in being independent actors, makers and directors of our own lives. (Young-Eisendrath and Hall 1987:439-440)

The ambiguity of the last sentence is a convenient point of entry to the task of developing a corrective balance to the prevailing use of 'self' in adult education. We do indeed 'create ourselves', but the central point of this and the preceding chapter is to establish whether this claim has substantive support underpinning the educational rhetoric it undoubtedly generates. Do we create ourselves in what we do, oblivious to what we find ourselves undergoing? Are there logical constructions which set up human experience and agency, and then selfhood, such that we cannot but live and learn as we do?

In more detail, what follows is this. In Chapter Five, when setting out a logically-constructed theory of experience, we identified the overstatement of the scope of human agency (both personally and socially) and the consequent over-enthusiasm for the range and diversity of choices of (learning) outcomes. This prediliction was sheeted home to the cultural location of self-directed learning within Western capitalist democracies. Extrapolating from that analysis of 'experience', we in like fashion will restore

• a broader ontological 'self' (or notion of a 'community member') not characterised by atomistic individuals antecedent to public, social relationships, and

• a stronger ethical 'self' (or notion of a 'moral subject') not characterised by attribution of desires and free choices, and

• a deeper epistemological 'self' (or notion of 'strong evaluator') not characterised by shallow ('weak') unsubstantiated preferences.

6.5.1 The Ontological Self

In giving priority to the communitarian aspect of selfhood, we do not thereby eradicate the personal aspect. We only seek to restrict the atomisation of human experience through the restoration of an appropriate balance of the personal and the social, in their integration as the selfhood of a person. The obvious fact of individual human embodiment should not lead us to the view that experience, and therefore selfhood, amounts to whatever the collectivity of such embodiments take it to be. This slips into an atomistic ontology: what is, is primarily a collection of singular subjects, in which human beings are prominent items. But the cost of that reductivism is the very meaningfulness of human life. Harre argues that, first, the 'body' is not to be denied, but that, second, persons develop 'selves' when, transcendentally (i.e. beyond sensory experience *per se*), meaningfulness emerges:

> The primary organisation of experience centred on persons should be ubiquitous in all mankind by virtue of the physical necessities that corporeal embodiment in a world of things imposes in point of view...if this is true then cultural relativity can appear only in the secondary structure of individuals when a transcendental self is introduced...via a theory to organise one's knowledge and, by reflection, the objects of that knowledge, one's states, beliefs, feelings and so on themselves. (Harre 1984:144)

He, seemingly following Wittgenstein, argues for the centrality of language in creating a meaningful world:

> An image I like is to think of social life as a kind of conversation. All our actions, not only our gestures and our talk are creating a kind of conversation...into which individuals enter, make their contribution to the common discourse and eventually fall silent. (Harre 1983:159)

Babies are immersed in this conversation, and the dead may continue it through 'frozen' speech in books, legends and the like: the ubiquity of language in 'world creating', as he calls it, '[goes] to the heart of what it is to be a human being, engaging with other people in constructing a social world' (*loc. cit.*).

In describing the 'advancing front' of psychology, he locates the personal in the social as follows:

> There is a growing tendency to say something like this: that practical and social knowledge, the rules of proper action, the actual processes of thought, might not be in an individual's possession at all. All these things might be properties of the social-collective of the human group. Insofar as the group has a social structure, so does the system of rules, so does the body of knowledge. A person having a certain location in the social structure, a certain role in an institution, has the right to display certain pieces of knowledge. (1983:165)

This, then, is the significance of community membership, if this is regarded as all those forms of association contributing to the formation of the self right from the moment of birth. It de-centres the ontological priority of the 'atomic' self by restoring the public, social environment within which we cannot but be knowing and known - as much by others as ourselves.

A bridge between consideration of the ontological self and the ethical self is provided in the debate generated by Rawls' theory of 'justice as fairness' (1971). Leaving aside the main details of that theory, we may take up the ascription of selfhood he developed, because it has both ontological and ethical aspects.

It is important for Rawls that individuals choose what they want in life from an entitlement to it. He does not believe that a person deserves what follows from the exercise of her natural capacities (genetic endowments, the contingencies one is born into and so on), nor that charitable activities by governments to remove disadvantages will secure such entitlements. Instead, he argues extensively for redistributive justice (via a formulaic reallocation of resources summarised as the Difference Principle) in favour of those sorts of outcomes most people would want if they were able to consider objectively the human condition. He posits as a term of art, the 'veil of ignorance' behind which a hypothetical identification of minimal human wants can be achieved. Rawls intends the 'veil' to mask an individual's circumstances, thus correcting for self-interest and natural capacities.

Without entering into the substantive issues involved, this conceptual topography has been criticised because it is thought to be excessively individualistic. This has both ontological and ethical aspects. The anthropologist Douglas discusses Rawls' 'unencumbered, unhistorical individual agent ' (Douglas 1987:126), in the light of Sandel's (1982) argument that Rawls' typical individual is

> individuated apart from or before the community experience, so the boundaries of the subject's self-hood are fixed independently of situations and are presumably incapable of change. Sandel for his part seeks...[a] self...profoundly penetrated by community. (Douglas:127)

Sandel argues that Rawls has 'assumed a subject of possession, individuated in advance, and given prior to its ends' (Sandel:169), but about which nothing which we want to claim as human is apparent: the lights are on, we may say, but there is no one home. This has profound implications for agency (too distant from the world of action to be efficacious) and reflection (no immediacy of experience to reflect upon). So Sandel is really questioning not only the 'veil' as a term of art, but more seriously, the ideological underpinnings of Rawls' account of justice.

Sandel argues that Rawls' rigid distinction between the subject of possession and the objects of possession such as capacities, desires and ends enshrines a dualism which 'radically disembodies' human experience, and that this denies central facts about the social creation of meaningfulness:

> ...to say that the members of a society are bound by a sense of community is not simply to say that a great many of them profess communitarian sentiments and pursue communitarian aims, but rather that they conceive their identity - the subject and not just the object of their feelings and aspirations - as defined to some extent by the community of which they are part. For them, community describes not just what they *have* as fellow citizens, but also what they *are*, not a relationship they choose...but an attachment they discover... (Sandel 1982:150)

Rawls responded. He argued that the veil of ignorance

> has no metaphysical implications concerning the nature of the self; it does not imply that the self is ontologically prior to the facts about persons that the parties are excluded from knowing. (Rawls 1985:238)

By the 'facts', Rawls and Sandel seem to agree that these generate the descriptors of a person's circumstances which clearly include the outcomes of their actions. But they disagree over the nature of the ethical self, or moral subject, which such an ontology implies.

6.5.2 The Ethical Self

Sandel regards the communitarian location of selfhood as a more realistic context for full-blooded self-reflection and agency. He moves from an ontological analysis to his central concern: the nature of the moral subject. He argues that in group membership, we find (or 'discover') ourselves in primary attachments to each other, not, *contra* Rawls, that our identities are constituted by individuation which is separated from any experiential content upon which to reflect:

> we...must be subjects constituted in part by our central aspirations and attachments, always open, indeed vulnerable, to growth and transformation in the light of revised self-understanding ...comprehend[ing] a wider subject than the individual alone, whether a family, or tribe or city or class or nation or people....And what marks such a community is...a common vocabulary of discourse and a background of implicit practices and understandings... (172)

This statement resonates with the rhetorical flavour of adult education values, yet it has arisen in quite another intellectual setting: as a conclusion to an intricate and sophisticated argument about the nature of the moral subject. It parallels deCharms' statements, earlier, concerning the centrality of language in both defining and enabling sociocultural experience, but our development of that has been to locate such experience *in what we find our 'selves' to be.* Furthermore, the ontological claim extends to an ethical claim that what we find ourselves to be is revealed in what we 'make' of our selves, albeit communally.

Now, however, there is a risk of overstating the role of agency. Earlier, we identified the need to apply a corrective to the prevailing view in adult education which assumes an almost infinitely variable model of free choice. Under this view, the autonomous learner is characterised by attribution of desires and goals entirely within that learner's province to create. The power to achieve those attributions is of course quite another issue we cannot investigate

here. Instead, we ask, is the ethical self too active an agent in that learning becomes desire-driven? That is, as Sandel puts the matter:

> To arrive at a plan of life or a conception of the good simply by heeding my existing wants and desires is to choose neither the plan nor the desires: it is simply to match the ends I already have with the best available means of satisfying them...[M]y aims, values and conceptions of the good are not the products of choice but the products of a certain superficial introspection. (162-3)

This banal and low-level kind of goal is reached in the satiation of desires, rather than in the satisfaction of achievement. In adult education provision, it is a way of conceptualising learning purposes as mere outcomes - where one has gone through a process which is a value vacuum. The process may be one of growth or one of gluttony. The point is that there are no grounds within this conceptualisation of the goal of learning for deciding.

The ethical self, by contrast, secures individuality within the context of community, and community is acknowledged as a site of shared values. Humans are born into shared values: more than that, we are 'persons' in that personhood comes communally-contexted. A human grouping of shared values constitutes a community. We find ourselves inevitably growing up as ethical selves just by being part of an (inherited) community. This leaves no lesser role for agency, it merely recognises the ethical parameters agency possesses.

6.5.3. The Epistemological Self

Leaving political and moral philosophy and drawing out the epistemological import of the forgoing accounts of ontological and ethical selfhood, we pick up the point Sandel presents us with - goals being regarded other than as outcomes - by reminding ourselves that education is about the formation of knowing what we want to want, and why we want it. It is not about the bald banality of merely arriving at an outcome - any outcome. Neither is it about outcomes which are merely instrumental: knowing *how* to achieve what we want - replacing satiation with satisfaction. There is yet another, teleological sense of 'goal' which taps human enthusiasm for getting the aims or purposes of activities right. Values and knowledge, as we first noted in Chapters Two and Three, are not surprisingly intertwined. We return to the teleology of this in Chapter Seven. Here, given that goals are to be regarded as purposes, and

are not to be thought of entirely cognitively, what can this mean for reconstructing selfhood?

