UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

The Virtues of Becoming an Educational Psychologist

Part Two of Two Parts

Appendices and References

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Submitted for the award of PhD

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October 2001

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Part Two

Appendices and References

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Appendix 1

Educational psychology practice: formal qualification route, current trends, history and critique

The purpose of this section is to provide the briefest of overviews of the formal qualification route to becoming an educational psychologist, current trends, the origin and critiques of the profession. I will not attempt to describe the role and function of an educational psychologist in local education authority employment. Some account of this can be found in DfEE (2000a; see below). In providing a brief overview I do not wish to imply in any way that the history and nature of the profession is unimportant. Indeed, instead of drawing upon MacIntyre's (1985, 1999) work, say, I could have drawn much more extensively upon a broader professional context (the history of the professions, the helping professions, educational psychologists, special needs constructs and legislation, and so on) and so, for example, more closely followed Erben's (1998) stages in biographical research, especially those concerned with societal context, cultural system, and chronology.

Formal qualification route

The greatest majority of professional educational psychologists in Britain are employed by local education authorities (library boards in Northern Ireland). There is a slightly different qualification route in Scotland than there currently is in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, in that a teaching qualification and teaching experience is not a requirement and the two Scottish training courses for educational psychologists provide a training across two years.

Each local education authority has its own team of educational psychologists, managed by a principal educational psychologist and, depending on the size of the service, a hierarchical structure which include senior educational psychologist and main (salary) scale psychologists. The service is principally delivered to schools but nearly all services have an open referral policy. Educational psychologists have responsibility for children and young people from birth to the age of 19 years.

Scotland excepted, then, there is a formal set of requirements to practise as an educational psychologist in a local education authority. These requirements are largely upheld by the Association of Educational Psychologists (the professional trade union, to which all educational psychologists are eligible to join, and most do). A number of educational psychologists work in private practice. Currently there is no statutory registration scheme (a concern of The British Psychological Society) that would prevent any one from establishing a private practice, although the Society is pursuing statutory registration. In the meantime, the British Psychological Society operates a voluntary chartering scheme, providing certain conditions of qualification and experience are met, and an accompanying register, available as a public document.

The formal qualification route is:

- a first degree in psychology (a degree that must be accredited by the British Psychological Society and so seen as offering the graduate basis for membership of the Society. The British Psychological Society is the learned society to which any psychologist from any discipline may belong. The Society had divisions, sections and subsections. Educational psychologists are eligible to join the Division of Educational and Child Psychologists)

- a recognized teaching qualification, usually for primary or secondary school teaching

- teaching experience of at least two years (usually in a local education authority school, although teaching in the further education section and in the independent sector can be accepted)

- postgraduate professional training in educational psychology; currently a one year course at master's level (12 universities in England, one in Northern Ireland, two in Scotland, and one in Wales offer courses; each course is funded for approximately 10 people).

Both the Association of Educational Psychologists and the British Psychological Society issue codes of conduct and ethics and uphold professional standards, if

necessary, through various scrutiny and disciplinary groups.

Current trends

At the time of writing, the role and training of educational psychologists is under review. A working group, convened by the, then, Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) has produced a report reviewing the current role and making recommendations about the future role (DfEE, 2000a) based on a relatively extensive research exercise (DfEE, 2000b). The content of these reports and the broader context is well summarized by Lown, Fox, Gersch, Morris and Stoker (2001).

At the end of 2000 the DfEE also issued an informal consultation document relating to future training. The central issues being debated within the profession are to increase training to three years leading to a doctorate (this has been the route for clinical psychology training, the closest comparator group to educational psychologists, for about seven years), and to substitute a teaching qualification and experience for appropriate and relevant experience (again, similar to requirements for clinical psychology training).

History and critique

The purpose of this section is to make the point that, in my view, the professional practice of educational psychologists has, from its inception, been a political practice but one that has generally gone uncriticized from within the profession. In Skrtic's (1991a, b) terms it is a profession that by and large rapidly moved from any sense of an adhocracy to a bureaucracy; in Voloshinov's (1973) terms, there has been a triumph of established ideology over behavioural ideology.

I take this as one reason why, when the participants in my research (and in other studies) were asked to comment upon what they find problematic about their work, and even when prompted to think about wider issues, usually what is identified as problematic is contained in the everyday. Anything considered politically problematic, with two exceptions, concerned in the main, local politics. My supposition is that the history and some of the more adhocratic traditions of

educational psychology practice have not been effectively mediated by training courses, nor by successive generations of practising psychologists, nor by the professional association and learned society, and are not encouraged by local education authorities with their bureaucratic impulse.

I will not attempt to provide a detailed history and critique of the profession here but gesture towards relevant literature.

The first educational psychologist, employed by London County Council (LCC) in 1913, was Cyril Burt. The reason for his employment was implicitly sociopolitical. Universal education meant that a large number of children entered the school system who challenged the skills of teachers who, initially, were paid by results.

Burt came from an experimental, positivist psychology background and had specialized in the standardization of psychological tests. His appointment as an educational psychologist, although it carried a range of duties, had one central purpose: to use psychological tests and other scientific methods to determine those children who, bluntly, were not capable of benefiting from the teaching approach that most children were seen as capable of benefiting from. Thus, children who were 'educationally subnormal', need not be the responsibility of teachers trying to educate 'normal' children, and should be in a segregated, special school.

About half of Burt's time was spent on research, the rest of his time on his role with the LCC. He saw himself, though, as essentially a research psychologist. Today, he would probably describe himself as a scientist practitioner.

Increasingly the role of educational psychologists was shaped by the birth and then virtual death of child guidance clinics but then, almost exclusively, by the professional association (for example, in its insistence on teaching as a necessary qualification, thereby ensuring an emphasis on the *education* in educational psychology) and the press of education and special educational needs legislation. So far as the latter is concerned the professional association has embraced such legislation as a way of guaranteeing employment but at a price, in my opinion, in that it has furthered the bureaucratization of the profession.

Accounts concerning Burt and the history of the profession can be found in Chazan, Moore, Williams and Wright (1974); Gilham (1978); Hearnshaw (1979); Sampson (1980); Norwich (2000).

Most of the above also contain discussion about the background to special educational needs legislation and related issues. Additional sources include: Barton and Tomlinson (1981); Galloway, Armstrong and Tomlinson (1994); Clark, Dyson and Millward (1995) Lindsay and Thompson (1997), Dyson (2001).

There are many books and articles which describe and speculate about the roles and functions of educational psychologists, and two journals published in Britain dedicated to publishing practitioner articles: *Educational Psychology in Practice* and *Education and Child Psychology*. There is a paucity, however, of reflexive articles about personal practice, let alone a critique of what that professional practice represents politically. My personal knowledge, from sitting on the editorial board of *Educational Psychology in Practice* for 14 years, six of which were as editor, is that only four articles that might be considered reflexive were submitted and published, although such articles were encouraged: Billington (1995); Mellor (1998a); Quicke (2000); Billington, McNally and McNally (2000). Mellor (1998b) has published elsewhere on a similar theme, as has Billington, whose other publications I will refer to below.

It could be seen as an indictment that since Gilham's (1978) edited collection *Reconstructing Educational Psychology*, no book has appeared setting out a sustained and coherent critique of the structures of educational psychology practice, although a collection of articles reflecting upon that book, including three written by original contributors, appeared in *Educational Psychology in Practice* (1999, 14, (4)). Paradice (1999), for example, has published on 'deconstructing development' but the only educational psychologist consistently writing as a an educational psychologist offering a critique of educational psychology practice is Billington (1995, 1996, 1999, 2000).

Billington apart, it is as if the substantial philosophical, psychological, political, and sociological critique of psychology's practices, including educational psychology, has taken place in a parallel universe.

Work in this parallel universe includes: that of Burman (1994); Burman et a. (1996); Foucault (1972, 1977, for instance); Henriques *et al.* (1984); Norwich (2000); Rose (1985, 1989, 1998); Sampson (1983); Slee (1995); Skrtic (1991a, b); and much of the work cited in the main body of my thesis.

Appendix 2

The relationship of my study to narrative approaches

Although my research is based on persons' experiences, it is not, in itself, a study of narrative. I am not taking the approach that Bakhtin (1984) took to Dostoevsky. I am not engaging in a structuralist interpretation of narrative, as Genette (1980) has applied to Proust. I am not undertaking a study of the discourse of educational psychologists, in the way that Billington (1995, 2000) has. However, the approach to my research is embedded in narrative in three fundamental ways.

First, my dialogical way of seeing my self and the other, as I repeatedly emphasize rests on 'narrative as a root metaphor for psychology' (Sarbin, 1986b: 3). Sarbin proposes that 'narrative is an organizing principle for human action' (9). In other words, 'human beings think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices according to narrative structures' (8).

Second, to extend Sarbin (1986b), and, again, to summarize, my way of seeing corresponds to the social constructivist views that broadly cluster under what has been described as 'sociocultural psychology' or 'cultural psychology'. Such a psychology embraces narrative:

> A cultural psychology is an interpretive psychology, in much the sense that history and anthropology and linguistics are interpretive disciplines. But that does not mean that it need be unprincipled or without methods, even hard-nosed ones. It seeks out the rules that human beings bring to bear in creating meanings in cultural contexts. These contexts are always *contexts of practice*: it is always necessary to ask what people are *doing* or *trying* to do in that context.
>
> (Bruner, 1990: 118, italics in original)

Third, it follows that the practical theory of self that informs my way of seeing is a narrative theory of self. This is how Polkinghorne (1988: 150) expresses it:

> ...we achieve our personal identities and self concept through the use of

> the narrative configuration, and make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of of a single unfolding and developing story. We are in the middle of our stories and cannot be sure how they will end; we are constantly having to revise the plot as new events are added to our lives. Self, then, is not a static thing nor a substance, but a configuring of personal events into a historical unity which includes not only what one has been but also anticipations of what one will be.

Bakhtin could not have said it better; I certainly could not.

I have elaborated all three of the above in *Part One* of my thesis.

Appendix 3

Sampling and demographic data

My participants were not intended to be a representative sample. (Descriptions about sampling are standard in the qualitative research literature; I took Miles and Huberman, 1994, as a staring point). Given the purpose of my study, they are all educational psychologists (or were at the time of their conversation-interview).

I prepared a flyer (*Appendix 4*) outlining the broad purpose of my research which I distributed to all the educational psychologists (about 120) attending a Southern Educational Psychology Services Residential Course, Sandbanks, Poole, in December 1998. Eight educational psychology services attended.

The flyer invited anyone interested in participating to contact me.

As a result, nine people volunteered: five women and four men. In this respect, the sample was entirely random. I also participated, and was interviewed by one of the other participants.

I collected demographic data (*Appendix 5*) about age group, number of years as an educational psychologist; experience as an educational psychologist (number of local education authorities in which the participant had worked, promoted posts, and so on); the qualification route; number of years as a teacher; institution awarding psychology degree, teaching qualification, and postgraduate qualification in educational psychology.

For reasons of confidentiality, I am not reporting some data here.

The most reliable, readily available indication of the number of educational psychologists and gender balance is published by the Association of Educational Psychologists (2001), although it is based on their membership numbers rather than on psychologists actually in post.

During the year (1999) that I carried out the conversation interviews, there were

2,322 members of the Association, of which 1571 were woman and 751 were men. This represents a proportion of 68% women, 32% men.

Age group

two participants were in the age group 30-39
seven participants were in the age group 40-49
one participants was in the age group 50-59

Number of years as an educational psychologist

two participants had worked between 0 and 4 years
two participants had worked between 5 and 9 years
four participants had worked between 10 and 14 years
two participants had worked between 20 and 25 years

Number of psychology services in which worked (including present one)

four participants had worked in one service
three participants had worked in two services
three participants had worked in three services

Number of years in teaching

five participants had worked between 0 and 4 years
two participants had worked between 5 and 9 years
one participant had worked between 10 and 14 years
two participants had worked between 15 and 19 years

Appendix 4

Have you ever wondered why you became an educational psychologist: flyer

Have you ever wondered why you became an educational psychologist?

I have. I have wondered what elements of my personal history led to my becoming an educational psychologist. I can recall influences throughout my growing up that might have played some role in determining my interest in psychology and then choice of career. I am also interested in the tradition in psychology that I thought, as a rosy cheeked sixth former, *was* psychology. It is the tradition to which Jerome Bruner refers to as folk psychology, cultural psychology, and narrative psychology. It is the tradition in psychology that crosses interdisciplinary boundaries to consider 'meaning' in terms of '... how people organize their experience in, knowledge about and transactions with the social world' (Bruner, 1990: 35). One approach to exploring this, Bruner suggests, is through autobiography (in Bruner's terms, 'an account of what one thinks one did in what settings in what ways for what felt reasons' 119.)

I am undertaking doctoral research through Southampton University. I intend to combine the two interests, above, to study the experiences that lead persons to become educational psychologists and, then, what shapes their practice as an educational psychologist.

Would you be interested in working with me on my research?

Since I am approaching this from the perspective of cultural psychology, I wish to carry out a conversation-interview with a relatively small number of educational psychologists. I envisage the conversation-interview lasting an hour or so, with the possibility of a follow-up. Naturally, complete confidentiality will be guaranteed and in every other way I will be following British Psychological Society guidelines on conducting ethical research.

If you are interested and would like to participate, please write to me at: Fleet

Local Office, Birch House, Barley Way, Fleet, Hampshire, GU13 8YB, telephone me at work (01252 814727), telephone me at home (xxxx xxxxxxx) or email me at <phil.stringer@hants.gov.uk>.

Thank you

Phil Stringer
December 1998

Appendix 5

Form for collecting demographic data and information about career pathway

Name

Age group 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59

Number of years working as an educational psychologist

Experience as an educational psychologist (number of LEAs, promoted posts, etc.)

Route to qualifying as an educational psychologist

number of years as a teacher

Institution awarding psychology degree

Institution awarding teaching qualification

Institution where trained as an educational psychologist

Appendix 6

Research procedure: a time line

June 1998:	Decision to change direction of research, from a discourse analytic approach to the work of special educational needs tribunals, to the more personal interest in why I, and others, become educational psychologists.
July 1998:	Change of emphasis in background reading. Started new notebooks for making notes from reading, in addition to making notes direct to computer. Decision to use Kvale (1996) as a procedural guide.
September 1998:	Drafted research purposes and action plan. Drafted interview format and guide.
October 1998:	Pilot interview tape recorded with educational psychologist colleague (not subsequently one of the participants).
October - November 1998:	Listened to tape, partially transcribed it. Telephone colleague for discussion and feedback.
December 1998:	Revised interview guide. Prepared flyer to recruit participants.
December 1998:	Distributed flyer at residential course for educational psychologists.
January 1999:	Contacted all volunteers by telephone for a verbal description of research and to arrange interview dates.

April 1999:	Started research diary.
May 1999 - September 1999	All conversation-interviews conducted. Interviews lasted between one and nearly two hours. Participants were sent a confirming letter and a brief note (see *Appendix 7*) about the interview about one week before. Started notebook to record thoughts arising from conversation-interviews.
August 1999:	Reading Bell and Gardiner (1998), in addition to Shotter's (1993a, b) convinced me to focus upon Bakhtin's work as a major theoretical-practical resource.
October 1999 - July 2000:	Tapes transcribed (a total of 242 pages and 145,654 words). Transcription was undertaken by a former colleague of mine, who had worked as a secretary in the Newcastle upon Tyne psychology service before qualifying and working as a social worker. She knew none of the participants, apart from me. No special transcription conventions were used. (See *Appendix 9*)
April 2000 - July 2000:	Two copies of transcripts sent to participants, with a covering letter (see *Appendix 8*) asking for a copy to be returned marked with any corrections. I decided not to follow through a proposal to ask participants to read and comment on other transcripts, partly because of the demands upon their time but also because I realized that I had more than enough to do in the time scale to which I was then working.

August 2000 - present:	Further reading writing, and making-meaning of conversation-interviews. I read each transcript once, then read the transcript and listened to the tape at the same time, making any revisions and/or notes on the transcript. I then put the transcripts way until April 2001. I re-read them and made notes. I then read them again, cutting them up and grouping them into broad themes. I then reflected upon the themes, in light of MacIntyre's (1985, 1999) work. I then wrote the account of my meaning-making (June - August 2001). July 2001, after a possibly throw away remark by my supervisor, requested possibility of transferring from submitting my thesis as an EdD to a PhD. Transfer approved, November 2001. September 2001, submitted first complete draft of my thesis. October 2001 submitted revisions to draft. Gave notice of my intention to submit. November 2001 proof read draft to (hopefully) remove typographical errors etc.

Appendix 7

Confirming letter to participants and a note about the conversation-interviews

Confirming letter

XX XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXX XXX

(date)

Dear

Life experiences and being an educational psychologist

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in my research. Just to confirm, we are meeting at (*location*) on (*date and time*). A brief note is enclosed about the interview. As you know, I would like to tape record the interviews and then arrange for them to be transcribed. At all times, I will safeguard confidentiality.

If the place, date or time is no longer convenient, please let me know as soon as possible.

Best wishes

****

A note about the conversation-interviews follows.

A note about the conversation-interviews

Life experiences and being an educational psychologist

A note about the interview

The purpose of my research is to better understand why some persons become educational psychologists and, in particular, the life experiences (as child, adolescent, adult) that have been influential.

I am interested in the extent to which a person now recognizes these experiences in their work as an educational psychologist. I am also interested in what a person see as being problematic about their work, and how this is managed.

My research draws upon the tradition of narrative psychology and relies upon gathering autobiographical accounts. I am doing this tentatively, since I recognize the personal nature of this. From beginning to end, the process of my research intends to respect and acknowledge this.

The interview is intended to be active and, as far as possible, conversational rather than rigidly structured. My areas of inquiry will include:

- what is personally important to you about being an educational psychologist?
- what experiences in life were influential in your becoming an educational psychologist?
- What of these experiences do you recognize in your work as an educational psychologist?
- What do you find problematic about being an educational psychologist and how is this managed?

Appendix 8

Letter to participants enclosed with copies of the transcript of their conversation-interview

XX XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXX XXX

(Date)

Dear

At last the first draft of the transcript of our interview has been completed - although I haven't gone through it to amend any typographical, spelling or other errors. Transcription has been a very long and winding road although, ultimately, I did not do the task myself. (For information, it was carried out by someone living outside the region, who would not be able to identify you. In addition they signed a confidentiality agreement.)

If you recall, I said that I would send you a copy of the transcript. In fact, I am sending you two. One is for you to keep. So far as the other copy is concerned, I would be grateful if you could read through it and highlight any parts that you **would not** want me to quote. Also, if there any additions you want to make or points you wish to clarify, please mark them on the text. As yet, I do not know which sections I might or might not want to use to illustrate a particular theme or point.

I have also been wondering whether you be willing for any or all of the other participants in my work to read your transcript and for you to read theirs (or some of theirs). It may not be practicable (in terms of time) from your point of view, and you may think it would compromise confidentiality (although I would ask that you removed any features that you thought would readily identify you). In doing this reading, I would be asking you to write a relatively brief

commentary on the extent to which the thoughts and experiences of others correspond with yours or diverge; and issues that you agree upon or disagree with. In all, there are ten participants.

Currently I am running about three months behind my projected timetable (essentially because I continued to edit the journal until the end of February). However, I would be grateful if you could return your transcript to me as soon as possible and let me know whether or not you would be willing to read others and/or have others read your transcript.

Thank you for your continuing help and interest.

Appendix 9

Transcribing and my use of transcripts

As I have noted, no particular transcript conventions were used since the focus of my work has not concerned analysis of discourse or conversation.

Under the various themes arising from the conversation-interviews, I have opted to structure my account using the name of each person, including myself, and to add a commentary. This in contrast, say, to combining accounts in a more continuous narrative. My decision was influenced by wanting to maintain, as much as possible, the integrity of each person's account; for that person to be able to relatively easily follow their own account; and for a reader, if they so chose, to be able to follow a person's account and obtain some sense of the whole of that account. My intention is that this may also make it more possible for a reader to form an opinion about the veracity of my account (see my discussion of validity in *Chapter Twelve*). To better maintain the wholeness of a person's experiences, and a reader's appreciation of that wholeness, in *Appendix 27*, I have provided a brief sketch summarising some of the experiences that a person talked about during their conversation-interview.

I have 'smoothed out' the transcripts to aid reading. My usage of 'smoothing' here differs from that of Spence (1986). It is worth making the connection, however, without over-dwelling upon it, since I have endeavoured to deal substantially with the issues elsewhere in my account, as a reminder that no matter how faithful I endeavour to be to what my participants said, 'smoothing' inevitably takes place, more or less consciously, at a number of levels.

Spence (1986) described two types of smoothing, in the context of a psychoanalytic relationship. First, ('Level I': 213) the smoothing that occurs when a person is led into saying particular things (largely related to the preoccupations of the person doing the leading). Evidence for this happening or not can be obtained from a transcript. Whilst I sometimes 'steered' the conversation-interviews, I strove not to 'lead' them with respect to, say, pursuing a particular issue in order to 'prove' something that I had in mind. I have provided some extracts showing what I see to be relatively typical exchanges, where I either provide verbal encouragement

to continue ('Mmhm') or say something which is part of a conversational (dialogic) exchange.

Second, 'Level II' (Spence, 1986:212) smoothing occurs 'when there is an attempt to bring the clinical account into conformity with some kind of public standard or stereotype'. Of course, I have attempted to create a narrative unity in making-meaning of what was said by my participants. I have selected certain parts of the transcripts and not others. But, again, I have striven in my writing, to present an open and as full an account as seems reasonable given the limits on this writing, of what my participants said. Rather than preventing a 'reader (if he or she chooses) from coming up with an alternative' (213) meaning, I have set out to encourage it.

My smoothing has aimed to change style not content or meaning. I was horrified by some of the ungrammatical things that I said. I know that some of my participants were, too, because they told me. Thinking aloud and saying things for the first time, it seems to me, is frequently, an ungrammatical event worthy of rehearsing. In the main, I have taken out such expressions as 'you know', 'I mean', 'erm', and other hesitations. I have generally changed 'yeah' to 'yes' and 'kid' to 'child'. I have shown some pauses by a dash (-), and interruptions and missing text by ellipses.

Appendix 10

Ways of seeing: reflexivity

Some discussion about reflexivity seems necessary, since, according to Denzin (1997: 223), reflexivity is 'not an option' because:

> The poetic or narrative text is reflexive, not only in its use of language but also in how it positions the writer in the text and uses the writer's experiences as both the topic of inquiry and a resource for uncovering problematic experience.
>
> (Denzin: 217)

This notwithstanding, I do not see a lengthy discussion of definitions of reflexivity as being central to my work, the more so since I see my reflexivity as being an ethical position, as exemplified by Bakhtin's (1993) account.

Also, I have suggested that a lengthy discussion of reflexivity seems out of place given the thrust of what Marcus (1994), Lynch (2000) and Pels (2000), amongst others, suggest. It is broadly their shared view that reflexivity is an inevitable part of the everyday but it has been lighted upon by mainly, qualitative researchers and those working in other 'intellectual fields ' (Pels: 21) conducting their own debate about the construct, whilst in everyday life, most people practise reflexivity without giving it a second thought.

Lynch's (2000) position is somewhat more extreme than that of either Marcus (1994) or Pels (2000) and it is relatively well summed up by his remarks that:

> In brief, there is no particular advantage to 'being' reflexive or 'doing' reflexive analysis unless something provocative, interesting or revealing comes from it. An author might *try* to achieve such outcomes, but many of us know all to well, an author's personal conviction is not a *criterion* of success. Regardless of whether a study examines a natural scientific project, a social science text, or its own construction, its cogency will depend upon what it says about its topic and whether it persuades relevant audiences. Depending on the case, it may come across as insightful, witty,

convincing, unconvincing, boring or silly. (42, italics in original)

Marcus (1994: 568, italics in original) cites (from Watson) 'an important distinction between *essential* reflexivity and a *derived* or as [Marcus calls] it, ideological reflexivity'. Essential reflexivity acknowledges the constant presence of reflexivity in language use ('one cannot choose to be reflexive or not in an essential sense'), whilst ideological reflexivity refers to what I have been discussing so far, reflexivity as a strategy.

