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# **COMMON-SENSE TO ACADEMIC-SENSE**

**Epistemological explorations  
into the study and processes of  
the act of coming to know**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
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at  
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# DEDICATION

For the creative dialecticians in my life

MICHAEL JOHN  
Yorkshireman  
my great grandfather

SAMUEL JOHN                      &                      LAURA ISOBEL  
Cornishman    Yorkshirewoman  
1881-1962    1892-1961  
my grandparents

and for the physician  
who instructed my father  
(when I was very young) :  
*'get her to interrogate her own questions;  
ask her 'Why?'*

But most of all for  
FRANCIS HENRY  
1917-1963  
Tirau citizen, my father, inventor and innovator.  
A person who explored possibilities and  
who taught me to do the same.

I am the product of their labours,  
and this thesis is a product of their questioning.

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a mighty big hug  
and

THANK YOU  
- from the bottom of my heart

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## Abstract

This study takes a sociological look at how different ways of knowing are educationally determined. It explores this complex praxis by engaging in two intellectual journeys.

First, (in Part I) it exposes my own moves from common-sense to academic-sense, as the topic of this thesis is formed in my personal history, but I find the methods to study it require innovative reconstruction. This realisation effects the move from psychology and Identificatory positivism to critical sociology, epistemology and a standpoint in 'the negatives'. When I realised the topic might be more authentically studied by methodologically conceding that knowledge is subject to change, difference and social determinisms, the original subject altered from a search to normatively understand 'how adults learn', to a social inquiry into how some radicalised ways of knowing are educationally mediated. Then an empirical study with epistemological underpinnings is outlined. The study is one which is critically contextualised prior to investigation, and one which negates the foregrounding and dominance of a search for truth by replacing this with the possibilities of exploring meanings.

Part II reflects the intellectual journey of several selected people as they move from common-sense to academic-sense. The first chapter in this section identifies the educational histories of three typified and radicalised ways of knowing, illustrating the habituation of personal epistemic views. The second (and major) section, analyses the year-long journey of these people, by collapsing the time-frame into the single sequence of one knowledge-act. It follows their first year of study, by correspondence, in the social science faculty of a university. During this journey, the adults begin from different epistemological preferences ('standpoints' which include language, personal epistemology and social contact) and they seek different forms of knowledge from within the institution (these 'touchstones' include the conventions of scholarly conduct, course-content itself and knowledge of evaluation strategies). For each typified way of knowing, the preferred standpoint and touchstone form a critical educational relation. In the third section of Part II, the social mediation of these three educational relations is explored.

What is found is that although two educational relations ('personal epistemology to course content', and 'language' to 'the conventions of scholarly conduct') are concerned with invoking either a subjectified or objectified understanding about academic ways of knowing, these knowledge-constitutive preferences were not, in the main, addressed by these university educators in their teaching practices. Instead a social-constitutive bonding (between staff and students) dominates the educators concerns. Rather than focus upon the epistemological aspects of ways of knowing, (such as 'how to be critical' or 'how to theorise'), these educators focussed upon the teaching of 'presentation protocols' (e.g. the need to prepare a bibliography) and outlining matters of evaluation (e.g. grammar, spelling, due dates, and word lengths). When this particular educational relation (between 'social contact' and 'evaluation') was radically politicised by deliberate negation of knowledge-constitutivity, it provided the framework of 'the academic game' - a minimalist approach to academic-sense effected by replacing the essence of knowledge-constitutivity with the appearances of knowing.

It is suggested that should an educational institution wish to allay or negate this ideology of success which is based in the mythologies of 'the game', then it would need to focus attentions upon epistemologically defining its knowledge-constitutive understandings of 'academic-sense', and reflect these examined understandings in the mediations of its social-constitutive practices.

