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Education in an Era of Schooling

Critical perspectives of Educational Practice and Action Research. A Festschrift for Stephen Kemmis

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Foreword

And What, Stephen, Have You Wrought?

When Samuel F. B. Morse opened the first telegraph line, he click-clacked, "What hath God wrought?" Here, as you move toward completing your telegraphy, Stephen, in some amazement we ponder, "What indeed have you wrought?" In these pages, we examine the magma you have brought forth, so helpful as we worked out our own.

What all have you wrought? Of course, it is impossible to say. Words fail to come close to saying what all. We face the reality of every teacher, researcher, evaluator: What all? For none of us is it an answerable question. Even "What is it here and now?" is not an answerable question. In 2007, under the title, "Here," you wrote:

> We are not just thinking and saying. We are not just doing. We are always relating, always connected to the earth and others. We are always, wherever we are, part of earth's flows, and the earth and what is in it are made part of the flows of our restless being by our being here. Though we may resist, resent or rejoice in it, we are part of a common humanity. Our lives make and leave marks on a shared earth, shared fates. (Kemmis 2007, as cited in Stake, 2010, p. 59)

To repeat, "always relating, always connected." You have written it. You have taught it. You have shown great faith, Stephen, in sharing, in relating, in communicative action. Many of our fellow writers on educational matters have pushed for impersonal, objective indications of quality, but you have pushed the opportunity for enhancing professional collaboration. You and Hannele Niemi (1999) said:

> We define [evaluation] as a process of creating and sustaining communicative action oriented towards mutual understanding and unforced consensus in and around a program or setting.

You may remember that I found that too constraining. I went along with such a conceptualization in action research. And I was happy to support internal

evaluation, which requires a half deaf ear. But I wanted evaluation to maintain a priority on identifying program goodness that could be seen and supported by a run of stakeholders, plus program badness that was both obstacle and disaffection. Gradually, I have come to realize that for most circumstances, you had correctly grasped the priority.

While you were at the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation [CIRCE] back in the early 70s, we could count on finding a few evaluation clients, sponsors, and students who supported not only formative evaluation (finding ways to make teaching better), but held the optimistic view that experience, that is, teaching and student experience, was worthy of the sustained, critical eye. But it didn't last. Now: "Just the facts, ma'am." Almost every audience or board today wants an evaluation contract promising "what works," something leveraging, that is, useful in getting more funding.

Back then and lately still, we are taken with MacDonald's (1976) idea of three types of educational evaluation, reflecting different kinds of power relationships (bureaucratic, autocratic, and democratic), with democratic evaluation being:

> …an information service to the whole community about the characteristics of an educational programme… [with its] key justificatory concept [being] a "right to know" the doings of the curriculum that the people fund and protect…

And how to tell? In a chapter "Telling it like it is: The problem of making a portrayal of an educational program" (1977), you muscled aside the engineering model (one size fits all) to make portrayal-making central to social communication. You drafted:

> An educational program is a complex whole: it involves people, things, places, events, activities, administration. Portrayal cannot hope to capture that enormously complex world and fix it in some rigid, final form. But it can hope to communicate something of the complexity, and something of the dynamic, flowing pattern of experiences it creates and of which it is constituted. (p. 3)

Vision counts. You drew our attention to the words of theoretical physicist David Bohm (1974):

> …science is primarily an activity of extending perception into new contexts and into new forms, and only secondarily a means of obtaining what may be called reliable knowledge … science research does not consist first of looking at something and then communicating it. Rather, the very act of perception is shaped and formed by the intention to communicate… (p. 374)

Fittingly, that moved you to concentrate more than other evaluation theorists on evaluation as perception-communication. With Hannele (1999), you wrote:

> Such an emphasis on communication, and indeed dialogue, brought you into confrontation with matters of equity and race. The people are a differentiated population, with a multiplicity of cultural values and life styles. How can an evaluation mechanism that seeks a single best representation of values do justice to a diverse society?

With your East Anglia colleagues, David Jenkins, Barry MacDonald, and Gajendra Verma, you wrote that the engineering model is

> highly appropriate for some development purposes. But it may be crude and dangerous in the evaluation of race-related educational provision and in multi-racial contexts. Its point of departure is a consensus about aims and objectives; in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural settings, diversity rather than consensus must be assumed. (1979, p. 30)

Together with your colleagues at the Centre for Applied Research in Education [CARE], you established the position that results of evaluation studies are to be negotiated, neither imposed by evaluator nor sponsor. Nor by funder.

Ah, yes. Had you been nominated for a Nobel Prize, I would have liked to write the tribute. I particularly would emphasize your recognition of the lack of documented connection between assessment of student achievement (classroom and international) and assessment of educators' success in educating (Kemmis, 1977). You recognized that in these times neither are effectively assessed—and that almost no one cares. Had you been heeded, the state of educational assessment might have avoided its present state of gross misinformation (see Rose, 2016).

You recognized that student achievement testing, as now carried out, provides a measure of student performance, and thus student state of mind, when faced with a battery of test items. A student response indicates what is available in her intellect and disposition, certainly not a measure only of learning associated with particular teaching. Test results can be used to indicate student readiness for further teaching, given teaching effectiveness, school quality, and appropriateness of national policy. Teachers are properly cautioned not to consider standardized test scores as an indication of individual student achievement.

Many teachers have come to consider national assessment as far removed from classroom practice. You dreaded this future in 1992. Before there were blogs, you blogged:

> It seemed as though national assessment was an idea whose time had passed. I thought it had gone to its death more or less gracefully, no longer suited for the parts it once was expected to play. I thought that, like a dinosaur confronting the ice age, it was a lumbering, archaistic ancestor of newer social practices of program evaluation, student assessment and school improvement better fitted for an era of greater professionalism among teachers, greater participation by school communities in the life and work of schools, and more decentralized and democratic curriculum decision making. But these metaphors of anachronistic survival miss a deeper, more disturbing dynamic: like the cicadas that fly free in open air only for a few fleeting weeks after several years of slow, subterranean development from egg to larva, crowned by the metamorphosis which drives them ineluctably to mature adulthood and the twin climaxes of reproduction and death, national assessment has returned. What worm has been feeding in the deep decay of our fears and now comes to take its toll of the harvest which is our children? (1992)

From Wilhelm Windelband (1894) and others, you borrowed the nomenclature of nomothetic and idiographic measurement, noting the distinction between measurement for scientific generalization and that for the study of individuals. You pointed out that achievement scores provide a small picture of each examinee's mind at a point in time but that the sum or average of these is not a picture of what the group learned of the total intended to be learned.

A measure of individual learning as well as group learning needs context, especially specifying an extent of instruction time, or "pathways" as Rose (2016)

recently put it. In your endeavors of 1977, in the British context of computer-assisted learning in higher education, you observed that the diversity of courses and campuses needed analysis of pathway portrayals of individual learning before compilation and generalization of what was learned. Psychometric precision could not compensate for testing for the wrong construct. That lesson has still to be learned across the education system. Indicator variables are a stretch.

In that work and beyond, you found special initiative and direction in the writings of Jurgen Habermas, Paulo Friere, Barry MacDonald, and Ernie House. Although without a unified view of democratic evaluation, they held common penchant for being of service to the public. You yourself said (1983):

> Educational researchers can measure the value of their work by the extent to which education becomes, in practice, more rational, just, humane and socially-integrative as a consequence of their collaborative efforts with others to improve it.

You found that people could not effectively arouse themselves unless they had places and ideas for talking about how to protect and advance their lives. Optimistic about communicative action, you saw the obligation of scholars and teachers to provide background and support for deliberation, for exploration of education, especially the curriculum. Drawing from Miloraad Pavic's Dictionary of the Khazars (1988), you wrote:

> I want to argue, however, that curricula are not just like maps, nor even just like the carpet in [Marco Polo's city of] Eudoxia; they are also pumas held on the rope between teachers and students. … [The many] ropes symbolize the dynamic tension of being in social relationships. (1993, p. 4)

You noted that Habermas (1987) spoke of three types of overarching social travelings, those of organizational systems, those of people's lifeworlds, and those of the "colonisation of lifeworlds by the functional imperatives of organizations." The traffic is such that "people of modern times have difficulty establishing common frameworks of understanding across settings and generations." For the people, taking collective social and political action becomes more needed and yet more difficult in highly bureaucratized cultures, thus the call for mechanisms of communication to invent and perpetuate such frameworks for collaboration.

Such, I understand, was the ground for your ideas of "communicative evaluation." The prime findings, you and Hannele have said (1999), should be whatever information about educational programs that best facilitates public exercise of control. You may remember that I have not been enthusiastic about that aim. I see little market for it. Today, the public has little appetite for those findings we are capable of delivering, and small trust in what we do. From any point of view, and counter to our self-promotion, small is the market for information that feeds deeper understanding. Rather than for knowledge, the funders and managers pay to advance their own protection (Foucault, 1972).

But evaluation has no single role, no unchanging design. Just as teachers simultaneously teach multiple messages, so do we. We are at once attentive to multiple stakeholders, multiple issues, multiple uses. However primary the

orientation to outcomes, economy or equity, evaluators keep multiple values in mind. There is always good room for attention to public interests.

Public interests are served by in-depth telling of personal stories (Kushner, 2013; Stake, 2010). The problem is less the time available than the will to make comprehensible. And there you have made your plea. You have urged that we all include communicative evaluation in our quivers (1980). You have urged we contribute even a little to better communication among stakeholders, toward mutual understanding. Amen.

Did we argue about which kind of program evaluation is worth more (both in anticipation and in retrospect), external non-participatory evaluation or participatory evaluation? Yes, seldom have we the opportunity to choose. Well, we always have some opportunity for critical action research, but, however well resourced, that choice seldom satisfies institutional demands for independent outsider evaluation. Participatory inquiry lacks protection from self-service. Of course, we want evaluation to be self-serving, but not to overlook key faults.

I am confident that money put on critical participatory evaluation is better spent. But only to a few clients have I made that recommendation. It so often was apparent to me that the political situation calls for independent study. And I have confidence that as an outsider, I would dig deeper to find issues to study. I admit they may not be as relevant and useful to insiders. I should more often have sent them to talk to you.

Over the years, your click-clacks have been thought-provoking. However, unpersuaded by your and Robin McTaggart's (2000) and Susan Noffke's urgings for advocacy, I told Sue one time that I thought I should write my own book on action research. She asked what had I to say? With thought, I realized I had no chance of saying it better than you had.

Perhaps an accumulation of so many epistemologies led you to give the twenty-first-century special attention to "practice," particularly teaching practice. You devoted concern to professional work, that for which the worker is centrally responsible for the definition and quality of her work. You pleaded:

> In a range of professions, professional practice today is under threat. It is endangered, for example, by pressures of bureaucratic control, commodification, marketization, and standardisation . . . In these times, there is a need for deeper understandings of professional practice and how it develops through professional careers.

It was not to be just a survey of action and language, but a probing of what it means to be "a professional" (2006). You developed a comprehensive overview of research on practice. You urged thinking in dialectical terms, moving from 'either-or' thinking to 'never either, always both' thinking. You drew from both objective and subjective perspectives with a focus on both the individual and the social, to encompass

> practice as socially and historically constituted, and as reconstituted by human agency and social action: critical theory, critical social science (2006, p. 3).

The last half of these Festschrift chapters is primarily examining this Kemmis in the twenty-first century.

Festschrift or not, indeed, Stephen, what have you wrought? While teacher and learner yourself over half a century, for half the life of teaching and learning as fields of study, you have probed the meanings of education. You have shunned rote and ritual, despaired of mere preparation for army, vicarage, and factory. You have turned the mirror on countenance and practice, the microscope on assessment and privilege, the telescope on aspiration and policy, and the telegraph to distant cultures. Little has escaped your watch.

All this answering back to what have you wrought: the scale of benevolence for a vast spread of children, youth, and doctoral candidates (1998, 2006, 2012), reminders that they already are part-professionals, azimuths of destiny, caretakers, historians. At the bottom of the box, I found a single sheet, no date, only identified by the hand of Stephen Kemmis, saying:

> …you and I make history, but not under circumstances of our own choosing. Still each of us makes choices and all of us share in the consequences. It is our common fate, our common destiny. Each day, each moment, by choosing what to do now, you are making your own memories, and making a history all of us will share. You are choosing what you will know, what conversations you will have, what our ideas and memories will be, how you will think with others now and into the future. You are choosing what you will make, what you will produce and consume, what you will be able to do in the future, how you will fit in the productive life of society. You are choosing who you will know, what relationships you will have with them, what you will do with, for and against others, and how you'll connect with others and they with you. You are choosing whether to be, and the extent to which you can be, the primary cause in your own life—a producer of experience—or a consumer of experiences produced by others. You are choosing what will be the conditions of life for all our children.

Bob Stake

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Contents

Chapter 1
The Possibilities for Education in an Era of Schooling

Peter Grootenboer, Christine Edwards-Groves and Jane Wilkinson

Abstract What are the possibilities for education in an era of schooling? This is a persistent question and indeed challenge, for educators and educational researchers in contemporary times. At its core, education is always a promise for and process of renewal, growth and change; thus, the job of renewal, growth and change too must work to fulfil its promises and be irrefutably educational. What educationality stands for and stands up for in its complex of practices (learning, teaching, leading, professional learning, researching and evaluating) is signalled in and made apparent existentially and ontologically. This is a given; what happens in different places under different conditions among different peoples under the guises of education matters. These are broad, but real concerns, taken up in this chapter, and the authors in this book that has been developed and prepared as a *festschrift* for Stephen Kemmis.

> Education changes **our shared fate** on this planet, as we roll through the unfolding history of our own lives, alongside the lives of others, and the collective life of our communities, our nation, our world. Each of us, as a teacher, makes a small contribution to **changing** the fate we all share—changing the way people live together in the world.
>
> Stephen Kemmis.[1]

[1] Excerpt from Occasional Address, "Education for Sustainability", Faculty of Education graduation ceremony, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, April 5, 2006. A fuller version of the address is found in Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018). Understanding Education: History, Politics and Practice. Singapore: Springer.

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Education is always a promise for and process of renewal, growth and change; thus, the job of renewal, growth and change too must work to fulfil its promises and be irrefutably educational. What education stands for and stands up for in its complex of practices (learning, teaching, leading, professional learning, researching and evaluating) is signalled in and made apparent existentially and ontologically. This is a given; what happens in different places under different conditions among different peoples under the guises of education matters. Thus, how education is generated and regenerated across times and places, how it is manifest in or reduced to quasieducational activities through the technicalities associated with accountability, management and performative regimes of particular schooling policy agendas forms an undeniable challenge for the conduct of contemporary education. Addressing this challenge is one that has been taken up by Stephen Kemmis throughout his educational life and is considered critically by each of the authors of this book.

This book has been developed and prepared as a *festschrift* for Stephen Kemmis. Traditionally, a festschrift was a book written by the doctoral students of a distinguished professor on their retirement, but nowadays, this is interpreted a bit more broadly—as we have here. This festschrift has been written by Stephen's colleagues and friends who have worked closely with him over a number of years at a particular stage of his educational life, and it includes some authors who were his doctoral students. A festschrift is not only a biography or a celebration of the distinguished professor's life, but moreover, it is a collection of works grounded to some degree in the seminal works of the professor. So, with this in mind, each of the authors have drawn upon the theoretical, philosophical, empirical and/or practical work of Stephen Kemmis that has extended for over four decades. This book shows how and the extent to which Stephen's influence has permeated the research and scholarship of many of his colleagues over some 40 years; it has a broad aim to examine possibilities for education in across different eras of schooling.

Understanding the Possibilities and Promises of Education

Understanding how education—and its constitutive practices—changes our *shared fate* so that individuals and collectives can *live well in a world worth living in* forms a fundamental interest for Stephen Kemmis. In many ways, Stephen's work has been driven by the challenges faced by changing educational circumstances for peoples in a diverse world where issues of inequity and unsustainability dominate, and indeed, compromise renewal, growth and change. In seeking to imagine the possibility for education under these conditions, from the earliest time in his career, Stephen Kemmis has questioned education, education practices and the conditions which enable and constrain education practices to be changed for the good of individuals and collectives. Motivating his work are questions such as, How can education live up to its promises? What makes education sustainable in this milieu? What is education for sustainability? What is renewed and should be renewed in education contexts? What conditions enable (and constrain) education to fulfil its promises for renewal,

growth and change? Answers to such questions form the bases of understanding what education is, what it promises and accomplishes, and how it is revitalised in contemporary society's era of schooling, and importantly have permeated (from his early graduate days in Illinois) through Stephen's theoretical work, professional practice and research programme.

The title of this book, 'Education in an era of schooling: Critical perspectives of educational practice and action research', indeed captures the core tenets of Stephen Kemmis's corpus of work and the unifying thread that bind it together. This body of work centres around the key role played by research and educational practice and has brought with it an enduring message of hope and action that resonates even more strongly in an era circumscribed by 'schooling' practices pressured by regimes of accountability, performativity and measurement.

Education in an Era of Schooling

The terms 'education' and 'schooling' are often viewed synonymously, being used interchangeably to describe edifying work and practices. In this chapter, we take the lead from Stephen Kemmis in suggesting that, in English, the two terms are, and need to be treated as, distinct. Indeed, the erroneous and taken-for-granted assumption that schooling is always educational has been, and continues to be, problematic. It conveniently overlooks how, in practice, schooling may instead be profoundly anti-educational. As an institutionalised system that is sedimented in many societies across the globe, schooling may at times be educational, but such an outcome cannot be assumed or taken for granted. Indeed, the endeavour to produce forms of schooling that are *educational* in their practices is invariably part of the day to day, hard fought-over challenge that educational practitioners face in education systems globally. Yet despite the realities of the contingent nature of educational practices and the local contexts which inform diverse forms of schooling (and sometimes) educational practices, schools as 'social forms' remain surprising durable,

> obstinately stuck in the nineteenth century. They remain stuck there because people doggedly remake them as 'school' – that peculiar form of life familiar to almost everyone in the developed world, remote though it may be from the ways life is lived in other parts of contemporary societies, and in other parts of the days of schoolchildren, their teachers, their parents, their communities and the organisations in which the children will one day work.
>
> (Kemmis et al., 2014b, p. 2)

There is a semantic distinction between the lifeworld of *educational* practice, the institutionalisation and systemisation of *schooling* and the interplay between these forms of life is lived out in education settings every day. It is a distinction that gestures towards fundamentally idiosyncratic and discrete worldviews. These distinctions are captured in the following definition of education taken from Kemmis and colleague's 2014 book, *Changing practices, changing education*:

> In our view, education, properly speaking, is the process by which children, young people and adults are initiated into forms of understanding, modes of action, and ways of relating to one another and the world, that foster (respectively) individual and collective self-expression, individual and collective self-development and individual and collective self-determination, and that are, in these senses, oriented towards the good for each person and the good for humankind. (p. 26)

The significance of making such distinctions between education and schooling is a provocative issue taken up by authors in many of the chapters in this book such as Chaps. 8 and 14. It is explicitly discussed in more detail in the opening section of Chap. 10 by Edwards-Groves, Grootenboer and Smith.

Education in the (Re)Making: Praxis, Practice and Practice Architectures

Schooling in its modernist manifestation could be said to masquerade as education. In doing so, its practices assume a variety of forms and functions in different sites, influenced by different political, cultural, social and material conditions. As a microcosm of social life with enduring consequences for the participants entangled in its practices, education and schooling endeavours require persistent scrutiny—a goal with which the authors in this book, like Stephen Kemmis, concur. A central aim of this book therefore is to foster such scrutiny, that is, to not only keep the debate about education and schooling open by providing scope for [re]considering possibilities for more humanistic forms of educational practice in an era dominated by technocratic systems of schooling, but to examine education in the making.

Examining education in the making means studying the practices and practice architectures that enable and constrain renewal, growth and change as it happens in actual sites of practice. While in many ways it seems commonplace, a truism, to remark that practices always happen somewhere, some time, it also turns out to be one of the most important things to say about them. Indeed, it is a wonderful act of revelation to discover how and why practices occur as they do, where and when they do, and how they relate to other things also present in the sites where they happen, as well as to other practices with which they interconnect. Through empirical analyses, we have seen the value and fortune to discover the sociomateriality of practices, and as Ted Schatzki (2010) puts it in *The Timespace of Human Activity*, how practices relate to material and other features of sites in 'practice-arrangement bundles'. Studying education practices in sites also reveals how these practice-arrangements bundle together to exert pressure on practices as they unfold materially in physical-space-time, discursively in language and socially in relationships.

Education as it is currently practiced is increasingly under pressure through school policy regimes dominated by management, standards, standardised curriculums and student assessment. Thus, to understand it—and fundamentally to improve it—requires critical perspectives of educational practice and praxis. Critical educational praxis forms another key platform of Stephen's work. As such, underpinning the

arguments presented in some chapters is a critical view of education and schooling. A critical view seeks to address three major questions about education practices (adapted from Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014a):

1. Are current practices irrational, unreasonable and incoherent?
2. Are current practices unsustainable, ineffective and unproductive?
3. Are current practices unjust, serving the interests of some at the expense of others and causing unreasonable conflict or suffering?

Indeed, a critical view of current schooling practices suggests that some practices are to a large extent irrational, ineffective and unjust. As such, and consistent with the seminal work of Stephen Kemmis, *critical participatory action research* emerges as one way to speak back to these injustices, as professional engage in critical inquiry into their own practices, and to understand and change the associated *practice architectures* in their sites.

Understanding the practice architectures associated with educational practices enables educators and researchers work towards educational renewal, growth and change. Practice architectures is those cultural–discursive, material–economic or social–political conditions that enable and constrain how practices unfold discursively, in and through the doing of activities in physical space-time as people encounter one another in different roles and interpersonal relationships. Capturing these conditions requires a dynamic theory of practice; one that highlights the relationship between practices and the practice architectures that influence the conduct of practices in real time. Over the past decade or more, Stephen's theoretical work has led the way in the development of the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008); noting that many of the authors in this book (see Chaps. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 8, 12, 13 and 14) have drawn on the theory of practice architectures to study the nature and conduct of education as it is practiced in different sites. An evolving reference list of publications utilising the theory of practice architectures is presented as Appendix.

Making and remaking education requires recognising the conditions that influence the particularity and substance of the sayings, doings and relatings that, in the doing of something, act as shaping, intersubjective mechanisms. These are socially accomplished. According to Kemmis et al. (2014b), accomplishing practices involves entering the social world within which

> characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doing) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (sayings), and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings)… that 'hang together' in a distinctive project.
>
> (Kemmis et al., 2014b, p. 31)

As the theory emphasises, education projects, like teaching hairdressing students at TAFE to cut hair or leading the professional learning of teachers, are always comprised of an interconnected arrangement of sayings, doings and relatings that are influenced by particular historical, political, linguistic, social, material and cultural conditions. These conditions form practice architectures or influential circumstances

or states. Practice architectures simultaneously and continuously exists in or exerts pressure on practices as they are actually unfolding discursively, actively and relationally in real time. As Stephen attests, understanding practices and practice architectures that shapes one's work forms an important dimension of being an educator.

Understanding Being an Educator and Practising Education

> What does it mean to be an educator, not just of children or young people or adults in the trades and industry, but also **for** a community and society? In my view, it means **connecting** with people in the community, **communicating** with them, and **contributing to** their lives in ways that make our shared lives more **sustainable**.
>
> Stephen Kemmis[2]

Understanding education sits alongside understanding what being an educator entails when practicing education. Practicing education, for Stephen Kemmis, relates not only to what happens in education sites or institutions (like in preschools, schools, universities, trade schools, technical colleges, vocational and training schools), it means recognising your place in what happens as part of a broader societal good. As the above quote suggests, contributing to the ongoing development of a sustainable community and just society is, thus, a distinctive part of being an educator. Being an educator is not, or should not be, bounded by the practices that happen within the limits of the fences and gates that surround institutional sites. It is broader than that; it is a both/and practice that attends to the needs and circumstances of people in the local sites with the aspiration to also reach into communities and beyond. This is a theme that underwrites much of the work of Stephen, and so emerges across the chapters in this book as a central idea.

Education practices—whether they are connected to curriculum, evaluation, pedagogy, research, development, innovation or policy—as Stephen attests must strive for sustainability. For him (as described in Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018), this means education for:

1. *environmental sustainability* which means to provide students and communities with knowledge to help them sustain the land, water, air and biodiversity inherited from our forebears and must preserve for future generations;
2. *economic sustainability* which means to find and give y students and their communities the knowledge, skills, capabilities and wisdom they need to conduct business, to run industries, to provide services in local communities and regions;
3. *social sustainability* which means teaching how and why people can and should live together in harmony, helping people to understand social trends and their consequences, and helping to make social life sustainable so people can live

[2]Excerpt from Occasional Address, "Education for Sustainability", Faculty of Education graduation ceremony, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, April 5, 2006. A fuller version of the address is found in Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018). Understanding Education: History, Politics and Practice. Singapore: Springer.

together in peace and goodwill in ways that respectfully rejects racism, ageism, sexism, homophobia or cultural or religious intolerance;
4. *cultural sustainability* which means recognising and respecting cultural difference by getting to know and deeply understand other people and their cultures well enough to know what we can openly and willingly learn from them; and
5. *personal sustainability* which means to equip students to live sustainable lives, helping them face risks and challenges, and develop personal qualities and capabilities like resilience, self-esteem, confidence, enterprise and a continuing hunger and capacity to learn to meet new demands and opportunities.

These five principles orient education towards the good for each person and the good for humankind (Kemmis et al., 2014a, b, p. 26) and are perspectives taken up by many of the contributors to this volume (see in particular Chaps. 5 and 15).

Education, Sociality and Intersubjective Meaning Making

Stephen Kemmis's unfolding educational history has always been alongside the lives of others. Making 'a contribution, small or otherwise, to changing the fate we all share', as quoted in the opening of this chapter, requires being in the company of others. For Stephen, living an educational life means being with others, together changing the way people live in the world in sustainable ways. It is a life that—in practice—acknowledges and attends to the centrality of the social participatory dimension of education. The authors in each of the chapters of this book have worked alongside Stephen during various stages of his career, and theirs; they individually and collectively show through their words the influence that being with Stephen has had in shaping their respective careers, perspectives, and practices.

The notion of 'being-with' (Shultz, 1967, as cited Duranti, 2010, p. 12) is critical for realising the potential and promise of education. Participants in practices form reform or transform meanings subjectively for themselves through the *inter*subjective realm of 'being-with' others. It is in the moments of interaction (at the time) that people move from *intra-* to *inter*subjective meaning making, creating (for themselves through interacting with others) spaces (or moments in physical space-time) to understand one another, to do things together and to relate to one another. In this, what happens is dependent on shared meaning making whereby people develop and extend chains of reasoning so that what happens, what is said and the ways people relate to one another is mutually understood and comprehensible. Here, the suggestion is, that individuals meet others in physical space-time as interlocutors in relationships, in interactions, through language and activity. And so, as people come together in human activity, they create an intersubjective space in which they act in the present; this is a space that is simultaneously being shaped by the remembered past (as traces from history) and in anticipation of possible future actions (Duranti, 2010).

Each of the authors in this book has become practitioners of particular kinds of education practices by co-inhabiting (acting in and on) the intersubjective spaces in the moment, in physical space-time and over historical time. In their individual and collective encounters with Stephen Kemmis and others, they have, over different historical times, brought to bear particular sayings, doings and relatings drawn out from their individual and collective experiences doing their particular work with Stephen. This might have been as Stephen's doctoral supervisor and mentor (like Bob Stake), fellow graduate student (like Tom Grayson), colleague (as was David Jenkin, Fazal Rizvi and Bill Green), friend and co-author (like Wilfred Carr), co-author and colleague (like Robin McTaggart), peer and critical friend (like Ted Schatzki, Susan Groundwater-Smith and Nicole Mockler), co-leader of an international research network (like Karin Rönnerman, Petri Salo, Petra Ponte and Jan Ax), fellow committee member and advisor (like Uncle Stan Grant, Carmel Wallis and Kaye Bryan), student (like Kathleen Mahon), mentee and co-author (like Tracey Smith, Hannu Heikkinen, Anne-Maree Lloyd and Susanne Francisco) or his co-researcher (like Ian Hardy and Laurette Bristol). It is in the specificity of their interactive moments that these persons encountered Stephen as interlocutors in interactions in the intersubjective spaces they co-created with him; their interactive moments, their conversations, became their practices simultaneously shaped by the time in history. For MacIntyre (1988, p. 12), conversations like these constitute *traditions*:

> A tradition is an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least part of those fundamental agreements, and those internal, interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted. Such internal debates may on occasion destroy what had been the basis of common fundamental agreement, so that either a tradition divides into two or more warring components, whose adherents are transformed into external critics of each other's positions, or else the tradition loses all coherence and fails to survive. It can also happen that two traditions, hitherto independent and even antagonistic, can come to recognize certain possibilities of fundamental agreement and reconstitute themselves as a single, more complex debate.

The interlocutors represented in the pages of this book are mainly those internal to traditions that we have collaboratively constructed; a few are external, representing alternative traditions.

Authors in this book will show, through their particular case, the ways that being with Stephen (at particular times in history and place) has formed particular intersubjective spaces relevant for the practices and associated tasks and relationships in which they found themselves (as teacher–student, as mentor–mentee, or as colleagues, peers, co-researchers, co-workers, co-authors, as fellow students, as members of the same boards and committees). For Stephen, it is evident in his response (presented in Chap. 16), that these enduring relationships, formed through a life lived in practices, a shared commitment to education, arise from an equally tangible commitment to personal sustainability.

In both a metaphorical and empirical sense, authors will show the ways they, with Stephen, oriented to one another's ideas through particular education practices, made apparent in their shared:

- semantic space whereby the words and language they used to engage with one another enabled them to share meanings, create discourses and mutual understandings relevant for their work at the time;
- activities conducted in physical space-time whereby they engaged with one another pragmatically and practically in work and tasks using relevant resources or suitable material objects to accomplish their work; and,
- roles and relationships which attributed different positions of power, solidarity and agency, as they encountered each other in different kinds of educational work.

These spaces are never neutral; they are always contested and mediated by past and present practices and by particular cultural–discursive, material–economic or social–political arrangements that influenced what happened at the time. Acting in these spaces, authors acknowledge their subjectivity as individuals, but at the same time importantly position their work as being formed through participating in shared intersubjective space/with Stephen Kemmis.

How Can We Know the Dancer from the Dance?

Stephen once remarked that 'the role of a professor is to increase the CV of others". Many of the chapters in this book are a testament to how he has put this principle into practice. Indeed, a strong a lifelong commitment to collaboration with a range of people, including junior academics and neophyte researchers, is evident across all the chapters—not simply as a kind gesture, but as a manifestation of his philosophical stance on academic life. It is in this spirit that we provide this opening chapter to this festschrift. For us, this festschrift is not only a time for celebration, it is a time for reflection, a time for examining the influence of the academic life and contribution of an important scholar. Like walking through the hallways of long ago times and faraway places, a festschrift is a moment for the recipient and his colleagues to be cast back, to take stock, to question what experiences shaped him/us? his/our views? his/our practices? but also be confronted by another's perceptions of him/us? what distinguishes him-us in the field? his/our work? But this task brings with it a particular kind of challenge for the writer—as the authors of chapters herein attest: there is some difficulty in considering the work and influence of the man without being drawn into reflecting on the man himself. It is therefore poignant to return to the last verse of William Butler Yeats' poem (1865–1939) 'Yeats' poem 'Among School Children' that ends:

> O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
> Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
> O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
> How can we know the dancer from the dance?

For us, these words illuminate the enduring puzzle of attempting to distinguish between the man and the man's life, the man from his ideas, the man from his

practices; yet they offer a poetic rendering that has no tidy or precise conclusion. The words are also one's that with Stephen Kemmis, we (the editors, along with Ian Hardy and Laurette Bristol) used to try to understand the interdependences between practitioners and their practices in a number of research conferences and texts. For example, in *Changing Practices, Changing Education*, we wrote:

> In this ever-changing world, things do not stand still, frozen in social tableaux. As we are equally well aware, change is happening all the time – in a dance between identity and otherness, a dance between the reproduction of some things alongside the transformation of others. Each day brings new beginnings despite the solidity of what yesterday seemed to guarantee: what we remember, what we desire, what words mean, the reliability of language, the weight and place of objects, the self-evident-ness of our own places in space and time, the security of legitimate social orders, the dependability of family and friends, the otherness of strangers. Each day brings new beginnings despite the seeming solidity of these things and their place in our reconstitution of today's world from the world of yesterday. Among other things, circumstances change as new ideas emerge from new conversations, and as new aspirations arise. They change with shifts in the weather, and as people and things move from one place to another; and they change with shifts in the relationships between people and with tilts in the power-relations of the social orders we inhabit.
>
> The transformation of schools and schooling for the twenty-first century entails the same kind of dance between reproduction and transformation. Education and schooling cannot be other than what they were yesterday and what they are today unless there are some significant transformations of the practices that reproduce and reconstitute schooling as we now know it. Education and schooling will not be equal to the new historical challenges of the twenty-first century, that is, if we cannot discover, develop and sustain changed and new practice of education.
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> (Kemmis et al., 2014a, b, p. 2–3)

This excerpt forms a core platform for the ways that the ideas presented by many authors in this book have been considered.

Overview of the Book

The next section of this chapter outlines the chapters in this volume; these include recollections and reflections from significant people in his educational journey and have characterised key aspects and influences of Stephen's oeuvre. Chapters are written by colleagues and doctoral students of Stephen's across all stages of his academic career. The chapters are generally in chronological order and are organised around three broad overlapping themes[3]: (1) personal recollections and reflections; (2) Stephen's influence on academic work; and, (3) Stephen's location in and contribution to particular research field/s.

[3]This outline is not necessarily presented in sequential chapter order.

Theme 1: Personal Recollections and Reflections

Although this book is not only a public affirmation of Stephen as an scholar, there is no doubt that to a greater or lesser degree, all the chapters include some personal accounts of shared experiences between the authors and Stephen because incontrovertibly 'how can we know the dancer from the dance?' (Yeats, 1965). Chapter 2, written by Stephen's close friend and long-time collaborator—Wilfred Carr—provides a key insight into this entanglement. Wilfred directly and beautifully addresses the intersection of the personal and the professional in relation to understanding and developing educational research, philosophy, theory and practice. Through his three-phase biography, Carr draws on conceptual tools from seminal philosophical authors, including Aristotle, Habermas and MacIntyre, to show how there is a coherence and development in Stephen's work across the different stages and phases of his career. Indeed, Carr argues that Stephen's CV reveals a unified and constant story that comprises what Macintyre calls 'the narrative unity of human life' (1984).

At the end of Chap. 10, Christine Edwards-Grove, Peter Grootenboer and Tracey Smith provide an epilogue where they show how the integrated personal and professional dimensions of Stephen's work and practice created conditions where these three (and other interlocutors across his career) could thrive in their professional and academic careers. His practices, as they recall, serve as an exemplar of how others can be *stirred into* educational practices; a notion embraced in Chap. 12 written by Kathleen Mahon, Susanne Francisco and Anne-Maree Lloyd.

The chapter 'Reminiscences, Reflections, Recognition' (Chap. 15) pauses for a moment to provide reflection and personal accounts about the life and work of Stephen Kemmis. These are moments in time shared by its authors, Thomas Grayson, David Jenkin, Uncle Stan Grant, Carmel Wallis and Kaye Bryan. The different stories form vignettes from across Stephen's career, turning a mirror back across places, spaces, times and practices from eras past and considers how his work—then and now—stands. Their words offer insights into what it means to 'live well in a world worth living in' recognising his continuing and steadfast commitment to securing a genuinely, culturally respected life for Australian Indigenous peoples and his work invested in securing environmental sustainability for future generations.

The concluding chapter to this volume has been written by Stephen himself; it was his opportunity to reflect on the ways his life and work was (and still is) entangled up with the life and work of the chapter authors. In this chapter, Stephen draws across a life lived in practices to remind us that contestation is a normal state of affairs. Partly, it is a simple matter of our all being different. In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt (1958, p. 8) puts this beautifully:

> Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives or will live.

To that, we can add that each of us has our own perspective, our own presuppositions, our own horizons. And so we always meet one another, as interlocutors, as embodied beings, and as social and political beings, in intersubjective spaces (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018) where we have to negotiate meanings, and

coordinate actions, and arrive at decisions, and do our best to preserve cordial relationships with one another. It is through our encounters with one another in and over time that the authors in this volume as Stephen's interlocutors have become his friends who have, in their different ways, richly nourished each other through talk and texts, and who have thus, *in practice*, re-shaped each other's lives. Consider the challenges that remain for education and educational research.

Theme 2: Stephen's Influence on Chapter Authors' Work

In Chap. 12, Mahon, Francisco and Lloyd use Stephen's more recent work on 'practice architectures' (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis et al., 2014a, b), an auto-ethnographic inquiry process as well as the concept of 'stirring in' (ref.) to discuss the formative influence and impact of Stephen's work and ideas on their work as academics. Using the theory of practice architectures, they analyse narratives of their encounters with Stephen and his work. Their aim is that these narratives contribute to ongoing theoretical conversations about lived experiences as the practice-forming processes. Mahon, whose doctoral research drew heavily on the theory of practice architectures, was the last of Stephen's doctoral students.

In Chap. 13, which focuses on the site-based nature of educational practices, Jane Wilkinson and Laurette Bristol develop their ideas using *practice architectures* and *ecologies of practices*. Importantly, it also illustrates the *dialectical* nature of this influence, with the authors sketching how the thinking tools of practice architectures and ecologies of practices can be brought into critical and fruitful dialogue with other forms of critical inquiry, such as feminist and postcolonialism in order to respond to the preceding questions of socially unjust practice.

Through tracing his own professional history and influential collaborative work with Kemmis over decades, Hannu Heikkinen in Chap. 6 returns to the same signposts he met at a crossroads of his career almost two decades ago. He lays down important grounds to establish new ways of considering age-old educational and societal problems: (i) research for practice, (ii) research about practices and (iii) research as praxis. Taking the lead from Kemmis, he argues, we need (i) action research, (ii) practice theories and (iii) a praxis orientation to research which starts with the question: what must we do as educators and educational researchers so as to enable better life for all of us, and also the unborn generations in the future?

Theme 3: Locating Stephen in a Research Field/s

Perhaps it would be more appropriate here to locate Stephen in research *fields*, although as we have discussed above, the phases or foci of his work have been intimately related and developmental. The early chapters by Bill Green (Chap. 3), Fazal Rizvi (Chap. 4), and Robin McTaggart and Rhonda Nixon (Chap. 5) focus on

Stephen's days at Deakin University. Green clearly outlines and discusses the fertile environment where they worked together (with what history now shows to be many other leading educational academics), and how the fields of evaluation, critical theory and action research began and evolved. The chapter by Rizvi focuses more specifically on a shared evaluation project they undertook in the mid-1980. Together, they collaborated to evaluate the Victorian *Participation and Equity Program*, and from this they prepared a book; *Dilemmas of Reform* (1987). This chapter is specifically focused on Stephen's work in educational evaluation and shows how evaluation can be practiced that is philosophically consistent and defensible, but also practical and useful.

For many, perhaps the most well known of Stephen's work is related to action research. Of course, this is grounded in the seminal text with Wilfred Carr—*Becoming Critical*. This work was applied and made accessible to many through his work with Robin McTaggart in the *Action Research Planner* (and more recently in the *Revised Action Research Planner* with Kemmis et al., 2014a). In Chap. 5 McTaggart and Nixon provide an account of the development of the initial *Action Research Planner* and its subsequent revisions. In particular, they describe the conditions that gave rise to these books, including new understandings about educational research, concerns about educational evaluation and teacher accountability, and emerging issues related to democracy, equity and social justice. Although the first planner was written in 1988, these issues and concerns seem to be perennially current and are as prevalent today as they have been over the length of Stephen's career. Thus, action research remains a current and developing *field*.

In their chapter (Chap. 7), Karin Rönnerman and Petri Salo provide insights into action research from a Nordic perspective. In particular, they show how *communicative spaces* are foundational to action research and the development of educational praxis. Kemmis, Rönnerman and Salo were leaders of a team that established an international research network (PEP),[4] with members representing different action research traditions (including Australia, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Colombia). This enduring, and long-standing collaboration has created and sustained professional communicative space, where those involved have been able to investigate action research practices and learn from others who practice in other traditions and cultural contexts. In this chapter, the authors show how researchers and practitioners can collaborate with one another in collegial and productive ways that move beyond the usual conferences and presentations.

Closely related to Stephen's seminal work on action research is developments in the field of *practitioner research*, and close colleagues of Stephen's in this work have been Susan Groundwater-Smith and Nicole Mockler. Not surprisingly, the notion of educational practitioner research proposed by Groundwater-Smith and Mockler in Chap. 8 is established in 'critical collegiality' (p. x) and communicative space, which create conditions for solidarity and generative shared enterprises, thus providing a viable and ethical alternative to those promoted in neoliberal discourses.

[4]For a list of the publications by the group see Appendix.

The primary field that has dominated Stephen's later work is *praxis* and *practice theory*, although threads of this can be seen from his early days. Thus, the chapters in the second half of this book focus on this area. Praxis is most overtly addressed in the chapters by Jan Ax and Petra Ponte (Chap. 9) and Edwards-Groves, Grootenboer and Smith (Chap. 10). Ax and Ponte discuss praxis and the continental European tradition of pedagogy as 'the science of the child's upbringing',[5] and make the philosophical case for a more ethically and morally informed understanding of educational practice. Edwards-Groves, Grootenboer and Smith consider the relevance of educational praxis in and for contemporary time in an Australian context. Drawing on an empirical example, they show how 'everyday routine' classroom practices might unfold as a form of praxis. In this way, they address some of the critical questions raised by Kemmis—what is the purpose of education? *and* in whose interests does it serve? not in an abstract way, but as wisdom *in practice*.

There is no doubt that Stephen's work (with colleagues) in developing seminal philosophical, theoretical and practical understandings of practice has been groundbreaking, most comprehensively captured in the book *Changing Practices, Changing Education* (Kemmis et al., 2014a, b). It is appropriate then, given the gravitas of Stephen's work in this field, that the influential practice philosopher and author Ted Schatzki contribute a chapter (Chap. 11) that charts the state of practice theory and Stephen's place in its development. Of note, after making the case for practice theory in his essay, Schatzki concludes by presenting the limitations of practice theory and argues the need for 'theoretical alliances' with other harmonious theories to more comprehensively understand education and other aspects of human life.

After the broad perspective on practice theory presented by Schatzki, the three chapters by Mahon, Francisco and Lloyd (Chap. 12), Wilkinson and Bristol (Chap. 13) and Hardy (Chap. 14) all draw specifically on the *theory of practice architectures* and the *theory of ecologies of practices*. In these chapters, the authors show how practices at a range of levels and in different contexts can be understood and developed using these theories. Ian Hardy was also influenced by Stephen, beginning with his time at Charles Sturt University. In his chapter, Hardy applies the theory of practice architectures to his field of educational policy, and through an Australian example he reveals how Kemmis' theoretical work can be used to critique education, but also to show how it might be done differently.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have presented the rationale and philosophy behind this book, and while we are fond of Stephen as a close friend and colleague, this volume is not a form of specious hagiography produced to 'massage his ego' or share personal anecdotes. Rather, this book has been developed in order to capture, share and discuss some of the seminal educational ideas that Stephen has developed over more than

[5] As differentiated from the usual Anglo-Saxon understanding as 'teaching'.

40 years and which have had such a profound influence on educational scholarship and practice. There is an urgent imperative for these ideas to be shared because they provide hope and see the possibilities for education, even in an era that is dominated by the pressures and constraints of schooling. Thus, while the chapters in this book can and do stand alone, together they provide a coherent and compelling case for considering educational practices in ways that benefit the individual students they serve, and concurrently the communities where they live—to foster individuals who can, even in challenging times, *live well in a world worth living in* (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018). As such, they are a clarion call to readers of the clear, moral imperatives that can and must education as both an ideal and an ever-evolving form of socially just practice.

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Chapter 2
A *Festschrift* for My Friend?

Wilfred Carr

> *When I speak of a man's philosophy I mean something of this sort. I see a man living a long and busy life; I see him doing a large number of different things, or writing a large number of different books. And I ask myself, do these actions or these books, hang together? Is there any central thread on which they are all strung?*
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> R. G. Collingwood, 1893, p. 6.

Abstract This chapter takes the form of an intellectual biography of Stephen Kemmis written from the perspective of a colleague and friend who has worked closely with him for the best part of forty years. I will try, as best I can, to describe some of the enduring ideas and beliefs that have permeated the numerous different theoretical and empirical research studies that Stephen has undertaken throughout his career as well as some of the major philosophers and theorists—both classical and modern—who have had a profound effect on his thinking. On the basis of this biography, I will distil some understanding of what it is that has always provided the underlying coherence of Stephen's work and which allow us to see how the separate and seemingly diverse episodes in, and stages of, Stephen's academic career, form part of a single and continuous story that constitutes what MacIntyre calls 'a quest for the good'.

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I

Stephen Kemmis is a long-standing academic colleague and my close personal friend. It is a friendship that has endured for 40 years and, for this reason, it is entirely appropriate that I should contribute to a book celebrating his academic life. But the closeness of our friendship and my intimate knowledge of his academic work also qualify me to raise some awkward questions that other contributors might find too embarrassing to ask. Should Stephen Kemmis be the recipient of a *Festschrift?* Since this *Festschrift* is made up of contributions written by Stephen's academic colleagues and friends, is it not vulnerable to the suspicion that it is little more than an exercise in hagiography—an idealised portrayal of Stephen that treats him with undue reverence and in an altogether too flattering way? In the German academic culture within which it has its roots, a *Festschrift* is only presented to eminent scholars whose scholarly publications have not only made a substantial and significant addition to the research literature of their chosen field but, when taken together, have challenged and radically transformed how theory and research in that field of inquiry is conducted and understood. Do Stephen's research publications meet these demanding criteria?

My answer to these questions starts with the conversation between me and Stephen that began in 1977 when I was spending a year at Deakin University. During our initial conversations, it soon became apparent that we shared the same educational and academic values and beliefs. It also became clear that we had some common concerns about the current state of education, educational theory and educational research. One such concern was with how the dominant 'behavioural objectives' approach to curriculum neglected fundamental questions about the educational aims and purposes that the curriculum should embody and promote. Another was with the prevailing positivist view of educational research as an applied science. Yet another was with the widespread assumption that educational theory could provide educational practice with the intellectual virtues that it so patently lacked. What also concerned us was that the conventional belief that educational research can and should be 'value free', denied both the possibility and desirability of forms of educational research in which educational values played a central role. It therefore came as no surprise to me when, at the outset of his academic career, Stephen began to implement a personal research strategy that addressed these concerns and that was to determine how his research plans were to unfold over time.

This research strategy was heavily influenced by the work of Lawrence Stenhouse, a British curriculum theorist who Stephen had worked with during the late 1960 when he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Applied Research at the University of East Anglia. Stephen fully accepted Stenhouse's view that curriculum development depended on teachers enhancing the *educational* value of their curriculum practices by engaging in action research (Stenhouse, 1975). But he also believed that the rationale for Stenhouse's notion of 'teacher as researcher' was theoretically under developed and that curriculum theory needed to incorporate a social theory—a theory which would locate the curriculum in its historical and social context and so allow teachers to address research questions about the distorting effect

of political influences and social structures on their curriculum aims and practices. The social theory that Stephen believed would meet this need was provided by one of his intellectual heroes: the German critical theorist Jürgen Habermas. In his book *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Habermas advanced the idea of a critical social science that created knowledge and understanding of how existing social and material condition impede the 'emancipatory human interest' in freedom and rational autonomy. (Habermas, 1972). For Stephen, the idea of a critical social science' raised the prospect of developing a 'critical *educational* science' that would serve these same emancipatory aspirations and ideals.

During his time at Deakin University (1978–94), Stephen began to develop the idea of a critical educational science in a series of publications which shifted the theoretical basis of curriculum theorising and research from the narrow confines of behaviourist psychology to the more ideologically sensitive perspective afforded by Habermas's critical theory. Prominent amongst these were (with Peter Cole and Dale Suggett) *Orientations to Curriculum and Transition: Towards the Socially Critical School* (1983, 2014a); (with Lindsey Fitzclarence) *Curriculum Theorizing: Beyond Reproduction Theory* (1986); and (with Fazil Rizvi) *Dilemmas of Reform*: *The Participation and Equity program in Victorian Government Schools* (1987). At the same time, Stephen set about revising the existing understanding of action research so that it could serve the aims and aspirations of a critical educational science. To this end, he produced a number of seminal publications elaborating the idea of 'emancipatory action research' and explaining how it could be organised and undertaken by teachers in their own classrooms and schools. Prominent amongst these was (with Wilfred Carr) *Becoming Critical*: *Education*, *Knowledge and Action Research* (1986) which was subsequently translated into Spanish. Another major publication was (with Robin McTaggart) *The Action Research Planner* which was first published in 1981 with the fourth edition appearing in 1988.

Since 1990, Stephen has continued to further develop and advance his initial research strategy by engaging in a series of theoretical and empirical studies focussed on the nature and structure of social practices. This has resulted in numerous publications in which the social practices of education were construed as a species of '*praxis*'—ethically informed action aimed at realising some internal 'good'. These publications provide a detailed understanding of the nature of educational *praxis*, the kind of knowledge which informs it, and the kind of research that facilitates its development. These include *Research for praxis: Knowing doing* (2010) and (with Tracy Smith) *Enabling praxis: Challenges for Education* (2008).

Stephen has never undertaken his academic work as an isolated individual. At Deakin University and at Charles Sturt University, he fostered the development of distinctive research communities whose members engaged in collaborative inquires that focused on their own shared concerns. Stephen was also a founder member of the '*Pedagogy Education and Praxis*' research programme: an international and cross-institutional research community whose members included established scholars, early career researchers and doctoral students from Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Norway and other Nordic countries. Stephen has never regarded these research communities as peripheral or marginal to his research. They were

essential to creating what Habermas called 'communicative space'—a social context in which all can participate in free and open dialogue and in which collaborative relationships between researchers can be sustained.

There is no doubt that, when taken together, Stephen's research projects and publications offered a radical challenge to the existing views of curriculum and curriculum studies, led to important new insights into our understanding of educational *praxis* and made an original and significant contribution to the theory and practice of educational action research. It is also true to say that Stephen's research achievements have already earned him the kind of accolades and honours—visiting professorships, honorary degrees, prestigious awards and the like—that reflect the high esteem in which he is now held by his academic peers. But, although this kind of recognition clearly reinforces Stephen's claim to be the recipient of this *Festschrift*, the fact that it is made up of contributions by his friends means that the suspicion of hagiography still remains. Can this suspicion be removed? Is it possible to find an alternative and, perhaps more compelling, rationale for this *Festschrift* for which claims of hagiography do not—indeed could not—arise?

II

On several occasions, Stephen has formulated his view of the purposes of education in the following words:

> Education has a double purpose. On the one hand, it aims to form and develop individuals with the knowledge, capabilities and character to live good lives…. On the other hand, education aims to form and develop good societies, in which the good for humankind is the principal value. (Kemmis, 2012; Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2017).

Answers to questions about the purpose of education always reflect the particular historical period and the specific cultural context in which the questions are being formulated and addressed. Stephen's understanding of his own historical and cultural location has always been influenced by Habermas's view that a defining feature of modern societies is the all-pervading cultural ideology he called 'scientism'—an ideology in which bureaucratic and technological forms of rationality have become so widespread as to make it virtually impossible for ordinary human reason to play any significant role in the collective determination of social ends. It is thus unsurprising that Stephen has always advocated educational aims that foster 'individual and collective self-expression, individual and collective self-development and individual and collective self-determination'—aims that will emancipate ordinary human reason from oppression and domination and so empower individuals to participate in open dialogue about the kind of lives they lead and the kind of societies in which they live (Kemmis, 2012). In this sense, Stephen's view of the aims of education, no less than his view of the aims of educational theory and research, not only reflects his continuing faith in the enlightenment values of emancipation, empowerment and rational autonomy. It also reveals how Habermas's critique of modernity informs his

commitment to educational aims that can restore the role of reflective and critical reason in the conduct of social life.

Although Stephen's understanding of the aims of education is clearly informed by the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas, the reason why he insists on relating these aims to the notions of 'the good life' and 'the good society' reveals the influence of another of his intellectual heroes: the ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, whose *Nicomachean Ethics* (1955) still remains the most brilliant philosophical inquiry ever conducted into what the good life is and how we might build the kind of good society that can sustain it. It is a book that Stephen has read many times, and it has had a profound impact on all his work.

"Every activity, every inquiry, every practice seems to aim at some good; for by the good we mean that at which we everything aims" In this trenchant opening sentence to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle asserts an obvious truth: to call something 'good' is simply to say that it is something sought or aimed at. But, Aristotle continues, 'if there is some one goal among those we pursue in our actions, which we desire for its own sake, and if we desire other things for its sake, …it is plain that this would be *the* good…' Aristotle identifies this good—the ultimate good—as *eudaimonia*, which is usually translated as 'happiness' but is better understood as 'faring well' or 'behaving well'. In what does this kind of 'happiness' consist?

For Aristotle, since rational behaviour is the defining essence of human beings—since we are, by our very nature, 'rational animals'—it follows that it is in terms of the right and proper exercise of human rationality the ultimate good has to be defined. And the right and proper exercise of our rationality requires that it be exercised in a morally principled way. So he defines the good as 'the activity of the soul in accordance with virtue'. It is thus only those whose rational thoughts and actions flow from a virtuous 'soul'—by which Aristotle means something like 'character'—that can achieve the kind of happiness that constitutes their *eudaimonia*. To say that someone has achieved happiness is thus to say that when their life is evaluated as a whole, their thoughts and actions are judged to be those of a virtuous person who, for this reason, can be said to have achieved *eudaimonia* and in this sense lived a life that is 'good'.

The virtues are thus precisely those qualities the possession of which will enable the individual to move towards their ultimate good and so achieve happiness. But the virtues are not themselves the preparatory means for securing this goal. Nor are they a range of human emotions, a list of intellectual capacities or a set of personal skills. To act virtuously—to do what is right—is to act on the basis of emotions, capacities and skills that are themselves formed by the cultivation of the virtues. In this sense, happiness is not an emotional state to be achieved but a way a life to be lived. Aristotle called this way of life 'the good life'—a morally satisfying life devoted to the practical pursuit of the human good. For Aristotle, the activities through which virtuous individuals pursue the good were those that the Greeks called *praxis* and which we would translate as morally informed practice. But this 'good' is not some externally related end to which *praxis* is the instrumental means. Rather the good of *praxis* is intrinsic to and can only be realised in and through *praxis*. It is thus a form of 'doing action' precisely because its good can only be done and can

only exist in the action itself. For Aristotle, all political activity was regarded as a form of *praxis* and so too was education.

Aristotle also insists that the individual is a 'social and political animal' who can only live a good life by participating in the life of a community whose shared *praxis* is aimed at realising some common good. For Aristotle, the virtues that he regarded as central to the good life for the individual always include qualities of mind and character that will enable them to contribute to the shared good of their community. The 'good society' is a community which sustains a way of life in which the good life can be lived. In this sense, the good life is only possible in a society worth living in and a society worth living in can only be sustained by individuals who possess and exercise the appropriate virtues.

Much of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is devoted to discussing the highly specific list of intellectual and moral virtues that characterise the life of the individual who is a member of the *polis*—the small-scale Greek city state where the policies and laws of the community are formulated and in which the face-to-face relationships of communal life find their home. Aristotle includes in this list such virtues as justice, prudence, temperance and courage but he finds no place for those virtues—such as faith, charity, humility and purity—which were to characterise the understanding of the good life endemic to medieval Christendom. But for Stephen, the parochial nature of Aristotle's account of the good life implied, not that it should be abandoned or rejected, but that it should be reconstructed and revised to take account of Habermas's powerful critique of the modern world in which we now live. Fortunately, this is a task that has been undertaken by the British philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre. In his seminal text, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (1981), MacIntyre, like Habermas, provides a damning critique of the modern world. His central claim is that modern societies are in a state of 'grave moral disorder'—a situation in no small part due to the fact that we now inhabit a cultural milieu which is 'after virtue' and hence a culture in which the notion of 'good' has become vacuous and lost its meaning. He therefore sets out to show, in some considerable detail, that though *The Nicomachean Ethics* is a book written in and for a culture very different from our own, it nevertheless provides the necessary starting point for rehabilitating the Aristotelian view of the good life in a way that would make it appropriate to the modern world.

He begins this task by giving a definition of 'a practice' which, like the Aristotelian concept of *praxis* incorporates the notion of an internal good. 'By a practice' says MacIntyre, 'I am going to mean any socially established co-operative form of human activity to which goods internal to that form of activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity' (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 175). As examples of practices MacIntyre mentions practical activities such as farming and architecture as well as intellectual activities such as history and biology. And he would clearly regard educational research as a practice as well.

On the basis of his definition of a practice, MacIntyre reformulates Aristotle's definition of a virtue as 'an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the

lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving such goods' (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 178). Following Aristotle, he then argues that because practices are necessarily social and co-operative activities, the virtues are always exercised within the context of a particular community of practitioners whose members strive to achieve the goods internal to their shared practice.

The next stage in MacIntyre's argument is to define the good life in terms of human practices. Specifically, he argues that, by confronting and dealing with the various distractions, frustrations and obstructions they invariably encounter in seeking to realise the goods internal to their particular practice, individuals thereby engage in a 'quest for the good' through which they further develop their understanding of what the good is and how, in the light of their own social and historical circumstances, the good life is to be lived. For this reason—and unlike Aristotle—MacIntyre claims that what it means to live the good life will vary according to time and place. Also—unlike Aristotle—he insists that this 'quest for the good' is not some high-minded act of philosophical contemplation. Nor is it a deliberate search to discover some determinate or fixed ideal. Still less is the good something that can be adequately characterised in advance of the quest. Rather it is in terms of the quest itself—this searching for the good—that the good life is to be defined. Thus, he concludes 'the good life … is the life spent in seeking for the good life and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life is' (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 204). So, for MacIntyre, the virtues required to live the good life are those which will sustain individuals not only in the pursuit of the goods of their particular practice but also in their quest for the good. They will therefore include the virtues necessary to sustain the kind of communities whose members collectively seek to live the good life as well as those necessary to sustain them in their efforts to understand what the good life is and how it can be enacted in the world in which they live.

III

I began by outlining the research strategy Stephen formulated at the beginning of his academic career and the kind of concerns it was intended to address. I also mentioned some—but by no means all—of his major research achievements and some of the ideas and arguments of Jürgen Habermas, Aristotle and Alasdair MacIntyre that informed much of his published work. If an intellectual biography of Stephen's academic life were ever to be written, there is no doubt that these philosophers would be afforded a central place. Such a biography would, of course, also include an account of Stephen's most significant academic achievements. But the only way to determine which of these philosophers' idea and arguments should be included and which of his activities and achievements are significant would be to see them as parts of Stephen's academic life as a whole. And the only way to do this would be to write this yet to be written biography as a continuous and coherent story whose continuity and coherence would require answering the questions asked by Collingwood in my

opening quotation. 'How do all the things he has written and done "hang together"? Is there any "central thread" on which they are all strung'?

From what I have said so far, a tentative answer to these questions has already begun to emerge. For it is now becoming apparent that as well as providing the theoretical basis for much of Stephen's research, Aristotle and MacIntyre also offer an external vantage point from which the 'central thread' providing unity and coherence to his academic activities can be made more visible and transparent. They are able to do this because they offer the conceptual resources for constructing an understanding of how, as a theorist and researcher, Stephen has always conducted his own academic activities as *practices* with their own internal goods and hence as essentially social activities that he could only undertake in a research community whose members understand their own scholarly activity as a species of *praxis*. If Stephen's intellectual biography were be written from this kind of Aristotelian perspective, his research activities and achievements would be interpreted not only in terms of their contribution to a particular field of research but also as key moments in a narrative account of how he undertook a series of theoretical and empirical inquiries that would enable him to overcome the obstacles and difficulties he encountered in seeking to realize the goods of his own academic practice. It would be a story of why, in the light of his own peculiar social and historical circumstances and as the bearer of his own particular academic role, he had the kind of concerns that he had and pursued the kind of research strategy that he did. It would explain why he advocated educational aims that 'form and develop individuals with the knowledge, capabilities and character to live good lives' (Kemmis et al., 2014b, p. 2). It would also make explicit how he developed critical curriculum theory and emancipatory action research as theoretical and methodological responses to the ways in which technologisation and bureaucratisation—those core embodiments of the ideology of 'scientism'—were transforming dominant forms of theorising and research into instrumental activities directed towards externally imposed goods. It would reveal how his studies of the nature of practice were part of a concerted effort to understand and conduct his own educational and academic activities as a species of *praxis*. And it would interpret the creation of the *Pedagogy, Education and Praxis* research network as an attempt to nurture and sustain the kind of research communities in which his educational and academic *praxis* could be authentically expressed. But in order to show how these different activities and achievements 'hang together', this biography would have to present them as interrelated parts of Stephen's academic life as a unified whole. And, written from this Aristotelian perspective, it would do this by portraying them as key episodes in a quest for the good and hence the activities and achievements of someone who himself exemplifies what the good life is and how it is to be lived in the modern world. It would, in other words, be a biography whose 'central thread' derived from an understanding of how Stephen's theory was his practice and how he practised what he preached.

IV

Does my interpretation of Stephen's academic life and work suggests a rationale for the publication of this *Festschrift* that is more satisfying than those normally advanced? If, as I have suggested, his academic activities and achievements are best seen as integral parts of a life that embodies a quest for the good, then any judgement about whether he is worthy of such an honour is always a judgement about the extent to which, in this quest, he has either succeeded or failed. Such a quest is fraught with difficulties and dangers. It may be frustrated or abandoned and can, for any number of reasons, fail. The conclusion I reached on the basis of my interpretation of Stephen's academic life is that it has, in the sense conveyed by MacIntye, been a good life—a life lived in accordance with those virtues of intellect and character required to live such a life. Stephen will no doubt be reluctant to accept this conclusion but—whether he recognises it or not—it is what provides unity and coherence to the diverse episodes and events that make up his academic life. And—whether they recognise it or not—it is the reason why his colleagues and friends wish to honour him with this *Festschrift*.

But even if this conclusion is correct, and even if this is a sufficient reason for awarding Stephen such an honour, does not the fact that it is his friends who wish to confer this honour means that concerns about hagiography remain? To answer this question, I must—once again—return to Aristotle.