A broadly similar distinction is made by Lynch (2000: 44), who draws upon Pollner's categories of 'mundane reflexivity' (that is, essential reflexivity) and 'referential reflexivity' (that is, a variant of ideological reflexivity).
In everyday life, for instance, reflexivity is seen as a virtue, although that word is seldom, if ever, applied, relating to the development of competence in many professions (see Schon, 1987, whose account of the reflective practitioner is synonymous with *reflexive* practitioner; Hawkins and Shohet, 1989; Eraut, 1994; and Skovholt and Ronnestad, 1995).

Pels' (2000) approach is also recognizably of the everyday. In advocating a 'one step up' approach he defines 'reflexivity as a self-conscious exercise in *circular reasoning*, which breaks with the unending quest for a transcendental objectivity and rests satisfied with merely partial and and partisan perspectives, even if these are informed and systematized by a scientific sociology of knowledge' (15, italics in original).

His approach is recognizably of the everyday in that, although he does not draw the connection, his account of circular reasoning bears a striking resemblance to the everyday life, as it were, of family therapists following a systemic epistemology, for whom reflexivity has become, since the early 1980s a key theoretical-practical construct (see, for example, Tomm, 1987; Andersen, 1992; and Hoffman, 1992).

If reflexivity is ever present, it seems to me that this is not the same as assuming that a person is aware of reflexivity nor that they practise reflexivity. Certainly, the literature on developing professional competence and on providing systemic consultation to families, examples of which are cited above, are based on a

premise that reflexivity is not a given. So, reflexivity as a way of everyday being, is in itself problematic, simply because, so far as I am concerned it is an aspiration. Indeed, Fabian (1983: 90) notes that it is an 'ideal'. There may be persons who have attained absolute reflexivity (along the lines of Bateson's, 1973, 'Learning III'; see also May, 1977;) but I know that I am not one of them.

Self-evidently, then, reflexivity, as a construct, is problematic in itself. Not least, as Wilkinson (1988) points out, its numerous appearances in the literature and diversity of meanings (its 'diverse realizations', Trinh, 1991: 43) can make it difficult to define.

It seems useful, to me, to make a distinction between everyday reflexivity and the use of reflexivity as an ideological strategy or tactic. As Banister *et al.* (1994: 194, italics in original) note:

> Reflexivity is perhaps *the* most distinctive feature of qualitative research.

Earlier, they draw out, as others have done (for example, Usher, 1996), the contrast between quantitative research which sees reflexivity as a problem (of subjective contamination) and qualitative research which cannot envisage research without reflexivity (in some degree). I accept that this is to over-simplify, since, as Yardley (1997) suggests reflexivity is just as relevant to quantitative research.

However, I wish to echo Lynch's (2000) point, that there might be no advantage, in fact, there might be considerable disadvantages, in 'being' reflexive, essentially as a *de rigeur* tactic for claiming validity. Trinh (1991), although writing from the perspective of documentary film making, has raised a similar issue. There is '...an epistemological position in which the notion of reflexivity is typically reduced to a question of technique and method...Thus, "being reflexive is virtually synonymous with being scientific"' (46). This was certainly never Smith's (1987) intention. Indeed, as Banister *et al.* (1994: 124) highlight, 'feminist notions of reflexivity and researcher accountability' are distinguished by precisely the kinds of goals Smith adopts in her 'problematic strategy'.

Given Bannister *et al.*'s (1994) proposition that reflexivity 'is an ethical enterprise'

(14), using reflexivity as mere tactic seems scarcely ethical. That is probably the least of it, however, in light of Burman's (1991) and Denzin's (1997) series of warnings, including self-indulgence and the breeding of solipsism, and Bakhtin's (1984) 'monologism'. That reflexivity can become too personal is also suggested by Usher (1996) and Fabian (1983), whose warning I note in the section on *Coevalness*, in *Chapter Ten*.

But what is reflexivity?

For Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 15) reflexivity in social research is an everyday way of being. It is an 'existential fact' that follows from researching the world in which we are included. Usher (1996: 42) puts this another way in drawing from Garfinkel:

> In ethnomethodology, reflexivity is constitutive...because...the accounts of the researched constitute the reality that is researched.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) draw out three implications of reflexivity for research, all of which can be recognized in Smith's (1987) work and elsewhere in the literature to which I have referred. First, it does not deny the the value of common-sense knowledge; (I also read this, as 'everyday' knowledge). Second, the researcher is an 'active participant' (18), influential in the context of the research. Third, and as I have already noted in *Part One*, our espoused theories (about research, about others in the research) should be as congruent as possible with our theories in use.

To repeat, I have suggested that for Smith (1987), and other writers cited, it primarily concerns adopting a problematic strategy. Everyday reflexivity implies problematizing every phase of research, from our theories of knowledge and our ways of seeing to writing an account and seeing that account as stimulus for dialogue. Essentially, this is what informs Heron's (1996) work.

Heron (1996), in describing co-operative inquiry, effectively describes a commitment to reflexivity throughout the phases of the inquiry process:

> I see co-operative inquirers as deeply engaged with the human condition, living and choosing with awareness. (37)

As well as a set of prerequisite assumptions, being a co-operative inquirer calls for those 'special inquiry skills' that, when combined, demonstrate reflexivity. They include 'being present' and 'imaginal openness' (58) - a connected set of qualities concerning how we experience others and the world (and how we experience our experiencing). Another group of skills includes 'emotional competence' and 'non-attachment' (59). Qualities here concern, respectively, how well we can manage our emotional being, and how well we can manage our commitment to the research without, as Fabian (1983: 94) has put it, loss of 'reflexive distance'.

Heron (1966) suggests an important digression, since none of this is to say that I am disinterested in validity, as demonstrated by *Chapter Twelve.* I am much convinced by Heron's argument, that:

> The challenge after positivism is to redefine truth and validity in ways that honour the generative, creative role of the human mind in all forms of knowing. (13).

He suggests that in reacting to positivism and its excesses (not least political excesses), we are in danger of confusing the meaning of truth and validity 'with the abuse of their meaning' (13). He sets out to establish meanings for validity and truth separate from positivism's quest for objective knowing and universal, incontestable 'true' facts. For Heron, validity is 'well-groundedness, soundness, having an adequate warrant' (57), and truth, 'that it implies some validating relationship with reality, other than the mistaken notion of correspondence' (163). 'Reality', here, is how we find meaning in and give meaning to our experiences, in other words, make-meaning. But, it seems to me, that it must be remembered that '...what is put forth as truth is often nothing more than *a* meaning' (Trinh, 1991: 30, italics in original).

To return to reflexivity. Wilkinson (1988: 493) provides an 'at its simplest' definition of reflexivity as 'disciplined self-reflection'. Whilst understanding her point ('let's make it simple'), the remainder of her article demonstrates the rich

complexity of the apparently simple. Reflexivity is an everyday way of being for Wilkinson, starting (at least in her article) with Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory. Since personal construct theory is a theory about how we construe our world, it is fundamentally a theory that requires reflexivity, since it applies to all people.

Wilkinson (1988) distinguishes three broad kinds of reflexivity: 'disciplinary', 'personal and 'functional', which seem to me to be aspects of Smith's (1987) 'problematic'. The personal and functional are viewed by Wilkinson as inseparable, in that our way of seeing (the personal) influences the choice and the conduct (the functional) of our research. Disciplinary reflexivity acknowledges what has influenced our way of seeing, be it the discipline of psychology, sociology or other *ology* and its attendant demands.

Marshall (1986), in what reads to me as a reflexive account, sets a formal discussion of reflexivity within the frame of validity. Her 'reflective checklist', poses questions (for both researcher and reader) under the headings of 'how the research was conducted', relationship to the data' and 'contextual validity' (197-198). I will draw upon some of these questions in summarising my discussion of reflexivity.

Usher's (1996) discussion of reflexivity focuses on language and writing in a broad frame of research as 'textual practice'. He sets out four 'critical conceptual resources for interrogating textuality' (45) in order to bring reflexivity to the forefront for both writers and readers. The terms *writers* and *readers* could be interchanged with observer and observed, researcher and researched, the self and the other, and so on. I will use Usher's (1996) concepts to note what are some of key reflexive themes. It will be helpful to hold in mind that these themes are all problematic, and they are interrelated, thus less discreet than is suggested by grouping them under conceptual labels. I will also add in the points that, earlier, in the *Preface*, I drew from the quote by Berger (1972).

The concepts Usher (1996) uses are first, *con-text*. (45) This highlights the interacting autobiographies of a writer and reader; the personal experiences that each brings to a work. For me, it includes personal reflexivity, that is: my self (and my personal history, gender, culture, politics) as an active participant in the

research; the participants and their the personal history, gender, culture, politics, and so on); thus, reciprocal relationships and an 'excess of seeing'; the context of our experiences; making-meaning of those experiences; relationships between the past and the present, the public and private, the democratic and undemocratic, the everyday and the rarefied.

The second concept is *pre-text* (46), in other words, the language resources that we draw upon and how we use that language in our construction of the text. This includes my language resources; how I use language and language uses me; the language resources and usages of co-participants; dialogue; the paucity of language to describe and explain; the relationship between an original and its reproduction.

Third is *sub-text* (46), how our theory of knowledge and way of seeing works more or less reflexively to influence the text. This includes the following forms of reflexivity (see Denzin, 1997, below): subjectivist, methodological, standpoint, functional and disciplinary. In essence, the nature of the relationship between my way of seeing and my research.

Fourth is *inter-text* (47), the extent to which writing is influenced by and draws upon other writing, quite clearly as I am doing both in citing Usher and every other author; additionally and inevitably my work contains 'intertextual traces' (47) whose origins I will not have referenced nor could recall because they are assimilated in my theory of knowledge. Intertextuality, itself, was coined by Kristeva (1986: 34, 37), who was influenced in this by Bakhtin.

Although Usher's (1996) concepts are subsumed by my consideration of Bakhtin's work, I continue to think that they do provide a useful schema for thinking about reflexivity, language and writing. Denzin's (1997) discussion of reflexivity also focusses on text. In reviewing 'ethnographic poetics and narratives of the self' (199), he draws out, 'modifying and extending Marcus' (217), six types or 'styles' of reflexivity'. (This is the chapter by Marcus, 1994, I refer to in the main body of the text.)

First is *subjectivist reflexivity*, which is essentially how I have been writing in this appendix; it refers to the extent to which the writer's voice prevails. I have

noted the dangers earlier, in no particular order, of self-indulgence, solipsism and monologism. However, this is where reflexion has become reflection in Fabian's (1983) terms. For Bakhtin (1984), as I outline in *Chapter Two*, it is countered by dialogism and polyphony.

The second kind of reflexivity is *methodological reflexivity* (218). As Denzin (1997) describes it and I understand it, this is where reflexivity becomes a mere tactic. Third is *intertextual reflexivity* (219). To illustrate this 'style', Denzin provides the example of 'narrative experiments' in writing that stand as critical commentaries by indigenous writers of the writing of 'white, male anthropologists' (220).

Fourth is *standpoint reflexivity* (220), writing that carries the heart and mind of the writer on its pages. Such texts are 'messy, experimental...always open ended and incomplete' (220). Because of this, they are open to much criticism, on the part of individuals with a different standpoint. Once again, I have already referred to this reflexive approach. Denzin (1997) acknowledges it as being long established in feminist writing, as my references to Smith (1987) illustrate.

Denzin's (1997) fifth concept is *queer reflexivity*. Denzin presents this form of reflexivity as being a reaction against the first four styles, which in one way or another variously act to deny 'queer theory' or to trap such theory within 'normative conceptions of self, agency, gender, desire, and sexuality' (222). Unfortunately, Denzin appears not to have found any examples of queer reflexivity resolving criticisms of other forms of reflexivity.

The sixth and final style has an equally unsatisfactory note to it. *Feminist, materialist reflexivity* also appears to act as a reaction against the first four styles. Yet, Denzin's (1997) account seems to me to be another way of describing a combination of subjectivist and standpoint reflexivity and to be entirely consistent with Smith's (1987) writing.

As it happened, I grew increasingly frustrated with Denzin's (1997) discussion about reflexivity. I think it is an intertextual frustration, since most of his discussion draws on the work of others and the least satisfactory concepts, the last two, draw on one writer in particular. My increasing frustration, I think, was an

increasing awareness that I could not understand what Denzin was writing about and a sense that he was not writing with conviction.

Lynch (2000) reviews some 16 approaches to reflexivity, which leads me to a general point concerning repetition. Different authors end up saying broadly the same things in different words. Is there anything original left to say? Denzin (1997: 201) wonders as much in what appears a throwaway remark:

> Much of what passes as new, however, may, under another framework, be old hat.

Actually, I'm not sure whether 'is there anything original left to say' is the right question, and my response is much as I would respond to Denzin. I have read, for example, Fabian (1983) and Smith (1987) and found them original. (This is not to say that I haven't found some of my other sources original.) It seems to me that they write with passion and commitment and, ultimately, authenticity. Again, to refer to my discussion on Bakhtin, I would say that I have been responsive to the 'dotted lines' (for example, Bakhtin, 1984: 91) radiating from their work. In part I can see this as an illustration of Usher's (1996) con-text. Thus, after Bakhtin, I think that originality is what we create in a work through trying to make-meaning of it. In interacting, in entering into a dialogic relationship, with their work I contribute what is uniquely mine.

As a step towards summarizing this section and connecting the various strands discussed, I will draw upon Pels (2000: 21) proposal of 'three concentric "orders" or "rings" of reflexivity. These concentric rings are shown in figure 2. (See following page.)

His outer ring, is 'where traditional sociological variables operate, such as the "holy trinity" of class, gender and race' (21). Here, I can acknowledge that although these 'variables' are undoubtedly of the greatest significance (see, for example, Erben's, 1998, 6-7, 'stages in biographical research') in the accounts that my participants gave of their experiences, my focus has been upon other themes, as set out in my *Introduction*.

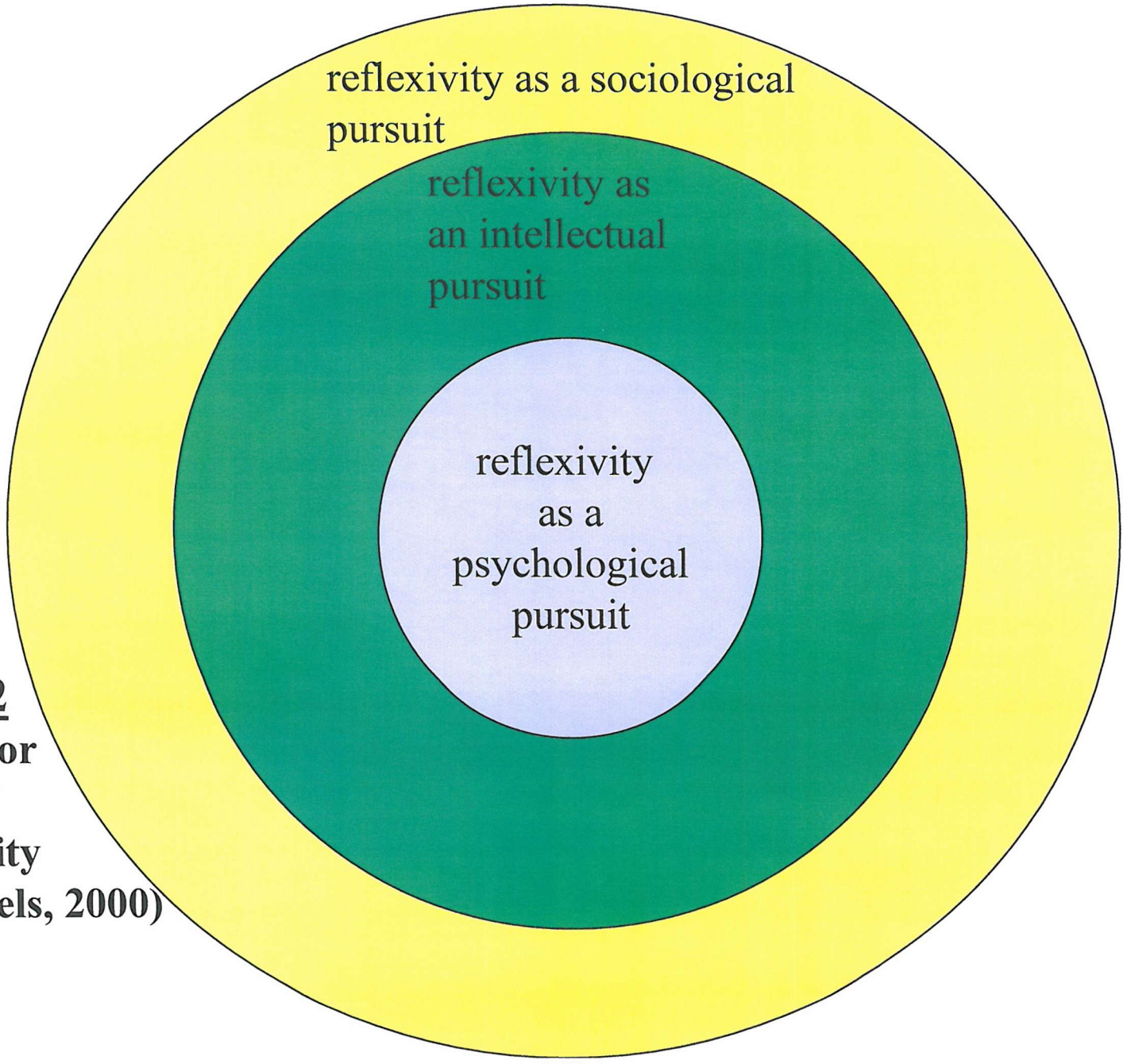

Figure 2
Orders or rings of reflexivity (after Pels, 2000)

The 'middle ring is [that] of intellectual fields and interests as acknowledged by Bourdieu or Bauman' (21) and, again, beyond acknowledging it through this *Appendix*, this ideological reflexivity has not been my concern. Pels' (2000: 21, italics in original) inner ring is that 'of autobiographical reflexivity which imports a much-neglected *social psychology* or *psychobiography* of knowledge'. It is this inner ring, with some modification, that appears closest to my practice of method in two main ways.

First, in following Smith (1987), I have argued that reflexivity is part of the everyday and that central to it is being curious, and treating the everyday as problematic. An implication of this is Smith's suggestion that what distinguishes her use of problematic from other usages and gives it reflexive meaning, is the practice of a researcher (observer, inquirer, professional psychologist or whoever) seeing him or herself as part of the problematic. In my case, I have attempted to practise this by being a participant myself in a conversation-interview, and including my experiences in my meaning-making.

Another implication is that in my practice of method, I have made no distinction between my meaning-making of my self, and how I make-meaning of others. My theory of self, to relate what I am describing directly to Pels' (2000) inner ring, is not something that I am applying to others as if I am invisible. For all the literature on reflexivity, carrying as it does more or less explicit theories of self, it seems to me that it is possible to read much of it without ever knowing if an individual author applies that theory of self to their own self.

Second, as noted at the beginning of this appendix, if reflexivity is 'mundane' or 'essential', if it is part of the everyday, then it is necessarily an ethical matter. Thus, I see reflexivity and my reflexivity as being an ethical position, and I will elaborate this in my discussion of Bakhtin (especially, 1993) in *Chapter Five.*

If reflexivity is acting ethically, then it is also acting politically. This is the starkest implication in most, if not all, the work cited in this *Appendix* and, in particular, feminist writing. This, for example, from Trinh (1991: 148):

> A responsible work today seems to me above all to be one that shows, on the one hand, a political commitment and an ideological lucidity, and is,

> on the other hand interrogative by nature, instead of being merely prescriptive. In other words, a work that involves her or his story in history; a work that acknowledges the difference between lived experience and representation; a work that is careful not to turn a struggle into an object of consumption, and requires that responsibility be assumed by the maker as well as by the audience, without whose participation no solution emerges, for no solution exists as given.

In summary, it is possible to draw together some principles expressing my reflexive position. Reflexivity:

- is an aspirational way of being, inherently part of the everyday, and neither simply a research method added on to a research project to claim validity nor an exclusively ideological position
- is determined by personal beliefs, knowledge, and values and, in this respect, is an ethical, and political position
- is represented by an aspiration to connect beliefs, knowledge, and values with practice
- is represented in all forms of language
- is also practised through my open participation in the research process, requiring my curiosity/use of a problematic strategy throughout the phases of the research.

Appendix 11

Debating interpretations of Bakhtin

In addition to the debate amongst Bakhtin scholars that takes place through journal articles and books, there is also electronic debate. For example, through the early summer of 2001, debate raged (a modest adverb given the tone of some responses) over interpretations of Bakhtin on the Bakhtin email discussion list administered by the Bakhtin Centre, at the University of Sheffield.

Once upon a time, debate was writ larger, in relation to the 'disputed texts' of members of the Bakhtin circle and, in particular the works of Voloshinov (1973, 1987) and Bakhtin and Medvedev (1978). From a position that attributed these texts to Bakhtin, there now appears agreement (supported not least by the translators of the texts) that whilst Bakhtin was undoubtedly influential he was not the substantive author (Hirschkop, 1999; Morson and Emerson, 1990; Matejka and Titunik, 1973; Titunik, 1987).

It seems to me that there will inevitably be debate over matters of translation and interpretation. Benjamin (1969: 81) argues that, to begin with, some work is more open to translation than others, largely because of '...the looseness with which meaning attaches...' to the original. Most creators of a work never created it with translation in mind (indeed: 'No poem is intended for the reader...' (69). Inevitably, a translation comes after the original work and as such, so far as the work is concerned, '...their translation marks their stage of continued life' (71). Even if the translator belongs to the same reference group (language, culture, social and so on) as the original creator, language changes over time as does writing style, and a translator, positively in Benjamin's view, will reflect such changes: a translation, then, is an act of re-creation or, indeed, interpretation. In that act of re-creation, a translator has to consider the author's (for example) intentions and how best to represent those in the the language of the translation.

In considering the original creator's intentions, the translator has to balance and effectively combine 'fidelity' and 'freedom' (Benjamin, 1969: 78-81). Absolute fidelity to the original words will almost certainly result in loss of meaning, so there needs to be fidelity with respect to both the original words (their order,

structure and so on) and to their meaning. The translator's freedom is realized through recognizing the meaning of the original words and being able to re-create that meaning in another language. As I understand this, Benjamin is describing a sort of dialogical freedom, a Bakhtinian creative understanding: a translator allows the language of the original work to enter his or her language and in turn allows his or her language to enter the original whilst retaining fidelity to the meaning of the original. A translator, therefore, in re-creating, is effectively interpreting and, effectively, mediating meaning.

I do not see myself as being qualified to enter the scholarly debate about Bakhtin. Nor do I wish to, since it seems to me to drift into 'did he'/'didn't she' arguments, as witnessed on the email discussion list debate referred to earlier. It is one more facet of the sub-text (Usher, 1996: 46) of every text. Inevitably, all readers of Bakhtin (and the name of any author could be substituted there) provide their 'reading' of Bakhtin, based on their way of seeing. Whilst this is the central point to draw out and bear in mind, it is part of the general methodological concern over interpretation and meaning-making that I deal with in the main body of my thesis. From my understanding of Bakhtin, I wonder if he would have minded? I assume that he would comment that it demonstrated, as monologically as they might have been presented, the potentialities in his writing; the unfinalizability of his ideas. Monologism (see for example Bakhtin, 1984: 292), potential (see for example, Bakhtin, 1986: 5) and unfinalizability (see for example Bakhtin, 1984: 32, 63) are concepts that I discuss in *Chapters Seven* and *Eight*.