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# Introduction

*Where ... do we look for understanding the differentiated structure of human thought? How are we to fathom the real explanation of why we hold these beliefs rather than those, or conceptualise our experience in one way rather than another? Above all, what is the way of breaking the control of different systems or forms of thinking - or (more importantly) the control of those who decide what is to count as a valid way of thinking?*

*Richard Pring, 1977:130*

## *The shaping of an original exploration*

'Epistemology' is about theories of knowledge and knowing. Epistemologies can be either public or personal possessions (as well as being idealist or materialist in intention). While public epistemologies are evidenced in such places as the curricula of public institutions of education and in academic disciplines, I believe that personal epistemologies are that collection of taken-for-granted beliefs that constitute our private ways of knowing. This thesis is about to explore the relationship between the implicit but public epistemologies of the academe, and the personal epistemologies of adult students. In fact, it seeks to discover the determinisms of educational mediation on personal ways of knowing.

To do so, this thesis explores the complex critical praxis of various logics. It begins in the questions of an intellectual journey and, following empirical study, overall shows that a passion to learn is based upon subjectivating<sup>1</sup> new information through the disciplining of one's own ways of knowing. It is assistance with the disciplining of one's personal common-sense epistemology that leads into the disciplined sense of academic-sense.

After years of viewing academic life from the outside, I found that traditional empirical research methods reflected the belief that *'If you did what you were told, how you were told, then you'd get it 'right'*. A received rather than a reasoned view of the knowledge of methods, was taken for granted. But methods which originated in Comte's positivistic philosophy involved exclusions of meaning, the corollary of which was that if researchers knew what to exclude before they began a study, then their inclusions indicated they knew something of the answer they sought. But I could not satisfactorily answer *'how adults came to know'* and moreover, I did not wish to know how every person knew; I sought to understand the meanings of how, where and why some did not. Mine was to be a search for the ideal *within* the material.

Making problematic the exclusivities of traditional methods of studying 'adult learning', I partially severed Comtean connections to the Principles of Identity by developing an inclusive dialectical methodology, which was centred in 'the negatives' and the different uses of negation. For instance, to explore the bounds of knowing or not knowing, I wanted the site of education that was investigated to be as problematic for the students as possible in order that their difficulties with learning would be forefronted, and so that less investigatory mediation would be necessary in order to find those difficulties. That is, 'the scene' needed to be filled with already-known and pre-selected educational tensions. In problematising the site of the empirical study prior to investigation, these objectified struggles were foregrounded and the research question was refined to the following

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<sup>1</sup> The naming and evidence of the practice of 'subjectivation' was arrived at without prior knowledge of Foucault's dream.

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empirical topic:

*What is the nature of influence of social relations which limit an adults' ability to 'come to know' social science knowledge during their novitiate university year, whilst learning by correspondence?*

Several procedural alterations resulted. I changed the vocabulary, the search strategies, the forms of analysis and engaged in a search for a problematic context in which to site the study. Thus a critical contextualism replaced the use of operational 'definitions'. This change reflected my beliefs in epistemological materialism. Knowledge arises from society, not solely from one researcher's view of a stranger's world. The search for meanings included information which differentiated between social-constitutive and knowledge-constitutive relations, and sought the nature of the dynamics between them. After this inclusive inductive study was completed, multiple forms of analysis were employed. The 'data' was (a) sifted to that which was specifically focussed on the question of 'difference', (b) Identified by the preferred knowledge-constitutive relations of different 'types' of students, and (c) critiqued according to the epistemic basis of the educational mediations to those preferred knowledge-constitutive relations.

This alternative methodology was developed within the framework of Adorno's obscure theory of the Negative Dialectic. I argued that educational *marginalisation* needed to be investigated by identifying the nature of *difference* (e.g. epistemic *radicalism*) rather than similarity, and within that, needed to identify the *life* of 'difference' as *educational relations*. Applying Adorno's principles of negativity to a literature review, a problematic context was located in which to carry out this study. Adorno's double negatives ensured this study was sited on the tension-ridden limits between 'knowing' and 'not knowing', as it sourced evidence of *radicalised* ways of knowing from within *problematic social relations*. Only after this siting process was over did the *actual* empirical question, rather than a general topic area, emerge and the usual reductionist tinkering of a rigorous method proceed. Adorno's double negative also extended into the later theorising of findings. In the dialectical form of analysis, I first identified several different *radicalised* ways of knowing, and conceptualised the particular *epistemic relations* each occupied by searching among their standpoints and touchstones for the connecting links. Then the educational mediations which influenced each of those conceptualised epistemic relations was critically examined. By epistemically 'tearing apart' first the knowledge-constitutive sources and then the social practices of knowledge-activity, Adorno's double negative had located an eccentric epistemic-based theory for education which is of value to teachers and learners alike.