Education is definitionally epistemological, although one would not wish to narrow this to what psychologists call the 'cognitive domain' to the exclusion of the affective, the social and the psychomotor domains. Knowledge is constitutive of all and each of these. Indeed, in experience, the distinctions between them do not exist. The holistic, integrative nature of experience implicates all domains all the time. But in addressing the formation of the self, and the contribution of experience and agency, we need to enquire what we bring to acts of choice and discrimination. We know we choose: are there qualities we are aware of when we do? Such awareness is epistemological and holistic in the very act of decision.

A helpful distinction here is made by Taylor (1977) in his account of human agency. In what he calls 'weak evaluation' we simply weigh up our preferences, say, between one cream cake or another, and this gives us an outcome with minimal reflection. On the other hand, he calls 'strong evaluation' that which issues in reflection on the quality of the motivation; how worthy are the desires I have formed? And, more deeply again, how have I been able to articulate them? Thus, for Taylor:

> The strong evaluator envisages his alternatives through a richer language. The desirable is not only defined for him by what he desires...plus a calculation of the consequences; it is also defined by a qualitative characterisation of desires as lower or higher, noble and base etc....[He will] have a *vocabulary of worth*. (112) (emphasis added)

It is not enough to see one's self as constituted by one's immersion in a community, shaped by communicative apparatus like language and sociocultural institutions. In addition, the self builds up its own constellation of meanings within that community membership. The richer these are the more articulate one is about the evaluations of experiences and the choices which flow from them. And richer meanings are exactly what it is the primary business of education to develop.

To press the point: Taylor's weak evaluator has nothing to say after choosing one cake over another (even after superficial reflection, 'I just want that one' will suffice); his strong evaluator will have stepped back from the immediacy, weighed up consequences, considered hesitation, retreat, advance - the 'big

picture', as it were - and will then have been able to articulate the justification if required. Perhaps the cakes remain uneaten, or discriminations about the choice hitherto unsuspected or ignored come out. Is obesity an issue? The time of day? Etiquette? Already we can see an evaluative language (or more accurately a personal 'dialect' or dialogue) in operation. As Taylor says:

> The strong evaluator has...a language to express the superiority of one alternative...[He] can articulate superiority just because he has a language of contrastive characterisation. (113)

Authentic reflection is the deeper kind of reflection, present in and resulting from strong evaluations where we can justify to ourselves and others our motivations. It contrasts with the superficial matching of means with motives where having seized upon where we want to go, or do, we cast about for the way to get there. Consideration of the formation of motivations has no part in this, there being no vocabulary available to articulate such activity. There is, in brief, no 'vocabulary of worth', only what we may call a 'vocabulary of consumption'. No value, only price. More dramatically, no conversation around the dining-room, just the sounds of a vomitorium.

By contrast, the epistemological self has a deeper ('stronger') evaluation of how the person-as-chooser comes to hold her or his beliefs and values. Such a person has an ability to articulate how she or he wants to want something - how they have come to such-and-such a state of knowledge. So, to use Taylor's phrase, a 'vocabulary of worth' generates justifications about how things have come to be as they are. Since language is social and the context of language is public, it can be concluded that the epistemological self is derived from socially, publicly justifiable criteria.

Having concluded an examination of the ontological, ethical and epistemological aspects of selfhood, we turn to their ownership, or integration, within a (re-cast) autonomous self.

6.6 Authenticity

Autonomy which results from and is displayed by strong evaluation and deeper reflection will also be characterised by authenticity. This is the disposition of the autonomous self to 'own' her experiences and to be able to countenance changing them. She will be able to articulate how she came to want what she wants, and on that basis some direction for the future.

Articulations are not just descriptions, but ingredients in the formation of the self in a dynamic sense, that is, they contribute to personal prescriptions. They identify changes in the self by authenticating how the self stands at any one moment. They crystallise amidst the ephemera where the self has come from and where it may be going. Put briefly, they capture as required the spontaneity of the 'being' in the concept of a human being.

But spontaneity is not to confused with caprice. The authentically autonomous person has principles and plans which guide action, and which are also informed by that action. This reciprocity is what deeper reflection consists in, in that a principle or a plan only presents as such if it is articulable as part of a disposition formed by practice in taking responsibity for one's actions. This requires a community membership shaped by freedom - that is, a voluntaristic environment wherein people seek their good in ways specific to themselves, and do not trample on others' efforts to do likewise. But this heightens the importance of a richer communication, of a vocabulary of worth, rather than of consumption. If a richer vocabulary were to be made more widely available, it would engage the experiences of more individuals and flow through to the deeper reflection leading to authentic (i.e. self-justified rather than merely self-possessed) autonomy. Where, for example, police reports of a 'domestic' are redescribed as 'criminal assault', more than redescription has gone on. A deeper evaluation of a certain set of experiences has drawn on broader cultural concerns leading to different actions: perhaps women and even some men will have been able to see themselves or others in a more sensitive way than hitherto. In Western democracies, we do prize the integrity of the individual:

> Liberal democracy is premised on the assumption that people should have equal rights to run their own lives. This in turn depends on a view of people as the proper objects of respect. (Lindley 1986:9)

This consideration of autonomy has drawn out the contradictions between equality and liberty insofar as the 'self' can be regarded as both an object of respect and a subject of respect. Adult educators have little difficulty with the notion of learners as objects of respect; they have not, however, moved beyond a superficial 'autonomy' in regarding learners as subjects of respect. Respect is due, certainly, but because adult learners are constituted by more balanced, well-rounded conceptions of:

• a broader ontological 'self' (or notion of a 'community member') not characterised by atomistic individuality antecedent to public, social relationships, and

• a stronger ethical 'self' (or notion of a 'moral subject') not characterised by attribution of desires and free choices.

To these twin aspects of the autonomous adult, we have added a more robust epistemology, namely

• a deeper epistemological 'self' (or notion of 'strong evaluator') not characterised by shallow ('weak') unsubstantiated preferences.

In 'knowing thyself', an adult learner generates her articulation of her experiences, her choices and her ends through deeper reflection constrained by the communicative opportunities afforded by her community. This is not a restriction on human agency. On the contrary, it merely identifies and shapes the boundaries of the possibilities for social and personal self-construction. 'Authentic autonomy' is thus the term we can use for this more balanced notion of the self: where an individual knows her *self* to be ontologically and ethically both subject and object in an equilibrium which constitutes her identity.

6.7 The New Professional Practitioner

At the beginning of this Chapter, at section 6.1, Candy's statements of the implications of his version of constructivism for adults' self-directed learning were paraphrased. They are

- self-constructing people tend towards autonomy;
- autonomy emerges in the 'dynamic' exercise of self-constructing;
- autonomy is therefore not given to learners, but claimed by them;
- such claims result from the 'inner life' or central beliefs around which self-constructions are organised, and which give intention and logic to behaviour;
- finally, it behoves educators to enter into such individual learner perspectives as far as possible.

Now that we re-read these, after establishing a new theorisation of experience, agency and the self, does this account of self-directed learning present itself as conducive to professional adult education practice?

Certainly, the last point is important, chiefly because it overtly addresses practice, and also because it is true. But is it significant? Looking back up the list, which reads as a sequence if not strictly as argument, we notice a flavour of individualism thoughout. 'Self-contructions' are organised around an 'inner life', which then drives claims on autonomy. There is no recognition of what we have called, above, the broader ontological 'self' (or of the notion of a 'community member'), located amidst socio-cultural group memberships that contribute to the formation of personal identity (which is what 'self construction' is actually about).

There is, however, evidence of support for what we have called a stronger ethical 'self' (or notion of a 'moral subject') not solely characterised by attribution of desires and free choices. Candy's self-constructed learners do appear to possess a constitutive capacity for authentic autonomy. They can develop their own reasons for acting thus-and-so (he lists intention and behavioural logic), and in that sense, 'authenticate' their purposes.

What is lacking is a rigorous sensitivity to the formative influence on authentication of the richer conceptualisation of experience, of the kind outlined in Chapter Five. This detailed three 'less helpful' notions of the 'given', leading respectively to socially, perceptually and creatively constructed experience, and foregrounded them with a substantial transcendental argument for an ontological constructivism, as a logical 'given'. These four 'givens' were then described as the necessary and sufficient conditions for human experience.

The significance of such a conception of experience comes out in expectations that we adults learn as much from what we undergo, as we do from what we undertake. We cannot make of ourselves whatever we want - but the rhetoric in adult education is that we can. We need to see human experience as a whole. This indicates a regard for what we inherit as sentient humans within sociocultural locations we could not have chosen, equipped with communication capabilities which inevitably display and engender those locations. Our experience is not, then, the infinitely malleable product we desire it to be, nor should we regard ourselves as mere producers of that product, and others as mere consumers. This is of crucial significance for adult

education practitioners, since it strikes at the cosy assumption that the field should be market-driven, and that simplistic facilitation is the methodological rationale for involvement. Market-gardening is not the only purpose in cultivating the field!

So, although we are active in the construction of new experiences, we are what we find ourselves to be. This needs to be recognised in all learning, and certainly in the learning of practitioners themselves. A restoration of a balance in the theorisation of experience also requires the dissolution of a dualism between the individual and group memberships (say, the socio-cultural world). Such a balance also requires the more sophisticated constructivism advanced in Chapter Five. Taken together, these three conceptual reforms de-centre assumptions about adult education based upon the Cartesian dualism of self and society, in favour of a unified, integrated approach which embraces the ontologically-given as well as the other givens displayed in much of the constructivist literature.

This approach requires a rather more modest view of agency, which was developed in this Chapter, drawing upon contemporary debate about the constitution of the 'self' in capitalist liberal democracies. In such ways, attention is drawn to the contextuality of prevalent views of both constructivism, and agency, and the way is cleared for a stronger, less rampantly atomistic, conception of human learning.

6.8 Summary: Chapters Five and Six

The general shape of the argument over these two chapters has been to attack the prevalent view in adult education theorisation that experience and self-direction are self-evident, indeed, are 'given', and moreover are *adequately* given in socio-cultural analyses. That the very notions of experience and the self (which does the directing) are themselves constructs is now apparent, but rather than demolish them, the project herein has been to modify their constructivism so they engage common and communal human understanding and awareness more fully.