Two of the ten books that make up the *Nicomachean Ethics* are devoted to a discussion of the nature of friendship. Aristotle begins this discussion by identifying three kinds of friendship: friendship based on mutual self-interest, friendship based on pleasure and friendship based on the goodness of character or virtue. Because they are based on superficial qualities, the first two kinds of friendship are dismissed as inferior and are not usually long lasting. Aristotle insists that only a virtuous friendship is a genuine friendship since it is based on a person wishing the best for their friends, regardless of utility or pleasure. It is 'a complete sort of friendship between people who are good and alike in virtue'. For Aristotle, what makes people 'good and alike in virtue' is their common pursuit of the good internal to their shared practice. It is therefore this allegiance to the common good of their community that makes possible the kind of bonds between individuals which constitute genuine friendship. The question of whether Stephen should be the recipient of an honour on the grounds I have suggested is therefore a question about his contribution to the good of the community of practitioners to which he belongs. But since this question can only be answered by those who share his allegiance to this good—those who are 'good and alike in virtue'—it follows that it can only be answered by his friends. The fact that it is Stephen's friends who have judged him to be a worthy recipient of a *Festschrift* is therefore not much so an indication of hagiography as the recognition of an indispensable qualification.

Aristotle's discussion of friendship has one more implication. For I now realise that when, in my opening sentence, I said that 'Stephen Kemmis is my long-standing academic colleague and my close personal friend', I was not identifying two separate relationships—one professional, the other personal. Rather I was describing a

friendship in which the personal and the professional were indivisible elements of a unified whole. It is an enduring friendship rooted in those shared values—the 'goods' of our educational and academic practices—which underpin the conversation that we began 40 years ago. So, it turns out that when Aristotle said that 'being a good man and a good friend is the same thing', he was merely stating what, for him, was an obvious truth. But for me, he is stating the reason why I have answered the question posed in my title in the way that I have.

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Chapter 3
Curriculum Studies in Australia: Stephen Kemmis and the Deakin Legacy

Bill Green

Abstract When the history of curriculum studies in Australia is written, it is likely that the work done at Deakin University from the latter part of the 1970s to the early 1990s will figure significantly in it, as indeed it should. Under Stephen Kemmis' leadership and example, a group of researchers and educators produced at least two major bodies of scholarship: one addressed to action research and practitioner inquiry, and the other to rethinking curriculum 'beyond reproduction theory'. While the work on Participatory Action Research is perhaps more well known, and internationally so, this chapter focuses on Deakin's contribution to curriculum studies, as a distinctive field of inquiry and praxis. Although it appears now to be little acknowledged in Australia, the Deakin project surely represents an important and distinctive contribution to curriculum studies, as well as constituting an object of interest for curriculum history more generally. The chapter documents, and is therefore an acknowledgement of, Stephen Kemmis' role and significance in curriculum history, in Australia and beyond.

Historically speaking, curriculum inquiry in Australia is quite a recent phenomenon (Green, 2003/2015). It emerged as a formal field of praxis and inquiry only in 1970s, partly motivated by what Bill Connell (1993) memorably described as a 'curriculum breakout' in the immediately preceding period. This was a time of considerable ferment in Australian education, from 1960s on, and overall an opening up of educational possibility. Originally, a special interest group and then a network, the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), was formed in 1980, while the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) was established in 1975, thereby indicating an emerging recognition of the centrality of curriculum considerations in education and schooling, in policy and research. What is little remembered now, and under-appreciated, is that Deakin University, and more specifically Stephen Kemmis (henceforth SK), played a particularly important role in developing curriculum inquiry in Australia, paralleling similar developments overseas, and indeed actively dialoguing with them.

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This chapter is addressed to telling that (his)story, as a contribution to curriculum history as well as to this Festschrift, in acknowledging such a long and illustrious career.

The Deakin Legacy

When the history of curriculum studies in Australia is written, it is likely that the work done at Deakin University from the latter part of 1970s to at least early 1990s will figure significantly in it, as indeed it should. Under SK's leadership and example, a group of researchers and educators produced at least two major bodies of work: one addressed to action research and practitioner inquiry (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, 1986), and relatedly, the 'socially critical school', and the other to rethinking curriculum 'beyond reproduction theory' (Kemmis & Fitzclarence, 1986). Related scholarship in this area at Deakin included work in classroom research and in specific subject areas (e.g. physical education, environmental education), although as I indicate later this tended to run parallel to SK's own work and interests. SK's principal contribution was in bringing together two intellectual traditions: that associated with the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) at the University of East Anglia, on the one hand, and on the other, that informed by Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School, in particular, the work of Jürgen Habermas. While the work on Participatory Action Research is perhaps better known, locally and internationally, this chapter focuses on Deakin's contribution to curriculum studies as a distinctive field of inquiry and praxis.

Established in the mid-to-late 1970s, Deakin University was characterised by, among other things, an innovative approach to educational research and development, as well as teacher education, to be realised within a reconceptualised Faculty of Education. SK was among several new appointments, expressly commissioned to bring new insights and perspectives to various educational fields, including curriculum studies. Tackling this challenge with his characteristic energy and erudition, he led the curriculum studies group over the best part of a decade or more, and by 1990, he was clearly recognised as 'one of Australia's foremost contributors to discussions on curriculum and practice' (Smith, 1990, p. iii). Moreover, he was a leading figure across the crucial decade of the 1980s in shifting educational research in Australia towards a more qualitative, 'naturalistic' orientation, or at least towards greater balance with regard to what counts as educational research, opening up new lines of inquiry in case study and the like. There is more that could be said about the Deakin phase of SK's career, and no doubt others will take this up in the present volume, as has been done elsewhere (Tinning & Sirna, 2011).

One thing that warrants mentioning at this point, briefly, is the institutional circumstances at Deakin, certainly in that early phase. As SK readily acknowledges: 'Our good luck was that we were working at a time of great opportunities, when there were funds to support the exploration of promising ideas and the promising young researchers who advocated them' (Kemmis, 2011a, p. 86), yet there was sig-

nificant work still to be done. The University was set up after the model of the Open University in Britain, providing for off-campus as well as on-campus study. As a consequence, academics worked for the most part in teams, i.e. collaboratively, in the form of teaching-and-research group. This was extremely important, overcoming to some degree the all too common privatised and individualistic nature of academic work (and indeed of teaching). Relatedly, Deakin developed a mode of what has been called 'monograph pedagogy', with academics operating as writers right from the outset, actually producing course materials, which were then formally presented, or 'published'. These took the form of Readers and Unit Guides, but also monographs—small books sometimes of around 20,000–40,000 words, sometimes with accompanying selected articles. Authoritative, innovative, scholarly, produced by the University's own Press, '[i]n many respects these monographs were a cornerstone that Deakin developed as a centre for educational scholarship' (Kirk, 2011, p. 109). Indeed many were picked up and re-published in various formats or formed the basis for more extended publications. This certainly included the work on action research.

Action Research and/as Curriculum Inquiry

The single most important initiative associated with SK and education at Deakin university is *action research*—or more broadly, educational action research. This was quickly adopted as the principal *modus operandi* in the fledgling Faculty, as it began to forge its own distinctive identity as a site of educational research. More particularly, this became an important focus for the Curriculum Studies Group, which SK led from the outset. Since others in this volume are better placed to provide adequate accounts of action research, here I concentrate on its links with curriculum inquiry, as I see it, particularly in Australia. I will also take a somewhat personal or autobiographical perspective in this regard, since I worked at Deakin myself, although sometime after what might be described as its heyday (Green, 2011). It is appropriate nonetheless to say something here about the action research movement itself, from that more personal point of view.

Action research for me is inseparable from the language-and-learning and teacher-as-researcher movements that I first encountered as a practising English teacher, working in Western Australian high schools. Drawing on and formed within the London School tradition in that regard, I was of that new generation of English teachers emerging in the wake of the Dartmouth Seminar, a trans-Atlantic gathering of English educators in 1966 which has since come to be seen as an inaugurating event in the so-called New English (Green, 2016). This was one manifestation (although arguably a particularly important one) in the post-1960s 'curriculum revolution' in Australia (Connell, 1993). Among other things, it was oriented towards a re-valuation of the role and significance of the classroom teacher, as an organic professional, and indeed, as it was later formulated, as a 'pragmatic-radical' professional practitioner (Boomer, 1999). Teachers were encouraged to 'becom[e] their own experts', and to take on responsibility for conducting inquiries into their own practice, thereby gen-

erating knowledge that really mattered, for them. This was greatly assisted by the increasing availability of cheap and manageable tape recorders and related technologies. Hence teachers engaged in local small-scale research and (in particular) study of classroom talk, and new curriculum technologies emerged, such as small-group pedagogy.

In 1981, I co-directed a year-long school-based project on theory and practice in English teaching, drawing on the *Martin Report* (1980), a qualitative study of English classrooms in Western Australian schools, directed by Nancy Martin, from the London Institute of Education. That follow-up project became known as the Kewdale Project, and a fuller account is available elsewhere (Green & Reid, 1986). It is relevant here because the Kewdale Project was, perhaps not unproblematically, an important resource for Shirley Grundy's work on action research and curriculum studies (Grundy, 1987), in itself a major outcome of the Deakin program. While the Kewdale Project itself was never described at the time as action research as such, retrospectively at least it was framed in those terms. It was a combination of *professional* development and *curriculum* development, with the aim of generating a 'practical theory' of English teaching, improving our own practice and also (hopefully) increasing the knowledge base for the profession and the field. The following year, I moved into the academy, at Murdoch University, and became a teacher educator, responsible for primary and secondary English teacher education, at the same time taking up doctoral studies. SK visited Murdoch soon after that, presenting seminars on action research and related matters, thereby consolidating my interest in and indeed my practical commitment to action research, as a key aspect of a Leftist, socially-critical orientation in educational studies. As it happened, during that visit I organised a meeting between SK and the executive and other members of the WA English Teachers' Association. In his usual fashion, SK took copious notes of the meeting, which I recently found and revisited. Those notes make for fascinating reading, even now.[1] At the end of the decade, I moved east to Deakin, where new preoccupations emerged (Green, 2011), and for me at least, action research per se was backgrounded. It was still indisputably part of the atmosphere in which I worked, however—the prevailing culture, and it is fair to say that has remained the case ever since, at least in spirit… (I resume the matter of those notes, briefly, in a short while).

What was action research at Deakin? More particularly, what was SK's vision in this regard? It is difficult of course to distinguish between the person (the 'author') and the program, especially over time, as others matured as academics and developed intellectually and new resources and perspectives became available. However, there does seem to be a certain consensus as to the dominant or most influential form that action research took at Deakin. This was 'openly ideological' and 'praxis-oriented' and keenly attuned to the forms and conditions of social justice, in educa-

[1] Among the points noted at that discussion was *programming*, i.e. teachers' planning of units of work and study—a particular focus of the Kewdale project, as it happens. In a paper published in 1990, I described this in terms of 'professional writing': 'programming conceived in this expanded way is usefully considered as a form of on-going action research' (Green, 1990, p. 54). Looking back, the opportunities for productive work between curriculum studies and (in this instance) English teaching are clear. This point is picked up later in this section.

tion, and in society. Hence, it has been described as 'partly influenced by the ideas of Lawrence Stenhouse, but also enhanced by a political context in which much curriculum work was being done around issues of educational equity' (Noffke, 2009, p. 9). SK's experience working at the University of East Anglia in the UK, and more specifically with the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) was clearly crucial in informing and fuelling the research program he brought to Deakin and developed there. This placed a particular emphasis upon the practitioner, the teacher and on classroom- and school-referenced inquiry, in an 'intellectual climate of collaboration and mutual development' (Kemmis, 2011a, p. 78). Accordingly, over the late 1970s and 80s, '[m]any scholars at Deakin University, and elsewhere in Australia, worked on projects that were school-based and used action research to improve educational understanding and action, as well as their context' (Noffke, 2009, p. 9). Action research morphed readily into what became known as practitioner inquiry, and a dialogue developed between these two forms of expression. Practitioners increasingly participated in research, and educational research itself became more open to qualitative inquiry. There is no doubt that the times were conducive to this new democratic spirit in education—in sharp contrast to the present. What emerges as of special note in this regard was that Deakin provided a platform for asserting and affirming the crucial importance of drawing *practitioners* (teachers, etc.) into educational research and curriculum inquiry. That is, practitioners were to be seen as 'participants', rather than 'spectators'—a distinction reiterated, more programmatically, two decades later (Kemmis, 2011b). Indeed, it can be claimed that two keywords organised the Deakin action research program, namely *participation* and *collaboration* (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, p. 177), ideally to be thought and brought together.[2]

From the outset, SK was working expressly in curriculum studies. Appointed to Deakin in 1978 (i.e. just three years after the University's establishment), he writes: 'I had been appointed as a Senior Lecturer, tenured from Day One, to establish curriculum research in the new University' (Kemmis, 2011a, p. 77); moreover, '[f]or some time, I was the only new appointee in Curriculum' (p. 77). The others in the group were mainly from the predecessor institution, the Geelong Teachers College, and while 'many … had excellent knowledge and skills in their curriculum areas (school science, or history and social science, for example), … they were not so confident about research approaches for curriculum studies in these areas' (Kemmis, 2011a, p. 80). SK was charged therefore with developing a research culture at Deakin, with a particular focus on curriculum studies (i.e. 'curriculum research'). What he brought to the task was a focus firstly on critical social science and secondly on action research, which became, as he describes, 'a more or less permanent feature of our work in the curriculum group at that time' (Kemmis, 2011a, p. 80). This entailed working with teachers, and with schools, and with the profession more generally, in a spirit of critical and participatory inquiry. Moreover, for SK, 'curriculum problems were practical problems, in the Aristotelian sense', in line with his earlier engagement with the work of the notable American curriculum scholar Joseph Schwab (Kemmis,

[2] A third keyword, perhaps rather more problematic, was *facilitation*.

2011a, p. 80). This is a line of thought remaining consistent throughout his career, in fact, and re-emerging with particular force in his later focus on practice theory and philosophy. Schwab and Stenhouse became, indeed, two cornerstones of the curriculum research program at Deakin, although perhaps rather selectively. For instance, while Schwab's 'commonplaces' seemed to be used in teaching, the point is made that 'they do not define a clear focus for curriculum research' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, p. 25). Significantly, while considerable work clearly was done with teachers and students, teaching and learning, and arguably on 'milieu' (however ill-defined that always was), very little seemed to be done with 'subject matter' or 'curriculum making'—concepts I certainly see as absolutely central to curriculum inquiry. This may well be a legacy of SK's non-(school-)teaching background, to some extent at least, although the manner in which education at Deakin was organised is likely to have been a factor, with a division of labour and responsibility emerging between curriculum studies and classroom research, as well as between 'methods' and 'foundations'.[3] Nonetheless, I do think that Deakin's curriculum studies program was perhaps insufficiently 'pedagogic' in its orientation.

Given my own background perhaps, I can't help wondering what if more had been made of Garth Boomer's work at the time, and the line of inquiry he was associated with. I am thinking of Boomer's interest in 'action research' over the 1970s, although he opted not to work with that term then, preferring 'teacher inquiry' (Boomer, 1985, p. 121). While the 'negotiating the curriculum' work clearly had an impact, I am thinking also, more specifically, of his work on programming, on 'composing', and teachers' learning. His paper 'Addressing the Problem of Elsewhereness', delivered at the 1981 national seminar on action research held at Deakin University, demonstrates not only his sense of the (dis)continuities between 'research' and 'learning', 'action' and 'knowledge', but also his view of the strategic value of action research for curriculum and teaching. As he wrote, bringing together teachers' programming and curriculum negotiation, 'the unit of curriculum is itself a piece of action research into learning which can be reflected upon and evaluated by both teacher and student' (Boomer, 1985, p. 128). Moreover: 'Action research will bring theory and practice together, *here* in the classroom. Answers will be sought *here* rather than *elsewhere*' (p. 129). So it seems to me in hindsight that there is much that might well have been drawn more systematically into the Deakin program, enabling a stronger sense of action research *as* curriculum inquiry. At the same time, there are tensions here which I believe emerged in the program as well—for instance, between seeing action research as (localised) curriculum work and taking due account of larger contextualisations and considerations. Even so, Boomer might well have formed the third in a triumvirate, i.e. with Schwab and Stenhouse, shaping and informing the Deakin

[3]Mention should be made of Rob Walker's work at Deakin at this time. Similarly arriving with a background at CARE, his focus was more on classroom research and qualitative inquiry. He was also more oriented to the 'practical' orientation, perhaps akin to John Elliott and the UK tradition. Nonetheless, it should be noted here that he served with SK as General Editors of the Deakin Studies in Education series for the Falmer Press. Among the notable books published in the series were Shirley Grundy's *Curriculum: Product or Praxis?* (1987) and David Hamilton's *Towards a Theory of Schooling* (1989), as well as Carr and Kemmis (1986).

program, to good effect. That remains a 'what if', of course, and besides, indicative of my own interests and investments. SK *and* Boomer: now, that's something to think about, eh?[4] My point is this might well have been more fully engaged with then, in the context of curriculum studies, but wasn't, and I can't help wondering why, and at what cost.

A focus quickly emerged on what was called 'critical curriculum research' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1993). This built on an analysis inspired by Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, and indeed Habermas became a particularly important resource for the program more generally—another 'cornerstone', in fact. A programmatic distinction was made between the 'technical', the 'practical' and the 'critical' as forms of action research, with implications accordingly for curriculum inquiry. Although a concerted effort was made to portray these as aspects within a more holistic, integrated perspective, in effect they became understood hierarchically and even teleologically, with the preferred emphasis falling on the latter—the critical, or perhaps the critical-emancipatory, orientation. This led some to question whether it was indeed the case that 'only [action research] which engages politically and follows a critical theory Marxist ideology was "emancipatory"' (Noffke & Somekh, 2009, p. 1), or whether this was necessarily more valuable or desirable than other perspectives, other theories, other forms of politics. Was it possible to imagine action research and practitioner inquiry without Habermas?

Clearly it was, and this consequently became something of a battleground. Deakin provided a platform for '*critical* curriculum research', or inquiry that was (borrowing from Patti Lather) openly ideological, praxis-oriented and even partisan, in its commitment to social justice. Kemmis and McTaggart (1993) suggest that work of this kind needs to be understood flexibly, and even generously, and as constituting a 'broad church'. They point to Australian developments and debates concerning the 'socially critical school', the 'democratic curriculum' and the 'negotiating the curriculum' movement, among other initiatives, as evincing perhaps different aspects of and emphases in 'critical curriculum research' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1993, pp. 130–131). I think that is correct, although I do wonder if the link historically is more along the lines of a widespread interest in public education and social justice than something to be framed necessarily within the terms of reference of Frankfurt School critical theory and critical social science. This social justice orientation has recently been described as a distinctively generational feature of Australian curriculum (Yates, Collins, & O'Connor, 2011), focusing on the educational significance of the 1970s. It is also worth asking, now, what ground was lost, politically and practically, in insisting on a political–theoretical program which may have seemed to some increasingly at risk of becoming dogmatic and even doctrinal. Even so, that there was something to hold on to under the label of 'critical curriculum research', something genuinely important, is indisputable.

[4]They did work together on various occasions, as it happens. For instance, they were both invited *raconteurs* at the 1985 Australian Curriculum Studies Association annual conference, held in Melbourne (ACSA 1985 Conference Newsletter)—just the second such conference, in fact.

The Socially-Critical School

A related matter to this emphasis on critical curriculum research is what has been already referred to as the 'socially critical school'. This is yet another key idea in the history of Australian curriculum studies which needs due acknowledgement, and accordingly warrants some discussion here. The term emerged in a monograph published by the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education in 1980, entitled 'Orientations to Curriculum and Transition: Towards the Socially Critical School' (Kemmis et al., 1983). Produced under the aegis of a working party, it was presented as 'a contribution, and a stimulus, to the on-going debate in schools about the curriculum of secondary schools and the transition from school to the adult world' (Dow, 1983). SK was clearly the principal author, and his conceptual hand is evident everywhere in the document. To indicate its focus and orientation, it is worth quoting the following passage, taken from the Foreword, in full:

> The authors begin from the premise that the central role of schools is educational, and they argue that in the present social and economic climate schools are being moved, under the guise of 'transition problems', to deflect their attention from this educational role to one of socialization where the existing structure of society is simply taken for granted. *Throughout, the fundamental concern in the report is curriculum: curriculum embodied quite concretely in the framework and the processes of the school, in all its practices, explicit and implicit*. To have a curriculum, a school must be clear about how it produces the effects it does, what effects it aspires to but does not produce, and what effects it does not acknowledge but does produce. To have a curriculum, a school must understand, and have some theory of, curriculum. (Dow, 1983—my added emphasis)

Relatively short and written in a punchy, accessible manner, the monograph is a remarkable document. It proposes three distinct orientations to curriculum, namely the 'vocational/neo-classical', the 'liberal/progressive' and the 'socially-critical'. These are described as 'show[ing] how different educational views manifest themselves in curriculum—in the view of knowledge adopted by the school, teacher-student relationships, assessments, the school community, and the like' (Kemmis et al., 1983, p. vii). Later, 'The three orientations are curriculum positions which are internally consistent and conceptually distinct' (p. 8), aimed at 'teas[ing] out some of the differences between codes in education' (p. 8). The explicit reference here is to Ulf Lundgren's concept of 'curriculum code', which features in his Deakin monograph published in the same year (Lundgren, 1983) for the Curriculum Studies Group—discussed further below. These 'orientations' are quasi-historical formulations, referenced back across Australian educational history, but functioning more as organising frames, 'represent[ing] rather general views about education and its role in society, each has its own critical history and literature' (p. 8).

That the preferred orientation is the 'socially-critical' is made very clear. This is characteristically partisan scholarship, advocating for social justice in and through education and working collaboratively towards such an end, with the focus in this instance being on 'transition education'. The 'socially-critical school' is presented

as 'an alternative image to that of the separate school.[5] We contend that the socially-critical orientation overcomes the problem of separateness endemic to schools adopting the first two orientations' (p. vii). Later, an organic link is proposed between the 'liberal/progressive' and the 'socially-critical', with '[t]he socially-critical orientation' described as 'tak[ing] some of its key ideas from the liberal/progressive orientation but extend[ing] them into a social framework' (p. 18). Nonetheless, it is the latter position that is privileged, of the three, as offering ways forward and opening up possibilities for social change and reconstruction, along with improved or enhanced curriculum and schooling.[6] This is a clear instance (and in many ways an exemplary expression) of what has been described as 'curriculum-as-political-text' (Pinar et al., 1995), albeit grounded firmly and squarely in Australian (and more specifically Victorian) social and educational conditions. Its added value is its explicit engagement with the institutional realities of public schooling and the active collaboration of academics with the professional community, including teachers and bureaucrats. Perhaps the strongest feature, however, is picked up in Dow's Foreword, in its reference to 'curriculum [as] embodied quite concretely in the framework and the processes of the school, in all its practices, explicit and implicit'. What this captures, most effectively, is the relationship between curriculum and schooling, as institutionalised practice. It is at the level of the school and in its very operation that curriculum is most commonly realised—'embodied', literally, in terms of its intercorporeality and intertextuality, its material spaces and places, it is always situated 'doing' and 'sayings' (and 'relatings'). This is still a point needing to be emphasised.

One aspect I want to highlight is the manner in which knowledge is thematised in the 'transition' monograph. It is described as 'dialectical', involving 'an interplay of subjective views of the world and the historical and cultural frame-works in which they are located' (Kemmis et al., 1983, p. 11). Knowledge viewed in this way is always-already problematic; it cannot be taken for granted, or reified. It is 'constructed through social interaction and thus as historically, culturally, politically and economically located' (p. 11). It is linked to action and to emancipation. This remains an important view of school knowledge. It connects readily to an emphasis overall on notions of 'praxis' and 'reflexivity' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983), and on social critique. 'How… should we regard the different kinds of "knowledge" teachers have and use? We should regard it as problematic' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, p. 46). It is noticeable, however, that there is little room here for thinking about what this might mean for work in the curriculum space of school subjects. Indeed, there is no mention at all of subject-disciplinary knowledge in the otherwise insightful review provided

[5]My added note: The notion of the 'separate school', as deployed in the monograph, might now be better termed the 'stand-alone school'.

[6]I note, in particular, the extensive reference made here to Boomer's 'negotiating the curriculum' work (Kemmis et al., 1983, p. 16)—a further indication, it seems to me, that the curriculum research focus might have been enriched by working more closely with progressive work in the subject areas and more grounded form of critical pedagogy, as certainly emerging in Australia at that time. See McTaggart (1991, p. 69) as an (at least implicit) acknowledgement that the Deakin work in action research/curriculum inquiry at that time was more social-theoretical than it might have been, and less pedagogical.

of teachers' knowledge (p. 44), even though that is arguably a key dimension of educational work and professional identity, perhaps especially in the secondary school. It is moreover something that has become especially significant in more recent curriculum debates (e.g. Young, 2008).

Yet, there were possibilities at the time, even so, for engaging more productively with school knowledge, along the lines indicated here. In a doctoral study of English in the New Zealand curriculum, Stoop (1998) drew extensively and specifically on the Deakin curriculum studies program, referencing Lundgren (1983) and Kemmis and Fitzclarence (1986), among others.[7] While his account is more generally an ideology critique of English curriculum change, what is of interest, more specifically, is his view of school knowledge in the case of English teaching and (in my terms) of what gets taught in the English classroom and how it is taught. In his conclusion, he is clearly reaching for a way of working with a socially critical program for English teaching. As he writes: 'Far from adopting a "something old, something new" methodology, I am, instead, attempting to embrace what [Terry] Eagleton… has described as the "dialectical habit of mind"'. He continues thus: 'To some progressive theorists of English teaching, the approach may seem to consort rather too cosily with the hegemonist outlook so roundly criticised in the pages of this study. *I would prefer that readers regard the method as thinking about both sides of [the] contradiction simultaneously*' (Stoop, 1998, p. 203; my added emphasis). This is surely what is implied in the 'manifesto' for the Socially Critical School. What it suggests to me is that there might well have been some very generative discussion among the teachers involved at the time, in and across different subject areas and levels of schooling. At the very least, it is likely that the way forward, along such lines, had been actively provided for, although I am not aware of much work actually taking such a step, in subject English or elsewhere.

What is noteworthy, though, is a distinction drawn elsewhere between the 'teacher-as-researcher' movement and the 'school-based curriculum development' movement, both of which were evident at the time. As Carr and Kemmis (1983) observed, '[t]hey had different foci: the individual teacher, and the school'. Moreover: 'The rationale for the teacher-as-researcher approach was individualistic; the rationale for school-based curriculum development collectivist' (p. 23). While this might be disputed, or rather it needs to be more nuanced, the important points to observe are firstly that it points to the significance of working collaboratively, rather than individually, and secondly that it indicates the need for some kind of institutionalisation—in this case, a whole-school focus on socially-critical curriculum and teaching. This is akin to Stenhouse's (1975) notion of 'extended professionalism', in part, and clearly this was something played out in the school as well as in the larger arenas of educational politics and policy, and also in curriculum and professional development.

[7] See also Stoop (1992). The Deakin influence is clear. As well as acknowledging Lindsay Fitzclarence's assistance with an earlier draft, the paper references Kemmis and Fitzclarence (1986) along with Giroux (1990) and Lundgren (1983), although Carr and Kemmis were edited out of the main text of the published version.

A Meta-Theory for Curriculum Inquiry

A question remains as to what actually constituted the work of (re)thinking curriculum in the Deakin program. To what extent was SK involved in generating curriculum theory, of a distinctive and noteworthy kind? It needs to be said, first off, that the opening chapter of the 'Becoming Critical' volume remains an important document in this regard.[8] It very clearly lays out the territory at issue, drawing on key British and American resources and indicating where the Deakin work is to be located. Its ambition is synoptic: it seeks to provide a comprehensive overview. With regard to curriculum itself, as a specific concept, it makes clear that it is inherently 'ambiguous':

> To what extent is the curriculum to be found in a specific act of teaching or learning? To what extent does it refer to a program of work across a whole year? To what extent is it to be understood in relation to historical circumstances and general educational policies? To what extent is it to be found in materials, and to what extent in educational practices? To what extent does curriculum refer to general systems, and to what extent to human encounters? (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, p. 24)

The point is made that 'curriculum theory has to embody a social theory' (p. 23). Curriculum itself is multi-dimensional, multi-levelled, and dynamic. Hence, 'Different curriculum researchers focus on different levels; from the point of view of curriculum as a field, the problem is one of relating the different levels to one another' (p. 26). What is needed therefore is a 'meta-theory': a comprehensive, flexible, informed (meta-)theoretical framing that is sufficiently and sensitively explanatory, and adequate to the complexity of the phenomenon at issue. A prevailing 'theory' at the time was the so-called reproduction thesis. SK pointed to the influence of this in the Deakin work, observing that while it was 'largely expressed in the development of what we would come to think of first as *emancipatory action research* and later as *critical participatory action research*', there were 'other elements to it (continuing to work on social and cultural reproduction theory and approaches, for example)' (Kemmis, 2011, p. 84). Henry Giroux and Michael Apple, among others (e.g. Patti Lather), visited the Geelong campus, often writing course materials (e.g. Giroux, 1990), and it is worth bearing in mind that the later 1970s and early 1980s were the heyday of reproduction theory in educational research.[9] However, just as important was the work of the Swedish curriculum scholar Ulf Lundgren, noted above.

Lundgren published two influential monographs for the curriculum theory course at Deakin.[10] The first, *Between Hope and Happening*: *Text and Context in Curriculum* (1983), was followed by *Between Education and Schooling: Outlines of a Diachronic*

[8] I work here with the original monograph, published in 1983. It was subsequently published, somewhat revised and extended, as a book in the Deakin series for The Falmer Press (Carr & Kemmi, 1986).

[9] For example, Giroux's *Theory and Resistance in Education* was published in 1983, although pre-publications chapters were read at seminars at Deakin (and also Murdoch) earlier. Apple was particularly influential at this time too, both with his own books (e.g. Apple, 1982a, b) and his edited works (e.g. Apple, 1982a, b).

[10] Courses such as this, and the teaching and research group associated with them, need to be acknowledged here. The Lundgren monographs were published in this context, as were those by

Curriculum Theory (1991), almost a decade later. The latter was a revised version of the original monograph, retaining much of it but expanding its scope so as to better register some of the major changes experienced in education worldwide. The preface to the 1991 text concludes, crucially, that '[a] curriculum theory is a method of inquiry' (p. vi). Something of the influence of Lundgren's work in this regard can be seen, once again, in the doctoral study referred to earlier, described as an 'analysis of the English curriculum in its "context of formulation" and "context of realisation" (Lundgren 1983: 13)' (Stoop, 1998, p. 45). It is more fully indicated in the following:

> Curriculum… must be understood as part of a wider socio-historical process: it is produced, managed and reproduced. This notion is captured in the subtitle of this thesis: text and context, drawing on Lundgren (1983). In other words, a curriculum statement must be seen 'both as an historical artefact and as an historical force' (Kemmis in Lundgren 1983: 5). Curriculum, then, is both 'shaped by and shaping history'; it 'betrays the influences of the social context, in particular, the dynamic struggle between state and society. Curriculum texts are ideological: they bear the traces of the struggle of state and society' (Kemmis in Lundgren 1983: 6). (Stoop, 1998, p. 43)

This bespeaks a distinctive 'language' for curriculum inquiry. I cite it because, rather curiously, there isn't much Australian reference to this line of work in the curriculum studies literature, as far as I am aware. That surprised me when I came to Deakin and started on my own investigations and engagements. Perhaps it was because, by then, it had been assimilated into ongoing inquiry. McTaggart (1991), for instance, referred to a more general view of curriculum in his monograph on action research, where he reviewed the current work at Deakin. As he wrote, 'the term "curriculum" is being used here very broadly', somewhat akin to the way in which 'the term "pedagogy" is used in the European tradition', and in 'a sense broader than Lundgren's suggestion' with regard to thinking curriculum in terms of 'selection', 'organisation' and 'methods' concerning 'what knowledge and skills are to be transmitted' (McTaggart, 1991, p. 69). This is interesting; it suggests that 'curriculum' had by this time become rather abstracted and specialised, or at least a matter of theory and politics rather than pedagogy in the more restricted sense, or the situated practicality of curriculum work.

More significantly, SK produced (with Lindsay Fitzclarence) the monograph *Curriculum Theorising: Beyond Reproduction Theory* (1986). My view is that this was a watershed moment in Australian curriculum studies, and that this is indubitably a 'canonic' text in this regard. Indeed, I would argue that it warrants attention in the international ('transnational') field. Instead, it seems not to have attracted much attention at all, which I think is a great pity. Perhaps it is because, by then, the heyday of 'reproduction theory' was clearly waning, and all but eclipsed by other interests

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Kemmis and Fitzclarence (1986) and others which became well known and were circulated widely [e.g. Hamilton (1990) and Giroux (1990)]. The team comprises at different times Lindsay Fitzclarence, John Henry and Colin Henry, as well as SK and others. Outside that group, others at Deakin identifying with curriculum research at that time included David Kirk, working in physical education and curriculum history, and Richard Tinning in physical education and critical pedagogy. Mention should be made too of the MEd research papers and doctoral dissertations emerging from the program.

and foci.[11] Yet, it is still worth reading, by anyone concerned with the intellectual history of the field. I have written on this monograph at length elsewhere, or rather I have drawn on it to develop my own argument with regard to rethinking curriculum inquiry (Green, 2010). Hence, I won't deal with it here as much as it deserves, as a major document in curriculum theory, and restrict myself to making some comments on its substance and contribution.

The subtitle indicates the monograph's ambition, that is, to move beyond reproduction theory per se. But this must also be seen as, necessarily, a movement *through* reproduction theory—through the view and the argument that curriculum and schooling are deeply implicated in, and indeed inextricable from, social reproduction, in its fullest economic, cultural and political sense. It needs to be remembered that at the time, and in this period more generally, this position was at once ('new') orthodoxy and avant-garde in critically oriented curriculum inquiry and educational research, within a legacy tracing back to the publication of *Knowledge and Control* (Young, 1971) and the inauguration of the New Sociology of Education. It was the highpoint too of what was later described, rather disparagingly, as 'curriculum-as-political-text' (Pinar et al., 1995), or at least its first generation. That 'reproduction' remained relevant and indeed of vital interest to SK, in particular, is indicated in the emphatic endorsement provided of Walter Feinberg's (1983) argument:

> To speak of education as social reproduction in the larger sense is to recognise its primary role in maintaining intergenerational continuity and in maintaining the identity of a society across generations even in the context of many significant changes. (p. 155; cited Kemmis & Fitzclarence, 1986, p. 88)

In my explicitly poststructuralist re-articulation, I have drawn on this formulation to refer to 'intergenerational (dis)continuity' (Green, 2010), but the point remains that at a certain level what is always at issue is the relationship between and across generations, which is fundamentally about recognising and negotiating difference(s). This is played out in the classroom as much as in any formally inscribed national curriculum—an interplay of difference and identity, repetition and renewal, in time and history.

The crux of the monograph's argument is its re-assertion of Lundgren's original formulation of 'the representation problem'. As Lundgren (1983, p. 11) put it, 'The representation problem is the *object* for educational discourse'. Curriculum, as he defined it, was '"the necessary solution of the representation problem"' (p. 14). This is taken up in the monograph as an argument about the relationship between 'representation' and 'reproduction', and it is one that SK worries at in a range of papers, as I discuss more fully elsewhere (Green, 2010). Perhaps most notably for me, he provided a chapter in the monograph I edited early in my own Deakin career (Green, 1993a). His chapter was entitled 'Curriculum as Text', and it remains fascinating reading. I focus on it here to provide some sense of SK's highly significant contribu-

[11] I note rather wryly that my own (revisionist) paper on 'reproduction theory' (Green, 1986), perhaps my first major publication and drawing on Derrida, came out in 1986—itself largely unnoticed, I must say.

tion to curriculum studies in Australia, and indeed more specifically to curriculum theory.

The first thing that can be said is that this paper is an acknowledgement of, and engagement with, the so-called linguistic turn in social and cultural theory, which elsewhere has been described in terms of the 'modernism–postmodernism' debate (Green, 1993b). In proposing that notions of 'text' and 'representation' are appropriately drawn into curriculum studies, and useful in terms of developing adequate forms of 'meta-theory', it not only speaks back to the (then) postmodern challenge in education studies—something only very recently emerging on the Australian scene, at that time—but also lays out a persuasive case for a *synthesised* view of different positions and paradigms in curriculum research. The paper begins thus: 'We frequently think of curricula as "transmitting" what students need to know, as if they could—in some unproblematical sense—represent the world to rising generations. *In this chapter I want to treat this idea of "representation" as problematic'* (Kemmis, 1993, p. 35; my added emphasis). This is a typical opening for SK's writing in general, across his career: clear, authoritative and very much to the point. Ever mindful of context and occasion, he addresses the issue, firstly, by drawing in various novels ('some from early this century and others more recent'). These are mobilised to trouble and even confound conventional views of knowledge, communication, character (and motivation) and meaning. Stories (and storytelling) have now become complicated, ambivalent and untrustworthy. It is impossible to know if SK had in mind Madeleine Grumet's wonderful formulation, published in 1981, that 'curriculum is the collective story we tell our children about our past, our present, and our future' (Grumet, 1981, p. 115)—he nowhere mentions it, to my knowledge—but it seems at least likely. Even if he wasn't aware of it, at a subliminal level, there can be little doubt that his paper plays off it, or perhaps its echo in both scholarly and popular culture. His response is powerful and eloquent. Stories, maps, copies—he traces a playful pathway through a thicket of images and tropes, some of which we continue to use and all too often unaware of their figurative nature, and their associated perils. Hence, for example: 'The map metaphor turns out to be only a very alluring simplification: there is a simplification between curriculum makers and teachers and students (and others) which the map metaphor cannot capture' (p. 41). And then there is the memorable image, drawn from Pavic and traced through Calvino, of the puma and the rope… Enough said.

The paper then moves to perhaps more familiar territory, to many readers of SK's work: an account of classrooms and schools, and systems and societies, through a network of classifications and relationships, in a characteristic rhetoric of threes. Language, work, power… As always this is at once intensely scholarly, sometimes densely so, and deeply pedagogical: it teaches us how to think. Charts proliferate, expressly designated as 'tables of invention'. 'The form and content of *classroom life*—its patterns of communication, production and organization—can be "read" in the forms and content of the *curriculum*, the forms and patterns of *pedagogy*, and the forms and patterns of *classroom authority*' (Kemmis, 1993, p. 45). The argument is relentlessly dialectical, recalling Fredric Jameson's classic formulation of 'metacommentary' (Jameson, 1971). Culture, economy, politics… The invitation

is to follow things through, to make connections, and to ask questions, always wary of being enveloped in text as it winds and winds, inexorably onwards.

Yet, this is also a self-critical, reflexive text, and this becomes clearer as it shifts finally to consider 'Australia' as an object of curriculum. "Just imagine", it states: "teachers in ten thousand Australian schools are all doing the same (or is it?) thing: preparing the rising generation for adult participation in adult society" (p. 48). How is Australia represented in (the) curriculum? Across the range of classrooms and lessons, at different levels, in different places? What relationship is there between the different representations of Australia that are designed and enacted and realised, and other representations, those that were perhaps possible but somehow missed out, by 'accident' or by 'design'? This passage alone could even now be drawn into pedagogy, productively and powerfully, for teachers and for students, in schools and universities.

Importantly, what emerges is an emphasis on *practice*, on practices—those which are involved in curriculum making, multi-scalar, multiply realised, and more broadly, in terms of production, communication and organisation, and the practice of social life itself. 'Text' and 'practice' are thereby linked. The message is: be careful out there. Be sceptical, and savvy. 'The curriculum is a social medium, constructed and constrained as all media are. The world it "represents" is manifold and diverse, always subject to interpretation, construction, and reconstruction' (p. 52). The end result is that the paper becomes ultimately an act of advocacy for what might well be called a critical (curriculum) literacy, as a crucial 'tool-kit' for practitioners everywhere. This paper alone, and also its associated research program, deserves to be much better known today. It remains in the record, however, as an indispensable ('canonic'…) resource for curriculum inquiry in Australia, but also beyond.

Conclusion

What I have tried to do here is to lay out a case for re-assessing SK's role and significance in the history of curriculum studies in Australia. His work at Deakin from late 1970s to early 1990s was extraordinarily generative. It ranged from working with teachers and schools, bureaucracies and unions, to the development of the development of rich forms of 'meta-theory'. Something of its value and originality can be seen in the way that Lundgren, for one, has remained active in Swedish curriculum studies and in Europe more generally (Sivesind & Karseth, 2014), working with the same kind of reproduction theory that he outlined in his Deakin monographs, without ever recognising the radical challenge that emerged in the Deakin project, in its articulation of 'representation' and 'reproduction'. That SK ran into trouble himself, in this regard, as I suggest elsewhere, doesn't lessen or deny the achievement: he opened the door. And then of course, there was so much more on offer, as I have sought to demonstrate here.

I want to conclude by making two last observations. The first concerns something that I think few would recognise, understandably so, and that is the continuity that

exists between this innovative work in curriculum studies, in the early years of SK's career, at Deakin, and his later work in practice theory and philosophy, in its later phase, at Charles Sturt University. I had the pleasure of working with him at both sites, and there is no doubt in my mind that his more recent work on 'practice architectures' (Kemmis & Mahon, 2017) and the like can be traced back to his innovative and engaged work on curriculum and schooling, then. It is fascinating to follow the threads as he works through the fine detail, all the while building again and again a rich synoptic account of educational practice, its possibilities and its constraints.

The second point loops back to an earlier matter: my reference to the notes he took way back in the early 1980s, in Western Australia, in a meeting with English teachers. Handwritten, these notes come with a quite characteristic drawing at the end, of two of those in attendance, almost cartoonish, but quite recognizably them.[12] This is a way of working that many will recognise, across the years: a legacy perhaps of SK's training in case study and evaluation. It is evident again in a paper he produced following a one-day symposium held at the University of Melbourne in October 2006. Addressed specifically to curriculum inquiry in Australia, I had organised this symposium jointly with Lyn Yates, newly appointed as Foundation Professor of Curriculum Studies at Melbourne. Along with a range of others at different stages of their careers, we had invited SK—by then, my colleague at CSU—even though he was clearly no longer working in the field as such, or rather, he had moved on, and was now fully engaged in a research program focused on practice theory and professional education. His attendance was much appreciated, however, and as might be expected, he was an active contributor. He was also taking notes… Indeed, his account is now the only record we have of the event. His paper was distributed not long afterwards (Kemmis, 2006), and it still makes for fascinating reading, as a report on the state of Australian curriculum studies at that time, derived from the symposium's discussions and deliberations.[13] His stamp is unmistakable, however, and in itself is a timely reminder of his contribution to the field, and his authoritative presence in its history. It is a fitting point, therefore, on which to draw this present account to a close. That 2006 paper is another which remains unpublished, but as I see it, it takes its place within what must be recognised as a major archive, itself marking out a record of singular achievement in curriculum studies, and well beyond.

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[12]Indeed one of the figures as the 'hero' in Grundy's (1987) account of action research and curriculum inquiry.

[13]It is worth noting that this line of inquiry, asking questions about the field's vitality and continued relevance in Australia, as well as about whether or not there is a distinctively Australian form of curriculum inquiry, has bubbled away ever since. Its latest iteration is to be found in a recently published Point & Counterpoint set of papers in *Curriculum Perspectives* (Vol. 38, No. 1, 2018).

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Chapter 4
Recollecting the Dilemmas of Reform

Fazal Rizvi

Abstract In the mid-1980s, Stephen Kemmis and Fazal Rizvi worked on an overview evaluation of the Participation and Equity Program in Victoria Australia. This evaluation resulted in a book, *Dilemmas of Reform* (Deakin University, 1987). Their analysis exemplified a new way of thinking about program evaluation that was both historically and philosophically informed and empirically and practically grounded. The notions of meaning and practice were brought together. In this paper, Rizvi will reflect on his experiences of working with Stephen, from the early stages of the conceptualisation of the evaluation to the later stages of writing the report. The chapter will highlight the many qualities, both personal and academic, that Stephen possesses and the many things that Rizvi has learned from him.

Introduction

In early 1984, upon completing my Ph.D. from Kings College University of London, I was offered a position as a Lecturer in Social and Administrative Studies of Education at Deakin University in Geelong Australia. The position signalled a range of new opportunities for me, most notably a chance to apply my training in analytical philosophy to an area of enormous practical importance: education. I was excited about joining Deakin University's Faculty of Education, which, in its five years of existence, had already gained an enviable international reputation for its commitment to innovation in educational thinking, its critical orientation to educational research and its determination to link theoretical ideas to practice. At Deakin, leading the charge for these new ways of thinking about education were two young scholars: Richard Bates and Stephen Kemmis. Bates had interviewed me, so I knew a great deal about him and admired much of his work in the new Sociology of Education. The name Kemmis was, however, new to me. Yet I was repeatedly told that I would

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enjoy meeting and working with him, not least because many of our philosophical interests converged. I looked forward to finding out how.

When I arrived at Deakin in early April 1984, Stephen was abroad and was not due back until late May. This gave an opportunity to read some of his academic writings, including a draft of his now highly influential book *Becoming critical*, co-authored with Wilf Carr. The book gave me a good indication of why many had believed that we would enjoy meeting each other. While I was not committed to the teleological convictions of the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas in a manner Stephen seemed to be, we shared a broadly similar approach to philosophical methods. We were both suspicious of the claims of analytical philosophy and especially the theory of meaning that underpinned its attempt to search for the definitive meaning of the key terms employed in educational thinking. Instead, we both viewed language in performative terms. I subscribed to "Wittgenstien" dictum that "with words we do things" in and through ordinary language. Both Stephen and I rejected the correspondence theory of truth that was implicit in the positivist tradition that dominated educational thinking at that time. We viewed meaning as inter-subjective, created by human communities to make sense of their world and to act upon it; and in this acting the meaning of words often changed. Indeed, I began to appreciate how this philosophical perspective was fundamental to Stephen's theory of Action Research, for which he is known and admired globally.

When Stephen and I finally met in late May, I had already been at Deakin for almost two months. During this time, I had learned of the high regard in which he was held by many of our colleagues, how he was mentoring them, and how he had already created a robust intellectual community that was exploring new directions in education, challenging the dualism between theory and practice and stressing the primacy of professional practice. Accordingly, Stephen had developed very good links not only with schools in Geelong but also with educational policy makers in Melbourne and Canberra. I must admit that I was somewhat daunted at the thought of meeting someone with such a stellar reputation, who had achieved so much already during a relatively short span of time since his own doctorate in 1975 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. But I need not have been concerned, for Stephen turned out to be friendly and approachable, with a wicked sense of humour that put me immediately at ease. Our first conversation was short, but almost instantly I began to imagine how we might create opportunities to work together.

This opportunity came a few months later when Stephen asked me if I would like to work with him on an "overview evaluation" of the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) in Victoria. I had no idea what an "overview evaluation" was; nor did I have any clear sense of the objectives of PEP. Yet I had no hesitation in Sayings yes. Over the next three years, we worked closely on this evaluation project which was funded and steered by the Victorian Department of Education but allowed us much latitude to construct the form and content of the work we did. The evaluation turned out not to be merely a technical exercise but an opportunity to explore deeper conceptual issues about the shifting meaning of the Program's key terms: "participation" and "equity". It also enabled us to consider some basic methodological issues about the traditions of program design, implementation and evaluation. And it helped us to examine the

role of the State in shaping the possibilities and limits of State-sponsored programs of educational reform.

During our fieldwork, we witnessed the program evolves through a series of struggles, both conceptual and practical. In the end, as we told the story of these struggles in our report, the term "dilemmas" kept suggesting itself. Our attention was drawn to the dilemmas of reform that teachers and schools faced and that the program managers had to negotiate, as well as the dilemmas we, as program evaluators, confronted in carrying out our assignment. As we struggled with these dilemmas, I witnessed some of Stephen's many qualities, both intellectual and personal. I saw the ways in which he interrogated complex discourses, practices and institutions, always thoughtfully and calmly. I noted his conceptual dexterity, his ability to create analytical categories with which to capture, examine and explain complex dynamic events about which no agreement existed. I wrote the final report with him, full of admiration with the ways in which constructed his narratives and wrote quickly but methodically. All along, even when we encountered a great deal of political criticism, he never lost his sense of humour and wit, as well as his sense of purpose. In what follows, I want to use our collaboration over 1984–1986 in working on the overview evaluation of PEP as a backdrop to elaborate my recollection of these qualities, to show how well-deserved Stephen's reputation is as an educational thinker, researcher, colleague, as well as a mentor to a large number of scholars around the world, including myself.

The Participation and Equity Program

The Participation and Equity Program (PEP) was launched in mid-1983, following the election of the Hawke Labor Government in Australia earlier that year. Having been out of power for eight years, the new Government was full of energy and committed to a massive program of reform in almost every area of government responsibilities, including education. In many ways, its ambitions reflected its belief that it was unable to complete the reform agenda it had initiated in the mid-1970, when the Whitlam Government was unceremoniously thrown out of office. Nowhere was this more evident than in education, as Labor's new Minister of Education, Susan Ryan, moved quickly to re-establish the social democratic norms that had been the hallmark of the Whitlam Government. PEP embodied these norms.

Ryan viewed PEP as a means of stimulating fundamental changes in secondary education, regarding the ideas of participation and equity as key drivers for interpreting and responding to the major social, technological and economic changes affecting young people. These changes were most disturbingly evident in the rising youth employment figures, steadily increasing from around 7% in 1974 to almost 25% in 1983. While Retention rates to Year 12 had been steady over the past decade, many young people felt increasingly alienated from society with their support for the country's key norms and institutions clearly weakened. In early 1980, Australia was consumed by debates that suggested Australian schools were allegedly producing a

group of young people who were unsuited for the changing world of work. It was widely assumed that they lacked the skills and motivation that were needed to meet the challenges of rapid technological, social and economic changes.

In launching PEP, Susan Ryan noted that the "social climate in which young people are growing up today differs in many respects from a generation ago". She expressed a deep concern about the emergence of an entrenched oppositional youth culture, and the challenges this posed to not only schools but also more broadly to the Australian society and economy. The schools, she insisted, needed to re-think their purposes, how they were governed and related to the broader society. According to the new Labor Government, PEP represented an opportunity for them to do so, through processes that involved collaborations across all sectors of the Australian community.

With its focus on democratic decision-making, the objectives of PEP, as well as its operational philosophy, departed significantly from the Fraser Government's response to the developing crisis facing young people in Australia, expressed in the form of the School to Work Transition Program. That program was largely compensatory and sought to give students the new skills that they might need for the changing labour market. Typically, the Transition Program had encompassed such activities as consumer courses, careers education, excursion to the local industrial sites and work experience, often with little understanding of the ways in which they related to the problems of the labour market. In contrast, Labor had argued, even before its election, that the Transition Program did not, and could not, lead to the creation of new jobs, and that it was not the lack of work ethic that was the problem but the structure of economic, political and educational arrangements. The "youth crisis", it had insisted, demanded a more radical response, with solutions coming from young people, the schools and their communities themselves.

In preparation for taking office, ALP had thus done a great deal of policy work regarding its alternative to the Transition Program. Instead of seeing education as involving human capital formation, it emphasised cultural aspects of schooling. It argued that secondary schools needed to be made more attractive to students, especially to those who came from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this way, Labour did not ignore economic issues, but insisted that the broader issues of economic life and prospects needed to be addressed within the framework of its traditional commitment to democracy and justice. It continued to regard the goal of retention of early school leavers as important, but did not view it as valuable in itself—or as a means of reducing youth unemployment—but rather as a way of enhancing students' life chances by providing them with improved educational experiences. It thus suggested that a comprehensive program of school reform was needed which included a renewed commitment to equality of educational opportunity, greater community participation in the governance of education, as well as wide-ranging curriculum and pedagogic reform. PEP was such a program.

Accordingly, the Labor Government viewed PEP as the centrepiece of its overall framework of youth policies, with the twin objectives of increasing participation in education and working towards greater equality of educational opportunity for all

young Australians. Its approach to program development and implementation was, however, distinct. It issued a highly generalised guide to its objectives, but left the operational details of the program to the states. The Guide insisted, for example, that the program's objectives should not be viewed in narrowly vocational terms, designed to "get the kids off the dole queue". Instead it encouraged schools to build on their experiences of earlier Commonwealth-funded reform programs, such as the Disadvantaged Schools Program [DSP] and the Transition Education Program. According to the Guide, PEP was best conceived as a "learning program" that valued the insights not only of teachers and administrators but also of parents and students, as well as the communities in which the schools were located. The idea was to ensure that the values of "participation" and "equity" were reflected in the ways in which decision-making bodies were constructed and would operate.

PEP was thus overseen by a Commonwealth Coordinating committee, which in the main did not have extensive powers. Most of the operational decisions of implementation and project activities were left to representative joint Commonwealth-State committees for each state, which were asked to work out the more specific guidelines, to target schools and make funds available for approved projects as well as to monitor and evaluate outcomes. In Victoria, the overview evaluation, which Stephen and I, along with Rob Walker were commissioned to conduct, drew upon its own distinctive history of educational reforms, many of which were driven by a number of Ministerial Papers (1981–1982) that had sought to decentralise the processes of educational decision-making. In this way, the Victorian PEP was able to harness the creative energies that had already been ignited in its schools. Many schools had already developed plans for reform, and hence welcomed PEP for the additional funds it provided to implement these plans. The funding of between $25,000 and $50,000 was allocated to a selected group of schools that were either assessed by DSP as disadvantaged or were known to have already developed an effective reform and renewal plan in line with PEP's major areas of concern.

The Commonwealth had declared 1984 as a developmental year for PEP, giving schools an opportunity to consult widely, organise teacher, parent and student conferences to work out plans for reform, participate in exchange visits and develop networks with various professional and community networks. Through these networks, it was thought teachers would be able to forge cluster arrangements—pool ideas, expertise and resources. All along, PEP was thus viewed as a school-based reform program, with 75% of the funds allocated for proposals from schools or groups of schools. The remaining funds were used for system-wide initiatives, to foster and support effective practice in schools, designed to enhance participation rates and develop system-wide initiative to promote greater equality of educational opportunity. PEP insisted that for genuine reform to occur, teacher professional judgement needed to be trusted and reforms were unlikely to be sustainable unless they were linked to local circumstances and priorities. Accordingly, PEP provided a great deal of latitude to schools to understand the idea of participation and equity in their own distinctive ways, and to develop reform plans whose seeds had already been implanted in ways that were unique to that location. The assumption was that if the

creative energy of schools was unleashed then a whole variety of reform practices would inevitably emerge, with greater likelihood of success in embedding them in the institutional ethos of the schools.

Developing a New Approach to Program Evaluation

For Stephen and I, these entirely democratic assumptions, together with PEP's broadest possible definition of its objectives, made the task of evaluation both exciting and challenging. Exciting because we were curious as to how schools in Victoria interpreted the requirements of reform and their mandate, and challenging because the program did not provide us with any clear set of criteria against which to assess its success. The lack of definitive evaluation criteria did not mean, however, that the program was laissez faire about its activities. On the contrary, it was committed to a complex evaluation strategy in which different aspects of the evaluation process were integrated into different facets of the Program's work. Indeed, as we noted in our report (Rizvi & Kemmis, 1986, p. i), "PEP was, in many ways, an 'evaluation-rich' program: it emphasised self-evaluation and reflection as part of a strategy for school improvement at each stage, and in each location of the program". What we were expected to do was to provide an *overview* of the Program's various activities, often relying on the reflective and evaluative practices of the schools themselves.

From the beginning, it was clear to us that the Victorian PEP relied on a particular theory of educational reform. This theory rejected a rationalist approach to reform, which worked on the means to achieve the declared objectives, taking for granted the meaning of these objectives. Such an approach it was believed was based on a highly generalised view of the contexts in which change took place: it overlooked the importance of the conditions in which teachers interpreted the specific requirements of what needed to be changed and how. The rationalist view assumed that reform could be dictated in a top-down fashion and implemented in a technical manner. Following the relative failure of many prior attempts to reform educational practices in this way, PEP was based on a bold belief that desired effects could not be produced by edict and funding alone; and that genuine reform required a greater measure of trust in teachers and schools to do what worked best for them, within, of course, a broader framework of goals and objectives. This meant that some degree of contestation was inevitable in any attempt at reform, as the participants debated the meaning of the program objectives and their relevance to the actual circumstances in which they worked.

PEP was not implemented in the same way across all of the states and territories in Australia. But in Victoria, especially in light of its Ministerial Papers, PEP rejected the idea of "management by objectives", at least at the beginning of the Program. It recognised that in practice, PEP would be a social construct, a product of a struggle over ideas, social relationships and ways of working. This *contestational* view of reform was entirely consistent with Stephen's world-view that he had considered and debated with many of his own mentors and colleagues. For exam-

ple, Stephen had worked closely with Robert Stake, Tom Hasting and Ernie House at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where they had challenged the key assumptions underlying the traditional technical view of educational reform, as well as of program evaluation. At Illinois, ideas of responsive and democratic evaluation had been widely promoted at its Centre for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation [CIRCE]. After Illinois, Stephen worked at the University of East Anglia, where he encountered such leading theorists of humanity-driven reform as Lawrence Stenhouse, Barry McDonald, Rob Walker and Ivor Goodson. Stephen had not only imbibed these academic orientations and educational values, but had also contributed to them. He brought these ideas to the intellectual work we did in trying to think through the demands of our overview evaluation, making it responsive not only to PEP's objectives but also to the intellectual and political work of teachers and administrators who viewed PEP as a unique opportunity to fundamentally reshape the educational landscape in Victoria.

I found my conversations with Stephen riveting, as he introduced me to a new set of ideas, theorists and literatures, while remaining habitually respectful of my own contribution to our work. His views were firm, but he never objected when I challenged them. I looked forward to our conversations; not least because our debates exemplified the debates PEP was encouraging within the broader educational community in Victoria. In any case, the disagreements between Stephen and I were relatively minor. Like me, he was deeply committed to a performative view of language and viewed the processes of contestation as fundamental to a collective understanding of what reform meant and how it was best achieved. We agreed that a program of reform was not a monolithic entity but a shifting amalgamation of sub-groups and traditions, of dynamic changes in views and allegiances, and of priorities and practices. We were convinced that different actors within the program had different interests and aspirations, but nonetheless had capacity to compromise and work towards shared common values negotiated through dialogue and debate. Contestation, we believed, should not be thought of as a problem, a barrier to reform, but rather as necessary for ideas, practices and relationships to be advanced towards their institutionalisation.

With the consensus that contestation was an educationally productive force, we viewed our task of evaluation to be critical interpreters of the debates that took place among the program participants themselves, as they too struggled to interpret and fashion their distinctive understanding of the values of participation and equity. In this sense, we engaged in what Giddens (1984, p. 20) had called "double hermeneutics", or as we rather colloquially referred to as "interpretation of interpretation". In this way, the theoretical perspective we brought to the overview evaluation of PEP was markedly different from the traditional rational-technicist view of evaluation. Instead of attempting to determine the extent to which the program's activities met its stated objectives, we sought to understand its evolution and work, by considering its emerging forms of discourse, practice and organisation, and look for evidence about the nature, formation and distribution of the contests which gave PEP its particular form in Victorian schools.

Our approach to program evaluation differed from the traditional approaches in one other important respect. Since we believed that the program debates and

practices were dynamic, changing in the light of shifting circumstances, we decided that it was important to engage the PEP community in Victoria in an active dialogue about our evolving insights, rather than wait to articulate them at the conclusion of the Program, in a cumulative manner. We determined therefore that in addition to the final report that we were committed to producing, we would also write regular notes about various aspects of the program—the exemplary practices we observed, the debates we witnessed and the problems we saw emerging. The notes were short, much like the blogs that are now produced, and invited feedback from the teachers and administrators engaged in the program. We did not view this feedback loop as a test, or validation or falsification, of some of our tentative ideas but as a way of promoting debated, embodying the democratic and responsive spirit of the overview evaluation. At times, these notes generated uncomfortable responses but they demonstrated how it was possible to challenge even the most cherished and institutionalised of ideas about undemocratic and socially unjust practices in education.

Program Achievements and Ideological Shifts

PEP in Victoria had a tentative beginning, not because the program officers hesitated to get moving but because authorisation of funds and a statement of administrative guidelines were late in arriving from the Federal authorities in Canberra. But once the Program was established, we were able to commence work on overview evaluation. Over the next two years, we witnessed two distinct periods that characterised the Program's achievements and challenges. During 1984, there was much enthusiasm about its potential, with PEP's democratic aspirations generating a great of productive dialogue, leading to highly imaginative solutions in schools to problems that had been long standing. Even the most cynical of teachers began to see the Program's reform possibilities, appreciating the trust that had been placed in their professional judgment. During the second half of our evaluation, however, a major change came over the Program, driven partly by rescheduling of the budget (amounting effectively to a major cut), and partly by the broader changes in the Federal Government's governance philosophy. From mid 1985, a major ideological shift was clearly discernible towards what was then called "economic rationalism", but is now widely known as "neoliberalism". This shift was clearly evident in pronouncements that displayed an acceptance by the Australian Government of the broader principles of "new public management" that intergovernmental organisations such as the OECD and the World Bank had been promoting for a number of years.

In 1984, PEP in Victoria employed a range of strategies to work towards reform. Chief among these strategies was to release teachers from their normal duties to reflect and work with parents and students on issues of equality of educational opportunity and outcomes, and what could realistically be done at the level of school policy and classroom practice. Many schools felt that the most direct and systematic way of addressing barriers to participation and equity demanded collective action. Some schools employed external consultants to facilitate discussions and develop concrete

plans for change. Many of these plans consolidated earlier reforms with respect to gender equity, multiculturalism and inclusive education. Student governance also became a major theme of reform, as did the ways of making parent participation more effective. In this way, PEP enabled many teachers, parents and students to re-think their relationship with each other in radically different ways from the kind of relationships that had developed over decades. Indeed, at the beginning of 1985, many teachers felt that PEP done a great deal to boost their personal and professional confidence; and that as a strategy of teacher renewal and professional development, it had proven more effective, most notably in relation to the work they needed to do with alienated students and disadvantaged communities.

With respect to curriculum and pedagogic reform, Victorian PEP established a School Resource Program (SRP) to support the development and dissemination of "good practices" across groups of schools. SRP encouraged sharing of ideas, rather than keeping them locked in within particular school communities. For some Program participants and observers, SRP became the flagship of the Victorian PEP. It generated a great deal of enthusiasm and unleashed the creative energies of teachers. It identified a number of themes such as Inclusive Education, Cultural Support and Mixes of School and Work, and selected through a formal submission process up to five schools to work together to develop and disseminate ideas and information on these themes. The Program worked on the principle that tried-and-tested material developed by teachers themselves was more likely to be taken up more readily by other teachers. It was rightly believed that a great deal of curriculum already existed in schools that remained untapped. SRP was thus intended to have a catalytic effect, accelerating curriculum reform in Victoria. It produced a great deal of material, using a wide variety of media. Some of this material could still found in schools many years later.