Inevitably, I claim an understanding of Bakhtin that suits my purposes. Part of my sub-text is my training, experience, institutionalization as a professional psychologist. Another element is the quest to find a philosophical and psychological basis for this research. From this sub-text, I read and endeavour to make sense of Bakhtin. Thus I read Bakhtin (for example, 1984, 1986, 1993; and, indeed Voloshinov, 1973,1987) for what is said about how we might make-meaning of people and their lives and experiences.

Bakhtin's (1984) discussion about whether or not Dostoevsky was a psychologist engages me because, in my reading, essentially it makes problematic the nature of the philosophical basis for psychology. His discussion about Dostoevsky the

author (indeed, all Bakhtin's writings about the novel) engages me because, again in my reading, essentially it makes problematic the methods by which we can grasp a psychology of human behaviour. Lest this is too obscure, my point is similar to that made by Morson and Emerson (1990: 343). For Bakhtin, novels, albeit of a particular quality (exemplified by Dostoevsky's work) '...are the best form for conveying psychological life...'. Further, there is a real sense that in 'conveying psychological life', novels (or rather, their authors) are ahead of any of the academic disciplines of psychology.

As noted in *Chapter Three*, Emerson (1997:38) comments that she and Morson, in their 1990 work, as Americans working from a different cultural, political, and social sub-text inevitably bring their way of seeing to Bakhtin.

They are not without their critics, notably Hirschkop (1999). For Hirschkop, '...virtually every Bakhtin text in print is corrupt..with an axe to grind' (124), and Morson and Emerson's Bakhtin is effectively saturated with 'American liberalism' (10). In Hirschkop's view, they:

> hypostasize and reify dialogue...as something tellingly close to academic conversation. Their dealings with Bakhtin are therefore marked by a symptomatic one-sidedness: fascinated by the dazzle of dialogue, they ignore the other great emphasis of Bakhtin's work - an insistent and ceaseless interest in the 'generic', as the textual form in which the dialogical is embodied. (10)

As I understand it, Hirschkop's (1999) reference to the generic, to genre, is a reference to the overarching importance in Bakhtin of *text* (for example, Bakhtin, 1986), whether literary genres or speech genres, although the focus of most of Bakhtin's work was upon text in the form of the novel.

Others, for example, Pavel (1998) are more generous towards Morson and Emerson (1990), seeing their work as a 'highly reliable introduction' (579) and as being prepared to challenge Bakhtinian constructs.

Hirschkop's (1999) work, 'An Aesthetic for Democracy' follows a thesis which connects Bakhtin's work, and in particular his work on language to the culture

and politics of democracy. (There are clear parallels, in my mind, with that work on discourse, for example, Burman, 1991; Burman *et al.*, 1996; Nikander, 1995; Parker and Burman, 1993; Potter and Edwards, 1990) which is intentionally political and, perhaps, more political than Hirschkop has in mind in his work.)

For my immediate purposes, this gives a flavour of what Hirschkop (1999: 3) highlights:

> Distrustful of what he saw as the vulgar routine of political struggle and manoeuvre, Bakhtin examined the communication of his day and the past with a careful eye and a critical intent, thinking that *there* was where he would find the fundamental patterns of social relationship.

Thus, as Hirschkop (1999) continues, dialogue for Bakhtin is in the 'process [of] the human sciences' and '...not in the objects of humanistic interpretation' (11). In other words, in the practice of method, as I discuss in more detail in the main body of my work. For Bakhtin via Hirschkop, then, the everyday and everyday communication is what we must view problematically to understand relationships (and, actually, human behaviour). As Hirschkop points out and, of course, as is evident from Bakhtin's writing (although not in, for example, Voloshinov, 1973), Bakhtin's 'careful eye and critical intent' (not to say, perhaps, his sense of self-preservation given the political context), was turned towards the everyday as manifested in some novels.

Appendix 12

Bakhtin: coding, categorizing and disciplinary trenches

Of course, an attraction of Bakhtin is his opposition to being categorized and categorizing others. It seems that much my formal education has been characterised by what appear to be impermeable category boundaries. In sixth form there was a clear and rigid distinction between those who studied sciences and those who studied arts (and the two rarely mixed). This was surprisingly even more apparent at university. In my first undergraduate year, psychology, philosophy and English literature were taught as if no other discipline existed. And even in psychology, each topic area was introduced as if independent from any other. There was no encouragement (and it was ironic, given that I had studied *Howard's End* for English A level) to 'only connect' (Forster, 1941, title-page).

Asmolov (1998: xxvi) refers to this issue when he notes the sort of argument academic psychologists engage in: should Bakhtin be included in 'the space of true psychology' or excluded as a '"philologist"'. As Asmolov goes on to indicate, this argument is only relevant to academic psychologists. In contrast, 'practical psychologists', are not hide bound by disciplinary categories (in the way in which academic psychologists are).

Aronowitz's (1994: 162) discussion of Bakhtin makes a similar point. He describes Bakhtin as making 'an antidisciplinary intervention into the construction of knowledge,' in that Bakhtin makes a 'paradigm shift from the standpoint of the disciplines to that of the human sciences'.

Much the same point is also made by Trinh (1991, 1992), when she discusses the ways in which 'fixed disciplines and refined compartmentalizations....ultimately serve to preserve the status quo' (1991: 226), practising '...theory in a very deadening way, so theory keeps aiming for closures and building up boundaries rather than voiding them' (1992: 155).

Also of relevance, here, and later, is Janesick's (1994) contribution to discussion about triangulation, that '...near talismanic method of confirming findings'

(Miles and Huberman, 1994: 266). To a list of tactics for achieving triangulation that she takes from Denzin, she adds 'interdisciplinary triangulation' (215). In effect, this is a realization of intertextuality and, for Janesick, as for me, the conscious use of work from other disciplines to validate research. Given what I have said so far, I can only agree with her proposal that:

> Interdisciplinary triangulation will help to lift us up out of the dominant trench of psychology. (215)

In the 'trench of psychology', Kelly (1955: 18), in outlining a theory of constructive alternativism drew attention to the way in which 'psychological', 'physiological' and 'sociological' theories inter-relate, so much so that are no obvious criteria to label a theory as one or the other. Ultimately, it comes down to our way of seeing. Kelly's point, and as can be drawn from Bakhtin, MacIntyre and others, suggests that we should be relatively relaxed about the boundaries between academic disciplines, yet, it seems to me, few appear to have absorbed this message.

If it were so, some 40 years later, Cohen (1995: 14) would not be writing about the implications of rigid boundaries (or 'dominant trenches') in his introduction to *Psychologists on Psychology*:

> ...some commentators claim that is wrong to speak of psychology as one discipline any longer.. The whole exercise has has been fragmented into many sub-disciplines that have nothing to say to one another. A clinical psychologist dealing with children who have been abused has nothing to say, and nothing to learn from an experimental psychologist.

in my experience, which I think is typical, psychology has never been taught or studied as one discipline although attempts have been made to present a particular approach to psychology, for example, experimental psychology, as if it is synonymous with the discipline of psychology.

In large part, Cohen (1995) accounts for this failure to connect as arising from the observation that most psychologists become psychologists by accident. They come to psychology through diverse experiences with correspondingly diverse

ways of seeing. More specifically, Cohen suggests, what is seriously missing from psychology (and psychologists) is a grounding in philosophy. For Cohen, there is no or hardly any, 'philosophy of psychological methods' (18).

Actually, it seems to me from my reading, that there is a philosophy of psychological methods, in that the philosophy exists (and has long existed, at least since Vico, for example, see the accounts of Hermans and Kempen, 1993; Shotter, 1993a; Cole, 1996 and the writing of, for example, Wittgenstein, 1953 1958, 1967; and MacIntyre, 1985) in which to firmly ground, at least a sociocultural psychology. It just happens that Cohen (1995) hasn't written much about it in his context, although he did refer to Polanyi's work. Arguably, there are scholars (including people who work as psychologists, and here, Shotter seems an especially good example) who have been contributing to just such a framework. It just happens that Cohen didn't interview them, although it seems to me he came fairly close in his interview with Hudson.

Thus, as a professional psychologist (a 'practical', applied psychologist), writing from my disciplinary base in psychology, and writing of colleague professional psychologists, how Bakhtin is categorised does matter. It matters because ultimately Bakhtin, as are other people, and, by definition, psychology, is uncategorizable (or rather, 'unfinalizable'). It is my way of seeing, my 'form shaping ideology' (for example, Bakhtin, 1984: 92), that although humans do categorize to make-meaning (and here, again, the tension to which I referred earlier), there is no finished category into which we can slot people or experiences. (Although educational psychologists often appear to be endeavouring to do this in their descriptions of children). For me, and, of course, I am not alone (for example, Morson and Emerson, 1990; Hermans and Kempen, 1993; Sampson,1993; Shotter and Billig, 1998) Bakhtin, along with other scholars (Morson and Emerson: 15, cite Ludwig Wittgenstein, Gregory Bateson, and Ferdinand Braudel as developing similar ideas), points to a transdisciplinary way of seeing human experience.

Appendix 13

Making the everyday problematic as a practice of method

I remarked in my *Introduction* that I see the process of my curiosity as being similar to to the process of making experience 'problematic'. Smith's (1987) work stands for me as a relatively early and engaging account both of what is implied by making the everyday *problematic* and responding to the challenge of finding a practice of method that is not bound by the 'dominant trench' of any single discipline. For example, in her proposal for a 'feminist sociology', Smith (1987: 9), says:

> But I am not a symbolic interactionist, nor a phenomenological sociologist, nor a Marxist sociologist, nor an ethnomethodologist. The sociological strategy I have developed does not belong to or subject itself to the interpretive procedures of any particular school of sociology. It is constrained by the project of creating a way of seeing, from where we actually live, into the powers, processes, and relations that organize and determine the everyday context of that seeing.

The opening *But* in the above quote suggests four points to me. First, and as I have emphasized in my *Preface*, most obviously, her research, as all research, is based firmly on her way of seeing, from her standpoint. The *But* refers to the diverse influences that she acknowledges, as I acknowledge mine.

Second, there is a recursive relationship between our way of seeing and the contexts in which we see. The *But*, then, also acknowledges that whilst Smith's (1987) way of seeing is not constrained by any -ology or -ism, it is still surely constrained by the boundaries of that recursive relationship. In my view, though, whilst 'constrained' conveys the notion of limits, in that there is always some kind of regulatory influence determining what we see and what we are part of seeing in relation to a particular project, the recursive nature of the relationship also implies possibilities. We might see the unexpected and our way of seeing might be unexpectedly influenced.

But, and third, the unexpected isn't the rarefied extraordinary in Smith's work

any more than it is in mine; it is 'where we actually live' and the 'everyday context'. It is, then, Bakhtin's prosaic. This is not to deny the uniqueness (the 'actual', the local) in the everyday.

Fourth, Smith's (1987) *But* does not subscribe to an -ology or -ism but to a 'strategy'. Here, it appears to me that she is arguing for both a congruence between our 'espoused theory' and 'theories-in-use' (Schon, 1987: 255) and for the way in which the recursive relationship noted above is often referred to in the qualitative research literature, as *reflexivity*. Whilst it seems to me that the extent to which one can be free of any -ism or -ology is arguable, Smith's point is a reaction against the 'dominant trenches' of any discipline. It is also an argument against positivism and against a way of seeing that finalizes.
Her argument, it seems to me, bears similarities to grounded theory in terms of establishing theory from the 'ground' up but striking differences to grounded theory in other ways, not least in her avoidance of categorizing and generalizing (157). Her argument is that:

> One way in which the sociological discourse has maintained its hegemony over experience has been by insisting that we must begin with a conceptual apparatus or a theory drawn from the discipline... (89)

She is, therefore, explicit about her 'sub-text' (Usher, 1996) and explicit in wanting to transcend it.

In my view, there is nothing unique to sociology in the above quote; for example, it applies equally to psychology (and any other -ology). The effect of beginning with a discipline specific 'form shaping ideology' is to then see everything that is seen through the eyes of the discipline and worse, to recall Berger (1972) from the *Preface*, there is no reciprocity, no evident democracy in the research process. This is because it implies that: '...the actualities of the everyday world are unformed and unorganized and that the sociologist cannot enter them without a conceptual framework to select, assemble, and order them...' (Smith, 1987: 89-90). The sociologist, then, is the detached observer, imposing rules, able to separate out aspects of living, and (through adherence to rules of objectivity) neither alters the experience and its participants nor is altered by it or by them.

Smith's (1987) strategy also argues for seeing 'the everyday world as problematic'. From my perspective it is worth dwelling upon this in order to illustrate my use of the term 'curious', since her use of problematic seems identical to the way in which I use curious. She distances her use of problematic from scientific or (perhaps unintentionally ironic, given her focus upon the everyday), even commonly understood connotations of the term 'problem'. Her concept of problematic is, effectively, her strategy for inquiring into life as it is experienced, from the inside out, in that it begins with persons in their lives and the context of their life.

Problematic, as a concept, acknowledges the diversity of experiences and, especially, relationships, that constitute the everyday. Smith (1987: 98) draws a parallel between her strategy and Marx and Engels:

> The conception of an everyday world as a sociological problematic presents a basis for a sociology that, like Marx and Engel's conception of the materialist method, begins not with the discourse but in the actual daily social relations between individuals.

This, too, implies the practice of method, that is the focus of more detailed discussion later, in *Part One*, in relation to Newman and Holzman's (1993, 1997) writing and my own position on this. As a strategy of inquiry, a problematic, sociological strategy is democratic, reciprocal, recursive and reflexive. It is not doing things to a person (in Smith's case, women) but *with* a person . The outcomes of the inquiry are intended to be as, if not more, revealing to the participants than to the inquirer (for Smith, how social structures organize women's experience). By implication, the process and outcomes are part of a recursive cycle that has the potential to change. And it is also a strategy for realizing reflexivity.

There are striking similarities here between Smith's work and Heron's (1996) account of 'cooperative inquiry' and systemic epistemology (in which, for example, hypothesizing, circularity, and neutrality form strategies for making problematic the relationships in families and other systems; Selvini Palazzoli *et al.*, 1980).

Smith's (1987) use of the concept of problematic to denote a strategy cannot be emphasised enough. However, her use of problematic might seem to have have problems of it own. Isn't she merely stating the objective of all academic disciplines? What inquiry, in some shape or form, isn't problematic in that it sets out to resolve problems (in the form of research questions) and, very often in turn, create new problems? Do not most aspects of everyday life lend themselves to being problematic - from buying a new washing machine to deciding how safe it is to let a child cross the road?

To resolve this, I think that is necessary to return to what is conveyed by the strategic use of problematic. Smith's (1987) problematic implies multiple meanings (based on multiple seeing) and multiple actions relating to everyday experiences. I have viewed problematic, and for me, my being curious, as a way of *being* because, fundamentally, it represents an attempt to be explicit about the connection between one's way of seeing (espoused theory) and what is seen (or practised). It is a way of *being* because, fundamentally, it is a manifestation of reflexivity and an attempt to avoid 'epistemological hypocrisy' (see Fabian, 1983: 90; and also on reflexivity such writers as: Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Burman, 1991; Banister *et al.* 1994; Marcus, 1994; Usher, 1996; Denzin, 1997; Stevenson and Cooper, 1997; Lynch, 2000; Pels, 2000; Todres, 2000).

Problematic, in this context, as Smith (1987) has argued, therefore has a specific meaning as a reflexive strategy; a method by which we can practise our relationship both to our own everyday experiences and those experiences of another. *Appendix 10* elaborates some of the background literature to reflexivity upon which I have drawn. Essentially, it is in reflexivity, then, for me, (for Smith, Fabian 1983, Skrtic, 1991a, b, and others) that curiosity, in this sense of problematic, begins and then runs throughout what we do as we inquire about those everyday aspects of the world in which we live and about which we are concerned.

Appendix 14

Constructs, construing and constructive alternativism

In Kelly's (1955) view, the constructs that we use to make-meaning of our experiences might be a more or less good fit and, in general, we are engaged in an active process of evolving our network of constructs so that they provide a better fit. Kelly uses the metaphor of person as scientist, to characterize this process. In our attempts to control the messiness of the world, we make predictions about it and use the feedback to make more effective predictions. In this, Kelly fulfils the 'two distinct desiderata for the vocabulary of the social sciences' set out by Rorty (1994: 52).

It seems to me that there are some similarities between what Kelly (1955) describes as constructs, and what Bakhtin/Medvedev, 1978: 133-135) describe as 'inner genres'. Their argument is that we think and so construct our inner reality through 'utterances', not through words and sentences, and that utterances are, in effect:'

> a series of inner genres for seeing and conceptualizing reality. A given consciousness is richer or poorer in genres, depending on its ideological environment. (134)

Constructive alternativism is essentially optimistic and aims for unfinalizability. As Kelly (1955: 15, italics in original) writes:

> *We assume that all of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement...* We take the stand that there are always some alternative constructions available to choose among in dealing with the world. No one needs to paint him or herself into a corner; no one needs to be completely hemmed in by circumstances; no one needs to be the victim of his or her biography. We call this philosophical position *constructive alternativism.*

Constructs are 'bi-polar' (Kelly, 1955: 105-106), since they are created through recognizing the differences and similarities between experiences. For example,

we construe someone as 'honest' since, as we see it, they are not 'dishonest', and we construe the 'day' as opposed to the 'night'. Thus, we can verbally label constructs, indeed this is what we do when we attempt to categorize experiences including behaviour. Kelly (16) acknowledges that 'constructs' may be seen as suggestive of positivism. Superficially, it is tempting to see the categories that constructs provide as 'finalizing', the more so since in everyday behaviour we make judgments, and are exposed to judgments about people and events, that are indicative of underlying constructs.

Additionally, and for me, a more serious criticism of 'construing' is that it opens the possibility of separating a person from their network of relationships, and of denying that dialogical meaning of experiences. It is possible to state that it is a person's construing that is at 'fault', not that their construing might be reasonable, say, given the context. In fact, Kelly appears to hardly think it worth setting out a case against positivism, since constructive alternativism is clearly non-positivist and constructs always more tentative, more provisional, than, say, might be implied by a newspaper headline or a teacher's description of a pupil.

Kelly (1955: 9, 16) notes that constructs are implicit in how we act and not necessarily verbalized. (Was he predicting Denzin's, 1997, 'sixth moment' in his reference to *pantomime*?) This is developed by Ravenette (1977) who suggests that often, we are not aware of our constructs unless we are obliged, in some way, to state them. Then, since we are stating something which can be highly abstract, and something that we are not used to verbalizing, something of the meaning inevitably will be lost. This is reminiscent of Bakhtin (1993, for example: 12), and means, again, that we must treat verbal statements of constructs, and I would add, any category descriptions, with caution: they are tentative.

Sections of Rorty's (1994) article never seem far away from constructive alternativism. For example, he echoes Ravenette's (1977) point, that we should not necessarily assume 'that a subject's [*sic*] own vocabulary is relevant to explaining him or her...' (55). He also highlights another theme, in that when another's construing is described, it is difficult to avoid some finalizing. As he writes, 'it has become obvious that *whatever* terms are used to describe human beings *become* "evaluative" terms' (50, italics in original).

Appendix 15

Connecting constructs, systemic epistemology and carnival

Seeing persons' experiences in terms of systemic epistemology and constructive alternativism suggests that, in our prosaic world, we are active in exchanging information within our networks of relationships. That exchange can change us, as we can change others ('even if only a little'). Whilst research and practice in systemic epistemology has generated descriptions of how information is exchanged (in other words, accounts of the beliefs and behaviours that can constitute how we relate to others), that threaten to 'finalize', systemic epistemology takes constructive alternativism further. It does this, it seems to me, by more explicitly, maintaining unfinalizability through making problematic constructs of reality and truth in a way in which Kelly did not. For example, to paraphrase Burnham (1986: 53), there is no truth, only 'punctuation'. Here, 'punctuation' is another way of describing the influences on our way of seeing, including the moment we choose to stop or pause, to punctuate, our seeing and to describe.

As Steiner (1989: 44) puts it:

> To achieve finalities of meaning one must punctuate (the very term is that of the 'full stop'). One must arrest the cancerous throng of interpretations and re-interpretations.

Having made a connection between systemic epistemology and constructive alternativism, it seems to me that yet another connection can be made with Bakhtin's carnival construct, especially since it draws attention to the tension between the accepted order of things and how that order can be challenged and possibly changed. In systemic terminology, it is worth highlighting the obvious, that carnival is one manifestation of a social system that loosely connects people who, at least for the purpose of the festive occasion, are willing to subordinate their individual needs in the interests of the larger group. In this respect, there is also a connection, here, with MacIntyre's (1999) writing about community and the necessity of being politically included, in the sense of being able to participate in the decision making of the community, to be fully included in that

community.

My focus, though, is on the *unfinalizable* connection between systemic epistemology, constructive alternativism and carnival, in other words, the optimism that is represented about potential for change; for a person to be able to reorganize their environment.

In Bakhtin's (1984) account, carnival simultaneously represents both optimism and also the tension between finalization and unfinalizability. Carnival is optimistic because it allows for the triumph of ordinary people over the established order. Carnival forces are propelled towards change, openness, unfinalizability at the expense of the finalization imposed, for example, by established social orders.

As noted in the main text, carnival is a broad construct. It stands for the everyday events of ordinary life and popular culture but with the added twist of occasions of festivity, in which, as Hirschkop suggests, 'the most natural things' in life take on a 'philosophical, rather than natural-scientific, meaning' (181). The role of 'festivity', with notions of the market place, humour and laughter, absurdity, and bodily excess, is to create a space whereby the ordinary can be dislocated where experience, to paraphrase Hirschkop, can be radically restructured. There is a line to draw here, though. Carnival has a festive nature but, as Clark and Holquist (1984), Hirschkop (1999) and Bakhtin (1984: 160), himself, draw out, it does not contain 'a grain of empty frivolity' (160).

Looking at this in terms of constructive alternativism, Bakhtin (1984) is describing the tension between the two extremes of a bi-polar construct. Some of the central themes that occur throughout his work are described in such bi-polar terms, for example, the present theme of finalizability-unfinalizability.

To return to the connection with systemic epistemology, carnival can be seen as the introduction of *second-order change* into everyday life and, therefore, as playing a role in changing a game without end. Systemic epistemology helps us to understand the nature of 'games without end'. Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967) and Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch (1974) discuss this concept. In essence a game without end occurs in a system where, when the members of

that system have explored all the options for change, no change can be generated from within that system. Change can only occur 'from stepping *outside* the pattern' (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1967: 232, italics in original) in what amounts to a 'second-order change' (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1974: 10-11). In effect, a new set of relationship rules are created for the system, which alter the rules maintaining the game without end.

Whilst the experience of a game without end is a 'gloomy' one, there is room for optimism:

> ...[S]econd-order change is an an everyday phenomenon: people *do* find new solutions, social organisms are capable of self-correction... But the occurrence of second-order change is ordinarily viewed as something uncontrollable, even incomprehensible, a quantum jump, a sudden illumination...
>
> (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1974: 22-23, italics in original)

Second-order change might well be viewed as novel by those in the system. Viewed from outside, 'it merely amounts to a change of the premises...governing the system as *a whole*' (Watzlawick *et al.*, 1974: 24, italics in original).

Appendix 16

Sociocultural psychology and Vygotsky: learning leading development

Sociocultural psychology and Vygotsky

Whilst not essential for my research in itself, to provide the background for my practice of method, it is important to locate the zone of proximal development within the context of sociocultural psychology.