Two sets of implications result from that analysis.

One main set of implications has been to attack an overstated constructivism, clearly present in adult education theorisation and in practice right across the field - that adult learners can become whomsoever they want. This is ironic, since there is, in the literature, and in practice, little intellectual reflection upon the very construction of this constructivism, within the adult education edifice.

Candy is a valuable contributor to 'constructivism', because he shows considerable sensitivity to the need to move beyond a narrow and presumptive 'self-direction'. His seven true-but-trivial propositions (section 6.2) show an engagement with wider aspects of human experience, but, as his three 'false-but-significant' propositions show (in section 6.3), his theorisation of self-direction collapses into a naive relativism - just the outcome also attributable to each of social, perceptual and creative constructivism, as we found in section 5.4.

So, in engaging the particularities of professional practice, an easy road to follow would have been a Candian analysis of self-direction. The learning arising in the work-life of the adult educator fits readily enough with the list of implications that Candy tries to establish. Who would disagree with the 'dynamism' of self-construction, and the receptivity to learners' perspectives, when we wear our own 'professional educator' hat? And who would disagree that adult educators' own work-based learning is also of that kind of constructivism - individualistic, active, open-ended?

The reconstruction of constructivism which these two chapters have developed is a response to the superficialities of these characterisations. There is enough plausibility in naive constructivism to generate agreement with prevalent views on the centrality of experience, self-direction and so on, as they appear within the discourses of certain 'givens'. But once one steps outside these, their implicit and excessive individualism becomes plain.

A second main set of implications of this reconstruction of experience and selfhood, replacing rampant individualism, is the following:

- an integrationist model of experience,

- a more socio-culturally located concept of agency,

- a communitarian selfhood, and,

• following from all that, a moral subject who knows her self to be directive in the world on these bases.

The professional practitioner in adult education, properly so called, can now be identified as the person who recognises her agency through the broad integrative constructivism summed up in these two sorts of implications just stated. She regards her location or contextuality, as pivotal: it gives her formation as a professional its authority. This however is no revisitation of traditional individualistic practice, nor an endorsement of endless choice-laden professional learning-at-work. There are constraints - ethical, epistemological and ontological, and these shape and are shaped by, judgements about the right action to take. Such a practitioner is sensitive to what she finds herself undergoing, as much as what she plans to undertake. Similarly, where there are obvious continuities of experience in her own life, she is able to recognise and build upon the continuities in her learners' lives. However, since education is an intervention in the 'swamp' of experience - a metaphor for the flux of adult learning - it behoves our practitioner to act with regard for the longer view, the greater good, and the social virtues, as much as for the immediacy of the 'here and now' for an individual. Such traditional models of practice are outmoded across a range of professions, no less so in adult education, an eclectic and collaborative enterprise, resistant to codification, and jealous of its potential. We will return to these points in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

Adult education practitioners, it has been argued, are characterised by their location amidst a point of tension. The tension arises because the learning which flows inevitably from adults' experiences engages, through the practice of educators, with educational ideals. But what is learned may be miseducative, and, conversely, what is educative may not have been experienced. To resolve the tension, the authenticity of learning should be integrated with the ideals of education, the argument goes. Indeed, the mark of the professional in the field of adult education will be prominent to the extent that this reciprocal integration takes place. Accordingly, the claim in the Introduction (in section 0.1) was that

> **The thesis will establish that professional practitioners in adult education are those who see themselves (and indeed are also seen) as agents of the integration of**
>
> **(a) adults' learning from their experiences, with**
>
> **(b) the values of 'education'.**
>
> **That is, such practitioners employ 'know how' to bring such integration about, and they may ideally exemplify a kind of wisdom in 'knowing why' they act as they do. We will call this the 'integrationist' model of adult education practice.**

Integrationism implies an espousal of integrity, which we can now make explicit. Birch (1993), who as we noted in section 3.6, has articulated much of the current concern with future prospects for life on this planet, has identified what he regards as our present 'estrangement'. In the face of this, he writes of the importance of 'integrity' for education:

> ...integrity...comes from the root *integer*, meaning undivided, at-one-ment, wholeness, health, and holiness... - the opposite of estrangement.

> To be educated is to have discovered through our understanding of experience an integrity at the four levels: inner, social, environmental and metaphysical. Education that can transform human lives and society is like a spark that kindles into flame the tinder of human lives. It is the discovery of self and the discovery of the world in an exciting life-long adventure. (287)

It is timely to revisit what this thesis is about. Birch's rhetoric reminds us, in a way. This is a thesis on adult education and philosophy! It deals in the conceptualisation of the right reasons for action - as does Birch's book. It suggests, as does Birch, a discovery of self, and of the world, in life-long terms, through an understanding of experience.

But our danger, unlike his, is that the theorisation of practice may be subsumed in the technicalities of argument (the methodologies based on logic as an analytic tool) and we lose the forest in our way through the trees. Visionary statements like Birch's look naively sentimental - not at all 'practical'. But his emphases are the values we want to advance, whether or not they are dressed in popular or academic discourse.

So it is important in this last chapter that we return forcefully to the ideological import of 'integrative' practice, available to us through the eloquence of Birch. Thus we are reminded that integration is neither merely a heuristic nor a pedagogical technique, but an ideal, a purpose, for claiming appropriate professional practices as one's own. Some examples of appropriate professional practices will be discussed in section 7.3. Nevertheless, for the moment, let us summarise the way integrative practice was used in Chapters Two to Six.

Integration, within the discourse of English-speaking academic philosophy, and as the substance of professional practice, was developed in more detail through holistic analyses of relevant aspects of philosophical psychology, beginning with aspects of moral psychology in Chapter Two, and continuing with creativity, rationality, reflection, and anticipation in Chapter Three. More extensive analyses, of intentionality and competence, contributed to a theorisation of the situatedness of professionals' work, as contextual formation, in Chapter Four. Chapter Five was a detailed analysis of human experience, which used a transcendental argument to establish a more rigorously constructivist approach to experience than has hitherto appeared in adult education literature. This raised difficulties, in Chapter Six, for the traditional recourse to individualistic agency as a basis for self-directed learning.

As these arguments unfolded, a substantively innovative theorisation has emerged: the integrative and communitarian professional practitioner. A structure for this was established in the Introduction, the key ingredients were shown to emerge from adult education literature, in Chapter One, and then developed across Chapters Two to Six. Indeed, in section 2.6, the structure was described as follows:

> It should be possible to show that
>
> (a) across *a diversity of workplaces* (public and private, with individuals and groups etc.), and
>
> (b) given *the nature of the experience* which shows up in myriad daily workplace judgements,
>
> (c) we can identify a new, more *socially sensitive and morally responsible* professional person.
>
> How do these elements relate to each other? Simply put, the qualities of a professional will blend ethical considerations such as sensitivity and responsibility, with epistemological considerations such as reflective and creative experience at work, within a broader range of specific contexts.

How did the thesis unpack this last sentence?

Chapter Two recalled Dewey' expansive notion of social democracy, and then discussed some current developments in political theory and psychoethics aimed at broadening and deepening learners' choices, not merely increasing the amount of choice people possessed. This theme was returned to and advanced in Chapter Six, where the whole ontology of purported choice was worked through, in the light of the inadequacies of prevalent and naively 'given' notions of experience (in Chapter Five) and selfhood (in Chapter Six).

Chapter Three was concerned with practical knowledge which included integrationist perspectives - holistic proficiency was the initial construct, supplemented with detailed investigations of rationality, reflection, creativity, and anticipation.

Chapter Four placed these psychological phenomena firmly in a theory of contextual formation, at the core of which is, at the level of particular occurrent actions, an integrative intentionality. This was supplemented, at the more

general level of professionals' own workplaces, by an integrationist conception of professional competence, justified by the principle of integrative inference.

Cultural formation is by definition a group-oriented form of association, and the argument for a modified constructivist view of experience, in Chapter Five, relies for a good deal of its cogency on the social connections and constraints we find ourselves under - that is, via the sharing of common experiences. So this chapter moved the analysis to ontological considerations.

In Chapter Six, this was developed further in arguments against the atomism of the self-directed learner. Autonomy and authenticity were recast relationally, that is, by a communitarian analysis of selfhood.

Taken altogether, Chapters Two to Six have established a theory of integrationist constructivism, where analysis has served to establish various relevant syntheses of key aspects of professional practice for adult educators, to the extent that we are able to claim that it defines such practice.

Now, in the final chapter, we progress from these theoretical innovations and consider some broader, teleological, issues. Before that, some methodological matters.

7.2 Methodological Limitations and Opportunities

This thesis exemplifies the academic culture of English-speaking philosophy. There are strengths and weaknesses in this, and also further issues we can identify, amenable to similar methodological treatment.

The main limitation has already been hinted. This methodology can be criticised as technocratically deterministic - as a technique that provides a set of sharp tools for the logic-chopping of anything substantive about the world. Combining this with the priority given rationality, one can see that such a methodology might potentially lend itself to formalism in debate and aridity in discussion about substantive issues, such as adult education's conceptualisations of professional practice.

Now this possible limitation, which was apparent as a feature of the 'London School' of conceptual analysis in philosophy of education has to be recognised and guarded against. Addressing it is probably best based on a determination

not to let the technicalities of argument rule the roost, since, after all, philosophy has always concentrated substantive attention on the 'big questions'. Many other traditions of philosophy such as Eastern mysticism and European *praxis* have never departed from these questions as central considerations. But what is regarded as a 'philosophical tradition' is justifiably elastic. We noted in section 0.1 the irony that the primary philosophical literature in this thesis springs from Aristotle, Kant and Wittgenstein, none of whom wrote in English, much less in an 'English-speaking academic tradition'. Wittgenstein's disdain for that tradition is well-established (Monk 1990:Ch 11). And it was Wittgenstein who, having said what he thought was all there was to say in philosophy, left academia and became a school teacher. In other words, he *practised* (none too professionally, according to the evidence: Monk Ch 9).