Within the *problematic context* of adults' first year academic experiences in distance-education, three *radicalised ways of knowing* were located and 'named'. Noah (knower) connected her '*personal epistemology*' to the touchstone of '*course content*,' but found very few lecturers who supported this practice even though she thought it had been fronted publicly as the ideal of a university. Luisa (loser) thought ways of knowing would be '*communicated*' to her but found that university '*conventions*' mostly consisted of protocols of presentation which in turn presented 'knowledge' as useful for university assignments but useless for social action in the everyday life it had purported to explain. The following quotation outlines the central epistemic fracture which tears apart these students' attempts to understand the nature of 'academic-sense':

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*'The educational relations of 'epistemology to content' and 'language to scholarly conventions' are marked by similarities of intention. Each typified potential knower who inhabits these worlds seeks a similar knowledge through a similar course of action. Either by 'knowing it all' or 'reading it all', each centralises 'ways of knowing' in their move from common-sense to academic-sense. Noah wants to develop further her subjectified ways of reasoning, while Luisa seeks the objectified, formal ways of doing things. However except for Lecturer 13, educators mediate these relations out of existence by failing to recognise the epistemological needs of the act of 'coming to know'. Instead they incorporate instrumentalist details and activities, which result in the potential knowers being unable to invoke these relations. Noah finds that when critical elements become instrumental (e.g. the tutor's lack of understanding becomes a need 'to read more'), these notions force her to move from her intention to 'know it all', toward playing the minimalist 'academic game', wherein expression is centred as the focus of the knowledge-act, and coming to know is an activity of forefronting the appearances rather than the essences of knowledge. Luisa's personal epistemological needs are ignored. When her educators failed to teach her the objectified scholarly conventions of academic sense (and Luisa had no words to ask), they instead instructed her in the protocols of presentation and she, like Noah, then began the 'game' which centred expression in the knowledge-act. Luisa failed to understand the necessity of these protocols and finished the year not knowing how she got there. What is it about the epistemological aspects of academic-sense, that draw everyone (teachers and students alike) to the written product?'" (Ch.7. p.206)*

Wyna (winner) occupied the third educational relation in a radical and politicised way. Believing that *'theory never matched practice in reality,'* Wyna (winner) avoided the knowledge-constitutivity of argument or critical analysis and in its place adopted the reductionist *'academic game'* suggested in *'social contact'* with authoritative others, including one lecturer. She reproduced knowledge gained from other students as if it were her own, encapsulating meanings in a concise and articulate script that reflected well the conventions on which *'evaluation'* had been based. In her own double negative, Wyna's *'elegance'* had selectively obscured ignorance.

This thesis would argue that changes are required to unravel this higher education entanglement. Teachers needed to background their authority-bound *social relation* with the students, and to foreground the *epistemic relation* between experts (originators of theory) and *potential knowers* so that *knowledge* and *ways of knowing* could be directly and subjectively accessed. In relativising the *practice* of acquiring *theory*, the potential was laid for the given knowledge to become personalised belief, even before its expression in either university assignments or social action and transformation. Moreover, educators needed to provide proportionately less material on 'how to organise oneself' and 'write essays', or proportionately more material on 'how to discipline' one's ways of thinking. These adults had *not* needed instruction to know how to budget time or how to write *'introductions, body and conclusions'*. Instead they wanted to know how to 'theorise' and 'critique', and why and where 'facts' and 'concepts' fitted into the schema of knowledge, as well as how each of these facets was legitimated. They had needed to know how to explore the logic of questions in order to find both questions and answers, rather than know how to present reproduced but unreflected theory back to their teachers. The different direction of these sequences misconstrued 'objectivity' and in so doing conflated the sociality of interpersonal-communication with knowledge-related educational relations.