In addition to funding targeted schools directly and establishing SRP, Victorian PEP also set aside funds to promote and support system-wide change. The idea of system-wide initiatives was first put forward by the Federal authorities. It involved setting aside 25% of the allocation for each state to address issues that affected all schools and could only be addressed at the level of the system as a whole. So, for example, it was correctly believed that unless there were system-wide changes in credentialing practices, tertiary access and examination systems, the capacity of schools to make changes would be limited. This line of thinking was not entirely new to Victoria, but PEP enabled system-wide initiatives that had already been in existence to be strengthened. With PEP funding, for example, the McClintock Collective extended its network of Science teachers in Victoria to increase the participation of girls in Science subjects. Similarly, the Access and Credentialing Project enabled four universities in Victoria, a number of colleges and Secondary Schools authorities to get together to produce a range of important discussion and research papers designed to improve practices relating to access to tertiary institutions. The success of these initiatives can perhaps be best shown by pointing to the fact that many of these projects were subsequently incorporated into the mainstream activities of the Victorian Department of Education.

During the first year of the Victorian PEP, a great deal was thus achieved, even if there was initially a great deal of uncertainty and confusion about the Program's objectives and its operational arrangements. During the second year however things changed markedly, due to factors both local and national. Locally, some schools were deeply upset about not being included in the list of targeted schools, while other schools argued that the Program was not sufficiently focused and tried to cover too many issues. There was also some bad publicity in the media about the misuse of funds by some schools. More dramatic however were ideological shifts that took place the national level, with the Federal Government tightening up its accountability processes for the use of public funds. These changes were informed by the principles of "new public management" that had gained considerable popularity within the government circles. These principles highlighted various micro-economic reforms focused on deregulation and privatisation of government services. Increasingly also many within the Federal Government began to speak of education in human capital terms, which viewing education not so much as a public good, but as a private investment that produced benefits for both the individuals and the nation. Many activists felt that the social democratic agenda that had inspired PEP was under attack.

This ideological shift was no longer neutral with respect to the ways in which the ideas of participation and equity could be interpreted—in a language of markets rather than in social democratic terms. While the government did not change the guidelines for PEP, the emerging discursive practices of a more managerial kind nonetheless began to have a profound effect on the ways in which some within the Victorian PEP began to speak about the purposes that PEP could be deployed to serve. Many of its politically anxious officers sought to gain more control of what the schools did with the funds and how they operated to translate the program's objectives into practice. The traditional core-periphery relations within school re-emerged, as the democratic practices of accountability began to be undermined by managerial edicts and requirements. At the same time, the more progressive definitions of participation and equity began to be contested.

Of course, these developments were entirely consistent with the contestational view upon which that our theoretical understanding of the processes of educational reform was based. While at one level, both Stephen and I found the Program's shift towards managerialism disappointing, even dispiriting, at another we were able to record and comment on the intense debates across traditional and critical interpretations of the Program's multiple discourses, activities and relationships. These debates showed how education is always located within broader sites of political struggle, and that just as national policy discourses and decisions have the potential to encourage educational progress they also have the capacity to constrain the scope of educational reform.

Dilemmas of Reform

From its very beginning, many of the senior managers in Victorian PEP were under pressure to consider rationalising the Program, managing it in a traditional rationalist manner. This pressure was intensified following an announcement from Canberra that PEP funding would be reduced by half. The announcement shocked many schools who had already drawn up plans for 1986, since they would now have to work in a climate of cuts, against a re-emerging culture of managerialism. They could no longer take for granted the Government's commitment to democratic decision-making, even if PEP's objectives remained formally unaltered. The cuts generated a further round of frustration. As external observers of the Program we noticed a marked degree of cynicism, especially among those teachers who had only tentatively signed up to the Program's initiatives.

Stephen and I had a long meeting about the cuts, and how these might affect PEP's work as well as our one—and indeed how we might portray a program that had remained committed to its core values but did so in a climate of uncertainty and confusion. We noted that while many PEP activists had continued to remain positive, they nonetheless recognised that they now needed to struggle not only against the long-established practices in schools that reproduced social inequalities but also against an emerging managerialism, together with a gradual shift away from a social democratic view of education to one which interpreted it in human capital terms. This shift was most evident in the Prime Minister's argument that PEP was already making good progress in increasing Retention rates and that therefore the Program could be funded at a slower rate. This sentiment reflected the assumption that PEP was more about Retention rates than about participatory democracy in schools.

Amid these confusing, and often contradictory statements, it was now clear that those working within the Victorian PEP faced a range of dilemmas. Perhaps such dilemmas always did emerge, we wondered; and perhaps all reform programs work within a context of competing interests and contradictory ideas about what should be done and what is possible. This led us to call our final report, *Dilemmas of reform* (Rizvi & Kemmis, 1986), as we attempted to provide an account of the Program's hopes and aspirations, its challenges and difficulties and its achievements and possibilities. Of course, the most basic dilemma the Program faced throughout its existence related to attempts to define and give practical meaning to its core concepts.

The concept of participation, for example, had at least three distinct meanings that demanded contrasting plans for action. The first of these meanings simply involved viewing participation as retention of young people at schools to complete their secondary schooling. This essentially human capital notion considered retention as essential for not only reducing youth unemployment but also for developing an educated workforce that the changing economy demanded. The second meaning of participation focused on decision-making processes, the need to involve, whenever possible, students, teachers and parents in the decision-making processes. This implied a participatory democratic approach to schooling, which some saw as enshrined in PEP's insistence on representative committees. And finally, the third

meaning of participation underlined the importance of educational and psychological engagement of students in all aspects of schooling, including a particular disposition to learning. Accordingly, a large number of PEP's activities were focused on attempts to understand the causes of student alienation and experiment with initiatives that rendered engagement in education more appealing to them.

Just as the notion of participation had multiple meanings and was highly contested within PEP, so was the idea of equity. It was interpreted in a variety of different ways. In its narrowest sense, the idea of equity was closely aligned to the notion of participation as retention—as equality of access. At same time, there were intense debates within the Program between those who interpreted equity in terms of equality of educational opportunities and those who criticised this compensatory approach and insisted on an "equal outcomes" approach. Some argued that the problem of inequality did not just demand a focus on individuals but on social groups, especially groups which were systematically disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, ethnicity and social class. Through the dialogues that took place within the various representative committees of the Program, a growing number of participants began to realise how issues of educational opportunities were embedded within the broader processes of social and cultural reproduction; and that for there to be an equality of social prospects, the ideas of participation and equity needed to be viewed as interdependent, since educational engagement depended on a shared responsibility schools had for each of their students. As compelling as this analysis was, the schools faced the dilemma of responding simultaneously to individual interests and those of groups that were collectively identified as marginalised and disadvantaged.

Dilemmas of reform in the Victorian PEP did not only relate to these conceptual issues but also to matters of curriculum and pedagogy, as well as the relation between the two. It was recognised that pedagogy and curriculum were inextricably intertwined, and that the new pedagogic practices that PEP encouraged also demanded curriculum change. However, curriculum changes required system-wide actions in ways that pedagogic reform did not. In this way, a more radical interpretation of PEP's objectives invited a new vision of secondary schools. This however demanded political intervention at the highest level, beyond the scope a relatively small program of reform. Victorian PEP thus faced the dilemma of operating on a scale that was necessarily limited when it came to problems that demanded action at the broader levels of both educational systems and society.

This dilemma underscored issues relating to the tripartite structure of the Victorian PEP. The three components of PEP—the targeted schools program, Schools Resources Program (SRP) and System Level Initiative (SLI)—did not always work in tandem, opening up the possibilities of either duplicating or undermining each other's efforts. This was particularly the case with their different style of discourse and views about the nature and scope of collaborative practice. While the discourse of the targeted schools program was largely "bottom-up" and democratic, the objectives and expectations of SRP and SLI were couched in top-down managerial language. These different styles of discourse were associated with the different locations of individuals and groups in relation to the bureaucratic structure of the Victorian education.

A fundamental tension thus persisted between the bureaucratic modes of communication in some parts of the Program, on the one hand, and the Program's strong rhetoric of collaborative practice, on the other. Especially during the last year of the Program, the tensions of democracy and bureaucracy overflowed. Following the announcement of cuts, bureaucratic modes of thinking and practice became increasingly evident, as the senior officers of the Program sought to control what they viewed as the excesses of the Program, often in order to protect their reputations and position themselves for careers after PEP. They sought to produce early evidence of the Program's success. Many of the initiatives they had earlier supported, and even encouraged, were now seen as problems, needing to be solved with the introduction of new sets of rules, and with tighter hierarchical forms of accountability. As the ideas of new public management emanating from Canberra became common, the Victoria Program began to be subjected to its technical principles, along with its norms of communication and interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion

PEP was a program founded on a set of educational values of enormous significance. It provided Australian schools with an opportunity to examine the forms and consequences of social inequalities in secondary schools, which prevented many of their students to realise their full potential. It enabled schools to explore how their decision-making processes could be democratised. Initially, the Program in Victoria sought to enact, with considerable enthusiasm, the values of participation and equality in all aspects of its work, including evaluation. However, during its final year, the Program was deeply affected not only by the unexpected cuts to its funding but more disturbingly by shifts in the ideological thinking of the Australian government that consisted in a steady departure from its traditional commitment to social democratic values to an economically rationalist approach to governance. As the Program negotiated this shift, it lost some of its energy and innovative drive. The conceptual, political and practical dilemmas that it had already encountered became intense. And as disappointing for us as this was, it gave us an opportunity to share with the Program participants our analysis of the dilemmas they faced and struggled to work through. Our own dilemma as evaluators was to determine how we could at once celebrate the achievements of the Program but also be a critical voice of its various initiatives—"speak truth to power".

As we negotiated this dilemma, Stephen came into his own. He spoke with clarity and conviction; but beyond that demonstrated many of the qualities for which his friends and colleagues have known and admired him for over more than four decades. These qualities are both intellectual and ethical. This became abundantly clear as we wrote the final report over a period of less than three months. We worked hard, late into the nights, struggling over ideas and how we might represent difficult conclusions about many of our close friends. To me the most impressive of Stephen's many intellectual qualities was his ability to convert some of the empirical observations

I had made in the field into deep theoretical insights. Even the most critical of his comments were never disrespectful of the professional work that teachers and PEP administrators did. Yet he never shied away from making judgements but insisted on locating them within his overriding concern to understand practice in its historical, political and cultural contexts. His deep ethical sense with respect to the values of democracy and social justice could never be disputed. As we wrote about the dilemmas of reform, he used a language that seldom ascribed wrong motives, but sought to understand the challenges and dilemmas that teachers faced in structural terms. He viewed contestation over complex educational issues as normal, and indeed something to be welcomed for the productive role it can play in the processes of educational reform.

I learned a great deal from Stephen, not only about writing and framing educational ideas and arguments in a manner that was both insightful and accessible—but also about how to live a life of scholarship. He mentored me, but also showed how mentoring is best done. He taught me how academic work is never best done alone, but collaboratively with others. He taught me how debate is never about winning an argument but about learning. When I first joined Deakin University, I was told that Stephen and I had similar philosophical interests. But it was not until the end of the PEP project that I realised while this might have been the case, what was even more important were the differences between us and our preparedness to debate ideas—converging on some, but disagreeing radically on others. This was the true strength of our collaboration over PEP, for which I remain eternally grateful to him.

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Chapter 5
Evolution of the Action Research Planners: Towards Critical Participatory Action Research

Robin McTaggart and Rhonda Nixon

Abstract This chapter is an account of the changing educational ideas, institutional work and collegial relationships in almost four decades of work in critical participatory action research. The focus is the historical context or back story of the evolution of the series of 'action research planners' (and related publications), the current version of which was written by Stephen Kemmis, Robin McTaggart and Rhonda Nixon and published by Springer in 2014 as *The Action Research Planner: Doing Critical Participatory Action Research*. The back story depicts the conditions that influenced the series of planners including those in university and school systems, as well as the expansion of the university sector, changes in research methodology, evaluation and accountability, and emergent concerns about the relationship between research, democracy and social justice. Different forms of action research emerged in areas of social practice, cultures, languages and traditions, together with convergence, contestation, and co-option of the ideas of action research. Critique of these practices generated more definitive accounts of participation, practice and practice architectures and the role of public spheres. The resultant critical participatory action research helped to bring new discipline and credibility to everyday reflection and action. The chapter explores the ideas of the most recent Planner in a major project in Canada.

Historical Context—Deakin University Faculty of Education

Australian action research practice did not suddenly appear out of the ether at the Deakin University Faculty of Education in the late 1970s. There were many people in education and other fields using the ideas of action research long before then. However, for the next of couple of decades, work at Deakin provided an important focus

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in the theory and practice of what came to be known as critical participatory action research. The new university established in Geelong in 1976 provided significant opportunity and encouragement for innovative approaches to educational research.

The State Government of Victoria passed the Deakin University Act[1] which led to the University's establishment in 1976 in the provincial city of Geelong in Victoria, Australia. From the beginning, its establishment and location were controversial. An earlier government inquiry had recommended that Victoria's fourth university be located at Ballarat, another regional city. To counter the ferment, Deakin was given the responsibility to provide regional education and improved access to university education through the medium of distance education. Deakin was expected by both state and federal governments to carve out a new niche in Victorian and Australian university education. The Deakin University Act also required the incorporation into the University of the former Gordon Institute of Technology (a College of Advanced Education) and Geelong Teachers College (only recently separated from the Victorian Education Department and known as the State College of Victoria at Geelong). There was a furore about the absorption of the two regional colleges into the university sector from two quarters: from the older universities who were worried about university standards and sharing sector budgets; and from the college sector worried about other colleges being disestablished or staff terminated by another amalgamation strategy, concerned that what was thought to be the special features of the college system would be devalued or disappear, or simply envious of the higher status bestowed on two of their former siblings (McTaggart, 2010).

The Deakin Planning (foundation) Dean of Education was Professor Iain Wallace who, although a cognitive psychologist, brought a strong commitment to developing a Faculty of Education quite distinct from existing teachers colleges, colleges of advanced education and other university education faculties. Like many other institutions, perhaps those especially arising amidst controversy, Deakin staff enjoyed and utilised the freedoms afforded by newness.

The practical implications of a commitment to distance education and the example set by the creation in 1969 of the British Open University (though not including its generous production budget) led Deakin to the establishment of 'Course Teams' for distance education course development, groups of academic staff, guest writers, and editorial design specialists. Over time Education faculty members began to recognise the benefits of working together in new ways and with new colleagues to produce course materials (the golden days of print and audiotape). Their Course Team practices expanded into on- *and* off-campus teaching, and then 'Teaching and Research Group', a very devolved and academically stimulating form of organisation. Faculty members who committed themselves to Course Teams had extensive opportunity to share and to critique their course writing efforts and to learn from each other. For some, these new work practices provided an induction consistent with the principles of action research, critical community, public spheres and the legitimate change in our research, teaching and consultancy activities.

[1]See the Act at: https://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/547822/Deakin-University-Act-2009-Vicincorporating-amendments-as-at-1-January-2016.pdf.

Wallace had dismantled the old Teachers College subject departments and head of department bureaucratic hierarchy and established a democratic Faculty of Education structure of three centres that faculty could choose to join: Education Studies, Curriculum Studies and Applied Studies. Centre members then elected their own chairs who in turn joined the advisory committee to the Dean (who later too was elected). This distributed leadership structure enacted the same principle as course teams—opportunity for people to assemble freely around ideas, like curriculum and action research. A 'principle of free association' instigated by Wallace explicitly underpinned the academic activities of the Faculty. New practices of productive, interesting, challenging and rewarding collaboration emerged. Some Faculty members were critical and wary of the new associations because of the redistribution of power, but most others seized the opportunity to engage in new participatory work practices and the innovative intentions of the university.

The commitment to work in course teams and to the production of course materials meant fast learning and high workloads in the short term, but provided numerous advantages. Staff grouped around new ideas in teaching, consultancy and research:

- Developing a Bachelor of Arts in Education, the first Australian three-year bachelor degree in pre-service teacher education (on-campus);
- Writing and producing teacher upgrading courses to complete a four-year Bachelor of Education (off-campus distance education);
- Writing and producing a Master of Education by coursework and research (off-campus distance education); and
- Developing research and supervision and Ed.D. and Ph.D. research degrees.

Newly hand-picked and appointed outsiders from other universities and interested former college staff members were immediately involved in these structures which provided induction to university academic life, orientation to the new Deakin approaches, opportunities for shared leadership and immense synergy from the sharing of ideas and expertise. Major workload shifts were accomplished. Lecture/tutorial approaches often accompanied by good course materials which were used on- and off-campus replaced the teachers college work culture of repeated lectures in small classrooms (eight repeats of the same content to different groups was common college teaching practice). Faculty began to have more time to do research, despite the increased load caused by distance education course development. The Course Team arrangements provided flexibility in covering teaching so time was more easily organised for writing, working on research projects, sabbatical leave and consultancy.

During this time, the appointment in 1979 of Stephen Kemmis with his interests in evaluation, curriculum, alternative and more democratic approaches to research, critical social science and action research created a focus for those with an interest in all of those areas. The Planning Dean's riding instructions for Kemmis were to work with people wanting to move into more comprehensive roles as university academic researchers. He led course teams and research group in curriculum, evaluation and research methodology, critical theory and action research. His leadership was welcoming, friendly, intelligent, informed and inspiring—those staff members who had committed to the agenda of the university quickly understood what they had

been missing in the hierarchical bureaucratic culture of college life. The activities led by Kemmis in the early 1980s were the wellspring of the Deakin view of critical participatory action research.

Evolution of Context: Conditions in Schools and Systems

The Deakin view of action research did not emerge in a vacuum. While many generations of undergraduate and post graduate students were passing through courses and projects with staff at Deakin Geelong, conditions in schools and systems were changing considerably—critical participatory action research was sometimes nurtured, sometimes impeded, and sometimes provoked by these conditions. It is not possible to delineate here the entire history of cultural change in education in Australia in that period, but we can identify some general trends which affected action research practice generally and also directly through the participation of our students. It is worth noting that very few whole schools or systems committed themselves to the ideas of action research. Most often Deakin staff worked with small pockets of people within and across schools and systems. Sometimes those participating educators enjoyed institutional support but quite often met considerable resistance, including bureaucratic inertia (unfortunately echoed in teacher and principal union practices), a weak sense of and commitment to career professional development in systems, and more recently the numbing effects of corporate managerialism.

Deakin faculty were most affected by events in the State of Victoria because of its location and the fact that most of its pre-service students were on-campus and likely to seek teacher registration in their home state. Many distance education students were also upgrading qualifications or seeking re-registration (for example, after parenting leave) to return to work in the Victorian education systems. Significant numbers of current teachers had been overtaken by increasing qualification standards required for salary scale progression and for teacher registration. Many faculty members also had children attending Victorian schools. However, the school systems in each state were quite similar to each other. Most state education departments (and some non-government systems) had central organisational units responsible for professional development, curriculum research and development and school evaluation. Some staff of those units, typically skilled educators and leaders on secondment from schools, had adopted action research approaches when working closely with other educators and leaders in schools. From the mid-1970s on, departments began to decentralise the management of service provision for numerous reasons but not least because of an emergent populist impulse. Bureaucratic rationality was being supplanted by the ideology of corporate managerialism—ostensibly more power for principals (and local communities, regardless of their level of educational expertise) but closely monitored by school performance indicators. Parents' and ministers' right to know began to compromise teachers' rights to use professional judgment free from micro-management and detailed scrutiny. As part of this so-called devolutionary

movement, formerly centralised teams of consultancy staff for curriculum, teacher development and school self-evaluation were broken up and dispersed to the regions.

The structural changes had several effects: the dilution of expertise, consultants with less access to the resources of capital cities, and fragmentation of the teacher support and development agenda. Consultants were 'closer to schools' but working under less developmental conditions for themselves in their new roles, isolated from their old colleagues and their expertise. The centralised units had been large enough to develop among their own staff shared intellectual energy and practical expertise which provided sound curriculum consultancy, practical interpretations of relevant research, and professional development for teachers in schools. The centralised institutional setting provided educators involved in the educational practice of educating other teachers and principals with the opportunity for professional and personal development, in other words to develop their own theory and practice to work with schools on concerns of mutual concern and consequence. Among central office staff there were critical communities of considerable expertise which often had strong links to educational researchers and teacher educators in universities and colleges. These relationships were disrupted by devolution and decentralisation. However, some staff who had been displaced to the regions strengthened their links to universities and in particular to action research advocates in universities who shared their preferred ways of working with schools and systems.

Increased politicisation of schooling had Ministers of Education responding to populist urges for communities to have more influence on schooling. Decentralisation and devolution of services to schools and school districts (or regions) had the effect of weakening those critical communities and strengthened the aspirations of many curriculum consultants to look to 'projects' and collaboration with university faculties of education. Some state funding was available to the central units for projects too, for example in Victoria, the School Improvement Plan and the Access Skills Project Team. The Australian Federal Labour Government had also become interested in resourcing innovative projects, especially in disadvantaged schools. The government provided new resources support to a wide range of school-based and community-based programs of reform especially through, considering some diverse examples, the newly established Commonwealth Schools Commission Disadvantaged Schools Program, the Schools Commission Innovations Program, as well as the Teachers as Evaluators, and Language and Learning Projects. These programs very often encouraged an action research approach to changing schools and systems, especially in terms of links between universities educators.

Teachers in teacher and curriculum development roles looking for support and validation increasingly turned to action research and collaboration with university academics with knowledge of curriculum areas, approaches to action research and school self-evaluation, and school leadership. Teachers in these roles were sometimes also seeking higher qualifications such as B.Ed., M.Ed. and then later Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees. Many teachers who were upgrading qualifications for continuing registration or salary progression relished the opportunity to use action research approaches to their studies as they integrated their own practice, research reading and the projects they conducted in association with their formal studies.

Most schools were changing in response to changing student populations. Immigration meant large numbers of students were coming from vastly different cultures and speaking languages other than English. Students were staying longer at secondary school as the economy shifted and lower level jobs dried up. The curriculum of the later years of schooling gradually became less rigid. Universities relaxed their domination over the senior years, an influence which previously had shaped the curriculum to university preparation and faculty selection of students. Senior years now had more diverse purposes. Disaffection with old approaches to teaching, curriculum and school organisation was growing among students, teachers and communities so that the impetus for change was strong, particularly in those primary and secondary schools most affected by changes in social conditions.

There was widespread interest among teachers, parents and education systems in working together to address locally focused issues of mutual concern and consequence. Education professional were becoming better educated and more confident about their skills, understanding and values to engage in educational problems as they arose in local schools. Through the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was a surge of activity that recognised approaches to action research which particularly were cognisant of a commitment to social justice and educational disadvantage. Action research, too, began to change and over several decades critical participatory action research theory and practice transformed itself. The aspirations and expertise of the Deakin Faculty of Education coincided with an emerging generation of teachers willing to take the opportunity to take control of their own professional development.

The Action Research Planners Emerge

The focus of this discussion is the series of guides to action research called *The Action Research Planner* which were used initially as learning resources in the Bachelor and Master of Education courses at Deakin University. The 'Planners' were produced as part of a draft group of resources first used in 1981 (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Hook, 1981; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1981; Kemmis et al. 1981). They are chosen here because they have been popular, some say iconic though that was never intended or anticipated. The complete set of resources for students were:

- *The Action Research Planner*: a guide to participating in an action research project (detail to follow);
- *The Action Research Reader*: a collection of articles illustrating the nature and history of action research;
- *Becoming Critical*: *Education*, *Knowledge and Action Research*: a critique of educational research approaches and the theoretical basis for critical participatory action research; and
- *Studying Classrooms*: a generic classroom research guide prepared for use in several distance education courses (but not particularly consonant with the evolving

ethos and understanding of critical participatory action research—life in course teams was not always sweetness and light).

Students in each action research course were require to conduct an action research project in their own situation and to produce (a) regular reports (assessable) for 'publication' in three or four course journals circulated periodically to all other students, and (b) critiques (assessable) of other students' reports in the course journal. Students were typically teachers, curriculum and other consultants (e.g., language across the curriculum, equity and social justice, Indigenous schooling, teaching English as a second language), principals, teacher educators and system administrators. Students from other fields such as nursing education, health services and social work also enrolled occasionally. Most students were from education systems, and they faced several conditions, professional influences and opportunities which anticipated, required, inspired or precipitated interest in critical participatory action research.

The First 'Series' of Planners (1979–1987)

The first developmental version of the Planner[2] was produced in 1979 for use by students, most of whom were two- or three-year trained teachers seeking to upgrade qualifications to the four-year Bachelor of Education degree. Subsequent early versions used the same basic design, a short introduction; a detailed step-by-step guide to starting an action research project with the classroom the most likely site envisaged; a summary of data collection approaches; and some principles of procedure. Over these eight years, the emphasis expanded to take account of different kinds of action research projects in education, but also in other fields, reflecting the Planner's diversifying audiences.

The authors and others recognised that the Planners' orientation seemed technicist, but practical pedagogical choices were made, mindful that students were coping with working from course materials, having infrequent if any tutorials, probably studying alone, and needing to produce progress reports to be shared with other students for critique in the Course Journal. There was also the obvious need to meet University requirements for assessment of individual students. These Planners also became very popular outside the Deakin courses, mainly because the idea of action research was growing in several fields of social and educational practice. The Course Team was concerned that the Planners would be misleading or difficult to comprehend if read without the other course materials, The *Action Research Reader* and *Becoming Critical* (eventually published as Carr and Kemmis (1986). Nevertheless, the Deakin action research group was encouraged and informed by the intelligent interpretations and use of the Planners made by colleagues in other

[2]Several people was directly involved in the production of the early Planners over several years, including Stephen Kemmis, Robin McTaggart, Marita Fitzpatrick, Colin Henry, Colin Hook, Susan Dawkins, Mavis Kelly, Giovanna Di Chiro, Jo-Anne Reid, Judy Mousley, Ian Robottom, Richard Tinning and Leon White. Many others have also contributed to a generation of work.

fields. In education, wide use was made of the Planners, most especially in teacher research and classroom research, reflecting the first Planners' early use of ideas from the Ford Teaching Project (Elliot & Adelman, 1973).

The popularity of the Planners also meant that there were several versions revised and produced more elegantly as both Deakin and Deakin University Press expanded and enhanced course production processes. At some point, during this improved production regime, one of these versions became known as the Second Edition. It is not clear why because the changes in content were always quite incremental.

The Early Planners: Final Points

An unfortunate outcome of the early Planners lay in the attempt to make the ideas accessible, especially to people all too familiar with the idea was that research was completed by professional researchers following an agreed method which led to reliable and valid findings. Other people then became responsible for the 'implications' of the research for their work. Crucial to this ideology was the assumed surety of adherence to method in establishing truths. So readers faithfully looked for the 'method' of action research: the action research spiral, plan, act, observe, reflect then plan again for another cycle became a recipe for doing action research. Odd suggestions such as a student needing to complete two cycles for a master's thesis or more for a doctoral thesis were outcomes of this blind technicism. Lost was the general idea as to how conduct research on and for oneself—the practice of changing one's own practice disciplined by collective reflection and informed action among participants who shared similar concerns.

A diagram (Fig. 1), 'the action research spiral', intended to illustrate the dynamism of action research compared with the rather static tendency of other kinds of research, had instead inspired slavish compliance with a mechanical model in situations where critical and responsive thinking was required to work through fluid and reactive educational issues. Teachers found, for example, that even simple changes like trying to ask questions that invited students to give more extended answers in class raised numerous issues around class discipline, assessment of students and new curriculum resources required to support changing practices of interaction in the classroom.

Deakin action researchers knew that there was too little emphasis on how to understand the conditions that action researchers faced in their own situation—on the history of and relationships among local site arrangements which impinged upon each individual participant's practice. This stemmed in part from the complexity of educational issues and unpredictable local conditions, the complexity of 'practice' itself as a concept, and the difficulty of providing an explicit view of practice which might, for example, guide information gathering in a project. There was enthusiastic encouragement of collaboration in the early versions of the Planners but they were inexplicit about the purposes and principles of participation. What the early Planners emphasised was working with others on concerns shared with others, engaging with others in understanding what was happening, using data and wider reading to

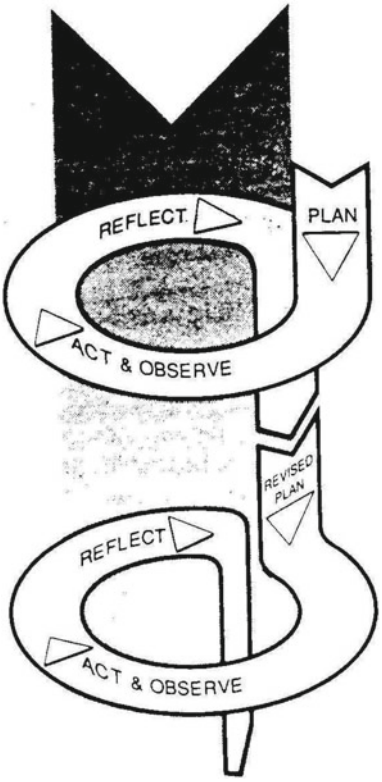

Fig. 1 The action research spiral

discipline collective reflection and planning, and changing one's own practice in the pursuit of coherence, equity and sustainability in education and social life. These were themes that were to resonate through the Deakin group's work for many years.

The Action Research Planner (1988)

In the ten years that passed between the early Planners and the 1988 Third Edition, significant changes had been wrought in social research. Sustained critique of the objectivism and elitist politics of traditional approaches to social science, educational research and evaluation had created new possibilities for participatory approaches to research. Action research theory and practice had become a global activity, and research students no longer faced unusual trepidation about establishing the legitimacy of the action research approaches used in their dissertations. There were now many species of action research being practised in many fields—education, social

work agriculture, health care, nursing, medicine and community development, for example.

There was extensive international dialogue about increasingly popular and diverse action research approaches. Enthusiasm was reflected in increased attendance at international conferences, greater diversity among participants, more participation by community activists and community members interested in change and social justice, and more non-professional researchers. Despite the growing participatory impulse, there was also continuing concern about co-option of 'participants' and the use of technicist approaches oriented towards the satisfaction of management objectives rather than the genuine concerns of others in particular situations in organisations or communities.

There was emerging need for more exposition about what the practical meanings of becoming critical and participation were and how they distinguished action research from other forms of researching and changing practice. The aims of critical participatory action research were expressed more clearly—commitments for participants working together to make their own educational and social practices less incoherent, irrational, unsustainable, unsatisfying or unjust. Being critical involved understanding and changing the ways in which existing language and discourses, activities and practices, social relationships and organisation constrained equitable access, participation and outcomes, with most effort directed towards the most disadvantaged.

The Third Edition of The Action Research Planner emphasised collaboration among participants who shared a 'thematic concern' to become more analytical about how contestation among alternative practices eventually led to the institutionalisation of current practice at the individual and collective levels. Participation was necessary for individuals to come together to help each other to do this analytical work, to act differently in their own situations in response to these analyses and to understand the nature and effects of these changes, and so on in a generally cyclical way. Participation with others was the way in which individuals worked on the legitimacy of their understandings and their actions. An Aristotelian 'table of invention' was provided to help participants clarify how others, students, teacher and parents, for example, were talking about an emerging shared concern and the changes individuals were bringing about in their practice. A 'thematic concern' emerged as participants in the action research clarified their ideas about the collective project and their own initial emphases in their specific action research activity.

A goal of the Third Edition was to help participants to become more analytical and responsive to the roles of *contestation* and *institutionalisation* in enabling and constraining their educational (or social) practice as it was expressed in three registers of practice: *language and discourses; activities and practices*; and *social relationships and organisational structures* as follows:

It was argued that the institutionalisation of particular kinds of social practice occurs through contestation. Some activities are chosen and reshaped ahead of others through an essentially political process. Clearly, the development of social practice cannot be achieved by looking, for example, at 'caring', 'advocacy' or 'teaching' practice alone. Particular forms of words are selected and invented to form the dis-

Social medium		Institutional form
Language		Discourse
	Institutionalisation	
Activities		Practice
	Contestation	
Social relations (power)		Organisation

course of the institution or program; particular kinds of activities are selected and constructed to form the practice of the institution or program; and particular kinds of social relationship are selected and constituted to form the organization of the institution or program. It is relatively easy to see that there can be enormous disjunctions between the social medium of ordinary community life and the organizational form of the institution or program (especially where domination by bureaucratic edict has characterized the outcome of contestation). The resultant disjunctions may not only be destructive for the culture necessary for thoughtful and informed work, but also for the individual. The development of professional work can be enhanced through the identification of contradictions which arise across and within registers within the social medium, within the institutional forms and through the dialectical process of institutionalisation and contestation.

The development of professional work can be enhanced through the identification of contradictions which arise across and within registers within the social medium, within the institutional forms and through the dialectical process of institutionalisation and contestation (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p. 44).

> Detailed advice for participants was provided in the Planner for each aspect of action research practice—of *planning, action*, *observing and reflecting and planning* again. The Planner provided considerable help for understanding how institutionalisation and contestation were playing out in language and discourses, in activities and practices, and in social relationships and organisational structures which constituted participants' work. Further advice was provided in planning disciplined and informed changes through each of these registers.

The Planner Third Edition: Final Points

In particular, this Third Edition explained much more clearly the practices of reflecting, planning, acting and observing. The clarity came from the more comprehensive narrative nature of the Third Edition which alleviated the tendency of readers of earlier editions to over-simplify and reify the action research spiral intended to illuminate the manifoldness, reflexivity and recursivity of action research practice. The idea that action research consisted of following routinely a spiral of steps was put to rest. The finely interwoven practices of action research and the practices of a substantive field (health, education, agriculture) were now more explicit. Nevertheless, extended experience of use of the Third Edition of the Planner indicated that more

thought was needed about the concept of practice itself. As the extract above suggests, the discussion of the content of practice was analysed more explicitly but the context of the formation of language, activities and social relationships, the other practices which surrounded them, was not developed. Further clarification of the features of all practices and purposes and the quality of participation in the essentially social activities of disciplined reflection and action had also become more pressing.

The Action Research Planner (2014)

The Third Edition of The Action Research Planner had a long life and was very popular. Careers of the two main authors diverged: Stephen Kemmis moved from Deakin to consultancy, life as Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Ballarat and then to Research Professor at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga; Robin McTaggart moved from Deakin to the position of Executive Dean of Law and Education and then Pro-Vice-Chancellor Quality Assurance at James Cook University in Far North Queensland. Kemmis continued his program of research and publication, and McTaggart, engaged by senior university leadership and management duties provided some support as critical participatory action research was more comprehensively rewritten from the perspective of critical social science and later practice theory which was expanding as a field of enquiry. A few years into the new millennium, in collaboration with Kemmis, McTaggart began writing the seventh or eighth version of the Planner now known as The *Action Research Planner: Doing Critical Participatory Research* (Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon, 2014). As Kemmis wrote an increasingly comprehensive theoretical background for a new perspective for critical participatory action research, the new Planner drafts seemed more and more dated. Kemmis and McTaggart were dissatisfied with the drafts and also recognised that there was a shortage of examples which reflected the emerging themes in the relevant literature (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, 2005; Kemmis & Smith, 2008; Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008).

Several central tasks for the new Planner were apparent. First, there was a need to articulate the idea of participation and its role in action research. Second, there was a need to develop the argument that only certain kinds of commitments to participation led to understandings and actions which were legitimate and valid. Third, the concept of practice as it was to be understood in critical participatory action research needed articulation so that participants could critically analyse their situations and work, and how their practices were affected by engaging in critical participatory action research, trying to bring about legitimate and valid individual and collective changes in practice. And fourth, some recent examples of action research conducted in the light of recent theoretical development were needed.

Just as these tasks were being identified, Rhonda Nixon from the University of Alberta invited Kemmis and McTaggart to participate in a series of interviews of she was conducting for her research into the background of action research. She was studying for a Ph.D. in the action research field and conducting a substantial

action research project in Canada. Kemmis and McTaggart later read her Ph.D. dissertation. Dr. Nixon also recognised the significance of the tasks to be engaged by the new Planner and joined the writing effort as co-author. Kemmis and McTaggart were delighted with the new collaboration because Nixon brought comprehensive theoretical expertise blended with directly relevant experience of action research in schools and systems. Her contribution permeated every page.

Doing Critical Participatory Action Research

This newest edition of the series of Planners emerged when Kemmis and colleagues were also developing an 'ecologies of practice' theory (Kemmis, Edwards-Groves, Wilkinson, & Hardy, 2012) which focused on a multi-faceted conception of practice and how practices are enabled or constrained by 'practice architecture', conditions of practice, constituted and influenced by the practices of others. During the writing of this 2014 edition of the Planner, Kemmis synthesised Habermasian and ecological theoretical themes to consolidate several years of critical participatory action research. That reconceptualisation involves more than can be discussed here, but Kemmis provided new insights into the ideas of participation, legitimation and validity in action research and social practice. His remarkable work invited new possibilities and examples for critical participatory action research for the most recent edition of the Planners.

Participation

Because critical participatory action research emerged from an experiential frame of reference (coming to know it by living it), ideas such as the action research group, thematic concern, a sense of lack of legitimacy, collaboration, critical friends and principles of procedure had been used since the earliest days of the Planners to guide the way people talked about and engaged in action research. These concepts were certainly grounded in practical experience but had been more slowly articulated theoretically. The commitments and principles of participation in critical participatory action research were more thoroughly developed by Stephen Kemmis (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005) and included in the 2014 Planner using the Habermasian concepts of *public spheres* and *communicative action* (when people interrupt what they are doing to question the legitimacy of what they are doing) and *communicative space* (when they create the conditions for open communication in order to change things). These concepts provided more coherent principles to guide participants gathering information around 'shared felt concerns' or sensing that their activities and practices were lacking in legitimacy in some way.

The key features of public spheres are that they

- are constituted as actual networks of communication among actual participants,
- are self-constituted, voluntary and autonomous,
- come into existence in response to legitimation deficits,
- are constituted for communicative action and for public discourse,
- are inclusive and permeable,
- expect people usually to communicate in ordinary language
- presuppose communicative freedom.
- generate communicative power.
- generally have an indirect, not direct, impact on social systems and
- are often associated with social movements.

Though proposed by Habermas for a slightly different purpose, these features reflect the experience of active research group and others who participate in action research or similar community movements. They provide useful principles to guide the practice of participation in critical participatory action research.

Legitimacy and Validity

One of the key features of public spheres is the commitment among participants to *communicative action*. Communicative action occurs when people commit themselves to *open conversation*—addressing any uncertainties participants may feel about:

(a) whether they comprehend what is being said (comprehensibility);
(b) whether what is being said is true in the sense of accurate (truth);
(c) whether what is being said is sincerely stated and not deceptive (sincerity); and
(d) whether what is said is morally right and appropriate in the situation (moral appropriateness).

In short, a commitment to open conversations means striving for comprehensibility, truth, sincerity and moral appropriateness. These are referred to by Habermas (1979) as the four validity claims that are presupposed by every utterance in open conversation in public spheres. Through the observance of the features of public spheres and the four validity claims, participants in critical participatory action research are able to reflect on their work and situations and plan legitimate and valid ways of acting to address their concerns.

The principles for participation and working towards the legitimacy and validity of understandings and actions described above generally coincided with experience with a range of action research activities the authors and their colleagues had participated in over many years. They also articulated the urgings of the early versions of the Planners. Theory and practice had mutually and recursively influenced each other over many years. How to work together was now well informed, but how could the idea of practice be better understood?

Practice

Throughout the life of the previous Planners, the concept of practice was treated with insufficient analysis or clarity about its many meanings. The 'practice theory' field began to emerge with some urgency towards the end of the twentieth century as the emphasis moved away from practice conceptualised around the individual and towards practices as purposefully and socially constructed and understood. Using the work of Schatzki (1996, 2002) , Kemmis et al. (2014, p. 31) proposed this definition of practice:

> A practice is a socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doing) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (Sayings), and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings), and when this complex of Sayings, doings and relatings 'hangs together' in a distinctive human social project.

Such a definition was broad enough to embrace comprehensive practices such as education and agriculture, but also useful in describing more specific practices such as teaching or leading. It is important to recognise that any 'human social project' implied what Schatzki called a 'teleo-affective' purpose, including such ideas as moral or educational purposes which help to hold a project together. The history of action research shows that progress towards the achievement of teleo-affective purposes is always mediated by the contexts (conditions) of practice. As Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer and Bristol (2014) went on to explain, practices (Sayings, doing and relatings) always occurred amidst 'practice architecture', local arrangements which influenced, enabled and constrained every practice.

Kemmis et al. (2014) had argued that Sayings, doings and relatings are made possible by arrangements that are found in or brought to a site where the practice occurs: cultural-discursive arrangements that support the Sayings of a practice, Material-economic arrangements that support the doing of a practice, and Social-political arrangements that support the relatings of the practice. These arrangements (cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political) hold practices in place and provide the resources (the language, the material resources and the social resources) that make the practice possible. The two key features of this theoretical proposal are that it provides:

- a language of analysis for critical participatory action research—conceptual furniture for talking about practice and changing it in order to makes it more rational, just and sustainable; and
- a way of seeing how the practices of other people create the practice architecture for ourselves and our own practices in a reciprocal way create practice architecture for others.

This theoretical work was done mostly by Stephen Kemmis and as always influenced colleagues and others working in numerous fields. His work on the relationships

among practices 'ecologies of practice' (Kemmis et al., 2012) contributed to the writing of the Planner but also provided valuable extended reading for participants using the Planner to conduct critical participatory action research.

Examples of Action Research

The examples of critical participatory action research in the current Planner were derived from the direct teaching, consultancy and research activities of the three Planner authors, from both Australia and Canada. As noted earlier, Rhonda Nixon had joined the 2014 Planner writing because of her own theoretical work and critical participatory action research with teachers in the Edmonton Catholic Schools District in Canada (Nixon, 2012; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). Her extensive critical participatory action research project was funded by the School Improvement Branch of Alberta Education as one of the Alberta Initiatives for School Improvement (AISI) projects for approximately 1000 K-12 teachers. Projects were implemented by school districts in cycles, each cycle being three years in length. In total, the Edmonton school district received almost ten million dollars in government funds for teacher education in language and literacy over nine years or three AISI cycles. Several examples included in this Planner were drawn from this Canadian action research project. The project titles (school names anonymised) indicate the diverse nature of the work undertaken in the Schools District:

- The Recycling Project at Braxton High School
- The Self-Directed Learning Project at Grace Elementary School
- The Graphic Novel Project at Joseph Junior High School

Two further examples were drawn from higher education:

- The Teacher Talk Project in an Australian University
- Critical Participatory Action Research in an Indigenous Community

As the Alberta project was well underway in 2012, Stephen Kemmis, Rozzie Brennan-Kemmis and Robin McTaggart worked with Rhonda Nixon in Edmonton developing the ideas of critical participatory action research in workshops with Edmonton teachers, consultants and educational leaders. Some of the educators who participated in the workshops had their work represented in The Planner. The time the authors spent in Edmonton provided an opportunity for dialogue integral to the writing of the Planner and the collaboration which extended long after that is reflected throughout the book. The *Action Research Planner: Doing Critical Participatory Action Research* was the culmination of many years of work by many people in the theory, organization and practice of action research.

The term 'culmination' is wrongheaded in one sense because it suggests the end of something. Action research theory and practice and the forms of social life it engages and fosters may seem securely embedded now. People are linked by it and have their lives enhanced by it all over the world, but it is not now over or complete in any

sense. We hope that there will be many more Planners as people continue to confront irrationality, unsustainability or injustice in their workplaces and communities. This task is far from being over. As the Nicaraguan action researchers of the 1980s used to say: '*La lucha sigue*'—the struggle continues.

A Festschrift for Kemmis

As our chapter in this important collection shows Professor Stephen Kemmis was a key figure in the interpretation of critical social science in educational theory, research and practice. His own educational practice was constant exemplification of the ideas he provided others. Our focus on the Action Research Planner series was chosen because we, the authors, shared experience in this work ourselves, as writers, researchers and education professionals. We both liked the kind of participation the Kemmis approach invited. We could live out personal aspirations and commitments through the work we did with him, partly because of him, but especially because the participation encouraged us to do better educational work. When you opt into participation in the Kemmis world and let your eagerness to learn and to make life more rational and sustainable focus your attention, you are in for a roller-coaster ride. It is not the same ride everywhere Kemmis has worked, but the ride gives everyone inspiration, ideas, sharing, leadership and friendship. All this helps people to confront bureaucratic rationality, competitive individualism and corporate managerialism with confidence and reason. We colleagues and co-authors with Stephen Kemmis are grateful for being fortunate enough to participate in that work.

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Chapter 6
Education, Work and Life

Hannu L. T. Heikkinen

Abstract In this chapter, I will study the relationship between education and working life from a few viewpoints. First, I will examine how everyday working life has changed and how education has to change. Second, I will depict how the practices of both education and the working world can and should be researched in terms of the theory of practice architectures. Third, I will come back to reflect on the relationships between work, education and life. The work that people do has increasingly been *immaterialized*. Working life has been detached from material production which is more and more automated and robotically driven. According to a Swiss professor Schwab (2015, 2016), we have already moved into a new era that can be called *the fourth industrial revolution*. The emerging and partially ongoing new revolution is speeded up by new technological breakthroughs in *quantum computing*, *nanotechnology*, *gene-technology*, *additive manufacturing* (*AM*), *Internet of things* (*IoT*) and *synthetic biology*. All these innovations, mingled with each other, fundamentally change our lives on Earth. At the core of the fourth industrial revolution and society are the cognitive skills of humans. This new order of economy can called *cognitive capitalism* or *cognitive economy*. Consequently, cognitive work is ever present in our lives. The work we do every day is technically with us everywhere, so we can colloquially call it *anyplace working*. Because cognitive work is essentially learning, we may say that learning also becomes *anyplace learning*. In other words, the development of cognitive skills is actively supported not only in formal education but also in nonformal and informal settings. This scenario leads to societal *polarization*: the divide into the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. As the borders between professions fade away, new jobs are created. These new kinds of jobs are *hybrid jobs*. Thus, we may find an ongoing process of *hybridization* in working life. The group of short-term workers, some doing fairly demanding assignments, have received the unifying title of the *precariat*. It is an ironic play on words, combining the old working class-term, *proletariat* with the French word *précarité* (Eng. *precarious*), that signifies uncertainty, instability and a high risk factor. In other work, working life today is

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becoming *precarisized*. To summarize, the ongoing tendencies of work and working life can be fused into nine intertwined core concepts. Firstly, the *processes of work* have undergone processes of *immaterialization*, *digization*, *robotization* and *globalization*. Secondly, and partially as a consequence of the previous processes, the *processes of learning at work and for work* have undergone elliptical processes of *formalization* of informal learning and *informalization* of formal education. All these have consequences for the work force in the forms of *polarization*, *hybridization* and *precarization*. These tendencies can be labelled under the umbrella term of *new work*. The practices of working life have dramatically merged, and new kinds of research are needed so as to better understand reasons why practices are as they are. In order to understand practices of new work, we need knowledge about:

(1) economic resources or physical and material routines, habits of action and activities which prefigure social practices;
(2) how practices of new work are understood and discursively formed by using cultural symbols, words, concepts and discourses; and
(3) social and political relations which are prefigured through power and solidarity as well as processes of indoctrination, oppression and emancipation from coercive power.

To put it briefly, in order to understand how practices are possible and how it is possible to change practices, we need research on (1) *material-economic* (2) *cultural-discursive* as semantic, as well as (3) *social-political* prerequisites of practices.

Stephen Kemmis first visited Finland in 1995, when I had just begun my Ph.D. studies. We were 25 young 'teachers-as-researchers' who had started doing Ph.D. studies through carrying out research on our own daily work as teachers. Stephen Kemmis was invited to have a doctoral seminar with us. The week in Tampere University changed my life. That was where we delved into the concept of action research as a tool for developing education, and the philosophical–theoretical background of critical theory, especially through the interpretation of Habermas (1972, 1984). I had read about action research and critical theory in some books and articles before that, but I must admit I did not know much.

After the week in Tampere, I started to wolf down anything I could get in my hands about action research and critical theory. One obvious book to read was Stephen Kemmis' and Wilfred Carr's *Becoming critical* which built action research on the basis of critical theory, dating back to the history-making work of Karl Marx and even further to western philosophy. Even though Marx thought that philosophers should attempt to make the world a better place to live in, critical theory had utterly failed to aid them to do so. The critical theory of early 1900's shifted further and further from practical issues, which was not quite in line with the aforementioned intentions of Marx. The work of the Social Institute of Frankfurt that Max Horkheimer and his colleagues founded on Marx's philosophical legacy was actually not practical but rather esoteric social philosophy. The perspectives on society and philosophy that

traditional critical theory opened up were interesting, but they were not so helpful for those looking for practical tools in improving human social practices.

In the hands of Carr and Kemmis, the practical aspirations of critical theory seemed to find new life in the form of action research. The practical approach towards social reality, however, did not mean doing practical development of social practices 'without an extra burden of theory'. Within the form of action research, theoretical aspects seemed to find connections with everyday practices. Inspired by the lectures of Stephen Kemmis, I also began reading the works of Jürgen Haberma, especially *the theory of communicative action* (1984) and *the discourse theory of law* (1996). When I had listened to Stephen, I thought I had understood what Habermas meant but as I took the original books in my hands, I had a feeling I didn't understand anything anymore. A new hermeneutical experience began as I met with philosopher Rauno Huttunen. After having discussed with him, we started to write together. And the rest is history: based on the work of Carr, Kemmis and Habermas, I published a number of articles about critical theory and action research together with Rauno, who also became my good friend and colleague. One of the crowning moments of our co-operation came along, when we launched a book about action research in Jyväskylä, Finland, in 1999 and Stephen graced the publishing event of the book with his attendance there. Today, that same book (Heikkinen, Huttunen, & Moilanen, 1999) is still one of the most referenced works about action research printed in Finnish. Google Scholar reveals a number of other milestones of this collaboration which were inspired by the traditions of participatory action research and critical theory.

Since then, Stephen Kemmis has taken his personal 'practice turn' from action research into more general theories of practice. However, I don't think his turn to practice theories can be regarded as abandoning action research. The relationship between action research and practice theories can be summarized by pointing out that action research is basically a *strategy for developing* social practices, informed by theories and empirical research, whereas practice theories are an umbrella term covering a broad range of different approaches which aim at developing theoretical descriptions so as to better *understand* and *interpret* social practices. The link between these two approaches is highly logical: in order to develop practices, it is useful to know what practices consist of; how they relate to each other; how the actors of the social field relate to each other; and how practices are enabled and prefigured in the social field.

Stephen Kemmis has visited Finland several times during the past twenty years and the significance of his work to the field of Finnish educational research has been immense. As recognition for his significant contributions, he was acknowledged with the title of *doctor honoris causa* at the Faculty of Education of Jyväskylä University in 2009. Kemmis was also invited to give the keynote lecture of the annual conference of the Finnish Educational Research Association FERA 2013 in Jyväskylä. In his lecture, he introduced his view on research within Practice traditions—research that is not just *about* or *in* education, but research *for* education (Kemmis, 2014). This view can be labelled *research as praxis*; it refers to the ultimate aim of research to enable the good life of persons and humankind.

I would say that I have now worked for over 20 years in more or less similar landscapes with Stephen Kemmis, sometimes taking my own excursions to other directions and then found myself again on the same crossroads with him. In the signposts of these crossroads, we may read three destinations which resemble each other: *research for practice*, *research about practices* and *research as praxis*.

In 2016, I started a professorship in research on 'education and working life' at the University of Jyväskylä, and I still think my work is guided by these three signposts. In my inaugural lecture, I expressed my gratitude and appreciation for Stephen Kemmis' work. I am doing my work *for practice*; action research is still the basic orientation of my research. I am also doing research *about practices* in order to develop them. I think I have also done my best to do my work as *praxis*; to enable people to live a good life in a world worth living in.

The words practice and praxis have a lot in common with the concept of work. This opens up interesting issues about the relationship between education, work, practices and praxis. In this chapter, my intention is to describe, in broad strokes, how the concept of work has changed during the modernization of western societies, how this change challenges the practices of education which should prepare people for working life and how we as researchers respond to this. I will study the relationship between education and working life from a few viewpoints. First, I will examine how the concept of work has changed. Second, I will depict how the practices of both education and the working world can and should be researched in terms of the theory of practice architectures. Third, I will come back to reflect on the relationships between work, education and life through the idea of *research as praxis*.

Rationalization of Society, Industrial Revolutions and the Turn to Immaterial Work

What is real work? Traditionally, the concept of work has been related to something related to the physical and material; real work is some kind of laborious action with sweat and strain, and the result of the work is something you can see, touch, hear or smell. Real work produces useful and practical things that people need. But this may not necessarily be true anymore. One of the most significant changes in the working life is the decrease in the role of humans in physical and material production. In Aristotelian terms, we would say that human work is less and less about *poiesis* which means the material production of things, and this means that the work that people do has increasingly been *immaterialized*. An American economist and futurist Jeremy Rifkin predicted two decades ago (1995), that human work as we know it will cease to exist: computers, robots and other high-tech instruments will replace manual labour done by humans. Even though Rifkin has justifiably been criticized for populism and exaggeration (e.g. Blank, 2016), many parts of his prophecy seem to be surprisingly accurate. Jobs have disappeared and will keep disappearing in the fields of manufacturing goods and products, sales, banking, transportation, agriculture as

well as government. Traditional work has not ended as we know it, but everyday working lives have changed significantly in a relatively short period of time. The economy and industry have separated themselves further and further from material production. The work done by people has shifted to a basis of thought—planning, communicating, negotiating. Work is increasingly about influencing and persuading people; it is about selling things, marketing, building brands and creating positive images about products and services.

Work is becoming something that offers people things to dream about. A Danish futurist Jensen (1999, 2016) says that the creation of dreams has become an essential element of work to the extent that he claims we live in a *dream society*. It is emotions that guide people's consumer behaviour, not the rational arguments. The feelings associated in the product images are the most essential factors of consumer decision making; so making people dream about something has become an essential element of work. What matters today are not the technical specifications of products, but the mental images that the products are connected with. Positive product stories in particular appeal directly to the emotions and values that people have. That is why the creation of brands through narratives and mental images has become a significant part of human work. Thus, the dream society has also been called a *narrative society*. This turn to creative production of things to dream about, boosted by mental images and narratives has also been called the *creative economy* (Howkins, 2001).

This new era of work has been called the *fourth industrial revolution* by a Swiss professor Schwab (2015, 2016). To clarify the concept and to make the distinction clear with the previous industrial revolutions, we have to briefly go through the three previous phases. The icon of first industrial revolution was the steam engine that powered factories, trains and ships. The symbols of the second industrial revolution were the electric power grid, the conveyor belt and motor cars. At these two first steps of the industrial revolution, the general *purpose of technology* was based on the utilization of coal and oil. What makes the difference at the third phase of the industrial revolution is the change of focus in general purpose technology from carbon-based fossil energy towards information processing. The third industrial revolution was kickstarted by the microchip. It launched the process of *digitalization* of work. Together with *robotization*, digitalization has changed our perception of working. Robotization changes our lives more than the automated production that we have been used to thus far. Traditional automation is based on the idea of executing the mechanical phases of production in the exact same fashion over and over again. Contrary to this simple idea, robots are much more versatile and flexible than computer-guided machines. Robots typically have joints that can move in several different directions and they can execute numerous different tasks depending on their programming. This all in turn boosts the process of the *immaterialization* of human work.

At the same time, production, consumption and work have been *globalized*. The networks and chains of planning, production, marketing and logistics are now worldwide. It is commonplace that a product is designed in one country, after which the blueprints swoop digitally into another country for manufacturing. You may order a product from a webshop which appears to be in your home country, but the actual

product will be sent to you via air mail from some other country where the production costs remain cheap. As a consequence, a growing amount of the economic action in the world is based on transferring information or transporting products between separate parts of the globe.

The *immaterialization*, *digization*, *robotization* and *globalization* of work are the starting shots for the next era which, according to Schwab (2016) is just about to evolve; the *fourth industrial revolution*. The emerging and partially ongoing new revolution is being speeded up by new technological breakthroughs in *quantum computing*, *nano-technology*, *gene-technology* and *additive manufacturing* (*AM*) that is better known as 3D-printing. *Synthetic biology* is also another promising area of technological innovation which may trigger a revolution in energy production. It will apparently soon enable energy production directly from sunlight without using the biomass and thus solve the current problems of energy production. All these innovations, mingled with each other, fundamentally change our lives on Earth (Schwab, 2015, 2016).

All the aforementioned characteristics enable and contribute new kinds of human practices. The technological inventions prefigure a dramatic shift in the life form of human beings. The *general-purpose technology* at the fourth phase of the industrial revolution infuses human life with technology; it intertwines the information processing of humans and technical devices. We are not just becoming cyborgs, no, we are already cyborgs by definition; persons 'whose physiological functioning is aided by or dependent upon a mechanical or electronic device' (Ursyn, 2013, p.?). Human practices integrate with machines and devices and devices integrate with other devices, forming a global network of technological devices which is called the *Internet of things* (IoT).

The features of devices, machines, applications and services are combined in new ways which completely change our practices. For example, *self-driving* cars are being used on public roads, and traffic is becoming increasingly automated which means that the interaction between car drivers will decrease whereas the interaction between cars and the physical traffic environment will increase. *Smart homes* combine a variety of home electronics into an integrated system that allows you to smoothly adjust the temperature, air conditioning and lighting of your house though voice activation. With just two words, you can order a pizza or call a cab to your door. This is not based on a single or unified technology but on making different technological devices, platforms and applications compatible. When all this ubiquitous technology works, everything may look easy but at a closer look everything is very complicated. The apparent easiness is actually an illusion which may give an impression that the combination of machines can easily be controlled in everyday use by humans. In actual fact, the control of the devices at the level of programming requires a very high level of skill.

Cognitive Skills as Tools of Production

At the core of the fourth industrial revolution are the cognitive skills of humans. These skills are dynamic in nature, and they can be developed through training. This brings the processes of learning right into the heart of work processes. Cognitive skills of humans have become the most valuable factors of production and economy. This new order of economy has been labelled the *knowledge economy*, *informational capitalism*, *knowledge-based economy* or *informalization of production* (Olssen & Peters, 2005). It is also known as cognitive capitalism (French: *capitalisme cognitif*; Peters & Bulut, 2011). I prefer to use the term *cognitive economy*. All these expressions encapsulate a common observation: the driving force of the economy and production is human cognition.

But human beings do not process information only in the brain. Information and knowledge is something that concerns human bodies. Knowledge is an inseparable part of a person's actions and practices. Knowledge is rooted in the body and personality. Embodied knowledge guides human behaviour and interaction with other persons in the social field in the form of tacit knowledge.

Nowadays, knowledge is continuously processed by portable devices. People carry smartphones and other portable information devices and the devices integrate with one's mental and cognitive processes. Information devices start to directly guide your movements and actions. These devices are used both in work and in leisure time. Hence, for a knowledge worker, leisure and working time are not always easy to separate from each other. Consequently, cognitive work is ever present in your life. The work you do every day is technically with you everywhere, so we can colloquially call it *anyplace working*. Because cognitive work is essentially learning, we may say that learning also becomes *anyplace learning*. This expression refers to the fact that the borders between formal and informal learning have blurred. Formal education also frequently applies methods that resemble informal learning. For instance, training events that include pair or group discussion enable people to better link their everyday experiences to the phenomena being addressed. It is also increasingly common to integrate work-based learning into formal education. New forms that resemble daily work or a collegial exchange of ideas consequently enrich formal learning. Social media has also changed the forms of learning and contributed to the blurring of boundaries between formal and informal learning. This trend in formal learning can be conceptualized as *informalization* of learning, i.e. a move towards more informal learning in formal settings. The lines between formal and informal learning are also being blurred from an opposite direction. In parallel with the discussion of the informalization of learning, there has been another discussion about *formalization* of informal learning. It means that informal learning is increasingly acknowledged within formal settings, i.e. schools and universities. This discussion is related to the notion of *recognition of prior learning*, which has been promoted, especially in the vocational education sector in Europe. Students are offered opportunities to demonstrate and build on what they have already learned in their work and everyday lives.

The Challenges of Polarization, Hybridization and Precarization

As the importance of cognitive skills increase, there is a threat of people being divided into two classes in terms of their cognitive capacities: those with the abilities to make quick and successful shifts in the cognitive economy, and those who fail. Earlier, we used to talk about three classes within society: the 'upper class', 'middle class' and 'lower class'. In the cognitive economy, only two classes remain: 'low-skilled, low paid' and 'high skilled-high paid' (Schwab, 2016). On the one hand, we still have simple work that cannot be robotized or moved to a third world country where the manufacturing costs are cheaper. On the other hand, we have demanding assignments that pay well. This scenario leads to societal *polarization*: the divide into the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Then again, as the borders between professions fade away, new jobs are created. Nowadays, mail carriers in Finland perform security guard duties, deal medicine and food orders for the elderly or mow lawns. These new kind of jobs are *hybrid jobs*. Thus, we may find an ongoing process of *hybridization* in the working life. Hybrid jobs are constantly changing. The clear-cut professions of the 'good old days' are becoming more and more rare. Instead, one may end up in a situation where the job assignments come in separate gigs, one after the other—and that is a best-case scenario. You may also easily completely drop out of the labour market. You may also find yourself in constant unemployment, especially during an economic downturn when the workers under short-term contracts are the easiest ones to get rid of. Even in the best case, it is common that there are periods of unemployment between gigs, where earning a living can be a bit of this and a touch of that. This group of short-term workers, some doing fairly demanding assignments has received the unifying title of the *precariat*. In other words, working life today is becoming *precarisized*.

To summarize, the ongoing tendencies of work and working life can be fused into nine intertwined core concepts with a similar ending ('*-zation*') and categorized into three main categories. Firstly, the processes of work have undergone processes of *immaterialization*, *digization*, *robotization and globalization*. Secondly, and partially as a consequence of the previous points, the *processes of learning at work and for work* have undergone the elliptical and dialectical processes of *formalization* of informal learning and *informalization* of formal education. All that has consequences to the work force in the forms of *polarization*, *hybridization* and *precarization*. These tendencies can be labelled under the umbrella term of *new work*. The new forms and understandings of work, in turn, change social practices, including not only the practices of working life, economy and production, but also the practices of education.

What Is to Be Done? Research as Praxis

What should be done? What can we, as educators and researchers of education, do in the middle of the changes which challenge our previous understanding of work and the human social life? We don't know what the world will look like, say, in a couple of decades. How can we help children and young people face an uncertain future for which none of us have accurate information? This problem is basically nothing new but a very old dilemma. It was actually formulated by Plato in his dialogue, Meno, and thus is universally known as 'Meno's paradox' (Plato, 2002), i.e. 'What do you seek when you're looking for something that you do not know?'