So there is no need for an apologetic, at least insofar as substantive issues are addressed by philosophy within the English tradition: nor is there much need to maintain gate-keeping or, as Australians say, boundary-riding, with regard to that tradition. The challenge for any philsophical tradition is to keep technocratic rationality, and its overall purpose, in balance. If a broader view of rationality is taken, subsuming mere ratiocination, then we may pursue systematic thinking about any human phenomena, and there will be techniques and tools, as in all practice, to advance such thinking. And in this, there is a prominent place for sensitivity to one's contextuality, both in an intellectual setting (a tradition of enquiry) and institutionally (a location for scholarship with its canon of standards).

Here it is important to recognise the force of some current impatience with traditional academic philosophy. Mouffe (1993) frequently refers to what she and others call 'this increasing dissatisfaction with the abstract universalism of the Enlightenment...' (13-14), which has fuelled much of the interest in the articulation of the particularistic and hitherto marginalised experiences of non-white, non-male, non-middle-class people. Immediately let us recognise that even this set of descriptors is deficient in that it defines the Other by what it is not.

The post-Enlightenment project deals in particularity, rather than universalism; with contextuality rather than essentialism; with belief rather than certainty, and so on. Mouffe argues that this emphasis

> explains the rehabilitation of the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* .This ethical knowledge, distinct from the knowledge specific to the sciences (*episteme)* is dependent on the ethos, the cultural and historical conditions current in the community, and implies a renunciation of all pretence to universality. This is a kind of rationality proper to the study of human *praxis*, which excludes all possibility of a 'science' of practice, but which demands the existence of a 'practical reason', a region not characterised by apodictic statements, where the reasonable prevails over the demonstrable. (14)

Professional practice is about the reasonable - about what will be the appropriate and right action in a unique situation. How do we achieve *phronesis* in the face of the contingency of these situations? It is to the formation of the cultural significance of those situations that we have looked in this thesis for the basis of guidance on appropriate judgments. There are two ways to regard what is 'appropriate' - the epistemological and the ethical, and they are intertwined. Were they a dualism or a polarity, a practitioner could regard his judgements entirely instrumentally. He or she has ' the knowledge'; all practice consists in is the application or replication of this. We saw earlier that this is inadequate. Of course practice has to achieve what is required, but what is actually required? Practical judgements have to be efficacious - that is what we mean by appropriate in this context - but in being so, they have to achieve a kind of ethical rightness beyond efficacy. Is rightness itself contextual? Section 7.5 takes this further.

Contextuality is therefore central to the substance of this thesis. That substance is the indeterminacy of practice. It is, to recall from section 0.1, Schön's 'swamp' and Wittgenstein's 'rough ground'. What opportunities for further philosophical development can we identify?

One emerging area of great significance (partly because massive amounts of government policy development and budgets are giving it prominence) is vocational education. Can we retrieve from the messiness of practice any sense that professional adult education may be 'vocational'? And do we need to retrieve it, anyway? In section 2.7, Greenwood connected the professional with career-mindedness quite generously:

> A career is essentially a *calling* to a life devoted to "good works". Professional work is never viewed solely as a means to an end; it is the end in itself....To the professional person, his work becomes his life...similar in some respects to entering a religious order. The same cannot be said of a non-professional occupation. (1982:30)

This looks like a vocation - a calling - especially since it is a form of work in which Greenwood expects the professional to invest her or his very being. A career and the professional practices which contribute to its formation are normally, one could argue, separable from one's life as a whole. One can develop a career, even a professional career, on the basis not of 'being', but of 'becoming'. This thesis has assumed a dynamism to professional practice which is evocative and indicative of growth and development: the argument is centrally about getting the account of agency right, of limiting the overstatement of it in the light of a more sophisticated constructivism, especially ontologically. But what if all this 'becoming' has missed the point? Perhaps a career-as-vocation (to gloss Greenwood's view) invites us into a state of being, marked by understanding, fulfilment and even repose. If so, we are not far from the enthusiasm Dewey had for philosophy as (vocational) education, as discussed in the article of that name by Garrison (1990), and similarly close to Whitehead's rhetorical question, in the Introduction: if education is not to be useful, then what is it for? 'It is useful, because understanding is useful' he replies.

A second opportunity for further philosophical development (again, partly prominent due to government activities) is the area marked by 'quality', 'excellence' and, in terms of practice, 'expertise'. After all another useful (sic) purpose for a career-as-vocation is simply expertise. Humankind has increasingly higher expectations of skill development, and as we noted earlier in the thesis, several of the traditional marks of a profession effect an exclusivist and gatekeeping function for the expertise (based on a body of knowledge and practice) so provided. Yet we also dealt extensively with 'professional competence', supporting a culturally-locatable holism, or integration of, respectively: what the work requires, what is brought to the doing of the work, and the context - where the work is done. So this opportunity could examine, at least initially, whether one can generalise this model to include all work, and the quality, skill or expertise at the heart of it, *per se*, in the light of Aristotle's *techne* and *phronesis*, drawing upon both the English speaking and the European traditions of philosophy. Dunne (1994) attempts just this project, with references to Newman, Collingwood, Arendt, Gadamer and Habermas. It seems a worthwhile extension of the sorts of theorisation displayed in this thesis.

A third philosophical opportunity is to draw out (mainly by implication) Wittgenstein's contribution to education theorising. An imminent publication (Smeyers and Marshall 1995; esp Nieman 1995 in Smeyers and Marshall) overlaps substantially and methodologically with this thesis, yet also ranges across European philosophical discourse, and even connects with Dunne (1994) in dealing with Newman. A luminous effort to advance connections between Wittgenstein and learning is found in Williams' article (1994) 'The Significance of Learning in Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy'. Here she argues, from a Wittgensteinian perspective that:

> What the child is learning is to adapt her behaviour to norms without recognising that her behaviour is normatively guided. This normatively-shaped behaviour that the child *unthinkingly engages in* is the indispensable means to acquiring, subsequently, the higher cognitive competencies.
>
> To make this claim more forceful, I want to distinguish normativity from biological purposiveness, or natural teleology. 'Normativity', as I shall use it throughout this paper, is restricted to performances, non-verbal as well as verbal, that can be judged to be correct or incorrect. Such performances can be individuated only by reference to some norm, standard, exemplar, or rule. This is because both the objects used as norms (whether formula as rule, post as signpost, or rose as exemplar) and the actions themselves (writing down a particular number, taking the left fork in the road, or gathering more of the same) are devoid of any biological significance or utility and are open to multiple interpretations if considered in isolation from their historical and contemporary contexts. (179) (emphasis added)

Here, in a nutshell, and with attention to children rather than adults, is nevertheless what this thesis has concerned itself with: the contextual significance of what we have called the 'integrative constructivism' of adult education practice. Such significance is telelogical, or purposive, for us, in the sense that Williams gives to 'normativity'. For adults, like children, learning (especially through experiences at and in work, since that is our focus) arises from what Williams states we are 'unthinkingly engaged in'. This does not mean mindless or unconscious engagement, but rather what we in this thesis have frequently termed 'what we find ourselves doing'. It is the 'normativity' of that for professionals which we address in section 7.5, but we have been addressing it throughout in various ways, in each previous chapter.

We note, as we conclude, these avenues of philosophical opportunity, which may lead to useful theorisations of broader practices - vocation, work, learning, for example - that may themselves be integrative, if we read our Aristotle (and

our Augustine) carefully. Leicester (1994), in an article which would appear to support Williams' analysis, above, is heading in that direction when she writes:

> We distinguish between education and training while recognising that vocational training, at its best, will also include the development of wider cognitive perspectives, and that education necessarily includes some training....Most of us will resist an emphasis on vocational competence which encourages an instrumental view of education....A person's knowledge is not to be understood as isolated in some radically private, ghostly inner 'mind' but as *constituted by their ability to engage in a social practice, a 'language game'*. (117) (emphasis added)

It is the practices of the professional adult educator which we have been locating through multi-faceted integration, which lead us to conclude that there is a species of holism present in the theory of 'integrative constructivism'. At the core of that holism is a competent individual, but both that competence and that individuality are as much a product of their situatedness, as they are a product of the exercise of any ability or agency.

We have argued, in effect, that Leicester's 'constitution of ability to engage in a social practice' is itself derived from a reflexive constructivism between the individual and her context, most of which is shown in what we find ourselves doing. It is the thinking that flows from and arises in that doing - those actions - which generates the 'normativity' to which all professionals *find themselves* subject. This looks like holism if anything is!

But back to *our* rough ground.

If a theorisation of practice is to useful, it should, according to Anyon (1994:129), express its very 'social utility' by '...result[ing] from a dialogue between concepts of one's goal or vision, and people's current activities and problems...'

Further,

> Useful theory would be neither total (and therefore seamless and deterministic) nor completely ad hoc and applicable to only one locale. Rather it would acknowledge the complex narratives that connect larger social structures and daily life...

She concludes her list of attributes of socially useful theory by adding the 'capability of enactment' which includes 'the values and ultimate goals of the theory', and some direction about actions to be taken. She says

> Thus a theory which urges the integration of theory and practice must develop types of *praxis* which exemplify this...

Thus although this thesis is set amidst a discourse which in the past has been less than useful in elucidating adult education, it has proved 'useful' in these ways in dealing with particular phenomena to a reconstructive purpose. It knows its own situatedness - its own context.

For these reasons, it can be claimed that the methodological approach of this thesis (that is, the English-speaking academic tradition) runs at least parallel to the discourse of postmodernism/poststructuralist (that is, the European *praxis* tradition). Anyon provides this summary which serves to establish the further possibility of *convergence* of the two discourses, as we shall see shortly:

> ...I think it is possible to identify three analytical heuristics on which, among postmodern and poststructural theorists, there seems to be general agreement: the importance of the local, the validity of deconstruction, and the centrality of discourse. These...all have implications for the social utility of the theories. (118)

This thesis has no difficulty with these three points, especially with the second, 'deconstruction'. This seems to echo our 'integrative constructivism' in both methodology and substance. There are some key common features. Anyon's summary of deconstruction includes: the demonstration of philosophical instability or contradictions, the relocation of categorical dualisms and oppositions as interdependent, and, presumably based on those two, an argument that theory and practice are mutually constitutive(119). We have done precisely these, but from within a parallel discourse.