This exploration is underpinned by selected writings of Horkheimer, Marcuse, Habermas and (especially) Theodor Adorno. Traditionally studies in adult learning have been bound within Comte's positivist paradigm. Such studies objectified knowledge and excluded subjective meanings. Exclusionary activity resulted from the search for the certainty of Identity. Inclusionary methods 'fit' inverse intentions, and that is why it was felt necessary to deduce a methodology

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from a dialectical epistemology, rather than continue grasping for 'reality' from within determinate rules of method.<sup>2</sup>

### *Assumptions*

#### *1. The background to the topic*

I believed that people possessed personal epistemologies which included implicit notions of political and philosophic belief. Personal epistemologies were, I believed, seldom recognised and even less well understood yet were the very essence of all educative activity.<sup>3</sup> For all day, every day, adults invent, imagine, remember or share ideas and get pieces of information in order to live their lives. Thought is one action of life which provides us with both individuality (differentness) and communal sociality (sameness). Whether tacit or explicit, we make claims to knowledge in a variety of contexts during our everyday experiences. Yet collectively we know little about this action and the objects of its intent. To find out *authentically* 'How adults know' required more than a passive acceptance of either the proven methodological recipes from the sciences, or an immediate and unquestioned siting of the quest. So the presentation of this thesis begins with a preliminary reconstruction of my personal seekings for a question, a method, and a supportive paradigm which I 'knew' to be true for me. Only after that was the research question finally framed.

#### *2. Theoretical roots planted firmly in dialectical socio-epistemological grounds*

In order to understand both the original intentions and the ensuing critique of 'positivism', I returned to its roots in history, grounding the critiques of the positivist rationality in the original writings of Comte. After his time the genesis of problems became unclear as the premises of positivism, historicism and pragmatism frequently overlapped and merged.<sup>4</sup> Although Comte's Positive Philosophy was developed in the 1820's and 30's and the method of critique I adopt (the Frankfurt Schools 'Critical Theory') did not begin until the 1920's, for me the use of the latter *required* the use of the former.<sup>5</sup>

What I found was that due to the epistemological foundations of Identificatory positivism, the study of adult learning had resulted in no-one being able to understand the full act of coming to know. What I decided to do was overturn this focus to see if the ways of knowing were open to a description of what they were not. By making problematic the dialectical negations of what was publicly-known about adult learning, a critical epistemology and methodology was able to penetrate and demonstrate underlying social relations and thus demystify the surface appearance of all being well.<sup>6</sup> I attempted to reinstate the integrity of the research act through the use of dialectical reasoning with reflexivity and critique become both tools of inquiry and analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> In this thesis, the term 'knowledge' and its derivatives are used to refer to any ideas or information which the intending-knower presumes to 'know' (through whatever form of validation or legitimation).

<sup>3</sup> i.e. knowledge-constitutive activity whether there was a formal teacher present or not

<sup>4</sup> Kemmis, Stephen. (1984:23) asserts that various philosophies such as empiricism, pragmatism and historicism tend to coincide and overlap. As a consequence of often merging premises they tend to become jointly criticised as positivism. Adorno (1976:239) made a similar proposal.

<sup>5</sup> Bryant, (1985:119f) outlined seven elements of critical theories in the critique of positivism:

- (i) rejection of scientism
- (ii) rejection of a positivist conception of science
- (iii) rejection of a theory - neutral observation language
- (iv) rejection of some forms of empiricism
- (v) rejection of any conception of the unity of the sciences
- (vi) rejection of exclusively instrumental reason
- (vii) rejection of a dualism of facts and values.

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interrogation in order to contextualise the research topic. (This is achieved through the use of the seven standard interrogatives.<sup>9</sup>) As a consequence each interrogation produces a site in which the specific learning act is seen as both most difficult and therefore most easily researched, on the assumption that the overcoming of problems would require an explicit and conscious effort on the part of the students involved.