My simple answer is to go back to the same crossroads I stood at more than two decades ago. I read the same signposts once again: (I) *research for practice*; (II) *research about practices*; and (III) *research as praxis*. In other words, we need (I) *action research*; (II) *practice theories*; and (III) *a praxis orientation to research* which starts with the question: what must we do as educators and educational researchers so as to enable a better life for all of us and also the unborn generations in the future? All of these approaches are encapsulated in Marx's (1845) famous statement, 'Philosophers have explained the world in different ways, but the mission is to change it'.

All these three orientations go hand in hand. We need (I) *action research* with the practitioners themselves; and we need work with ordinary people to make the practices of work and life better for all. Lately, this approach has often been labelled as *practitioner research*, as well as in slightly different formulations like *practice-oriented research*, *practice-as-research*, *practice-based research*, *practice-led research*, *mixed-mode research practice* and *practice through research*. All of these expressions carry special connotations, and there are differences between them. However, in my understanding, all these approaches fit under the large umbrella of action research; they all are approaches that emphasize participation of the participants; the ordinary people who do the work, in order to make things better. This is what I call *research for practice* (Heikkinen, de Jong, & Vanderlinde, 2016).

But in order to make practices better, we need to understand practices better; in other words, we need (II) *practice theories*. As the father of action research Lewin (1951) used to say: 'Nothing is more practical than a good theory!' We have to keep in mind that research itself is a set of practices that has to be studied and critically reflected on. Too often (educational) research is a simple servant of economy and production, and the basic questions of a good life for all are not always asked.

What we need especially in the contemporary world, ruled by forces of the cognitive economy of the fourth industrial revolution, is a better understanding of how social practices, such as education and work, evolve, exist and transform. So as to change practices for the better, we have to understand how practices are enabled and prefigured. Practices are configured by (1) economic, physical and material actions and activities, routines and habits; (2) ways of understanding through our cultural symbols, words, concepts and discourses; and (3) social and political relations which

are prefigured through power and solidarity as well as processes of indoctrination, oppression and emancipation from coercive power.

This is why we also have to do research on the prerequisities of practices from these three views. Firstly, we must research how (1) economic, *physical and material things enable or constrain social practices*. This means considering the physical environment whereby practices take place and the material objects or resources required in the conduct of the practice; for example, many education practices occur in school buildings, classrooms, staffrooms, gym halls or hallways, and require material objects or resources such as speaker podiums, whiteboards, books, electronic devices, or computers. In practice, therefore, the physical environment and material objects and resources form arrangements that influence how the practice happens.

Forms of thinking also have to change. We conceptualize the world around us through words which are connected to each other and thus form more complicated symbol systems and theoretical depictions. Therefore, in terms of understanding, it matters how we (2) *speak about things, or how we use language*. The language we use, however, is never a neutral description of the facts out there in the world. It contains assumptions about the character of reality that are also connected with politics and power. For example, it matters a great deal whether we as educators talk about 'customers', or simply about children and their parents. It also makes a difference to talk about 'education as production of work force' or 'a sub-system of the economy'. All these expressions are examples of neoliberal thinking which seems to be one of the most popular and taken-for-granted ideologies beyond education nowadays.

This is why we must also do research on how (3) *practices are constrained or enabled by power relations, social structures, ideologies or hegemonies*. Practices are prefigured also by loyalty and trust to other persons or between social groups. Human relations are also affected by debts of honour and political passions. Practices are also prefigured by mechanisms of subjugation and submission that exist between genders, between generations, between ethnicities and between professions. The struggles for recognition are often the most important factors that prefigure social practices everywhere, even though they are often the least visible or explicit (Heikkinen & Huttunen, 2004).

To put it briefly, in order to understand how practices are possible and how it is possible to change practices, we need research on (1) *material-economic* (2) *cultural-discursive* as semantic, as well as (3) *social-political* prerequisites of practices. These three defining dimensions of prerequisites are intricately linked together. That is why it is best to research them simultaneously, as intertwined entities (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2017; Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer, & Bristol, 2013; Kemmis, Heikkinen, Aspfors, Fransson, & Edwards-Groves, 2014) .

All of the aforementioned enables us to do (III) *research as praxis*. Education is not just about being prepared for a working life. No, it is indeed for your entire life. Education is not either about your brain being optimized for the needs of the cognitive economy, or, the other way round, not for yourself to make the best possible individual benefit in the market of the cognitive economy. Education in its pure meaning is

for the good life not only for yourself but also for others. When we are talking about education for life, we are not speaking only about something happening in the future or something happening in terms of the economy and production. Education is not about becoming 'future consumers', 'future workers' or 'future taxpayers' (McCarthy, 2011, p. 309). Good education is something that enables a good life in its broadest meaning at each moment of life.

This orientation to education can also be called education as philosophy in its original meaning (Hadot, 1995). This ethos can be found in the long historical tradition of the theory of practice. The etymological roots of the word *practice* are in the ancient Greek word *praxis* (πρᾶξις). Within Aristotle's philosophical framework, the word *praxis* refers to an action that enables a good (and virtuous) life, *eudaimonia*. This ultimate aim (*telos*) is guided by the disposition that Aristotle called *phronesis*; an orientation to practical wisdom or knowledge of the proper ends of life (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012, p. 2). This understanding guides us to work for *education as praxis and educational research as praxis*. Stephen Kemmis depicted this thought in his keynote lecture at FERA 2013 by making an important distinction between schooling and education (see also Hamilton, 1989):

> (…) a vast part of the educational research industry internationally is in fact devoted to schooling research that serves the interests of the managers of education systems rather than those whose lives and work shape and are shaped by education. We need a changing international consciousness that might bring us back to Education from schooling, back to Pedagogy from schooling, before we pass the generational link that connects rising generations of educators to the educational traditions that have nourished us since Plato and Aristotle. I hope you will join me in supporting the development of that educational movement, helping to build a social movement in our field, that will place educators at the heart of educational research, not just their managers. (…) Perhaps we can also find new ways to extend that struggle in the field, to strengthen the capacities and resources that educators need if they are to have the professional autonomy to act and to research their practices, not just in the name of schooling, but in the name of education. (Kemmis, 2014, p. 64).

I think there are lots of educators and researchers of education who want to respond to this invitation to *research for practice, research about practices* and *research as praxis*.

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Chapter 7
Action Research and Communicative Spaces

Karin Rönnerman and Petri Salo

Abstract In this chapter, the authors describe their involvement and engagement in international research collaborations and networks characterised by shared research ambitions, interests and conceptual frameworks regarding action research and school development. A focus is placed on: professional practices that enable communicative spaces to occur; further collaborative work for understanding traditions, sharing concepts (praxis) and theoretical frameworks (practice architecture); and developing practices of action research, in various historical and cultural contexts for education.

In this chapter, we reflect on the benefits and outcomes of being involved in and acting upon various interconnected communicative space with the aim of developing and conducting action research as a theory and practice. Long-term involvement in the Nordic Network for Action Research (NNAR) (coordinated with Eli Moksnes Furu) and participation in an international research network, Pedagogy, Education, Praxis (PEP), led by Professor Stephen Kemmis, with participants representing different action research traditions (Australia, the Netherlands, England, the Nordic countries) has opened up various kinds of professional communicative space. These communicative spaces have inspired and enabled us to investigate the action research practices characteristic of educational research and educational traditions in Nordic countries. Stephen Kemmis' initial invitation to focus and reflect on the concept and practice of 'praxis' has challenged us to become aware of and identify the traditions of *bildung* (in Swedish, *bildning*) and folk enlightenment, with an emphasis on human growth and empowerment in becoming a citizen in a democratic society, as the pedagogical and political roots of action research practices in the Nordic countries. The theory of practice architectures, as developed by Stephen Kemmis and his colleagues

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(Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer, & Bristol, 2014a,b) has inspired and helped us in the Nordic network to systematically develop action research practices as a means of site-based educational development.

Establishing communicative space in action research for professional learning will be explored throughout the chapter. First, we outline the political landscape of education today. After that, we will briefly introduce the concept of *communicative space*, as developed by Habermas and used by Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014b) in developing Critical Participatory Action Research. This is followed by a section describing how *communicative space* has been picked up and used in research in the Nordic countries as a way to secure democratic workplaces by including all personnel in dialogues. In the subsequent section, we focus on action research, taking our own work in the Nordic network as a point of departure. We will describe how the establishment of communicative spaces has been of importance for developing and conducting joint research based on democratic values. This chapter ends by acknowledging the importance of being involved in professional networks in which dialogue is constantly emphasised and conversations are continuously used as a means for reviewing one's own traditions. Throughout years of collaboration, Stephen Kemmis has been a welcoming leader, as well as a respectful and inspiring colleague, who has invited us on a fascinating participatory journey during which we have come to understand our own action research traditions and practices in a more enlightened manner.

Conditions for Educational Development

In their book, *Changing Practices, Changing Education* (Kemmis et al., 2014a), Stephen Kemmis and his colleagues formulated, within the Australian context, a fundamental and guiding question for educators and researchers in the early twenty-first century:

> How are schools, teachers, students, leaders, and communities responding to the current conditions of education—that is, as they experience education today? (Kemmis et al., 2014a, p. 9)

Even though the 'current conditions of education' might be somewhat different between continents and countries, educators around the world are similarly struggling with the inexorable effects of the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM). Education is being de-professionalised as a result of standardisation, testing, accountability and increased public demand on and control over educational practices and their outcomes (Sahlberg, 2011, pp. 175–179). Education is often transformed into schooling, a technical process in which teachers' responsibilities are restricted to the production of learning outcomes (Kemmis et al., 2014a, p. 25). Within these circumstances and conditions, the dynamic and complex processes of human growth have been overlooked. Likewise, the recognition of human beings' potentiality to both transform themselves and become more humane, in various forms of social,

cultural and historical contexts and practices, in an orderly and sustainable manner has been neglected—that is, the pedagogical and political basis, aims and ideals characteristic of the Nordic traditions informing educational action research have been ignored (Rönnerman et al., 2015, pp. 2–3). Forming and maintaining educational action as praxis, morally-committed, tradition-guided action with history-making social and political consequences (Kemmis et al., 2014a, p. 26) is not, in our view, an impossibility, but rather an ongoing professional, political and personal struggle; one that should be cared for and nurtured in a collaborative, collegial, reflective, critical-analytical and systematic manner—within various forms of communicative space.

The NNAR, in which we have aimed to respond to the conditions of education in a praxis-strengthening manner, was formed by like-minded educational researchers from the Nordic countries who share an interest in school development and professional learning. The practical aims and more fundamental ambitions of conducting sustainable, collaborative and participatory action research have led to a need to manifest its very characteristics and professional identity within the network by formulating and presenting a tradition-conscious definition of action research:

> A reciprocal challenging of professional knowledge and experiences, rooted in the everyday practices within schools, in collaborative arenas populated by researchers and practitioners, and in the interchange of knowledge of different kinds. (Rönnerman, et al., 2008, p. 277)

Due to the lack of historical understanding of and regard for action research, combined with shortcomings regarding its methodological base and research practices, the Nordic network began to search for and formulate a purpose and mission for its work. Members from different Nordic countries jointly began to reflect on the historical roots of 'local' educational traditions, ideals and practices. This was done in order to enhance collective professional self-understanding and thus make meaning of the current conditions in order to be more responsive to them. This inquiry into the roots of our action-research practices resulted in the identification of practices (study and research circles, dialogue conferences) and educational traditions and ideals (*bildung*, folk enlightenment) as precursors and sources of inspiration for the Nordic way of conducting action research (Rönnerman et al., 2015).

Our definition and thereby our understanding of action research were at first implicitly built on the phenomenon and idea of communicative space. We built our understanding of action research as the 'reciprocal challenging of professional knowledge and experiences' taking place in 'collaborative arenas for interchange of knowledge of different kinds' about practices associated with the collaborative invention of experiences and the collegial production of knowledge, both of which are characteristic of the practice of study circles (Rönnerman & Salo, 2012, p. 3). Participating in a wider international research collaboration within the PEP network provoked us into opening up a dialogue—a communicative space—inclusive of both the Anglo-Saxon tradition of action research and the concepts and theoretical frameworks developed and proposed by Stephen Kemmis and his colleagues (i.e. praxis, practice, practice architecture, ecologies of practices, communicative space). A collective praxis which was based on various forms of communicative spaces within the

PEP network was formed. Collaboration within the PEP network, as well as common interest in research practices focusing on professional learning and development within education, resulted in a collective praxis response to the 'current conditions of education':

> A capacity-building model of intellectual engagement that builds communication and partnership. Its impetus comes from the desire of like-minded professional to overcome dissatisfactions and address issues that threaten personal praxis. (Smith et al., 2010, p. 63)

Communicative Spaces Within the Nordic Educational Tradition

In the Nordic countries, opening up communicative space has its roots in the beginning of the twentieth century, in the idea(l) and practices of educating the people to become democratic citizens in a society and working life in the midst of transition. Since the overall level of education was low, labour unions together with employers arranged for workers to study, thereby enabling them to grow as both workers and citizens. The main approach and arena for these studies were study circles, which have since become a model for collective adult learning within Nordic popular education. The concept of the *study circle* emphasises a collaborative approach, democratic dialogue and inquiry for learning. Later, in the 1970, study circles became a model for collaboration between labour unions and universities, since they resulted in a deeper understanding of the transformations happening in working life (increasing unemployment). Today, study circles are used as a model within educational action research for collegial and collaborative learning (Rönnerman et al., 2008, pp. 30–35; Rönnerman & Salo, 2014, p. 47).

The term *communicative space* was coined by German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas (born in 1929) for his theory of communicative action (*Theorie des kommunikativen Handels*). The theory emphasises possibilities for conversational rationalisation (as opposed to instrumental rationalisation), both theoretically and practically as an exchange between individuals and unrealised democratic potential in modern society. The communicative sense is directed towards mutual understanding, which Habermas considers essential for developing a modern society. As such, it will include important issues in people's lives concerning rights and ethics. For Habermas, communicative action is a vision for ending oppression and the objectification of people. It promotes the development of democratic approaches in modern society (Habermas, in Månsson, 1995). An important aspect of Habermas' theory is the notion of the *life world* and the *system*. The life world is the one in which our social relations exist—work, family and friends. The system is composed of anonymous and objective relations in the economic market or within a state authority. Within the life world, people's actions are coordinated through communicative rationality, which in turn results in social integration. In the system, media and power via system integration coordinate people's actions. In modern society, the system is colonising

the life world, leading to human actions grounded in communicative rationality as part of a regime of instrumental reasoning. Modern society lacks the ability to develop and institutionalise areas wherein communicative action can take place. New Public Management is an example of the way in which schools and universities are steered in an instrumental, top-down and outcome-oriented manner. This kind of steering strains traditions and practices built on collegiality, as the possibility of creating communicative space is not secured. A lack of sustainable communicative spaces hinders people from taking responsibility for their collective and societal concerns. Habermas understands communicative actions as both the means for and goals of a socialistic utopian society. Individuals are understood as subjects within language who act as members of a specific language community and thereby enter into an intersubjective life world. This enables them to participate in rational conversations in which all participants can freely and equally engage in a collaborative search for truth.

The Habermasian notions of communicative action and communicative space can be related to the conceptual *system* that Larsson (2001) presented to make sense of the central aspects of democratic processes characteristic of the functioning of Nordic welfare societies, as well as to discuss study and research circles as arenas for and means of furthering democracy within the Nordic tradition of adult learning. This conceptual *system* consists of seven aspects of furthering and maintaining democracy, three of which focus on the social conditions for democratic processes and collaborative learning: *equal participation, horizontal relationships* and *recognition of diverse identities*. These aspects are taken into account when meeting with teachers in, for example, a research circle used as a forum and arena for enhancing professional development via action research (Rönnerman & Olin, 2014). The following three aspects are related to the qualities of the processes by which democracy is to be realised: *knowledge informing the standpoints to be brought forward, deliberations* and *internal democratic decision-making*. These aspects are also of importance when researchers collaborate with teachers in action research. Teachers must argue for their standpoint, not merely by using their own immediate professional experiences, but also based on broader and general perspectives within the research literature. Researchers in turn have a responsibility to become participants and not act as experts in the sense of providing theoretical reasoning to the discussion. The six aspects listed above are also included in Ellen Key's (author of *The Century of the Child*, 1900) vision of understanding study circles as a way to enhance human growth. She emphasised dialogue while maintaining that education had to begin within individual human beings, each of whose issues should be scrutinised and further explored—a view also recognised in action research. Being involved in dialogue is about establishing a democratic discussion between all participants and creating the space for communication between all parties (Gustavsen, 2001; Kalleberg, 1993).

Norwegian work-life scientist Bjørn Gustavsen took up the concept of 'democratic dialogue' in the early 1980 in his work on developing working life organisations on democratic grounds. At that time, researchers as well as labour market representatives had established new practices with an emphasis on collaborative development. The focus was placed on procedures rather than content, e.g. how to deal with issues

such as work organisation and local cooperation (Gustavsen, 2001, p. 18). In Gustavsen's work, the practice of dialogue was of importance and was therefore used in a framework of communicative space. Gustavsen (2001, p. 19) outlined a number of rules to ensure the dialogue was democratic. As a result of Gustavsen's work, the dialogue conference was established as a practice involving workers in collaborative processes prior to decision-making.

Action Research and Communicative Space

From the perspective of Nordic countries, the tradition and practices of action research are to be understood in terms of democratic, dialogic and collaborative practice, and opening up and sustaining communicative spaces. As a collaborative and participatory practice, action research builds on local knowledge and embraces and nurtures agency. Action research, and the communicative spaces established within it, function as both enablers of and practices for democracy (Aspfors et al., 2015, p. 404). In the Anglo-Saxon context, communicative space has been discussed within and in relation to participatory action research by Kemmis (2006), Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) and, later on, in Kemmis et al. (2014b). Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) understood participatory action research in terms of opening up communicative space for participants. Thereby, participants can become more engaged in mutual inquiry with the aim of reaching 'intersubjective agreement, mutual understanding of a situation, unforced consensus about what to do' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005, p. 296). A collaborative sense of agency and legitimacy are achieved by relationships characterised by participation and mutuality. This in turn enables participants to act collaboratively and engage in researching and improving the professional practices in question. Besides recurrent examination and development of the understandings and agreements held by participants, responsible action and research in communicative spaces require decisions aimed at strengthening mutual comprehensibility, authenticity and truthfulness, as well as moral rightness and appropriateness.

The emergence of a communicative space requires that those aiming to be involved in it interrupt their technical and practical actions and instead strive to participate in communicative action, characterised by collective and collaborative inquiry into and the interpretation of both the cognitive and emotional aspects of the human experiences at hand and at stake. As a result of involvement and engagement in a communicative space, the world, as well as human actions, appears more comprehensible. Communicative space builds on interpersonal qualities, such as authenticity, informality, respect and trust. They rely on participants' willingness to be present, listen to each other, and pay serious attention to each other's experiences in order to promote mutual perspective taking and learning. Further communicative spaces can be created and sustained when social conditions, such as democracy, equality, diversity and justice, are in place and nurtured (Bodorkos & Pataki, 2009, pp. 314–315; Hyland, 2009, pp. 336–337; Kemmis, 2006).

Gayá Wicks and Reason (2009, pp. 258–259) viewed communicative space as delicate, liminal and dynamic places and moments in which the life world confronts the system. In their view, communicative spaces are constantly changing, offering unforeseen possibilities and unpredictable challenges. Opening up a communicative space is often both a paradoxical and contradictory undertaking. To become a safe place for participants 'to grow within', boundaries and the provision of a sense of purpose must be provided. Conflicting understandings of the conditions for and approaches to participation, as well as the need and character of leadership practices, must be dealt with, in depth and in a recurrent manner. Newton and Goodman (2009, p. 308), when discussing action research and communicative space from a systems psychodynamics perspective, maintained, "the value and test of communicative space is the willingness of participants to enter into affective exchange and move from feelings about each to thinking together". The Anglo-Saxon understanding of communicative spaces within action research coincides largely with the seven aspects of democracy that are related to study circles—that is social conditions for democratic processes and learning and the qualities of the processes by which democracy is to be realised, as presented by Larsson (2001, see above).

Creating Communicative Spaces for the Nordic Network for Action Research (NNAR)

The NNAR was established in 2004 when a group of researchers from Finland, Norway and Sweden met at a research conference and identified a shared professional interest in action research. Somewhat different understandings and ways of conducting action research had been developed separately by the members of the group, in their own national contexts. In Norway, a group of researchers had published a book on action research (Tiller 2004); while in Finland, two doctoral theses on action research had been published (Forsman, 2004; Salo, 2002). In Sweden, the researchers were involved in a new action-research programme for teachers' professional learning and development (Rönnerman, 2000). These different action-research practices functioned as a common platform for sharing individual experiences and constituted the beginning of an interest in investigating the roots of action research and its implications in the twenty-first century. A meeting with Stephen Kemmis at the CARN (Collaborative Action Research Network) conference in Nottingham in 2006 was a critical moment for the NNAR.

Together with Professor Petra Ponte (Netherlands) and Professor Karin Rönnerman (Sweden), Stephen Kemmis made an agreement with Sense Publishers to write a book series on Pedagogy, Education and Praxis, which was also the name of the international network established in 2006. The first books were grounded in the authors' own educational traditions and established a joint practice of comparing, learning and sharing experiences from different educational systems. The Nordic network began to work on a book entitled *Nurturing Praxis* (Rönnerman et al., 2008) by forming

various communicative space in which to discuss their experiences with and contributions to action research. As the dialogue continued, the members of the network became aware of the slightly different educational histories of action research in the three Nordic countries involved, which were based on *bildung* (in Swedish, *bildning*) and folk enlightenment. Writing the book and discussing various perspectives and practices on action research became a collective inquiry into our own histories and traditions. This was both inspired and enabled by a confrontation and dialogue with other traditions and practices, for example, the Anglo-American as presented by Stephen Kemmis and his Australian colleagues. Work on the book functioned as a starting point for prolonged study of action research as a methodology. During its first five years, parallel to writing the book, the Nordic network investigated different aspects of action research: the role of the researcher when facilitating practitioners in a democratic way, appropriate tools for collaborative work with practitioners in schools, and the emergence of knowledge via collaboration between researchers and practitioners. During subsequent years, the Nordic network became involved in the PEP network and, in a productive manner, contributed its findings to academic conversations with colleagues from other traditions. A number of joint projects, published in international journals, were undertaken. Network coordinators had the responsibility of organising time and space for dialogues and communicative space. This was done in conjunction with conferences and other workshops the members attended. For example, the Nordic network always met prior to the annual Nordic Educational Research Conference (NERA) to comment on and discuss each other's manuscripts or to discuss more general issues of concern for action research. As in earlier years, guidelines were established to ensure democratic dialogues. Such guidelines included how to respond to each other's arguments, raising awareness of all voices to be heard, keeping track of time so important decisions could be made and providing time for individual work to be completed.

Based on a number of dialogues in collegial communicative space throughout the years, ideas, activities and developmental practices have been developed and shared for joint actions. One such activity is the NORALF conference, a meeting and communicative space for practitioners (teachers and school leaders) and researchers, which is held every 18 months in either Norway (Tromsø) or Sweden (Gothenburg). NORALF conferences have been organised in the form of a dialogue conference (Lund, 2008), based on dialogical practices established by Gustavsen. Most conference activities take place in small groups, which share, discuss and comment on ongoing action research or other professional development projects. The organisation of these conferences is such that all participants, especially practitioners, are heard when presenting first-person experiences with conducting action research. NORALF conferences mainly involve sharing professional experiences in mixed academic groups rather than listening to experts giving lectures. The group dialogues are intertwined with 'real-life' examples from schools, teachers and principals conducting action research at their professional sites and discussions about studies being done by researchers. Developing various approaches to and arenas for partnership between researchers and practitioners, and between universities and

schools, has guided the Nordic network from its very beginning (Rönnerman et al., 2015, pp. 7–8).

Another concerted idea was the establishment of a Nordic master's programme in education directed towards action research in 2011. The students were recruited from both Norway and Sweden, and a number of procedures were put in place to enable professional dialogues within the programme. These included meetings via Adobe Connect, Skype or other video links. The programme itself emphasised dialogues during the seminars. Students were trained to give responses to both oral and written drafts. A specific procedure was established, in which the students would send out their drafts to the group and receive comments on them prior to the meeting. During the meeting, students chaired the discussions and chose the topics to be discussed on the basis of comments from fellow students. After the seminars, students revised their manuscripts on the basis of comments and discussions within the groups.

Action Research Practices in Nordic Countries

The Nordic countries are built on social democratic values developed within the formation of welfare states from the mid-1950s onwards. When industrial work replaced the social structures of agricultural society, industrial workplaces became social sites of interest to be led, developed and studied. Studies during the 1960s revealed that industrial workers had little influence over their work, echoing Taylorism, that is technical and instrumental organisation and management of work. Before this time, Lewin (1943), often regarded as the pioneer of action research, discovered that workers developed their working practices within groups, with communication as an essential component. The developmental potential of these groups was based on their level of independence. These findings were further developed as the basis for better working conditions at the Tavistock Institute on Human Relations, established in 1947 (Tavistock Institute, 2017). Later, working life scientists in Sweden, Norway and Finland picked up these ideas. In Norway, Bjørn Gustavsen initiated a large-scale experiment focusing on Leading, Organisation, Participation (LOP), which became a national research and development project in Sweden (1985–1990) that included around 50 researchers and 1000 employees. The LOP project was based on the practices of action research, and researchers acted as partners in the development of workplace practices (Gustavsen, 1985, 1990; Hansson, 2003). The key activity in this large-scale experiment was dialogues among the participants. Dialogues were set up according to specific rules, with the aim of including all participants, their various experiences and their voices (Gustavsen, 2001). Research at the time confirmed that employees' active involvement in group work and dialogues had an effect on organisations and working conditions. Collective and collaborative learning among employees contributed to developing organisations, resulting in double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1998, pp. 20–25). The Finnish educational scientist Engeström (1987), known for action research based on activity theory, used dialogues in his

development-oriented research. For example, in hospitals, Engeström (1996) showed how nurses were empowered to have influence over the development of their work.

Earlier, we discussed and documented how the principles and practices of participation, partnership, democratic dialogue, mutual recognition and collaboration have influenced and been applied in education and educational research (see Rönnerman, Furu & Salo, 2008, Rönnerman & Salo, 2012). In the following, we will concentrate on the researchers' role in action research from the perspective of our Nordic countries' traditions and practices. Action research in the Nordic perspective is grounded in work-life sciences. When entering education, action research is affected by educational ideals and traditions, such as *bildung* (in Swedish, *bildning*), folk enlightenment and adult learning. As noted above, the purpose of educating employees is to enable them to participate in the development of a democratic society. One can claim that the last sector to embrace these ideas was the educational sector. In Sweden, it did not occur until the early 1990s. Then, the educational sector went through a transformation, from being state-governed to being deregulated and decentralised. As a result, municipalities, principals and teachers became responsible for developing their schools on the basis of local needs. Finland, in turn, is characterised by a long tradition of a strong and sound municipal government and development. In a culture of professional trust, teachers have been, until lately, individually responsible for both their professional practice and its development (Salo & Sandén, 2016, pp. 109–110). Action research has been quite rare, and it has been realised in the form of teacher-as-researcher in her/his own teaching practices.

In our Nordic view, a researcher's function in action research is to become involved in its processes and enhance the creation of practices for development and improvement. From this perspective, communicative space and the rules for democratic dialogues are of utmost importance. Participation in the processes and the establishment of communicative spaces involves *gaining* knowledge, *developing* knowledge and *participating in the social production* of knowledge (Holmer, 1993). As educational action researchers or facilitators, we influence the processes taking place in schools, among teachers and principals, and contribute to the outcomes of these processes. Still, we need to be aware of the different prerequisites for acting as researchers together with teachers or principals, the differences in the overall working conditions, the knowledge base as well as time as a resource and frame. These differences must be acknowledged and discussed, to enable sustainable collaboration and development. Communicative space need to be created and maintained.

The Practice Architectures of Educational Action Research in the Nordic Countries

During their years of collaboration within the PEP network, Stephen Kemmis and his colleagues have been engaged in conceptual and theoretical development connected to and inspired by action research. This work includes the concepts and

frameworks of practice, practice theory and practice architecture (Kemmis et al., 2014a). Since the NNAR has been a part of the international PEP network, the development of the theory of practice architectures has especially inspired us to reflect on our engagement in action research and professional development with teachers. Practice architecture has functioned as a lens for reflecting on and gaining deeper understanding of our own collaborative work in the context of the Nordic countries. We have used the theory of practice architectures to elaborate our understanding of both Nordic traditions and established action-research practices. We have come to understand that we have seemingly taken for granted democratic dialogues and communicative space. In the latest anthology from the Nordic network, *Lost in practice: Transforming Nordic Educational Action Research* (Rönnerman & Salo, 2014), we used the theory of practice architectures to further examine and understand the conditions both enabling and constraining our action research and professional development projects. Most of the articles in the anthology relate to and apply the theory of practice architectures. This has provided us with further insights—a bigger picture—into our specific Nordic country traditions, societal conditions, organisational contexts and professional challenges, as well as the researcher competencies we have jointly developed. The intellectual communicative space produced 'by the articles' has been extended to physical communicative spaces, such as professional workshops and research conferences within the PEP network, where we have presented and discussed our interpretations and use of practice architecture. In our chapter (Salo & Rönnerman, 2014), we used the theory of practice architectures to elaborate our understanding of Nordic educational action research by identifying its characteristic material-economic (doing), social-political (relatings) and cultural-discursive (Sayings) arrangements (Fig. 7.1).

In the Nordic practice of action research, two sets of Material-economic arrangements, *doings*, come into focus: providing space and time for dialogue and applying tools for inquiry. Teachers must be freed from their work duties to conduct action research and must be provided with a physical space in which to meet. Democratic principles must be used to guide the dialogue on and collaborative inquiry into the practices to be researched and developed. A research-oriented conversation and inquiry enable us to challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions about practice, as well as professional strategies for teaching. This is achieved through facilitation and negotiation, by either a researcher or a colleague with experience in action research. The tools of inquiry should be used to help teachers act systematically and analytically—that is formulating questions and collecting and analysing data (Aspfors et al., 2015; Rönnerman, 2008).

Regarding *relatings*, action research aims to empower and include teachers and researchers in joint collaborative partnerships for co-generating knowledge in democratic dialogues. The relationship between researchers and teachers is understood as equal and reciprocal, and the production of knowledge and action plans is furthered by mutual recognition (Furu et al., 2007; Rönnerman, 2012). Action research should result in local theories relevant for both theory development and school improvement. The Nordic conceptualisation of action research is strongly anchored in practice and represents a bottom-up perspective.

Fig. 7.1 The practice architecture of Nordic educational action research (adapted from Salo & Rönnerman, 2014, p. 66)

The discourse, *sayings*, is political rather than pedagogical. It relies on collaboration, participation and facilitation within professional groups and partnerships with local communities. It stems from interactive and social knowledge construction, which brings together knowledge forms and fields, discourses and institutionalised practices. Relationships between researchers and practitioners are understood as reciprocal: research is close to and relevant for practice, based on interaction, meetings and dialogues (Heikkinen, 2008; Rönnerman & Salo, 2012). The concept of *action learning* emphasises the collegial processes of learning-through-reflection within everyday practices, rather than engaging teachers in analytical inquiries into the contextual frameworks forming the practices (Furu et al., 2007).

Conclusion

In our understanding, with reference to action research and educational development practices, which we have been engaged in, and with respect to the traditions which we have identified as precursors for our practices, we view communicative space as constituting those moments of deliberate interaction and communication in which human life-world experiences in their various forms (personal, social and professional) are, *first*, both allowed and encouraged to be formulated and expressed; *second*, mutually recognised, considered and shared; and *third*, explored, reflected on and negotiated.

This is done in an authentic and respectful manner that it emancipates and empowers the inhabitants of a communicative space to act to affect, improve and transform the circumstances and conditions under which they live and function.

From our experiences being both members and coordinators in two professional networks, we argue that communicative space is of great importance for sharing, responding and developing as researchers and human beings. These spaces serve as expressions of the life world in which *bildung* (in Swedish, *bildning*), which means growing as a human being and democratic citizen, is to be realised. In today's working life (for us at the university), where the logics of the system prevail, we must be able to create communicative spaces for sharing and developing knowledge with colleagues and within networks. The collegial arenas and communicative space provided within our research networks and workshops are essential to our survival as academics and for acquiring the energy and confidence needed to further action research in the form of praxis. What we have learned so far is that these meetings must be planned and scheduled in advance. In both networks, this is accomplished by the coordinators in democratic processes the year prior to the current meetings. Our experiences with being coordinators of the networks suggest certain procedures for initiating and maintaining collegial conversations. One such procedure is to prepare for upcoming conversations by reading research published in the network and discussing it in smaller groups during the meeting. In this manner, we become aware of extant publications and are capable of initiating new collaborative projects. But, as we have claimed throughout this chapter, it is not just what we have learned as individual academics that matters. The conversations in groups, with colleagues in communicative space, both affect and enable us to influence our working conditions and become more involved in changing the organisation of our own work.

It may not be possible to change the world itself, but we do have faith in the ability to change our own worlds by creating and maintaining communicative space. Lastly, we want to thank Stephen Kemmis for inviting us to become engaged in the PEP network and for preparing various opportunities for us to be included in a participatory, inclusive, reciprocal and empowering social production of knowledge—in communicative spaces set up within the network during the last 10 years.

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Chapter 8
Practitioner Research in the Company of Others: Resistance in the Face of Normalising Practice

Susan Groundwater-Smith and Nicole Mockler

Abstract In these times of increasing bureaucratic management in education, the need for the profession to organise itself to support and protect its professional work is obvious. Moreover, if the central aim of education is the critical transmission, interpretation and development of the cultural traditions of our society, then the need for a form of research which focuses its energies and resources on the policies, processes and practices by which this aim is pursued is obvious as well. Emancipatory action research, as a form of critical educational science, provides a means by which the teaching profession and educational research can be reformulated so as to meet these ends (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 224).

> …I believe that some—perhaps most—action research no longer aspires to having this critical edge, especially in the bigger sense of social or educational critique aimed at transformation of the way things are. Much of the action research that has proliferated in many parts of the world over the past two decades has not been the vehicle for educational critique we hoped it would be. Instead, some may even have become a vehicle for domesticating students and teachers to conventional forms of schooling. (Kemmis, 2006, p. 459)

Practitioner research in education is built on a tradition of critical collegiality: rather than constituted as an individual enterprise, it seeks to open up communicative space, building a form of generative, joint enterprise. Across the various traditions of emancipatory action research, collaborative practitioner inquiry, teacher research and so on, a common tenet has been the role of inquiry in fostering critical teacher professionalism and professional learning, and the 'transformation of the way things are', to draw on the opening quotation from Stephen Kemmis. While in 1986 Carr and Kemmis identified increasing bureaucratic management in education at the time as a threat to teacher professionalism and professional judgement, they may not have quite anticipated the places in which we would find ourselves 30 years on;

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places increasingly dominated by multi-national edubusinesses who have, to a large extent, influenced the increasing privatisation of education policy on a global scale by making and shaping public policy decisions and practices (Ball, 2012; Hogan, 2015). Nevertheless, Stephen's voice in encouraging this critical collegiality amongst teachers and teacher educators has been a constant and powerful influence over the past four decades, whether focused on curriculum development, emancipatory action research, practice theory or the study of education broadly.

In this chapter, we explore the potential for critical collaborative practitioner research as a disruptor to manifestations of neoliberal educational agendas in schools. We share Stephen's disappointment that action research has often become domesticated such that it might be seen to have lost its critical edge, and also his lament over the growth of technical rationality in education spheres in recent decades and its impact on educational action research (Carr & Kemmis, 2005) . We also see, however, at a local level, cause for hope. Our work with teachers, both pre- and in-service, suggests a growing suspicion in some quarters of the promises of endless 'improvement' and 'effectiveness' embedded in neoliberal policy agendas and a growing understanding of the negative effects of these policies on students, teachers and school communities. We argue in this chapter that practitioner research holds the potential to play a critical role in resisting the standardisation of practice in education, most powerfully when it is conducted in the company of others rather than alone.

Before we begin, a word about neoliberalism and education. We are conscious of Rowlands and Rawolle's (2013) caution that 'neoliberalism is not a theory of everything'. We understand neoliberal policy agendas in education to be those that reflect market fundamentalism (Apple, 2006), pitting national and other systems, schools, teachers and consequently students against each other in the quest for improved standards and outcomes. We see the proliferation of national testing, teaching standards, performance pay for teachers, league tables and the intrusion of commercial/corporate interests as manifestations of these neoliberal agendas on a global scale.

The chapter is presented in four parts. In the first, we explore the inherent individualism implicit within neoliberal educational discourses, arguing for the benefits of collaborative work towards educational change and suggesting ways in which we might navigate this tension. In the second part, we explore recent attempts to constrain and standardise teachers' practices as a consequence of neoliberal policy frameworks. In the third, we argue for the place of critical collaborative practitioner research in resisting this standardisation of practice in the interests of transformation. Finally, we consider the conditions that might allow this kind of practitioner research to flourish in schools in our time and the role that teacher educators (of both pre-service and in-service teachers) might play in supporting the development of these conditions.

Individualism and Collaboration in Practitioner Research

Practitioner research holds significant power in terms of building teacher professional judgement, consolidating and expanding professional knowledge, and providing for contextualised, ongoing teacher professional learning. How do teachers know their students are learning and the conditions under which such learning is fostered; and how do they know that they, themselves, are learning about their practice in ways that are generative and developmental? These are fundamental questions in relation to schooling, and in both cases, there is an essential need for dialogue and interaction. Knowing the how, what and why of the learning of children and young people requires that their teachers engage and communicate with them. Similarly, in considering their own professional learning, it is essential that teachers undertake investigations that uncover the how, what and why of their professional practice and that they do so in the company of others in ways that are civil and inclusive, but provide conditions for challenge and debate. Our concern here is with 'critical collegiality', a condition that is participative and non-hierarchical and struggles with the exigencies of the lived life of schooling through rigorous inquiry. Furthermore, as Kemmis (2009b) reminds us, such inquiries should lead to sustainable practice; that is practice that is not a capricious or trivial response to the poorly thought out edicts of others. It should be seen that it is the concerns of the practitioners that inform the questions to be asked rather than those imposed on them by an outside agenda (Sachs, 2003).

Lawrence Stenhouse's minimal definition of research, both generally and in relation to practitioner inquiry is that it is systematic self-critical inquiry based upon a stable and deep curiosity (Stenhouse, 1981). He also wrote of research as 'systematic inquiry made public' (Stenhouse, 1979). Groundwater-Smith (2006, p. 182) notes that Stenhouse 'perceives curiosity is wonderfully dangerous because it leads to social change. It proposes heresy and threatens faith'. Fundamental to these notions of teacher/practitioner research, then, is that it is a collegial critical exercise conducted as a joint enterprise. It is a form of mutual engagement, willing to address difficult questions. Importantly, the impetus for such research is that it is generated by the practitioners themselves and may be inclusive of their students as active agents responding to a concern, or suite of concerns, that will lead to action designed to improve and reform.

While the thrust of our argument will be to drive home the merit of this tradition of critical collegiality, we must first explore current conditions, mediated as they are by the already noted tenets of neoliberalism, that mitigate against such communitarian values. In educational terms, 'neoliberalism' is understood as a global cultural system that is marked by self-interest, ruthless economic efficiency and unbridled competition. It is characterised by the liberalisation of trade and the creation of a vast global market in both material goods and ideas. Its values and structures lie within the range of economic and social–political life and privilege the notion of individual responsibility over that of social and public good (Hursh, 2007). The material effects of the 'neoliberal imaginary' (Ball, 2012) in education are most keenly felt in most western countries through the impact of the Global Education Reform Movement

(GERM), a term first coined by Finnish educationist Sahlberg (2011a, b). The GERM is said to comprise moves towards standardisation; an increased focus on core subjects (such as literacy and numeracy); prescribed (e.g. national) curriculum; transfer of models from the corporate world to education; and high-stakes accountability. Power (1994, 1999, 2003) has written extensively on audit as a technology of neoliberalism, more broadly than in the field of education. He draws on the work of Shore and Wright (2000) to argue that 'audit is not simply a practice but also a cultural value in which the auditee is the product of a profound transformation of the subject, the construction of an "auditable" professional self' (2003, p. 191). Neoliberal policy regimes, such as those demonstrably embedded in education in contemporary times, in Australia and elsewhere, typically resist a culture of openness and debate, preferring for agents, whether teachers or learners, to capitulate to the system.

An example of this in action might be seen in recent deployments of teacher performance management and its relationship to the assessment of student learning in England. Used as a regulatory tool to determine teacher efficiency and effectiveness, performance management has come into vogue in the context of education policy in England in the form of a de facto educational standards strategy. As Sahlberg (n.d.) notes in relation to global trends, the adoption of test-based accountability for schools is paramount in determining teacher efficiency:

> In doing so [employing test based accountability] school performance—especially raising student achievement—is closely tied to processes of accrediting, promoting, inspecting, and, ultimately, rewarding or punishing schools and teachers. Success or failure of schools and teachers is often determined by standardized tests and external teacher evaluations that devote attention to limited aspects of schooling, such as student achievement in mathematical and reading literacy, exit examination results, or intended teacher classroom behavior.

Advocates of performance management in education argue that it brings together the needs of the individual, the teacher, with the needs of the organisation, by embedding professional development and improvement standards in the fabric of the school via the tools of evaluation, appraisal and capability procedures, through an intense scrutiny of an *individual* teacher's work as evidenced by student achievement (Page, 2015). Under such conditions there is little space for critical collegiality. Page further notes that compliance with the regulations regarding employment and performance is complex and often invisible. There are clandestine conversations and negotiations thus allowing the given performance to be controlled by senior leaders who themselves may be subject to the audit gaze of the employing authority.

As a consequence, within this regime, teachers are increasingly encouraged to view assessment data that records student achievement as a commodity for their own use. This is in contrast to using assessment information as a means of improving student learning through collegial interactions whereby teachers might engage in critical discussions regarding the data that are yielded more broadly by examining patterns of testing outcomes. Pratt (2016) in a discussion with teachers regarding performance pay observed that interviewees regularly referred to 'my data'—a process that endowed teachers with a false sense of ownership and agency. Clearly, they were not using assessment data as a platform to discuss with their colleagues the

ways in which they and their students were learning, but rather saw it as a first line of defence when protecting and promoting their own performance.

O'Neill (2013, p. 4) sees this process of appropriating and reusing assessment results beyond supporting learning to making judgements regarding teacher performance as one in which 'the assessment tail starts to wag the education dog'. Similarly, in a prescient letter to Bob Stake in 1992, Stephen Kemmis wrote of the perils of national assessment:

> It seemed as though national assessment was an idea whose time had passed. I thought it had gone to its death more or less gracefully, no longer suited for the parts it once was expected to play. I thought that, like a dinosaur confronting the ice age, it was a lumbering, archaistic ancestor of newer social practices of program evaluation, student assessment and school improvement (that is) better fitted for an era of greater professionalism among teachers, greater participation by school communities in the life and work of schools and more decentralised and democratic decision making …[1]

His lament holds to this day.

In this brief discussion of the ways in which teachers' individual performance is inexorably chained to student achievement, as measured by testing data, it is not difficult to identify the ways in which their critical voice as members of a community can be muffled. Teachers are increasingly constituted as 'robotic technicians', whose role is to follow the edicts and instructions of others, lacking the agency to critically evaluate policy with respect to the interests of their students (Hinchey, 2004). Here, we have an example of the tension between individual performance, often with teacher pitted against teacher, and the tenets of a traditional critical collegiality. These are troubling waters to navigate, particularly in the current context where the default mode for educational policies and practices in many jurisdictions internationally might be seen as conservative and regressive.

Standardising Practice

The moves toward standardisation referred to in the discussion of the GERM above manifest most strongly in terms of attempts to standardise teachers' practice, usually according to ideas about 'best practice' or 'what works' in education. The beginnings of the current and ongoing fascination with 'what works' can be traced to Hargreaves (1996) lecture *Teaching as a Research Based Profession*, which was delivered to the Teacher Training Agency in the UK and argued that educational research should aim to catalogue practices known to improve student learning which could then be utilised across schools regardless of context. Over the past two decades, the ideology of 'what works' has driven a great deal of reform and 'improvement' in education

[1] Entitled The worm of national assessment Stephen Kemmis wrote this piece as a short contribution to a conversation with Bob Stake, Oli Proppe and Dick Jaeger regarding their investigation into issues to do with national assessment undertaken in 1992. He went on to liken national assessment as a worm that continues to feed "in the deep decay of our fears and now comes to take its toll of the harvest which is our children".

globally. Trenchant arguments in favour of the proliferation of randomised controlled trials in education, such as those advanced by Ben Goldacre during Michael Gove's term as Secretary of State for Education in the UK (Goldacre, 2013) are one example of this. Pronouncements from the Australian then-Opposition Spokesman for Education Christopher Pyne promoting a return to 'practical', 'didactic' and 'traditional' teaching methods (Kelly, 2013, February 23) over 'child-centred learning' is another.

Notions of 'what works' and 'best practice' in education invariably ignore context. The rise of scripted curricula in Australia, the USA and elsewhere over the past decade, wherein teacher professional judgement and decision-making according to local context are eroded in favour of practice being standardised, down to the words spoken in the classroom is an extreme example of this. Woods, Dooley, Luke and Exley (2014), among others, have highlighted the scripting of curriculum and teaching as an issue contributing to the deprofessionalisation of teachers, arguing for the power of school-based curricular and pedagogical decision-making as a tool for improving student learning on both conventional and other measures.

Beyond issues related to teacher professional judgement and the deprofessionalisation of teachers via the standardisation of practice, standardisation privileges the technical over the relational dimensions of teaching. As Raewyn Connell eloquently reminds us, education comprises nurture, which is only achievable in the context of sound and authentic relationships:

> To say that education involves nurture is important. Education involves encounter between persons, and that encounter involves care. Learning from a computer is not education; the machine does not care. Learning from a person behaving like a machine is not education; that person's capacity for care is being suppressed. It is care that is the basis of the creativity in teaching, at all levels from Kindergarten to Ph.D. supervision, as the teacher's practice evolves in response to the learner's development and needs. (Connell, 2013, p. 104)

Finally, Kemmis and colleagues demonstrate the importance of the *site* of practice to practice itself. Practice is enacted in particular ways within particular sites according to practice architecture: the cultural discursive, material economic and social–political arrangements that are constituted within the site and work to enable and constrain practice (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008; Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer, & Bristol, 2014b; Mahon, Kemmis, Francisco, & Lloyd, 2017) . Furthermore, practices are said to exist in an ecological relationship with each other, wherein practices shape and are shaped by each other within and across sites:

> By ecologies of practice we mean distinctive interconnected webs of human social activities (characteristic arrangements of Sayings, doing, and relatings) that are mutually-necessary to order and sustain a practice as a practice of a particular kind and complexity (for example, a progressive educational practice). (Kemmis & Mutton, 2012, p. 15)

Clearly, these nuanced understandings of the complexity of practice, the relationships between practices and the site-based nature of practice development sit uncomfortably with ideas about the standardisation of educational practice. Furthermore, with respect to neoliberal policy regimes in education, standards, as tools of standardisation, work, in overt and covert ways, to curtail and constrain practice. As Lawrence Busch writes, in his book *Standards: Recipes for Reality*,

> However much standards appear to be neutral, benign, merely technical, obscure and removed from daily life, they are, I argue, largely an unrecongised but extremely important and growing source of social, political and economic relations of power. Indeed, in our modern world standards are arguably the most important manifestation of power relations…Even if we know who established them, standards take on a life of their own that extends beyond the authorities in time and space. (Busch, 2011, pp. 28–29)

While we do not wish to argue that practitioner research represents a panacea for the ills of neoliberal policy effects in education, we argue that it holds particular capacity as a tool for resistance, and it is to this work that we attend in the next section.

The Work of Practitioner Research in Resisting

In the face of the current push towards standardisation, and the concomitant erosion of conditions of critical collegiality in education, we now turn to the possibility of active resistance. We first make a point of engaging with children and young people as the consequential stakeholders[2] whose voices may provide a resonance for their teachers, by effectively 'striking a chord' with them. It is not that children's and young people's perspectives remind teachers of the dilemmas and challenges that they face, rather that they expand, amplify and illuminate persistent conditions of practice that act to trammel the possibility of communicative action.

'Student voice' may be seen as a co-constructed phenomenon that takes place within specific pedagogic contexts that are mediated by the many variables that govern schooling (Thompson, 2009). For this reason, we are careful about the creation of optimistic generalisations. Much has been written about the various modes of interaction through which student voice may be heard. Indeed, we advocate for transcending the notion of 'consultation' in that such a process may consider views and inputs that are responses rather than initiatives (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). Bragg and Fielding (2005) have spelled out the rationale for perceiving students as active respondents where there is a willingness to move beyond the mere accumulation of passive data and there is an authentic desire to hear what students have to say about their own experiences. 'Students are thus discussants rather than recipients of current approaches to teaching and learning' (p. 107). They suggest that student engagement in the consideration of the conditions of their schooling progress from being a data source, to becoming active respondents, through to co-researchers and ultimately to being researchers able to initiate and identify issues to be researched and doing so with the support of their teachers. In a later piece, Fielding (2007) argues that participative democracy is enhanced by the development of counter narratives such that phrases like 'personalisation of education' are moved from the notion of personalising as a form of customising, attached to consumerism, to one of greater

[2] A phrase adopted by Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2012) to connote that learners in schools bear the consequences of decisions made on their behalf. The phrase was originally coined by the then Queensland Board of Teacher Registration.

discernment. Fielding and Moss (2011) argue that we need to value each person, as an individual, but not as one who acts alone. They see 'personhood' as relational and contextual, ideally existing within a community that pays reciprocal attention to both the uniqueness of individuals and the capacity of each to relate to others. This stance is not in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the various members of a community, that point to their relative power, but by perceiving all of its members as those deserving of respect, marked by a capacity for altruism, and engagement in critical discourses on practice.

Children and young people are not passive and inactive commodities to be sold to the producers of education services. Indeed, they are well positioned to discern the viability of those services, their strengths and weaknesses, and are able to identify ways in which they may be meaningfully changed. They both shape and are shaped by the circumstances in which they find themselves. In effect, they contribute to the notion of practice-changing practices that are both enabling and constraining; along with their teachers they are concerned with coming to know 'how to go on in practice' (Kemmis et al., 2014a, b, p. 207). Thus, through student voice work, it is possible to explore how educative practice is formed, reformed and transformed through the engagement of young people as contributors to research—doing research, being in research and themselves relating research to local policy and enactment.

Second, in thinking about practitioner research as a tool of resistance, we are reminded of Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle's argument that 'teacher inquiry is a way for teachers to know their own knowledge' (1993, p. 45). Cochran-Smith and Lytle argue that practitioner inquiry supports teachers to become creators of knowledge for and about their own work: localised knowledge about practice derived from careful and critical collaborative analysis of evidence. This argument links with that made by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) about how action research 'aims to change practices, people's understandings of their practices, and the conditions under which they practice' (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014a). Practitioner research not only holds the potential to support the development of teacher professional judgement, but also deep, localised knowledge about the practice of teaching.

Wisdom of Practice

In our thinking about the nature of practice in education and the ways in which participative inquiry conducted in a context of critical collegiality can interrupt the instrumental knowledge interests of our society (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2017), we now turn to the difficult and challenging question of 'what is education for?'. Biesta (2010) has posed the questions: 'what can education do for children and young people?'; 'what is a good education?'; and 'what is educationally desirable in the face of the dominant global discourses in relation to effectiveness and accountability?' He challenges the normalised ways in which 'accountability' stands as a justification for what is to be done and why. Seemingly, in some languages, for example, Finnish, there is no word that matches 'accountability', the closest being

'responsibility'. As Sahlberg puts it, 'accountability is what is left when responsibility is subtracted' (quoted in Partanen, 2011). The very notion of accountability has been captured by the need to answer to systems, rather than accountability to learners and through them the community in which they live within an ethic of care, that which O'Neill (2002, 2013) has identified as "intelligent accountability". Biesta distinguishes between wisdom and cleverness; seeing that too often, it is the latter that is rewarded, what it is that an individual 'knows' in particular about the rules and regulations that govern practice.

Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) have observed that there is a mistaken belief that rules and regulations can substitute for wisdom; they see instead that the wise person is able to understand them and apply them selectively, perceptively and insightfully in relation to the specific demands of the situation. Furthermore, we would argue that given the ways in which the privatised life has become a dominant force in the face of the decay of communitarian values it is essential that education contributes to an understanding that we should care for and assume responsibility for others besides ourselves. As citizens and through education, it is vital that responsibility is taken for issues beyond private needs and desires; that judgment transcends rules. As Bauman (n.d., p. 36) argues, to be responsible does not mean following rules, indeed being responsible may require us to even disregard the rules where they are not warranted in order to build a better community whose members are resourceful and thoughtful enough to cope with the many challenges to be faced.

In particular, practitioner research is not directed to instrumental ends but through its very nature by being constituted as 'systematic inquiry, made public', endeavours to develop a consensus about 'how to go on' in practice (Kemmis et al., 2014b):

> … we conclude that learning [about practice] is the process through which people, perhaps tentatively or as novices, enter the Sayings, doings and relatings that hang together in the project of practice and, by practising, explore the enablements of and constraints on interaction characteristic of that practice, and become more adept in interacting with others and with objects of the world though it. (p. 39)

It is through carefully informed inquiry that teachers and their students will be well armed to be resistant to increasingly bureaucratic requirements and able to exercise discernment, based upon the carefully collected evidence of their own making.

Conclusion: Enabling Resistance

Having argued that practitioner research could provide a valuable tool for teachers and schools in resisting the imposition of neoliberal regimes and their 'perverse effects' (Lingard & Sellar, 2013) on education, in this concluding section, we point to factors that might enable such resistance to happen at a system and school level. In presenting this discussion, we recognise that contemporary schools are awash with data: as observed by Selwyn:

> Within even the smallest of schools, for example, masses of digitised data are being generated, collected and collated on a daily basis. These data range from the often ad hoc 'in-house' monitoring of students and teachers to the systematic 'public' collection of data at local, state and federal levels. Vast amounts of 'naturally occurring' data are generated from the daily use of 'virtual learning environments' and other learning technologies that log information during the course of their operation. (2015, p. 66)

The prevalence of more data, however, does not necessarily equate to greater capacity amongst schools and teachers to use such data wisely. In the UK, the final report of the BERA-RSA Inquiry into Research and Teacher Education (Furlong, Menter, Munn, Whitty, Hallgarten, & Johnson, 2014) constituted research literacy, as one of the three key dimensions of teachers' broader professional identity in the contemporary age. Furthermore, research literacy was said to underpin the other two dimensions of subject and pedagogical knowledge and practical experience. The authors of the report argued that:

> To be research literate is to 'get' research – to understand why it is important and what might be learnt from it, and to maintain a sense of critical appreciation and healthy scepticism throughout. (Furlong et al., 2014, p. 40)

Research literacy, however, cannot be taken for granted as something that prospective teachers will bring with them into the profession, and neither can it be assumed that teachers will naturally develop research literacy by virtue of engaging in their day to day work. Recent research from the UK and continental Europe (see, e.g., Amir, Mandler, Hauptman, & Gorev, 2017; Evans, Waring, & Christodoulou, 2017; Gutman & Genser, 2017) highlights the importance of (and tensions in) actively supporting pre- and in-service teachers in the development of research literacy as a matter of priority for professional development. Enhanced research literacy for teachers might not only ensure that more teachers 'get research', but also that they increasingly use and engage in research in their own classrooms, bringing to this enterprise a wise appreciation of appropriate evidence and its uses. As Lingard and Renshaw (2010) argue, teaching itself should be a research informed and research informing profession. As the prevalence of data of all kinds increases in schools, the incumbency upon teacher educators to support teachers' wise and responsible use of such data also increases.

In the early 1980, Stephen lamented the disjuncture between teachers and educational researchers, arguing that we needed to move beyond narrow conceptualisations of theory and practice in order to engage in the joint enterprise of education:

> It is a natural consequence of our analytical fragmentation of the world of schooling and our abrogation of participatory ways of understanding that we no longer speak the language of teachers and students, that our concerns are not their concerns. (Kemmis, 1980, p. 1)

In Australia, recent moves to encourage a greater sense of partnership between higher education institutions and schools in the provision of teacher education through professional experience provide opportunities for teachers and university-based teacher educators to work together on the 'stirring into practice' (Rönnerman & Kemmis, 2016) of pre-service teachers. In this context, critical collaborative

inquiry-based approaches incorporating action research provide a vehicle for building authentic partnerships and exploring the theory/practice 'divide' (see, e.g., Talbot, Denny, & Henderson, 2017, under review).

One of Stephen's own 'projects of practice', executed over an extended period of time, has been to argue for the important role that participatory action research can play in opening critical communicative space (2001); in supporting the telling of 'uncomfortable truths' (2006); and in shaping and forming teachers' practices over time (Kemmis, 2009a) such that they themselves might engage in the broader project of education, seeking to form individuals such that they might 'live well in a world worth living in' (Kemmis, 2012, p. 81). In the age of data, audit, standardisation, markets and competition in education, these ideas have taken on an even greater importance, and teacher research a more significant and critical potential.

The standardisation of educational practice that is at the heart of many neoliberal policy reforms in education seeks to provide simple solutions to increasingly complex and multifaceted problems. Problems such as the deepening and widening of educational disadvantage in most western countries; the advanced literacy demands of the information age; the question of inclusion and engagement of young people in times of increasing fundamentalism of many kinds—these are problems that will not be addressed via a 'cookie cutter' approach to educational practice. Practitioner research, which aims to support teachers to explore local issues and questions in their local setting; to problematise their practice; to engage in ongoing critical dialogue with colleagues, students, and community members, is an important tool of resistance. Stephen's work over the past four decades is a reminder to us not only of the potential of practitioner research, but of the importance of using this tool wisely and untiringly in the pursuit of education for the common good.

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Chapter 9
Action Research and Praxis: Grasping the Mystery of What Happens?

Jan Ax and Petra Ponte

Abstract The Enlightenment and humanist philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries 'discovered' human beings as individuals who are able to influence their own lives and the context in which they live. In the words of Nietzsche in the nineteenth century, the human being turned out to be 'dass noch nicht fest gesteltes Tier', a creature with the capacity to learn, a creature that relies on being raised by adults. With the discovery of human beings as autonomous individuals came the 'discovery' of the possibility and need to raise children in certain ways. Kant for instance—one of the most influential philosophers of the modern age—contended that human beings only became human through their upbringing. He argued that human beings are not determined by inborn instincts or divine powers, but essentially by their capacity for autonomous moral judgment and actions. Human beings fulfil themselves as 'creatures of pure reason […] and so they need to be brought up with an ethical outlook […]. The main task is to bring up children to be virtuous people and that does not happen as a matter of course' (Smeyers & Levering, 2001, p. 25). It was from the 'discovery' of human beings as autonomous individuals who are dependent on their upbringing that pedagogy as 'human science' or, more precisely, 'the science of the child's upbringing' developed. It is a science with strong German roots, dominant in many European countries (especially in the north and east, including the Netherlands). In this chapter, we hope to convey an impression of pedagogy in continental Europe in the past, present and future. We will briefly explore 'praxis' as its object of study. Then, we will sketch the background to this science by looking at three Enlightenment figures that concerned themselves with education and the raising of children. They are Rousseau (who had a huge influence on philosophers such as Kant and on educationalists who emphasise the individuality of the child and its development); Schleiermacher (who had a major influence on

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ideas about the nature of *theory* in continental European pedagogy); and Herbart (who was a significant figure in the thinking about teaching as an issue for pedagogy as human science right through until the mid-twentieth century). We will then go on to link the contributions made by these figures to important debates that have determined the further development of continental European pedagogy. We conclude with a discussion of current trends stemming from neoliberal and Anglo-American influences, which threaten the survival of pedagogic thinking as we know it and finally point to some challenges for the future.

Introduction

On the first page of his book Lessons of the master, Steiner (2004) argues that:

> we are so immersed in the profusion of forms of education (…) that we seldom just take the time to think about the wonder of transfer, the resourcefulness of deception, which I, pending a more precise and relevant definition, would like to call *the mystery of what happens*. (p. 1)

We could say that in 2005 Stephen Kemmis came to the Netherlands and Sweden with the idea to start an international research network in order to grasp that *educational mystery* by a 'conversation of tradition' in the field of educational research. His initiative led to the PEP-network (Pedagogy, Education and Praxis), which was initially coordinated by researchers of Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, Australia (Stephen Kemmis), the Universities of Gothenburg (Karin Rönnerman) and Stockholm (Matts Mattson) in Sweden and the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and Leiden University (Petra Ponte) in the Netherlands. During the years that followed, researchers from many other universities in Australia, Canada, Colombia, the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and the UK have all played a role in the network, and it still exists today (https://arts-ed.csu.edu.au/research/ed-research/pedagogy-and-praxis). The initial goal was to foreground and rephrase the moral foundations of education and educational research. We tried to capture *the mystery of what happens* in a language borrowed from a concept that was formulated way back in antiquity—that is, the Aristotle's concept of praxis. Our initial motivation was prompted by a shared concern for the quality of action research and education in an age in which, according to Neiman (2008), moral claims make many people feel profoundly uncomfortable. If they are made at all, such claims

> are subject to quotation marks – sometimes called scare quotes – that express the speaker's discomfort in the ultimate postmodern gesture, fingers wiggling beside ears in a little dance that says: I can use it, but I don't go so far as to mean it, and it all matters so little anyway I can make myself look silly to boot. What matters is putting distance between you and your beliefs. (p. 18)

In this chapter, we will limit the work to our understanding of praxis as a critical framework for action research as reformulated and refined by the 'conversations of traditions' during our participation in the PEP-network. We will, therefore, broadly follow the line of argument in some of our key publications that have been published

under the umbrella of, or inspired by, the network (Ax & Ponte, 2008, 2010; Ponte & Ax, 2009; Groundwater-Smith, Mitchell, Mockler, Ponte, & Rönnerman, 2013; Ponte & Smit, 2016).

In the first section of this chapter, we establish the neoliberal trend in Dutch education. In the second section, we argue that this trend has led into action research as a manageable, instrumental method for solving immediate problems, or a useful way to apply academic knowledge in practice. As alternative we suggest an approach, which has praxis as educational, morally informed action in the social and cultural contexts as its domain of study. Then, we continue by further exploring the origins of the praxis concept. We replace the concept of Aristotle and Kant (1784/1999) by a concept that is among others based on the *theory* of Habermas (1981). This allows us to define praxis as a domain of study in terms of 'the unity of action'. Finally, we present a 'model of critique' with which educational praxis can be problematised in terms of the scope that professional in academia and the field are given in educational praxis to act autonomously and to take decisions with regard to the moral aims of their actions.