Wertsch *et al.* (1995) and Cole (1996) outline a history of sociocultural research and I have already noted their definition of 'sociocultural'. As the title of Cole's book states, cultural psychology was 'a once and future discipline'. 'Once', because cultural psychology has its origins going back to at least the eighteenth century with Vico (1990, 1999), whose work I suggested, in *Appendix 12*, provided an early philosophical basis for psychology Hawkes (1977), Hermans and Kempen (1993), Shotter (1993a), and Cole all provide a discussion of Vico's work, with Hermans and Kempen seeing him as 'the father of the social construction orientation' (5).

If Vico is seen as a parent of social constructionism (or constructivism in the terminology that I have been using) then, in 1879, Wundt became 'the father of psychology as an experimental laboratory discipline' (Farr, 1980: 186; and see also, for example, Giorgi, 1970; Wertsch *et al.*, 1995, Cole, 1996). To follow Farr, Wundt saw the value of a 'folk psychology' as equal to an experimental (largely physiological) psychology. As Farr quotes:

> "Its problem [that is, folk psychology's] relates to those mental products which are are created by a community of human life and are, therefore, inexplicable in terms merely of individual consciousness since they presuppose the reciprocal action of many" (Wundt, 1916, p.3).
>
> (Farr: 186)

Farr's (1980) use of 'folk psychology', a term also used by Bruner (1990), is the equivalent of 'cultural psychology'. As Cole (1996: 101) records, this was how Toulmin translated Wundt's original *Volkerpsychologie*.

The compartmentalization of psychology, to which I have already referred, again in *Appendix 12*, is largely due to the origins of psychology itself. In short, it seems to me that dualism has and still beleaguers psychology. Farr (1980) argues that for a number of reasons, Wundt emphasized his experimental approach to psychology at the expense of folk psychology, and this was exacerbated by American psychologists who, having visited Wundt in Germany, returned to the United States with a model of experimental psychology. However, Wundt's folk psychology did influence social scientists and as such, became absorbed in the discipline of sociology.

At the same time, work contributing to a cultural psychology was still being undertaken. The 'future discipline' of Cole's (1996) title, though, acknowledges both the virtual, underground status of cultural psychology in academic psychology and Cole's commitment, based on 30 years or so of work in this field, to describing what cultural psychology can offer to the future. The cultural psychology that influenced Cole (as it has influenced others cited in this *Appendix*) was that of Vygotsky and his colleagues who began working in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s. (Vygotsky died of tuberculosis in 1934, at the age of 37.)

My focus will be on Vygotsky but I want to briefly mention one of his prominent colleagues, Luria. White (1996, xv), in his foreword to Cole's book, describes Cole as being inspired by Luria to follow a 'romantic science' which, in an unattributed quote, is defined as '"the dream of a novelist and scientist combined"'. (And, as I mentioned in *Chapter Two*, on *Writing*, see also Luria's 1979: 174 own writing on 'romantic science'.)

As I understand it, romantic science is entirely consistent with a Bakhtinian approach that can both give meaning to a person's behaviour whilst always holding sight of the whole person in their whole context. I am not sure what Bakhtin would then make of my accompanying suggestion that this is a fundamental tenet of Gestalt psychology, although I continue to think, given the times, it is reasonable to view Bakhtin's understanding of psychology as limited. As Wertheimer (1924: 2), one of the leading figures in Gestalt psychology wrote:

> The fundamental 'formula' of Gestalt theory might be expressed in this

> way. There are wholes, the behaviour of which is not determined by that of their individual elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole. It is the hope of Gestalt theory to determine the nature of such wholes.

In Cole's (1996: 107) description, Vygotsky and his colleagues argued for a 'total reorganization of psychological theory'. They were not arguing for a new discipline or sub-discipline of psychology. They were responding to what they saw, then, as a crisis in psychology, precisely because of the split between experimental psychology and folk psychology. In their view, the 'cultural-historical' (sociocultural) approach that they were following could unite this split.

For Asmolov (1998: 21), 'practical psychology' is one manifestation of this approach. He notes how Vygotsky and the 'Vygotsky school' has opened up the 'cultural space of psychology...with its tendency to break the disciplinary boundaries'.

It also worth indicating, before leaving this brief history of psychology, that whilst Vygotsky and others were working in the Soviet Union, as Farr (1980) and Sampson (1993) discuss, in the United States, Mead, was developing a social psychology which, in my mind, can easily be construed as a sociocultural psychology. Mead, who had studied Wundt's writings, began work in 1891, and many of his ideas bear similarities with those of Vygotsky. Principally, though, they share, 'an unequivocal emphasis on the central role that the other plays in the formation of all that we currently presume to be characteristics of the person - including, for example, the person's mind, thinking, memory, and so forth' (Sampson: 103).

In the same way that Farr (1980) Sampson (1993) have made the connection between Vygotsky and Mead so, too, have writers made the connection between Bakhtin (and Voloshinov, for that matter, see Bakhurst, 1996) and Vygotsky. As I discuss in *Chapter 8*, Cheyne and Tarulli (undated), for example, consider similarities and differences between Bakhtin's notions of dialogue and those of Vygotsky.

It might be reasonable to wonder, given that for the period of Vygotsky's life (1896-1934) he and Bakhtin (1895-1975) were contemporaries, whether he and Bakhtin met. In fact, Emerson (1983: 251) and Kozulin (1999: 180) both note that there is no evidence that Bakhtin or Vygotsky ever met nor that they were aware of each other's work. Kozulin, however, draws out three possible connecting lines between the two. He is struck by the similar timing of their 'rediscovery' in the West; the similarity in their 'linguistic sources'; and, finally, one of Vygotsky's cousins, David, was a member of the 'same intellectual circle' to which Bakhtin belonged in Leningrad. In a footnote, Kozulin adds that David was also imprisoned in the same camp as Medvedev, author of one of the Bakhtinian circle's 'disputed' texts, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, Bakhtin/Medvedev, 1978; see Hirschkop, 1999). It is more than likely, thinks Kozulin, that Vygotsky heard about the work in which Bakhtin and his circle were engaged. What we are left with, then, as Emerson remarks, is that Bakhtin and Vygotsky connect 'not on the plane of their actual texts, that is, not in the reality of a cross reference, but in the ultimate implications of their thought' (251).

Vygotsky: learning leading development

I want to switch the focus, now, and set Vygotsky in a different context.

Despite, in my opinion, overwhelming evidence to the contrary (for example, Block and Dworkin, 1977), the established view in the West of child development and learning, and for that matter, adult learning and development, is still premised on an acceptance of innate cognitive ability, meaning that 'intelligence', say, is genetic and so static or fixed, since the environment plays less of a role than genetic inheritance. It is, thus, a finalizing view of a person rather than a view which leaves a person filled with potential. I am not going detail the origins of 'intelligence' here (for example, see Block and Dworkin; Hearnshaw, 1979; Rose, 1998).

The work of Piaget is particularly implicated, since his work on child development became part of the seemingly unshakeable foundation of the established view (for example, see Newman and Holzman, 1993; Burman, 1994).

Kozulin (1998) indicates the similarities and differences between Piaget and Vygotsky, the essential difference being Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective. For example, in Piaget's account children, by and large, move through fixed stages of development, the attainment of a particular stage corresponding with an ability to learn more complex information. Critically:

> For Piaget, learning occurs in an unassisted interaction between the child's mental schemas and the objects of the external world. (40)

In other words, the child is a lone learner and their learning relies upon their development (which is a genetic given).

For Vygotsky, the collaborative role of other people is the key factor in learning. Rather than an innate cognitive ability, Vygotsky can be understood as describing 'cognitive processes'. Through collaborative activity, cognitive processes that are 'created' between, say, child and adult, become internalized by the child. As a consequence, the child becomes a more effective learner and so develops. Language (a 'cultural tool') and inner language is an essential part of this process. As Kozulin (1998: 40) puts it, 'learning occurs in the collaboration between children and the adults who introduce symbolic tools-mediators to children and teach them how to organize and control their natural psychological functions through these cultural tools'. Through this process those 'natural psychological functions of the child change, their nature becoming culturally and socially informed and organized'.

In identifying the centrality of language in cognitive development, some of the connections can clearly be seen between Vygotsky, Bakhtin, and Voloshinov (and, of course, discursive psychologists working today).

Thus, for Piaget, children *develop and then they learn* (development leads learning), and potential to learn is finalized both by inheritance and critical stages through which a person has to pass. Because of this, Newman and Holzman (1993: 58) argue, Piaget separates 'development and learning and thinking and knowing'. As a consequence, they continue, 'the Piagetian separation of "pure development" from learning has dominated twentieth century educational psychology as manifest in concrete and biased practices such as the IQ testing'.

In contrast, for Vygotsky, it is not genetics that determines learning and potential. Through sociocultural processes children *learn and then they develop.* (As Newman and Holzman, 1993: 86, describe it, 'the dialectical unity {meaning-making/learning-leading-development}'. (See also Newman and Holzman, 1997, for an extension of this.) A crucial issue for me, though, is that even if it is couched in terms of children's learning and development, what is being described here, in current phraseology, is lifelong learning or, in words that Bakhtin would recognize, lifelong *becoming* (and thus unfinalizability).

Appendix 17

The zone of proximal development's need for dialogism

Just as I have argued that the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is necessary for a fuller understanding of unfinalizability, in turn Cheyne and Tarulli (undated) argue that Bakhtin's ideas about dialogue are necessary for a fuller understanding of the ZPD. Whilst they do not write with the fervour of Newman and Holzman, the essence of their discussion is that of 'using and misusing the ZPD' (Newman and Holzman, 1993: 66) and they carry a similar warning about the ZPD not necessarily being a revolutionary process:

> In the developmental literature, the ZPD is almost invariably presented as a rather cozy, nurturant, extended 'womb', but...it also has the capacity to dominate, discourage, and oppress.
>
> (Cheyne and Tarulli, undated: 10)

They suggest that for Vygotsky, the nature of the interaction that provides a model for the ZPD is largely aimed at achieving a consensus of understanding.

It seems important to record, however, particularly because it does not seem from my reading that Vygotsky's impulse was towards the centripetal, that Vygotsky's interests were largely with child development and effective instruction for promoting the development of language and thinking, as Cheyne and Tarulli (undated) point out. In these terms, the more competent other might be seen as having some very clear responsibilities to promote the {meaning-making/learning-leading-development} of the developing other. It also seems reasonable to assume that for Vygotsky, the ZPD was as much a virtue as unfinalizability was for Bakhtin. This is not deny, though, the problematic nature of the ZPD, in its 'capacity to dominate, discourage and [ultimate] oppress'. Also, that it is hierarchical, in that it implies a controlling role of a more competent other (the first voice; for example a parent, a teacher, a more able peer) over a less competent other (the second voice and, to follow the example, a child, pupil or class mate).

For Cheyne and Tarulli (undated: 7): 'Vygotsky, at least in his view of the ZPD,

clearly portrays a knowledge differential as a power differential.'

Such a differential, they continue, inevitably turns attention to 'the role of the other in the ZPD'. To illustrate this, they describe the role of the other in three dialogical genres. These dialogical genres are presented as a centripetal-centrifugal continuum for viewing the ZPD. I like less their suggestion that the dialogical genres represent phases, since that implies some kind of developmental progression, explanation and, ultimately, reification. (Although in my own practice as an educational psychologist, I might playfully experiment by encouraging parents concerned about the behaviour of their adolescent children to see such behaviour in terms of a 'Menippean phase'.)

As Cheyne and Tarulli (undated) propose, following Bakhtin, Menippean dialogue represents the challenging, centrifugal, carnival possibilities of the ZPD as opposed to the centripetal Magistral dialogue that takes place, say, between master and novice, or parent and infant. Their third dialogical type, between Magistral and Menippean, is the questioning, 'suspicious of consensus' (8) Socratic dialogue.

In accounting for the role of the other in the three dialogical types, Cheyne and Tarulli (undated), contrast Vygotsky's view of the other with that of Bakhtin's. For them, this contrast centres on what is essential for communication. For Vygotsky, it is the shared beliefs of a self and the other, and a commitment to reaching shared understanding. For Bakhtin, what is not shared is essential: consensus is not a necessary goal for communication. Indeed, it is when the self and the other 'struggle for difference and misunderstanding that dialogue and thought are productive...' (Cheyne and Tarulli: 6).

In Bakhtin, then, a centrifugal understanding of the ZPD is described:

> After all, our thought itself - philosophical, scientific, and artistic - is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggle with other's thoughts, and this cannot but be reflected in the forms that verbally express our thought as well.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1986: 92)

Appendix 18

Dialogism as performed conversation

The purpose of Newman and Holzman's (1997 1999) performed conversations is clear and I have already drawn upon their description. Such conversations comprise revolutionary activity whose purpose is to use language to reorganize the environment, to create new meanings for 'existing social relations' if not 'the everyday, mundane, practical overthrow' (1997: 109) of such relations. This purpose, I think, can be recognized as a centrifugal force, as a carnival process, as Menippean dialogue. In their examples of performed conversations, and especially 'performed emotive conversations' (1997: 116) there are striking parallels, for me, in the account of narrative therapy provided by McLeod (1997) and the work of, amongst others, White and Epston (1990).

White and Epston (1990; 14) prefer the term 're-storying of experience' rather than conversation for their work but I think that their account is recognizable as {meaning-making/learning-leading development}, although Newman and Holzman (1999) dispute this. For instance, White and Epston propose that:

> ...the re-storying of experience necessitates the active involvement of persons in the reorganization of their experience...This, along with invitations for persons to engage in activities that generate an awareness of a process in which they are simultaneously performers in and audience to their own performance, and a consciousness of one's production of one's productions, provides for a context of reflexivity...This context brings forth new choices for persons regarding the authoring of themselves, others, and their relationships. (18)

Newman and Holzman's (1999) central argument is against the notion of 'organization' (or 're-organization' here) and an implication that the process in which we are performers and audience is driven towards producing consistency (a consistent life story, for example). For Newman and Holzman, as might be predicted, given the philosophical background that they practise, what is essential about performing conversation is the practice or process, not the product, since life is just not that ordered. Ultimately, White and Epston (1990) provide an

account which is too rational: a better story, not necessarily a better life.

To paraphrase Newman and Holzman's (1997: 136), therefore, re-storying (performing a conversation) makes new meaning (through reorganizing experience). Making or creating meaning has to take place if learning is to lead development (the realization of new choices).

The performed conversations in my research did not have a 'therapeutic' purpose. The conversation-interviews did not set out to reorganize the environments of my co-researchers, although I have noted that it appears to have contributed to some reorganization for at least one participant. The conversation-interviews did set out to recognise the reorganizations that had taken place in a person's life. In this sense, I was not setting out to create a zone of proximal development but to recognize the past (and possibly) future creation of such zones. Concurrently, I suggest, there was and is an active meaning-making process going on but this is not necessarily the same as turning the conversations into 'objects of study' (Newman and Holzman, 1997: 115).

Appendix 19

Wondering about research relationships: summary of background literature

Managing the tension between explaining and understanding or meaning-making

Emerson (1997: 61) notes an 'enduring divide' in Bakhtin's thinking about explanation and understanding, 'a binary pair' (62) that she (along with Ricoeur, 1981) observes is central to Dilthey's *Verstehen*.

Incidentally, Ricoeur (1981) deals with a different point, which I will briefly mention. Whereas Emerson's focus is on the divide that endured for Bakhtin, for Ricoeur it is the divide that endured for Dilthey. Ricoeur's argument, however, is that when it comes to the relationship between writing and reading (a relationship in which human science research is necessarily involved) it is not a divide but a dialectical relationship: *'because* the writing-reading situation develops a problematic of its own which is not merely an extension of the speaking-hearing situation' (210, italics in original).

Emerson (1997) cites Bakhtin as viewing both Dilthey and 'explanation' as monologic. To explain something assumes a position of some privilege, an ultimate semantic authority (an objective observer), since some insight or 'knowing' has first taken place which can then be explained to someone else. This does not equate to 'understanding' for Bakhtin, however, since proper understanding is dialogic, arising through dialogue (or performed conversation). We make-meaning for ourselves by trying to explain to another who reciprocates by, perhaps, agreeing, challenging, seeking clarification, or adding to:

> Neither party should seek 'essences' (there are none), nor perfect reconstructions of a past context, nor full consensus. And at no point does either side know anything for sure... [to explain something] need acknowledge only one active subject, the person who grasps a concept and proceeds to explicate it to someone else.
>
> (Emerson: 62)

In *The Problem of the Text*, Bakhtin (1986: 111, italics in original) wrote about the 'enduring divide' as being that between explanation and comprehension:

> With *explanation* there is only one consciousness, one subject; with *comprehension* there are two consciousnesses and two subjects. There can be no dialogic relationship with an object, and therefore explanation has no dialogic aspects (except formal, rhetorical ones. Understanding is always dialogic to some degree.

If this means that understanding is all and that explanation should be avoided at all costs, then this is problematic in the same way in which I found Newman and Holzman (1997, 1999) problematic. Even if Bakhtin is just gesturing towards, he is still explaining (offering to make-meaning). Even if Newman and Holzman are just gesturing towards, they are still explaining (offering to make meaning). As part of my practice of method, I see it as important not to take this issue for granted, nor avoid it in some other way but to work out, for myself, the relationship between explanation and meaning-making. This *Appendix* and *Chapter Ten* contribute to this process.

Empathy

Although my primary focus is Bakhtin, Shields' (1996) critique of *Verstehen* echoes issues and problems with empathy that Bakhtin (for example, 1990: 81) also discussed.

As Shields (1996: 227) describes it, *Verstehen* is 'often called a method of "empathetic understanding" [which] has suffered from an equivocal definition wavering between Rickert's and particularly Dilthey's romantic science of empathy and the more empirical and contextual "interpretive understanding" derived from Weber...'.

Without wishing to take too much away from Shields (1996), the accounts, for example, by Rickman (1979) and Ricoeur (1981) suggest that his analysis of *Verstehen* is somewhat limited. In particular, Rickman emphasises that in considering Dilthey's work as a whole, Dilthey undoubtedly saw *Verstehen* as involving much more than a 'romantic sense of empathy' (Shields: 277); 'it is

clear beyond question that [Dilthey] thought of understanding as an intellectual and not an emotional process' (Rickman: 75). *Verstehen*, as Rickman indicates, is a complex process relying upon three elements of which the notion of empathy is just one. The other two elements are, simply put, hearing the other's words and understanding what the utterance means. Empathy, in this sense, is more like having a theory of the other person's mind, so that we can attribute intention to the utterance. This makes a connection with intersubjectivity and alterity, and the process as a whole makes a connection with Bakhtin's (1996) description of creative understanding. (See *Chapter Ten* and below)

Shields (1996) identifies the lasting problems of *Verstehen* to be the 'role of empathy' (282), whether it is applied to the personal relationship between observed and observer or to the observer's 'empathetic understanding' of the observed's context. In both cases:

> The 'empathetic aspect' of *Verstehen* is a flaw which silences the Other by masking the differences between Self (investigator) and Other (respondent). The difficulties of understanding, and the problematic character of, in particular, cross-cultural communication are elided. We thus pass over a central aspect of social interaction. We learn less about the Other while at the same time being 'authorized' by the *Verstehen*-method to *speak-for* the Other as interpreters whose voices are legitimatized by social science, over the voices of Others who are thereby marginalized. (290, italics in original)

As Shields (1996) argues, if 'most English-language interpretive social science' is characterized by *Verstehen*, then, *Verstehende* methods are unethical by contemporary standards of research ethics' (275).

Dialogism: my self and the other

Continuing with Shields (1996), his antidote to the monologism of *Verstehen* is the difference and outsideness inherent in dialogism. I do not see Shields, though, as advocating objectivity. Rather than the research process, say, trying to smooth out the difference between researcher and researched through, for example, 'empathetic understanding', a dialogical approach relies on a 'relation

of difference, an "outsideness" of two subjects to each other which is necessary to any "understanding" which will recognize their mutuality...' (288).

The latter point is critical since, again, it is not the outsideness of the dispassionate, objective observer. To emphasise this, Shields (1996) quotes Bakhtin's view (a view that is represented in systemic epistemology, for example, Keeney, 1983; Andersen, 1984) that the position of being outside the other can enable us to ask questions that that other may not ask of themselves. In responding to such questions, the other may provide new meanings (both to the outsider as well to the other). These new meanings will have arisen, then, through a relationship between research participants that is:

> ... an ethical one of mutuality in the making of meaning. In the practice of method, the value of dialogism is that it allows this while making the difference of these viewpoints - the 'outsideness' of subjects to each other - the central feature of a theory of social meaning practices.
>
> (Shields, 1996: 289)

'Mutuality in the making' is a concern for Wertsch (1998). In his argument that communication requires both intersubjectivity and alterity and that 'the challenge is to "live in the middle"' (Wertsch: 111), it seems to me that at one level, he is restating the tension between centrifugal and centripetal forces. He uses a definition of 'pure intersubjectivity' (112) to represent the process whereby the self might be finalized by the other, and alterity to represent the process whereby the self plays a positive role in defining (in a way which still leaves room for change and growth) the other's sense of self in the world.

Wertsch's (1998) arguments might have been enriched (although Bakhtin and Voloshinov might have considerable reservations about this) by an appeal to the psychoanalytic literature and, in particular (and this is my excuse to Bakhtin and Voloshinov) what it says about subjectivity. To make my point, I will draw upon O'Loughlin (2001).

O'Loughlin's (2001: 49-50, italics in original) definition of subjectivity is essentially the one that I have been following, a sense of our self in our world. He takes issue with such terms as *'individual identity'* and *'autonomous self'*

because they imply that we are finalized and that the other has no influence: 'that we can separate ourselves from the world and define ourselves independently of it'. He suggests that this denies what actually happens, in that from birth children are part of a sociocultural context:

> The challenge of developing our subjectivity, as Judith Butler (1997) [although he could as readily have cited Bakhtin, as he does elsewhere] noted, is in enabling ourselves to become vibrant living subjects who identify with particular cultures and discourse practices, without simultaneously becoming totally *subject* to those same ideologies and discursive practices. The line between *subjectivity* and *subjection* is a fine one.

One of the implications that I have taken from this and the other sources cited, is the value of my seeing my meaning-making in terms of Bakhtin's (1986) process of *creative understanding*. Although, in my view, he does not draw it out as explicitly as he might, it seems to me that this what Shields (1996) is describing in so many words.

Surplus of vision

Creative understanding, then, relies on alterity. It also relies upon other ways of seeing a dialogic relationship. The remaining sections in this *Appendix* and in *Chapter Ten*, elaborates some of these other components.

In his discussion of *Life as Authoring*, Kozulin (1998) draws upon the concept of *surplus of vision*. Of particular relevance to my work is Kozulin's consideration of how we make-meaning of the experiences of the other. Surplus of vision enables us to provide a temporal frame for the life of the other. For example, we do not recall our earliest days and rely upon others for an account of them. Similarly:

> Our surplus of vision in respect of others allows us to construct a complete 'story' of their lives, to turn those lives from a sequence of disjointed experiences into the whole of memory. (140-141)

In my view, Kozulin oversimplifies the process of construction here in that he tends not to follow through his life as authoring thesis. Thus, he overlooks the reflexive aspect to surplus of vision. A dialogical perspective implies that if coherence emerges, it is jointly constructed in a performed conversation, rather than merely being the product of the other (thus alterity rather than intersubjectivity). What Kozulin indicates, though, is the impulse to coherence (centripetal forces) and 'wholeness' in thinking of the other's life (and, to add again to Kozulin, as well as our own). I return to this, in discussing MacIntyre's (1985) work in *Chapter Fourteen*. For the time being, Kozulin implicitly confronts us once more with the need to maintain distinctiveness.