*(c) 'Knowing it all' is a qualitative rather than a quantitative matter*

Since I needed to understand the actual limits to the knowledge-act, the research method took its philosophic underpinnings from the use of the (negative) dialectic - or as my father would say, from '*seeing both sides of a story*'. In so doing, I made no effort to be traditionally normative. For instance, I chose neither to discover *all* the adult education literature nor to debate the full range of variant philosophies now evident in adult education research. I simply juxtaposed two epistemologies, one to which I was intellectually wedded and the other to which I was not. I used *some* adult education literature as exemplification before discarding one theoretical position in favour of the other.

### *The sequence of the thesis*

This thesis is divided into two parts with the first part forming an exploration of the socio-historical determinisms of this project and the innovation of its method. The second part explores educational histories, typified sequences of the knowledge-act, and educational mediations to the educational relations formed by those typified acts.

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<sup>9</sup> The standard journalistic interrogatives used are what, when, who, why, how, where and with whom.

## PART ONE

### **From common-sense: epistemological explorations into the processes of studying ways of knowing**

*The true beginnings of philosophy  
are where the cards are on the table, exposed,  
and the end is a question rather than an answer*

Althusser, 1977:164

*Methodology by itself does not suffice;  
it must also prove itself as epistemology  
or, better, as its legitimate and reliable executor*

Jurgen Habermas, 1978:67

## Chapter One

### An intellectual journey in the common-sense world of questions

The question upon which this thesis is predicated - how do people come to know ? - originated in a turnabout of events in my personal history when a childhood of positive and coherent intellectual nurturance became an adolescent world of confused negativity.<sup>1</sup> Questions arose where once there had mainly been answers. This chapter reflects upon this induction into a particularly creative form of dialectical thinking. Brought up in a family which valued knowledge and the processes of 'coming to know', it was not until my objectified<sup>2</sup> understandings of the unknowns were subjectified by painful personal experiences, including others' denials of different forms of negativity, that I really understood the strength of this mode of thought. Although these competing ways of knowing, then, had no names, I was puzzled by the nature of their difference and by peoples' commitment to either one way of thinking or the other. Since even my undergraduate study was marked by negativities (a problematic discipline and the absence of an explicit epistemology and no language to ask for one), this present quest searches for understanding of these different forms of adult reason. The fact that *questions rather than answers* became this person's *needs* (e.g. "I need to ask .."), illustrates the interests of a particular way of looking at the world but only much later would such a personal epistemology find philosophic validation.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Everyday-life quests of childhood and adolescence*

During the years of my childhood (1950's) I was privileged to live in a small relaxed seaside resort with a very complex yet compact environment which fuelled childhood curiosity. At the same time our schooling world reflected the stimulating advantages of an education of the imagination.<sup>4</sup> Public and personal 'educational' worlds thus shared a common epistemology which was supported by

<sup>1</sup> From the understandings of my childhood, I still take knowledge (or information in general) to consist of two aspects or (as my parents would say) 'two sides of a coin'. On the one side is the *positivity* of answers which are taken for granted as correct, acceptable, and without need of challenge in *most* peoples eyes. On the 'other side of the coin' of knowledge are the multiple negativities: the errors and gaps, the questions, the contradictions and the places for challenge, change and difference. In a dialectical epistemology, challenges can be made of the relationship between the positive and negatives which exist for any one idea or set of ideas. Such challenges are the basis of critical reasoning. A non-dialectical epistemology obscures the existence of the negativities, and thus the very source of critical reasoning. In this form of a positive 'philosophy' (cf Comte, 1843) the growth of knowledge tends to move from answer to answer without the epistemic nature of questions becoming important or even examined. This argument between Comte's 'positive philosophy' and Adorno's particular form of a 'dialectical epistemology' is addressed in Chapter Three. Until then, this dialogue reflects the personal history of my own epistemology.

<sup>2</sup> *Objectified* meaning separated from the person; an object - usually for examination rather than personal involvement. *Subjectified* is its corollary and implies involvement by more than reason alone. For instance, knowledge gained by personal experience.