Establishing the Trend in Dutch Education

One of the main activities of the PEP-network at that time (mid-2000) was the series of books, four in number, that had been published and whose aim it was to explore the meanings of the terms 'pedagogy', 'education' and 'praxis' in different local educational domains (Kemmis & Smith, 2008; Ax & Ponte, 2008; Rönnerman, Moksnes Furu, & Salo, 2008; Mattsson, Johansson, & Sandström, 2008).

In the Dutch publication *Critiquing praxis* (Ax & Ponte, 2008), the overall conclusion was that what had been understood to be good education over the past decades seemed to have been coloured by the general neoliberal social climate and to a lesser extent by developments in, and current thinking about, the education profession and teacher professionalism. With regard to the content of the discussions, metaphors from domains of practice other than education were often used. A striking example of this was the language used in connection with issues of total quality management (TQM): tailor-made teaching; client-oriented services; achievement-based reward; and so forth. All of these notions had been developed in the world of industrial manufacturing and, more specifically, the domain of predictable technologies and closed production processes and were now being adopted in education. Schools produced products and had to compete with each other; governors and managers were the 'directors' and were required to demonstrate 'entrepreneurship'; teachers were the 'workers on the shopfloor'; and pupils and parents were the 'customers'.

There has also been the idea that education should be evidence-based (EBP)—just like medicine—and the academic world professes that it can come up with the necessary knowledge for this purpose: instrumental knowledge, which can be understood in terms of 'what works'. The focus on 'what works' has been coupled with decreasing interest in the theoretical and philosophical issues in education and that is rather

remarkable. Whereas in the sixties and seventies, practitioners often paid little or no attention to models or concepts for teaching and curriculum development from educational *theory*, as they were seen as too 'theoretical', nowadays many practitioners as well as academics seem to be brimming with enthusiasm about management models and the establishment of function protocols, instruments and databases of useable products. The current dominance of this managerial and instrumental thinking in the field as well as the academic world is remarkable, because medical and management models are even further away from the actual educational practice of teachers and students than the educational theories that were used before TQM and EBP models were introduced. They are not only further away in terms of the degree of abstraction from the daily practice of students and teachers; they are especially further away from educational and moral debates about the kind of education that should be offered to children in our schools and in our society (Biesta, 2013).

Action Research, Praxis and Knowledge Development

These current trends are in clear contrast with continental European literature in the 1960 and 70, when a number of Dutch researchers in the field of education advocated the need for action research. Theories of Dewey (1957) and Lewin (1947) were referred to, but these researchers mainly founded themselves in the German critical tradition in educational studies as formulated amongst other by the *Frankfurter Schule* (Blankertz, 1969; Benner, 1993; Moser, 1978). This tradition was highly influential in many continental European countries. With the desire to understand and transform education, it was felt that educational studies need to be practice-based by connecting moral philosophical insights with the understanding of the real existing world in education. In line with this, Benner (1993) describes the nature of educational studies as

> both practical and theoretical, for it supports, for one thing, the gradual problematisation of the educational practice. … the problematisation of practice always proceeds from a situation in which accepted norms and conversations of human coexistence become questionable'. (pp. 11–12, translation by the authors)

Therefore, educational praxis was defined as its 'domain of study'. This means, as we will argue in the following sections, that educational studies, including action research, have educational action in the social and cultural contexts as their domain of reality.

Action research in the Netherlands was banished under the influence of the dominant trends in the academic world as described in the former section. It, however, was again 'imported' in the beginning of this century from English-speaking countries, with a strong focus on the Teacher-as-Researcher approach of Stenhouse (1975) and Elliott (1991). This approach, however, was adopted mainly as a strategy for professional development for the field, which means that action research was still not taken seriously in the academic world.

As a model for professional development, apart from the academy, action research was, and still is, often degenerated either into a simple, instrumental method for solving immediate problems, or a handy way to apply academic knowledge in practice. For instance, in a study of the place, function and design of action research in a number of initial teacher education courses in the Netherlands (Ax, Ponte, & Brouwer, 2008), we found that their curricula paid hardly any attention at all to substantive questions such as: 'What is a good school? What is good teaching? What function has education in a democratic society? Moreover, many action research reports that we encountered over the years often failed to address such substantive Claims or they were simply accepted as given. Sometimes there were only sentimental accounts about the collaboration between the stakeholders in partnerships ('We got on well together and we appreciated the process'), and sometimes there were only instrumental accounts ('We made sure that we stuck to the methodological rules and we valued the procedures'). In the first case, the substantive claims of action research was ignored, and in the second case, they were not taken up as research problems.

We can conclude that this is not the knowledge to which the concept of educational praxis refers. Riedel (1977), see also Ponte, Ax, Beijaard and Wubbels, (2004), for instance, defines knowledge in the framework of praxis as knowledge about human beings who act with a purpose and take responsibility for their actions. This knowledge can be distinguished from general knowledge based on *theory* (modelled predictions of educational reality) and *techne* (potential skills, techniques and strategies). Educational literature rarely distinguishes between *theory* and *techne*, according to Riedel. He maintains that this is because both are forms of systematic knowledge, that is knowledge about regularities. *Theory* is concerned with knowledge about how phenomena are related in certain situations. *Techne* is concerned with knowledge about what could be done in certain situations. It is important for education that both knowledge based on *techne* and *praxis* are intended to exert an influence on practice. *Techne*, however, is concerned with general knowledge about the exercise of influence without the need to be responsible for, or to reflect on, the moral objective behind it, whereas this need is the key to *praxis*. *Praxis*, therefore, is concerned with moral goals that human beings are responsible for, since *praxis* arises through purposeful intervention in the reality of others. *Theory* and *techne* can be used when making these interventions, but their use in itself does not constitute *praxis*.

Praxis as a Domain of Study in Terms of 'the Unity of Action'

Riedel's *theory* gave us a general idea about the nature of knowledge about educational praxis, but we still needed to question the substantive features of it in depth. What is actually our understanding of educational praxis that we want to change and understand? How can we come, according to Gadotti (1996)

> to a praxis *theory* that is practical; that is to say a *theory* that should 'not abstract itself from the intended practice, but commit itself to educate individuals as a point on the horizon but never a finished process because education is really an unending process … Education is at the same time *promise and project*. (p. 7)

Many who see the concept of praxis as central to the endeavours of education have drawn upon the wisdom of Aristotle who tried to answer the questions: What is wisdom? What is knowledge? What makes a person who has the capacity to act? He defined praxis as

> 'action' referring in a general sense to all intentional activities, by which people can reach a particular goal through their own efforts. More specifically, the term refers to rational action based on a conscious choice (…) and action is defined as the product of observation, desires, and intellect or reason (…). The inclusion of reason means that action in the narrow sense is the preserve of adults, who are most complete when they are engaged in action and who achieve 'happiness' through action. (in Van Bons and Ophuijsen, 1999, p. 340, translation by the authors)

Aristotle's concept of praxis could be interpreted as individualistic. He starts from the premise that human beings are inclined 'to do good' thanks to their natural capacity for reason. Praxis is the purposeful and self-accountable action of the individual who is 'trying to do good' in order to reach happiness. In his view, there is also 'non-praxis', that is 'not trying to do good'.

Enlightenment philosophers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries renewed the interest in praxis. In his moral philosophy, Kant (1784, English translation 1999), for instance, sees praxis as intentional and rational action with which normative judgements should be validated: 'How can I validate this moral claim as just or unjust?' This is deliberative rationality by pure reason that in his view is obtained through pure reasoning by individuals. This means that Kant—as well as Aristotle—had a individualistic approach to praxis which was criticised in the twentieth century by Dewey (1957) and Habermas (1981) among others, when praxis became a framework for sociological critique and critical educational theories. According to Böhm (2007), Dewey blamed Kant for embedding

> the value of a moral act in its intentions and thus in the inner disposition of the actor, instead of measuring it against the external effects that are achieved and ensured by these actions. (translation by the authors, p. 71)

Habermas (1981) then reformulated Kant's *theory* about deliberative rationality into the *theory* of communicative action. According to Habermas, not only pure reason but also moral intentions and consequences must play a role in this procedure.

The theories of Habermas have had major implications for our understanding of educational praxis. To support our position, we put forward three arguments.

First, in contrast to Aristotle's idea that a social situation can be defined as praxis or not praxis, Habermas suggests that every concrete social situation has morals—and so by definition can be critically evaluated through the lens of praxis, no matter what the nature of the action is. According to Gadotti (1996):

> the kind of education that copies models, that wishes to reproduce models, does not stop being praxis, but is limited to a reiterative, imitative, and bureaucratized praxis. Quite different from this, transforming praxis is essentially creative, daring, critical, and reflective. (p. xvii)

Second, this critical understanding of praxis as framework for critique supposes deliberative rationality but, unlike Kant, Habermas sees deliberative rationality as obtained by communicative action; the construction of practical theories should be not an individual, but an intersubjective endeavour.

Third, in understanding the relationship between human action (in our case—action research) and the cultural, social and political contexts in which human action takes place, praxis does not refer only to individual intentions 'to do good' (as in the Aristotelian and the Kantian definition), but also to social—sometimes unintended, hidden or manipulative—consequences in terms of social equity, justice and solidarity.

We see praxis, in other words, as the real, existing practice of education and as a natural condition of human beings. Praxis as the *promise and process* of education always exists, regardless of its quality or implications. We become people in and through the social environment and morality is the essence of this. This means that praxis expresses the notion that every educational action:

- involves some kind of attempt to give meaning;
- is dependent on concrete situations in reality;
- is always based on suppositions about that reality;
- always has a course of development; and
- always involves several actors (at the very least a teacher and a student).

Together these characteristics constitute praxis or the *unity of action* as a domain of study. This means that educational studies, including action research, study educational action as in the social and cultural contexts. The key questions—and so the questions that need to be studied in association with each other—are consequently equivalent to the characteristics of praxis just mentioned:

- Giving meaning: What are the intentions, the consequences and the meanings in concrete situations in education and upbringing?
- Reality: How is praxis expressed in time and space? How is it expressed in concrete actions and artefacts?
- Suppositions: What is the quality (relevance and validity) of the suppositions on which the actions in the situations in education are based?
- Course of development: Without reducing it to causal chains, how does the action develop over time?
- Actors: What is the role and function of the participants in the education situations? What kind of interaction is going on between the actors?

A Model for Critiquing Praxis

The above definition of praxis as *unity of action* and by that as the domain of study leaves unanswered the question of whether the act of education should be interpreted mainly from the standpoint of researchers and practitioners who are capable of acting autonomously and rationally or mainly from the cultural, social and political contexts in which they act. The first standpoint is represented by *lifeworld* as seen in the phenomenological *theory* of Schutz (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973), the second by the *system theory* of Luhman (1984/1995). Habermas (1981) tries to overcome this duality by arguing that neither *lifeworld* theories or *system* theories are sufficient to understand social phenomenon. Instead, social situations should be interpreted as resulting from the interplay of both forces, and we hold this to be true in relation to action research in education. We develop this viewpoint into a model of critique with which educational praxis can be problematised in terms of the scope of action and decision-making that professionals in the academia and the education field are given in educational praxis.

Lifeworld and System

Action research in which knowledge is construed via participatory meaning-making, critical dialogue and change assumes that professionals in academia and the field does indeed have the opportunity to realise these aims. Those opportunities are determined by two conditions: (1) the scope they are given in educational praxis to act autonomously and (2) the scope they are given to take decisions with regard to the moral aims of their actions. We explored this by combining Habermas' concepts of *lifeworld* and *system* with the distinction that Mannheim (1940) (in line with Weber, 1946, first published in 1902–24) made between functional and substantive rationality. In order to understand their argument, we first look briefly at both theories.

With Habermas' concepts of *lifeworld* and *system*, we can problematise the professional scope to act autonomously. *System* in Habermas' theory is the way the world is organised; it has self-regulating dynamics with anonymous mechanisms, in which individuals have little or no influence. *System* is driven by economic, legal, administrative and bureaucratic subsystems. Habermas argues that in modern societies, *system* is increasingly uncoupled from its foundations in *lifeworld*, foundations that are necessary for shared sense-making, fair social relationships and mutual solidarity. *Lifeworld* is the domain where people organise their own reality, based on their own preferences and in dialogue with others. *Lifeworld* in current times is increasingly being colonised by *system* in which power and money are the dominant mechanisms, according to Habermas. We see this in education where the autonomous scope to act seems to be reduced more and more, under pressure from increasing standardisation and bureaucratisation, handing control over what happens in the school and the university to others (politicians, bureaucrats, etcetera). Such colonising practices

clearly have ramifications for action research. This happens, for instance, when action research is appropriated by authorities as an implementation tool or, as Stephen Kemmis put it, when 'action research becomes a vehicle for domesticating students and teachers to conventional forms of schooling' (2006, p. 459).

Functional and Substantive Rationality

One of the dangers of colonising *lifeworld* by *system* in neoliberal times is that moral questions about whose interests various actors in social situations are acting in and where that action should lead are in danger of no longer being discussed. This danger requires us to turn to a more finely tuned distinction with regard to rationality, which is the one that Mannheim (1940), with reference to Weber (1946, first published in 1902–24), makes between '*functional rationality*' and '*substantive rationality*'. *Functional* rationality concerns the instrumental decisions about rules, methods, strategies and techniques that are needed to reach a specific goal: of greatest concern in this rationality is the *functional* usefulness of possible actions. Which instruments do we have at our disposal? Are the measures taken effective and efficient? What works and what does not work? *Substantive rationality*, by contrast, is concerned with the desirability of the actions and the goals to be reached through those actions: of greatest concern in this rationality are the arguments that provide moral legitimacy for an action or the purpose of an action. What are our underlying values? What are our aims? What do these mean for our actual actions? Have we achieved something that is genuinely worthwhile and just?

Professionals who are carrying out action research must have the necessary degree of say about values and aim, because it is they who ultimately have to reconcile in a professional manner the diverse values and aim of the different stakeholders in education, all of which may be legitimate in themselves. This essential power to take decisions about values and aim is the substantive scope for decision-making. Substantive scope is not enough though. Professional also need functional scope; they need to decide how those values and aim can be realised in practical terms as well. *Substantive* and *functional rationality* are two sides of the same coin. The issue at stake now is that not only are expectations of professional's *substantive rationality* inflated, so are expectations of their functional rationality, and too many policy-makers believe that this rationality can also be imposed from outside.

Framework for Critique

Combining Mannheim's substantive and functional rationality with Habermas's *system* and *lifeworld* gives us a relevant framework for understanding the professional scope for rational decision-making and autonomous action in action research. This framework can be represented in a matrix as shown in Fig. 9.1.

		Scope for Autonomous Action	
		System	*Lifeworld*
Scope for Rational Decision Making	*Substantive rationality*	1. To what extent are educational aims prescribed by the *system*? Who actually forms part of that *system*? What is our own role in the *system*?	2. What scope do we have in our *lifeworld* to set our own aims? What opportunities are there to expand that scope and are we using them?
	Functional rationality	3. To what extent does the *system* determine how we have to achieve the aims and which parts of the *system* make those decisions?	4. To what extent can we decide on our own rules and working methods? What scope do we have to do this and how can we increase it?

Fig. 9.1 Professional scope for autonomous action and rational decision-making

It is important to emphasise that we, unlike Habermas (1981) and others, do not equate *system* with functional rationality nor *lifeworld* with *substantive rationality*. The relationship between professional rationality and autonomy in education is more complex than that. *System* and *lifeworld* are not strictly partitioned: education is a public enterprise, and all of us occupy different positions in both worlds. Moreover, individual responsibility to take substantive and functional decisions exists irrespective of *system* dynamics. This means that educational praxis can be described first and foremost as a reality, meaning that the cells in Fig. 9.1 do not represent separate spheres of influence, or a static description of reality, or a prescription of how educational praxis should be. The cells in Fig. 9.1 help us to explore and understand the issues, dilemmas and challenges with questions in educational research such as: To what extent are educational aims prescribed by the *system*? Who actually forms part of the *system*? What is our own role in the *system*? (cell 1); What scope do we have in our *lifeworld* to set our own objectives? What opportunities are there to expand that scope and are we using them? (cell 2); To what extent does the *system* determine how we achieve the aims and which parts of the *system* make those decisions? (cell 3); To what extent can we decide on our own rules and working methods? What scope

do we have to do this and how can we increase it? (cell 4); How far are objectives (cells 1 and 2) in harmony with methods of working? (cells 3 and 4).

To Conclude: What's in a Name?

In the foreword to *Enabling Praxis* (the book of Stephen Kemmis and Tracy Smith in the PEP series to which we referred in the opening section), we quoted Bennet. On page 253 of his book, Freedom Evolves (2004), Bennet described a fable to illustrate the misunderstandings that can arise from a difference in language. In answer to the question as to whether things such as 'faith' and 'pain' are real, he wrote:

> the fable concerns people who speak a language in which they are talking about being overcome by 'fatigues' where you and I would simply say that we are 'tired' or 'exhausted'. When we come to them with our sophisticated science, they ask us which of the small bodies in the bloodstream are the fatigues? We wave the question aside, which then leads them to ask in disbelief: are you denying that fatigues are real?

The concept of praxis, with which we tried to capture the essence of action research in education as a moral endeavour, can be compared with being tired. We all knew that the concept exists, but it could not be marked out as a set of rules, procedures and outcomes, just as fatigue cannot be marked out as 'small bodies in the bloodstream'. In the PEP network, we needed to construct a language to express our shared as well as different understandings of the concept. We quickly understood, therefore, that we needed constantly to explore the substance of our different traditions and languages. Sometimes we used the same words for different concepts; sometimes we used different words for the same concepts. However, during the many fundamental and extremely inspiring debates with Stephen and other colleagues in the PEP-network, we always could start and return back to some basic joint intentions when trying to give words to *the mystery of what happens* in terms of praxis. Stephen (in Kemmis and Smith, 2008) formulated these basic joint intentions as follows:

> Instead of contemplation on the mystery and marvels of a divine creation, the critical perspective provokes contemplation on the possibility that existing ways of understanding things might be *irrational* (…), that they might lead to *injustice* or *human suffering* (…), or that they might be *unproductive* or *destructive* (…). The critical approach thus emphasizes not just how things are, but how they might be otherwise (….). (p. 23)

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Chapter 10
Knowing Pedagogical Praxis in Twenty-First Century Education

Christine Edwards-Groves, Peter Grootenboer and Tracey Smith

Abstract There are always perennial and critical questions to be asked about the nature, conduct and study of education. Who is it for? What is its purpose? Is it just? How does it happen? How does one educate? What is education? Such questions lead us into the complex territory of interrelated educational practices involving student learning, teaching, leading, professional learning and development and researching. This chapter seeks to answer a more fundamental question for educators about pedagogical practice posed by Stephen Kemmis: *in whose interests are we acting?* To do this, we take the lead from decades of influential work by Kemmis and his commitment to a praxis-oriented view of pedagogy, research and education. For him, praxis in education, although differently understood in different historical and educational traditions, concerns a more deliberative, moral, ethical and virtuous conceptualisation of pedagogical practice. It sets aside a more simplistic view of praxis as action by tying it intimately to the notion of phronēsis, a concept that accounts for practical wisdom and the recognition that practical action in the here-and-now (in everyday life, in educational settings) has consequences and so is part of history-making. Thus, the chapter re(in)states the promises of education by considering what is pedagogical praxis, what is required for pedagogical praxis and why should educators be concerned with pedagogical praxis in contemporary times.

> Educational practices are always propelled by something more than propositional knowledge. Today, we want practitioners of the professions to have qualities that extend beyond professional practice knowledge toward wisdom in the form of the dispositions of wisdom and prudence, that Aristotle called phronēsis. (Kemmis, 2012, p. 148)

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As we move forward and more deeply into education in the twenty-first century, it is necessary to consider the practices, interests and dispositions that propel it onward. This means it is time to return to enduring questions concerning education itself and, as suggested by Kemmis, the prevailing need for praxis. Such questions lead us into the complex territory of the interrelatedness of educational practices involving student learning, teaching, leading, professional learning and development and researching. To be educational in these pursuits, according to Kemmis, means looking 'to live well in a world worth living in' (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018, p. 14).[1] This view of education suggests that it is not solely an individual endeavour, but that its purpose is aspirationally a societal good. However, since the turn of the century, understanding these practices and answering questions related to their educational virtue have shifted towards results, measurement and accountability. With this global shift, the pathway towards education has narrowed, leading *education* to be more simply equated with *schooling*. Perhaps education has even been diverted into territories that might be described as *un*educational. Education in schools has struggled to find itself within the midst of New Public Management and the rise of neoliberal regimes of technicism and performativity, which have gathered momentum across the globe as teaching standards, high stakes national and international student testing, and national systemic accountabilities and comparative league tables have pervaded the daily work of educators (in preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, technical and vocational schools and universities). Left in its wake seem to be more perfunctory technical schooling practices and dispositions devoid of a sensitivity to the broader societal purposes of education that are realistically and genuinely responsive to the site, and of the needs and circumstances of those practising there—for societal good.

Against this movement, this chapter searches for praxis in modern education by taking up the double view of education premised on the idea(l) of praxis. It sets aside a more simplistic view of praxis as action by tying it intimately to the notion of phronēsis, a concept that accounts for practical wisdom and the recognition that practical action in the here-and-now (in everyday life, in educational settings) has consequences and so is history-making. Thus, in this chapter we re(in)state the

[1] After intellectual encounters with Aristotle, Plato and Dewey (among others), Stephen has long considered that education has a double purpose: to live well in a world worth living in. He first wrote about this doubleness in *Curriculum, Contestation and Change: Essays on Education* (unpublished manuscript, Deakin University 1990). This conceptualisation is now published in Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018) *Understanding Education: History, politics and practice*, based on Kemmis' (2006a, b) *The Nature and Study of Education*, written for first-year education students at Charles Sturt University. Although Stephen also wrote about this idea in varying ways across his career, particularly notable is with Wilfred Carr in 1986 *Becoming Critical* and more recently in a volume reporting findings from an Australian Research Council Discovery Program research project reported in Changing Practices, Changing Education (Kemmis et al. 2014).

Making this distinction between education and schooling in his Occasional Address 'Education for Sustainability' to participants in the Faculty of Education graduation ceremony, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, 5 April 2006, Kemmis described 'schooling' as 'the functional apparatus of schools, textbooks, lesson plans, units of work, assessment'. Education, on the other hand, he says 'is what changes lives'. Published in: Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018).

promises of education by considering what pedagogical praxis is, what is required for pedagogical praxis, and why educators should be concerned with pedagogical praxis. To explore this further, we draw on Kemmis' work to explore the concept of praxis as it is intricately tied to the conduct of practice. Our intention here is not to re-package Kemmis' work on praxis and practice but to attempt to discover its relevance in empirical examples. We orient the chapter by examining a definition of education proposed by Kemmis and colleagues in 2014.

Rediscovering Praxis in the Task of Education

> Education and schooling will not be equal to the new historical challenges of the twenty-first century, that is, if we cannot discover, develop and sustain changed and new practice of education. (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 3)

To the challenge proposed here by Kemmis et al. (2014), we add to *rediscover* the purpose of education in and for contemporary times. Kemmis et al. (2014) state:

> Education, properly speaking, is the process by which children, young people and adults are initiated into forms of understanding, modes of action, and ways of relating to one another and the world, that foster (respectively) individual and collective self-expression, individual and collective self-development and individual and collective self-determination, and that are, in these senses, oriented towards the good for each person and the good for humankind. (p. 26)

This definition points us to the doubleness of education proposed by Kemmis in the 1990: *to prepare people to live well in a world worth living in*. This, as Kemmis et al. (2014) claim, 'must always be determined anew for changing times and circumstances' (p. 27). So our task as educators, as suggested by Kemmis et al. (2014), is to rediscover what counts as the good life for humankind (we note that this notion is also contested), individually and collectively in, and for, education. This double view establishes education as having an individualistic aim to educate sovereign persons that, at the same time, works futuristically towards a broader societal good. Kemmis et al. (2014, p. 2) state that:

> On the one hand, it aims to form and develop individuals with the knowledge, capabilities and character to live good lives—that is, lives committed to the good for humankind. On the other hand, education aims to form and develop good societies, in which the good for humankind is the principal value.

Education, thus, is formational and transformational of individuals and societies. This view of education turns us towards praxis.

Taking the lead from decades of influential work by Kemmis and his commitment to a praxis-oriented view of education, in this section we consider these central questions: What is pedagogical praxis? What is required for pedagogical praxis? What is educational about pedagogical praxis? Why should educators be concerned with pedagogical praxis? To ponder these critical questions for education and the more fundamental question for educators posed by Kemmis, *in whose interests are*

we acting? means taking seriously the double purpose of education. This means to critique and question the ways educational endeavours serve the interests of individuals in practice and the interests of the societies in which individuals are responsible. Added to this is a line of questioning in regard to how education forms society and how society forms education (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018, p. 21) through the recursive interconnections between the individual and the collective. This line of thinking generates provocative questions that challenge us to turn a mirror back onto ourselves as educational practitioners. As Kemmis (2012, p. 148) states:

> Our task in *understanding* professional practice, in *researching* it, and especially in *developing* or *changing* it, is greater than the task of understanding the professional practice knowledge that resides 'in practitioners' heads. Our task requires understanding, researching and working to develop professional practices both in the heads of practitioners and in the settings in which they work, in which their practices are formed and daily re-formed *in practice* – or, one might say, from the perspective of the one who acts, *in praxis*.

From this view, praxis as practical action prioritises the *happeningness*, the socialness and humanness of practices and practising. This is a site ontological view (after Schatzki, 2002) that centralises the primacy of the site and the conduct of practice as it happens there. It considers how practices are always made and remade in the doing of them in real time, each and every time; that is, the realities of what happens in the place or situation at the time are revealed as if they 'unfold' through passages of time. Fundamentally, this requires practitioners to know doing (Kemmis, 2010).

Inspired by critical theories, in particular the critical theory of Marx, Kemmis draws our attention to the insight that 'while histories make practices, at the same time, practices make histories' (in Kemmis & Mahon, 2017, p. 223)[2] when considering the consequences of practices—or more precisely praxis. So, for instance, a Grade 3 teacher stepping into a mathematics lesson about scale and measurement with his class of 25 students on one day will, in reality, make practices anew in subsequent lessons about scale and measurement because the day, the content, the student prior knowledge, the student attitudes and emotions on that day might be new/different/changed for them at that new/different/changed moment. Therefore, the task for educators is recognising that the doing of practice—at any given moment—is thus at every point an historical action with particular consequences for those in the practice at the time. For the Grade 3 teacher and his students, practices encountered in the lesson make history with consequences that might be evidenced by some students learning more about scale and/or measurement, some students having difficulty with an aspect of the new concept, the teacher learning more about individual students' prior knowledge of the topic, and so on. These cannot be known as a priori to the moment, but are revealed in actions in moments as they happen.

For Kemmis, to be praxis-oriented acting in these moments is guided by dispositions that reflect a more deliberative, moralistic, ethical and virtuous conception of pedagogical practice since it considers 'the ends' of Education. Exploration of

[2]In an interview with Kathleen Mahon, Kemmis outlined some of the earlier influences on his thinking that have led to current theorisations of praxis, practice and practice architecture, presented as a genealogy in Kemmis and Mahon (2017, pp. 219–238).

educational praxis and the ends of Education requires an exploration of phronēsis; a disposition described by Aristotle as informing and guiding practice (represented in Fig. 10.1).

Accordingly, if as practitioners—as educators in practices—we understand that practices are 'formed and daily reformed in practice' as suggested by Kemmis et al. (2014), then praxis cannot simply be the doing or the action nor is it the intentions for the doing or action. For practitioners, there is a continual interplay between praxis, phronēsis and practices (as represented in Fig. 10.1).

Praxis is a particular kind of action whereby practitioners' actions in practices are anchored in an overt awareness of the historical consequences of those actions. This is because, as suggested earlier, how things turn out at the time cannot be predetermined. This raises the notion that praxis should also be understood as socially responsible history-making action (after Marx & Engels, 1854; published in 1970). Knowing praxis for oneself means to understand that praxis also accounts for the particular practitioner dispositions to do the right thing at the time amidst the changing circumstances and conditions brought to bear on the conduct of practices at the time, regardless of the intentions residing in the practitioner's mind. These two related views on 'praxis' were explained initially by Kemmis and Smith (2008, p. 4), and later by Kemmis et al. (2014, p. 26) in this way:

> 'Educational praxis,' may be understood in two ways: first, as *educational* action that is morally committed and informed by traditions in a field ('right conduct'), and second, as 'history-making *educational* action' that is, as action with moral, social and political consequences – good or bad – for those involved in and affected by it.

This view is one that makes knowing pedagogical praxis for ourselves a central condition of the educational work we do:

> To make such an argument … means being able to see beyond the intention of the practitioner to see into the practice at the time of practising in the site of practising. Kemmis (2012, p. 148)

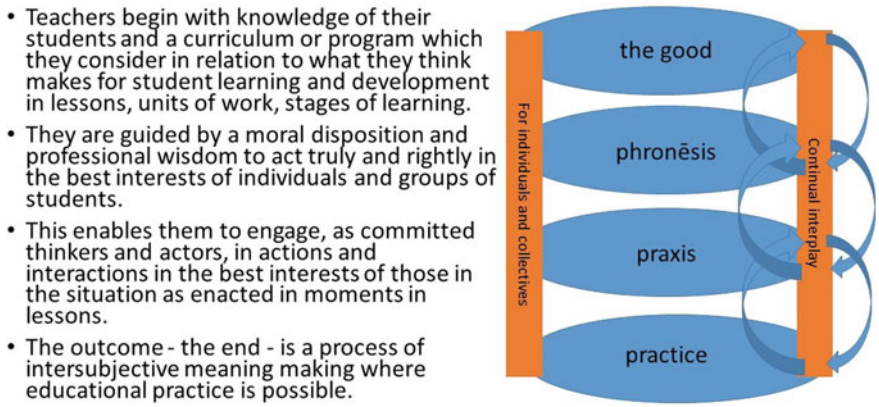

Fig. 10.1 Educational practice, phronēsis and pedagogical praxis (adapted from Grundy, 1987, p. 64)

Entering into this argument means our task as educators is one that not only seeks to understand the nature, conduct, study and improvement of education, which have been central to Kemmis' life's work, but to understand it as it arises from *phronēsis* in *praxis* in moments of *practice*. This springs from, and connects back to, our role as teachers, teacher educators and educational researchers, that challenges us to see beyond the intentionality of our work and look deeply into practices to see the here-and-now—the happeningness, of practices and to consider the justness of our practices. For educators, this view of education is not only a philosophical undertaking, but importantly for those acting within it and for it, redirects our educational thought, reasoning and reflection about our everyday work towards pedagogical praxis in teaching practice.

Pedagogical Praxis in Teaching Practice

> A teaching life is an educational life. (Kemmis, 2006a, b[3]).

When we think of education, or more specifically an educational life, our thoughts often turn to the teaching and learning practices that happen in classrooms in schools, that is to consider pedagogical praxis. This is the focus of this section. In classrooms, among other places where educational practices occur, teachers and learners enter into teaching and learning practices of one kind or another. As teachers and learners enter into these practices (generally temporally bound in 'lessons'), there is always an uncertainty about how things will actually 'play out'; that is, that practices as practical real-time actions unfold in the here-and-now of lessons in indeterminate, in unpredictable and sometimes in unintended ways. The reality is that practices always have consequences, and hence the need for praxis:

> It turns out that we confront uncertain practical questions more or less constantly, in the form "what should I do now/next?" The kind of action we take in these circumstances is not a kind of rule-following, or producing an outcome of a kind that is known in advance (both characteristic of technical action) but rather action whose consequences are more or less indeterminate, but that can only be evaluated in the light of their consequences – in terms of how things actually turn out. This kind of action is 'praxis'. (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 26)

In making determinations about what to do now or next, practitioners in practices are confronted with choices and consequences. Guided by phronēsis, praxis-oriented practitioners bring an awareness of making choices in the moment to act in one way or another. Thus, educational action is dynamically composed of decision-making:

> Making choices is always a practice matter since it concerns what ought to be done for the good of individuals and the collective, and so is not simply a technical question about how to do things – although practice choices ordinarily also involve knowing how to use the appropriate means to get to a desired end. (Kemmis, 2012, pp. 223–4)

[3]Cited in Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018, pp. 153–157).

Choices in practices too have consequences.

It is how one acts at the time where practical wisdom is revealed in practical actions. Considering the consequences of practices forms part of our educational life—a praxis-oriented socially just life, one where dispositions of prudence, ethics and morality enter our day-to-day work. So, as educators, when we reflect on, or even confront past practices, or contemplate future practices, we might ask ourselves specific questions concerning the finer details about how things transpired in moments (of lessons) like, *Did I do enough to support Selma's struggle with division? What else does she need to know? How can I help tomorrow? What book would have better for helping Omar with his comprehension? Was I clear enough in my explanation about biodiversity and deforestation? Why were the class not engaged in this lesson? What should I try tomorrow that can help prepare them in their writing persuasive texts for NAPLAN test on Wednesday?* These specific yet almost banal routine questions about moments of practising are ones inseparable from questions concerning an educational life like, *are our practices educational? How do we understand our educational life? How can we live an educational life in the midst of the pressures of performativity?* What elevates these questions towards praxis is a desire to be more than a technician of practices. Furthermore, although meanings generated by these kinds of deeper level questions often hover above our consciousness as educators, they significantly show the relationship between praxis, phronēsis and practice, demonstrating that educational praxis is cognisant of moral, social and political consequences. It is a relationship whereby each of these dimensions of practising does not sit loosely alongside the other, but rather reflects a disposition for acting justly—for doing 'good' for individuals and the collective under the circumstances at the time.

To ask questions of this kind about their teaching practices, teachers recognise and orient towards the theoretical, technical and practical dimensions of their work. They are acting within an educational paradigm formed and differentiated by knowledge and dispositions which give rise to different kinds of actions and ethics. These knowledge and dispositions reflect a neo-Aristotelian perspective within the theoretical, technical and practical perspectives (outlined in Table 10.1) which shape language, activity and interrelationships encountered in practices.

Acting with the realisation of the consequences of how actions enacted in the moment of doing is praxis. Here, it is practical wisdom and prudent action that aims—at that moment in time, for the good of those involved (the individual) and for the good of humankind (the collective). This is a view consistent with post-Hegelian/post-Marxian understandings of praxis as 'history-making action'; that is, as action with moral, social and political consequences for those involved in and affected by it.

Here, we open up the question of what pedagogical praxis might be by taking up the question, *What is a good teacher?* To begin this task, we return to the proposition made by Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008, p. 39) who suggested an educator, a good teacher, is a person who

- is well-informed about education traditions (with the disposition *epistēmē* put into practice through the contemplative action called *theoria*),
- has the technical skill to achieve educational aims using appropriate means (with the disposition of *technē* put into practice through the technical action called poiēsis),
- aims to act rightly (with the disposition of *phronēsis* put into practice through the practical action called *praxis*), and
- has a critical disposition to overcome irrationality, injustice and suffering through *critical* reflection and *emancipatory* action in concert with others who arrive at critical insights about how irrationality, injustice and suffering might be overcome.

In many ways, the descriptions here draw our attention to the distinctive qualities and dispositions of praxis-oriented educators. It also directs us to the interplay, reciprocity and delineation between these classes of actions (contemplative, technical, practical and critical) and dialectics such as theory and practice, thought and action, skill and action, practical wisdom and practical action, and activism and action. Yet, as asserted by Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), such an educator does not develop 'naturally', nor solely through having these good intentions and acting on them, but that it is through praxis that phronēsis develops and through phronēsis that praxis

Table 10.1 Four disposition-action couplings (adapted from Kemmis, 2012)

	Theoretical perspective	Technical perspective	Practical perspective	Critical perspective
Telos (Aim)	The attainment of knowledge or truth	The production of something	Wise and prudent judgement in activity	To overcome irrationality, injustice and suffering
Disposition	Epistēmē: to seek the truth for its own sake	Technē: to act in a reasoned way according to the rules of a craft	Phronēsis: to act wisely, critically, morally and justly	Critical reflection: to arrive at critical insights about practices
Action	Theoria: 'Contemplation', theoretical reasoning about the nature of things	Poiētike: 'Making' action, involving means-ends or instrumental reasoning to achieve a known objective or outcome	Praxis: 'Doing' action, morally informed action, involving practical reasoning about what it is wise, right and proper to do in a given situation	Emancipation: sayings, doing and relating to others in practices in ways that are socially rational, just and for the betterment of individuals and humankind

develops (this interflow was depicted also in Fig. 10.1). These actions are not hierarchical but recursive and generative. Each action alone is not sufficient for education.

As Kemmis and long-time colleague Carr suggest (1986), considering the 'here-and-now*ness*' of doing practice establishes a more fulsome account of educational praxis; as they state:

> We can now see the full quality of *praxis*. It is not simply action based on reflection. It is action which embodies certain qualities. These include a commitment to human well-being and the search for truth, and respect for others. It is the action of people who are free, who are able to act for themselves. Moreover, *praxis* is always risky. It requires that a person 'makes a wise and prudent practical judgement about how to act in *this* situation'. (p.190)

The idea that praxis is risky is experienced by teachers in the doing of teaching practices every day, since the uncertainty and unpredictably of how things will actually turn out at the time weighs greatly on their shoulders as they move through the semantic spaces, physical space–time and social spaces of their lessons. As we wrote in 2015 (Edwards-Groves & Grootenboer, 2015), making wise and prudent practical judgements at the time relies on teacher dexterity and a meta-awareness that praxis and so practical action is characterised by three interrelated principles:

1. Praxis-oriented teaching decisions [being] about education, and more than schooling
2. Praxis-oriented teaching [being] ontologically responsive to local circumstances and needs
3. Praxis-oriented teaching [reflecting] individual and collective dimensions, where individual actions taken together influence the broader society for the good. (p. 159)

In our study that reported on an empirical examination of praxis we found:

> when actors in practices – even students – describe their actions in relation to 'what we do here in this place for this purpose and consider the best way forward under these circumstances', they reflect particular knowledges and dispositions which give rise to different kinds of individual practical action and responses that may influence the broader society for the better. This kind of action points to a kind of disposition of educational praxis that is about more than schooling; one that is responsive to the circumstances and needs of students in the particular school in the face of regimes of performativity and accountability. (Edwards-Groves & Grootenboer, 2015, p. 159)

This means that *a teaching life is an educational life* (after Kemmis, 2006a, b) when teachers' praxis explicitly accounts for, and demonstrates in their practicing responsivity to, the particularity and nuances of the site, site-based concerns, needs and circumstances.

Recognising Pedagogical Praxis and Phronēsis in Practice: Why This Matters?

Recognising pedagogical praxis and phronēsis in practice matters, since it is through recognising it that we can begin to understand it, develop it and find it for ourselves in

our own practices. Recognising the ways that our pedagogical praxis is intricately formative and transformative of individuals and societies, provides an essential platform for the development of praxis in contemporary education. And as Kemmis (2006a, b) asserts, we need to find it in the empirical. To begin the task of understanding pedagogical praxis in contemporary education, we turn to a classroom lesson, since this is one site where educational praxis happens. In a practical sense, lessons are sites where pedagogical practices, with enduring consequences, happen daily and routinely, and often without critical examination. We begin here also because transcripts of lessons (like the one presented here) are representations of practices that can reveal how practices unfold sequentially and temporally in actions, activities and interactions in physical space–time and semantic and social spaces.

With the benefit of the transcript, we can study the lesson practices for praxis and phronēsis, making it possible to infer the particular dispositions that guide the teacher's pedagogical decision-making. By closely reading the transcript, we can see that it is in the moment of practising that pedagogical praxis is enacted and made evident; that is, what the teacher (Mr. Moro[4]) does, what he says and how he relates to the student (Theo), in certain ways at particular moments, reveals his 'teacherly' disposition. The episode is taken from a whole-class writing lesson recorded in a Grade 1 classroom. Students in this class are 6 years of age, and the teacher, Mr. Moro, has set the children the task of writing their own ending to a story they have read in a prior lesson. Here, Mr. Moro approaches a desk where a student, Theo, is sitting looking at his page. Theo is a recently arrived student to this class who has English as a second language. He lacks self-confidence in his abilities in English and often struggles to begin assigned tasks.

Extract 1: The Escaped Cow—Mr. Moro and Theo discussing Theo's writing.

1. Tch: You look stuck Theo, can I help? ((Theo nods as he twirls his pencil)) Do you remember your sentence buddy? ((Theo shrugs)) Was it about the escaped cow? ((Theo nods gently)) Okay so think back, say it aloud again Theo, then when you hear it, that will um help you remember it and help with writing your sentence, and ah spelling those tricky words, that's our focus, remember. Let's go
2. Theo: Umm ((pause 0.2, as Mr. Moro lowers himself to be at the same level as Theo who is sitting at his table)) they, they shout out at the c:cow that um escaped through the gate STOP WO:OAH STOP ((says 'stop' and 'woah' loudly))
3. Tch: Excellent, love that expression, what an improved sentence from your first go. Okay, well let's write those words one by one to make the sentence, your ideas sound right, make sense. So, first word they, see if you can write THEY ((0.2)) We did that one the other day. Th the:ey, they. What can you hear at the beginning?
4. Theo: th::th ((says slowly as he writes the letters *T, H*))

[4]All names are pseudonyms.

5. Tch: Good lad, then? stretch it out slowly. What's next? But don't get tricked, it rhymes with day like you know but we need to spell it using other letters that make the ay:y sound. You can do it, come on.
6. Theo: I can't ((long pause 0.9. Theo cries, 0.3, Mr. Moro puts his hand on his shoulder)) [ay::y ((makes the sounds with Mr. Moro))
7. Tch: [ay::y. Okay, good Theo, you can write that for me. They. ((Theo writes the letter A)). Think carefully, it's one of those tricky ones.
8. Theo: I know, I know it, its ee:e ((Theo writes the letters E, then Y))
9. Tch: So so clever, you can do it. Okay, great, now, can you write the next bit for me? SH:SH[OUT OU:T ((said loudly and slowly))
10. Theo: [they shout out = ((Theo joining in))
11. Tch: =Remembering if you can write sh:shout you can write out too. K? writing sh:shout, do you remember spelling your word Theo?
12. Theo: Sh::sh sh:sh
13. Tch: you have the sound, now what two letters make that sh:[sh sound?
14. Theo: [sh:sh H ((names the sounds and H)) sh::sh out
15: Tch: Clever speller, now can you write it for me? OU:T ((said loudly and slowly))
16. Theo: ((Theo begins to write, first forms the letter *O*, then *W*))
17. Tch: No, O W will work for cow though, it's ah one of those tricky ones, can I hear again? What else makes ow sound, OUT? stretch it.
18. Theo: ow::w ow ((spells letters *O, W*)), no, no it's U, it's O-U-T ((names the letters aloud)) that's right isn't it Mr. Moro?
19. Tch: Right, you are right. Good work Theo, and, since you are so smart, if you can write shout, you can write out, out, use what you know about shout to write out. Off you go.
20. Theo: I've got it ((writes *O, U*))
21. Tch: Yes you have, you're, ah working hard, good writing Theo ((patting him on the back as he rises))
22. Theo: I know it, can do it myself ((writes the word *out*))

Reading across this extract shows the ways in which lessons are formed by practices that are constituted *socially* (among people like teachers and students, e.g. Mr. Moro and Theo), *temporally* (through time, like in this small segment of the Grade 1 writing lesson), *spatially* (in places, like sitting at a desk in a classroom and using resources and materials such as pencils and books) and *discursively* (through the talk, interactions and relationship between Mr. Moro and Theo) in moment-by-moment exchanges and happenings. Understanding how these interconnected aspects of pedagogical practice relate to praxis requires closely examining how the lesson progresses and how the precise substance of each turn connects to one another as they unfold chronologically through time, represented here in the sequential lines of the transcript. If at any one point in a first reading of the transcript we stop reading, we can never know what actually happens next; although we might guess at the intentions of Mr. Moro in this exchange, it is in what actually happens in real time that the consequences of practice, and so praxis, is revealed.

Several instances of practical wisdom seem to guide the choices Mr. Moro makes in this short segment of the lesson. To explain, as Mr. Moro moves around the room, he notices Theo twirling his pencil looking at his blank page in a somewhat 'glazed' fashion. At this point, his noticing action (in turn 1) to assist Theo individually seems to be one prompted by his prior knowledge of Theo's identity as a literacy learner and of his more restricted experiences as an English language user. This instructional move to help Theo at this particular moment sets in motion particular actions and interactions between them, but as this begins, Mr. Moro does not, or cannot, know how things with Theo will actually progress or turn out. For instance, Theo's shrugging (turn 1) shifts Mr. Moro's action towards reminding, prompting and revising; these pedagogical moves appeared, at this time, to be the right things to do to assist Theo begin his sentence writing.

Following this, Mr. Moro's shift of position to crouch down alongside the desk to be beside Theo at eye level (turn 2) appeared to be an action touched off by Mr. Moro's knowledge of Theo's reluctance to begin a task along with his knowledge of Theo's lack of self-confidence with English literacy. This physical move seemed to encourage Theo's enthusiastic telling of his sentence (in turn 2)—a pronouncement that prompted a positive feedback response by Mr. Moro (in turn 3); 'excellent, love that expression, what an improved sentence from your first go'. Mr. Moro then incorporated some important teaching moments customised for Theo who required additional support in English language and literacy learning. For example, the provision of specific literacy cues, like 'writing words one by one to make the sentence, your ideas sound right, make sense', reminding Theo that they 'wrote the word *they* the other day', and to 'focus on hearing the beginning sounds to help with the spelling', make apparent both Mr. Moro's knowledge of the technical skills of writing that at the same time are significant for Theo as he continues in the practice. Each pedagogical move required practical wisdom for a timely, sensitive response to a student with additional literacy learning needs. Yet as it turned out, Mr. Moro would not have anticipated that Theo might cry (turn 6). This is unknowable as a priori to the moment, but it is what actually happens next that demonstrates praxis. Here, it was his response to put his hand on his shoulder at that moment that indicates that Mr. Moro at that time seemed concerned for Theo's well-being and literacy identity. It is our view that this move could be described as praxis guided by the disposition of phronēsis.

This transcript provides empirical displays of pedagogical praxis. Since these kinds of responding moves to interact with individual learners, like Theo, at particular moments demonstrate a kind of professional knowledge and practical wisdom that teachers, like Mr. Moro, make apparent *in the doing*. The transcript is one that illustrates the ways particular practical actions are influenced in moments by a disposition for *doing the right thing here and now*. In many ways, we can see how guided by the disposition of phronēsis, praxis reveals itself in the unfolding turn-by-turn moments in lesson practices. As the lesson progresses, Mr. Moro demonstrates praxis in practice as he offers timely praise (turns 5, 7, 9, 15, 19 and 21), provides focused explicit writing instruction at teachable moments (turns 3, 5, 13, 11 and 17) and offers cueing and prompting next turn actions (turns 3, 5, 9, 11 and 17) to assist

Theo's accomplishment of writing his sentence about the escaped cow. It is critically important that Theo's own responses 'that's right isn't it Mr. Moro' (turn 18), 'I've got it' (turn 20), and 'I know it, can do it myself' (turn 22) provide evidence that indeed Mr. Moro in this lesson was acting in the best interests of Theo.

In this short transcript, attention is drawn to the collective, social and corporeal aspects of human activity. Here, we examined the notion of praxis and how pedagogical praxis moves teachers and learners into, as Kemmis contests, educational practices that are undertaken by morally committed professional. It is in examining lessons like this that the ways educational practices are influenced by more than technical skills and performativity are highlighted. We see that practical action (the praxis, the doing) is clearly guided and influenced by an educator's practical wisdom (phronēsis) in the moment of acting in highly nuanced site-responsive ways. As Lindeman (1944, p. 103) acknowledged, although many teachers are involved with *pedagogical praxis*—teaching acts which shape and change the world for individuals and the collective—the notion of praxis often is not part of their vocabulary. To this we add—nor is praxis as a concept that is overtly part of many teachers' meta-awareness as they act in actual moments of teaching; they do what is right in the moment and this evidenced in the pedagogical moves they make to support student learning, well-being and positive identity development. We argue that explicitly knowing praxis in practice for oneself provides educators with a meta-cognitive awareness of the kind of pedagogical actions that can be described as educational with certain individual and, ultimately, societal goods. Herein lies an important imperative for teacher education.

In Whose Interests Are We Acting?

This chapter takes up Kemmis' long challenge to educators that there is a need to restore the broader sense of purpose of education. Taking Kemmis' lead, we argue this is an urgent task, not simply in order to move understandings beyond technical descriptions of schooling where performativity and accountability pressure the daily lives of educators, but to recover a sense of its significance for educators, like Mr. Moro, as they practise in 'educational' moments. Understanding education through the philosophical ideas of praxis provides educators with a resource for reconsidering primacy of praxis, and more critically, to consider whether their 'educational' practices are really educational, or, on the contrary, only practices of schooling. This is necessary because in constantly changing social, political, material and environmental circumstances for both educators and those being educated we need to be sure that *living well in a world worth living in* means we know with absolute certainty in whose interests we are acting.

Postscript

It is by virtue of Stephen's disposition for living a praxis-oriented life that we came together to write this chapter to mark his role in influencing our three distinctly different educational lives in significant ways. From the early–mid-2000, the three of us—among others of course—work/ed with Stephen at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia. Led by Stephen, part of our work then involved participating in critical conversations about pedagogy, education and praxis (along with colleagues Ian Hardy, Jane Wilkinson, Will Adlong, Helen Russell and his wife Ros Brennan-Kemmis *now deceased*). These conversations contributed to the foundations for the now longstanding international research network 'Pedagogy Education and Praxis' (PEP) (meeting yearly since 2006). From these early moments, a number of themes recurred in our discussions with Stephen and our colleagues about the nature of praxis, and to this day continue to reverberate through the work of the PEP network. Through Stephen's leadership in PEP International's research programme, of which we have been part from the beginning, the PEP network continues to reflect on and examine the influences of neoliberalism on educational practices, researching questions concerned with pedagogy, education and praxis, in particular ideas characterising:

1. agency, subjectivity, intersubjectivity, being, becoming, identity (and difference and otherness) and reflexivity;
2. site ontology and the particularity of sites and materiality;
3. connectedness, relatedness, conditions, practice arrangements;
4. history and biography;
5. morality, ethics and justice;
6. the purposes, connections and differences between education and schooling;
7. critical participatory educational action research and emancipatory practice
8. the differences and connections between praxis, practice and practice architecture;
9. praxis as revealed in Sayings (not just thinking or intending), doing and relatings
10. Practice traditions and practice landscapes;
11. the nature of and ecological connections between the Education Complex of Practices (that is, teaching, student learning, professional learning and development, leading and researching); and
12. the enablements and constraints in enactment.

The list here is not exhaustive, but both individually and collectively our own educational and intellectual histories were influenced by Stephen in ways that challenged us to consider, but moreover confront, the profound consequences of the happeningness of educational practices like teaching, learning, professional development, leading and researching. In turn, this challenge drew us all to an existential and ontological view of educational work that at the same time required us to understand our own actions—especially our praxis *as happening* in the living processes of history and *as contributing* to a history we share with others as researchers and educators.

With this, Stephen's sincere commitment to education and deep wisdom—realised and expressed in praxis—played a pivotal role in drawing us into discovering praxis for ourselves and in ourselves, changing the directions of our professional lives: Tracey as co-editor with Stephen of the first PEP book '*Enabling Praxis: Challenges for Education*' which initiated a series of Sense publications (from the international PEP network) that set in train a solid foundation for the establishment, ongoing development and growth of PEP's research programme since 2006; Peter, as co-author with Stephen, of the seminal publication '*Situating praxis in practice: Practice architecture and the cultural, social and material conditions for practice*' (appearing as Chap. 2 in 'Enabling Praxis') that launched a comprehensive introduction to the theory of practice architectures that has been subsequently utilised by researchers across the globe as an analytic, linguistic and theoretical tool for understanding and changing practices; and Christine as co-chief investigator—with Stephen, Jane Wilkinson, Ian Hardy, Peter Grootenboer and Laurette Bristol—of an Australian government funded philosophical-empirical inquiry examining the ecological connections between *leading and learning* practices in education (published in *Changing Practices, Changing Education* 2014) that established critical empirical evidence of the utility of the theory of practice architectures for understanding the complexity of educational practices, and more recently as co-author with Stephen of the text *Understanding Education: History, Politics and Practice* (2018). Bringing us into these professional activities in strategic ways was an expression of Stephen's commitment to educational praxis; these history-making actions had real consequences for our future educational work, practices for which we are forever grateful.

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Chapter 11
On Practice Theory, or What's Practices Got to Do (Got to Do) with It?

Theodore Schatzki

Abstract This essay surveys the current state of practice theory, along the way charting Stephen Kemmis's position in the current constellation. Section one, "What Are Theories of Practice?", demarcates the domain of practice theory. Section two, "The Popularity of Practice Theory", then seeks to explain the rise of practice theory as an approach to social analysis, identifying sociological, disciplinary, linguistic, and subject matter reasons. After this, Section three, "Are Theories of Practice Better Than Other Social Ontologies?", suggests that multiple good social ontological approaches exist and that the family of practice ontologies is one of them. Section four, "What Are Theories of Practice Good for?", then considers the sorts of phenomena for which illuminating practice-based analyses exist, arguing that this approach is constantly expanding the range of phenomena it can handle. The essay concludes, however, by arguing that practice theory cannot analyze everything and needs to form theoretical alliances with compatible theories to cover more of human life.

Social theorists have long taken different approaches to conceptualizing and explaining social affairs. The classic nineteenth-century opposition between J. S. Mill's individualism and G. W. F. Hegel's corporatism identifies two important forms these approaches have taken. Waves of succession have passed over the forest of contending approaches since the Second World War, leaving behind a dense thicket of competitors: not just individualism and corporatism (or collectivism), but also functionalism, structuralism, structural-functionalism, poststructuralism, systems theory, complexity theory, emergentism, critical realism, pragmatism, interactionism, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, genealogy, field theory, actor–network theory, assemblage theory, materialism, new materialism, theories of performativity, theories of process or becoming, institutionalism, evolutionism, and cognitivism, not to mention competing epistemological theories such as realism, relativism, historicism, hermeneutics, social constructivism, and feminist epistemology.

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In recent years, a new entrant has appeared: practice theory, or better, theories of practice. The label "practice theory" was first, to my knowledge, used in 1984 by the anthropologist Sherry Ortner (1984) to name the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu. Since then, the term has come to denote a stream of thought boasting varied theorists whose ideas have been appropriated in numerous disciplines for the investigation of diverse social phenomena. The disciplines involved include education, sociology, geography, organization studies, political science, and history; the phenomena and issues addressed are diverse, including consumption, economic production, high-tech start-ups, migration, teaching, learning, art, natural resource use, energy use, organizations, professions, the secondary insurance market, and international relations.

This essay provides an overview of this stream of thought and inquiry. It does not advance theories of practice in the sense of providing new practice-theoretical ideas or using such theories to investigate further phenomena. Nor does it focus on any particular discipline or domain, for example, education. Rather, it mainly provides a sense of what this theoretical stream is about, why it is spreading, what it is good for, and some of its limits. In addition, the essay gives some indication of Stephen Kemmis's place in it.

What Are Theories of Practice?

The social sciences include anthropology, economics, geography, history, organization studies, political science, and sociology, parts of linguistics, psychology, and education, and the occasional humanistic endeavor. What these disciplines share is the study of social life. Sayings this presumes that the range of phenomena that qualify as social is quite broad, from pas de deux to international arms agreements, from school classes to mortgage markets, from trepidation before a public appearance to the European Union, and from mass movements of peoples and goods and nonstandard forms of language to racial prejudice, heated arguments, and uneven distributions of educational and economic opportunities.

The study of these phenomena has a theoretical dimension, where by "theory" I mean abstract, general thought. Theories come in different flavors and the approaches called "theories of practice" are theories of what I call a "humanistic" sort, in a broad sense of this word. Unlike more "scientific" researchers, investigators of a more "humanistic" character do not believe that the point of theory is to yield explanations alone. Their theories often do deliver explanations. But their theories aim at wider comprehension: not just explanation, but understanding and interpretation as well; not just why and how, but what things mean and what they add up to as well. Humanistic theories, as a result, do not formulate laws or develop models, though they are replete with generalizations, even universal ones. These theories instead address topics of an abstract, general nature, for example, ontology, the determination of action and social reproduction. And what they say on these topics gives researchers conceptual tools for describing, explaining, and interpreting social phenomena and for collecting

their findings and analyses under particular conceptual schemes; what they say also suggests interesting topics or angles for investigation. Theories of practice form one of many streams in the social disciplines that develop "general frameworks" through which researchers investigate particular phenomena.

Although "practice theory" is now a well-established label, there is no one, definitive way to demarcate what qualifies as one. Most observers will attest that the theories I call "theories of practice" qualify. But not only can practice theory be defined in multiple ways, but theorists have identified wider collections of approaches that can be called "theories of a practice sort"; an example is the collection of approaches called "practice-based accounts" in organization studies. I will not here explore relations between the narrower range of theories I call "theories of practice" and the wider vista of practice approaches.

The first feature of the theories I call "theories of practice" is that they treat social life as composed, at least principally, of practices. These theories agree on neither what a practice is nor what it is for social phenomena to be composed of them. But they concur that practices are central to social affairs, and, in fact, their conceptions of practices reveal deep similarities. For example, all practice theorists conceptualize practices as carried on by multiple, indeed indefinitely many people: A practice is not something that one person alone could enact. A second key feature of practice theories arises from the fact that the world does not contain one practice but many. Practices connect: The different practices that make up social life hang together and form complexes, which in turn connect into larger constellations. This vision of practices forming complexes and constellations is the second feature of practice theories.

The third feature arises from the second. It is the idea that social phenomena —including power, science and religion, racial and ethnic prejudice, migration, organizations, and the dissemination of knowledge—are either aspects of, constellations of, or rooted in nexuses of practices. Upholding this idea requires treating one's subject matters as constituted or rooted in practice nexuses. It also requires explaining these matters by reference to phenomena that either are aspects or features of practice nexuses or are compatible with the social world consisting in these. For example, someone who studies competition among education companies might (1) conceptualize these companies and competition among them in terms of nexuses of such practices as advertising, faculty input, strategic planning, price-determination, teaching, and purchasing; and (2) explain how such competition works, as well as the fates of particular firms and markets, through the dynamics of such nexuses.

A fourth feature is that practice theories arise on the background of philosophical ideas of Wittgenstein (1957) and Heidegger (1978). An especially crucial idea in this context is that human activity rests on something that cannot be formulated. Diverse conceptions or names exist of this something, including habitus, practical consciousness, skills, and, Kemmis's choice from Wittgenstein, knowing how to go on. These expressions all denote capacities or dispositions to do things, whose bearing on human activity are inadequately captured by the significance or implications for such activity of any finite collection of symbolic formulations. Capacities

and dispositions also correspond to what Ryle (1971) dubbed "know-how," which according to him is a fundamental type of knowledge alongside "know that."

In sum, the four features I use to demarcate theories of practice are, first, viewing practices as central to the composition of social life; second, holding that practices form wider complexes and constellations; third, claiming that social phenomena are constituted or rooted in these complexes and constellations; and fourth, believing that human activity rests on practical capacities that cannot be put into words. Prominent practice theorists include Pierre Bourdieu (e.g., 1976), Anthony Giddens (e.g., 1979), Jean Lave (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991), and less explicitly Taylor (1985). These four can be dubbed "first-generation" practice theorists. A second generation of practice theorists includes Andreas Reckwitz (e.g., 2002), Stephen Kemmis (e.g., Kemmis et al., 2014), Joe Rouse (e.g., 2003), Elizabeth Shove and associates (e.g., Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012), Silvia Gherardi (e.g., 2006), Thomas Alkemeyer (e.g., Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017), and Robert Schmidt (e.g., 2012).

Anyone who knows these individuals' ideas knows how disparate these ideas are. They promulgate different conceptions of practices, of the connections among practices, of the relations of social phenomena to the complexes and constellations of practices, and of the capacities that underlie action. Despite this diversity, it is important to emphasize two general commonalities in their conceptions of practice. The first is that practices are organized activities (for practice theorists, consequently, organized activities are central to social life). This core idea implies that uncovering and understanding particular practices—for example, those of teaching, politics, or commerce—requires identifying both the actions that compose them and their organization. Of course, theorists of practice—as I am demarcating them—are not alone in emphasizing the centrality to social affairs of organized activities: closely related approaches such as MacIntyrian accounts of practice, social-cultural action theory, and neo-Marxist praxis theory share this intuition. These and further approaches also share an opposition to individualism since organized actions are not reducible to individuals and their properties.

A second commonality in practice theorists' conceptions of practices is that practices are intimately entwined with materiality. Some theorists of practice treat materiality as part of practices, whereas others believe that materiality is distinct from but intimately connected to practices. Members of both camps, however, see materiality wherever they espy practices. Again, theorists of practice are not alone in emphasizing materiality: Attention to materiality is a major feature of social thought in the past twenty-five years.

The Popularity of Practice Theory

As mentioned, practice theoretical ideas have been appropriated in various disciplines to study a range of phenomena. Before offering several shaky ideas about why these ideas have attained modest notoriety, it is advisable first to give another illustration of what it is to appropriate them.

As explained, appropriating a practice-theoretical approach involves treating the phenomenon or topic one studies as either constituted or rooted in complexes and constellations of practices. Suppose one wants to study teaching and how teachers interact with children of different backgrounds and statuses. Doing so practice theoretically requires conceptualizing teaching as a practice or as something that takes place in multiple practices and uncovering the wider nexuses of practices of which this practice or practices are part. Doing this, in turn, requires tracing connections among the practices involved. Details of these practices—their constituent activities and organization—will likely also be relevant, as will the material entities and settings amid which they are carried on. In proceeding thus, an investigator employs the conceptual apparatus of practice theory to conceptualize her subject matter. Explaining whatever differences are discovered in interactions between teachers and students of different backgrounds/statuses is a further step. Appropriating practice-theoretical ideas in giving explanations involves two moves. The first move is restricting possible explanatory factors to matters that either pertain to practices and nexuses thereof (e.g., relatings à la Kemmis) or are compatible with a practice construal of the phenomenon to be explained (e.g., beliefs). The second move is treating possible explanatory factors as occurring in the context of practices when gauging their significance.

The present question, therefore, is why have increasing numbers of steadily more disciplinary diverse researchers both conceptualized subject matters with practice-theoretical frameworks and funnelled searches for explanations through such frameworks? Note that theories of practice hardly form the only theoretical stream to gather followers in the last twenty years. Critical realism and process approaches have grown during the same period, as has actor–network theory, which has enjoyed great popularity. Other ways of thinking have maintained long-standing strength during this time, for example, interactionism and individualism. Still, practice-theoretical research has spread during this period and this is what we want to understand.