Coevalness

Surplus of vision, indeed any aspect of the relationship between the self and an other, assumes a relationship between time and space. As noted in *Chapter Ten*, Holquist's (1990) discussion of surplus was built, in part, on time/space relationships. It seems useful to note his arguments.

Holquist (1990) invites us to think about the dialogic relationship between people. Dialogue takes place between persons who share the same but different space. In other words, although a dialogue between persons might be shared, the experience of it will necessarily be different. Holquist argues that as well as our bodies being in a different (albeit same) space, there is also a 'cognitive time/space' (21) factor. He describes this in terms of 'dialogism's master assumption' (22) that we structure the world according to figure-ground contrasts. (See note 63 in *Part One* and also *Appendix 16* for referencing to Gestalt psychology and the construct, 'figure-ground'.) Bakhtin, via Holquist, though, proposes a more fundamental contrast: the time and space constructs that we use to identify the limits of our world set against the the time and space constructs that we use to identify the limits of the world of other people (and objects). Crucially, as Holquist emphasises, this, along with all construing, is a reciprocal process.

As Holquist (1990: 22) continues, one of the implications of cognitive time/space as a construct is that as an observer, we are (obviously) at the centre of the space encompassed by our our observing. As an observer, time is unfinalized.

However, when we observe others, we construe them in time that is finalized and in space which is relatively neutral:

> From the perspective of the self, the other is simply *in* the world, along with everyone and everything else. (22, italics in original)

I have already responded to one implication for my research relationships that follow from this. In attempting to overcome this impulse towards finalizing and 'neutralizing' the other, I have drawn upon such constructs as intersubjectivity and alterity, sympathetic co-experiencing and surplus of vision.

Fabian's (1983) construct of coevalness seems especially relevant as a way of making-meaning of both Bakhtin's (1986) creative understanding and Holquist's (1990) comments, above. It seems to me that creative understanding, as part of the process of a dialogic relationship, relies upon co-creating some sense of sharing time and space. Further, it seems to me that when persons talk about a 'breakdown in communication' or mis-communication, it signals a breakdown in coevalness.

Being an Inappropriate Other

Although writing about this matter, here, in the context of Bakhtin's 'outsideness' and 'otherness', I might equally have written about this, and surplus of vision, and coevalness, in my discussion on validity in *Chapter Three*. If I was researching within a positivist tradition, I would be an unavoidable source of bias. I could make all sorts of claims and assumptions based on my insider knowledge, shared values, shared speech genres, and so on, and represent those assumptions as explanations about the other. I would do my best to counter accusations of bias through claims about objectivity and traditional approaches to validity.

Within non-positivist traditions, being a member of the same profession could be celebrated, in a sense, through the use of such insider research methods as participant observation, although, of course, this was not the practice of method I chose. Instead, my practice of method is a dialogic practice, carrying all the suppositions about the relationship of my self to the other: a meaning-making

relationship of difference, of negotiation, of openness, of unfinalizability, filled with potentials.

In not wanting to take these matters for granted and as a way of acknowledging the particular circumstances of my research relationships, Trinh's (1991: 75) concept of the 'Inappropriate Other' seems especially useful.

The Inappropriate Other occupies 'an undetermined threshold place' (Trinh, 1991: 74) where one is reflexively, both part of yet not part of, and in making-meaning, both making and being made by images (the language of conversations, the language of film and so on). There are connections, here, with Bakhtin's (1990, for example: 82) sympathetic co-experiencing and notion of multiple 'I's. The 'I-for myself', 'I-for-others' and 'the-others-for-me'.

The Inappropriate Other, I suppose, is one way of describing an implication of dialogism for representation (and a dialogic or creative understanding). As such, it makes problematic everyday, taken for granted practices and also makes problematic, in a different way (from the objective/subjective debate), the whole notion of being able to represent one's culture (or any activity, performed conversation, professional group, whatever).

The Inappropriate Other, surplus of vision, and coevalness, then, are all important ways of seeing aspects of a dialogic relationship, and essential for meaning-making between persons.

Appendix 20

Tacit knowing

In writing my practice of method, and in describing my way of seeing, I have set out to show the theoretical 'workings' of my practice, my constructs or my 'theories of action' (Schon, 1987: 255). Hence this collection of appendices.

As outlined by Schon (1987), I have wanted to go beyond the 'espoused theories that [I] use to explain or justify [my] behaviour'. I have wanted to write about my 'theories-in use implicit in [my] patterns of spontaneous [or not so spontaneous] behaviour with others'. Schon indicates, just as Ravenette (1977) has in writing about constructs, that it is not that simple, since theories in use are generally tacit and can defy description. Yet, I have wanted to articulate my tacit theories, with growing confidence that by doing this, and by connecting these theories, *my* theory can become *my* method.

There is a significant connection here, with Polanyi's (1969) discussion of 'tacit knowing'. In arguing that we always know more than we think we do, he is arguing for a zone of potential development or for Bakhtin's (1984) 'dotted lines':

> To hit upon a problem is the first step in any discovery and indeed to any creative act. To see a problem is to see something hidden that may yet be accessible. The knowledge of a problem is, therefore, like the knowing of unspecifiables, a knowing of more than you can tell. (131)

Incidentally, It seems to me that tacit knowledge, in itself, relies upon what Lakoff and Johnson (1999:10) describe as the 'cognitive unconscious'; a detailed discussion of this is beyond my present scope.

For Polanyi (1969: 138-145, italics in original) 'discovery' or 'scientific intuition' relies on tacit knowledge, and tacit knowledge comprises 'two kinds of awareness, *subsidiary awareness* and *focal awareness*' (144). We are more or less (usually less) aware of the parts of the whole: we see the whole without necessarily being aware of how we see the whole. (See note 63 in *Part One* and *Appendix 16*, on Gestalt psychology.) Thus, '...a scientific discovery reduces our

focal awareness of observations into a subsidiary awareness of them, by shifting our attention from them to their theoretical coherence' (140). Explicit knowledge (espoused theory) relies upon tacit knowledge since:

> ... explicit knowledge must rely on being tacitly understood and applied. Hence all knowledge is *either tacit* or *rooted in tacit knowledge.* A *wholly* explicit knowledge is unthinkable. (144)

For Polanyi (1969), then, there is always something that remains tacit. Knowing something, again, as it is is for Kelly (1955) and others, is 'personal knowing' (133) and we cannot always specify how we know. Further, as Polanyi proposes, in human science research, 'tacit knowledge is indispensable' (151). It is indispensable for much the same reasons that are identifiable with Bakhtin's (1986) account of actively responsive or creative understanding. And the similarities with Bakhtin continue, for Polanyi sets out an argument against the domain of psychology that Bakhtin argued against. To try and specify, code or categorize the tacit knowing of another is invidious:

> All tacit knowing requires the continued participation of the knower, and a measure of all personal participation is intrinsic therefore to all knowledge, but the continued participation of the knower becomes altogether predominant in a knowledge acquired and upheld by such deep indwelling.
>
> An attempt to de-personalize our knowledge of living beings would result, if strictly pursued, in an alienation that would render all observations on living things meaningless...
>
> ... *We experience a man or woman's mind as the joint meaning of his or her actions* by dwelling in his her actions from outside.
>
> Behaviourism tries to make psychology into an exact science. It professes to observe - i.e., *look* at pieces of mental behaviour and to relate those pieces explicitly. But such pieces can be identified only within that tacit integration of behaviour which behaviourists reject as unscientific.
>
> (Polanyi, 1969: 152, italics in original)

In other words, one of the significant implications of my practice of method is that I do not require the alibi in Being of following the explicit knowledge represented by a research method that does not appear to fit either the focus of my research or my way of seeing. Inevitably, some aspects of my method will be hard to describe: 'a wholly explicit knowledge is unthinkable'.

It seems to me, that this is why it can be sometimes problematic, as a reader, to follow the 'intuitive' leaps that appear in research accounts. It is not that the researcher is trying to obscure their making-meaning, more likely they have not seen the need to be explicit about their 'tacit knowing' and/or have found it difficult to describe in words how they have arrived at their 'explicit knowledge'.

Accepting the difficulties, then of articulating tacit knowing, and as I have emphasized, it has nevertheless been necessary for me to write about my way of seeing my making-meaning, so that can become *my* method.

Appendix 21

Ricoeur on meaning-making, with an additional perspective from phenomenological psychology

At the beginning of *Appendix 19* I took Emerson's (1997) reference to Bakhtin and Dilthey to make a connection, through Dilthey, to Ricoeur (1981) and his observation (as obvious as it seems) that writing and reading is not the same kind of dialogical situation as speaking and listening.

No matter how much I might wish it otherwise, the moment I move away from the conversation-interviews with my participants, transcribe those conversations and write about them, the dialogic relationship has ceased. Apart from the conversation that I have with myself whilst listening to the tapes, reading the transcripts and what I might imagine about the reader, there is no rejoinder. Further, as conventional as it might be, as discussed in my chapter on Writing, I have approached this writing not as a the production of a polyphonic novel but as a report of a research study. I am not, therefore, attempting to represent dialogic relationships as, say, a novelist might but I am attempting to retain an ethical responsibility towards my participants and their dialogic existences.

In confronting a text, we have two broad choices, suggests Ricoeur (1981: 152). We can either:

> ...remain in the suspense of the text, treating it as a wordless and authorless object; in this case we explain the text in terms of its internal relations, its structure. On the other hand, we can lift the suspense and fulfil the text in speech, restoring it to living communication; in this case we interpret the text.

In other words, and following Bakhtin, we can either treat a text as finalized and possessing an ultimate semantic authority (it explains and we listen) or as unfinalized and full of potential (it provides us with material from which we infer meaning(s)).

However, and as previously indicated, Ricoeur (1981) does not argue for a

dualistic either/or. He argues that explanation and interpretation form a recursive relationship since:

> To understand a text, is to follow its movement from sense to reference, from what it says, to what it talks about. (218)

In this, it is possible to recognize Bakhtin's stages of understanding. We need to recognize (explain, albeit intuitively to ourselves) what we are reading (or hearing) and then understand (interpret meaning in context). In discussing the differing interpretations that different readers may bring (or the same reader on different occasions), Ricoeur also hints at the 'active-dialogic' aspect of Bakhtin's process of understanding.

One of Ricoeur's (1981) purposes here, and not dealt with by Bakhtin, is to tackle this issue: if we can all read a text in different ways, does that mean that anything goes, that any reading or interpretation is as 'valid' as any other. In this respect, the movement is 'from understanding to explanation' (210). Ricoeur's discussion relies on work by Hirsch (1986), who suggested a dialectic between making guesses and validating guesses. I discuss Hirsch's work in *Chapter Twelve* on Validity.

As Ricoeur (1981) concludes, there is a limit to the ways in which we can construe a text and 'the logic of validation' (213) allows us to engage in a process of moving between what he terms 'dogmatism' and scepticism', what Kelly (1955) describes as tight and loose construing, and what Bakhtin had any number of terms for: finalizability-unfinalizability, centripetal-centrifugal, monologic-dialogic.

There are a few other aspects of Ricoeur's (1981) account that I want to highlight here in order to make additional connections with Bakhtin's work. First, as already indicated, Ricoeur emphasizes that in understanding, we respond to the whole of a text, not just to the letters, words and sentences that make up its surface features: a text is 'a cumulative, holistic process' (212). Second, Ricoeur uses the term 'plurivocity' about a text in much the same way, it seems to me, that Bakhtin uses 'polyphony', when:

> This plurivocity is typical of the text considered as a whole, open to several readings and several constructions. (212)

Third, Ricoeur, suggests that a full interpretation of a text relies on 'a kind of personal commitment' (220) in a way that is reminiscent of Bakhtin's construct of emotional volitional tone. For Ricoeur, personal commitment is a crucial element in preventing the 'hermeneutical circle' of explanation and understanding from becoming a 'vicious circle' (221). In other words, and yet again to make the point, we cannot avoid being involved in the process of meaning-making.

In interpreting a text, and as noted in *Chapter Eleven*, these four criteria become:

> (1) the fixation of the meaning, (2) its dissociation from the mental intention of the author, (3) the display of non-ostensive references, and (4) the universal range of its addressees.
>
> (Ricoeur, 1981: 210)

Titelman (1979) has considered these criteria from the perspective of phenomenological psychology. He points out that, as in my work, to study the content of interviews, their meaning must, of necessity, become fixed in the form of a tape recording or transcript. 'This process of fixation provides the possible basis of intersubjective agreement', between the researcher(s) and participants, and between the researcher(s) through the research account and any number of readers. It is finalization of a sort but a finalization, following through Ricoeur's four criteria, that is arguably essential to permit the possibility of unfinalizability.

As has been noted, a transcript implies a 'dissociation from the mental intention of the author' and interpretation is required, as Titelman (1979: 185) writes, 'not only because the protocols lack structured meaningfulness' for the research participant but also because the participant's 'intention...and the meaning...of the protocol no longer overlap' in that the interview relationship (possibly a dialogic relationship, in a Bakhtinian sense) between the researcher and participant changes. At some point, the researcher, as 'reader-interpreter' takes a greater responsibility for meaning-making than do the participants.

For the phenomenological psychologist, 'the display of non-ostensive references', implies an assumption that transcriptions are only meaningful when considered as a whole; they represent 'a world in the sense of expressing a network of internally interconnected and interdependent relations' (186). To put it another way, the spoken tape recorded and transcribed accounts of my participants, project a world that can only be fully understood as a whole, not through fragmenting their accounts into words or sentences in the manner of, for instance, some approaches to conversation analysis.

Titelman (1979) adds little to the fourth criterion, 'the universal range of [a text's] addressees', that I have not already mentioned elsewhere in terms of multiple-addressees and unfinalizability. Just as the transcripts that have been produced from the conversation-interviews in my work could, in theory (but not in practice, given confidentiality) be read by any number of readers, bringing their own interpretations, so can my writing about my research.

The remainder of Titelman's (1979) account deals with the role, and in particular, with the 'personal commitment' of the phenomenological psychologist as researcher 'actively and personally involved in the phenomenon' (187) being researched. Elsewhere, I have raised issues for me to do with bias and validity. Titelman adds another point. Rather than trying to 'bracket-out' this active and personal involvement (as more or less possible that would be, anyway), the researcher needs to find a way of using their understandings and experiences of what is being researched 'as a bridge or access for elucidating and interpreting the meaning of the phenomenon as it is presented both in my own [the researcher's] and others' experience' (188).

Appendix 22

Interview planning: *aide-memoire*, and guide

Kvale (1996) acted as a reference point for me throughout the procedural aspects of my research. I followed the seven stage investigatory process that he outlines (Kvale: 88, italics in original):

1. ***Thematizing*** - clarifying the purpose of my research; 'the why and what of the investigation'.

2. ***Designing*** - planning the research, 'with regard to obtaining the intended *knowledge* and taking into account the *moral* implications of the study'.

3. ***Interviewing*** - carrying out the conversation-interviews with 'an interview guide and with a reflective approach to the knowledge sought and the interpersonal' nature of the interview.

4. ***Transcribing*** - In my case, posting the tapes to the person who had agreed to transcribe them.

5. ***Analyzing*** - Deciding on how I would make-meaning of the interview accounts.

6. ***Verifying*** - Responding to matters of generalizability, reliability, validity as they apply to my research.

7. ***Reporting*** - Planning the writing and finding time to do it.

****

Aide-memoire

This is the series of prompts that I listed to help me remember what I needed to say to each participant. There is a copy of the format and interview guide in *Appendix 23*.

****

Interview Guide

As noted above, I followed Kvale (1996) for the procedural aspects of my research, including the interview guide. I have discussed elsewhere my approach to the interviews and the rationale behind terming them 'interview-conversations'. Here, I will outline the general intent that lay beneath each question and add a commentary, as appropriate, about what transpired when the question was asked. In this context, it seems more respectful to my 'participants' to refer to them as colleagues. To recall, my research was conducted with two broad purposes in mind, to explore:

1. **What experiences have led a person to becoming an educational psychologist**

2. **What has shaped a person's practice as an educational psychologist?**

The questions were as follows:

What is personally important to you about being an educational psychologist? This was intended to be a positive, opening inquiry that would sensitize my colleague in the conversation-interview to the process of reflecting upon their work and their Self. I had few expectations about what would emerge. Predictably, the response to this question frequently went in various directions, including, almost immediately, into areas of the work that were viewed as problematic. Since I was practising a conversation-interview, this did not matter.

If you consider your life, what experiences, events, and so on, were influential in your becoming an educational psychologist, although at the time you might not have known it? This was intended to invite my colleague to reflect more deeply upon their life experiences, to consider connections between the 'now' and the 'then', the role of their parents, and of other people in shaping their experiences. I was interested to see what I recognized, if anything, of my Self and my experiences in their account. I was interested in listening to any descriptions that indicated 'why' my colleague thought that they had become an educational

psychologist, where they had got the idea from, who had influenced their decisions and so on. For example, did it seem to be a vocation? I was interested in listening for parental expectations about schooling, higher education and careers; and the role of parents and others in co-creating zones of proximal development.

What people were particularly influential? This was intended as a follow-up, if necessary, to the previous question. Generally, I asked this amongst a range of other prompting questions to encourage my colleague to 'dig deeper'.

Of the experiences that you have talked about, what do you recognize in your work as an educational psychologist? The intention, here, was to highlight and/or further explore those experiences that my colleague saw as being influential in shaping their practice. I was especially interested in whether my colleague identified any connections with an intuitive or a growing awareness of the vulnerability of others or a particular sensitivity to the needs of others. As it turned out, in light of what a colleague had already said, I rarely needed to ask this question.

What do you find problematic about being an educational psychologist? and, as a follow- up, **How do you manage anything that is problematic?** This was partly intended to further the exploration of those experiences that might shape professional practice, through exploring those aspects of practice that might be viewed as constraining. I also wanted to explore my interest in what I take to be a limited critical stance in the profession of the profession, and whether my colleague would identify any broader sociopolitical issues as being problematic.

What surprises you when you look back at these experiences? This is a question that I use a lot in my own practice as an educational psychologist. It is derived from systemic epistemology (for example, see Burnham, 1986: 110-125) and is intended to be a 'surprising question', to provoke further reflection and. particularly, the creation of spontaneous connections amongst the things that have been said.

Is there anything that you would like to add or think that I should have asked you about? The intention of this question was a 'catch-all'. It was also a way of

providing a clear signal about the ending of the conversation-interview. Although the question often brought forward further descriptions, in the main, that description was an elaboration of previously made points, and so I have not discussed responses under a separate heading.

Appendix 23

Interview *aide-memoire* and guide

The first section comprises an *aide-memoire* of the things that I needed to say to each participant. The second section comprises my prompting questions. I had copies of this sheet with me for each conversation-interview.

****

Aide-memoire: **introduction to participants**

- aims of my research and reminder about the context (i.e., a research requirement; my recall of experiences, people, personal qualities that I now think were influential in my becoming an educational psychologist; narrative psychology)
- permission to tape
- the interviews will be transcribed and interpreted
- will send participants a copy of the transcript
- will respect confidentiality throughout
- aiming for an active, conversational style of interview and happy for the interviewee to shape it as they wish, although there are particular topic areas about which I wish to inquire
- any questions at this stage
- complete sheet for demographic information and career pathway

****

Interview guide

- what is personally important to you about being an educational psychologist?

- If you consider your life, what experiences, events, and so on, were influential in your becoming an educational psychologist, although at the time you might not have known it?

- What people were particularly influential?

- Of the experiences that you have talked about, what do you recognize in your work as an educational psychologist?

- What do you find problematic about being an educational psychologist?

- How do you manage anything that is problematic?

- What surprises you when you look back at these experiences?

- Is there anything that you would like to add or think that I should have asked you about?

Appendix 24

Bakhtin on biography and autobiography: metaphors for research

> Cultural and literary traditions (including the most ancient) are preserved and continue to live not in the individual subjective memory of a single individual and not in some kind of collective 'psyche,' but rather in the objective forms that culture itself assumes (including the forms of language and spoken speech), and in this sense they are inter-subjective and inter-individual (and consequently social); from there they enter literary works, sometimes completely bypassing the subjective individual memory of their creators.
>
> Bakhtin (1981: 249fn17)

Although Bakhtin (1986: 159) provides a series of notes 'toward a methodology for the human sciences', in my view, and as a resource for my particular research interests in the practice of a sociocultural, narrative psychology, it is possible to look elsewhere in his work.

To follow the 'life as authoring approach' (for example, Kozulin, 1998: 136) is to follow Bakhtin's view of the novel as representative of life. One important consequence of this, for me, is that before psychology existed as a discipline (a formal attempt to represent an understanding of human behaviour) creative writers were fulfilling this function in their attempts to represent psychology. So, in literature, how was the person and their development understood? How were their lives and the events in their lives represented? And what might be the implications for the research process?

In *Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,* and in the context of developing a 'historical poetics', Bakhtin (1981) considers these issues. He deals, in a much condensed form, with the same issues in *The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism,* (in Bakhtin, 1986) which Morson and Emerson (1990) suggest should be read as another chapter to *Forms of Time*. He traces the development of the novel from ancient times to Rabelais. In Bakhtin's discussion of the origins of the novel in its ancient forms, there is an immediate implication for my research. The notion of historical poetics is central, here.

Holquist (1990: 108) discusses a definition of historical poetics and the apparent contradiction inherent in the term, a contradiction he suggest that Bakhtin endeavoured to surmount through his use of the construct *chronotope* ('literally *time space*' Bakhtin, 1981: 85).

Vice (1997: 202) indicates that a chronotope operates on three levels: how history is represented in a text; how space and time is represented and related in the writing; and as a means of considering the 'formal properties of the text itself' To put it in words more relevant to sociocultural research, it is an approach to analysing in a person's life the relationship between the events of their life (their coming into being as a person) and space and time (see Morson and Emerson: 366-374 for an elaboration). In this sense, it is recognizably an invitation to consider a person's experiences against multiple layers of context, and recognizable as the approach that, for example, Erben (1998) advocates.

Bakhtin (1981: 250-251) puts it most powerfully, himself, it seems to me, in suggesting that chronotopes are:

> ... the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel. The chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative....the chronotope makes narrative events concrete, makes them take on flesh, causes blood to flow in their veins. An event can become communicated, it becomes information, one can give precise data on the place and time of its occurrence... any and every literary image is chronotopic. Language, as a treasure-house of images, is fundamentally chronotopic.

So far as historical poetics is concerned, in essence, as Vice (1997: 201) points out, Bakhtin's interest, here, is in describing a means for considering the relationship of a text to its social, political, historical and cultural context. How is that certain 'aesthetic forms, including conceptions of human subjectivity, come about at certain times...'? As such, it seems to me that in his account of different forms of the novel, Bakhtin provides a series of metaphors by which to view different approaches to research with people and, especially, metaphors for seeing what suppositions have been made by a researcher about a person, about that person's

experiences, about the context of those experiences in time and space, how that person and their experiences are written about.

Novel metaphors for the research process

From the outset, it is possible to draw the most general of distinctions in seeing how research represents a person. It is the distinction Bakhtin (1986) makes between novels that 'know only the image of the *ready-made* hero ' (20) and 'the novel of human *emergence*' (21, italics in original). This contains the distinction that I elaborate elsewhere, between the person represented as 'finalized', a closed system (to borrow from systemic theory/practice), and the person represented as 'unfinalized', or an open system. In this distinction, the researcher, then, either acts as an 'ultimate semantic authority' representing a static, monological world in which their voice predominates or acts to represent an open, dialogic world in which their voice is one in a polyphony of voices. That said, I will now follow Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) account of the history of the novel, drawing out the implications for the research process. In this, a detailed discussion of historical poetics or chronotopes is beyond the scope of my work.