We can perhaps, then, note some convergence between the parallel discourses of postmodernism (subsuming for brevity poststructuralism within that) and the English academic tradition. Each should enrich the other. To press the point: This thesis has shown sensitivity to its own context (as a 'discourse'), a focus on the particular (the 'local'), and an explicit deconstruction of the *phenomenon* of professional practice, not merely the *concept(s)* of professional practice. Moreover, the thesis has its own stipulation of purpose and of *praxis*. The purpose is refined and affirmed in the last sections of the thesis (sections

7.5 and 7.6). Praxis - Anyon's enactment capability of a useful theory - is shown in two obviously mutually constitutive contexts - of practice (which entails theorisation) (section 7.3) and of theory (which entails practice) (section 7.4).

7.3 Contexts of Practice

What can we expect of an integrationist theory of practice? Recall (in section 4.13) how Hargreaves has characterised the 'new professional':

> At its core, the new professionalism involves a movement away from the teacher's traditional professional authority and autonomy towards new forms of association...(1994:424)

He goes on to discuss the shift from a traditionally individualistic culture, classroom-focussed, to a collaborative culture, focussed on whole-school strategy. Further evidence from other workplaces, such as the corporate world, supports this shift, as we discussed throughout Chapter Four. The pairs of chapters either side of Chapter Four really serve to establish and then develop this new professionalism, in the case of adult education. So here, looking at contexts of practice, we would expect to find collaborative professionalism engaging what we have called an integrative constructivism. In the spirit of the thesis stated in section 0.1, we would expect adult educators to do this by developing strategies which effect adults' ownership of their learning, by participation in it, although the purposes of this learning will transcend that ownership.

We return to the three examples of practice first mentioned in the Introduction (in section 0.2), noting that they were selected for their contextual contrasts.

7.3.1 Adult Literacy

Take, as our first example of adult learning practice, the opportunities available to recent settlers in Victoria, Australia, for English classes, as detailed in *Education and Training Facilities for Newly Arrived Adult Migrants to Victoria* (Abu Duhou, Beckett and Hampel 1993). This research argued that

> ...the adult NESB [Non-English Speaking Background] person most vulnerable is the woman, because her skills may be less visible, her representation (both culturally and industrially) less forceful, her socialisation less extensive and her time less available to address these. In labour market terms, her location in labour-intensive manufacturing and

> retail sectors makes her livelihood precarious and her claims on social justice strategies strong but regrettably faintly heard. (2)

Together with empirical data, these statements supported what the review of relevant policy literature was indicating: that there are groups disadvantaged by poor access to appropriate education and training facilities, especially in a recessionary climate. English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) is therefore a poignant example of the broader demand for adult literacy. As we noted in section 0.2, adult literacy is

> where community and further education, and the social justice tradition of adult education provision, both justifiable on 'liberal' grounds, are strong, but meeting equally strong pressure to slot these in to instrumental or 'vocational' education outcomes.

What, then, do adult literacy teachers, especially those who work with NESB learners, strive for? Even a simple and powerful teaching strategy, such as role playing, will exemplify some stance on relationships between learning English for citizenship, and learning English for employment. Assuming a role, in an ESL class, of 'interviewer' or 'interviewee' will reflect many learners' concurrent experiences as job-seekers, but what is the purpose of the literacy such a strategy addresses? Similar questions can be asked of any number of strategies: mainstream media analysis and discussion, field trips (including simulations) around the neighbourhood, journal compilation and sharing, publications, aural and visual 'readings' of the learning environment with a variety of technologies, political initiatives (letter-writing etc.) which arise immediately and locally and so on. In all of these, the adult educator will start with the learning experiences present in the group, and build on them - that much is orthodoxy. But where one directs a focus - towards citizenship, or towards employment - cannot without particular local knowledge be decided. After all, the Victorian research indicated that the ESL learners themselves were able to accommodate both foci, under the idea of 'livelihood'. There is, they often said, little point in citizenship without the empowerment of economic self-sufficiency; nor is there much point in literally earning a livelihood unless one's literacy extends beyond the working day and its contingencies.

So practice for adult literacy teachers frequently integrated learners' expectations of what in the relevant literature is termed the contrast between 'functional' and 'cultural' literacy (Luke 1992; Shore 1993). Whether learners saw a role play as addressing one or the other of these is not the point. Rather,

learners were able to join in and enjoy a role play as a strategy across daily life as citizens (asking directions, shopping etc.) and as workers (decision-making over work practices, safety and health procedures, etc.), where these were common experiences. How the role-playing is structured in a teaching setting, such as a classroom, should reflect easily a participative model: everyone tries it, all are in the 'audience', and everyone can de-brief, as it were. These are generalisable principles of sound ESL teaching - and indeed of much that is 'education' wherever it is provided. The creativity of the staff and the availability of resources besides the learners themselves are the chief additional ingredients of the success of this integrative approach, once the notion of learning-for-livelihood is agreed upon.

The main concerns the Victorian research showed, that were based on two general considerations were, first, a preference in learning styles amongst many NESB groups for formal grammatically-explicit written work as a model of successful learning of ESL; and, second, a sensitivity to access to classes. Both of these are linked in sociocultural terms. NESB women expressed a preference for single-sex classes, near where they lived, with child care provision. Some responses wanted ethnicity-specific ESL classes, which in regions where there was a high diversity of ethnicity, was too specific a provision. Of course, there is an educational argument against ethnic-specificity: if diversity is a resource, and tolerance a democratic virtue, the inclusive classroom will run better if there is experiential breadth present. The same cannot regrettably be claimed as confidently of the gender-inclusive classroom, where patriarchy even (or perhaps, especially) within a democracy has some way to go before tolerance is achieved.

If access is sensitively provided, then strategies which break down the traditional reliance on formal grammatically-explicit models of learning, such as role-play, can be given a chance to work. When people are relaxed they are more likely to achieve - again, that much is orthodoxy. Where they are further challenged to reflect upon their common experiences (as newly-arrived citizens, as nascent workers), the communality of that environment is likely to educationally legitimise the already powerful adult learning which is carried through the door of the classroom. But it is getting through the door, each day, which is the real achievement, for all concerned.

In this context, then, 'integrative constructivism' is shown in practice by

• provision of a learning environment which is attractive, and accessible (e.g. transport and child care and costs have been addressed);

• prevalent use of small group-work with peer negotiation over roles and outcomes, and input in to assessment tasks, and assessment itself;

• use of a wide range of learning strategies: classroom and non-classroom; print and non-print; structured and semi-structured;

• overt emphasis on learners' life experiences: usage of anecdotes, items, problems, socio-cultural issues, traditions and expectations; and

• clear articulation of 'pathways' for learning outcomes: into further more formal study, labour market requirements (such as competencies), community resources (such as health and welfare agencies).

7.3.2 Nursing Education

In contrast to the provision of adult literacy, which we took as normally classroom-based, but institutionally 'floating', nursing education has always been institutionally situated, even to its detriment. After all, nurses learned traditionally by doing the work, as part of the labour-force of a hospital. In brief, section 0.2 noted that nursing education

> has emerged from a hospital-based 'apprenticeship' model of workplace learning, and is seeking to maintain a nurturant ethic as the basis of professional development distinct from the dominant and positivist medical epistemology, but not so distinct that it cannot articulate with medicine - and science and technology in general.

Nursing is about caring, and it strives to mark itself as a profession on that basis, as well as maintain its links with other professions' knowledge bases, principally medicine. As one nurse educator puts the matter:

> The problem here is not whether nursing is an occupation or a profession. Nor is it what nursing must do to acquire professional status. Rather, the problem is that nurses, in accepting the traditional orthodoxy surrounding American professions as the only standard, have forced an impossible fit and thus deprived themselves of their actual identity. (Parsons 1986:270)

Recent changes to nursing education have moved pre-service preparation to tertiary settings, with degree courses in nursing as an 'applied science' (sic) grappling with a nursing identity crisis. We cannot rehearse the complex history behind, nor current theoretical influences upon, the emergence of a post-apprenticeship, post-positivist nursing profession (the award-winning film documentary, *Handmaidens and Battleaxes*, Gillespie 1989, outlines these), but it is a fascinating saga. Our interest is in whether integrative practice has a part in reformulated nursing education, recognising that such education will be partly classroom-based, and, increasingly at graduate level, clinical.

Nursing seeks to maintain and develop the caring ethic, as it arises from the welfare of the whole person. So (w)holism is a serious central issue in nursing, especially in the clinical teaching at both pre-service and post-initial levels. A prominent nursing theorist, Watson (1988), endeavours to specify holism through her theory of 'transpersonal caring' , which she sees as

> ...scientific, professional, ethical, yet esthetic, creative and personalised giving-receiving behaviours and responses between two people (nurse and other) that allow for contact between the subjective world of the experiencing persons (through physical, mental or spiritual routes or some combination thereof). (58)

Where everything is connected to everything else, integrationism is submerged in a barely coherent holism. It looks like a recipe for professional exhaustion and *dis*integration. More recent writers see it as problematic for nurses: 'Holism is a turbid, amorphic term, of Quixotic character, the meaning of which alters according to the context in which it is located' (Owen and Holmes 1993:1688).

Yet Watson does highlight for us in her overstatement the need for the nurse to read the particularities of the bedside, the ward, the theatre and the clinic in an integrative fashion. That is, learning in those contexts can be holistic if the educator is sensitive to particular values. Powerful learning in clinical settings is emerging through what adult educators are calling 'problem-based learning' (Boud and Feletti 1991; Albanese 1993). Here, actual clinical issues are addressed (or made available in simulation) and professional judgements made in the light of 'normal' practice. Thus problems that are often critical incidents, and are certainly contingent incidents, are brought to reflection in and on action by and for people expected to deal with them. Here, the place of intuition (Noddings 1984) and other forms of 'know how' such as critical thinking itself, are much debated (Brookfield 1993: English 1993), especially since nursing has

been substantially influenced by feminist approaches to epistemology and science (Harding 1991; Belenky et al. 1986), and to ethics (Noddings and Shore 1984), building on the relational ethic set out earlier in section 2.10.