Whenever changes in scientific practices are the subject of study, the discussion confronts the unholy duality of cause and reason and the likelihood that some mix of the two is responsible for the changes to be understood. For example, part of the causal explanation of the rise of theories of practice likely lies in the attraction that particular theorists have exerted as dissertation and postdissertation supervisors. Kemmis (like Elizabeth Shove and Andreas Reckwitz) has been unusually prolific in this regard, spawning a productive practice-theoretical wing in the Australian and European educational research establishments. His personality and penchant of coauthoring texts with students and colleagues are important sources of his gravitational pull. The significance of pulls such as his should not be underestimated, especially in a domain such as social theory that contains an accumulating archive of new or enduring approaches to social life. Of course, poles of attraction are impotent if people are not sensitive to them. Here, too, causality plays a role, in the form, for instance, of suggestions from teachers and peers that lead someone to study with a particular individual instead of others. Reasons, too, presumably have something to do with the matter.

Another causal factor that should be mentioned in this context is restlessness. Disciplines differ in how theoretically restless their students and professors are, thus

in the degrees to which practitioners are susceptible to and seek out new approaches, whether Indigenous to the discipline or imported from without. I mention this factor because theories of practice have enjoyed success in some disciplines—such as geography and organization studies—that manifest great restlessness.

A final, and related, cause lies in the concept or word "practice" itself. In contemporary humanistic social theory, "practice" sounds both ancient and cutting edge. Aristotle was the first philosopher to make extensive use of the concept, and the remarkable depth of his insights on practice has lent the concept considerable gravitas. At the same time, since the middle of the twentieth century the word "practice" has been carried on the banner of offensives against cognitivism, intellectualism, theoristic conceptions of science and such dualisms as subject–object and synchronic–diachronic. This fact lends the concept exciting intellectual cache. This powerful combination of venerableness and progressiveness has created an aura of ferment and fascination that favors the dissemination of practice thinking in social research.

What sort of reasons, meanwhile, might have led researchers to practice theoretical frameworks? One reason (or is this a cause?) lies in the majesty of the work of first-generation practice theorists, Bourdieu, Giddens, Lave, and Taylor. These thinkers have attracted extensive followings that extend or apply their ideas. They have also inspired second-generation practice theorists and sparked the dissemination of practice theoretical ideas.

A related reason concerns the role that early success plays in attracting believers. Practice-theoretical approaches were made more credible through the illumination found in such theoretically informed empirical analyses as Bourdieu (1984) on French society, Lave (1998) on mathematics, Shove (2003) on consumption, Kemmis on education, Gherardi on organizational learning and knowing, Reckwitz (2006) on subject cultures, and Warde (2005, 2016) on eating.

A third reason lies in the relation of practice to action. Practice theory, as stated, opposes individualism. It claims, for instance, that actions are essentially social events. It also holds, however, that practices are composed of actions, though not only this. So practices are at once more than actions but closely bound up with actions. As a result, theories of practice simultaneously satisfy two itches: The first itch is the desire to transcend individualism, the second the evidentness of upholding the central role of action in social and human life. Of course, theories of practice are not the only approach to satisfy these two desires; interactionism, process approaches, and social-cultural activity theory, to take just three examples, do so, too. Moreover, many researchers do not seek to transcend individualism. Still, I believe that this intimate relationship of practices to actions helps explain why practice theory has attracted increasing numbers of researchers.

Are Theories of Practice Better Than Other Social Ontologies?

As mentioned in the introduction, a large number of theoretical approaches to social life coexist today in the social disciplines. This multiplicity naturally raises questions such as Are any of these approaches better than the others? and, If so, How do we know which approach(es) are better or best? A related question is whether any of these approaches is true or at least truer than the others. To simplify my remarks on these topics, I will temporarily set aside both theory in general and practice theory in general and focus on one kind of theory—or, rather, one component of the theoretical dimension of social investigation—namely, ontology, in particular, practice theoretical ontologies.

Social theories offer abstract, general, and systematic thoughts about social life. The most abstract of such theories are ontologies. Ontologies specify the basic or fundamental nature, elements, dimensions, or structures of things, in this case, the basic nature or elements etc. of social life. The claim that social practices are central to the composition of social phenomena is an ontological assertion. So, too, is the "old" actor network claim that society is composed of networks of human and nonhuman actors, the symbolic interactionist claim that meaningful interactions are the building block of social affairs, the individualist claim that all social phenomena are ultimately composed of individuals and their properties, and Kemmis's (e.g., Kemmis et al., 2014) claim that practices are shaped in cultural-discursive, social-political and material-economic architectures. A different sort of ontological thesis is the proposition that human action is the principal cause in social life or Bourdieu's thesis that the habitus that underlies human activity is structurally homologous with both social spaces and the layouts of material environments. Note that ontologies can take different forms: books, chapters, chapter sections, and sentences. Ontologies can also be presupposed, unformulated, by any or all of these. Good examples of ontological texts by Kemmis are chapter three of *Enabling Praxis* (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) and chapters two and three of *Changing Practices*,*Changing Education* (Kemmis et al., 2014). It is to Kemmis's credit that, unlike many social researchers, he attends to ontology and makes sure that his students and colleagues pay careful heed to the topic. His collaborators and mentees have thereby learned to articulate, discuss, and defend the ontologies that inform and constrain their research. Given that the social disciplines boast a multiplicity of ontologies, this is a propitious, but too often missing, practice.

The most prominent social ontological families include individualism, interactionism, wholism (including systems theory and structural-functionalism), theories of process or becoming, and different flavors of structuralism including classic French, American network, and British critical realist. This variety ensures that incompatible structural accounts can be given of the same phenomena. I have already indicated that which ontology a researcher appropriates can rest on contingent features of her biography and experience and that the space for reason to help determine ontological

choices is circumscribed. Despite this, discerning observers and participants want to know, Which ontologies are better or best?

One approach to this issue is to say that an ontology is better the truer it is, hence, that the truest theory is the best. I am not going to pursue this idea here, in part because the topic of truth is arcane. For example, some philosophers hold that it is not clear what it is for one set of propositions or sentences to be truer than another. Moreover, even if the idea of degrees of truth is set aside, it is not clear that one ontology is simply true and the others false. One could, for example, plausibly claim that just as truth is multiple—any set of events and entities is subject to multiple true descriptions—different ontologies each get something right about the world. To complicate matters still further, different understandings exist of how this might be the case.

Once truth is bracketed, two principal criteria of a good ontology emerge.

Theories, including ontologies, are developed through argument, elaboration, and appropriation. Argument is the provision of considerations for and against claims, whereas elaboration is the spinning out of an idea's or theory's meanings or implications and appropriation is the interpretation of preceding ideas. Since ontologies are developed through argument, elaboration, and appropriation, an ontology is good, first, if it is rationally sensible.

Rationally sensible means that convincing arguments and interpretations can be provided for the ontology, that elaborating the ontology does not reveal deficiencies and that the ontology jibes with, or at least is not contravened by, experience and knowledge. Of course, convincingness, like deficiency and consistency, lies in the eye of the beholder and is subject to all the kinds of contingent biographical and contextual factors that lead researchers to favor one ontology over others. No argument, for instance, is likely to convince an individualist that human actions are essentially organized as practices, just like no argument is likely to convince a theorist of practice that practices—like other social phenomena—are nothing but compendia of features of individual people. In addition, an argument or interpretation is convincing only until a more convincing one appears. Still, within a given community of social theorists and researchers, and despite their frailty and contingency, argument, elaboration, and interpretation do provide reasons for upholding certain positions versus others. They do, therefore, rationally support some ontologies while undermining others.

As for the second criterion, I said earlier that a central contribution of theory to empirical investigation is the provision of concepts and ways of thinking for use in describing, explaining, and interpreting the world. It follows that a second criterion of a good ontology is usefulness: An ontology is good if researchers can use its concepts to do these things. Accordingly, evidence for this goodness lies in the prevalence of these uses of an ontology and in trends in such usage over time: If an ontology's concepts are increasingly used, its goodness is steadily revealed.

It is important to point out that neither argument nor usefulness is likely to reduce a field of competing ontologies to a single best one. As indicated, arguments, [etc.] are provisional, and their convincingness is relative to biographical and contextual factors. Often, consequently, researchers will stand by different arguments. What's more, the number of contending arguments and so on can become so great as to

make it impossible to discern which are right. This is the situation in many areas of philosophy and social ontology is moving in that direction. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that rational discourse can thin the field of contenders.

Usefulness, too, does not pick out unique best ontologies. Practice theory enjoys a growing following among empirical researchers, but other ontologies enjoy or retain significant, indeed, larger followings, including actor–network theory, symbolic interactionism, and individualisms of various sorts. All four ontological approaches, as a result, qualify as good. People tend to think that there is a single best theory for anything. Social research, by contrast, needs to embrace the idea that there are multiple good ontologies. Note that the existence of this multiplicity should not be turned back to impugn the value of usefulness as a criterion of goodness. For the criterion does play a useful whittling role: Only a subset of extant and past ontologies are appropriated in empirical social research. Others are ignored or forgotten as empirical research proceeds. So usefulness does narrow the range of good ontologies, though it will never—outside a totalitarian society, and even there—identify a single best one.

Hence, the family of practice ontologies is good and looks better all the time. But there are other good ontological families, too.

What Are Theories of Practice Good for?

For exactly what, however, is practice theory good, that is, useful? Consider a partial list of phenomena of which illuminating practice theoretical analyses have been given: eating, Nordic walking, teaching, learning, washing machine use, cycling, mobility, day trading on the Nasdaq market, domestic energy use, household waste, sustainable design, sustainable consumption, temporalities of consumption, the work of ambulance paramedics or lawyers, anxiety, memory, communities of practice, and organizational learning and knowing. At first glance, these phenomena might seem to be small, local, or somehow limited in scope—for they seem to be nothing more than people doing particular things in particular settings. In fact, of course, the activities involved can be pervasive and their effects cumulative and significant. Learning, for instance, occurs everywhere, and its effects are long-lasting and powerful. It is not small, local, or relevantly limited in scope. What is true, however, is that the above list is missing familiar large, even global phenomena such as governments, wars, international finance systems, the Premier League, the commercial music industry and education sectors. Indeed, word is out that practice theory is good at analyzing local or small phenomena but not good at analyzing larger ones. If this claim were true, the goodness of practice ontologies would be circumscribed: They would be good for exploring only some of the things social researchers study.

The first thing to say about this situation is that most families of ontology face a predicament of this sort. For example, the rumor going about practice theory also applies to actor–network theory: It, too, seems best at analyzing smaller, more local phenomena. In fact, today few ontologies beyond individualism are actively appro-

priated in the study of both small or local and large or global social phenomena. Theorists such as Bourdieu and Niklas Luhmann claimed that their theories apply to just about everything in social life. But I am not sure that their optimism has been borne out by empirical research.

A second thing to say about this situation is that it might not be problematic if certain families of ontology are good for studying things of certain types and other families are good for studying things of other types. Perhaps it is best to think of an ontological division of labor. I am not, however, going to pursue this suggestion presently. For just about all social ontologies aspire, theoretically, to capture social life at large. This is certainly true of practice ontologies. I just cited Bourdieu as someone who wants his theories to capture social life in toto. Giddens harbors the same aspiration. Consider his great 1979 book, *Central Problems in Social Theory*. The second chapter of that book outlines the chief concepts of a general ontology (further elaborated in *The Constitution of Society*, 1984), while subsequent chapters use that ontology to formulate positions on various prominent social theoretical issues. Similar ambitions have informed the work of Shove et al., Reckwitz and myself. Kemmis's theoretical work on practice architecture and ecologies carries the same intention.

However, and this is the third thing I want to say, practice theory ontology and research is an expanding enterprise. As I speak, practice theorists are seeking to develop conceptual resources for analyzing large or distributed phenomena. The earliest example of such an analysis is, I think, Reckwitz's (2006) account of subject cultures, where a subject culture is a dominant regime of ways of being a person that holds sway over a large expanse of space and time. A more recent example is Kemmis et al.'s (2014) book on the education complex that conceptualizes this complex as composed of five interrelated practice constellations: student learning, teaching, teacher education and professional development, educational leadership/administration, and educational research and evaluation. At present writing, further authors (e.g., Bueger & Gadinger, 2014, Jarzabkowski, Bednarek, & Spee, 2015; Schatzki, 2016; multiple essays in Hui, Schatzki, & Shove, 2017 and in Brandes & Zierenberg, 2017) are developing practice theoretical analyses of and ways of thinking about large phenomena. Consequently, the jury is still out on how wide a range of phenomena practice theory is useful for analyzing.

Another subject matter that some observers have claimed practice ontologies are not good at illuminating is people. The criticism in this context is that practice theories are so fixated on practices and connections among them that they neglect to analyze the people whose actions constitute those practices. These ontologies do conceptualize people as practitioners, but, so the complaint, such a conceptualization does not amount to, but instead is only the starting point for, an analysis of individuals.

Like the observation about large phenomena, there is something to this claim. It is, however, a little inaccurate. For example, a rather robust account of people is found in Bourdieu's account of habitus and fields—it is just that the account makes people versions of one another and has not found much favor! Moreover, Reckwitz's aforecited work on subject cultures is all about the formation of individuals, though it does admittedly focus on the social matrix in which they are formed. More recently,

authors such as Schmidt (2017) and Weenink and Spaargaren (2006) have developed practice analyses of further key dimensions of being an individual: reflection and emotions. And one must not forget the fascinating work of Ole Dreier (e.g., 1999), which is all about the twists and turns of being an individual person moving through a world of practices and organizing his or her life. Finally, my own work has always incorporated detailed analysis of mind and action (as conditions attributed to individuals) in its account of practices. In short, practice theory offers promising ideas for analyzing people (on this entire issue, see Schatzki, 2017). And, of course, it is quite good at comprehending the social context in which individuals form and persist.

In short, the goodness of particular ontologies as measured by usefulness can wax or wane. Topics for which theories of practice have not been useful might become ones for whose analysis it provides advantageous concepts and ideas. Because practice researchers seek to add to and extend the reach of practice-theoretical frameworks, observers should keep an open mind. In addition to building out these frameworks, practice theorists should also continue developing arguments for, elaborations of, and interpretations of them.

The Frontiers of Practice Theory

Although practice theory might be useful for analyzing more topics than those for which it has already proved valuable, the extension of practice-theoretical concepts and ways of thinking is not potentially endless. I do not believe that practice theory is or should aspire to be a TOE—a theory of everything. For instance, practice theory is not likely to provide insight into the anatomical development of human fetuses, though it is not implausible that it might help explain variations in how the brain is wired. Similarly, practice theory is not going to explain persistent adult depression, though it might contribute to better understandings of emotions more generally. An inaccurate, but still revealing way of putting the matter is that practice theory illuminates the *social* dimension of human existence, whereas other ways of thinking explain the biological and psychological dimensions. An advantage of putting the matter thus is that it suggests, sotto voce, that these three dimensions of human life fit together and that the corpuses of research that study them must be mutually compatible and supportive. At the same time, this way of putting the matter is misleading because distinct social, biological, and psychological realms are a fiction and because the disciplines that investigate different aspects of human life continually evolve and occasionally hybridize, divide, or arise new, in the process redefining these erstwhile "realms" and the putative dividing lines among them.

The starting point for getting a handle on which phenomena theories of practice can analyze is to realize that a fundamental tenet of practice theories is that practices and the complexes/constellations they form are a basic reality: Human activities take place as elements of interconnected organized arrays of activities. The significance of this fact for the present discussion is that, as a basic reality, the plenum of practices forms a fundamental scaffolding or background for other dimensions of human lives.

The metaphysical assumption that the different aspects of reality fit together implies that the different aspects of human life, too, must fit together, that is, be mutually compatible. This implication does not preclude people from, say, acting inconsistently or contrary to their beliefs. It means only that there is a broader context in which these apparently inconsistent matters fit together (i.e., there is a reason for or explanation of the situation). Since practices form a basic reality, the facts about fetal anatomical development and brain wiring (whatever these are)—like the facts about trenchant depression and the emotions (whatever they are)—must fit with activities being organized as interconnected practices. Indeed, each of these sets of facts serves as a background for the others. However, in Sayings that the plenum of practices forms a scaffolding or background for other dimensions of human life I primarily have phenomena other than fetal development and brain structure in mind. I should add that even though practices, on the one hand, and the human brain and anatomy on the other have often been conceptualized and studied as separate domains, it would be productive to investigate the interface and links between them.

Many social aspects of human life are analyzable as components, slices or aspects of the complexes and constellations of practices. Examples are many of the phenomena mentioned earlier of which theories of practice have produced illuminating analyses. Other examples are individuals and large social entities, which are presently succumbing to practice-theoretical analysis. But even though these social matters are aspects of the plenum of practices, and even though the conceptual armature of practice theory constantly evolves and expands, it is not likely that theories of practice are going to illuminate everything about them. I already suggested this regarding individuals. Consider also, in this regard, interactions. An example of what theories of practice have to say about interactions is that interactions take place as part of practices: The actions that make up the action chains that constitute interactions are beholden to the normative organizations of practices. This proposition, however, does not exhaust what there is to interactions. A fuller account of them must explore further matters such as physical presence, nonlinguistic communication, emotional energy (à la Collins, 2004) and power differentials. It is true that the conceptual armature of practice theory can expand. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that practice theory as such will have much to say about most of these matters. To comprehend them, other bodies of theory must be harnessed, for example, symbolic interactionism, conversation analysis, or a Foucauldian conception of power.

What's more, there are other features of human life, some social and others either mental or simultaneously mental and social in character, that are not simply slices or features of the practice plenum. The practice plenum forms a scaffolding or background for these phenomena in the sense that they take place dependent on aspects and components of the plenum. In more philosophical language, the plenum forms a constitutive context for them. Examples of such phenomena are power, the dissemination of knowledge and ideas, experience, learning and the constant adjustments people make in the flow of conduct. Consider power. Giddens builds power into his account of practices. Alternatively, the idea that practices are a basic reality can serve as the starting point of an account of power, whose filling out requires marshaling ideas from beyond practice theories through which power is defined and

its forms, sources, and modalities are analyzed. These ideas can be those of Weber (1978), Lukes (1974), Foucault (1982), or someone else. On this approach, practices simply form the constitutive context in which power—however defined—transpires. Or take learning. As the work of Kemmis (and others such as Alkemeyer; e.g., Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017) has shown, practices form a context in which learning occurs. In particular, practices affect the contents, occasions, possibilities, and depth of learning. But this is only part of an account of learning. A fuller account must encompass matters beyond the context in which learning occurs. Comprehending learning thus requires calling on other theoretical corpuses and combining these with practice theories. The only stricture on which ways of thinking can be drawn on in analyzing phenomena that take place in the context of practices is that the theories not contravene the practice-theoretical tenet that the plenum of practices is a basic reality.

In this way, practice theory can build alliances with other theoretical approaches and traditions to provide advantageous accounts of phenomena that transpire in the context of practices. To repeat, the main constraint on building these alliances is that these approaches be compatible with the thesis that practices are a basic reality. I believe that this stricture allows considerable free space for a range of approaches to join practice theories in broader theoretical coalitions.

This essay has offered an overview of social theoretical practice theories: What they are, why they are increasingly popular, why they are not necessarily better than alternatives, what they are good for, and the frontiers where they need to partner with other theoretical approaches in building up broader accounts of human life. The essay also tried to locate some of Kemmis's important contributions in the overall edifice of practice theory. I hope that you all now have a better idea of what practices have got to do with it.

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Chapter 12
Practice Architectures and Being Stirred into Academic Practices of a Research Group

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Abstract This chapter uses the theory of practice architectures to show how particular kinds of arrangements can make particular kinds of academic practices possible. It does this by exploring the authors' experiences of being *stirred in* to practices of academia within a particular practice landscape as part of a research group, and the arrangements that enabled and constrained that stirring in. Employing an autoethnographic approach, the authors draw on their individual and collective experiences of research and collaboration with Stephen Kemmis and encounters with the theory of practice architectures. Individual narratives are analysed to identify key cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements that prefigured our being *stirred in*, a process which has led to deep and long-lasting research collaborations and commitments that have strong and enduring local and international ties. In sharing our analysis and narratives, we provide a glimpse of how these collaborations and commitments, and the theory of practice architectures (itself a prefiguring arrangement of our practices) have influenced our research into practice in our respective fields. Our discussion offers insights not only into the kinds of practice architectures that make up a university landscape, but also how conditions of possibility can be created for academic practices that resist the de-professionalising effects of troubling university conditions.

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Introduction

Contemporary researchers have identified the challenging conditions that universities, and academics within universities, are experiencing (for instance, Barnett, 2013; Edwards-Groves, 2013; Hardy, 2010; Hardy, Salo, & Rönnerman, 2015; Mahon & Galloway, 2017). Barnett (2013) argues that

> The idea of the university has closed in ideologically, spatially and ethically. Ideologically the contemporary envelope of ideas encourages the university to pursue quite narrow interests, particularly those of money (in the service of a national—and even global—knowledge economy); spatially, the university is enjoined to engage with its region, especially with industrial and business organisations in its environs (increasingly its students are also 'local'); and ethically, the university has come to be focused on its own interests. (p. 2)

Few, if any, universities are immune to these changes. Academics are increasingly confronted with systems of accountability, surveillance and measurement (Hardy, 2010) leading to increased administrative work and increased workload more broadly. Within such an environment, academics can struggle to develop approaches to scholarship, to research and to teaching that are fulfilling and generative.

This chapter draws on the theory of practice architectures as well as the concept of being *stirred in* to practices to illustrate how academic practices that aim to respond to conditions such as these can be enabled within a university landscape. The chapter also draws from the narratives of the authors' experiences. We share an interest in researching practice and understanding how people enter into arrangements and maintain the practices that shape their social life. But that is not all we share. We have each in our own way (and influenced by our varying backgrounds) experienced a kind of 'stirring in' to practices associated with being an academic by becoming part of a particular 'practice landscape' (Kemmis et al., 2014b, pp. 4, 34) and research community in which Stephen Kemmis and his ideas have played a vital role. In this landscape, and within this community, we have encountered *arrangements* that enabled and constrained our ways of being academics. This includes the theory of practice architectures (as it was either emerging or being further developed), and long-lasting research collaborations and commitments that have strong and enduring local and international ties.

This chapter tells a story of this *stirring in* and its impact on our work as academics. The story emerged from an auto-ethnographic inquiry process in which we constructed and analysed narratives of our encounters with Stephen and his work. The theory of practice architectures was used in our inquiry as an analytical lens, and in this sense, the theory is both partly the subject of our story and part of our analytical framework. The aim in presenting our analysis is not only to shed a personal light on the formation of, and possibilities for, academic practice, but also to contribute to ongoing theoretical conversations prompted by reflections on our lived experience of the practice-forming processes highlighted by the theory of practice architectures.

We begin the chapter by briefly introducing the notion of *stirring in* and the theory of practice architectures. We then outline the inquiry process. Next, we present our

narratives and analysis showing how encounters with particular practice architectures have influenced our practices as academics and our research into practice in our respective fields.

The Theory of Practice Architectures and Being *Stirred in* to Practice

Being *stirred in* is a process of being drawn into a practice and coming to know how to go on in the practice through engaging in the practice (Kemmis, Edwards-Groves et al., 2017a). It involves being engaged in the *language games* (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009) and the other activities of a practice. *Language games* refers to the development of a shared understanding of meaning (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009). 'In the practice of the use of language', Wittgenstein argues, 'the whole, consisting of language and the activities into which it is woven (is) a language game' (1953/2009, p. 8), and 'the speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life' (p. 15). In coming to know how to go on in a practice (p. 66), we engage in particular language games and activities so that over time we develop a shared understanding of how to go on (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009).

The theory of practice architectures helps shed light on how arrangements (like language games) that practitioners encounter as they engage in a practice become part of the stirring in process. Introduced by Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), and further developed by Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer and Bristol (2014),[1] the theory of practice architectures is a 'site-ontological perspective' (Wilkinson & Kemmis, 2015, p. 343) of practice that has its roots partly in the critical theory of Habermas (e.g. 1974, 1987) and Marx, and that has been influenced by the work of Schatzki (e.g. 1996, 2002, 2010).[2] According to the theory of practice architectures, cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements form the *practice architectures* that prefigure (but do not predetermine) the actions that are undertaken in a *site* (Schatzki, 2002). Cultural-discursive arrangements enable and constrain what is said and thought about, in, and in relation to, actions in a site: the *sayings*. Material-economic arrangements prefigure what is done in a site: the *doings*. Social-political arrangements are arrangements of solidarity and power that prefigure the ways in which people relate to each other and their environment in a site: the *relatings* (Kemmis et al., 2014b). Sayings, doings and relatings (three overlapping kinds of action), together with the *project* within which the actions cohere (encompassing the aims and ends of the actions, Rönner-

[1]The theory has also been extended through other work by Stephen Kemmis and colleagues (e.g. Kemmis & Brennan Kemmis, 2014, April; Kemmis, Edwards-Groves, Wilkinson, & Hardy, 2012; Kemmis & Heikkinen, 2012; Kemmis, Heikkinen, Aspfors, Fransson, & Edwards-Groves, 2014a; Kemmis & Mutton, 2012; Kemmis, Wilkinson, & Edwards-Groves, 2017b; Rönnerman & Kemmis, 2016; and numerous conference presentations).

[2]See Kemmis and Mahon (2017) for an account of the theory' theoretical influences.

man & Kemmis, 2016), are what practices are composed of (Kemmis et al., 2014b). Since the three kinds of arrangements—cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political—together shape and are shaped by the practices within any given site (making certain kinds of practice possible—or not), what exists and happens in a site of practice is highly significant for the unfolding, development and evolution of practices.

From a practice architecture perspective, when people enter or are drawn into a practice, they encounter particular sayings, doings and ways of relating in a practice, and they modify their own sayings, doings and relatings as they try out ways of enacting that practice (which may be a new practice, or a familiar practice within a new set of conditions and circumstances). Since their ways of enacting the practice are constrained and enabled by the practice architectures that exist in the particular sites of the practice being entered into, they must find ways to go on in the practice amidst those architectures (Kemmis et al., 2017a). We use the notion of being *stirred in* here in a way that allows for the possibility that, when people are being stirred into a practice, they not only come to know (and perhaps name) a practice by participating in it, but also come to *own* a practice enough to be able to push at the boundaries of the practice and challenge its practice traditions, and to feel a sense of belonging to the community of people engaging in the same practice. We acknowledge that the notion of being *stirred in* is neither unproblematic nor linear.

Auto-Ethnographic Approach

We have used an auto-ethnographic approach to locate and reflect on our entries into particular ways of thinking about, researching and enacting practice. Each author reflected on her experiences of being stirred into particular kinds of academic practices as part of a particular university landscape, and, specifically, a particular research community which has embodied certain research traditions, practices and collaborations for over a decade: the Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP) network. The focus of these reflections was the many ways being stirred into certain kinds of academic practices occurred. Short reflective narratives were generated and then individually and collectively interrogated by the authors using the theory of practice architectures as an analytical resource (Francisco, Mahon, & Kemmis, 2017) to identify the intersecting sites of our own practices as academics. Part of our analysis involved collaboratively identifying themes that were common across the narratives, as well as forming a composite picture of shared understandings.

Our Experiences of Being *Stirred in…*

The process of being stirred into academic practices associated with the PEP network was a richly complex one for us. We experienced it in different ways relative to

each other, partly because of our varying backgrounds, circumstances and interests. Susanne had recently started as a lecturer in adult and vocational education and was undertaking Ph.D. research into novice VET teacher learning at another university when she first encountered the PEP network. Annemaree (Annie) was researching and lecturing within the field of information studies having worked as a teacher and a library manager in the VET sector. Kathleen had been teaching and studying in an outdoor education teacher education programme at another university and was seeking a Ph.D. supervisor. We had thus been influenced by diverse professional perspectives and practices, as well as different theoretical backgrounds and traditions.

Despite our contrasting backgrounds and differences as academics, there are common threads running across our individual narratives. Not least of these threads are the deeply personal experiences that working and learning within this community, and working with Stephen Kemmis who played a crucial role in the network, holds for each of us and the kind of world and activities into which we were drawn as Stephen's researcher-colleague, teacher-colleague and/or Ph.D. candidate-colleague. Of particular significance have been our dialogues with Stephen, our writing collaborations related to the theory of practice architectures, and participation in particular collegial learning and research activities as part of the PEP network at a 'local', institutional level (the focus of this chapter), as well as part of the Australian and the international PEP research network.[3] The role of these dialogues is revealed in a glimpse of our narrative(s) presented next.

Opening Up the Communicative Space

Creating a communicative space (Habermas, 1996) involves (among other things) dialogue 'in which people strive for intersubjective agreement, mutual understanding and unforced consensus about what to do and in which legitimacy arises' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005, p. 592). Our dialogues with Stephen Kemmis have been valuable to us on many levels and are especially relevant to our being stirred into the developing practice architectures perspective on practice. The dialogues have taken various forms, including *salons*, which were regular informal meetings between Annie and Stephen Kemmis over coffee at the University Student Union (campus cafeteria):

> Salon was my favourite part of the week. [It] started like this….
>
> Annie: (In email to Stephen Kemmis) Stephen, I have been reading … (insert a myriad of things here) and I have questions.
>
> Stephen: (In email reply to Annie) I think we should meet for coffee!

[3]The PEP research group as we know it is made up of a local research group of which we three authors are, or have been, members; the PEP Australia research network involving researchers from across six Australian universities; and the PEP international network which includes researchers from seven countries. The PEP Australia and PEP international networks are made up of people who are members of the locally based groups. As mentioned, in this chapter, we focus primarily on the local PEP research group of which we were all members.

> The allocated hour would then disappear into three. Starting points for discussion would weft and weave their way around the importance of ontology (very important to me), epistemology, practice, practice theory and Habermas (always ever present). In the early days, we were working through understanding practice. I was never sure where we might end up but was always delighted at the strange and unusual spots we often found ourselves.
>
> Stephen invited others to attend our weekly coffee meetings and some great discussions arose. We were learning together and it was liberating. We would talk for hours and I really miss those conversations which helped me to clarify my thinking, and allowed me to work at a deep theoretical and analytical level. Stephen's generosity with his time and his patience provided me with a kind of intellectual apprenticeship—he brought me into thinking and into practice in a deeply analytical way. (Excerpt from Annie's narrative)

The salons were opportunities for Annie, Stephen and others to collectively interrogate their readings and thinking. They did so often, from Annie's perspective, with a '*delicious sense of subversiveness*' as they critiqued their emerging understandings against the background of the campus cafeteria.

The tradition of *salons* later morphed into a related but different practice with different practitioners. As Kemmis et al. (2017a) note:

> By varying the way particular practices are practiced in response to changed historical or material conditions in different times and places, practitioners create conditions for the transformation and evolution of both the practices and themselves as practitioners. (p. 61)

Dialogues with Stephen have also taken the form of *PATchats*. PATchats (practice architectures theory chats) involving Susanne, Kathleen and a group of colleagues in conversation with Stephen were similar, but different from, the salons. These chats have evolved, with different people involved and different venues, but they are always specifically about the theory of practice architectures. Susanne was using the theory as part of her theoretical framework when she was involved in the initiation of an earlier version of what later became known as PATchats, and they were important in terms of opportunities to discuss questions related to

> aspects of the theory that we did not understand, or that we challenged. PATchat …was a powerful learning environment for me. Stephen's discussion of the underpinnings of the theory helped me to gain an understanding of other theorists, and especially the works of Aristotle, Habermas and Wittgenstein in a way that earlier readings had not. The opportunity to safely question the theory [of practice architectures] and the approaches taken, and seeing the theory develop in front of me was intellectually stimulating and personally exciting. … In these chats I felt that we were able to engage more deeply with theoretical ideas, their underpinnings, their possible development and precursors. (Excerpt from Susanne's narrative)

More recently, the PATchat groups have evolved from small groups of Ph.D. candidates into a broader group of academics involved in the local PEP group.[4]

For Kathleen, stirring in chats with Stephen took the form of Ph.D. supervision meetings. Kathleen met with two of her supervisors (Stephen Kemmis as principal supervisor and Laurette Bristol as co-supervisor) as a team approximately every two weeks throughout her Ph.D. candidature, mostly in Stephen's university office:

[4]This practice has also *travelled*, with Swedish PEP members now having regular PATchats with Stephen via the internet.

> I engaged with Stephen's ideas (and those of his colleagues) on practice, praxis[5] and practice architectures in a way that made them more tangible. I could test and critique his ideas while in conversation with him, and while being subjected/exposed, as a learner, to his embodiment of those ideas…. Through our discussions, I developed a keener sense of some of the key constructs in the theory of practice architectures while putting the theory to work to critique the educational circumstances in which I found myself, and while examining the theory itself under a critical microscope. Stephen seemed committed to developing new knowledge and critical playfulness, and he encouraged this both as my supervisor (as did Laurette) and as a theorist. It was an exciting and challenging experience. (Excerpt from Kathleen's narrative)

Conversations like those we experienced in salon PATchats and/or supervision meetings became important spaces for us to observe, experience and try out/bounce around/debate different ideas about, practice (including our own practices as academics, university practices in our institution and the practices we were researching in our various projects). These chats were connected to other activities and initiatives in which we not only encountered particular PEP architectures and PEP colleagues, but also each other. We engaged together in seminars, reading groups and writing collaborations, working, for instance, on a chapter about the theory and its place in the theoretical landscape of practice theory (i.e. Mahon, Kemmis, Francisco, & Lloyd, 2017b), the introductory chapter for *Exploring education and professional practice—through the lens of practice architectures* (Mahon, Francisco, & Kemmis, 2017a).

Memories to which all three authors can relate directly because they are part of our shared history as members of the local Charles Sturt University PEP research group are those of PEP meetings. Now the meetings occur over a full day and follow PATchats, 2-hour reading group discussions and an evening dinner attended by PEP members the day before. In the PEP meetings themselves, time is set aside for the explicit purpose of discussing theoretical matters, for sharing what the members are doing in their scholarly work, often with one or two people talking about a project more extensively and seeking feedback from the group. The meetings are peppered with lunch and coffee breaks, and, like the PATchats, typically take place in Stephen's home [6] (e.g. in the cosiness of inviting blue lounges [Smith, Salo, & Grootenboer, 2010]), away from the email, paperwork and deadline distractions of daily academic life.

These gatherings have been at once a social, nurturing, challenging and intellectual pursuit. On the blue lounges, we have developed and explored our praxis. We have talked, laughed, argued, agreed, disagreed and resisted. We have drawn diverse perspectives, experiences and theories into our rich conversations about all manner of things from praxis to embodiment, to intersubjectivity, and to power (Smith, Salo, & Grootenboer, 2010). In these moments, we have cared for each other and valued each

[5]The word *praxis* here and throughout this chapter denotes a kind of practice that is informed, morally-committed and linked to a sense that when we act, we *make history* (Kemmis et al., 2014b).

[6]An example of this is the practice of *Teacher Talk*. In the interests of space we have chosen not to discuss the practice in this chapter. However, other PEP researchers have written about *Teacher Talk* for those interested in finding out more, for example (Edwards-Groves, 2013; Hardy, 2010).

other's perspectives. We have been '*privileged through our togetherness*' (Annie's narrative).

Our Stirring in Through the Lens of Practice Architectures

Our narratives can be seen as stories about practice architectures that support learning/knowing how to go on (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009) in the sayings, doings and relatings associated with a particular research community and particular academic practices in particular sites of practice. Conversations and initiatives like the salons, PATchats, PEP meetings and writing collaborations are just some of the sites in which our practices were forming and transforming. So what were the sayings, doings and relatings we were being stirred into and what were the relevant practice architectures that enabled this stirring in?

As members of the PEP group, we were stirring in, and being stirred in, to particular ways of thinking and talking about practices, research, theory and our own disciplines. This stirring in took place against a broader environment within universities of an increased market orientation bringing with it increased competition, accountability and surveillance (Barnett, 2013). Our stirring into academic practices included thinking and talking critically in terms of the consequences and social justice implications connected to the subjects of conversation. Furthermore, certain words (sayings) associated with practice theory in general, and the theory of practice architectures in particular, became part of our vernacular as we engaged in 'language games' (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009, p. 8) and such doings as talking, arguing, reflecting, theorise, changing our minds, drawing, writing and even laughing about practice. Our doings also crucially included clarifying and dissecting relevant and contrary theories, interrogating literature, looking for points of divergence and convergence with our own theoretical work, naming tensions and identifying practice architectures that enabled and constrained academic practices in our own sites and the sites of our research. Because these doings and sayings were social, we were simultaneously being stirred into particular ways of relating to our academic colleagues as co-producers of knowledge and new practices, collaborators, fellow theorists, debating opponents, co-learners, critical friends and just plain *friends.* The sayings, doings, and relatings characterising our stirring in hung together, in practice architecture terms, in a distinctive 'project' (Kemmis et al., 2014b) of doing scholarly, praxis-oriented work.[7] So in the stirring in process, we were effectively buying into, among other things, a particular project related to doing certain kinds of academic work—doing academic work in a particular way, involving and anticipating critical communities of colleagues.

[7] An example of this is the practice of *Teacher Talk*. In the interests of space, we have chosen not to discuss the practice of Teacher Talk in this chapter. However, other PEP researchers have written about *Teacher Talk*; for those interested in finding out more, see for example Edwards-Groves (2013) and Hardy (2010).

And what made this possible? Many cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements were pivotal to our stirring in experiences. Not least of these were the practice theory concepts[8] and language bound up with the theory of practice architectures (i.e. as a shared language), and the critical theories and discourses informing both the theory and the work of those who participated in the activities we have described. These linguistic and conceptual resources enabled and constrained particular interpretations and articulations of the sites we were cohabiting and investigating, and the practices we were enacting and exploring. Material artefacts like books, readings, diagrams and interview transcripts were important sources of inspiration, ideas and insights. Equally important were the shared coffees and meals, the blue lounges in Stephen's home and the relaxed atmosphere of the university cafeteria for imbuing our work with a sense of safety, fun and togetherness. Over time and in these spaces, we developed a sense of solidarity. We learned to trust each other and developed deep bonds that sustain our collaborative work. Our collaborative relationships and the PEP network itself enabled the stirring in which resulted in the co-production of some of the particular architectures (e.g. scholarly texts, theoretical concepts) and practices (e.g. debating, sharing, reflecting) we have been describing. These practice architectures and practices constituted and served to open up, communicative spaces (Habermas 1996; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005), supporting our collaborative learning and investigation.

The theoretical journey and thinking about practice and praxis begun by Stephen Kemmis has been the entry point and catalyst for our shared journey, bringing this group together and allowing us to encounter each other. Stephen played a crucial role in establishing and nurturing the PEP group, and helping us craft a safe intellectual space through which to explore important ideas and issues. He has guided, mentored and encouraged our practice of *doing PEP*, so to speak. In addition to extrapolating his ideas and debating about practice, Stephen has invited us into his world of critical playfulness and theoretical risk taking.

Our own role in this *stirring in* story is important as well. We did not enter the sites we have been describing without particular interests, resources, dispositions and ideas. We brought with us certain motivations, for instance. In Annie's case, this included a desire to deepen her understanding of practice (especially its ontological dimension—e.g. how practices happen) and to theorise practice. In Susanne's case, there was a desire to find a useful theoretical tool to explore teacher learning, and that could help effect change. Kathleen was motivated by an interest in the notion of praxis and how to nurture praxis in educational settings and in her own practice. Our experiences of being stirred in were thus influenced by our own investments in the process and what we were being stirred into.

[8] See Table 1.1 'Key terms associated with the theory of practice architectures' (Mahon et al., 2017b, pp. 16–19).

Some Emergent Themes: Sharing, Shaping, Reframing, Agency and Resistance

Emerging from our analysis of the auto-ethnographic narratives we wrote in preparing for this chapter were some key themes that, in a sense, capture our stirring in experience. *Sharing* is an obvious theme. It relates to common endeavour and the idea of shared agency. In engaging in the collaborative and dialogic arrangements like those discussed, we created sites of shared knowledge, that is, particular kinds of intersubjective space. Such spaces were constituted through common reference points created when we came together as a group of researchers through the various activities related to common goals. It was against these reference points that we reflected about various aspects of practice.

Shaping and reframing also emerged as themes. Entering a group involved being introduced to the group and its ideas and ways of practising. Inherent in these activities were discourses, which were in some ways explicit (e.g. in the PEP meetings: ways of talking about practice set ups, presenting research, talking about theory), but were in other ways embodied and nuanced, and present in the group's routines (e.g. making coffee, having lunch, ensuring we had done the pre-reading). Connecting with the nuanced ways of doing PEP or with the vernacular knowledge related to PEP has helped to situate us in the PEP culture. We have been shaped and positioned in terms of our membership within the group (e.g. insiders/senior researchers/outsiders). Yet, we have also made adaptations to suit the circumstances as we have negotiated existing practice architectures and practice traditions. We have essentially been making and remaking the practices (and the theoretical ideas) and co-produced new practice architectures (like PATchat) in the process.

The theme of *agency* also emerged and describes our role in our own stirring in, and our contributions to the evolution of the practices and theory we were being stirred into. We have often taken different theoretical positions when discussing contested ideas and we have clearly expressed agency in modifying how we have used and related to the theory of practice architectures in our own work. We have been involved in creating different practice architectures through different practices.

Some of our agency, we suggest, was borne of our awareness/consciousness of our stirring in when it was happening, illustrated in the following excerpt:

> In the space of my regular meetings with Stephen and Laurette, there was a collective self-consciousness amongst us that I was being 'stirred into' particular ideas and ways of thinking, but also into ways of doing academia. (From Kathleen's narrative)

Being able to name what we were doing and what was happening to us individually and collectively was empowering, in a sense. It enabled us to respond to and deliberately embody and transform the practices we were beginning to own.

An important part of our stirring in process was a degree of *resistance* to the ideas and practices into which we were being stirred. This is another of the themes to emerge from our analysis, and it relates to the notion of agency. The mention of debate, challenging ideas and critique is crucial here. In each of our stories is

evidence of a will to unsettle, or to avoid settling and being settled on particular ideas and ways of doing things. Kathleen explained it like this in her narrative:

> While I was learning … to think with these new ideas about practice, I was also trying, in some ways, not to lose my sense of self, and to avoid 'getting fixed on that way of seeing the world' (as Laurette put it) … Ironically, I was being stirred into a practice of resistance, and that includes resistance to being stirred into particular ideas, practices and ways of being stirred in.

The stance of resistance reflected here, though, is less about resistance for the sake of resistance, and more about a commitment to praxis and avoiding being confined by practice architectures and practices that might inadvertently affect our own and others' opportunities for self-expression, self-development, and self-determination (Young, 1990). We wanted to think with, and against, but also beyond, the resources we encountered. We wanted to act with, and against, but also create possibilities beyond, the current arrangements. This applied (and still applies) to the practices and practice architectures of the PEP community as well as in the practices and arrangements of our universities, and the practices and practice architectures we have been interrogating in our research.

Influences on Our Work

What our encounters with the PEP community, Stephen Kemmis and his work, and the various arrangements constituting our practice landscape enabled is changed thinking in our practice. Annie described the process of being stirred in as '*coming into practice*' and '*changed thinking due to deeper understanding of the ontological dimension of practice, and thinking about practice in a "deeply analytical way"*'. Susanne wrote about coming to understand change differently, while Kathleen described gaining a sense of what it means to embody and enact praxis in a higher education context and how our efforts are mediated by arrangements comprising our work environment. Through our stirring in, we have come to be asking different kinds of questions of practice. And we have carried these into our new landscapes and sites. The following excerpt from Annie's narrative reflects these sentiments well:

> Coming into practice has meant that I have spent a lot of time thinking, doing and talking about it. Practice theory has not only become a central theme and theoretical framework for my research, it has also become a central theme that informs my praxis. In reflecting on my practice, I ask; How does my practice happen? What does my landscape look like? How is it shaped, what conditions influence, enable and or constrain this shaping and in turn my own actions? How does my practice impact on others? How can I describe practice in ways that allow others to understand and see its landscapes? These are important questions for me—and Stephen helped me get to this intellectual space, a space that I now try to share with others who are interested in developing deeper understandings about practice.

We have also each taken ideas further—to create something new—in our respective research areas. Working with the theory of practice architectures allowed Susanne, for example, to address the question (in her Ph.D. research) of how novice

teachers learnt to become teachers, and especially what enabled and constrained that learning. Importantly, she used the theory of practice architectures to explore the work-based learning of novice teachers. She found interactions between the practices that support teacher learning (PSLs), which led her to develop the concept of a trellis of PSLs (Francisco, 2017a, 2017b). Her research showed that in sites where a trellis of interacting PSLs was available to support teacher learning, the teachers became confident and capable more quickly. She is now exploring the possibility that this concept extends into work-based learning more broadly.

Kathleen used the theory of practice architectures and developing ideas about practice to explore critical pedagogical praxis in higher education in her Ph.D. research (e.g. Mahon, 2016). These resources helped her to examine the 'happening-ness' (Kemmis, 2010, p. 10), 'doing-ness' (Green, 2009, p. 43), and complexity of critical pedagogical praxis and how it was being constituted, sustained and nurtured in a particular university setting. The theory particularly prompted her to ask questions such as

- What practice architectures enable and constrain the enactment of critical pedagogical praxis? How so, and what are the pedagogical consequences of this?
- What is the role of individual and collective human agency in constructing the salient practice architectures and what does this mean for university educator practice?
- What conditions of possibility make a site a niche for critical pedagogical praxis?

Questions like these continue to frame Kathleen's research into higher education praxis and thinking about how we can make universities more praxis-oriented.

Annie's work with Stephen provided her with a depth of understanding about *how and why* practices happen. This allowed her to build on her doctoral research into workplace learning and the role of information literacy practices in learning. She felt that a deeper analytical layer was missing from her theorising, that is, an ontological dimension. The notion of *information landscape* that emerged from her doctoral studies represents the enmeshment of epistemic, social and corporeal modalities. From a practice architectures perspective, these modalities could be expressed in deeper analytical terms:

- Cultural-discursive conditions of a setting where we engaged with the sayings of practice (semantic space), for example, the epistemic modality;
- Material-economic space where we create the preconditions of practice, for example, the corporeal modality; and
- Social-political where we encounter power and solidarity, for example, the social modality.

Through many discussions with Stephen, the landscape theory continued to evolve and is now recognised as a theoretical approach in the information studies field (Lloyd, 2006, 2010, 2012).

Concluding Comments

In our various subject positions (as student, collaborators, colleagues), we authors were woven into a bricolage of practice architectures that developed and deepened our practice as academics. This was not something that was done *to* us, however. Rather, we were active, agentic participants in this process of stirring in, embracing (although with a critical eye) new ways of seeing and doing our work (and new ways of seeing practice) while at the same time contributing to the evolution of the very practices in which we were engaging and the practice architectures we were encountering.

The PEP community subtly crafted by Stephen was a key part of this. The network works on many levels, as an act of resistance to the neo-liberal ideology of the academic institution—which values our outputs, but is unable to provide time, in the current climate, for intellectual inputs necessary to fuel intellectual curiosity and thought. Similarly, it provides an expanded spatial engagement so that it is not limited to the local, but encompasses work with an international network of PEP colleagues. A focus on educational praxis, on scholarly thinking and scholarly debate, and on collaboration in the activities we have described has been a powerful way to push back against the broader trend across universities of increasing surveillance and accountability (Hardy, 2010) as well as increased administrative load and workload more broadly. On other levels, our participation has cemented our solidarity by creating a shared space of purpose and meaning. This purpose and meaning has emerged through numerous edited books and journal articles, but also through collegial relationships, which continue to be sources of courage to hold firmly to our moral commitment to find more sustainable, ethical and educational ways of engaging in practice within our work as academics.

Upon reflection, we have been privileged to be stirred into particular ways of doing academia through our work with Stephen Kemmis and the community he helped to build. We have been challenged and guided through complex theory and thinking and introduced to new ways of seeing and questioning the world that have allowed us to be and become academics of a particular kind. As academics of this kind, we feel confident, agentic and open to conversation and critique as we follow new lines of inquiry and explore new sites of practice. This has created new openings in terms of imagining, and in our respective fields and academic landscapes, working towards how things can be otherwise.

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Chapter 13
Practice Architectures and Ecologies of Practices: Knowing Practice Within Sites

Jane Wilkinson and Laurette Bristol

Abstract Theory is often used to speak across and for cultural contexts and sites, in that it explains phenomena and helps us apprehend experiences and practices at various levels. Rarely is theory used to speak within sites, such that it provides a means for entering a conversation of *knowing practices in action within sites*, particularly when that knowing in action is prefigured (enabled and constrained) by the cultural essence of a practice landscape. Using vignettes of reflective collaborative research encounters with each other *within theory*, where we came to know each other's research practices as individuals (Australian and Trinidadian and Tobagonian), through the application of theory to research sites, the authors explore the bundling of practices and how these practices were prefigured by arrangements that came to constitute a shared ecology of collaborative research practice. We draw on the ecological connections emerging from our experiences as participants in the Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP) research network, where we were immersed into international research practices and sites influenced by Stephen Kemmis' work in practice theory. This mosaic construction of collaborative research practice will illustrate the complexity and interconnectivity of the arrangements, which sustain and nurture our practices of researching, mentoring and leading in an ecological relationship with each other.

Introduction

In these autoethnographic accounts, we reflect on: our experiences of working with Stephen as a senior colleague and mentor; our growth as Early Career Researchers (ECRs) as we immersed ourselves and contributed to the evolving Practice Archi-

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tecture (PA) of the Pedagogy Education and Praxis (PEP) network; and our ongoing collaborative research journey as we continue to grapple with and contribute to the evolution of practices theory in diverse sites of educational practice.

Our choice of autoethnography reflects our shared commitment as critical scholars to reflexivity, particularly in terms of the key role it "plays in the formation of the 'knowing subject'" (Reed-Danahay, 2005, p. 23). This choice also honours the spirit in which this edited collection has been conceived, that is, as a testimony to the content and conduct of Stephen's lifework, foregrounded in his commitment to a collective form of researcher praxis that aims to create the "good for each person" and for "humankind" as part of the formation of a world worth living in (Kemmis et al. 2014, p. 27) .

We commence the chapter with individual accounts of our being and becoming academics in the shared *telos* of collective praxis that formed the backbone of the PEP network. This path was forged through Stephen's deliberate construction of a communicative space that allowed a new set of sayings, doings and relatings for collectively thinking and speaking about practice theory and praxis to emerge in our Wagga Wagga university site. This "evolving and self-determining" process led by Stephen, which focused on "what might be rather than what is" (Smith, Salo, & Grootenboer, 2010, p. 58), was modelled for us by the regular PEP meetings which Jane and, later, Laurette attended, the latter as a newly appointed postdoctoral research fellow. At these meetings, we were immersed in and immersed ourselves in dialogue about praxis, practice and practice theory. We collectively began to carve out a time and space which, though not without its contestation and tensions, supported an emerging sense of solidarity and efficacy as researchers (see Smith, Salo, & Grootenboer, 2010, for a more detailed account of the emergence of the Wagga Wagga, Australia PEP network). We now turn to our individual accounts of this process.

Entering the Field of Practice/Praxis: Jane

My first encounter with Stephen and what eventually came to be known as PEP was reading an email that Stephen, as the fairly newly arrived Professor of Education, had sent out to the whole School of Education. In the casually but no doubt carefully worded message, Stephen invited anyone who was interested to join him for a coffee to talk about praxis/practice and our work as researchers (Smith et al., 2010). At that stage, I was employed as a lecturer in the School and in the throes of attempting to complete my Ph.D. while holding down a full-time academic position and raising a small child. I distinctly recall reading the email a number of times before responding. I was pulled in a two different directions by its contents. On the one hand, the thought of having an opportunity to discuss practice with someone whom I knew to be an eminent researcher of Action Research was very tempting. I was struggling to find a scholarly home in the faculty to which I could belong. The email held out possibilities for intellectual stimulation, potentially with a group of like-minded academics. On

the other hand, I was a critical feminist researcher, immersed in Bourdieuian theory as I attempted to come to terms with how women leaders in the higher education sector understood their leadership practices. I had scarce amounts of time and intellectual energy. Was accepting the invitation to talk about practice theory going to take me down an unsought path that was not in synergy with my critical feminist practice? In the end, after wrestling with the invitation for a couple of days, I responded with a "yes". I figured that it was only a coffee invitation. I could go along, test the waters and retreat at any time if it did not appear to offer me the kind of intellectual succour that I was seeking.

At our first coffee conversation, a group of us sat on the wooden benches outside the Rivcoll Union and talked with Stephen. I do not recall a great deal about the particularities of the discussion, but I do remember we talked about practice theory more broadly and shared ideas about what the group might focus on. But it was the *manner* in which we talked which was most illuminating. What I recall most powerfully was that it felt like we had a genuine conversation—a dialogue—rather than the more typical discussions I had had with other academics in which we were so focused on the end product (publications, grants, etcetera) that the *raison d'etre* for why we had entered the academy was lost. In this coffee conversation, I felt as if a senior academic was giving us space and time to talk about ideas and theories that mattered to all of us and to education more broadly. This seemed like such a luxury in the busyness and maelstrom of academic life. As a young academic, it gave me a glimpse of the possibilities that might exist in academia, that is, that there were other ways to live an academic life and that this included giving oneself and others permission to actively carve out the time and space to talk about big ideas that mattered. The time to talk about ideas, to shape the conversation and to have a hand in *developing* theory (not simply applying it, albeit in insightful ways) remains my most powerful impression and memory of those early days. It is the reason why I have continued to attend and contribute to the PEP network.

As I look back over those early days, I understand that what Stephen was attempting to do was to construct an intercommunicative space in which we all could participate—in just, rational and thoughtful ways. It was/has been and remains a dynamic space that has changed, grown, morphed into other forms of life and is struggled over and contested. My entry into the theoretical space was gradual as was the evolution of the theory itself. I recall many meetings where we talked and wrestled over the concepts, something that we continue to do to this day. An important breakthrough was the decision to add to our intellectual armoury the notion of relatings and of the social–political arrangements in which such relatings are nested. As a critical feminist, committed to notions of social justice, the power relations, the notion of relatings and the arrangements that prefigure them were a key reminder of the inherent sociality of practices and of what enables and constrains our practices: what and how we think; which activities we perform; and how we relate to other participants in a practice and to the material world which we inhabit.

As I watched and later discussed with Stephen *how* the practice architecture of our research network had begun to evolve, I understood that one of the key ways this occurred was through the conduct of our regular PEP meetings, in which there

was a careful orchestration by Stephen (and later, other members of the group) in the practices of collectively researching, based on our shared interests and projects. We were actively encouraged in these meetings to speak and think about, carry out and relate to our research as collaborators in a shared research enterprise through, for example, developing a shared set of theoretical and practical understandings and language about our work. This was in stark contrast to the more typical practices of researching I had encountered, in which academics were encouraged to think of their research as first and foremost an individualistic enterprise, albeit one which might sometimes include other colleagues. It was due to this role modelling in terms of a collective telos or purpose for our research that I first began to work with Laurette. We clearly had research interests in common and when the opportunity arose for Laurette to apply to do a small, internally funded research grant that required a more senior researcher as a mentor, we agreed that this would be a useful way for us to explore our collective interest in educational leading and action research as practices for social justice.

Coming to Terms with the Practice Architectures of PEP Researching: Laurette

A highly skilled migrant in Australia, my story of contact with Stephen and PEP begins outside the Australian context. I completed my Ph.D. in 2009, having worked with Professor Wilfred Carr (Wilf) and Dr. Jennifer Lavia at the University of Sheffield, UK. Driven by a longing to return home, I quickly left the UK and returned to the primary classroom in Trinidad and Tobago. Armed with a Ph.D., I thought that I could really make a significant contribution to the development of a postcolonial pedagogy (my own and my peers) (Bristol, 2010, 2012), but the primary education context in Trinidad and Tobago does not provide a good fit[1] for a primary school teacher qualified at the Ph.D. level. Thus, within months of my return to Trinidad and Tobago, I was seconded to a local university in the School of Education. Here again, idealised assumptions about my self-advocacy in the creation and facilitation of practice, particularly research, reigned. I was soon to be disillusioned and it was when reflecting with Wilf via Skype, on the dissonance between research training, career expectations and the lived constraints of practice in higher education in Trinidad and Tobago, that the possibility of another change arose. This time it required relocation to Australia, and in 2010 with lingering touch, I left my family and moved to Wagga Wagga.[2]

[1]It is not common in this context to have primary school teachers qualified at the Ph.D. level. In fact, the practice landscape and Practice traditions in which educational practices in Trinidad and Tobago are nestled propel a movement of teachers qualified beyond the level of the first degree out of the primary classroom and into the tertiary level sector.

[2]Often times in these narrative accounts, there is a lot left unsaid, particularly when the focus of the account surrounds the revelation of a particular experience. This is the innate limitation of the

At this time, PEP was one of the five research areas/groups within the Charles Sturt University *Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education* (RIPPLE), and the postdoctoral appointment was to serve the research agenda of this group. Stephen, as the leader of PEP, was appointed as my research mentor. In preparing to assume the position, Stephen started sharing with me (via) email some of the published work from members of the group around practice architecture. We later discussed how I was responding to the work via Skype and began initial conversations around the ways in which I saw my postcolonial framing contributing to the advancement of the PEP research agenda. Thus began the start of new research journey with the "other half" of the Carr and Kemmis (1986) duo.

At the time of my joining the PEP group, the sets of arrangements which prefigured and sustained the group had evolved. As such, while I too experienced the liberation of authentic scholastic engagement, the group members now faced the imperatives of publication and successful grantsmanship as a means of demonstrating the group's relevance to the University and to RIPPLE. Thus my experience of being initiated into the research practices of PEP was shaped by sometimes-conflicting agendas of needing the time to resolve my postcolonial framing with the theory of practice architectures, gaining authentic membership in the group (beyond being systematically appointed to the group), and responding to the requirements of meeting the yearly publication demands RIPPLE's Director set for postdoctoral research fellows in the first, second and third years of their appointments.

Working with Stephen and the PEP members brought with it significant academic gifts. First, as an early career researcher (ECR) I was immediately thrust into the midst of rigorous academic thought and debate amongst a team of seasoned researchers led by Stephen. Second, I was initiated into a practice of grant-funded research where I was simultaneously observing others (students, teachers and leaders at schools and fellow researchers engaged in data collection in schools) and being a participant observer as together we shared in a practice of observing practices (teaching, learning, professional learning, leading) while in practice (researching). Third, my practice as an academic mentor was brought into sharp focus when Stephen and I collaborated to supervise a Ph.D. student. Where the first gift sharpened my analytical skills and my ability to engage in a higher form of philosophical inquiry, the second and third gifts provided an inner access to practice (learning while doing), when the lens of praxis became a methodological means through which the ontological assumptions of place, space and sites for practice could be continuously interrogated. As I write, I remember, with fondness, the long-lasting debates (over days and sometimes months) with PEP members and our Ph.D. student on the best way to express concepts and interrogate phenomena when one adopted a site ontological approach, as with the theory of practice architectures.

It is in these debates that the challenge of the gifts was experienced, and it is in these discussions that the theoretical challenges were sometimes resolved and

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methodological approach. Left unsaid is the telling of the experience of being mentored by Wilfred Carr and the ways in which he worked to initiate me into a form of collegial academic practice that well prepared me for the next stage in my academic career.

often times made more complex. Practice architectures as an idea was seductive, but I felt compelled to deploy my postcolonial framing as a means through which the position I was trying to advance could be simultaneously critiqued. Thus, for me, while "site" has its theoretical home in practice theory positions, "place and space" (location and dislocation) for a postcolonial researcher carried a historical and cultural obligation that did not always sit comfortably next to "site" on the research bench. While in the work of the theory of practice architectures we attempt to discover how a practice shapes and is shaped by particular conditions that prefigure it, we often inadvertently disconnected conditioning events from the tensions of the historical traditions and practice landscapes which framed them. This is a tension I am wont to maintain given my own historical conditioning as a descendant of a formerly enslaved and colonised society. In my presence in Australia, I could never escape and not be aware of my place (a Black migrant woman from a small island, English-speaking nation in the Caribbean) and space (given my place, navigating an Australian Higher Education context). At first, I navigated these tensions in isolation played out in publications (Bristol, 2014) and then collaboratively with colleagues from the Caribbean as we tested the theory of practice architectures in the English-speaking Caribbean postcolonial field (Bristol, Brown, & Esnard, 2014; Bristol, Esnard, & Brown, 2015).

Over time, as I worked with researchers in PEP, Jane and I started talking about the theoretical and methodological challenges that she often navigated as she too engaged with the theory of practice architectures. In so doing, we found common ground in our methodological orientations. It is important to note that these conversations between Jane and I were also interrogated in both the local (Wagga Wagga) and international intercommunicative PEP spaces. These diverse ways of thinking were encouraged and often served to contribute to refining the theory of practice architectures.

For Jane and me, these conversations evolved into a collaborative small-grant-funded research project (Bristol & Wilkinson, 2014; Pennanen, Bristol, Wilkinson, & Heikkinen, 2015) that utilised the theory of practice architectures to explore the practices of teaching and professional learning in a rural secondary school engaged in school transformation. Thus, we worked to test the theory in and through sites of and for research. As we did, we gained a deeper appreciation for the theory's utility and a keener understanding of its limitations and the ways in which these limitations can be overcome methodologically through the re-presentation of the data. This provided the means for pushing the boundaries of the theory of practice architectures. Further, our collaborative work attracted the attention of Finnish colleagues in the international PEP network. Together we explored mentoring practices (Finland and Australia); paying particular attention to our collaborative research practices and the practice architecture of collaborative research practices (Heikkinen, Wilkinson, Bristol, & Aspfors, 2018; Pennanen et al. 2015, 2017). This facilitated an understanding of practice architecture as a theory of practice emergence, continuation and disintegration.

As I learned about practice in practice (through the sayings, doings and relatings of international researchers), my research confidence increased and my understanding of the site as social was cemented. This became evident in publications that applied the

theory in spaces outside of my fast-growing comfort zone; exploring praxis in higher education (Hardy, Grootenboer, & Bristol, 2016); the designing and re-designing of online pedagogies and professional learning in teacher education (Bristol & Childs, 2016); engaging with the challenge of communicating research (Brown, Bristol, & Esnard, 2018); and exploring leading practice through a practice lens (Wilkinson, Ronnerman, Bristol, & Salo, 2018).

Unlike Jane (as an early member of the PEP group), I entered the narrative space with Stephen through a systemic imperative; i.e., I was a postdoctoral research fellow assigned to the RIPPLE PEP research area. This mode of entry conditioned our relationship around particular requirements. At the time of my initiation into researching in PEP, Stephen was well on his way to considerations of retirement from active academia; but he was doing so leaving a strong community of researchers in place at RIPPLE. Critically, these were researchers who would be able to mentor others through a deliberate orchestration of talk, shared understandings and research collaborations. Our time together co-supervising a Ph.D. candidate and the personal conversations over often-shared coffees, lunches and dinners (with Rozzie[3] making me curry to remind me of home) served to provide me with access to the professoriate and created a second home for me in academia.