Research as a Greek adventure novel

Bakhtin (1981) identifies three types of ancient novel, the first of which is the Greek romance or novel of adventure. It seems to me that the research process and especially the Self that is represented in research, is not like such a novel. In Bakhtin's description, the features of the Greek adventure novel are characterized by 'an *abstract-alien* world' (101, italics in original). Persons are cut off from any sociocultural historical context and chance is a key feature of their lives. Decisions about action are not based on a person's initiative and any action that takes place leaves a person unchanged. Thus, (chance occurrence) A leads to B and what happens between A and B does not change people. [ie, as in traditional experimental research in psychology, in which the research process is somehow assumed to leave the participants unmarked]

Life, according to Greek adventure time is a series of experiences, and it is irrelevant where they take place. Biography is the central organising principle for time but, according to Bakhtin (1981; 108), it is the biography of an entirely

public person, a finalised person who, as above, is disconnected from their context:

> He or she does not feel him or herself to be part of the social whole. He or she is a solitary [person], lost in an alien world. And he or she has no mission in this world.

Research as an adventure novel of everyday life

Nor, it seems to me, is the research process like an 'adventure novel of everyday life' (Bakhtin, 1981: 111). Such a novel, as Bakhtin describes it, has two special prerequisites: events take place against context of metamorphosis, and the course of life corresponds to an actual course of travel (that is, the chronotope of the road: life is a path along which we travel, having adventures). The adventures are not the common, everyday events of life but the critical moments, the extraordinary. Time in such a novel is segmented into episodes, with no sense of unity. Clearly, this could be a pitfall in making-meaning of my conversation-interviews, where through describing themes it would be possible to present 'The everyday world [of my participants as] scattered, fragmented, deprived of essential connections' (128).

In such a novel:

> Metamorphosis or transformation is a mythological sheath for the idea of development. (Bakhtin, 1981: 113)

A person comprises the important moments/crises of their life in a cycle of crisis/rebirth but that person does not develop. Chance and initiatives are limited by the boundaries set out by the novel (or research project) but the initial and final links of the adventure sequence are not determined by chance. They are determined by the 'hero' and nature of his or her personality. This is different from Greek adventure time in that the person and his or her fate is changed by the chain of events. However, although the entire sequence of events is grounded in individual responsibility, as in the Greek adventure novel, the person is private and isolated. A person does not shape their environment; actions are not initiated by a person but occur as a response to

mistakes, crises, and so on: 'no traces are left in the surrounding world' (119).

Once again, from a research perspective, it is if the researcher extracts the person from their life and discounts the influence of life events:

> Life is...spread out along the edge of the road itself, and along the side roads. The main protagonist and the major turning points of his or her life are to be found outside everyday life. He or she merely observes this life, meddles in it now and then as an alien force; he or she occasionally even dons a common and everyday mask but in essence he or she does not participate in this life and is not determined by it.
>
> Bakhtin (1981: 120-121)

Research as ancient biography and autobiography

Generally, the two types of ancient novel described so far can be seen as metaphors for positivist research and any research account which effectively objectifies a person. Of particular relevance for sociocultural research and, therefore, my research is Bakhtin's description of the third type of ancient novel: biography and autobiography although, as he points out, they are 'forms' rather than novels as we would understand the term.

A significant theme for Bakhtin is a sense of the development of Self. That process of a person's 'becoming' ('the image of *a person in the process of becoming* in the novel', Bakhtin, 1986:19) and, therefore, through writing, the access we have to a person's interior world: to their inner thoughts and feelings. Although I have discussed 'unfinalizability' in detail in *Chapters Seven* and *Eight*, I see it as helpful in understanding Bakhtin to provide, at this point, a brief elaboration of what he means by 'becoming':

> For there to be a real sense of becoming, according to Bakhtin, the future, and especially the immediate or near future in which we concretely act, must be seen as significant, valuable, and open to change. As in *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, Bakhtin wants to represent the world as one in which the actions that each of us undertakes actually count. Indeed, ethical responsibility, no less than creativity, is thoroughly impoverished

unless the future is viewed in this way.

Morson and Emerson (1990: 397)

Hirschkop (1999: 1978) echoes the point:

> For the hero of the modern chronotope life becomes meaningful in the only manner possible, as a continually revised estimation of the future and its possibilities.

The future is not all, of course, and just as significant a theme for Bakhtin is history, the role of historical time, and how past-present-future connect. Bakhtin (1986: 26) proposes that the eighteenth century saw a recognition of a *'...sense of time*, above all a sense of time in nature and human life', and that this was a precursor to a sense of 'historical perspectives'.

In Bakhtin's (1986: 26) view: '...this process of preparing for the disclosure of historical time took place more rapidly, completely, and profoundly in literary creativity than in the abstract philosophical and strictly historical and ideological views of Enlightenment thinkers.'

Morson and Emerson (1990: 405), suggest that for Bakhtin, 'becoming' requires three components, which I interpret as being characteristic of a sociocultural psychology.

First, a belief consistent with the Vygotskian construct of zone of proximal development. I discuss this in *Chapter Eight* and *Appendix 16* but in summary, individuals have the potential to continuously learn and develop; it is not a matter of being born with a fixed potential (be it identity or whatever) that is merely revealed in time. Thus, the *future* is one of potentialities, it is 'unfinalizable'.

Second, history goes through a similar process of becoming: past, present, and future are governed by 'continuity and creativity' (Morson and Emerson, 1990: 405). Change is not simply random nor is it predetermined, simply waiting to be happen in the manner of a prophecy.

Third, the first two components interact and are mutually dependent.

Individual development relies (although not entirely, since clearly genetic endowment does play a part) on that individual's sociocultural inheritance. In turn, individuals are always shaping their history. Although we might say that someone is 'of their time', it is not strictly accurate, since we all '...retain the capacity to surprise, and that sort of surprise is, indeed, what ultimately produces historical change' (Morson and Emerson, 1990: 406).

As Bakhtin (1981) traces it, the development of biographical and autobiographical writing concern the development of a person's private consciousness from an entirely public consciousness. It concerns the development from a biography or autobiography of a fully formed person ('the stable essence of an already completed character': 140) to that of ' a personal and detached human being - "the man or woman who exists for him or herself"...' (135) who is never complete but always 'becoming'. Early biographical writing did not conceive of an internal being. 'For the Classical Greek, every aspect of existence could be *seen* and *heard*' (134, italics in original). There was no sense of a private person. Bakhtin suggests that for Plato, even inner thought (inner language) did not imply 'any special relationship to one's self' (134). The biographical and autobiographical were synonymous and 'necessarily public' (136).

Bakhtin points out (1986: 17) and it is important to recall, that the biographical novel (as we would understand it now) did not exist in a 'pure form'. Rather, it was the use of 'the biographical (autobiographical) principle for shaping the novel's hero and certain aspects of the novel' that characterises Bakhtin's analysis.

In Bakhtin's (1981) account, there were two biographical forms in ancient Greece. One was built upon 'the chronotope of "the life course of one seeking true knowledge"' (130) and the image of the 'seeker's path'.

The second form, and the origins of autobiography, lie in the 'biographical schemes developed for the encomium' (137), the public declaration of a life as a series of achievements typical of the role held by that person.

The Roman version of biography introduced some notion of the importance of context and sociocultural mediation, in that it was orientated towards the passing

of the traditions of a family or clan from parent to child, so providing a 'link between deceased ancestors and descendants not yet entered public life' (138). However, the focus remains one of 'public life'.

In Bakhtin's (1981) description, the role of omens in structuring Roman biography serves to inextricably link a person with the state. If the omens were good for the state then, by definition they were for the person but this was not seen as a reciprocal process (in the way in which it is now, for example, the 'feel good factor' that politicians rely upon). There was no sense of 'personal or private luck' (139).

In Greek and Roman writing, Bakhtin (1981) notes the emergence of a form of representation consisting, effectively, of a listing of a person's works and achievements. Such a listing is less public, but only in that it is usually intended for a specific audience. It seems to me that Vico's (1944) autobiography is a good example, as is Bruner's (1983) and, in general, what is recognised today as the 'celebrity' autobiography.

This form of representation can also be recognized in the 'analytic' model of structuring ancient biography. Bakhtin (1981) suggests that there were two such models. The 'analytic type' (142) is a 'scheme with well-defined rubrics, beneath which all biographical material is distributed: social life, family life, conduct in war, relationships with friends...'. Selection of 'facts' or themes takes place, as in any research writing, leading to a biography, effectively of the person's role (one or more of them) in life, as Vico (1944), Bruner (1983), a celebrity, a politician, an educational psychologist. It is possible to learn a lot about a person's role and their public achievements but little about what that person is like in day to day life. For example, in reading Vico or Bruner, it is possible to get to the end of their books with little sense of the person behind the role: what made or makes them happy or sad, what was the nature of their personal relationships but then such writing is not intended to be 'confessional', in the way in which, say, is the intention of Lott (1997). Nor is my research intended to be confessional. Whilst personal experiences are clearly the major focus, and whilst my meaning-making sets out to respect a person's integrity, it does not set out to reveal a person.

The second model of structuring biographical writing is the 'energetic type'

(Bakhtin, 1981: 140), in which 'the essence' of a person 'is realised not by his or her condition, but by his or her activity (or) active force ["energy"]'. In this model, a person does not exist apart from their 'energy'. Their actions characterize them but, again, there is no reciprocal relationship: people are not influenced or changed by what they do.

Bakhtin (1981: 143) indicates that there were autobiographical and biographical forms in which 'private self-consciousness was beginning to force its way through'. Although there was still a clearly 'public consciousness', there was a shift in emphasis to events which might have little consequence for the state or society but which had significance for the person in their own life.

He describes three such forms. First, a 'satirico-ironic or humorous treatment', in which personal and private matters were rendered less personal and private by being wrapped, say, in irony. Second, the use of what he terms 'drawing room rhetoric' and the 'familiar letter'. Here, a third party is allowed access to some of the personal and private events of someone's life. In contrast, the third form, a 'stoic type of autobiography', allows for no third party. We understand this as the soliloquy in which, as Bakhtin notes, there is also room to 'struggle with "another's" point of view' (Bakhtin, 1981: 145).

Thus far

As reviewed, so far, different types of novel (forms of writing), in their different representations of the person and the development of Self, can be seen as representing different metaphors for the research process. My argument is that, although it might be tempting to follow, as some research methods do, the metaphors provided by the Greek adventure novel (the novel of ordeal); the adventure novel of everyday life (the travel novel) and ancient biography and autobiography (the biographical novel), they are inadequate, precisely because of their chronotopic qualities and their depiction of individual development. To continue with Bakhtin's schema, the research process that seems to offer most to sociocultural, narrative research and, therefore, my own, resembles more closely a 'novel of human *emergence*' (Bakhtin, 1986: 21, italics in original).

Research as a novel of emergence

In *The Bildungsroman,* Bakhtin (1986) describes five, related 'novels of emergence'. He categorises them, largely according to 'the degree of assimilation (into a person) of real historical time' (21). The first uses the chronotope of the idyll, in which the concept of cyclical time is represented. A person develops through the events of their life cycle. All individuals experience a similar life cycle, wherever and whenever they happen to live and in this sense, the time is the time of the cycle.

The second is the *Bildungsroman,* or novel of education, in which 'the world and life' is depicted 'as *experience,* as a *school,* through which every person must pass and derive one and the same result: the Self becomes more sober, experiencing some degree of resignation' (22). Again, historical time is not a significant determinant.

The third type moves away from notions of cycles in a person's development. Development takes place in 'biographical time' (rather than historical time), as a consequence of circumstances: destiny and development are inextricably linked. Bakhtin sees Dickens' *David Copperfield* as an example.

The fourth, is the 'didactic-pedagogical novel'. As Bakhtin (1986: 22) describes it, its basis is 'a specific pedagogical ideal' and the essence of it seems to be the guiding of an individual's development by another, following a set of pedagogical principles. Bakhtin cites Rousseau's *Emile* as an example, and I am reminded of *Vanity Fair.* As with the other four types of novel, this type also assumes a 'steady state' world: nothing is changing in the context of a person's development. What the world effectively asks of a person is that they fit in and get on.

The final type of novel of emergence is most significant in Bakhtin's (1986) view, as it is for me, in representing a break with a static world. It is the 'realistic novel of emergence' (24), in which a person's 'individual emergence is inseparably linked to historical emergence' (23). Such a novel combines the three essential components of a person's 'becoming' (from Emerson and Morson, and noted above): as a person 'emerges *along with the world* and...reflects the historical

emergence of the world itself' (23).

> Understandably, in such a novel of emergence, problems of reality and man or woman's potential, problems of freedom and necessity, and the problem of creative initiative rise to their full height. The image of the emerging man or woman begins to surmount its private nature (within certain limits of course) and enters into a completely new spatial sphere of historical existence.
>
> Bakhtin (1986: 24)

In other words, a person is shaped by their sociocultural history and in turn they shape their social and cultural world, not least as they come to mediate it to others. In particular, how the time and space of a person's experiences is represented is clearly a challenge in any research dealing with lived experience. Again, I have referred to the issues elsewhere, for example, in *Chapter Ten*, in drawing upon Fabian (1983). Here, though, in drawing upon Bakhtin, I see him as providing a complementary and supplementary view to those research methods that emphasise context, with Erben (1998) standing as a clear example.

Bakhtin (1981,1986) takes Goethe and Rabelais as supreme examples of a novelist's ability to visualise historical time. I will lead into a summary of what Bakhtin writes about Goethe and Rabelais by returning to the three types of ancient novel he outlined and how space and time is treated.

Representing time and space in a person's life

As implied earlier, for Bakhtin (1981), time in the Greek romance or adventure novel is fixed by two points (for example, a passion finally ending in marriage). In the normal flow of events adventures suddenly occur. Not that everyday, 'real' time is represented since time is measured by the length of a particular incident. Further, there is no necessary sequence to incidents. Being attacked by wolves (failing an exam) is not predicated upon being rescued from a ship wreck (getting divorced). In this way, Bakhtin suggests that time fulfils a purely technical purpose. In this time, individuals do not age nor do they develop as individuals. They get from A to B and the route has been immaterial.
Space, too, is technical in that it is of no significance where the extraordinary

events take place.

In the adventure novel of everyday life (the forerunner of the 'road movie' or novel) there is also a focus on extraordinary events. However, there is a marked contrast with the depiction of time in a Greek romance. In the adventure novel, temporal sequence is important because it makes a difference to a person's life. '...[T]ime is not merely technical, not a mere distribution of days, hours, moments that are reversible, transposable, unlimited internally, along a straight line; here the temporal sequence is an integrated and irreversible whole' (Bakhtin, 1981: 119). Time, therefore, does make a difference to a person but, all the same, the world the person inhabits remains unchanged since, for all purposes, the person is the hapless victim of events. They play no role in determining what happens, when or how. Thus the events make no difference to a person's context.

Even though there is this real sense of non-participation in life, the use of space changes with the 'adventure novel of everyday life'. It '...becomes more concrete and saturated with a time that is more substantial: space is filled with real, living meaning, and forms a crucial relationship with the hero and his or her fate' (Bakhtin, 1981: 120).

Thus, the person gets from A to B; the route has been important to that person but the person has not been active in creating or influencing that route.

In the ancient form of autobiography and biography, time and space is significant in revealing a person's character. That character, however, was never in any doubt. There is no concept of personal growth and becoming, rather it is a process of 'filling in' a picture already drawn in outline. For example, it as if the child is a ready-made, miniature version of the adult they are destined to become.

In the 'energetic' type of biographical writing, the time and location of events is not reversible since the events have been determined by history. However, so far as the person's character is concerned, time can be reversible. Because character is 'filled in', because there is never any doubt about the finished person (she or he was always meant to be an educational psychologist) there is not a necessary

order or cumulative impact of experiences. Effectively, again, history determines the person but there is no reciprocal relationship between a person and their history.

In the 'analytic' type of biographical writing, with its 'well-defined rubrics', time is of no significance. Similarly, the order of life events makes no difference.

So, in biographical writing, the route from A to B is clearly important, as are the incidents along that route. Getting from A to B is never in any doubt, though, it is a well-established route, even if it might be the most circuitous.

From the perspective of my research, it might have been tempting to consider a person's entry into teaching or educational psychology practice as a vocation, where that implies it was that person's destiny. Indeed, it has been tempting for me to see myself as having been destined to enter the profession because I followed a relatively ordered sequence of events. However, I was not born to become an educational psychologist, it was not part of any family tradition, and I was not allocated the job by someone else. Some parts in the sequence of events were not reversible (I could not work as an educational psychologist without teaching). But, as my research shows, in addition to what I know from personal experience, the sequence of events and their timing can be very different for different people. What is required, then, is a different understanding of space and time than that provided by the type of biographical writing that Bakhtin (1981) highlights, or the adventure novels.

As already noted, a different concept of time and space is a significant marker for Bakhtin (1986) of the novels of emergence. In the idyllic novel and a version of the *Bildungsroman*, the development of someone's life is cyclical. The 'becoming' of a person *depends* upon the passing of time. To explore this further, I will summarize Bakhtin's use of Goethe and Rabelais.

Goethe's representation of time and space

Bakhtin (1986: 26) saw Goethe as providing a landmark in world literature in being able to visualise historical time. (Incidentally, it is interesting that Bakhtin appears to have seen Goethe as another transdisciplinary thinker, in that Goethe

as a creative writer, could function as a researcher with research interests unconfined by the narrow boundaries of academic disciplines. For example: 'Goethe's heroic struggle to introduce the ideas of emergence and development into natural sciences is generally well known' 28.)

Bakhtin (1986: 27) argues that Goethe saw language as having a very direct correspondence with vision, so much so that 'Goethe was averse to words that were not backed up by any actual *visible* experience'. (It seems to me ironic that this effectively became a mantra of behavioural psychologists.) This is part way in Bakhtin's argument that Goethe's way of seeing things (and thus describing them) was quite different from most writers before him.

> Everywhere, whatever served as and appeared to be a stable and immutable background for all movements and changes became for Goethe a part of emergence, saturated through and through with time, and emergence took on a more essential and creative mobility than ever.
>
> Bakhtin (1986: 30)

Goethe's visual awareness spanned his whole visual world; he was as acutely aware of the passing of time in nature (such as the growth of trees), as he was of 'all visible signs of time in human life - from everyday time that is measured by the sun and the ordinary sequence of man or woman's day, to the time of the whole human life - ages and epochs of man or woman's emergence' (Bakhtin, 1986: 31).

Goethe achieves what Bakhtin (1986) calls a *'fullness of time'* (34, italics in original throughout this paragraph). He does this by rejecting the romantic ideal of an unchanged past cut adrift from the present and future. Goethe saw the continuity of the past *'in the unbroken line of historical development'* (33) but more than this, he saw the past as being *'creative'* (34), as having an influence on the present. 'Fullness of time', then is that sociocultural connectivity between past-present-future: '...a creatively effective past, determining the present, produces in conjunction with the present a particular direction for the future, and to a certain degree, predetermines the future' (34).

Given Bakhtin's concept of unfinalizability, the 'to a certain degree' is a necessary

qualification, as Morson and Emerson (1990: 415) point out, to emphasise human agency in the 'fullness of time'. For Goethe, suggests Bakhtin (1986), the significance a place, a space, a 'locality', requires people that are in creative and transformational interaction with that place. And this creativity is very active.

As Morson and Emerson (1990: 414) note:

> Creativity is always real, is always going on, and so cannot be understood as sudden, mysterious eruptions from nowhere. On the contrary, creativity is always a response to problems that are posed in particular circumstances at a particular time....creativity is rooted in the real actions of real people, who use the resources provided by the past, which is to say, of earlier creativity.

To remain with Morson and Emerson (1990), they distinguish between Dostoevsky's use of time and space, generally 'the cross section of a single moment' (418) in a confined space, for example, the claustrophobia of *Notes from Underground,* and Goethe's visual sense of time. They suggest that whilst Bakhtin viewed Dostoevsky as the model 'dialogist', Goethe was 'the model for prosaics' (419). In Dostoevsky, dialogue can lead virtually anywhere and, certainly, to unfinalizability. Unfinalizability, in Goethe, arrives through a different route; it is '...prosaic; bounded by constraints as well as endowed with potentials, people change through the slow process of accumulated small decisions' (419).

And Goethe's vision, as Morson and Emerson (1990: 419) suggest Bakhtin might have written:

> For nothing absolutely conclusive has yet taken place in the world, a penultimate word of the world and about the world is always being prepared and always slowly changing, the world is more or less open and free within limits, everything comes from the past and is reworked in the present as we live into an open future.

It seems to me that, at this stage, the implications for my research are clear. My participants, as all people, have lived and continue to live within constraints. In

the main, they events that they describe are not dramatic epiphanies. They are relatively prosaic events with a history, more or less described to me through the course of the conversation-interviews. Above all, they are events in which a person has participated in an active, creative way, rather than being a victim of circumstance.

Rabelais' representation of time and space

Here, I am going to return to Bakhtin (1981) and establish some of the background to his reference to Rabelais. Bakhtin continues his account of novelistic forms by taking the 'Chivalric romance' as typical of novels of the Middle Ages. He suggests that such novels are different from the Greek romance because of the concept of the the 'heroic deed'. Chivalric romances are typified by the chronotope of 'the miraculous world in adventure time'. Heroes 'plunge headlong into adventures as if they were (their) native element' (152) in a world which has become 'miraculous': 'the unexpected is the expected' (152). In this world, the hero and the miraculous world are synonymous and time is fragmented into adventures. As in other early novels, time is abstract and technical, and the connection between time and space is also technical, 'the world is strung out along a vertical axis'. It is as if everything takes place within a single time, 'the entire world is simultaneous' (157). It reminds me of watching films where the time doesn't quite add up, as if everything is happening at the same time. The only way that some of aspects of the plot of a film work is because of this. For example, we watch the police driving to the bank, where the criminals are still looting the vaults and it doesn't seem possible that the police could be taking so long. This representation of events, time, and space, is clearly different from the 'real' life of my participants.

At the same time as 'high literature in the Middle Ages' (Bakhtin, 1981: 158), folk lore was showing evidence of satire and parody, particularly with the introduction of three characters: the rogue, the clown and the fool.

There is a change of emphasis, here, in Bakhtin's (1981) account. He introduces the 'general problem of personal authorship' (160). One significance of the roles of rogue, clown and fool, was that it allowed an author to position him or herself through the use of a 'mask' in the novel, and it also allowed the author to

express a point of view.

I have an immediate purpose in citing this part of Bakhtin's (1981) argument, since I want to relate it to the difference between between writing an account of research and writing a novel and the relative role of the researcher and the novelist in writing. Bakhtin suggests that for most forms of writing, apart from the novel:

> the point of view necessary to the shaping of the material is immanent in the very genre. Within the genre of the novel, there is no such immanent position for the author....The novelist stands in need of some essential formal and generic mask that could serve to define the position from which he views life, as well as the position from which he makes that life public. (161)

What my practice of method requires, as many approaches to writing about research, is that my point of view is as open as possible to scrutiny, that it is not just left as 'immanent in the very genre'.

The roles of rogue clown and fool (and other developments in the novel) prepared the way 'for an utterly new way of seeing and of portraying time in the novel' (Bakhtin, 1981: 166). Bakhtin takes Rabelais as an exemplar of this development (as he was to take Dostoevsky of other developments). He describes the way in which Rabelais is able to connect everything that a person does to both space and time in their world, and terms this the 'Rabelaisian Chronotope' (167). Rabelais shows evidence of a sociocultural perspective: the development of a person is inextricably linked to the development of culture.