If nurses can preserve the nurturant ethic, and the particularistic approach to holism, they are well-placed it seems to continue to develop problem-solving as a clinical strategy which taps nurses' common experiences at work, and their communal ownership of the judgements that result. The additional elements of reflective practice and of modelling, through preceptorship, enrich these judgements immensely, and may well lead to a new nursing professionalism, and hence a new identity, unlike a clone of the traditional medical practitioner, nor a caricature of social welfare work.

In this context, then, 'integrative constructivism' is shown in practice by

- provision of common time and space for sharing experiences;

- clear expectations of legal, ethical and workplace-specific accountability;

- management of the work environment which is more collaborative than consultative;

- tangible educational support for career pathways (research activities, study time, specific skill training); and

- collaborative establishment of a workplace 'mission', detailed in achievable and equitable objectives, and linking these to evidence of learning (journalling, conference and other papers, presentations to peers, appraisal).

7.3.3 Corporate Training

We complete our brief overview of contexts of practice by considering attempts to pin down non-classroom learning in the corporate workplace. In section 0.2, we noted

> Corporate training has emerged from reactive and behaviouristic assumptions about adult learning at work, and is now dragged blinking and bewildered into a fast-moving 'enterprise' globalism, without much idea of what to do about strategically-focussed, non-classroom learning.

We noted in section 4.3 that the exercise of human agency has become an increasingly central and compelling feature of work life, and that current workplace reforms should advance the capacities of more people for more involvement in work life than previously. In this sense, *workers are actors* in an increasingly demanding work environment: their agency is not only expected but required by the new workplace. Whether or not it is voluntarily made available we will leave to one side. Our issue is: can corporate training usefully evolve more integrationist practices?

As we noted in sections 4.4 and 4.5, corporate training was traditionally based in an adversarial workers-management model (broadly 'Fordist') which produced some hopelessly didactic and pernicious adult learning. Workers learnt what their place was: managers learnt how to keep them there. Is there any prospect, in these 'post-Fordist' times of there being a genuine dissolution of this model?

The current national policy agenda of training reform, and the wider globalisation imperatives which drive it, have initially drawn attention to what happens in formal training settings, that is, 'classroom' based learning, albeit at work. Interest and enthusiasm for formal training and development, with its traditional reliance on behaviouristic learning principles, has been replaced with an equally enthusiastic endorsement of humanistic pyschology. Chapter One drew attention to this paradigm shift in adult education at large. To recall briefly: central to humanistic learning is the holistic richness and individualistic integrity of human experience. That is, humanist psychology starts with the reasons, motives and values of the individual and seeks ways of structuring the experience we all inevitably undergo, so that better learning results. So formal or 'classroom' - based workplace learning is only part of the experiences people have at work from which they learn. Informal and incidental learning have emerged as significant concepts in the further development of workplace learning. (See Marsick and Watkins 1990: Watkins and Marsick 1992a, 1992b) Examples of these include on-site provision such as preceptorship, coaching and mentoring, and off-site provision such as experiential or adventure learning in teams, perhaps in rural retreats. It should be noted that informal and incidental learning, while not formal, is nonetheless amenable to structure. Venturing around an obstacle course with a kit of rations and one's work associates may be informal but it does not lack structure! In fact the whole point of such off-site exercises is the assumption that transferability of the

experiential learning to the corporate workplace will and does occcur. The extent of this is not clear at all.

Pressure on productivity and profitability injects an urgency into corporate workplace learning (see section 4.1). Leaders cast about for strategies that give a hope of that elusive market edge. There are some promising developments in non-classroom-based learning such as coaching and mentoring which could be developed as a peer responsibility, rather than hierarchically (Caldwell and Carter 1993; Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management 1995). After all, organisational restructuring since the early 1990s has shown amongst other things that middle-level management is disappearing. Without some new notion of the responsibilities of leadership for generating appropriate specific micro-cultures, it is hard to see where the authority and direction for much non-classroom-based workplace learning is meant to come from. Who is around to articulate the strategic vision of the organisation in ways that make it accessible to the workforce in a range of learning modes? We argue that directive educational leadership - culturally sensitive and facilitative in style - and advanced through coaching or mentoring arrangements, offers some of the best ways to advance the sense of ownership of a specific part of the workplace, as well as advance the ownership of the whole, integrated, corporate culture.

In this context, then, 'integrative constructivism' is shown in practice by

- policy and provision of specific strategies to make corporate work experiences tangible such as mentoring, coaching, including dedicated time to engage these;

- development of more personal strategies: career plans, input into annual appraisal, initiatives with particular assignments or work problems, acquisition of competencies and new skills (languages, technology);

- structures for peer collaboration through occupational teams, natural work groups (site-based rather than occupation-based) and off-site shared experiences, and reflection and review of all these in the light of productivity, both personally and organisationally;

- provision of amenable workplace conditions such that access to the above is maximised (child care, flexible work practices such as rotation, opportunities for leadership development);

• incentives to learn which are tangible: promotion, articulation with formal study, study leave (etc.); and

• the clear articulation of, and agreement upon, the strategic significance of workplace learning and is used to shape program design and structures, and the general outcomes expected from these.

7.4 Contexts of Theory

To help draw out the main theoretical strands of the integrationist argument for adult educators' practice, we will draw on three other examples of the theorisation of practice for educators.

The first of these (Carr and Kemmis) is concerned with how teachers in general conceptualise their work and their learning from their work, and has been very influential within and beyond school teaching, especially in education research environments like universities.

The second (Cervero) overtly integrates continuing professional development with practical knowledge, so it sits squarely in the adult education literature.

The third (Tong) discusses ethical approaches to policy analysis, and therefore ranges across all the social sciences. But because of the prominence of adult education in national and international political agendae - largely through the attention being give vocational education and training - it is especially relevant to our field of study.

All three analyses use an Aristotelian framework to construct a model of professional practice, but they do so with varying success. Nevertheless, they provide interesting insights pertinent to a more robust professional practice model, recalling the main points of the body of this thesis. The third example, in particular, provides a strongly justified basis for an integrationist practice in terms of a modified Aristotelianism.

7.4.1. Teacher Education

In *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research,* Carr and Kemmis (1986) state:

> Few competent social researchers fall into the trap of treating their theories as 'truths'. They treat them as problematic, as open to reconstruction. But they do not always make it clear that their theories have this problematic character....Social life is reflexive: that is, it has the capacity to change as our knowledge and thinking changes....Social and educational thinking must cope with this reflexivity: the 'truths' they tell must be seen as located in particular historical circumstances and social contexts, and as answers to particular questions asked in the intellectual context of a particular time. (42-43)

In their book, they outline the evolution of education research traditions as a sequence which flows from, broadly, foundationalist to technicist to practical and critical approaches. These successively show, first, a recognition, then, an accommodation, and finally an endorsement, of the contextual nature of knowledge and human values, as shown in the quotation above. On pages 32-34, Carr and Kemmis are keen to use Aristotle's epistemology to underpin both 'practical' and 'critical' approaches to teachers' knowledge and research efforts. *Praxis* is highlighted as the generic term for mutually reflexive theory and practice, within which *phronesis* is 'the disposition to act truly and rightly' (34). But there is a minor and a major difficulty with this. These are as follows.

First, the minor difficulty. Curiously, they dismiss as instrumental ('means-end') reasoning, both *poietike* and *techne,* describing the latter as 'the disposition to act...according to the rules of the craft'. Yet for the Greeks *poiesis* was far from regulatable: it was the 'divine madness' of the inspired genius who could incite people through poetry. This led Plato to recommend the banning of such artists. Visual art, music and craft was regarded as *techne,* and, even if in formal terms it was instrumental, its expression of Forms (for Plato) and various causation (for Aristotle) admitted considerable creativity. Because of their assumption that 'means-end' reasoning represents a compromise of educational purposes, Carr and Kemmis are left with a misinterpretation of Aristotle, which nonetheless they think provides them with a holistic, or integrated, model of practical knowledge. This assumption is shared by Jarvis (1983), which we will discuss in section 7.5 below.

Second, their major difficulty. To understand it we must ask: What is Carr and Kemmis' 'integrative' model? It shows up in their posited relationship of *phronesis* to *praxis*, and it is problematic. In brief, Carr and Kemmis seem to regard their exposition of an Aristotelian epistemology as explaining the moral point of practical and critical modes of teacher knowledge, yet this exposition is not accurate. We are able to identify workplace-based research activity (*praxis*), but the reliance on *phronesis* as a disposition (somehow *within praxis*) to act rightly is, as we shall see, exegetically inaccurate and conceptually inadequate. Having made a promising beginning the full significance of an Aristotelian account of practical knowledge, even for Carr and Kemmis' critical purposes, is not realised.

7.4.2 Continuing Professional Development

The experiences of practitioners at work are directly linked in the notion of practice, and directed to some purposes through the notion of intentional action. The thesis as a whole has made that explicit. One of the most prominent writers in adult education, Cervero (1987,1988,1991), has consistently made the same point. For example, in an article promisingly entitled 'Professional Practice, Learning and Continuing Education: an integrated perspective' (1992), Cervero observes that

> ...current practitioners and researchers are not the first to observe that learning from practice (or experience) is a central way that people create their world and give it meaning. John Dewey most recently made this point, and David Hume before him and Aristotle before him...However, for the better part of this century, our society has given legitimacy to knowledge that is formal, abstract and general, while devaluing knowledge that is local, specific and based in practice....For this we owe a debt to Plato and Socrates, who believed that for something to count as knowledge it had to be de-contextualised, generalised and abstracted to cover a range of situations...
>
> My view is that the distinguishing characteristic of practice is its action-orientation. Professionals reason toward the goal of wise action, rather than describing what it is. They attempt to put matters right rather than uncover the truth....If practice is normative, then wisdom must be seen as socially constructed, taking its meaning only within the particular ethical framework of those who have the power to define wisdom for a profession...
>
> Wise action means making the best judgement in a specific context and for a specified set of ethical beliefs. (91-92)

We shall see later that the 'particular ethical framework' for professional practice must, on a consistent Aristotelian analysis, transcend the particularities of practical wisdom if these purposes are to make moral, as opposed to merely prudential, sense. Although Cervero is accurate in his depiction of the intellectual lineage of practice, and asks the 'right' questions of it, he never applies his goal of wise (professional) action with any appreciation of wider social virtues. Nevertheless, he clearly recognises the contextually-dependent and therefore hermeneutic nature of continuing professional development, and looks to specific expressions of wisdom as the integrative principle in professionals' judgements. As is apparent, Cervero is in accord with the general argument of this thesis, but stands in need of an explicit and substantive outline of the social virtues entailed by those wise judgements he advocates.