Theoretical Explorations: Pushing the Boundaries of the Theory

This paper is located within a *practice landscape* (Kemmis et al. 2014) that is populated by the narratives and narrative practices of: (1) researchers exploring a common theoretical pathway; and (2) researchers who have shared an intellectual ecology with Professor Stephen Kemmis. Attempting to map this practice landscape will not be an easy journey. Other chapters within this Festschrift have illuminated the theory of practice architectures; thus, in our analysis we will focus on the challenge of: (1) *knowing practices in action within sites, particularly when that knowing in action is prefigured (enabled and constrained) by the cultural essence of a practice landscape; and* (2) *the deliberate or careful orchestration of research practices amongst developing academics.* For us, the ontological site for our academic practice was the Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP) network (and maybe most intensely experienced on the blue lounges at Stephen and Rozzie's home in Wagga Wagga, as well as internationally). Employing the theory of practice architectures helps the researcher to apprehend the project (purpose) of a practice. This provides meaning for the social agents involved in any particular practice.

As we engage in this analysis, we navigate the themes of: issues around social justice; the dynamism of the theory; different ways of understanding the world; and collaborative explorations. These were key areas of utility and contestation as we were initiated into the practice architecture of PEP researching. Thus, we give

[3]Ros Brennan Kemmis—Stephen' wife and a key PEP researcher.

purpose to the ways in which Stephen went about fostering particular orders and arrangements, which served to connect our researching practices into an ecology of local and international academic practices.

In relation to issues of social justice, for example, we were highly conscious of the need to not only identify the arrangements that support particular educational practices, but simultaneously to ask "why … [does] … the practice takes the shape it does?" (Kemmis, Wilkinson, & Edwards-Groves, 2017, p. 242). The questions of not only *what* but *why* are crucial for they invite us to consider the history-making implications of practices and whether such practices "might be transformed, or conducted otherwise, under other conditions of possibility" (Kemmis et al., 2017, p. 242). As such, they together bring to the fore the questions of power relations and individual and collectively responsibilities around social justice.

Related to matters of power relations and social justice, an opportunity lies in the dynamism of the theory. This concerns the applicability of the theory in social and cultural sites fundamentally different from the practice traditions and practice landscapes, which prefigured the nature and form of practice architecture as a theory *of* and *for* practice. Through our research in rural secondary schools in New South Wales (Bristol & Wilkinson, 2014) and in Trinidad and Tobago with school leaders (Bristol, Brown et al., 2014; Bristol, Esnard et al., 2015), we have been able to demonstrate the regional and international application of the theory given its descriptions of the arrangements and prefiguring conditions which influence the form and content of a practice. This provides us with the opportunity to ask and explore a range of practice questions across a diverse range of geographical and cultural sites of practice.

The dynamism of the theory in turn enables an understanding of practices in different sites (national and cultural) as is evident in our work with our Finnish colleagues (Pennanen et al. 2015, 2017) and our recent edited collaboration (Wilkinson & Bristol, 2018) which explores the practices of leading across a range of distinct cultural, religious and national contexts. These projects have highlighted the importance of understanding the site in terms of historical traditions, in order to fully understand the possibilities for practices (both existing and emerging). In so doing, the political motivations for engaging in a particular practice become clear and allow us to apprehend "how other conditions can be created through our practices and the practices of others" (Kemmis et al., 2017, p. 242).

Understanding practices in and across different sites has also enabled forms of collaboration between researchers who are concerned with a common point of practice. It is this that sustains our self-generative, collaborative research practices with colleagues within and beyond the PEP network. In particular, this collaborative engagement has served to extend the boundaries of our understanding of practice architecture. As we navigate its inherent empirical challenges, we are able to identify new ways of understanding the theory itself.

Navigating Theory Generation: Ways Forward

The joy of working with a theory such as the theory of practice architectures is that it is dynamic, flexible and alive. As a set of "thinking tools", it provides an opportunity for new, emerging and established scholars to wrestle with the challenge of an ontological rather than epistemological apprehension of the world in which we live—a notion of practices and the arrangements which prefigure them as always in dynamic tension, as being and becoming, rather than as static or fixed categories. As such, the theory provides researchers with a socially critical lens grounded in praxis—for in the being and becoming of practice lies the possibility for social change and transformation. For educational leadership scholars like us, it has provided a powerful means by which to apprehend a social practice such as *leading* in new and innovative ways, which challenge the shibboleths of the leadership field of scholarship practice. Moreover, in working through some of the challenges, we have noted above in relation to issues around power relations and social justice, it has also provided us with a chance to contribute to the theory in what we hope are productive and helpful ways. We conclude the chapter with a brief sketch of how the theory can and is being used in the educational leadership field in ways that illuminates the capacity of its utility.

When applied to educational leadership scholarship, a critical feminist lens has critiqued the historical bifurcation constructed between leading as a masculinised set of practices (equated with stereotypically masculinised notions of power and authority) and teaching as a feminised practice—an invisible labour of caring. More recently, thanks to the influence of postcolonial and Indigenous scholarship, leading as a practice has been analysed as not only gendered, but "raced" and classed: apprehended as the "natural" property of individual, white male figures (Wilkinson, 2007, 2008, 2009). Critical scholars have noted that educational leadership as a site of research and scholarship has tended to uncritically borrow trends and fads from other fields such as business, while ignoring the specific sites of practice in which educational leading is located; i.e., educational leadership has been viewed as an entity which can be unproblematically transplanted into differing sites (Wilkinson & Kemmis, 2015). In contrast, a site ontological lens allows us to see leading *as a practice* and provides us with the insight that leading practices do not occur in a vacuum—rather they are prefigured by the cultural-discursive, material-economic and social–political arrangements of practice that are brought into or exist in current sites (Kemmis et al., 2014). Crucially, these arrangements include the social–political arrangements that exist in sites, for instance, the *relatings* between principals and teachers/students and parents, which are variously prefigured/enabled, and constrained by masculinist/white relations of power that exist in Australian schools (Wilkinson, 2018). Hence, the theory of practice architectures and ecologies of practices opens up powerful and exciting possibilities for exploring how the social relations of power are composed and connected discursively, materially and socially politically through practices and the arrangements which they prefigure/prefigure them. As such the theory suggests possibilities for transformations through analysis

and critical activism to the inequitable status quo that characterises much of education (Wilkinson, 2016).

One of the ways in which a marriage of analysis and critical activism can be brought to bear on the theory of practice architectures is to employ critical feminist/postcolonial lenses in concert with the theory in order to ask different but complementary questions that foreground issues in regard to power, privilege and social justice. For instance, when analysing the project of an educational practice such as leading (or teaching, professional learning, student learning, researching or policy enacting) one could productively ask:

- Which cultural-discursive arrangements are enabling which sayings (and which arrangements and sayings are being constrained/marginalised/silenced/missing in this site of practice?)
- Which material-economic arrangements are enabling which doings (and which arrangements and doings are being constrained/marginalised/silenced/missing in this site of practice?)
- Which social–political arrangements of power and solidarity are enabling certain relatings (and which arrangements and relatings are being constrained/marginalised/silenced/missing in this site of practice?) (Wilkinson, 2016).

Moreover, different theoretical lenses employed in concert with the theory of practice architectures will suggest different kinds of questions about the *intersubjective spaces or medium* in which these practices hang together and are enabled/constrained. In relation to leading as a practice, for instance, one might ask:

- What forms of *knowledge* about leading practices are being privileged/marginalised through the medium of language? (leading as instructional practice; leading as pedagogical practice?)
- What kinds of labour are being privileged/marginalised in physical space–time in the medium of work? (leading as management of people, finances; leading as emotional labour/care?)
- What kinds of social–political relations are being privileged/marginalised in the medium of power and solidarity? (leading practice as collective responsibility for learning; leading as imbued in the paternalistic authority figure of the principal?)
- In whose interests do these arrangements work? Which groups are marginalised/ignored?

By asking the above questions, we are forced to reflect upon not only existing practices, but also:

1. What is unsayable, undoable and unrelatable in these practices; and
2. How existing practices may colonise sites in ways that force out or render "unliveable" alternative practices and ways of relating to the world.

Such questions can assist us to "see" existing practices in a new light, for one of the insidious effects of asymmetrical relations power is that they circulate in practice architecture in sites in ways that render "natural" or "taken-for-granted" the practices they prefigure (Wilkinson, 2016). Yet, if practice is indeed the "site of the social" and

the social is invariably permeated by, through and with relations of power and solidarity, then it is crucial to ask questions of the arrangements that prefigure/prefigured by practices and how they are materialised in practice architecture of particular sites.

Alternative theories such as critical feminism, postcolonialism or Foucauldian theory to name but a few can provide a helpful means by which alternative questions can be asked about how practices and arrangements come to "hang together" in sites and how they might be transformed. An important consideration, however, is that in using such lenses, we need to be explicit both in their employment and in how such employment may occlude or preclude other ways of "seeing" the world (Wilkinson et al., 2018) .

Conclusion

When thinking of Stephen, the word that most commonly comes to mind is generosity. Whether sharing his time, his intellect or his stories, there has always been an extraordinary generosity about Stephen's scholastic and intellectual endeavours. As Early Career Researchers, Professor Stephen Kemmis, an icon of Action Research, seemed to be an imposing and intimidating figure. As a colleague and friend, we have come to understand this was simply not the case. We have lived, benefitted from and witnessed his generosity and investment in not only our careers but those of myriad other fledgling researchers. This investment has been a source of intellectual joy and great personal satisfaction for him and for us. And we have had such fun together!

And so we conclude. There is no real way to thank Stephen for the difference he has made to all our lives. But in posing these site-specific ways (as located in the ontological positionings of researchers) of thinking about the theory of practice architectures, we can think of no better way of thanking Stephen and honouring the emotional and intellectual capacity that he continues to nurture amongst academics and educators in pursuit of fostering a world worth living in.

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Chapter 14
Practice Theory and Policy: Redesigning 'Quality' Teacher Education in Australia

Ian Hardy

Abstract This chapter draws upon recent reforms in teacher education policy in Australia to exemplify the richness of Stephen Kemmis' work on practice theory. Specifically, I elaborate how Kemmis' notion of practice as constituting particular actions ('doing'), discourses ('Sayings'), and relationships ('relatings'), and as influenced by and influencing the particular conditions—'practice architectures'—for practice, provides a particularly useful conceptual apparatus for making sense of how initial teacher education policy is currently understood and promoted by the Australian federal government. The chapter draws upon part of the 'Students First' policy ensemble in Australia—the principal policy for schooling in Australia. The chapter argues that even as the action of promoting particular discourses around 'quality' teacher education practices within this initiative seems instinctively sensible, closer scrutiny of this policy ensemble reveals evidence of more reductive conceptions of what constitutes productive teacher learning. Focusing in particular upon the Australian Government commissioned *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teacher* policy artefact, and the federal government's response, the chapter reveals that rather than cultivating a more site-based, praxis-oriented conception of teachers' initial education, this policy, and its associated policy artefacts, and the broader policy and political milieu in which the policy was generated, privilege more generic, standardized conceptions of initial teachers' learning. Through the example of this particular policy initiative, the chapter seeks to honour Kemmis' work by revealing the power of his concepts for not only critiquing but also suggesting how schooling might be done differently. The chapter also seeks to position Kemmis' recent work within the broader programme of research that has characterized his own lived experience.

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Introduction

This chapter draws upon recent reforms in teacher education policy in Australia to exemplify the richness of Stephen Kemmis' work on practice theory, and how his later research relates to his earlier work. Specifically, I elaborate how Kemmis' notion of practice as constituting discourses ('Sayings'), actions ('doing') and relationships ('relatings'), and as influenced by and influencing the particular conditions—'practice architectures'—for practice, provides a particularly useful conceptual apparatus for making sense of how initial teacher education policy is currently understood and promoted by the Australian federal government. The chapter draws upon part of the *Students First* policy ensemble in Australia—the principal policy for schooling in Australia. The chapter argues that, even as the action of promoting particular discourses around 'quality' teacher education practices within this initiative seems instinctively sensible, closer scrutiny of this policy ensemble reveals evidence of more reductive conceptions of what constitutes productive teacher learning. Focusing in particular upon the Australian Government commissioned *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teacher* policy artefact, and the federal government's response to it, the chapter reveals that rather than cultivating a more site-based, praxis-oriented conception of teachers' initial education, this policy, and its associated policy artefacts, and the broader policy and political milieu in which the policy was generated, privilege more generic, standardized conceptions of initial teachers' learning. Through the example of this particular policy initiative, the chapter seeks to honour Kemmis' work by revealing the power of his concepts for not only critiquing educational policy and practice, but also suggesting how schooling might be done differently. The chapter also positions Kemmis' recent work within the broader programme of research that has characterized his academic work and life.

Education Beyond Schooling: Understanding Practice and the Conditions for Practice

For Stephen Kemmis, education has always occupied a much more privileged position than schooling. Schooling, as a particular institutionalized form which seeks to 'educate', cultivates an array of practices that may or may not actually be educative in either intent or effect. Much schooling may, for example, simply instantiate practices that further disadvantage those students already marginalized. Indeed, it is the critique of dominant schooling practices (indeed, social practices more broadly) that seek to diminish those already disadvantaged that served as a crucial stimulus for Kemmis to encourage educators to adopt a much more critical standpoint—to open themselves to 'becoming critical' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986)—as a means of raising consciousness (their own and others') about the effects of systemic forms of discrimination, as a means of acting differently, of challenging such practices. It is

this emancipatory intent that served as the primary stimulus for Kemmis' work, and which continues to inform his more recent research practices.

Significantly, the primary locus of attention in this work has been to challenge entrenched ways of being that come to constitute embedded social practices and that are consequently particularly difficult to challenge. Of particular note are the conditions within which such schooling practices have been enacted. In recent work, Kemmis and colleagues have described such conditions as various 'architectures' of the practices that come to constitute these sedimented ways of being (Kemmis et al., 2014).

However, and at the same time, the metaphor of 'architecture' also needs to be engaged carefully. These 'architectures' do not somehow determine, but rather prefigure, practices, and they are themselves subject to influence by the particular 'Sayings', 'doing' and 'relatings' of those engaged in particular practices. This is a twofold process. On the one hand, practices actually constitute some, but by no means all, of the conditions within which they are enacted (practices do not constitute the weather which influences the conduct of some practices, for example). Nevertheless, some of the conditions—the practice architecture—which enable and constrain practices are the product of particular discourses (Sayings), actions (doing) and relationships (relatings) at particular times. Thus, the conditions for practice are never simply given, and at least some of those conditions are subject to change as a result of the Sayings, doings and relatings that constitute practices. They are affected by the particular vicissitudes of circumstance, timing, displacement and uncertainty, even as they are simultaneously the product of already-existing ways of talking, doing and relating—some (perhaps many) of which are deeply sedimented, and not necessarily easily subject to alteration. On the other hand, these conditions simultaneously constitute, make possible, the practices that come to be enacted. These conditions 'condition' those within their remit, and upon whom they depend for their very existence. Not all possible practices are possible at any given time, but are instead influenced by the circumstances within which they unfold.

Consequently, practices are both product and productive of the particular conditions within which they exist, and help to give meaning to these conditions, even as they are simultaneously constituted by these same conditions. The interplay between practices and the conditions within which they play out is complex and contested—always open to change, even as such change may be resisted. The result is the capacity for new ways of being to emerge, even as such new opportunities are never simply 'given' and always subject to the vicissitudes that characterize any given circumstances in which such potentialities unfold.

However, a prior question needs to be asked, and perhaps remains unanswered. Just what are these 'practices' that influence and are influenced by the social conditions within which they arise and to which they give meaning? For Kemmis, and drawing upon a 'site-based' ontology, practices always exist in situ; they do not exist in the form of some sort of generic contrivance that exists in all places and at all times in readily identifiable and transparent ways. Rather, practices are constituted by and through what Schatzki (2002) refers to as particular 'sites'. This site-based ontology constitutes 'the site of the social' as constitutive of practices, and of practices as

comprising particular social orders that are 'arranged' in particular ways that help give meaning to particular practices as practices of a particular kind.

For Schatzki (2002), practices constitute 'an open, organized array of doing and Sayings' (p. 51). While Kemmis acknowledges that Schatzki's concepts of 'doing and Sayings imply relationships between people and things that are 'organized' and arranged in time and space' (p. 30), he also argues that the 'relating' aspects of practices 'need to be made explicit' (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 30). To this end, Kemmis advocates for a conception of practice as comprised of not only particular language characteristics—'Sayings'—and actions—'doing'—but that is also explicit about the importance of particular relationships—'relatings'. The result is a conception of practice that brings together these concepts of meaning-making:

> A practice is a form of socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doing) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (Sayings), and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings), and when this complex of Sayings, doings and relatings 'hangs together' in a distinctive project. (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 31)

However, how might we articulate a conception of practice that has the potential to foster more productive, indeed emancipatory, practices, in situ? To what sort of goals or ends are practices oriented? Or, perhaps more cogently, what are the *values* that inform such an orientation?

Practice as Praxis

Even as specific practices are the product of this complex interplay of Sayings, doings and relatings, practices exist in ways that have the potential to give rise to more productive possibilities. Reflecting a normative hope within these more sedimented practices, Kemmis et al. (2014) argue that social practices are the product of particular ways of being, and that these ways of being are themselves subject to change. To this end, even as established practices may be problematic, alternative, more productive, emancipatory practices can be instantiated through careful critique of existing practices and by drawing upon the practices and principles that characterize traditions of excellence as understood within particular fields of endeavour. To this end, and reflecting the influence of more philosophical conception of practice, Kemmis' work has been heavily influenced by the moral philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre, particularly his neo-Aristotelian efforts to better understand possibilities for exercise of the virtues under current conditions.

For MacIntyre (2007), the modern world is a source of malaise—an environment that necessitates considering how one is to live in a world 'after virtue'. This is because any conception of how the world might be cannot be divorced from the peculiar social circumstances that characterize the world as it is. Or to put it another way, it is difficult to 'step outside' of the particular social conditions which dominate at any given time. Significantly, under these circumstances, we make choices about

how to achieve particular ends, and these choices are never straightforward, but always have to be determined in situ, and require considerable deliberation and judgement. For MacIntyre (2007), and from an Aristotelian perspective:

> [s]uch choices demand judgement and the exercise of the virtues requires therefore a capacity to judge and to do the right thing in the right place at the right time in the right way. The exercise of such judgement is not a routinizable application of rules. (p. 150)

The disposition of phronēsis that is cultivated through such actions enables the 'exercise [of] judgement in particular cases' (p. 154). And it is through the exercise of particular actions that particular dispositions are cultivated: 'We become just or courageous by performing just or courageous acts; we become theoretically or practically wise as a result of systematic instruction' (p. 154). It is through the exercise of judgement in context that judgement develops.

The result of the exercise of such judgement is the development of a particular form of 'practice' in relation to particular socially constituted activities:

> By a 'practice' I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and good involved, are systematically extended. (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 187)

It is the cultivation of such a conception of practice that can inform understandings of the nature of practices. The result is advocacy for a conception of practice as *praxis.* Such praxis does not exist in isolation but is instead both product and productive of the particular conditions within which practices unfold in action. The conditions can be understood as influencing—serving as the 'architectures'—of subsequent practices.

For Kemmis, this notion of praxis in education is under threat. Instead of a conception of practice as praxis—as 'action that is morally committed, and oriented and informed by traditions in a field' (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, p. 4), education is put at risk by dominant schooling practices. Various forms of 'rule-following'—as articulated in policy and various forms of procedures that become accepted over time—militate against the development of a sense of the '*moral agency* of the educator' (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, p. 5) that is so necessary for making decisions about how best to respond to the particular needs of particular students in particular schooling settings, at particular moments in time.

The result is a conception of schooling practices that are not necessarily educative, and of such practices as failing to engage the forms of praxis advocated by MacIntyre. However, teachers have, and every day act on, the disposition of phronēsis in various ways, even as the broader conditions within which any given practice (in our case, school teacher education policy practices) may militate against such a disposition. It is the extent to which such a disposition is evident in current teacher education policy in Australia, and as an example of the power of Kemmis' work, that this chapter now turns.

Policy as Practice and Initial Teacher Education

The history of initial teacher education is one of continuous policy reform, and this reform has taken on increased urgency of late, both nationally and internationally. Cochran-Smith (2013) argues this is because of an increased focus upon teachers as key to broader economic reforms. This is the case even as a long history of research into education has questioned the extent to which teachers and teaching in isolation can respond adequately to the broader pressures and demands that impact upon children and their communities in situ (cf. Bourdieu & Passeron 1977 in France; Anyon 1997 in the USA; and Thomson 2002 in Australia). Indeed, in their overview of the policies and politics of teacher education across national contexts, Furlong, Cochran-Smith, and Brennan (2009) argue that 'a new national preoccupation with the quality and supply of teachers is now almost universal' (p. 1). When teacher education is seen as more tightly tied to economic reform through advocacy for a 'knowledge economy', governments have taken a much more strident interest than previously:

> [T]he shift to a knowledge economy has brought unparalleled attention to the quality of education systems, and in particular to teacher education providers and teachers, who are presumed to be the generators of knowledge workers for the new economy. (Cochran-Smith, 2016, p. xii)

Across countries as diverse as the UK, USA, Australia, Belgium, Singapore, Fiji and Nigeria, governments have increasingly sought to have more and more control over both the form and content of teacher education than ever in the past (Furlong, Cochran-Smith, & Brennan, 2009). This includes a shift towards responsibility to the schooling systems that employ teachers, and away from traditional university providers (perhaps most evident in England), and an increased focus upon standards in some jurisdictions (e.g. the USA, Australia and England). Indeed, reforms have involved substantive challenges to higher education providers and regional and national professional associations that have previously been engaged in teacher education. In what she describes as 'the policy turn', Cochran-Smith (2016) also highlights how there has been a shift towards more neoliberal instantiations of educational practice, foregrounding more competitive, economic prerogatives at the expense of other goals: 'In many countries… the policy turn reflects the shift to a global and competitive knowledge society, which has also been a shift to neoliberal economics where individualism, free markets and private good(s) have taken precedence over other goals' (p. xii). In relation to the UK, Menter (2016) similarly describes this policy shift towards a more neoliberal and control-oriented approach to teacher education:

> Under the influence of neoliberal governments, cultures of accountability and control developed rapidly, leading to the emergence of teacher education systems dominated by standards frameworks, which set out explicitly what it was that teachers should be able to do and setting conditions for the provision of teacher education. (p. 3)

Indeed, teacher education has become something of a policy problem for governments. And this has been described in some quarters as being increasingly linked to

student achievement defined as test score: '… it is worth noting that when teacher education is constructed as a policy problem, the focus is almost always on pupil achievement, defined as test score, as the most important educational outcome' (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008, p. 1085).

However, at the same time, there is also evidence of alternative, more empirically focused approaches to initial teacher education. This includes specific programs aimed at targeting initial teacher education for equity in the USA and New Zealand, and which flag the need to identify the role of teacher education in challenging inequality, outline practices for equity, develop curricula that address local patterns of need and inequality and theorise conditions to foster ITE students' equity practices (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). In the Australian context, Burnett and Lampert's (2016) research into a specific teacher education programme for high poverty schools in Australia is an example of how an alternative approach can be cultivated under current policy conditions. However, the 'exceptional' nature of such initiatives also gives pause for thought about the extent to which such initiatives are sustainable under current policy conditions, and the need to challenge those conditions that seek to divorce teacher educators from the very substance of their work.

Policy and Political Conditions for Educational Reform in Teacher Education in Australia

Schooling policy, including policy for initial teacher education, is heavily influenced by the broader neoliberal and managerial conditions that buffet nation states. Even as schooling is the constitutional responsibility of the individual states and territories in Australia, the federal government has exerted considerable influence upon schooling since the first dedicated federal government funds were provided during the early 1960 for the building of science laboratories, and, later, the establishment of libraries, under Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzie administration. Notwithstanding constant calls to reform the federal administrative and governmental apparatus more broadly, as the comments by a recent former federal education Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, indicate, the federal government sees itself as taking something of an oversight role in relation to its responsibilities in education:

> My role as Federal Minister for Education is to ensure national leadership in education. State and territory government and non-government authorities have primary responsibility for delivering school education, providing specific programmes, and support for students in the classroom. (Pyne, 2014)

These influences are expressed through the *Students First* policy ensemble. As its name suggests, *Students First* seeks to put the purported needs of Australia's school students at the forefront of Australian schooling policy making and practice. *Students First* focuses attention upon key areas considered vital for schooling reform. These are: teacher quality; school autonomy; engaging parents in education; strengthening the curriculum (through reviewing the Australian Curriculum, and focusing

attention upon STEM), and focusing attention upon the needs of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and with a particular emphasis upon dyslexia (an area in which Minister Pyne had a particular interest, given a family history of dyslexia, and his own father's (Dr. Remington Pyne) involvement in the establishment of the influential Specific Education Learning Difficulties (SPELD) Association of Australia) (Australian Government, 2016).

A key component of the *Students First* initiative is to ensure a 'quality' education for all students, as well as to foster the professionalism and status of teaching: 'The first step to achieving a quality education, which is so critical for the future of young Australians and our nation, is to lift the quality, professionalisation and status of the teaching profession' (Australian Government, 2016). This focus on 'teacher quality' is construed as being achieved through advocacy of five specific initiatives: the introduction of a literacy and numeracy test for initial teacher education; advocacy for agricultural studies; more flexible approaches to literacy education for remote primary schools; support for the 'Teach for Australia' program, and; advocacy for the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) initiative. It is the last of these initiatives, and the government's response to this initiative, that informs the discussion presented here.

TEMAG Policy Practices: The *TEMAG* Report

The TEMAG reforms arose in response to Ministerial appointment of the TEMAG to advise the Minister on how 'to make recommendations on how initial teacher education in Australia could be improved to better prepare new teachers with the practical skills needed for the classroom' (TEMAG, 2014, p. v). Chaired by Professor Greg Craven, Vice-Chancellor of Australian Catholic University (ACU), the group consisted of prominent school and tertiary educators, from a range of universities, independent think tanks and school systems.

The very act, 'doing', of commissioning the report reflects concerns about the nature of teacher education in Australia, and the extent to which graduates are seen as contributing effectively to students' learning. This is evident in the way in which the report is framed, including within a context of many previous reviews into teacher education, but with a sense that these did not have substantive influence upon policy and practice:

> Initial teacher education in Australia has been the subject of a large number of reviews, but the outcomes have had limited impact on the policy and practice of developing new teachers. The goal of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group is to provide strong, implementable options to initiate genuine national reform. (TEMAG, 2014, p. viii)

The emphasis upon the 'Sayings' of such 'implementable' options reflects broader demands for immediate, short-term reform, and initiatives seen to have an immediate impact. The very title of the report, '*Action Now: Classroom Ready Teacher*',

reinforces how a sense of urgency and concern about student teachers not being 'classroom ready' pervades discourses of initial teacher education.

That a more reductive approach to initial teacher education has been taken is also evident in the Chair's letter at the beginning of the report and how it presented its findings to the Minister. The way in which the recommendations were described as having been chosen because they are 'practical' reflects the dominance of various Sayings in the form of discourses of derision in relation to teacher education more broadly—implying teacher education is seen as not sufficiently 'practical' in its orientation: 'The recommendations contained in this report have been chosen on the basis that they are practical, based in evidence and calculated to succeed' (TEMAG, 2014, p. v).

Furthermore, the nature of the relationships anticipated within the report also suggests a degree of consternation and concern about the place of initial teacher education in Australia. Those involved in teacher education are seen very much as the objects of reform—the 'raw material' for inquiry into their practices by a panel of evaluators identified and selected for the task.

However, and verifying how all forms of practice (including research practices *on* participants (teacher educators)) are always subject to a more praxis-oriented approach, these relationships were also framed as having the potential to promote enhanced collaboration between the different groups involved in initial teacher education. This was evident, at least discursively, in the introductory letter:

> We have concluded that the single most important action to be pursued is the integrated delivery of initial teacher education. This can be achieved through close partnerships between providers, school systems and schools, and underpins improvement to all aspects of the preparation of teachers. (TEMAG, 2014, p. v)

At the same time, more and less praxis-oriented approaches were evident through the 'key directions' outlined in the report, which flagged the importance of national accreditation arrangements, increased scrutiny of programme accreditation, a focus upon a broader range of entry requirements—including what were described as 'desirable personal attributes' for teaching—closer partnerships between universities, school systems and schools; the provision of evidence of 'classroom readiness', and some form of teacher pre-registration.

The findings of the report proper also revealed explicit support for: broad-based national standards as vehicles to inform pre-service teachers' learning; considerable emphasis upon external markers of esteem (expressed as the 'need to lift public confidence'); criticism of 'poor practice' in some programs; inadequate integration between the work of those in universities, schools and systems towards cultivating enhanced student learning; concerns about inadequate professional development for beginning teachers; and concerns about 'workforce data' available in relation to the nature and effects of initial teacher educators upon their students' performance. These directions arose out the principal findings of the report.

The report also flagged four 'principles' that the authors believe 'go to the heart of high-quality initial teacher education'. These were expressed as forms of 'integration' between education providers, teacher employing authorities and schools; various

'quality assurance' processes in place to accredit and monitor programs of study; 'evidence' of the outcomes of courses, including in terms of student outcomes in the classroom; and emphasis upon increased 'transparency' from the commencement of courses, through to final outcomes.

On the basis of its findings, and in the light of these principles, the TEMAG report put forward what it described as five 'key proposals' based around' reformed national quality assurance processes; more robust selection processes for entry to teaching; improved integration of theory and practice; an assurance that pre-service teachers were 'classroom ready' upon completion of their qualifications; and the development of greater national research capability into teacher education (TEMAG, 2014, pp. x–xi).

The Government Response

The government's response to the TEMAG recommendations reflected a close synergy between particular reforms advocated by the group, and increased governmental scrutiny of initial teacher education programs. In a 'fact sheet' summarising the government's response, a list of five points was outlined which resonated strongly with the 'key directions', findings, 'principles', and 'proposals' outlined by TEMAG:

- stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses;
- rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses;
- improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students;
- robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness;
- national research and workforce planning capabilities (Australian Government, 2015a, p. 5).

Interestingly, while the TEMAG report stated a need for a national regulator for teacher education, the government supported greater scrutiny in relation to the quality of initial teacher education courses, but through existing national bodies—particularly AITSL:

> The Government notes the Report recommendation for a new national regulator of teacher education courses, but does not believe establishing a new body will necessarily deliver better quality assurance nationally. Instead, the Government will utilise the expertise of existing bodies to achieve this outcome. AITSL will be given greater responsibility for driving improvement in the quality of initial teacher education and will work with state and territory teacher regulatory authorities to increase the rigour of assessment of courses for accreditation. (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 5)

Again, this reflects the increasing centralization and culture of accountability in relation to teacher education more broadly (Menter, 2016). Similarly, regarding the rigorous selection of students to become teachers, the government proposed (and implemented for the first time in 2016) a national literacy and numeracy test for teacher education students to complete before graduation:

> Importantly, teachers must possess strong personal literacy and numeracy skills to foster the development of these skills in their students. The Government will therefore work with universities to make available a national literacy and numeracy test for teacher education students graduating from 2015. From 2016, all teacher education students will be required to pass the test before they graduate. (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 6)

In relation to practical experience provision for students, the government also expressed concern about 'poorly delivered practical experience' in some schools, and advocated 'best practice' examples and improved partnership agreements between schools, universities and education systems:

> The Government will instruct AITSL to establish and publish the essential requirements for practical experience, identify best practice examples in Australia, and model partnership agreements and other supporting materials for universities. This work will be developed in partnership with universities, schools and education authorities. This will ensure universities and schools support the connection of theory and practice, and successfully manage practical experience placements. (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 7)

Evidence of increased control over teacher education was also evident in calls to ensure 'classroom readiness' amongst pre-service teachers. This was to include universities being responsible for assessing how their students' teaching led to enhanced school student learning:

> AITSL will also guide universities and schools in how teacher education students should be supported including what they should collect as evidence of their classroom readiness. This will help teaching graduates demonstrate to prospective employers that they have the knowledge and skills essential for teaching. (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 8)

Finally, the government accepted TEMAG's (somewhat surprising) view that an adequate research base to inform initial teacher education programme development is lacking. The solution was seen as commissioning another study into a national focus on research into teacher education. Furthermore, this research was construed as providing important information as part of a review of the Graduate level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 8). Even as research evidence was foregrounded, it was framed within existing conceptions of how to monitor and manage initial teacher education—in this case, through the professional standards framework. Such reified frameworks are a long way removed from the actual practices of teacher educators, pre-service teachers, and these teachers' own students in schools.

Understanding Teacher Education Policy: A Practice Approach

The reason I have chosen a specific empirical case—TEMAG reforms and the government's response—to argue for the value of Kemmis's work is to endeavour to be true to his own approach to research—an approach that unashamedly foregrounds the centrality of practice and an approach that does not somehow seek to prioritise

some conception of 'theory' in relation to practice. It is not the 'theory' of practice architecture that matters in relation to Kemmis's life work, but rather, the 'practice' of endeavouring to understand education (and schooling). It is for this reason that it is also relatively easy to situate Kemmis's more recent work in relation to his overall programme of research. As Kemmis and his co-authors put it, this not just to *understand* educational practice, but also to *change* educational practice, essentially, to revitalise education (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 205).

The very act of commissioning the TEMAG report was itself a crucial 'doing' on the part of government, conditioned by its continuing attention to teacher education, and a continuation of various 'discourses of concern' about the nature of initial teacher education and how it is constituted in current initial teacher education programs. In a sense, the expression of such concerns could be construed as evidence of an effort to flag what are perceived as shortcomings in current practice, as a precursor to addressing such shortcomings. It is difficult, after all, to argue against the need to improve the 'quality' of initial teacher education.

However, it is the abstracted discourse in which notions of 'quality' are framed that requires closer scrutiny. The concurrent, and more dominant discourses of concern about 'national standards', and the application of such standards to pre-service teachers' practice, glosses over the much more situated forms of learning that are needed to actually make sense of what such standards actually mean *in* practice; this overt concern with standards is also very much in keeping with broader trends towards increased standardization and centralization of teacher education more broadly (Menter, 2016). Similarly, concerns about public confidence are not closely associated with teachers or students' everyday learning practices, but have perhaps more to do with issues of perception in relation to a broader public or polity, or sub-groups (e.g. business) within this broader polity. Broader political concerns appear to have greater leverage in this case than educational concerns about the formation of teachers.

Furthermore, concerns about 'integration', and how universities, schooling systems and schools work together, may or may not be oriented towards improved teacher education practices. Increased integration between various bodies associated with pre-service teachers' education may simply reinforce already unproductive practices, and the arrangements that make them possible, rather than seeking to look anew at existing relationships. Identifying the nature of the interactions, the 'relatings', that are promulgated between those involved, and understanding the conditions that have brought these kinds of relationships into existence, is vital for understanding how to enhance teacher education practices.

Concerns about inadequate professional development for beginning teachers are laudable, and emblematic of the significant gap in systemic provision of professional learning more broadly. However, and while it is absolutely necessary to have adequate 'workforce data' in relation to the allocation of staff to ensure adequately trained teachers are available in all subject areas, including hard to staff areas, a focus upon workforce-related issues is a long way removed from the sorts of evidence of actual productive teaching practices that such pre-service teachers are exhorted to possess

and develop. Such concerns seem more in keeping with human capital arguments and reflect more economistic prerogatives within government responses to initial teacher education in recent times (Cochran-Smith, 2016).

Similarly, and in relation to the government's response to the TEMAG report, the focus upon 'the knowledge, skills and capabilities required of beginning teachers' (Australian Government, 2015b, p. 8) also reflects a more technicist approach that assumes teaching can be somehow 'sub-divided' into various discrete entities. While the understanding of practice presented in this reform—what Cochran-Smith (2016) refers to as the 'practice turn' in teacher education—is multifaceted, it also tends to be more reductive, emphasising a 'more technical view, [that] assum[es] that good teaching depends on management techniques, understood as explicit, highly uniform, predictable sequences of teacher behaviours" (Cochran-Smith, 2016, p. xiv). This contrasts with assumptions about teaching as a more 'holistic activity, which is not equal to the sum of its interacting parts, given their non-linear and not fully predictable relationships' (Cochran-Smith, 2016, p. xiv). And it is very much in contrast with the sorts of context-specific, intensely interactive teacher education initiatives focused on serving the needs of the most disadvantaged schools and communities in society (Burnett & Lampert, 2016; Cochran-Smith et al., 2016).

This technicist versus more holistic 'professional' view, grounded in the intricacies of practical action, was made explicit in Kemmis' earlier work, and more than three decades later, continues to be an important motivation today:

> The professional judgement of the teacher … remains a professional prerogative. All decisions of educational consequence cannot be taken by groups or committees representing the interests of all client groups for it is the nature of practical educational decision-making that decisions must be taken on the spot. It is for this reason that society requires professional teachers, not simply instructional technicians. (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 223)

> The theory of practice architectures is a resource for exploring the intricacies of practical action in social life and how action is shaped as it happens in passages of real, historical time. (Kemmis, Wilkinson, & Edwards-Groves, 2017)

More significantly, the aim of Kemmis's approach was to explore practices critically, to question the conditions within which particular practices come to be embedded and taken as 'natural'—as 'how we do things around here'. It is this critical dimension that continues to inform his work, and which is similarly a common thread through his work over time:

> But the theory [of practice architecture] was devised to help us explore practices critically: to see when and how they were formed, reproduced, and transformed; what social conditions (practice architecture) make them possible and hold them in place; and how both practices and practice architecture might need to be changed if they turn out to have untoward consequences: if they are incoherent or unreasonable; wasteful, destructive, or unsustainable; or the cause of suffering or injustice. (Kemmis et al. 2017)

> Critical educational research… views education as an ideologically-formed historical process. …[I]t is shaped by an emancipatory interest in transforming education to achieve rationality, justice and access to an interesting and satisfying life for all… Its view of policy is critical, since it treats policy as the expression of ideology and the interests of dominant groups, and its view of reform is emancipatory. It envisages no alliance between researchers and practitioners or policy-makers, except as may be necessary to initiate a process of critical

> and self-critical reflection in democratic communities of researcher-practitioners. (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, 220)

This focus upon the emancipatory potential of educational research has been a driving force throughout Kemmis' career. The critique of incoherent and unreasonable approaches, unsustainable and unjust practices, has oriented his programme of research. Seen from such a viewpoint, the approach to educational reform that dominates so much policy work at present seems anodyne,[1] the antithesis of the sorts of grounded, robust and deeply interactional approaches and associations Kemmis has cultivated through his work. The increased centralisation of schooling and initial teacher education practices advocated in policies like *Students First*, *Action Now*, and the government's response to TEMAG, belie a mistrust of the sorts of professional respect and responsibility that are in fact necessary for substantive educational reform.

Of course, even as specific practices of initial teacher education may be limited, constrained, by the particular practice-arrangement bundles envisaged by the government's response to the TEMAG inquiry, they may also serve as vehicles for the transformation of subsequent policies, and/or the practice of practitioners. In Kemmis' view, there is always hope for a better world—for practice architecture that would render a world more just than the one that currently exists. As Kemmis et al. (2017) argue, adaptation is always possible, even as reproduction exists as an ever-present outcome of particular practices:

> The dialectic of reproduction and transformation of practices is driven by the power of *adaptation* (realised in our capacity of adaptability): reproducing former practices to meet the usual circumstances, or varying them to meet the demands of new circumstances. (p. 248)

Transformation of this kind—achieved as professional practitioners *themselves* adapt their work to meet changed circumstances and changing needs—entails a morality grounded in a praxis-oriented approach. And such an approach provides educational researchers with resources for hope to critique problematic practices around them, to explore possibilities for alternative practices:

> The critical purpose of the theory of practice architectures is to provide theoretical, analytical, and transformational resources that enable a particular kind of critique with a moral purpose—to discern untoward consequences of our practices and, individually and collectively, to discover whether other conditions of possibility for different kinds of practice can be created through our collective and individual actions. (Kemmis et al., 2017, p. 250)

Conclusion

Through the example of ITE reforms in Australia, I have sought to show how research into recent teacher education policy reveals the usefulness of Kemmis's concepts of

[1] Of course, it is recognized that these 'anodyne' approaches are far from that. What appear as 'common sense' approaches actively dissuade alternative policies and practices (including policy practices) that are likely to challenge entrenched disadvantage and discrimination within society.

the Sayings, doings and relatings that constitute practice, and how these are constituted (and are sometimes constitutive of) under particular conditions understood as 'practice architecture' within which these practices are enacted. However, and more substantively, I have also sought to show that such a focus demands that we consider how such an inquiry might lead to alternative, more productive, practices. It is practice—practical action in history—not theory that matters. The key task is 'to see practices in relation to the social conditions that make them' (Kemmis et al., 2017, p. 13), and as a result of such observations and analysis, to critique more problematic responses and to advocate for how they might be enacted differently. Such a stance is particularly apposite in relation to the practice of educational policy analysis, given that educational policy is both product and productive of particular conditions for educational practices. Such analysis remains incomplete, however, while existing, problematic policies remain in force, and is only truly operationalized when we have changed the world—not simply for our own benefit, but for the benefit of others and the world more broadly. This is the lesson Kemmis has lived in his work as an educator, demonstrating, for all of us, one way to work and live 'educationally'.

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Chapter 15
Reminiscences, Reflections, Recognition

Christine Edwards-Groves, Thomas Grayson, David Jenkins, Uncle Stan Grant, Carmel Wallis and Kaye Bryan

Abstract This chapter brings together an ensemble of recollections and reflections recognising the work and educational life across Stephen's career. These reflections are reminiscences that stretch from his days at Graduate School at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the USA in the early 1970s, to his work at the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) in the mid-70s in the UK, to his continuing and steadfast commitment to securing a genuinely, culturally respected life for Australian Indigenous peoples and his work invested in securing environmental sustainability for future generations. Between and through their lines lies a dynamic portrayal of an educational life with words flowing across continents, through time and around blue lounges.

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Introduction

1965–71 Teacher of guitar, Sydney.

Stephen Kemmis

Teaching takes on many forms; it is as ordinary as it is extraordinary. It promises much; yet its real and deep influence often remains silent or faded through the mist and rhythm of time or sometimes hidden beneath or amidst the progress, development or success of others. Teaching does not always happen in classrooms—sometimes through the words of poetry, through debate and discussion, or on blue lounges, in a lecture hall, on the front porch, around a meeting table or with a guitar in your hand. Making a difference to the lives of others—as it aspires to do—is sometimes adagio, sometimes allegro, sometimes a cappella, sometimes a symphony and sometimes improvisation but it is always in concert. Stephen Kemmis's teaching way of life began with his love (and talent) for music and poetry. As a guitar teacher (from 1965 to 1971), Stephen's educational overture began—like that of many teachers—with a desire to serve, bring rhythm to and improve the lives of others; he took joy in sharing part of himself with those around him (and still does) and striving for the betterment of individuals and collectives in society. Collaboration, cooperation, participation and communication are common refrains heralded by those teaching, researching, leading and living an educational life. This is the kind of work and life of a true teacher; this is the work and life of Stephen Kemmis.

This chapter brings together an ensemble of recollections and reflections recognising the work and educational life across Stephen's career. These reflections are reminiscences that stretch from his days at Graduate School at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the USA in the early 1970s, to his work at the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) in the mid-70s in the UK, to his continuing and steadfast commitment to securing a genuinely, culturally respected life for Australian Indigenous peoples and his work invested in securing environmental sustainability for future generations. Between and through their lines lies a dynamic portrayal of an educational life with words flowing across continents, through time and around blue lounges.

To begin, from visions of being a poet (sharing poetry in weekly meetings with Dereck Marsh, a Reader at The University of Sydney) or a folk singer (leading a number of folk groups singing around the traps in Sydney), Stephen began his university and academic life as a tutor at Sydney University in 1971 where he completed a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours in Educational Psychology. He then moved to a position as a University Fellow at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA (1972–74), where he also completed post-graduate qualifications (EdM, 1975; PhD, 1976). Below is a recollection from Tom Grayson, a fellow graduate student at the time.

Hush! For a Moment in Quiet Reflection

Thomas Grayson
University of Illinois

I first met Stephen Kemmis in 1972 as a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We were part of a cohort of other graduate students, including Kathleen Brophy, Judy Dawson, Irene Dowdy, Paul Elliott, Craig Gjerde, Marty Hotvedt, Linda Mabry, Patrick Walsh, and Robert Wolf, to name just a few. All of us were seduced to the field of evaluation because we thought we could bring an understanding of how evaluation processes could better education programs. We studied evaluation under the umbrella of the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation [CIRCE] at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. CIRCE was proposed by Tom Hasting in 1963 and was created with innovative ideas from Bob Stake, Lee Cronbach and Jack Easley. These individuals were our mentors, as were other CIRCE members: Terry Denny, Arden Grotelueschen, Gordon Hoke, Ernie House and Jim Wardrop.

It wasn't long before Stephen became our exemplar, in different ways. On a personal level, he entertained us with his humor, a strange accent and by playing his guitar while singing Australian folk songs. These were good times and left all of us with great lasting memories. On the academic side, he was a high energy, innovative thinker who enhanced our understanding of the complexities of case studies and participatory, interpretive, naturalistic and ethnographic research. These topics were often part of our happy discussions during CIRCE's "sack" lunches every Friday. Stephen's thought-provoking imagination and ideas made us smile with the realization that he was going to be a major contributor to the field of education.

I remember the times during Bob Stake's courses on evaluation when Stephen would listen and question, deeply probing the notions of responsive evaluation, portrayals and case studies. And he questioned the whole notion of assessing students and teachers with aggregate scores, mean differences and other numerical methods. Simply put, Stephen was amazing. He inspired all of us with his creative thinking and, of course, his laughter.

One unique characteristic of Stephen's writing was his thoughtful use of words and metaphors to get his ideas across. An example of this uniqueness is:

[1]Hush! For a moment in quiet reflection, let us recall the moment of a birth. Always mysterious and awe-inspiring, fixing us in history and genealogy. But set aside those egocentric thoughts of human birth, and consider the birth of a combine harvester.

Stephen wrote this way as a graduate student. He was well beyond the rest of us in evaluative thinking. His writings often referenced Foucault and Habermas. To the best of my knowledge, none of we fellow graduate students hardly fully realized the importance of these two sociologists and philosophers in developing the field of evaluation in new and creative ways. Stephen was able to weave their genius into a better understanding of evaluation. He helped to recognize that sociology and philosophy were very important in shaping evaluation methods, increasing our understanding of evaluation knowledge and theory.

I believe these early experiences as a graduate student lay the foundation for Stephen's studies to establish the theory and practice of action research for evaluation of educational programs and policy. He fostered self-reflective activities to solve issues in educational programs. He encouraged this self-reflection by teachers, students and communities as individuals and collectively. He promoted responsive and participatory evaluation involving individuals working collaboratively or as a "community of practice" to improve educational programs and services. He recognized the importance of case study methodology democratic and deliberative evaluation.

As a former fellow graduate student, I have great appreciation for Stephen as a friend, colleague and mentor. He has influenced many evaluation colleagues to be competent, to practice honestly and with integrity, and to respect people as we conduct evaluations and, hopefully, contribute to the betterment of society. For all this, we owe him thanks.

[1]Kemmis (1993).

In 1975, Stephen moved from Illinois to take up a Senior Research Associate role in both in the UNCAL team and the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) , University of East Anglia, UK. At CARE, Stephen worked with colleagues on the development of case study methods in evaluation, on "democratic evaluation", and on an idiographic approach to the evaluation of student learning with computers. Through this project he met and worked with the talented David Jenkins, among many key figures in the field of applied and critical education. Below is an extended account of this time penned by David, one of his earliest colleagues.

Beyond the Raw Prawn: Stephen Kemmis at CARE

David Jenkins

Introduction

In 1975, the thick end of half a century ago, a gangling Jarvis Cocker lookalike in his late twenties arrived at Norwich rail station with a trunk full of psychology textbooks and a Les Paul guitar. Stephen de Camois Kemmis (best to keep one's full professional name) had arrived to become the youth wing of CARE, the Centre for Applied Research in Education, on the analogy of team development in a UK Premiership football club. Writing in 2017 I must sound, even to myself, like a ghostly voice from the past. This piece is a historical chapter in a book aptly celebrating the stellar career of a now semi-retired but still active Australian Professor, and his influential contribution to the professional status of the teaching profession in the Antipodes and beyond. Hindsight is proverbially 20/20 but I can honestly say that I not only saw it coming (with Wordsworth, 'I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous boy') but also recognised how the ingredients of a lauded career were being shaped even back then.

Context

At the conclusion of the first-generation curriculum reform movement in the UK, the celebrity educationist Lawrence Stenhouse ('a chess player in a world of draughts') had established CARE at the University of East Anglia on a self-selected brief to turn teachers into reflective action researchers (Stenhouse & Rudduck, 1985). The immediate historical precedent was the Humanities Curriculum Project, nominally a product of the Schools Council ROSLA (Raising of the School Leaving Age) programme, but artfully extended to promote across the board a controversial version of vernacular humanism in education based around the promotion of argument and disputation in public spaces, including schools and universities. The evaluation of HCP, directed by the charismatic but enigmatic Barry MacDonald, had morphed into the evaluation wing of CARE and was attracting further soft money for sponsored evaluation research based on an emerging model of evaluation research calling itself 'democratic'. Lawrence and Barry would always support each other in the last ditch but famously tangled in some of the earlier ones given their

competing visions (see e.g. Stenhouse, 1979). It was an intellectual as well as a personal rivalry, with the erstwhile 'Evaluation Officer' (note: never accept a job with 'officer' in the title) becoming an academic equal, a plaque on both their houses.

Stephen was to work with Director Barry MacDonald, science educator David Tawney and myself on the UNCAL evaluation of the National Development Programme in Computer Assisted Learning; the Government-backed £2.5 million initiative in computer assisted and managed learning. NDPCAL supported 35 projects across sectors in a range of subjects running from 1973 to 1977. Run energetically by Richard Hooper (1975), it featured both matched funding and a step-funding arrangement, thereby requiring formative as well as summative evaluation.

Stephen was an inspired appointment, although typically of the time, it was more the product of networking than a formal process of application. This paralleled my own involvement with UNCAL, which was the result of an accidental encounter in a British Rail buffet car. The name UNCAL (nominally 'Understanding Computer Assisted Learning) was intended to carry ironic reference to the TV spy series 'the men from UNCLE', tongue-in-cheek because 'democratic' evaluation explicitly forbids the evaluator as spy (Jenkins, Kemmis & Atkin, 1977). But the 'men' bit was certainly accurate; gender transgressions were never far below the surface at CARE and its evaluation wing was increasingly run like Beowulf's all-male feudal comitatus. Those were the halcyon days in which Saville (now Professor) Kushner had the task of mowing MacDonald's lawn.

Stephen's immediate value to CARE was in part that he represented the inclusion for the first time of an evaluation practitioner who had not developed his evaluation practice 'on the hoof' as had the rest of us who were largely the product of the UK's pragmatic and relatively atheoretical curriculum development movement, but had benefitted from an outstanding masters and doctoral programme under celebrity tutors like Bob Stake at CIRCE, the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Writ larger, Stephen could be seen as cementing the emerging trans-Atlantic partnership that was proving crucial in developing what was then regarded as a subversive movement promoting case study methods in qualitative evaluation, that was challenging the current orthodoxy of experimental design in educational research and evaluation, which was largely conducted on the analogy of crop yield studies in agricultural botany (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972).

Although clearly outstandingly able, Stephen wore his scholarship lightly, and his manner was always engaging and collegial. But he also made not infrequent throwaway comments suggesting he saw himself as on some kind of political/moral crusade, with a strong desire to make a difference, a mood not always shared by his ageing, battle-weary colleagues. I was reminded of

vignettes in *The American Soldier* (Stouffer et al., 1949), which document a clash between the veteran culture of the trenches and the culture of young officers recently arrived from the transit camp. This was never a problem at CARE as Lieutenant Kemmis earned his spurs in short order, his longstanding preoccupation with the links between thought and action kicking in almost instantly.

At this time, too, Stephen had fallen under the influence of the Frankfurt School and in particular critical theory as influenced by Jurgen Habermas's work on communicative reasoning and the possibility of emancipation from oppressive ideologies. In describing his own work as 'in the footsteps' of Habermas, Stephen reminded me of good king Wenceslas, particularly the line 'where the snow lay deepest', for in truth I have never really got on with the great man's humourless Germanic pronouncements. Perhaps in the spirit of 'a response to my critics' I should put the point differently and admit that in relation to his work I have been "unable to awaken the hermeneutic willingness requisite for its reception" (Habermas, 1982). Although I sense that the Frankfurt affiliation may have subsided a little over the years, one point of continuity is the consistent preoccupation that Stephen has shown with the role of the intellectual in society.

The UNCAL Contract and Stephen's Contribution

The UNCAL evaluation of the NDPCAL was commissioned initially to run for three years from January 1974. It has been widely reported on as both a macro project and a metaevaluation (see e.g. MacDonald & Kemmis, 1976). All 35 projects in the Programme had a contractual obligation both to conduct internal evaluation and accept external scrutiny. The UNCAL team accepted collective responsibility for evaluating the overall initiative at the same time as allocating individual members to lead on the evaluation of specific projects. Stephen's project case studies included the Glasgow University Basic Maths Project, the Suffolk Local History Project and the University of Leeds Computer Learning in Chemistry Project. One particularly interesting project was the University of Glasgow Clinical Decision Making Project, which offered computer simulated disease conditions that allowed medical and dental students to examine their diagnostic thought processes and protocols. He also worked with me on the London Business School Management Decision Making Project, which I discuss in more detail below.

Although there was some tension between UNCAL's 'independence' and its 'service role' (a 'non-judgemental communication of information for the guidance of decision making' was the official version), in general the UNCAL evaluators were able to be supportive of internal project evaluation as well as offering policy-relevant generalisations arising from the NDPCAL as a whole. However, the UNCAL stance predictably suffered from some degree of disconnect with the bureaucratic context. NDPCAL was run by a Programme

Committee of civil servants from seven government departments, many of whom were antithetical to UNCAL's allegiance to the counter culture of alternative evaluation with its 'democratic' aspirations, not least our preference for integrated 'portrayals' over clear specific recommendations. This was exacerbated by the stepped funding arrangement by which a hostile mid-term report could terminate a project. Stephen, in particular, negotiated this minefield adroitly and had excellent relationships with all stakeholders, playing a pivotal role in any success that UNCAL eventually achieved.

Student Learning in CAL

The emerging paradigm, not unexpectedly, had its critics. There were suggestions that evaluative case studies were insufficiently grounded in the social sciences (Atkinson & Delamont, 1985), that curriculum criticism was itself a misguided concept (Gibson, 1981), and more specifically from the Programme Committee that early UNCAL reports were neglecting the core issue of what could be learned from NDPCAL about CAL and student learning. In relation to each of these issues it was notably Stephen who most effectively led the response. His grounding in positivist psychology reassured our critics, even as he himself was questioning the paradigm (Kemmis, 1978). His portrayals of project personnel were sharp and perceptive without giving offence.
But Stephen's most significant contribution to offsetting such criticism was that he all but singlehandedly rescued the reputation of UNCAL as having something significant to say about CAL and student learning. A summarising evaluation of the National Programme, nominally by the combined research team (MacDonald, Atkin, Jenkins, & Kemmis, 1977) , was heavily dependent on a previous Kemmis internal paper on 'How Do Students Learn?' This suggested two analytical schemes, one offering alternative paradigms of CAL interactions and the other a typology of learning in a CAL environment. This analysis has subsequently been much quoted as a significant contribution to our understanding of student learning.

A Portrayal of the Person

UNCAL reports did not shirk from the collective insight that the portrayal of persons is legitimate evaluation data, although the practice was unevenly distributed across the team (MacDonald, 1976). So I imagine that there is a general expectation that I will address the relationship between Stephen the private person and Professor Kemmis, the public man. In this quest I have sought some support from career theory, although it is typically viewed as an adjunct to guidance and counselling and not as a source of alternative theories capable supporting a typology against which an individual career might be mapped. Nevertheless several suggestions in the literature appear to offer insights into the Kemmis trajectory. One relevant theme is clearly the match between talent and occupational opportunities, and the role of self-concept in

adjudicating fit. One does not need Holland's theory of 'vocational personalities' (Holland, 1997) to realise that Stephen matches the 'investigative type' admirably suited to an academic career, albeit one in the world of educational practice. Indeed the fit could be considered perfect, even down to the required minimal but unmistakable geekiness. In the nicest possible way Stephen, even at the young age we are considering, was not a man troubled by self-doubt. Yet he was ever good natured and personable, a receptive listener, a reliable colleague, comfortable around women and grounded. Although ravished by theory (which he saw as food to the soul) and saturated in the literature, he had an original mind that went beyond the imperative urge to tidy.

Stephen's serious mindedness never descended into pomposity and despite his sense of moral purpose and crusading streak (his language peppered with phrases like 'a struggle against social injustice' and 'the good of humankind'), the young Kemmis could also be amusing and witty, with a nice line in self-irony. At CARE he adopted as his occasional ironic *alter ego* the persona of one Barry McKenzie, the die-hard crude and ignorant Aussie immortalised in a strip cartoon in *Private Eye.* Incidentally, the subsequent 1972 film based on the strip was banned in Australia on the not unreasonable grounds that it "relied on indecency for its humour". Colleagues were regaled with a whole range of McKenzie euphemisms like "pointing Percy to the porcelain"; "up shit creek without a paddle"; "bangs like the door on a dunny" etc. I trust the current established Professor Kemmis has been able to hang on to this attractive streak of mock irreverence.

It would be remiss of me not to mention Stephen's generosity to me personally. Two examples will have to suffice. With no money to offer, I was able to persuade him to join me in Northern Ireland during 'The Troubles' to make a contribution to the evaluation of the Rowntree Schools Cultural Studies Project, which was targeting the secondary school curriculum in an attempt to undermine sectarianism in the divided province, a task not without its dangers. I believe that some of the insights into the politics of identity would have fed into Stephen's later contributions to Aboriginal education. The final report, *Chocolate Cream Soldiers*, was well received (Jenkins, O'Connor, Kemmis, Anderson & Breslin, 1980).

A second act of generosity was when my relationship with one of the NDPCAL projects was compromised when my cover was blown in an attempt at covert participant observation. Denied access to a relevant course at the London Business School I had signed up to it under an assumed name as a student (for a description of the car crash see Jenkins, 1978). Following the predictable fallout, Stephen offered to share the assignment and had a calming influence on the subsequent progress of the evaluation as well as making an important intellectual contribution and co-authoring with me the next case study.

More Career Theories

Other career theories are less narrowly concerned with person/occupation fit and several of these can be brought to bear around the task of understanding the narrative nuances of the Kemmis career. David Super more broadly constructed careers as matters of 'life span' and 'life space', with the series of roles one occupies in a lifetime, including domestic roles, playing an important part (Super, 1980). This widening of the scope allows room for Gottfredson's theory that most careers involve life choices that are matters of 'circumscription' and 'compromise' (Gottfredson, 1996), not least because life choices are frequently governed by modes of practical reasoning that lie outside the academic paradigm.

This thought is relevant because at the end of his contract with UNCAL Stephen returned to Australia, at first for a short-term consultancy with Malcolm Skilbeck in the national Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra and then as a self-confessed 'young Turk' to Deakin University, where he was given full departmental responsibility for Curriculum Studies and developing the research capability of the institution. I had hoped that CARE would have found a way of keeping him, but this outcome had become dramatically less likely when a seismic shift in his emotional life saw Stephen form a relationship with Barry MacDonald's wife Sheila, who subsequently joined Stephen in Australia and became the second Mrs Kemmis. Although Stephen acted with integrity in a difficult situation, it was not the kind of move that a career consultant would have recommended. A not altogether fanciful precedent might be cited from Arthurian romance. Sir Lancelot, despite being a model of chivalrous rectitude, rescues Queen Guinevere from the stake and becomes her lover, threatening the destruction of the knightly fellowship of the Round Table and compromising his own quest for the Holy Grail (Malory & Caxton, 1897). *Plus ca change.*

But fortune was on Stephen's side, since the move to Geelong serendipitously put him in contact with Wilf Carr, soon to become his celebrated co-author on the hugely influential *Becoming Critical* (Carr & Kemmis, 1983) . This geographically fortuitous meeting of paths and minds is one of many instances that suggest to me that the particular career theory that best explains the Kemmis trajectory is Krumboltz' version of so-called 'happenstance' theory.

According to Krumboltz, career progression is achieved by learning through a series of relatively unpredictable social circumstances. It is partly a matter of luck, but as the book title succinctly puts it, '*Luck is no accident'* (Krumboltz & Levin, 2004). Certainly Stephen had greatly benefitted from the intellectual climate both in CIRCE and CARE. At CIRCE he was influenced by Bob Stake's developing ideas on responsive evaluation (Stake, 1983) and by Joseph Schwab's exploration of the nature of practical reasoning (Schwab, 1969). At CARE he found himself in something of an intellectual hothouse (he himself described it as 'heady') where a strong collective tradition of applied case study research and evaluation in education veiled not always subtle differences

of emphasis. Stenhouse, for example, believed that the texture of reality that made judgements possible was best achieved by utilising historical inquiry as the model for case studies, with a 'case record' made available alongside the study itself. The UNCAL evaluations were more formative and issues-based, concerned with supporting practical choices rather than historical veracity, Stephen's broader take on these methodological issues was nicely expressed in his canonical 'nomothetic and ideographic' paper (Kemmis, 1978). Barry MacDonald also had a pivotal influence on Stephen's social philosophy of research, particularly in his politicisation of evaluation into autocratic, bureaucratic and democratic paradigms (MacDonald, 1993). I rather suspect that Stephen found my own engagement with a literary model of 'curriculum criticism' not especially to his taste, perhaps seeing Eisner's 'connoisseurship' as just another version of the autocratic stance (Eisner, 1983), although Stephen retained an interest in curriculum 'as text' as well as 'intellectual project'.
Hardworking and prolific even then, Stephen Kemmis at CARE was able to take advantage of his learning opportunities and select judiciously among the competing influences, beating his own path and showing a pronounced ability to form fresh, cogent and non-derivative judgments. His performances were exemplary both as author and co-author, and in my experience, there are very few who excel at both. Much of the career trajectory was happenstance, but it takes unusual ability to put oneself in a position to be able consistently to ride one's luck.