> Rabelais connects the growth of generations with with the growth of culture, and with the growth of historical development and mankind as well. (204)

In Bakhtin's (1981) view, in a declining medieval world view, Rabelais represented the world in an entirely different way. Rather than time being a force in which only the predestined was revealed and nothing new is created, for instance:

> A new chronotope was needed that would permit one to link real life (history) to the real earth. It was necessary to oppose to eschatology a creative and generative time, a time measured by creative acts, by growth and not by destruction. The fundamentals of this 'creating' time were present in the images and motifs of folklore. (206)

Bakhtin (1981) outlines the origins of Rabelais' world view, in large part locating it in the use of 'idyllic chronotopes' (224).

For Bakhtin (1981), the '"creating" time' of Rabelais has its basis in pre-industrial folklore, the folklore of the countryside and the agricultural 'collective' (or tight knit village community). In such a community, human life and nature is viewed as synonymous: the 'seasons' of a person's life were categorically similar to the seasons of nature. 'Time here is sunk deeply into the earth, implanted in it and ripening in it' (208). In this time, as in other ancient times, there was no sense of private life. The community is just that - people sharing common events in their travails against nature. Additionally, there was no growth in the sense of a 'becoming': the cycles by which time moves forwards are simply repeated (the tasks of one autumn are carried out, in essence unchanged, the following autumn). The individual is governed by their external world and individual development virtually suffocated in the little village.

This 'collective conscious' begins to fragment with the advent of 'slaveholding society' and 'feudal society'. (Bakhtin, 1981: 214) (It is possible to make a connection here with Marx and Engel's, 1974: 43, 'stages of development in the division of labour.' As with other tantalizing connections, pursuing this particular connection is also outside the scope of my work here.) And, as Bakhtin notes:

> The course of individual lives, of groups, and of the sociopolitical whole do not fuse together, they are dispersed, there are gaps; they are measured by different scales of value; each of these series has its own logic of development, its own narratives, each makes use of and reinterprets the ancient motifs in its own way. Within the boundaries of individual life-series, an *interior aspect* makes itself apparent. The process of separating out and detaching individual life-sequences from the whole reaches its

> highest point when financial relations develop in slaveholding societies and under capitalism. Here the individual sequence takes on its specific private character and what is held in common becomes maximally abstract. (214-215, italics in original)

Just as 'individual life-sequences' were developing in the novel, so was a separate and parallel historical time sequence with different events and different narratives, irrespective of the impact upon individuals. In effect this represented life in general (rather than the life of a particular individual): people in general, the state, the nation and so on.

In the eighteenth century, according to Bakhtin (1981), the 'idyllic chronotope' emerged, in large measure as a response to a growing awareness amongst writers that time could mean different things, that rural time, city time and historical time were not necessarily the same. (This a theme that endures today it seems to me, as people opt for a 'quality of life' move from the city to the slower pace of the countryside.)

Bakhtin (1981) identifies a number of 'pure' idylls: idylls variously concerning love, agricultural labour, craft work, and the family. Different idylls share three distinctive features, however. First, they occur in a 'spatially limited world' (225), for example, a particular little village (such as the Ambridge of the BBC Radio 4 series, *The Archers*), where the continuity of the village determines the continuity of families. Second, idylls are restricted to the basic life cycle features of people: birth, growing up, falling in love, work, marriage, divorce, death and so on. There is no place for the trivial or prosaic aspects of life. Third, a common, albeit metaphorical, language is used to describe the features of a person's life and nature: planting/conception, growth, child rearing, harvesting and so on.

I am struck by Bakhtin's (1981: 232) description of the 'family novel' and what I recognise in it of how the narrative of my life and that of my participants has been shaped. Such a novel breaks with the idyll of the 'spatially limited world' (although that world might continue to exist, as in the village in which a person grew up and where their parents might continue to live). The leading participant of the family novel leaves the little village and sets off through life, experiencing the range and randomness of life's events, before 'settling down',

and recreating the little village: a partner, a job, a home, possessions, a family, a network of friends:

> This narrow and reduced idyllic little world is the red thread running through the novel as well as its resolving chord. (323)

Towards the end of the eighteenth and into the first half of the nineteenth century, a fundamental theme in the family novel became the breakdown of the idyll as a key theme. In Bakhtin's (1981) description, it corresponds with the acceleration of industrialisation, mobility, and capitalism, with accompanying themes of personal dislocation from one's community of origin (and, again, Marx and Engels, 1974, could supplement this account, although Bakhtin looks to Hegel). Somehow a person has to make sense of a world in which there are fewer points of reference, fewer certainties; the idyll of the little village community with a place for life has gone:

> In Hegel's definition, the novel must educate man or woman for life in bourgeois society. This educative process is connected with the severing of all previous ties with the idyllic, that is, it has to do with man or woman's expatriation. Here the process of a man or woman's re-education is interwoven with the process of society's breakdown and reconstruction, that is, with historical process. (234)

In returning to Rabelais, Bakhtin (1981) suggests that in his use of 'laughter', Rabelais employs a significant device for challenging established forms (of society, culture, the novel, life, views of people, in fact, 'all historical limits', 240); for laughing it out of existence, to paraphrase Bakhtin. This is relevant for my work in that although the people of Rabelais' novels are not depicted as having an interior world (we do not know what a character is thinking), they are not depicted as being governed by some unalterable social, cultural, historical force (as in adventure novels, idylls, family novels, positivist research, and so on):

> Therefore, the task of assuming a complete personality is conceived in Rabelais as the growth of a new man or woman combined with the growth of a new historical era, in a world that knows a new history but that is also connected with the death of the old man or woman and the old world...

> These new realities are purged through laughter, taken out of the high contexts that had disunited them, distorted their nature, and are brought into the real context (the real plane) of a freely developing human life. These realities are present in a world of freely realized human possibilities. There is nothing to limit this potential. This is the most fundamental distinguishing feature of Rabelais' work. All historical limits are, as it were, destroyed and swept away by laughter. The field remains open to human nature, to a free unfolding of all the possibilities inherent in man or woman. (240)

As for the characters (the participants) in Rabelais' work, the 'great' men or women are 'great not in his or her differences *vis-a-vis* other men or women but in his or her humanity; he or she is great in the fullness of his or her development and in his or her realization of all human potentialities. As such, he or she is great in the space and time of the actual world, where interior is not opposed to exterior...' (Bakhtin, 1981: 242). As Bakhtin says, Rabelais did not conceive of human potential and growth from a restricted biological sense but as part of the spatial temporal world envisaged by the Renaissance: ultimately, 'the whole universe illuminated by astronomy' (242).

Before summarizing this appendix, I will continue to follow Bakhtin (1981), and note some of the points from his conclusions that seem particularly relevant.

More on chronotopes

As cited at the beginning of this appendix, 'any and every literary image is chronotopic', hence, for Bakhtin, art and literature are 'shot through with *chronotopic values*' (243, italics in original). For example, in the chronotope of the encounter (the adventure novel), time is more significant than space. There is also a high intensity of emotions and values. In the chronotope of the road, emotions and values are less intense but time and space 'fuse'. The time and space of the encounter is important: the lives of people intersect at a point 'on the road' which, itself, acts as a new beginning. The chronotope of the road is particularly useful, Bakhtin suggests, for depicting events that are determined by chance (243). In the novels that Bakhtin surveys, the road always passes through 'familiar territory, and not through some exotic alien world... it is the

sociohistorical heterogeneity of one's own country that is revealed and depicted' (245).

It is possible, here, to readily recognize this chronotope both as a synonym for that metaphor, 'the journey through life', and as a tempting metaphor for describing the accounts of my participants. It is a temptation that I see as being important to resist, not least because of the implications that the events in a person's life always happen by chance and because the phrase is forever linked, positively, for me, with Kerouac (1972).

Of course, not everything happens 'on the road'. It can happen in factories, offices, shops, and houses. In the novels of Stendahl and Balzac, Bakhtin (1981) identifies the chronotope, not of the road but of its urban and suburban equivalent: the 'parlors and salons'. Meetings tend not to happen by chance, as on the road. The parlor or salon provides the space '...where *dialogues* happen...revealing the character, "ideas" and "passions" of the heroes'. (246, italics in original) Of importance, according to Bakhtin, what happens in these novels is that history (sociocultural history) interacts with people going about their lives. We learn about history, society, culture, politics as people meet to talk. We learn about it, however, by becoming a 'spy' and by eavesdropping. 'The literature of private life is essentially a literature of snooping about, of overhearing "how others live"' (123).

Bakhtin (1981) also points to the chronotope of the 'threshold' (which he suggests can be combined with the chronotope of the encounter). This chronotope is characterized by a high intensity of emotion and value and by 'crisis' and 'break', by epiphanies in someone's life (248). Bakhtin describes time in Dostoevsky's use of this chronotope as 'instantaneous', in that it 'falls out of the normal course of biographical time' but then these epiphanies, 'these moments of decision become part of the great all-embracing chronotopes of mystery-and carnival time' (248-249). In contrast, in Tolstoy's novels, biographical time is emphasised: the epiphanies are not sudden life altering events but are inherent in and emerge from a person's biography, rather as the majority of experiences described by my participants.

Finally, Bakhtin (1981) wonders about the way in which 'the chronotopes of the

author and reader or listener are presented' (252). To address this, he discusses the relationship between the author of a text and the reader of that text, 'real people' who are writing, reading or listening and who might be separated by considerable time and distance yet who are united by the text:

> ... nevertheless they are all located in a real, unitary and as yet incomplete historical world set off by a sharp and categorical boundary from the *represented* world in the text. Therefore we may call this world the world that *creates* the text, for all its aspects - the reality reflected in the text, the authors creating the text, the performers of the text (if they exist) and finally the listeners or readers who recreate and in so doing renew the text - participate equally in the creation of the represented world in the text. Out of the actual chronotopes of our world (which serve as the source of representation) emerge the reflected and *created* chronotopes of the world represented in the work (in the text). (253, italics in original)

It is important, writes Bakhtin (1981), not to confuse the world represented in the text with the world outside the text; nor what we might infer about the author of the work through reading that work with what the author might be like in their day-to-day life, nor that as a reader of that work we are the same as any other, past present or future reader of that work. Yet, he notes, in words which convey the notion of the potentialities in a work and the creative understanding that we bring as part of meaning-making, and as I have discussed elsewhere, for example, in *Chapter Eleven*:

> The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. Of course this process of exchange is itself chronotopic: it occurs first and foremost in the historically developing social world, but without ever losing contact with changing historical space. We might even speak of a special *creative* chronotope inside which this exchange between work and life occurs, and which constitutes the distinctive life of the work.' (254, italics in original)

Summary

In this appendix I have sought to use Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) work to explore a number of metaphors for viewing the research process. Two strands have been important. First, the way in which a person is represented in the novel and, for my purposes, in the research process. In essence, a distinction is made between a person who is viewed as a finalized entity, for whom context and the impact of life's events are largely irrelevant because their development is fixed, and a person who is unfinalized. I have discussed this distinction in detail in *Chapters Seven* and *Eight*, in particular. Second, Bakhtin's construct of the chronotope is important as a way of considering the relationship between a person, and that person's development across time and space.

Although I have not wanted to make it central to my research process and to my writing (for example, I have not sought to identify chronotopes in the accounts of my participants, nor to locate my writing according to such a construct), in my view, Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) discussion about chronotopes and the various forms of the novel, provides a valuable supplementary resource for considering those key parts of the research process that deal with the representation of a person and their experiences. Accordingly, from Bakhtin, the form of novel which supplies the most apt metaphor is that of the novel of emergence in general, and the 'family novel' in particular. Here, the unity of narrative is maintained but, looking to Goethe and Rabelais (at least from Bakhtin's account) there is nothing finalized about the people in such a novel (or in a research project) or about their experiences. A person is not part of a static, predetermined world governed entirely by centripetal forces but is always in a process of becoming, aided, not least, by the centrifugal forces of 'laughter' (in whatever form that might take).

Appendix 25

More on themes

As Voloshinov (1973), Bakhtin (1986) deals with broadly similar questions concerning 'utterances' and understanding, although his discussion becomes more tangential for my purposes. Nevertheless, it provides useful supplementary background, as does Van Manen's (1990) 'hermeneutic phenomenological' perspective.

Bakhtin (1986) identifies themes as having two principal functions. The first function appears as one of the three, inter-related features that constitute an utterance. First, there is a 'change of speaking subjects' (71); second, in order to respond to an utterance (or responsively understand it), it has to be relatively 'finalized' (76); finally, the utterance will employ a 'particular speech genre' (78). The theme of the utterance provides the means by which we can relatively finalize it; we have 'heard' what the speaker has had to say and, assuming that 'we embrace understand, and sense, the speaker's *speech plan* or *speech will*' and that we can 'imagine to ourselves what the speaker *wishes* to say' (77, italics in original), we prepare to respond.

The second function identifies the importance of affect (emotional volitional tone, by another term) in both selecting theme and conveying theme:

> There can be no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance. The speaker's evaluative attitude toward the subject of his or her speech (regardless of what his or her subject may be) also determines the choice of lexical, grammatical, and compositional means of the utterance. The individual style of the utterance is determined primarily by its expressive aspect.
>
> (Bakhtin, 1986: 84)

Whilst affect is expressed through intonation and becomes associated with some words ('evaluative speech genres' such as '"Excellent!"' and 'special sociopolitical speech genre[s] such as '"Peace!", 85), theme is still the vehicle for carrying affect. We use such words, and add particular intonation, as part of our 'active

responsive position' (86) in responding to the utterances of others and in creating our own utterances.

In addition to the emotionally evaluative aspect of a theme, Bakhtin/Medvedev (1978) deal with another, super-ordinate evaluative aspect, that of 'social evaluation' (125). Ultimately, they argue, in analyzing a work, no matter how many elements can be isolated, all those 'elements are united by and serve social evaluation' (125). In this respect, and making the same point about context as Voloshinov (1973), social evaluation is a key determinant of context. As speakers and listeners (writers and readers), we 'chose' the words (utterances) we use and give them the meaning we give them because of the sociopolitical and sociocultural time that we live in. In theme, then, the context of the time is revealed. Bakhtin/Medvedev also emphasize this in what they term the 'value center' of an epoch:

> Within the ideological horizon of every epoch, there is a value center toward which all the paths and aspirations of ideological activity lead. This value center becomes the basic theme or, more precisely, the complex of themes of the literature of a given epoch. [As note 28 in *Part One* indicates, ideology is used, here, to refer to any system of ideas rather than being used in its current politically orientated sense]. (157)

To continue with Bakhtin/Medvedev (1978), an utterance (a work) has a 'two-fold orientation in reality' (130). Theme provides us with an orientation towards our sociocultural context: 'the work is oriented in life, from within... by its thematic content' (131). The other orientation is towards performance in:

> ...real space and real time... It presupposes a particular audience, this or that type of reaction, and one or other relationship between the audience and the author. (131)

The two orientations are mutually dependent:

> The thematic unity of the work and its real place in life organically grow together in the unity of the genre. (133)

Bakhtin (1986) and Bakhtin/Medvedev (1978), then, add further dimensions to my understanding and identification of themes. In specific terms, theme is a necessary part of the finalizing process of dialogism, and a process which calls for creative understanding (active meaning-making). We also use themes to convey affect. Inevitably, the 'emotionally evaluative attitude toward the subject' (85) of my participants would have influenced their use of themes and just as inevitably, influenced my choice of themes. More generally though, and in echoing Voloshinov (1973), themes are indicative of a sociocultural time and place. Performed conversations have form and content and although neither can be understood without the other, meaning-making is most concerned with theme.

Having reviewed Bakhtin/Medvedev (1978), Bakhtin (1986) and Voloshinov(1973) here and in *Chapter Thirteen*, on 'theme', I want to turn to Van Manen's (1990) perspective, which seems highly pragmatic in contrast.

Van Manen's (1990) 'hermeneutic phenomenological reflection' relies on 'recovering the theme or themes that are embodied or dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work.' (78) He sets out his understanding of themes, how they arise and how they relate to whatever is being studied.

He offers four defining features of a theme. To paraphrase:

- first, themes arises when we experience the point of something we read (or hear)
- second, it is only ever a simplified grasp of meaning
- third, they are not tangible objects
- finally, in using theme in trying to grasp what it is we are trying to understand, it 'describes an aspect of the structure of lived experience'. (87)

To continue to paraphrase Van Manen (1990) themes arise because we have a need to understand experiences and so they provide labels; they represent, in language, our understanding. Although themes are fixed, in that they have labels, they have arisen because we have openly engaged with an experience. As such, themes provide insight through a process of *'invention* (my interpretive product), *discovery* (the interpretive product of my dialogue with the text of life),

disclosure of meaning (the interpretive product "given" to me by the text of life itself)' (88, italics in original).

Themes relate to whatever we are studying (in human science research) in that, first, they provide 'a tool for getting at the meaning of [an] experience'; second, they provide a structure or 'shape', albeit provisionally, for 'a notion' that by definition defies being structured; third, they seem to describe the essential nature of the experience, 'the core of the notion' (88); and fourth, inevitably they both reduce and can only hint at the meaning of an experience.

Van Manen's (1990) approach to identifying themes broadly follows that of Giorgi (1985a, b), although Van Manen outlines three general approaches to the text: a 'wholistic' approach, a 'selective or highlighting approach, and a 'detailed or line-by-line approach' (92-93).

Appendix 26

Alasdair MacIntyre

Given my emphasis on Bakhtin's work in this thesis and that I came to MacIntyre's work when my writing was at an advanced stage, I have opted not to provide a detailed overview of MacIntyre's work, of any critique of it, and of its place in the broader context of moral philosophy. I am conscious therefore, that my use of MacIntyre is open to criticism; probably my worst fear is that I have brought insufficient depth of understanding to his work and so have proceeded naively.

I would like to have written that I had set out to use MacIntyre's work. I was aware, from secondary sources, of his views on narrative but when I turned to the primary source (MacIntyre, 1985), I quickly realized that it is only a minor part of his overall project. The unity of a narrative quest is a vehicle for the the practice of the virtues. Reading MacIntyre on *courage* (for example, 192) had a profound impact upon me. Suddenly, I both saw this in the accounts of my participants and saw it as filling a thematic gap over which I had been puzzling. Up until that point I had been viewing the accounts in terms of personal constructs (Kelly, 1955) and Bakhtin's (1993) account of ethics.

I saw MacIntyre's (1985) description of the virtues as providing labels for some constructs that appeared core to my participants (and to me). Further, it seemed to me that his description added some necessary content to Bakhtin (1993). It seems good enough to me to suppose that we effectively create and maintain an ethical position as we go along, in everyday moments and activity. But why does a person create an ethical position which seems to sit easily with, say, the act of excluding a child from school, whilst another person has created an ethical position that would not even entertain that action as a possibility? The response that I read MacIntyre as providing, is that some individuals have developed a different sense of what it is to be an independent practical reasoner: their practice of just generosity and other virtues is different.

The more that I read and dipped into MacIntyre's work, so there quickly grew, for me, a strong appeal. In many respects he seems to be as transdisciplinary a

thinker as are Bakhtin and Voloshinov. For example, he has written from and about a Marxist perspective, and he has also written about human science methods, and has been as critical of behavioural psychology and idealistic explanations of the 'unconscious' as both Bakhtin and Voloshinov. (See MacIntyre, 1953; 1957; 1958; 1970; 1971.) Although, at times, there appears to be considerable agreement between MacIntyre and Bakhtin and Voloshinov (and Vygotsky, too, especially in MacIntyre, 1999), so far as I can find, if MacIntyre is aware of the work of any of these three, he does not cite it. (See *Chapter One* and note 10 in *Part One* for a reference to a comprehensive bibliography of work by and about MacIntyre.)

As interesting as that body of MacIntyre's work is, it his writing aimed at 'establishing a tradition of practical rationality' (Knight, 1998: 11) which has been most significant for my meaning-making. This writing is most substantially made up of MacIntyre (1985; 1988; 1990; and 1999), and I have taken entirely from the 1985 and 1999 work.

There are some tantalizing (because I would have liked to have spent longer reading and considering them than I have been able) accounts and critiques of MacIntyre's work. Horton and Mendus (1994) have edited a collection of critical essays, a collection described by Knight (1998: 276) as 'the most important book yet published on MacIntyre'. McMylor (1994) draws out the implications of MacIntyre for sociology. Knight (1998) presents a selection of MacIntyre's work along with, for me, a valuable introduction/overview and a comprehensive guide to further reading.

MacIntyre (1999) directed me to Becker's work (1986), since Becker provides 'an account of moral relationships [which] is in important respects at odds' (MacIntyre: 100) with that of MacIntyre's. The essence of Becker's work is that reciprocity, as a moral virtue, is a fundamental virtue. As I understand it, a key difference that puts his account at odds with MacIntyre's, is Becker's suggestion that 'we should return good for good, in proportion to to what we receive' (4). As I read MacIntyre's description of just generosity, there is no conditional giving-receiving; we may well give more than we ever receive and, following MacIntyre's example, a person with severe disabilities may receive more than they ever likely to give in some respects but that does not mean that they cannot

practice the virtue of reciprocity not that they are or should be excluded from reciprocal relationships.

Brief reference to Becker (1986) apart, there is not the scope in this thesis for a detailed review of the literature on ethics, although had I arrived at MacIntyre earlier, it would have been appropriate to have set his work in that broader context. I experienced another test of self-discipline. In addition to Becker, my glances, for example, at Aristotle (2000), a significant source for MacIntyre, and at Warnock (1998) suggested the benefits of much further reading in this field.

Appendix 27

Gesturing towards the unity of a narrative quest: nine stories that I heard, recorded and read, and one story that I told, recorded and read. Unfinalized quests and unfinalized stories, all

In writing these stories, I have not attempted to summarize everything that I heard. Rather, the intention is to provide a brief overview of the whole of a participant's account, as a step towards providing a reference point for the fragments that have been reproduced elsewhere. Inevitably, my selection has been made to emphasise the interests that I have followed in my research. I am aware that this may take away from the integrity of the accounts. What I have written are self-evidently partial accounts and in this respect, can only gesture towards the unity of a narrative quest. In any event, for every person who participated, there has never been anything finalized about their quest and I would not wish to contribute to any impression that there either might have been or ever could be.

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Judith's story

Judith was born with a heart condition that resulted in a relatively restricted early life and feelings of being excluded at school, although increasingly she began to do some of the activities (such as swimming) that she wasn't supposed to do with no apparent ill-effects. Her mother had a nursing background. Her father had lost a leg in the war and worked in a variety of jobs. Neither of her parents had gone to university.

Although inclined towards wanting to work in something creative, such as theatre or costume design Judith went into teaching as a pragmatic choice because at the end of the degree course she would emerge being able to do a job.

As a teacher, she increasingly became drawn to working with children with learning difficulties and that, along with meeting both clinical and educational psychologists, prompted her to study for a psychology degree with the Open

University and to train to be an educational psychologist.

Her story highlights experiences that can be seen as having been created through zones of proximal development, not least when she was at school and the role a teacher took in leading Judith to see that she had mathematical ability.

Working as an educational psychologist brings autonomy, an opportunity to practise a range of skills and qualities that she found it harder to practise as a teacher, to share and develop those skills as part of a team, an opportunity to enable change in others, to give voice to others and to enable others to give voice.

What she finds problematic as an educational psychologist is balancing her role as a parent with her work, and the restricted expectations that the institution of the local education authority has of her role.

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Howard's story

Howard became an educational psychologist, as he told it, because there was nothing better to do. His mother's father and brothers worked as doctors and, under better socioeconomic conditions, his own father would have liked to have become a doctor. Neither of his parents had been to university and his mother did not undertake paid work after she got married, although she did a lot of charity work.

Howard started medical training but left, in large part because he had not found it sufficiently interesting, and started a psychology degree. After his psychology degree he followed what seemed a relatively easy option of taking a teaching qualification, in the main because he wanted to remain living where he was in London, along with a close circle of friends. Taking a teaching qualification meant that he would not have to move. He had gone into teaching thinking that he might train to be an educational psychologist and the decision to to do this was motivated by what he might be able to earn, set against what he might be able to earn in teaching.