7.4.3 Policy Analysis

Rosemarie Tong, in *Ethics in Policy Analysis* (1986), endorses an Aristotelian approach which actually begins with Aristotle, as follows:

> Once we focus on *eudaimonia* [well-being, flourishing] then it makes sense to talk about practices...coherent and complex forms of socially-cooperative human activity. (87)

She goes on to outline the difficulties anyone has in making situation-by-situation judgements of what the 'mean' or temperate response should be; this requires skill in interpreting one's own as well as others' circumstances. Then she ties such context-sensitivity to specific professional competencies which make sense in overarching ethical terms:

> If what Aristotle says is correct, then policy experts would do well to develop the virtue of practical wisdom. It is not enough for policy analysts to be mere technicians, clever persons skilled in cost-effectiveness...cost-benefit and risk-benefit analysis, who can fund the means to any given end. Rather, they must also be wise persons, able to discern the value of ends they pursue...Likewise it is not enough for policy analysts to be mere rhetoricians, eloquent persons schooled in persuasion. Rather, they must be virtuous persons who speak neither too much nor too little. (88-89)

We shall return to Tong's consistent and thorough-going application of concepts when we are in a position to weigh up all three examples of the theorisation of professional adult education practice (later, in section 7.5).

7.5 Beyond Integrationism

In Chapter Three, Ryle's analysis of 'know-how' in terms of performance was modified by the analyses of action by Polanyi, Oakeshott and Aristotle. The modification has given appropriate prominence to practitioners' understandings and discretionary judgements, to a sensitivity to individual (and possibly unique) circumstances and to an interpretative or associative approach to one's own expertise. As we remarked in Chapter Three, these flesh out the overall dispositional intention to 'get it right' - right in terms of efficacy, or appropriateness to the particular case, and also rightness in terms of the general ethical purposes of professional practice *per se*.

Moreover, 'rightness' is, as we would say nowadays within post-positivist research paradigms, context-dependent: the rightness, both epistemologically and ethically, which we attribute to successful practice is specific to the nature of that practice. Chapter Four argued that a theory of cultural formation gives context-dependency the logical, epistemic and ethical significance it deserves.

But here it is essential that we understand what rightness of purpose means for Aristotle. His *Ethics* is concerned with the getting of wisdom. Of the three main epistemological categories - theoretical, practical and productive, first stated in the *Metaphysics* (*Basic Works* ed. McKeon 1941: 778), the *Ethics* is principally concerned with the contingencies of human conduct - practical (ethically-based) actions, as shown in individual lives. Ethical considerations for the individual centre on the achievement of the 'mean', a state of judicious moral equilibrium whereby extremes of indulgence and abstinence are avoided. In this will the virtuous man be found. Whilst the ultimate end is contemplative wisdom (*sophia*), as Ross, in his well-known commentary (orig. pub. 1926) summarising Aristotle, puts it:

> [P]ractical wisdom does produce an effect. Virtue, no doubt, makes us choose the right end to aim at, but practical wisdom makes us choose the right means. Practical wisdom, however, cannot exist independently of virtue. The power to attain one's end, be it good or bad, is not practical wisdom but cleverness. Let the right end be aimed at - and only virtue can ensure this - and cleverness becomes practical wisdom; let the wrong end be aimed at, and it becomes mere clever roguery. (1964:220)

It follows that practical wisdom has an end beyond itself; if the aspiration is to virtue this converts mere 'cleverness' into prudence - practical wisdom, or *phronesis*. The centrality of this to the moral life is shown when we list and locate *phronesis* amongst the other states of knowledge he discusses in the *Ethics* (see Danford 1978:128-136). How they fit together seems dictated by the overall scheme distinguishing theoretical (logically-necessary and empirically-established) knowledge from the rest of life, including the hierarchy of living things.

When considering what marks humans from animals, he is keen to distinguish human knowledge, as intuition (*nous*), from what points us to spirituality, as theoretical wisdom (*sophia*). Between these two are science (*episteme*), 'making' or producing - especially in the arts (*techne*) and our main interest, practical wisdom, or *phronesis*. Of *phronesis*, Ross reminds us that

> Practical wisdom is the power of good deliberation...about how a whole state of being which will satisfy us is to be bought into existence....Thus, the practically wise man should know, to start with, what are the things 'good for man'... (217)

However, *phronesis* is, as we said, prudential, rather than ethical, virtue, although it will contribute to ethical virtue. It identifies the stance of planning to get where you want to go. This will often imply *techne* - a skilful means of getting there. Even the skilfulness, though, is not to be regarded as the mere exercise of mechanistic routine or habit. An active intelligence can play with and develop new ways with materials and resources such that art and creativity in general result. That is, the utility of the process (what the playing with the materials and resources seems to be for) need not determine the nature of the process. We are, in short, able to identify a much wider application of *techne* (including creative activity) than narrow skill deployment which implies erroneously that 'craft' was all that making consisted in. Similarly, the utility of *phronesis* lies beyond itself; even the framing of the goal of virtue does not determine the nature of the means to get there. *Phronesis*, like *techne*, is a means to other purposes, yet its development, like that of *techne*, brings its own satisfactions. Neither are to be regarded mechanistically, but as expressions of the practical judgements which ordinary (i.e. logically-contingent) life consists in. Professional practice is specific, socially significant 'hot action' in ordinary life. How does Aristotle help us to understand it?

Leaving aside the teleology of the overall virtue of the contemplative life, wisdom is practised in judicious decision-making. As we saw in Chapter Three, Aristotle links know-how (bearing in mind this connection between *phronesis* and *techne*), judgement and understanding in consideration of 'things which may become the subjects of questioning and deliberation' (Aristotle ed. McKeon: 1032).

We remarked in section 3.3 that

> ...coming to grasp a truth, that is, the arrival at understanding, is for Aristotle addressing the same intellectual object as may be regarded from the perspective of practical wisdom as issuing in activity - what ought to be done.

Understanding may well be unvoiced; but the expression of the judgement of understanding gives practicality to the wisdom ascribed to someone who has acted rightly, or as Aristotle says, 'soundly' or 'well'. This is what is at the core of professional practice, more particularly for the practices involved in policy analysis, where, applying Aristotle, there are many 'things which may become the subject of questioning and deliberation'. The sheer political contingency of public policies make analytic engagement with them professionally challenging, not least because the nature of researchers' understandings (our very recognition that we are players in the game, which is at the heart of postpositivist paradigms) directly affect the judgements that issue from those engagements. In other words, 'wise action' (*phronesis*) is extraordinarily difficult. In this respect, we recall what we termed in section 3.3, the 'central curiosity of any concept of practical knowledge': that it is an astonishingly elusive phenomenon!

Subsequent attempts to pin it down - as discussed in Chapter Three, and contextualised in Chapter Four - showed how central *phronesis* is to accounts of intentionality, and particularly how such wisdom is connected with action. Moreover, following Chapters Five and Six, it could be definitive of human experience, in that it homogenises the integrationist, or communitarian, model of agency, and the more sophisticated notion of contructivism which requires such agency. But so far, in Chapter Seven, attempts to further pin it down have proved elusive, and the professional practice of educators may just be ineffable!

The foregoing discussion of such practice seems to leave us with two scenarios. We either:

(1) find ourselves, after the event, presumably having exercised unregulated and perhaps unregulatable practical knowledge in some still-mystifying fashion; or

(2) find ourselves, before the event, with quiescent (perhaps even inert) understanding of practice.

These dismal alternatives hardly generate an appealing development of professional practice. Perhaps the investigation of professional practice as contextually-dependent judgement is fundamentally deficient, even if the promise of the achievement of 'wise action' remains bright with hope.

What will remedy the matter? Let us return to our four analyses of practical knowledge.

Oakeshott expects immersion in a tradition (customary practice) to codify know-how. Polanyi expects us to make sense of tacit knowledge in retrospect. Aristotle expects our understanding to be ethically enformed before judgements issue in wise action. Schön expects reflection-in-action to guide future practice.

For each of these, the meaningfulness of the practical knowledge is derived from the location (or situatedness) of the subject in a context within which the right judgement is made. Thus practical knowledge is not constituted by how it is produced, but by something beyond its production. Yet certain influential examples of paradigmatically post-positivist social science research (for example 7.3.1, 7.3.2 and 7.3.3 above) appear to assume the opposite, that is, that the very context-dependence which is undoubtedly a salient feature of post-positivist approaches provides its own justification. If the resort is to Aristotelian epistemology, we have seen that this cannot be supported. Practical knowledge for the education researcher, the emergent professional practitioner, and the policy analyst will properly and inevitably include the aspiration to both efficacious and to ethically-responsible judgements. And central to that will be understandings grounded in dispositional, tacit, imbibed activities specific to the practices under scrutiny and within occurrent

experience. These are necessary but not, however, sufficient conditions for professional practice of the kinds we are here concerned with.

We have noted that neither Oakeshott's and Polanyi's practical knowledge, nor Aristotle's practical wisdom, nor again Schön's reflection, is constituted by how it is produced, but by something beyond its production; we have argued for a more expansive notion of contextual dependency (called a theory of 'cultural formation') as the constitutive force in question.