Return to Australia

In 1978, Stephen returned to Australia to take up a position as a Senior Lecturer, then Associate Professor, then Professor of Education, at Deakin University, Geelong. During this time (until 1994), he was also Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) in 1991; Chair of the Academic Board in 1993–4; the Director of the Deakin Institute for Studies in Education from 1981 until 1993; and, Co-Director of the Deakin Centre for Education and Change in 1994. At the end of his time at Deakin, Stephen established his own company—Stephen Kemmis Research and Consulting, before in 1996 (to 1997) he took up a position of Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) then Deputy Vice Chancellor (Operations) at the University of Ballarat. From this time Stephen, as a steward of education, contributed significantly to educational evaluation, participatory action research, curriculum and schooling studies, university and research development, and practice theory and the theory of practice architectures. Although we have not included any recollections here because some of the details of this time are covered in the chapters written by Wilfred Carr, Bill Green, Fazal Rizvi and Robin McTaggart (c.f., Chaps. 2, 3, 4, and 5), a brief description of Stephen's work in these fields is presented next.

Evaluation

Stephen was instrumental in developing approaches to assisted self-evaluation through a variety of school-based projects in the late 1970's early 1980's, and through projects at Batchelor College in the Northern Territory in Aboriginal education and teacher education. In the early 2000s, Stephen worked on developing the notion of "communicative evaluation". Over this period, Stephen worked on a wide variety of large and small evaluation projects including *program evaluation* of British *National Development Programme in Computer Assisted Learning,* the OECD *Pacific Circle Consortium,* the Victorian *Transition Education Program,* the Victorian *Participation and Equity Program*, and the National *Schools Computing Program* of the Australian Schools Commission. He led *institutional evaluation* studies that include an independent evaluation of Geelong Grammar School and reviews of a number of departments, schools and research centres in a number of universities. During this period, Stephen also conducted a number of *meta-evaluation studies* (evaluations of evaluations) including one of the Centre for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation (University of Illinois) *Evaluation of Reader Focused Writing for the US Veterans' Benefits Administration.* His *participatory evaluation* studies included work with various schools and universities, and some Aboriginal communities, in self-evaluation and participatory action research projects. As an *evaluation consultant,* he worked on a wide variety of projects, programs, institutions and organizations, in government, non-government and in community settings. In 1986, Stephen received the inaugural *Australasian Evaluation Society ET& Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation*.

Participatory Action Research

A key aspect of Stephen's work, since the late 1970s, has been his significant work in developing the theory and practice of educational action research. Together with colleagues at Deakin and elsewhere, he advocated "emancipatory action research" as a participatory form of research and evaluation which embodies the aspirations of a critical science of education. Participatory action research (PAR) is a way of working which helps teachers, students and communities to work individually and collectively in developing their practices, their understandings of their practices, and the situations in which they live and work—to transform the work, the worker and the workplace. Stephen was Congress Advocate (previously known as Patron) of the Joint *5th World Congress on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management (ALARPM)* and *9th World Congress on Participatory Action Research* held in Ballarat, Victoria, in September 2000. The details and influence of Stephen's work in and for action research are taken up in latter chapters.

Curriculum, the "Socially Critical School", and Full Service Schooling

Stephen has made a significant contribution to theoretical work in curriculum studies; it was concerned with the development and reconstruction of reproduction theory. His publication of these ideas, for example in *Curriculum Theorising: Beyond Reproduction Theory* (with Lindsay Fitzclarence, Deakin University Press, 1986), remains a seminal line of theoretical work that was further developed through an Australian Research Council-funded project "Educational Reform in Australia, 1972–88". More practically, he contributed to national debates about curriculum in Australia through the development of the notion of 'the socially critical school'.

The theme of social justice in and through education remains central to Stephen's work across his career. In 1980s, Stephen was one of a team conducting innovative case studies of schools aimed at illuminating issues of alienation. In 1985–6, he co-directed an evaluation of the Commonwealth's *Participation and Equity Program* in Victoria, the successor program to the Transition Education Program. The evaluation of the program was published in *Dilemmas of Reform*: *The Participation and Equity Program in Victorian Schools* (by Fazal Rizvi and Stephen Kemmis; Deakin Institute for Studies in Education, Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria, 1987). These studies threw light on the issues of school alienation and the response of schools to initiatives aimed at meeting the needs of young people previously under-represented in schooling in the post-compulsory years. At the time, they also contributed to contemporary debates about the connections between social justice and education as the issues were played out in school organization, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices of the 1980.

At the invitation of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Stephen presented the 2000 Radford Lecture at the Association's Annual Conference in December 2000. His lecture, *Educational Research and Evaluation: Opening Communicative Space*, advocated more inclusive approaches to research and evaluation (especially to include practitioners and others) and the roles for research and evaluation that contribute to the public sphere and the development of social movements. A year later, in 2001, he accepted the association's invitation to become an Honorary Life Member.

University Development, Research Development

Over the last forty years, Stephen has been involved in university research development. After playing a leadership role in building the research profile of the Faculty of Education at Deakin University, he was Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) at Deakin in 1991, and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) then Deputy Vice Chancellor (Operations) at the University of Ballarat in 1996–7. Added to this, he continued to assist many universities in Australia, in Europe, North America and Asia to construct

practical strategies for developing research activity, research proposal preparation, research project design and management, improving publication records, and higher degrees by research supervision. This remains to be true in 'his retirement'.

Since 1994, Stephen has worked on a variety of reviews, development projects and other consultancies in over twenty universities in Australia and elsewhere. For example, he has worked with universities including Curtin University of Technology, Griffith University, La Trobe University, Monash University, RMIT University, the University of Ballarat, the University of the Sunshine Coast, The University of Western Australia and Victoria University, (in Australia); the University of Helsinki and the University of Jyvaskyla (in Finland); Sheffield University and the University College of Northampton (in the UK); and the University of Illinois (in the USA). His work reviewing programs and research centres extended to chairing reviews of nurse education programs, for example, at La Trobe University in 2000 (with Prof. Beverley Taylor and Ms Philippa de Voil), and the Aboriginal Centres of the University of Western Australia which recommended the formation of a School of Indigenous Studies at UWA. Partly because of his university and review experience, in 2001 he was commissioned as a consultant to assist the *Review of Nurse Education* being conducted by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training in 2001–2.

PEP, Action Research and the Theory of Practice Architecturess

After Stephen's move to Charles Sturt University with the prompting and encouragement from then Dean, Professor Bob Meyan, Stephen was instrumental in establishing the "Pedagogy Education and Praxis" (PEP) International Research Network in 2005. PEP is a cross-institutional, collaborative research program which brings together researchers investigating the nature, traditions and condition of pedagogy, education and praxis and how they may be developed in different national contexts and various educational settings. In the true spirit of collaboration and communication, with colleagues Wilfred Carr (Sheffield University, UK), Karin Rönnerman (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), Petri Salo (Åbo Akademi University, Finland), Eli Moksnes Furu (the University of Tromsø, Norway), Matts Mattson (Stockholm Institute of Education, Sweden) and Petra Ponte (Leiden University, The Netherlands) (most who have contributed to this volume), Stephen developed PEP's research program.

Initially, PEP international's program emerged out of a series of discussions about the way in which the bureaucratization and de-professionalization of education were now eroding the moral, social and political commitments that informed pedagogical practice until the recent past, and a shared conviction of the need for a form of educational research committed to reviving and restoring these commitments. The

outcome was the formal creation, in 2005, of an international research program that would create and support a collaborative network of scholars committed to:

- reviving and reconstructing the classical concept of 'praxis' in ways that make it applicable to a critical analysis of the present condition and future development of educational practice, and
- conducting research that would expose impediments to, and promote the development of, praxis in different educational settings and in relation to a variety of educational issues as they emerged in a variety of national contexts (Edwards-Groves & Kemmis, 2016).

These are issues that continue to concern and influence Stephen's recent theoretical and empirical work, and drives PEP participant's continuing reflexive dialogues between the European traditions of 'Pedagogik' (Pädagogie) and the Anglo-Saxon tradition of 'Educational Philosophy and Theory'. These dialogues continue to provide theoretical resources for understanding how the concepts of 'education', 'pedagogy' and 'praxis' are understood in the different traditions of thought and practice of countries participating in the PEP international collaboration.

The PEP research agenda is organised around five general research questions concerning education:

1. What is educational praxis?
2. How, in different national contexts, is good professional practice ('praxis') being understood and experienced by teachers?
3. How, in different national contexts, is good professional development (praxis development) being understood and experienced by teachers?
4. How, in different national contexts, are the changing cultural, social, political and material conditions for praxis and praxis development affecting the educational practices of teachers?
5. What research approaches facilitate praxis and praxis development in different international contexts?

These questions are answered through:

- theoretical studies of the concepts of pedagogy, praxis and praxis development as they have come to be understood in different intellectual, theoretical and cultural traditions, and
- empirical studies informed by, and critically informing, these theoretical studies, by bringing them into dialectical confrontation with how praxis and praxis development are instantiated in the practical realities of teachers' work and careers.

Researchers participating in the PEP collaboration continue to meet regularly to manage the research program, to plan collaborative initiatives, and to encourage the cross-fertilisation of ideas. The strength, vitality and sustainability of the program result from a research strategy developed and continuously revised at international planning meetings held yearly since 2005. This strategy has produced some notable achievements including many publications utilizing, explicating and applying the theory of practice architectures (listed as Appendix A, and utilised by many of the authors in this volume).

A Commitment to *Education for All*: Indigenous Education

The theme of social justice in and through education remains central to Stephen's work. A commitment to 'education for all' underlies Stephen's long interest in issues of Indigenous education and reconciliation. From 1983, he worked with Batchelor College, Northern Territory (now Institute) on self-evaluation processes in Aboriginal teacher education, and simultaneously worked with a number of North East Arnhem Land schools on the education and development of Aboriginal teachers. This involvement led to his 1987–8 appointment to evaluate the *Remote Area Teacher Education* programs offered by Batchelor. In 1998, he participated (with two Yolngu women) in an international conference on Indigenous Science at the University of Calgary in Canada. Stephen was instrumental in the development of a Deakin University program for Aboriginal teachers upgrading to the Bachelor of Arts in Education degree run by Deakin at Batchelor.

Stephen was instrumental in the formation of the Deakin Aboriginal Teacher Education program, and the subsequent development of the Deakin Institute of Koorie Education. In 1994, he was a consultant to the national *Review of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Policy* chaired by Mandawuy Yunupingu and was one of a number of people assisting with the preparation of proposals which led to the formation of the Garma Cultural Studies Institute of the Yothu Yindi Foundation. In 1995, he worked with the Aboriginal Studies Centre of Curtin University, Western Australia, preparing papers on reconciliation issues in higher education which helped form reconciliation practices in the curriculum and teaching processes of Curtin University. In 1996–7, in his role as Deputy Vice Chancellor (Operations) of the University of Ballarat, Victoria, he assisted the University's Koorie Education Unit in its work and wrote the first draft of the University's Statement of Reconciliation. In 1998–9, Stephen collaborated with Woolum Bellum Koorie Open Door Education school in East Gippsland assisting it in its development work as part of the National Schools Network Full Service Schools Research Circle. In 1999, he chaired a review of the Aboriginal Centres of the University of Western Australia. In 2000, he was co-facilitator (with Viv White, Director, Australian National Schools Network) of an Action Research Workshop in Brisbane for Queensland Aboriginal Education Coordinators. In 2002–2003, with co-researchers Marianne Atkinson, Roslin Brennan and Casey Atkinson, he conducted the Phase 2 research for the *Mid-Term Review of "Partners in a Learning Culture", Australia' s national strategy for Indigenous vocational education and training* for the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). In October–November, 2003, he was Chief Consultant to the Review of the Curtin University Centre for Aboriginal Studies, with Jill Milroy (Chair), Ian Anderson and Nerida Blair.

These aforementioned projects for and in Indigenous education are touchstones of enduring concerns that Stephen raises about contemporary education. These concerns rightly challenge educators and educational enterprises to question whether indeed their practices are rational, reasonable and coherent; sustainable, effective and productive; and whether their practices are just, serve the interests of some at the

expense of others, or cause unreasonable conflict or suffering. Working and struggling alongside local Aboriginal Elders across Australia, Stephen's commitment to Indigenous education as an investment in Australian society continues to this day with his work in, and for, recovering Aboriginal cultural histories and heritage and with language reclamation.

From 1998 until 2002, Stephen largely worked for himself (Stephen Kemmis Research and Consulting), before moving to Wagga Wagga in NSW to take up a position of Professor of Education, Charles Sturt University, where he was appointed as Professor Emeritus in 2015. It is after this move to the Riverina, NSW, Australia, he met and began to work with local Wiradjuri elders on a number of projects aiming to recover lost and dying languages. Next, words about Stephen's work in and for Indigenous education and training this commitment are offered by Uncle Stan Grant, Indigenous Elder from the Wiradjuri nation.

Yindyamarra winhanganha

The wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in

Uncle Stan Grant (Snr) (AM) PhD

For our Brother and the true embodiment of Yindyamarra, Emeritus Professor Stephen Kemmis—The Grand Architect of our Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage.

As a senior Wiradjuri Elder, I believe Wiradjuri education for our people is about finding ways to rebuild and strengthen our people and our nation, it is my hope that we are rebuilding Wiradjuri by rebuilding our language and cultural ways of life. Our Wiradjuriness has to be treated as a central asset and not as a problem. Our partners are welcome at the table as long as they are aware of how their own actions can either enhance and/or constrain our work. Stephen Kemmis continues to be invited to sit at our table and continues to respectfully challenge us all. He challenges us to find new and innovative ways of revitalizing our ancient wisdom for modern times and circumstances. He helps guide us to find solutions that can support the transformation of Wiradjuri students, I believe his work is also transforming the University, thereby transforming our collective futures. For this I am forever grateful.

We often say that Stephen Kemmis is the grand architect of a whole body of work that was happening between a group of Wiradjuri Elders and leaders, in partnership with Charles Sturt University (CSU). He is the *dhirrangalbang marramaldhaany* (grand high craftsmen and creator). I am particularly proud of both the students and staff who come together for our *Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage*. We don't yet fully understand why this course works and our students are marvelous, they refuse to leave, there is something that appears to be incredibly transformative and maybe even empowering. Perhaps, we think, it's success it because of Stephen's capacity to listen deeply and then help us as Elders and leaders in this work, think

about how our dreams and aspirations can put at the centre of our strategies. He helps us consider the benefits of partnering with academia, and what can get in the way of our collective aims; we knew very little about academia when we started this journey but thankfully the then DVC A gave us some of Stephen's time to help us navigate this new world. To quote a former student,

> it strengthens who you are, it makes you walk tall.

There is an apparent problem with engaging Aboriginal students in higher education, but in our Wiradjuri course, many of our student's refuse to leave. Stephen convinced us that if Wiradjuri culture is treated as the asset, not a liability, then our communities can create diverse and innovative legitimate futures, futures of their own design, thereby ensuring future generations of Wiradjuri are able to live well, in a Wiradjuri world worth living in.

Stephen was the Executive Officer for the Wiradjuri Language Culture & Heritage Programme Committee (WLCH&PC) which was jointly chaired by the DVC Academic and the then, chair of the Wiradjuri Council of Elders. The WLC & HPC guided the work of the University by providing advice on a range of initiatives designed to meet a number of domestic and local needs of my Wiradjuri people. The University in collaboration with the Wiradjuri Council of Elders and numerous Wiradjuri people developed a Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language and Cultural Heritage with its first offering in 2014. This course has become a practical demonstration of the University's commitment to community engagement, and was developed by Stephen and his late wife, Ros Brennan Kemmis and Flo Grant, and Dr John Rudder and myself.

In some ways, the Grad Cert is also his Rozzie's achievement. Many of us know it could not have come into being without her guidance and genius. As she would insist, however, it is also the achievement of a wider community in the University, the community, and the Wiradjuri nation. Most of all, it is the achievement of the Grad Cert students who continue to make it their own, individually and collectively. They have built a living network of Wiradjuri minds, every day deepening their Wiradjuri knowledge and, along with it, renewing the living knowledge that refreshes Wiradjuri country, culture and communities. This network makes a great contribution to sustaining the Wiradjuri nation. It has become a vital a resource for Wiradjuri nation-building.

The Graduate Certificate course is a marvelous achievement. For a number of years, it was no more than a dream of the Charles Sturt University Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage Program Committee, co-chaired by the then Wiradjuri Council of Elders Chair Florence Grant and CSU's (then) Deputy Vice Chancellor Ross Chambers.

In 2012, the wonderful Ros Brennan Kemmis retired from her job as Head of the CSU School of Education and accepted our challenge of making that dream a reality. With lots of help from our Wiradjuri community, the University, and with the specialist knowledge of CSU course development processes she had gathered over the years, she made a course that welcomed Wiradjuri students,

along with others who wanted to join it. Very few people could have brought the course into being in the way both Rozzie and Stephen did, their capacity to listen to us as Wiradjuri knowledge holders and decision makers matched with the respectful way they would challenge us if necessary about a new and better way of thinking about something. Rozzie was delighted to see the first (2014) cohort of students enter the course and make their way towards completing it. When, late in 2014, she got sick, she drew back from day-to-day involvement in the course, and watched with great delight as others took over Course Coordination and teaching, and as new cohorts were admitted to the course. She was delighted to see that it had become sustainable, and that it was owned and loved by the Wiradjuri community. It has been able to survive and thrive, even after her death in July 2015.

As the lead architect of this course, Stephen knew if set up properly, it could guide, educate and support the students, but it was also designed to allow students to find their own ways into Wiradjuri language, culture and heritage, drawing on and sharing their own backgrounds, experience and expertise. Stephen continues to challenge and guide our work in really wise ways, balancing the demands of what it takes to run a modern university alongside the need to do things in our own Wiradjuri way, a culturally legitimate Wiradjuri way. Stephen listens to us, sometimes even challenging us all to think differently. He can describe things that can be tricky to describe, he understands that by revitalizing our language, we can revitalize our Nation. His giftedness with words (in English) helps us describe what we feel and know deep inside, he allows us to be stronger in our own Wiradjuriness, ensuring we remember to honour our sacred role to speak Wiradjuri, revitalizing those deep Wiradjuri concepts that teach our young one's how to live and how to be Wiradjuri. Stephen understands that if Wiradjuri language is orientating our communities about how to relate in the world, then it can teach us all how to live a full and 'proper-way-Wiradjuri life', this is a beautiful gift to the modern world and a beautiful gift to our future generations. So, they can fulfill their own sacred roles and responsibilities to our beautiful Wiradjuri rivers and Wiradjuri country and to the generations of Wiradjuri that will follow. To quote former student, now a teacher on the program, Harry Lambshead:

> Badhu Wiradjuri Gibir
>
> I be Wiradjuri man.
>
> My name is Yarri. I am a proud Wiradjuri man. I am very thankful to be studying at CSU Wagga Wagga, learning Wiradjuri language, culture, heritage, graduate certificate.
>
> I have reclaimed my Wiradjuri identity and have a strong connection to my language and culture. This course has given me the tools and confidence to take back to my community and share, support and encourage my mob to walk with our ancestors once again.
>
> This course has awakened our eyes to a beautiful Wiradjuri way!!
>
> Mandang guwu Yarri

Running a course like this, sometimes things can get a bit wobbly, it's Stephen who gets us all back on track, he gets us back to thinking about how we can *strengthen our Wiradjuri Nation* by *rebuilding our Wiradjuri cultural lifeways*. Critically he also guides the University to find its own way of enabling rather than constraining our collective efforts so far, he encourages the institution to think deeply and strategically about how it can be aware of how the constraints placed on them can flow on to either enhance or maybe even erode our work. In this way, both the Elders and the Institution can be on the look-out for the unintended things that can trip up this profoundly important work. Stephen has been our conduit into the world of academia and the privileges that comes with it, ensuring we are able to harness its resources and letting us in on its internal secrets. Through his giftedness with words and academic theories he encourages CSU to work out how they can be an active part of the solution to the sometimes seemingly intractable problems that can be thought to plague our people.

In this way CSU, steered by Stephen's respectful wisdom, are demonstrating to other institutions how to proceed slowly and respectfully, taking care along the way, in Wiradjuri we call this Yindyamarra. Stephens embodies Yindyamarra, his contribution to Wiradjuri is enormous and we will be forever grateful that this brother has been walking with us, side by side, leaving a positive and constructive future for the generations that will follow. May they pick up and continue to regenerate and rebuild Wiradjuri lifeways and may they find their own champions of this work, champions like our Brother, Emeritus Professor Stephen Kemmis; together it is my hope they protect and restore our Wiradjuri Education for all people living and working on Wiradjuri Country, may together they continue to create a positive and sustainable future of their own design, thereby living well, in a world worth living in.

In, 2015, Professor Emeritus Stephen Kemmis (Wiradjuri word big important one) stated:

> "The Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language, Culture and Heritage answered a call from the Wiradjuri nation. Now, it has begun to speak back to the Wiradjuri nation, helping to recover the past, to revitalize the present, and to rejuvenate the life, the language, the culture and the heritage of the Wiradjuri nation. In these ways, it contributes to building a more certain, stronger and safer Wiradjuri future for Wiradjuri people." Unquote.

So, you can see why Stephen is our brother, when we speak, he understands what we are truly Sayings, and most importantly he supports us to navigate this modern world, he supports us to carve out this space from which to rebuild, we might not have a whole lot of things left from the arrival of the Newcomers to our shores but with our Non-Indigenous brother's guidance and care, we are rebuilding our sacred Wiradjuri lifeways in order to rebuild communities in which our communities will once again be able to fulfill our sacred role to teach our young and teach our brothers and sisters from other lands, we want

our communities to think about 'what kind of Ancestor they want to be' and then work strategically towards that goal.
Stephen's contribution is helping guide us towards reversing the way we look at things, most focus either on what's wrong with our people or on Australian governments' policies. That focus on disadvantage reveals the dynamics of problems but pays little attention to the vast array of successes and solutions to them. Stephen's work is supporting Wiradjuri to find their own solutions to their own set of concerns, he allows us to dream and then helps us strategize about how to get there.

> The Wiradjuri Language and Culture program at CSU has helped to revive the Wiradjuri Language and has given students confidence and pride in their culture, and has certainly helped them to possibly teach our Wiradjuri Language and Culture, to students for the future, it makes me so proud to be a small part of their future.
>
> Mandaang guwu (Thank You)
>
> Nunarmun Stan
>
> (Uncle)

Uncle Stan's words show us that apart from his academic work and scholarly achievements, there were many other facets to Stephen's academic and intellectual life. His commitment to a shared sense of responsibility to citizenship is a genuinely lived educational aspiration firmly located in his continuity of concern about what education for all means "for all" people, and for a world worth living in.

Deeply concerned about the world we live in, in particular about environmental issues as they impact on humanity and our planet Earth, Stephen became part of a sustainability educators' group convened by Wagga Wagga City Council in the mid-2000s. For one period of its existence this gathering, called *The Mick's Bakehouse group*, often met over breakfast at a local bakery 'Mick's Bakehouse'. In time, Stephen became its chief note-taker and chair; its lynchpin, according to many of the members. Here, Stephen meets Sr Carmel Wallis and Sr Kaye Bryan and *ErinEarth*. *ErinEarth* is a community project concerned with education for sustainable living formed under the auspices of a body of catholic sisters, known as the Presentation Sisters. Next, Carmel and Kaye talk about Stephen, not only about his environmental work and influence on the development and management of *ErinEarth*, but about the gifts he brought to its members and its practices focusing on supporting others (young and old) to "live well in a world worth living in". They reflect…

Living a Sustainable Life—Connecting Humankind to Earth in Practices
Carmel Wallis and Kaye Bryan

Stephen is a big picture thinker and knows the importance of working to articulate, as clearly as possible, the purpose of an educationally environmentally responsible enterprise. With Stephen's help *ErinEarth* was able to express, that "Central to its mission is a profound awareness of the living connections

between humankind and all other forms of life that have evolved on the Earth-…Earth does not exist principally to serve the needs of humankind, but rather human beings have a unique responsibility to preserve our planet for future generations of life." To us, this would seem to be integral to Stephen's own "worldview"—lived and expressed in practices.

With Stephen's membership of the *ErinEarth* management board and his mentorship, he remains steadfast in his commitment to advancing *ErinEarth's* mission to be "a place of Earth awareness, reconnection and reflection". With this, he brings the gift of himself; for us, this is means we encounter, in practices: *Stephen, the academic with his rich philosophical background*. Our meetings at *ErinEarth* are nothing if not a deeply spiritual and rich philospohical encounter—to get in touch with our personhood *to look within*, *to do good to others as simply as a horse runs, or a bee makes honey, or a vine bears grapes season after season without thinking of the grapes it has borne* (as quoted by Marcus Aurelius). Our conversations, centered on tying our humanity to our physical world, are often tangled with treats to such quotes from Marcus Aurelius. And we think it fascinating that when we researched Marcus Aurelius that so many of his quotes actually describe the Stephen we know and his 'worldview', particularly that we should *waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.*

Stephen, the communicator. Communication, and opening the communicative spaces for all present to join together in conversation, collaboration and community, is the essence of Stephen's being. From mundane tasks like email and taking notes, to discussing deep spiritual issues and reading and interpreting complex philosophy. He was the one who sent out the Board emails with relevant extracts in the Guardian with the hopeful news of the emerging international rights-of-nature movement that aimed to address the way western legal systems treat nature as property. These open communitarian practices were important for the sustainablity of *ErinEarth* itself—as we all agreed—important in shifting towards making the living world visible to the law.

Stephen, the mentor. At this time, he is mentoring the new *ErinEarth* management team as the next stage of *ErinEarth* emerges. The phrases they use to describe him include—"he gives us confidence and helps us trust our own insights, just makes us feel good", "challenges us to take *ErinEarth* to the next stage that will grow out of but still have its own distinct characteristics","He is so generous, aware of our workloads and if he can he will carry some of it","we love his cheeky wit and he is just a delightful human being"

Stephen, the lover of story. He just loves people and story. He loves telling stories as much as listening to stories. He just can't wait to hear the stories of others, he hangs on every word, appreciates what he hears and is able to convey that appreciation.

And how does story and thoughtful conversation come about?

Stephen, the hospitable facilitator. When entering his glorious open living room at the back of the house we are greeted with four large deep blue sofas with vibrantly coloured cushions. The huge coffee table arranged with intriguing books and tempting custard tarts and other delicacies. Good coffee always on tap. At the same time he is quite adept at erecting nesting boxes for rosellas and responding with a chuckle to the magpies who come to his backdoor to remind him that treats are due.

This is an hospitable and warm space, a space openned up for friends and colleagues and newcomers—all are welcomed into the circle. We all feel comfortable, accepted, respected and trusted. That story and thoughtful and at times challenging, stimulating and sometimes disturbing conversations stretches the boundaries of our consciousness always strikes us as a remarkable gift.

Stephen, the consummate teacher. Stephen, the teacher is able to sit with an individual person or a group of people, listen deeply, find the positive, intuit the person or group's unique strengths, draw them out and then gift them back to the person or group. There's a great quote from Karl Jung about teachers that reminds us of this quality in Stephen:

"One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of a child".

It is that "warmth" that is key to Stephen's capacity to facilitate and bring about change for a better society.

We thank you Stephen, our wise, erudite, compassionate, funny, lovely man … our treasured friend.

Carmel and Kaye

These stories, like some presented in other chapters in this volume, are recollections of Stephen and of his work (some from long ago); some speak about his work on particular topics; some locate his work in particular intellectual fields. It seems to us that they represent an acknowledgement of shared times; of shared projects; or shared struggles in an intellectual field where the challenges in and for education and educational research reverberate around the world.

Conclusion

Across this volume are more fulsome and comprehensive accounts of Stephen's research, writing, theorising and influence on education over his 50-year career. What emerges across these chapters are the ways that Stephen's educational life, like that of the authors themselves, is filled with enablements and entanglements evolving over time—variously interlocking, overlapping, enmeshed, provocative,

and distinctly separated by time and place. What holds them together is Stephen Kemmis, the man, the scholar and the teacher. To borrow from a recollection of Bob Stake (1983, p. 287)

> Stephen was "generous also in hearing me out, pointing my head in still another way, weighing the merit of our several notions, and offering occasionally the luxury of a passionate argument".

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Chapter 16
Life in Practices: Challenges for Education and Educational Research

Stephen Kemmis

Abstract This chapter makes the case that we live our lives in practices—that we engage with other people, other species, and the world in practices. After introductory remarks expressing my profound thanks to the contributors to this volume, the first section of the chapter makes the case that we engage with the world in practices. It does so by describing intersubjective space: the 'three-dimensional' medium in which we encounter one another and the world. The next section argues that practices adapt and evolve in relation to practice architectures—arrangements in intersubjective space that enable and constrain how practices unfold. These practice architectures are also conditions that make practices possible. Against the background of the theory of practice architectures, the next section introduces a view of education, not as a process for the distribution of knowledge, but as a process for the distribution of practices. It offers a theory of education which complements the theory of practice architectures, and shows how education has a double purpose of pursuing the good for each person and the good for humankind. The next section sketches a few implications of this view of education for educational research, in relation to curriculum (a curriculum not of knowledge, but of practices), for pedagogy, and for assessment. The chapter concludes by suggesting that, in our time, education has the urgent purpose of distributing practices of sustainable living across the planet.

I am profoundly grateful to the people who have so generously contributed to this volume. All are friends who have, in their different ways, richly nourished me through talk and texts, and who have thus, *in practice*, re-shaped my life—and me. Thank you.

In the two volumes of *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984, 1987), and elsewhere, Jürgen Habermas makes a detailed critique of 'the philosophy of the

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subject', a philosophy that asserts that truth is to be found in propositions and that these are 'read' by the mind in the same way that images on the retina are 'read' by the mind (as also in the image evoked in the title of Rorty's (1979) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*). Habermas rejects the philosophy of the subject (which he also describes as the philosophy of consciousness) in favour of an *intersubjective* view of truth. I will say something about intersubjectivity in this chapter. Habermas's alternative ('post-metaphysical') view holds that truth exists in conversation, not in propositions torn from the conversations that they inhabit. In a similar spirit, MacIntyre (1988, p.12) described a tradition as 'an argument extended through time': truths come to be established—and disestablished—through the lives, and the evolution, of traditions.

The contributors to this volume have been my Interlocutors in life, in some cases over many years. Ideas like 'opening communicative space', 'encountering one another as interlocutors', 'communicative action', 'dialogue', and 'conversation' are crucial for me. They blur the apparently material boundaries of our biological individuality; they testify to the porosity of our subjectivity, and the malleability of our intellectual horizons. They make us part of the conversation that is history, the history of the world, the history of science, and the history of particular fields and disciplines—like practice theory, for example. Contemplation, long held to be at the heart of the notions of science and theory, since the time of Plato and Aristotle, turns out *not* to be an isolated human activity. Contemplation always invokes the echoes of conversations, of talk and texts, that recall our place in the life of families, friends, and communities, including communities of practice and scientific communities. I am grateful for the privilege of such Interlocutors, for the substance of so many conversations, for what they have made of the life of *this* mind, this man.

I am also pleased that this volume appears under the title 'Education in an era of schooling'. This has been a central preoccupation of most of my career. I say something about education in the pages that follow, and about the role of educational research in making schooling (at every level) more educational and less anti- or non-educational. A number of contributors to this volume have taken up this theme, especially in relation to the critique of neoliberalism or the New Public Management in educational policy and its effects on educational practice. We live in an era in which the management and administration of educational institutions and systems—and educators—makes it increasingly difficult to respect the intimate, organic processes through which education actually occurs. These processes are rooted in the lifeworlds in which teachers and learners encounter one another in conversations in shared languages, when they engage in activities in shared material conditions in space–time, and when they connect with one another in relationships of solidarity and power in shared social spaces. I will say something more about intersubjective spaces shortly. Many contemporary commentators have pointed out that, despite the presuppositions of neoliberalism, education is not a process of production like the manufacture of external objects. On the contrary, it is a double process of the formation of persons and societies. It is a process of human action in history that forms both humans and histories. It does so by forming and transforming practices.

As human beings, we live our lives in practices. While some take the view that our lives unfold in a stream of consciousness, I take the view that our lives unfold in an unceasing stream of activities, most of which occur in practices. Similarly, while many educators have regarded education as an initiation into knowledge, I take the view that education is an initiation into practices. Thus, while many educators construct curricula with a view to transmitting knowledge to rising generations, I want to encourage you to follow the implications of thinking how education initiates rising generations into practices—indeed, into a dazzlingly diverse and highly differentiated array of practices. Once taking this view, we might then seek to specify curricula not solely in terms of knowledge, but also in terms of practices: we might ask not 'What do we want rising generations to *know*?' but, rather, 'What do we want them to be able to *do*, how do we want them to be able to *live*?' On the view that life is composed of practices, knowledge remains important, of course, but we should remember that knowledge finds its home not just 'in our heads' but in practices. On this view, knowledge arises from practices, and it represents, recalls, and returns to its use in practices (Kemmis and Edwards-Groves, 2018, p. 116).

After outlining this view, I will say something about a view of education that follows from this perspective, including the notion that education aims both for the good for each person, and for the good for humankind. After some remarks on educational research, I conclude with some comments about the challenges for education in the face of our contemporary global environmental crises.

Our Subjectivity Is Intersubjectively Formed

In 1987, in an interview with the magazine *Woman's Own*, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher famously claimed that 'There is no such thing as society'.[1] I think she was wrong, and profoundly so.

[1] In the interview with Keay (1987, pp. 29–30), Mrs. Thatcher in fact said 'I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand "I have a problem, it is the Government job to cope with it!" or "I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!" "I am homeless, the Government must house me!" and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first. It is our duty to look after ourselves and then also to help look after our neighbour and life is a reciprocal business and people have got the entitlements too much in mind without the obligations, because there is no such thing as an entitlement unless someone has first met an obligation…'. A statement clarifying this comment was issued by 10 Downing Street to *The Times*, published on July 10, 1988 in its *Atticus* column: 'All too often the ills of this country are passed off as those of society. Similarly, when action is required, society is called upon to act. But society as such does not exist except as a concept. Society is made up of people. It is people who have duties and beliefs and resolve. It is people who get things done. [Mrs. Thatcher] prefers to think in terms of the acts of individuals and families as the real sinews of society rather than of society as an abstract concept. Her approach to society reflects her fundamental belief in personal responsibility and choice. To leave things to 'society' is to run away from the real decisions, practical responsibility and effective action'.

As persons, none of us is an atomistic individual, entirely constructed from our own perceptions and understandings of the world, or our duties, our beliefs, our resolve, or our actions. Each of us is the product of the social practices in which we have participated, in a twin process of individuation and socialisation, through which we become uniquely ourselves while at the same time becoming a co-participant, with others, in a family, a community, and a society. This is to say that our very identities, our *embodied subjectivities*, are formed *intersubjectively*.

Three and a half centuries before Margaret Thatcher's remark, the English poet and cleric Donne (1624) said 'No man is an island'. I agree. From infancy, we are formed intersubjectively, through our encounters with others and the world. We encounter one another and the world as we accomplish things through our practices, in a 'three-dimensional' social reality:

1. In semantic space, we encounter one another as interlocutors, in the shared medium of language. Thus, we form our own individual understandings of the world and sometimes arrive at novel insights, but, at the same time, all of our understandings are expressed in languages we share with others.
2. In physical space–time, we encounter one another as embodied beings, in the medium of work and activity. Thus, we form our own individual ways of doing things in forms of work and other activities that frequently also involve others, and we do things in a material world that we also share with others. Indeed, in this material world, our bodies are constantly regenerated throughout our lives, as we breathe and eat and interact with the materiality of the world.
3. In social space, we encounter one another as social beings in the medium of power and solidarity. Thus, we form our own place in the world, in our own special set of relationships with all the others we encounter, each of whom also exists in webs of relationships of inclusion and exclusion, hierarchy and equality, stretching out around the globe, and backward and forward deep into history.

Ordinarily, we encounter others and the world in these three dimensions simultaneously, *in practices*. Like the three-dimensional intersubjectivity in which we encounter others and develop as persons, our practices are also three-dimensional: they are composed of combinations of *sayings, doings, and relatings* that hang together in the *projects* of our practices—the purposes that motivate them. Thus, for example,

1. A teacher speaks, and a student learns, the language of mathematics (Sayings);
2. the teacher shows, and the student enters the activities (doing), of mathematics; and
3. the teacher and student relate to one another and the world in ways made possible by mathematics (relatings);

all within the twin projects of the teacher's teaching and the learner's learning of mathematics.

It is through our co-participation in practices that our encounters with others and the world give us our individuality and uniqueness. At the same time, we are also

socialised and shaped as co-participants in a shared world, a shared community. Beyond this, I believe, our shared community extends, in the end, to the shared community of all life on the planet. Indeed, our entire being, as individual human beings, is a fleeting pulse in the shared and expanding materiality and history of the cosmos. But here I want to emphasise that we participate in the community of life on the planet *through our practices*: we eat, we breathe, we move around, we transform things—and, as we do, we connect with other people, and with a range of other species from the bacteria that make up our biome, to the species farmed for our food, to the inhabitants of the South American rainforest ecosystems now under threat by our demands for more farmland, for rare timber species, for mining.

Our species, *Homo sapiens*, evolved through a dynamic process of reproduction with variation and selection that also yielded the differentiation of all species that have ever existed, as well as all the individuals within those species. I suggest to you that *practices* also differentiate and evolve through the same dynamic process of reproduction with variation and selection as we interact with others and the world. We make our start in the world with relatively undifferentiated practices like sucking and grasping, and, through long processes of differentiation, we rise to a vast array of practices in which, as adults, we speak, practise a profession, or play leading roles in organisations and communities. So where does the person, the practitioner, end and the practice begin? Or, as Irish poet W. B. Yeats put it,[2] 'How shall we know the dancer from the dance?' Our very selves are woven in and by the practices in which we participate.

Practices Adapt and Evolve in Relation to Practice Architectures

Through lifelong processes of specialisation, the practices of our infancy, childhood, and youth differentiate and evolve to yield the rich repertoire of practices by which, as adults, we accomplish the many and varied things we do. Our practices reach out like tendrils into the semantic space, material space–time, and social spaces we inhabit, and, in the process, they are shaped and re-shaped by the arrangements with which they intertwine:

1. In semantic space, the sayings of our practices are intertwined with cultural-discursive arrangements (in language and specialist discourses) that enable and constrain what we say and how we think.
2. In physical space–time, the doings of our practices are intertwined with material-economic arrangements (in the medium of activity and work) that enable and constrain where we can go and what we can do.

[2]In the last line of his (1928/1965) poem 'Among School Children'.

3. In social space, the relatings of our practices are intertwined with social-political arrangements (in the medium of power and solidarity) that enable and constrain how we can relate to others and the world.

Taken together, these three different kinds of arrangements form *practice architectures* that enable and constrain what we think and say, what we do, and how we relate to others and the world through our practices. Thus, for example, my practice of writing this chapter has been shaped by the history of my thought, and the ideas and literatures that have shaped my thought through a lifetime; it is shaped by a history of writing various kinds of academic works and addresses, and by all the tools and technologies that have enabled my writing; and my practice has been shaped in relationships with hundreds of colleagues and interlocutors. Vast constellations of arrangements—practice architectures—have enabled and constrained the way my practice of writing unfolds each time I sit down to write.

But our practices are not *determined* by the practice architecture that prefigure (Schatzki, 2002) them. Practices are malleable; they have a remarkable plasticity. They flow into new conversations with new interlocutors, into new places and times, and into new relationships, adapting and evolving in response to the new circumstances and conditions they encounter. Sometimes our practices change readily, in fluid adaptations that readily allow us to continue functioning smoothly in new circumstances. But sometimes they are resistant to change, and we do not easily give up our established ways of doing things. We see examples of both these tendencies watching learners learn new practices, sometimes adapting easily to new tasks, and sometimes hesitantly and with resistance. We also see both when we observe teachers' professional learning, sometimes readily adopting new forms of pedagogy, and sometimes resisting new practices in order to maintain practices that are long established. We need to understand more clearly how practices change and develop, the kinds of conditions under which they adapt and evolve, and the kinds of conditions under which they resist and maintain their existing forms.

To change peoples' practices, we frequently change the conditions under which they practise. That is, we build practice architectures that enable and constrain—that channel—their practices in new ways, to lead their practices into new forms. Thus, for example, a teacher builds a lesson to channel students' learning practices into new forms, or an educational leader proposes a policy to channel teachers' professional learning practices in new directions.

Figure 16.1 aims to encapsulate this view of practices in the theory of practice architectures (see Kemmis, Wilkinson, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Grootenboer, & Bristol, 2014; Mahon, Francisco, & Kemmis, 2017; and Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018) .

I stand in awe and wonder at the extraordinary variety in the array of ecologically interconnected life forms that currently exist on our planet. Every species in this array has come into being by displacing dozens or thousands of earlier species now extinct. There is no way back to our earliest ancestors; contemporary biodiversity blooms in a humus made rich by departed species.

The extraordinary variety in the practices and accomplishments of human beings is likewise a cause for awe and wonder. All of these diverse practices and accomplishments also came into existence through being nurtured by conditions that made them possible, each in its own ecological niche, and in ecological interdependencies that connect them with one another in direct or indirect ways.

Contemporary societies across the planet have been composed through material actions in history—that is, through dazzling varieties of practices and accomplishments. And as they differentiate still further, an equally dazzling variety of practices is required for their maintenance, their transformation, and their sustainability. But many millions of highly differentiated and specialised practices, shared way beyond the village and the globe, require human beings to sustain them. And so we must discover *how* to disperse *which* practices through human communities and populations, not only for the survival of contemporary societies and economies, but also for the survival of our species and all the other species on which we depend. Discovering how to disperse these practices through human populations, and how to secure them in people and in organisations, is an important task for education, and an important task for educational research.

Who is to learn what practices, for what ends? Every answer to this question comes to life in educational practices. Or, to put the question the other way around, every

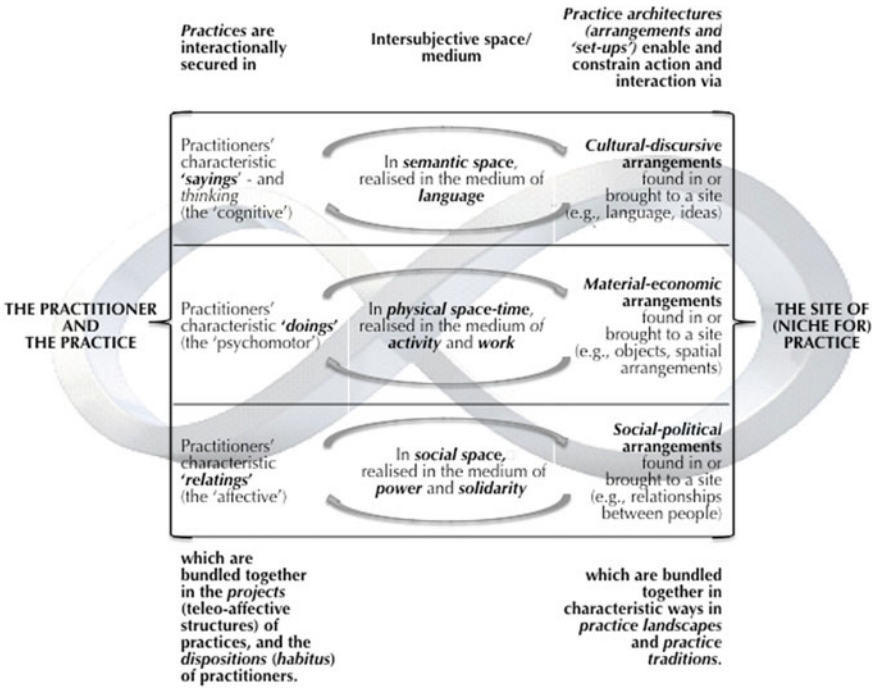

Fig. 16.1 Theory of practice architectures (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 38)

existing form of education, presupposes an answer to the question 'Who is to learn what practices, for what ends?' In general, school education, for example, proceeds by inculcating elementary knowledge, skills, and values into most children in the early years, and, later, by offering arrays of subjects to allow older children and young people to discover where their interests and abilities lie, then allowing them to settle in the range of subjects that most suits them—with guidance from teachers and others, of course. This negotiation of interests takes place under difficult and contested conditions, including children becoming adolescents, exploring, and finding their own identities; teachers shaping their offerings for students in the light of their own knowledge and interests; states imposing on schools curricula and examinations that put boundaries on what will be taught and learned. So the process of producing people who will be the bearers of the vast mix of practices needed for the survival of our communities and the planet is frequently messy, and necessarily flexible and forgiving. Teachers understand it as an organic, human process that must be undertaken flexibly, with care and compassion. It is not a mechanical process, no matter how explicitly the possible pathways to knowledge and practice are laid down in school curricula or university degree regulations.

I paint this picture of schools and other educational institutions as the purveyors of practices into living human communities, and the community of life on the planet, in order to sharpen the contrast between this view of schools and their purposes and the view that schools are transmitters of knowledge. Knowledge is vitally important, of course, but it is important because of what it does, not what it is. We should not fetishise knowledge; instead, we should grasp how knowledge has its place in the living world. To me, this means recognising this important fact: that all knowledge arises from, represents, recalls, and returns to its use in practice (Kemmis & Edwards-Groves, 2018, p. 116). Knowledge may be essential for practices, but it is *practices* that are essential for living, for life, because it is through our practices that we participate in the community of life on the planet, for better or for worse. While we may be reluctant to call *breathing* a practice, it is by respiration that we engage with the air around us. Much less ambiguously, through our practices of *eating* we engage with the food we find or grow or buy. Through practices of *working* we engage with the economy. Through practices of *sex* we reproduce the species. Through practices of *producing and consuming energy*, and through *transportation*, we travel locally and across the globe, as we go demanding and consuming fossil fuels that contribute to the greenhouse effect and global warming, threatening thousands of other species as well as our own. It is with good reason that some palaeontologists call our era the *Anthropocene*—the era in which humankind and its practices will bring about one of the greatest extinction events in the history of the planet. To reiterate: it is through our practices that humankind engages with, and transforms, the resources of the planet, and all of the rest of the community of life that also depends on the planet.

To return to schools, knowledge, and practices: How is it that I was once taught the most basic elements of astronomy, the planets and their order from the sun, and to recognise a few constellations, just as facts to be learned, as simple knowledge? My teachers remarked in passing that, once upon a time, knowledge of the constellations

had permitted sailors to travel far from the sight of land—but now, they said, we have navigational aids for that. But the story of what that knowledge of the constellations made possible *in practice* was not made plain to us: how sailors did and do travel the seas with the aid of that knowledge, practising trade, military expeditions, and exploration, for example. And how Aboriginal Australians travelled, and still travel, through their own country, and to far distant parts of the continent, following 'songlines' laid down in the skies by their Ancestors, which, from time immemorial, are still visible in the constellations that follow their annual migrations through the sky. Astronomy was not a bunch of 'facts' for sailors or for those Aboriginal people; it made possible human practices that covered vast networks on the sea and on the ground. Knowledge emerges from, represents, recalls, and returns to its use in practices: in the case of those Aboriginal peoples, the practices of life lived in tune with the environment, and local practices of agriculture, depended on knowledge of the seasons marked by movements in the constellations. One might manage without such knowledge, but with it, one was empowered. Learning the sacred stories of the Ancestors was not just a matter of knowing the songs, but of knowing how to live in one's country, and how one's country was connected to the country of one's neighbours near and far, along tracks laid down by the Ancient Ones. Some of those songs also revealed where waterholes could be found, creating way stations, for those who knew them, through apparently impassable deserts.

So we learn knowledge not for its own sake, but for how it enables us to live, and to live with others and in the community of life on the planet. In Book 2 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle remarks that 'the present subject [ethics] is taken up, not for the sake of contemplation … for we are conducting an examination, not so that we may know what virtue is, but so that we may become good' (Bartlett and Collins, 2011, p. 27). The same can be said for other things we learn: we learn them not only to know them, but also to become good, and to make things, and to do things, as well as to contemplate things, and to consider how things might be otherwise or better for people, for humankind in general, and for the community of life on the planet. We learn things not just to contemplate them, but also to employ in living our lives.

Part of the answer to the question 'Who is to learn what, for what ends?' will be given by educational research. For those of us whose vocations are education and educational research, our task is to find ways to ask and answer this question so that individual persons can find interesting and satisfying lives, and, at the same time, so our societies and nations and people around the globe—humankind—can also thrive. Education has the double purpose of forming individuals *and* forming societies. As I understand it, these are the two faces of *Bildung* in the European pedagogical tradition (e.g. Siljander, Kivelä, & Sutinen, 2012).

What Is Education? What Is the Good for Humankind?

On the view of practices I have outlined, including the theory of practice architectures, I believe that education is an initiation into practices. But the practices into which people are initiated through *education* (as opposed to by habituation, or by socialisation, or by acculturation, or by indoctrination, for example) are ones intended to be for the good of the person being educated: in the justified self-interests of that person. Not only this: they will also be practices that are, simultaneously, intended to be in the interests of people universally, that is to say, in the justified collective interests of all—the good for humankind. Encapsulating this view in a slogan, one might say that education aims to form people so they can live well in a world worth living in.

Now, what 'the good for humankind' consists in is contested. That is, different people have different views about what it is. Following Young (1990), however, I have come to the view that the good for humankind can only be found in a just society. Like her, I think it is difficult to define what 'justice' consists in, but that it easier to identify what counts as 'injustice'. In her (1990) book, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, she suggests that we can make more headway towards achieving justice in society not by focusing principally on the positive 'justice' but rather by concentrating our efforts on avoiding or overcoming or ameliorating the negative 'injustice'. For Young, there are just two forms of injustice: *oppression* and *domination*. She elaborates each in her book. Oppression,[3] she argues, occurs when social structures and practices unreasonably limit people's opportunities for individual or collective *self-expression* (what they can think and say) and their *self-development* (what they can do); domination occurs when social structures and practices unreasonably limit people's opportunities for individual or collective *self-determination* (how they relate to others and the world). A society that aims to be just, then, must work against the injustices of oppression and domination, that is, against structures and practices that unreasonably limit people's individual and collective powers of *self-expression*, *self-development,* and *self-determination*. I think Young's picture of a society working continuously against injustice gives a possible answer, for our time, to the question of what the good for humankind might look like: a society that works both to overcome limits to, and to extend, people's individual opportunities and capacities for self-expression, self-development, and self-determination in ways compatible with the collective opportunities and capacities of all.[4]

Put more generally, I would say that, on the side, of the intersubjective world we share, I hope, first, for individual and collective self-expression, and thus work to secure a culture based on reason.[5] I hope, second, for individual and collective

[3] Young (1990, Chap. 2) describes five faces of oppression: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

[4] Most of this paragraph and the next are adapted from Kemmis and Edwards-Groves (2018), p. 17–18.

[5] By 'reason' here, I do not mean a narrow rationalistic view of knowledge, but also the reason of the heart. As the French philosopher Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) put it [in his *Pensées* (*Meditations*),

self-development of a kind that will sustain us and also sustain the world we live in, and thus work to secure a productive, sustainable economy and environment. And I hope, third, for individual and collective self-determination, and thus work for a just and democratic society. These, it seems to me, are the three most crucial elements of 'a world worth living in'.

Taking these ideas about the good for humankind into account, we might thus say, more precisely, that education is an initiation into practices, and thus into

- forms of understanding (Sayings) that foster and sustain individual and collective self-expression,
- modes of action (doing) that foster and sustain individual and collective self-development, and
- ways of relating to others and the world (relatings) that foster and sustain individual and collective self-determination, and,

by doing these things, serves both

- the good for each person, and
- the good for humankind.

Figure 16.2 aims to depict this theory of education.

Figure 16.3 puts the theory of practice architectures (outlined earlier) together with this theory of education.

Educational Research

I have sketched a theory of practice, and a theory of education. Now I will make a few brief remarks about educational research.

First, I think the principal purposes of educational research are to make the practice of education more educational, and to make education less anti-educational or non-educational. In terms of making education more educational, educational research might help us more richly to achieve the double purpose of education: enhancing individuals' opportunities and capacities for self-expression, self-development, and self-determination, and, not only in our own nations but also across the globe, securing cultures based on reason, productive and sustainable economies, and just and democratic societies.

In terms of making education less anti-educational or non-educational, educational research might help us, as far as possible, to remove from schooling those practices that distract schools from the central task of educating students, and especially those that are contrary to the purposes of education—practices that make it harder for learners to achieve individual and collective self-expression, self-development, and

1670/1995, p. 127], 'The heart has its reasons, of which reason knows nothing'. On this view, we should include reasonableness and reason-giving as part of what is meant by 'a culture based on reason'.

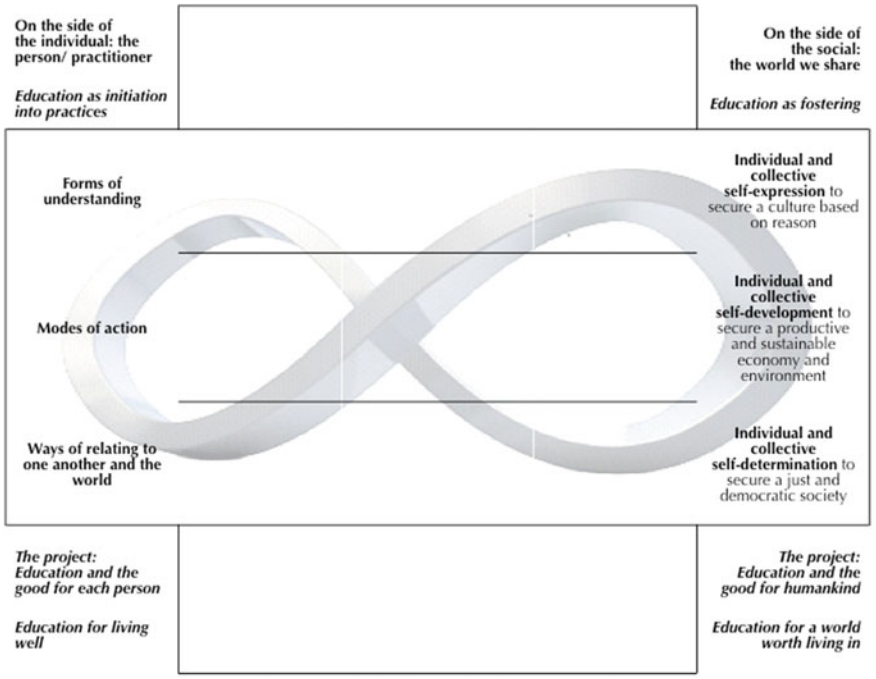

Fig. 16.2 A theory of education

self-determination. Many practices in schools may have these untoward effects—like forms of classroom management that limit learners' freedom of expression, that demean or discourage students, or that limit learners' freedom of association. Educational research might helpfully identify where such practices are to be found in schools, and how they might be replaced with more educational practices.

On the view that education is an initiation into practices, challenges for educational research emerge in relation to each of the three main 'message systems' of schools long ago identified by British educational researcher Basil Bernstein (1975): curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation[6] (or assessment). I invite you to consider what tasks educational research might pursue if it were to adopt the theory of education as initiation into practices, in relation to each of these three message systems. Here, I only have space to gesture broadly towards some such tasks.

[6] 'Formal education knowledge can be considered to be realized through three message systems: curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation. Curriculum defines what counts as a valid pedagogy defines what counts as a valid transmission of knowledge, and evaluation defines what knowledge, counts as a valid realization of this knowledge…' (Bernstein, 1975, p. 85).

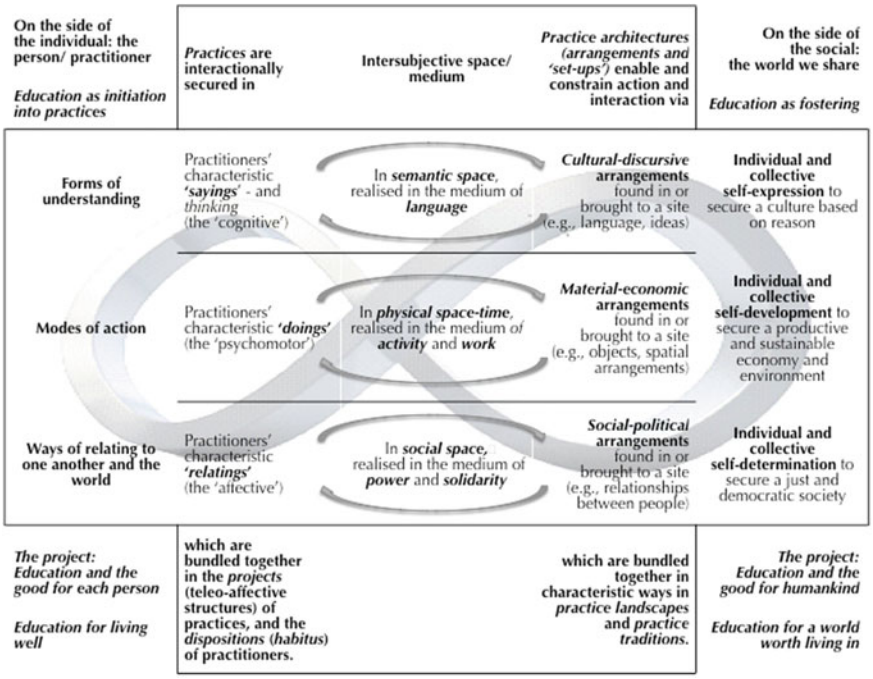

Fig. 16.3 A theory of education, incorporating the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis, 2014)

Curriculum

We are accustomed to specifying curricula in terms of the *knowledge* we want learners to learn. On the view of education I have outlined here, I encourage you to consider how curricula might be constructed in terms of the *practices* we want people to learn and to participate in. What might *curricula of practices* look like? What practices would we want to include, and for whom? How might we more effectively distribute through human populations the practices needed for the sustainability of our people and the planet, our economies and environments? And how might we work more effectively through education to prevent or avoid the maintenance and dissemination of practices that currently threaten the planet—like many of our taken-for-granted practices of agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, energy use, waste disposal, and so on. We need other practices to displace many of our present practices if we are to live sustainably on the planet; part of our task as educational researchers is thus to work with people in those industries, and others, to help discover and distribute practices in those fields that will allow us to live sustainably, for the sake of humankind and for the sake of Earth's community of life.

Pedagogy

In addition to considering the implications of specifying the content of education in terms of curricula of practices rather than curricula of knowledge, educational researchers might also want to explore the most appropriate pedagogies for teaching various kinds of practices. Like specifying curricula, teaching and pedagogy occur in practices. What pedagogical practices are the most appropriate for teaching what practices? In many workplaces, as Lave and Wenger (1991) noticed, newcomers learn practices by 'legitimate peripheral participation', and later by direct participation. This kind of modelling and mimicking cannot be the only way to initiate newcomers into practices, although it has a history older than that of *Homo sapiens*. In many educational settings, practice architectures are constructed to make it easier for newcomers to participate more fully in all kinds of practices, including through simulation and training and direct instruction. Perhaps researchers will be able to develop a taxonomy of different kinds of practices, and a parallel taxonomy of practices for teaching and learning those different kinds of practices.

Evaluation (Assessment)

Other questions for educational researchers will flow from the task of constructing curricula of practices. For example, we might also want to explore how best to assess learners' practices rather than their knowledge. Assessing knowledge has a long history in psychometrics; assessing behaviours that reveal knowledge also has a long history; but how might we more directly assess the practices we want learners to learn? The competency-based testing movement might have been regarded as one tilt in this direction; the assessment of workplace learning is another, perhaps more promising. And steps have also been taken along these lines by researchers thinking about situated learning (like Lave and Wenger, 1991).

There is not space in this chapter to take these lines of speculation about curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy further. But I invite you to think further about the implications of the notion of *curricula of practices* and whether and how this way of thinking about curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment might be more or less productive than our current thinking about curricula specified principally in terms of knowledge.

Conclusion

We are at a crucial turning point in the life of our planet and the species that inhabit it. We need to think of the planet not as a backdrop for human life, or simply as a resource for humankind. It is a community of life of which *Homo sapiens* is a living

part. I have suggested that it is through our practices that we are intertwined with other species in this community of life, and through our practices that we engage with the dynamic chemical and geophysical processes of the Earth itself—including, but not only in relation to, the processes by which global climate change is occurring. Human life is conducted in practices; we are not the sole or autonomous producers of all of our own practices as individual people, but co-producers of practices, in concert with others, in the languages and cultures, the economies and environments, and the communities and societies, that we inhabit.

Humankind faces multiple and compounding challenges in the Anthropocene era. Our current ways of life threaten rising and future generations, not only of *Homo sapiens* but also many other species becoming extinct or threatened with extinction at an unprecedented rate. Our ways of life are made up of practices that must change if we—and many other species—are to survive and thrive.

Once upon a time, education could concern itself principally with the distribution of knowledge through populations. In those innocent days, nature seemed inexhaustible. Now, we know better. Now, we can see that many of our historically given, culturally formed practices are extinguishing many of the resources necessary for human life, and threatening many other species with extinction.

If we think about the tasks of education and educational research from a practice perspective, we may be able to identify the kinds of practices we must curb and extinguish if our species and others are to survive and thrive: many of our current practices of transportation, energy production, manufacturing, and agriculture, for example. And education and educational research might help us to replace those practices with other, more benign, practices that seem more likely to secure the sustainability of our species and other species, and to limit existential threats like those posed by rising sea levels, warming and more acidic oceans, warming air and land temperatures, more extreme weather events, and the mass migration of human beings caused by climate change and by the conflicts it is likely to generate.

The great conundrum of our time is that we have the science, and we have the knowledge, that allows us to conclude that these threats are upon us. We have accomplished this knowledge through practices of science, and research, and education. But having the knowledge has not been sufficient to change our many practices on the scale necessary to decisively avert the threats we face. Some of this knowledge *is* being put into practice—in changes in our use of fossil fuels for energy and transport, for example. But more changes in practice, on a global scale, are needed.

Accomplishing the necessary changes in human social practices, and distributing new practices throughout human populations, are not just challenges for politics and policy. They require intimate changes in practice for every one of us, and on behalf of rising generations. Changing the practices that currently constitute our world is the central challenge for education and educational research in our time.

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Appendix
The Theory of Practice Architectures: An Incomplete Bibliography

Researchers in the international Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP) Research Network[1] produced most of the items listed in this bibliography (2008–2018). It includes a number of publications in Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish. Despite our efforts to make the list comprehensive, it remains incomplete.

Items in the list marked with an asterisk (*) are by researchers who are not regular participants in the research program of the international PEP Research Network.

Books

2018

1. Edwards-Groves, C. & Rönnerman, K. (in preparation, 2019). *Generative Leadership: Rescripting the promise of action research*. Singapore: Springer.
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[1]For information about the network, see https://ips.gu.se/english/cooperation/networks/pep.

C. Edwards-Groves et al. (eds.), *Education in an Era of Schooling*,
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