He did not identify any emerging commitment to working with vulnerable children and denied that he had entered the profession out of any sense of wanting 'to do good'.

It was hard for him to identify anything about the work that is important (sustaining) for him. Indeed, as he reflected upon what he finds problematic about the work, he revealed that he thought there was very little theoretical or practical basis for what he does. He was critical of the construct of intelligence; concerned that as a profession, educational psychologists have colluded with local educational authorities in using it as the basis for allocating resource to some children. He was critical of his early practice, and how he could be justified in describing children in the ways in which he did.

As a postscript (*Appendix 28*), Howard has now left the profession.

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Teresa's story

Being an educational psychologist is important for Teresa because it gives her an opportunity to make a difference for others, in part through ensuring that their voice is heard. This seems to form a connection with her own experiences of schooling (where she feels that she was too often denied a voice) and her father, who also tended to deny her and, especially her brother, a voice. Her mother acted as a balance to this. Neither of her parents had been to university.

Although she had not set out to a do a psychology degree, it was the subject that she enjoyed most during her first year as an undergraduate. In her final year, the wife of a lecturer talked with her about a career in educational psychology. Psychology, as a discipline, represented and continues to represent an intellectual challenge. It provides the tools to problem solve and a framework for considering different facets of a person. She had a year as a research assistant between graduating and teacher training. The research post involved working with children with profound and severe learning difficulties in a hospital setting. They were children who effectively needed a voice and she found it rewarding work.

When she began teaching, she was surprised at what teaching gave her and increasingly she experienced her ability to provide a responsive understanding of others.

As she sees it, being a teacher and, now, being an educational psychologist allows her to repay the debt that she owes, in part on account of what she described as a relatively privileged up-bringing.

As an educational psychologist, she finds other people's expectations problematic, and also their capacity to undermine work that is being undertaken with a particular child. Additionally, she finds it problematic to manage the emotional content of the job, especially if she has to carry an issue home rather than having been able to deal with it in work.

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Vivian's story

Vivian's route to becoming an educational psychologist comprised a combination of serendipity and pragmatism, with a good deal of careful reflection on the way.

She grew up in a small community and from an early age had an awareness of people with disabilities, in part through her mother speaking out over what she saw as the lack of justice for people with disabilities. Her secondary school took her out of her familiar culture and was, initially, an unhappy experience. At secondary school she was, again, with people with disabilities and recalled naturally supporting one particular girl who was part of her group of friends.

Neither of her parents had had a university education but were keen that she had. Before university, she spent a year with the Community Service Volunteers on a variety of placements working with people with vulnerabilities of one kind or another. She hadn't set out to study psychology at degree level but of the subjects that she was studying, found that the most interesting one during her first year and so switched to psychology. After university she started nurse training but the medical hierarchy, the distressing nature of aspects of the work,

and the absence of a voice, contributed to her deciding to leave that and to start teacher training.

Nursing had given her some positive experiences, including caring for a boy with a hearing impairment. As a teacher, she came to specialize in working with children with hearing impairments.

She had not planned to become an educational psychologist but a chance encounter with two educational psychologists at a conference, and other circumstances in her life at that time led her to apply for professional training.

Now, as an educational psychologist, it is important for her to be working in a job where her skills and experiences are valued, and people want her involvement. She has concerns, however, that one day she will be discovered as having nothing to offer. She also finds it problematic to 'put on an act' with those with whom she hasn't yet developed a relationship, and where the expectations placed on her are either unrealistic or intended to serve the needs of the institution (for example, the staff of a school) than a particular child. She has sought to balance work and home life by deciding not to pursue promoted posts in, say, another educational psychology service.

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Jim's story

Jim did not set out to be an educational psychologist. As he told it, his career owes a lot to serendipity.

His father was a teacher and keen that Jim get a university education. Neither parent had such an education. His parents have been very supportive of him through his education and various career choices but beyond that did not feature much in his account.

He had a traditional grammar school education where there were traditional expectations about what pupils might achieve. Jim aspired to what he saw himself capable of achieving and being interested in, and after school, went to

train as a PE teacher. Instead of going to teach in a school, however, he went to work in an outdoor activity centre. An interest in children with special needs was discovered in him, in effect, when he was offered a job in a special school for children with emotional and behaviour difficulties. He also discovered an interest in learning and in psychology through the Open University, and he took his psychology degree with them.

He became an educational psychologist as a career move but had been influenced, inadvertently, by psychologists who visited the school in which he worked.

In working as an educational psychologist, it is important to him that he uses the skills, experiences and knowledge that he has acquired and that he can contribute that to help other work more effectively with children. He finds little that is problematic about being an educational psychologist, apart from a concern about how the inclusion into mainstream school of children with complex emotional and behaviour difficulties can be in such children's interests without adequate resourcing, and the skill development of teaching staff.

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Florence's story

Florence's story is strongly characterized by the influence of her family. She grew up in a big house, with her parents and paternal grand parents. It was her grandmother that did most of the caring and nurturing, however, as her mother was working or experiencing bouts of what Florence thought might have been depression. Her mother had trained to be a nurse but stopped before she took the exams. Neither parent had had a university education.

Florence's mother was determined that Florence should have the best education and so placed her in the independent sector for her secondary education. This was to uproot Florence from what she saw as a her home culture and also to take her away from the friends that she had in primary school.

After school she wanted to take a psychology degree because it struck her as interesting. Her undergraduate course included a year out on a work placement

and she chose an attachment to a psychology service. She then went on to teach and to train as an educational psychologist.

Other than her own experiences she had no particular experiences which indicated a growing impulse to work with vulnerable children. However, this strongly marks her practice as an educational psychologist, and she made the connection between this and her experiences of exclusion (from her mother and from her culture). She does not think that professional training (or her psychology degree) equipped her for this work and so she has taken a variety of courses to give her the knowledge and skills that she sees as being necessary.

She needs variation and challenge in her work and to be trusted that she is doing an effective job. It is important to her that she can enable others to find a way forward, whether it is an individual child in emotional distress or a group of teachers wanting to develop their skills.

Attempts at quick solutions for children are problematic, for her, as is a school system that has the option of special schools because that can undermine motivation to persist with supporting a child in a difficult situation in a mainstream school. In the psychology service in which she works, she does not let the time allocation system be a problem to her; it is a compromise to the quality of work with children that she is not prepared to admit. Finding the right balance between work and home life can be problematic, however.

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Ruth's story

Ruth grew up with a strong sense sense of justice and caring. She had contemplated becoming a nurse. Her mother had trained to be a nurse but not worked as one, because she got married. Ruth had moved school twice at secondary level and so experienced two changes of culture. The second move was most significant, though, in that for a few months she lived abroad, in a country where she experienced huge contrasts between wealth and poverty, and judgmental attitudes which she found difficult to accept.
In childhood, Ruth started on a quest for better self-understanding and from

early adolescence, wrote poetry. She also became a Christian and has a faith which is central to her.

After school she studied psychology, took a teaching qualification and then taught for a number of years in a variety of teaching posts, usually entailing involvement with children with special needs.

She decided to become an educational psychologist, in part because of the encouragement and expectations of others and also because she was ready for a fresh challenge and career change. For her, what is important to her in being a psychologist is the possibility of changing things for others, that it is possible to improve someone's learning opportunities. Working with like-minded colleagues is important, too, for sustaining her professional development and for supporting her day-to-day practice. She finds that a time management can be problematic, as can be keeping up-to-date with psychology research and developments in practice, and some of the challenges of particular pieces of work, where a way forward might be difficult to identify. Maintaining a balance between home life and work can also be problematic.

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Alan' story

Alan described his father as being very rigid but, in contrast a much more open, enabling mother who worked in the theatre for most of Alan's early childhood and had an active circle of friends, to whose conversations Alan was often privy. This exposure, to 'conversational realities' (Shotter, 1993b), appears to have had a lasting impression and, to some extent, been the origins of an interest in wanting to understand people.

Neither of his parents had been to university. Alan worked hard at school and was doing well at a relatively traditional grammar school until he failed maths 'O' level, his first significant experience of failure. From then he started missing school, eventually truanting so that he could work on a market stall. There was a time when the attraction of what he could earn buying and selling might have outweighed anything else. Another market trader was influential, though, in

causing him to reflect on whether this was what he really wanted. As a result he worked hard, in a short space of time, for his 'A' levels, and went to university to study ecology.

Alan did not set out to be an educational psychologist. He had not had many experiences of children with vulnerabilities and was not particularly drawn to working with children with special needs. However, he was drawn to psychology and the possibilities it offers for understanding people through the practice of psychoanalysis.

It is important to him that he is a psychologist rather than an *educational* psychologist, that he can use psychology to make a difference to all people, not simply a minority of children who are identified as having special needs, and that he can work with others in an organization that supports such a broad approach. It is also important to him that he can play a part in the development of colleagues and that they can play a part in his professional development.

He finds it problematic when others do not share his enthusiasm for psychology and his enthusiasm for applying it. He recognized that he can have unrealistic expectations about what he and psychology can achieve, and there are times when he should refuse work. He puts a lot of energy into work at the expense of home life, although this is something that he has negotiated with his partner.

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Mark's story

Mark grew up in a 'working class' family. Neither of his parents had been to university. Both his parents worked and, for whatever reasons, Mark's older brother played a major parenting role, until he moved to the continent to work. This was a huge loss to Mark.

He had always done well and been happy at school, with a good circle of friends. Towards the end of his primary school education, however, a series of incidents led to him moving to another school. This school gave him a contrasting experience since an assumption seemed to have been made that he was not going

to succeed academically, and he was not placed in the class being prepared for the eleven plus exam.

At secondary school the expectations were that most of pupils would not enter higher education. Mark left school and for a while worked as a professional musician. This exposed him to beliefs that challenged many of the constructs that he had taken for granted. He also had indirect but close experience of racism. These experiences, along with his experiences at school engendered a passionate sense of what is just and unjust, and the importance of having a voice.

After leaving school, he discovered psychology. He encountered a number of people who encouraged his interest in the discipline, as well as influencing him to study for a psychology degree, teach, and then train to be an educational psychologist. Those experiences are contained in what he finds important about being a psychologist. He finds it problematic when his constructs are compromised and, in particular, when someone's voice is being denied. He also finds it problematic when his enthusiasm for learning and for critically engaging with issues is experienced by colleagues as disempowering.

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My story

From entering the sixth form at school, I wanted to be an applied psychologist. It combined a desire to understand myself, to understand others and, at the time,to take a course that was seen, at least by the teachers in my school, as being a radical proposition.

My parents valued education. Neither had been to university although my father, who had left school at 14, went to evening classes and earned enough qualifications to become a chartered member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers. That was significant for him and in what he conveyed to me. He saw his profession, and membership of the Institute, becoming an all graduate profession. He was determined that I would not have to take as hard a route as he had taken. My mother didn't work after I was born.

I found undergraduate psychology a huge disappointment but, if anything, it made me more determined to become an applied psychologist (although I briefly flirted with the idea of journalism). I was clear in not wanting to work in the private sector.

I qualified as a teacher and taught for the minimum two years. I enjoyed very little about that time; it was simply a means to an end. As I had experienced when I was at school, I felt some intuitive understanding of children who seemed more vulnerable but was not especially drawn to working with such children. After teaching, I worked for a year as an unqualified educational psychologist and was variously supported, challenged, encouraged and inspired by colleagues. This continued when I started to train as an educational psychologist.

It is important to me that I can be me in work, that what I do is valued, that I can be accepted by others whose experiences are very different from my own, that I can enable others to achieve their aspirations and that I can be optimistic that this will happen. Knowing whether or not I am any good at what I do, including my role as a manager, is problematic, as is what I see as contributing to a shift in our professional culture. Whilst I believe that there should be a balance between work and home life, completing this research is some evidence of the incongruity, in this instance, between my espoused theory and theory in use.

Appendix 28

A postscript from Howard

Howard's letter follows.

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5th August 2001

Dear Phil

Recently I have been sorting through some documents, amongst which is the transcript of the interview we had in 1999 as part of your investigations into the process of becoming an EP. I've thus been reminded of my motivation for volunteering to be interviewed. That motivation has a close connection with what has happened since, and I'm writing to you now because I'm in the middle of a somewhat maudlin process in what is for me a quite important juncture: and, although by now you've probably finished your Ph.D., it might provide a postscript to the story I told you.

When you advertised for volunteers I expressed an interest straight away for reasons that were not entirely altruistic. Most people like talking about themselves and I am no exception. Witness the length of this letter: like the Ancient Mariner, I'll talk at as great a length about myself as anyone can take, and I suppose I felt it would be an opportunity for me to do so in a way that might help sort myself out. A kind of therapy, if you like. In the event it made a contribution to the train of events which has culminated in my leaving my job as an EP.

I have been fortunate enough to be given 'after a lot of negotiation' a modest early retirement pension. This good fortune has followed the appointment of a new director of education and a reorganisation in our LEA; I am lucky to have been in the right place at the right time. The cushion of a pension rather takes the gloss off my ability to claim I've thrown up a job which I've always felt is a somewhat dubious way of earning a living, because I shall now be living on the subsequent proceeds of the last thirty years of that employment. Without them, I would have incurred additional financial difficulties (though there are always people worse off than oneself), but I like to think I would have left anyway.

One thing the interview with you did was bring into the open for me, as it were (although it was

never far beneath the surface) the fact that I have always been somewhat uncomfortable as an EP. (I know I am not alone here and that it's accepted wisdom in the profession that as a group, as well as, no doubt, individually, EPs do spend a lot of time navel-gazing). As the discussion with you pointed up, in my case this stems partly from certain expectations from my early years (other members of my family being doctors, father would have liked to be one but wasn't from a sufficiently affluent background, etc.) and partly because, since becoming an EP, I have never really succeeded in believing I am playing a central role in much. All right, I've generally been made welcome in schools and parents' homes, some of the courses I've run have been well received, and I believe I've made a few contributions to policy, etc. ... but I have never felt I am playing any kind of central role in education or, indeed, anything else. That might for some people be a spur to redoubling their efforts. In my case I have increasingly seen myself as an outsider. I knew the job of a PEP was likely to involve more management, more distance from the mainstream EP job, but I didn't mind that because I'd been an ordinary, albeit 'senior', EP for long enough - too long; I'd been bored with it for years. So I'm not leaving for the standard 'I didn't come into this job to do all this paperwork' reason; I knew the paperwork and the management would be different and more extensive. (Some of the latter I've found hard, though not generally that involving EPs - it's been the others that have been difficult.)

I have said to everyone who has enquired what I'm going to do that I intend to have nothing to do with education, or psychology, or management; and I see no reason to change my mind, although I admit that one cannot forecast the future. What I shall emphatically not do is become a private EP, churning out private reports for a fat fee in order for the children of the rich to unfairly garner even more educational resources ... (oh dear, there go my prejudices). I'd rather stand on the corner of a street selling The Big Issue. At least that's an honest job, and over the last few years I've felt that what I've been doing isn't honest. It isn't honest in the sense that it doesn't seem to have much relevance to reality. My own personal reality, that is. I don't mean these things - the paperwork, the meetings, the discussions - don't have to take place, that they aren't in some way benefiting the education of children. In the complex set of systems in the governmental/local governmental/educational world EPs inhabit, they are probably necessary, and someone has to do them. It is just that I have found increasingly less connection between those things and what my life ought to be. It ought to be simpler. There ought to be a more direct relationship between work and remuneration. That connection wouldn't be established by my going back to maingrade EP work (of which I have always done some, even in the largely management position I've been in these last four years). Perhaps I believe, at heart, that the education system ought to be good enough not to need EPs at all; and that that is at the centre of my difficulties with the role.

Certainly, some of the schools, and head teachers, I have most respected have been those who seem to have been able to run their establishments without relying much on outside help. In some cases that has been accompanied by a thinly-disguised contempt of what EPs do. My difficulty has been that I have found myself agreeing with them.

No doubt there are more culpable purveyors of snake-oil than EPs. And I do know that EPs are people who are knowledgeable about a great many things which are, in fact, useful. The expertise of my colleagues in my own (erstwhile) service, and much of that which is demonstrated at AEP courses and the like, has always impressed me hugely: and there is no doubt schools, parents and LEAs will spend money on it, and receive good products in return. But I suppose another part of my situation is that I no longer find it motivating. Me personally, I've done it for long enough.

So my recognition that I have spent too much time in this world of education does not mean that I do not recognise the value of what my colleagues do. They work hard and frequently effectively. But I have never been convinced that I have been able to make a valuable enough contribution to the lives of children or their families or to schools. At best, I have provided a diversion, perhaps a different way of looking at things. But I haven't been able to do that frequently enough, and with sufficient proof, for me to gain much satisfaction. This seems a terrible admission to make at the end of a career but it is one of which I have been aware throughout it. Always at the back of my mind has been the question 'am I actually doing any good?' (and even 'am I actually doing anything?'), and although people have sometimes said, 'thank you for coming', and the like, which has been gratifying, I haven't really been able to believe they have been saying that from much else than politeness. The main thing that has kept me going - again a terrible admission - is that I've been paid for it: which has (a) made me think, well, if they're paying me for it, than I must be doing something useful (an argument whose missing premise ('if someone pays for an item, *ergo* that item is useful') is patently open to question), and (b) provided me with a comfortable enough means of living - and therefore delayed my acting on my suspicions that I ought to be doing something else.

All of this invites the question 'So what are you going to be doing?' The answer surprises me (as well as other people), and continues to surprise me; but I now find myself doing it. I have had to repeat it, when I've been asked, but the written word has a permanence which the spoken doesn't, so here I'll need to say it only once. I am going to be a lorry driver. In fact, I already am; I started a few weeks ago. Work has come in dribs and drabs, but I think is likely to build up; if it doesn't, then I'll register with another agency, or go further afield to look for it.

Why? For reasons hinted at above. There is a direct relationship between the work and the remuneration (which is about a quarter as much, per hour, as what I have been earning hitherto). (No, not 'earning': I don,t like that word, because it has connotations of 'deserving'. Does David Beckham earn £10 million a year for playing football? Does he deserve it? Debatable. Does he receive it? Yes.) Someone wants something delivered from A to B, and is willing to pay me to put it on a lorry and drive it there? Fine. I'll do it. Illegal immigrants and cocaine consignments apart, I like that relationship between someone wanting to buy something, and their consequent willingness to pay someone to take it there. You may ask what is the difference between that and what, for instance, private EPs do. One of the differences is that (some) private EPs are delivering things which are to my mind dishonest. They are giving people something purportedly scientific which I think often has little if any scientific value. They are pretending (inadvertently, sometimes; companies purveying test materials are not immune from criticism) that things exist which don't. And whilst EPs in public service are not thus tainted (or not as much), I personally have had enough of providing the brand of reassurance, encouragement and training, much of it based on shaky conceptualisations and dubious theories, which I have been dealing in for most of my working life. (Ironically, one of the things I found unsatisfactory about medicine during the year I spent doing it was that it seemed based too little on scientific evidence and cogent principles than on vague notions and the power of the doctor to persuade. To con people, at worst. And I ended up in psychology!)

How does this relate to my origins, my journey to becoming an EP, which is where we came in? There is a paradox. My mother's family - well-off Home Counties with money, not much of which filtered down to me, unfortunately - were scandalised at her marrying whom she did - a boiler-stoker, for heaven's sake, even though he did later pull himself up by the bootstraps, earn some modest professional qualifications, buy a small yacht and vote Conservative. They are nearly all dead now, my relatives from my parents' generation, but that is hardly relevant: somehow, I am defying them, in an attempt to show them that whatever opinion they had of my father half a century ago, there is value in manual work, and that any respect they showed him (and it was thinly disguised, when it was disguised at all), should not have been merely that of *noblesse oblige* and a condescension to his efforts to better himself.

I also like the physicality of the job. Loading, driving, unloading. And in my job as an EP I have always liked driving around the countryside, though much of the driving of lorries is of course on industrial estates and the equally unlovely backsides of shopping precincts. Ah! The dignity of manual labour. I know that in industrial history, on Marxist theory, that notion was probably one

which was invented by the capitalists, and reinforced by the Church, as a means of keeping their workers oppressed; but the persuasiveness of the conceptualisation may partly have lain in there being at least some truth in it. Anyway, conditions are a bit different now, lorry cabs (some of them) are comfortable and airy, and to an extent I am able to pick and choose: I am not owned by the driving agency, and up to a point will be able to take work when I choose (if there is any).

And I wanted to do something simple. I have become tired of the mass of loose ends. I have been working in what has seemed an increasingly complex environment; I've tried to make sense of it, tried to find ways of operating satisfactorily in it - but have been unable to do so, at any rate in a way which I have personally found to my liking. I know other environments, commercial as well as non-commercial, also have some great complexities, and there are uncertainties in them and unanswered questions and that someone has to grapple with them. But I'd tried doing that sort of thing for long enough. I wanted to do something simpler. Sell my labour in a straightforward way. Not that there isn't a set of skills to learn, and I've enjoyed starting to do that. Reversing a 35-foot rigid lorry into a small space is hard. Reversing a 55-foot articulated lorry is harder. (The key for the novice, by the way, though it slows things down horribly, is GOAL. Get out and look.) I can't do it well yet. But I hope to improve. These are skills that are tangible. Addressing an audience, presenting effective training, talking to parents about their child in a way that helps them, writing a paper for the LEA - all these also entail skills whose possession I should probably value. But I have ceased to be interested in practising them: perhaps because I've done so for too long, but also because of their intangibility.

All this is possibly a justification post hoc. The fact is that I have driven lorries before, thirty-five years ago, when one did not have to have an HGV licence to drive medium-sized lorries. Then, I didn't do it for long enough to become sated. I became a teacher instead. So, partly, I am revisiting unfinished business. A year, eighteen months ago, whilst driving back home from whatever meeting it was I'd been at for the thousandth time, I began looking at lorry drivers passing me and thinking: I'd like to do that. This feeling did not last merely a few minutes, or a week. It has lasted long enough for me to pass the necessary qualifications and start in paid employment.

Perhaps I shall wake up after a few months of doing it, and think, What a fucking crazy decision! (and now I'm a lorry driver, every other word is 'fuck' or a derivative), and then put together a few training packages for schools. But I doubt it. The last thing I want to do is become a private EP, or an educational consultant, and the next to last thing is sit on my backside doing nothing.

I regard this as much as a move into something as a move out of something else: a change of job, not a retirement. It is an acknowledgement of different motivations, a move towards doing something which for a variety of reasons I want to do. The whole process has been set about with uncertainties, and the mental baggage of the past thirty years still has to settle down a bit. I've thrown away the bulk of the journals, papers and books relating to my career in education, and the plan is that if - when - the few bits that remain, which have been packed into boxes and stored in the loft, have been there for six months without my feeling the need to touch them, I'll jettison them too.

All of this may seem curious, but there it is. Sorry to have gone on at such length. The reason I've done so (aside from it being, as was my original discussion with you, a means of sorting out my own thoughts), is that you did express an interest in exploring why your interviewees became EPs. Why I became an EP is, as you see, closely connected with why I've stopped being one. In my beginning is my end. So, if you wanted to use any of it as a postscript to your investigation into people's origins as EPs, please feel free. Otherwise, I'm sure my ceasing to be an EP has no more interest to other people than any one else's doing so. When my fellow truckers ask me what I was doing before I started this driving job, I say office work, and that I got fed up with it, and wanted to drive lorries. Sometimes, to fill the time, they ask a little more. But generally that is the end of that conversation. And I think, don't they want to know more? But then I think, Why should they? Why should I make a song and dance about it? I've changed my job, that's all.

Best wishes.

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