In this contextuality, processes such as acting intentionally and even *techne* (construed as creativity not merely technique) generate the means to practical knowledge or wisdom. These processes *authenticate* contextually-dependent, hermeneutic knowledge, *but do not themselves constitute it*. After all, practice, especially in education, but also for any professionals, must have an end beyond itself. Candidates for these ends may include, respectively: the achievement of understanding, the arrival at health or taxation-minimisation, the attainment of political credibility, and so on.

All manner of outcomes are legitimately attributable to practice largely because these outcomes are framed by expectations pertinent to entering into that practice to begin with. But doing it (i.e. practising) well, while generating practical knowledge, and perhaps wisdom, leaves the point of the practice itself underdetermined (but not undeterminable). *Phronesis*, then, is more like *techne*, rather than a contrast to it, in that both are purposeful human activity. Moreover, they are alike in this more compelling sense: they require goals beyond the practices which they respectively constitute. We can refine these goals as follows.

• *Outcomes-directed goals*. Outcomes, driven by motives or needs, will be apparent in any human activity. These are not of much interest to the philosopher if a causal view is taken of them (although that issue *per se* will be of interest). Here, the goal is arrived at by exhaustion or satiation, rather than by achievement or satisfaction.

• *Purpose-directed goals*. These will provide a better, closer focus on human aims and expectations. We can call these arrivals 'purposes' if they have 'outcomes with intended consequences', that is, we have achieved, or satisfied, what we aimed for - what we wanted.

• *Wisdom-directed goals.* Even closer in focus to the practices under scrutiny will be 'wisdom' - these will be 'purposes with intended ethical justification'. It is of the very nature of ethics that these justifications be couched in and constituted by regulated (normative) social behaviour. We have access to these norms via cultures, traditions and language games (depending on which philosopher you follow). For Aristotle, the purpose of practical wisdom was *eudemonia*, the well-balanced life of well-being. Practical wisdom, *phronesis*, became wisdom once that ethical (virtuous) purpose had evolved for an individual.

One warning here: Aristotle's virtues are those of the warrior! By courage, his pre-eminent virtue, he means that of the battle-field! He has in mind the well-balanced life of the successful warrior, not the moral courage we esteem (Cordner 1994). Our argument has been based upon, and indeed requires, a prescriptive list of virtues something like those identified in section 2.10, which flow from a Dewian view of socio-political arrangements: relational in orientation, democratic in 'manners'. Nevertheless, with this warning, our main argument continues intact.

In seeking the ends of post-positivist social science, we do Aristotle and certain other philosophers a disservice when we fail to distinguish the value-ladenness of the process from the value-ladenness of the purpose. We are, correctly, looking for the contextual dependence of both of these, but when we find it, they are not to be run together.

In short, the particularity of appropriate practices is a necessary but not sufficient condition of the particularity of appropriate purposes. The getting, or acquisition, of wisdom is not to be confused with the means by which it is acquired. To run the two together is to commit the Genetic Fallacy: that the origin of an entity explains its current circumstances, or its prospects or purposes. This no more applies to human life than it does to the raindrop. Explanations of professional practice which are acutely sensitive to context must take account of the origin of any specific context and those practices as embedded in it. But beyond that context will be purposes and ideals. Their identification requires rather different justification from the kind we too often find in education: statements to the (fallacious) effect that where we have come from and the way we have arrived indicate where we should be going. This conflates all three of outcomes -, purpose -, and wisdom - directed goals. It effectively obfuscates practice.

Moreover, this conflation infects education theorisation with hackneyed debates about means-end models. As recently as 1983, an eminent adult educator, Jarvis, in *Professional Education*, has argued:

> It has been claimed [in his chapter] that the aims of any form of education must not lie beyond the process, since those which do are of a utilitarian nature and therefore invalid. Hence competence to practise is not a legitimate aim in professional education. Rather, producing in the learner the ability to recognise good practice and the determination to ensure that his own future practice will not fall below this standard is a major aim. (1983:43)

But education is an honorific activity with ideals shaped and indeed constituted by society. Professional practice and the educative activities that induct and continue the development of the practitioner are, as Chapter Four argued, culturally formed. At the heart of this cultural formation is a cogent account of integrative competence - increasingly holistic, if the arguments for sophisticated constructivism, and communitarian agency are accepted. Jarvis' blinkered perception of outcomes renders broader contextuality invisible. He wants outcomes which have integrity, but will not countenance an integrative model of, say, liberal and instrumental learning (or of education and training) such that these dimensions enrich one another. All the old dualisms are implicit in his distinction between means (processes) and ends (aims).

Two pages prior to this, his limited grasp of contextuality is quite apparent:

> The perspective of placing the education of professionals into the wider professional and social systems may not be unrealistic, but it may distort an analysis of the aims of professional education by trying to locate these beyond the institutional education process. If this were undertaken, it would allow the process to be evaluated in terms of its effect on the system. This is the classical formulation of utilitarianism: the good or bad act is evaluated in terms of its consequences. (41)

Now, to be fair, Jarvis then goes on to deride the justification of education in terms of market forces - a view this thesis shares. But to invoke the spirit of Dewey (1916:50): 'the educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end', as Jarvis does, is to miss the holism of Dewey's overall approach. Dewey's dissolution of means and ends in his advocacy of growing and growth, reciprocally related as both product and process, requires a sensitivity to the contextuality of what Jarvis calls 'professional and social systems' (sic). Dewey is an organicist; Jarvis, in speaking of systems, an implicit structuralist. He has

not reconciled this with Dewey's holism. For Jarvis, the lines of trees structure a forest - the lines make their own ends, and a forest results; but for Dewey, the grouping of the trees in itself makes the forest - the growth occurs amidst the group, increasing the parameters as it goes.

The key point for us, and for Dewey, is the recognition of a certain educational holism, not unlike the 'unitary' nature of trying which Thalberg drew to our attention, and the 'component' view of intention (especially desiring), found in Adams' work, in section 4.6. Growing and acting have in common continuity over time and a purposefulness achievable as an outcome. Dewey is right. These are ways we can conceptualise what is inevitably *episodic* about human learning. The result for Jarvis is a confusing and therefore quite limiting theorisation of professional education. The 'aims' he jealously guards are decontextualised. There is little we can say about these, much less advance them, if they are divorced by definition from purposes established and endorsed through sociocultural practices, whether these are constructive of professionals' or indeed anyone's 'formation'. And our purpose throughout has been to move beyond the episodic ascription of outcomes to the identification of certain substantive educational ideals - or purposes - which lie beyond both growing and acting.

7.6 Contextual *Phronesis*

It follows that Carr and Kemmis (in section 7.4.1 above) have inaccurately and inadequately relied upon Aristotle to generate practical and critical perspectives on teachers' knowledge, because they believe *praxis* provides its own purposes. The ensuing argument has shown that it can not do this.

It also follows that Cervero (in section 7.4.2 above) has been provided with a more detailed and logical development of his ascription of 'wise action' to professional practice: we are now able to understand how 'getting it right' operates, both ethically and epistemologically.

It follows that Tong (in section 7.4.3 above) is basically correct. Her Aristotelian treatment of policy analysis is a generalisable example of a statement of substantive moral purpose not assimilable to, nor dependent upon, the context of the means which constitute that practice. She shows this distinction when she states appropriate moral purposes as follows:

> ...I believe, like William Frankena, [Ethics (1963)] that all moral virtues can be derived from justice or benevolence. So, for example, nonmaleficence, beneficience, and kindness are forms of benevolence; likewise, fairness, nondeception, truthfulness, honesty and dependability are aspects of justice.
>
> If the above listing of virtues is correct, then all of us human persons...ought to manifest the general virtues of justice and benevolence to each other. However, depending on the particular personal and professional relationships we enter into, we will also be expected to manifest certain virtues specific to them. According to Michael Bayles [Professional Ethics 1989; orig. pub. 1981], professionals like doctors, lawyers, and, I would add, policy experts, will be asked to manifest the virtue of trustworthiness towards their clients. Trustworthiness, a specific moral virtue that flows from the general virtue of justice...is pivotal to the policymaker-policy expert relationship. (1986: 91-92)

But, in addition to such purposes, construed as 'wisdom', we have seen that professional practice can and does rely on certain Aristotelian and modified Rylean argument to establish separate means to those moral ends. So, for Tong, the getting of wisdom (the means) is clearly and justifiably not to be confused with the arrival at it (the ends).

Let us return to the example of commissioned research quoted in the beginning of section 7.3.1 (Abu Duhou, Beckett and Hampel 1993). In this, we can identify both individual justice - the right to livelihood for newly arrived settlers - and social justice - the right to fair opportunities amongst ethnic diversity. Further, the study supported claims for benevolence in virtue of (sic) the circumstances of NESB women. These are the researchers' moral purposes. Furthermore, applying Tong again, the research team fulfilled the trust the commissioning agency had in its professionalism, properly so called, because this also involved a prudential reliance on our practical knowledge, that is, the means of arrival at our moral purposes.

Professionalism for educators in general thus requires both appropriate moral purposes and practical, purposive knowledge. But to conflate these, or, reductively, to expect purposiveness to provide purposes, is to misrepresent Aristotle. Worse than that, it also misrepresents the richness of the commitment to others', and one's own, learning. Presumably all education professionals hold dear such a commitment.

This thesis has provided a substantial explanation of that commitment and has suggested how it may be deepened and strengthened, especially in the light, just dawning, of the twenty-first century. The last and perhaps wisest words on wisdom shall be Wittgenstein's (1963):

> Is there such a thing as 'expert judgment' about the genuineness of expressions of feeling? - Even here, there are those whose judgment is 'better' and those whose judgment is 'worse'.
>
> Correcter prognoses will generally issue from the judgments of those with better knowledge of mankind.
>
> Can one learn this knowledge? Yes; some can. Not, however, by taking a course in it, but through '*experience*' - Can someone else be a man's teacher in this? Certainly. From time to time he gives him the right *tip*. - This is what 'learning' and 'teaching' are like here. - What one acquires here is not a technique; one learns correct judgments. There are also rules, but they do not form a system, and only experienced people can apply them right. Unlike calculating rules.
>
> What is most difficult here is to put this indefiniteness, correct and unfalsified, into words. (227)

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