<sup>3</sup> 'Human interests ... derive from both nature and from the cultural break with nature'. (Habermas, 1978:312)

<sup>4</sup> Under C. Beeby, Director General of Education, Gordon Tovey was responsible for the training of art advisors. His Deweyian philosophical practice nurtured the natural curiosities of childhood by 'expression through the arts' (Elwyn Richardson's phrase) and many New Zealand schools were subject to this influence. It is interesting to contemplate the results of such a childhood. It appears that about half of our small sixth form class (N=13) have graduate degrees. One neighbour became a Rhodes Scholar and is now a Professor in Humanities. Yet the population of the High School (N=300) was considered by the community to be lower

the rich physical environment. The coherence or 'fit' of the unity of life was apparent, as it grew and progressed. The unknown was approached with a view to identifying and including new understandings in the known. There were beaches, mountain and bush to comb at will or under the guidance of visionary adults; harbour or ocean as the mood (and weather) prevailed; never-mown grasses and sand dunes to lounge and ponder within. Every chance to demystify our own reality was both encouraged and inspired by people of various religions, ethnicities and political persuasions and by schooling practises in which expression through the arts was a common feature. Where knowledge and knowing were concerned, for the children there was a common conscious interest in "finding out". The act of discovery was important : at school - to see who could invent an effective wind machine for the school play, or at home, saying we were "experimenting" to see who could suck ice off the puddles for the longest, or if stones placed on tracks would derail the train, or if "cups" made of soggy "emo"<sup>5</sup> leaked after being "cooked" on a fire of twigs behind the shed. We also wanted to see if we could get crabs from the beach to live in jars of home-salted water and "proved" that if care was taken, tuatua populations could be seeded on parts of the beach nearer home, and so save us a lot of carrying when the kits were full. Thus it was that we learned to push the limits of science (especially), and to question or test the results of our trials rather than blindly accept the givens of others.<sup>6</sup>

Most important for activating my intellectual life were three persons. My two paternal grandparents, Sam and Laura, continuously challenged each other, life in general and my understandings of the world. Sam read and kept a library filled with the Fabian Society's second-hand books from which he seemed to have learned never to tell you anything straight. His every reply was another question. 'Socratic Sam' was well renown for his practise of maeutics,<sup>7</sup> cautioning his grandchildren first 'to think before you answer'. He asked such questions of us as, 'Why does the drum have rings pressed in its side?' and 'Why never build a pig-pen on a hillside?', tolerating all efforts but chuckling over our guesses to be correct. Thus it was that the reflective search for logical answers and abstraction of ideas became a habituated intellectual practice from when we were very young.<sup>8</sup> In quite a different way, our wonderfully eccentric "Granny" fired our imaginations. An example was Laura's daily comical dance of squeezing into multihooked, skin-coloured, whale-boned corsetry during which she alerted us to the paradox of the 'appearance of

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middle-class and working class. The 'wealthy' families privately educated their offspring in boarding schools out of the region, or bused them daily to 'better schools' in a neighbouring city.

<sup>5</sup> It was a roadside clay. May be the word was actually 'ammo' (for 'ammunition') because we used to throw it at each other. The roughly bulldozed roads had 'emo' banks into which we dug caves quite successfully. The roads themselves were white with truckloads of crushed sea shells. We used to take bucketloads of these fragmented shells from the verges to feed to the hens, supposedly to harden their egg shells.

<sup>6</sup> I now believe this is not an uncommon epistemology for people brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, and maybe also Judaism, because the consideration of competing abstractions is part of daily religious life. As Bourdieu would claim, it is part of the habitus; a particular cultural epistemology, relativistic and context bound.

<sup>7</sup> The midwives' knowledge of 'drawing forth', in Socrate's sense of 'drawing forth' answers.

<sup>8</sup> '... the social function of philosophy is found ... in the development of critical and dialectical thought. Philosophy is the methodical and steadfast attempt to bring reason into the world ...' (Horkheimer, 1986:268)

appearance'. It was she who laughed at the contradictions of life and adored the passion of her grandchildren's first loves as she encouraged us to seek the essential beauty in all things. That quality of essence - the truth or the soul of life - was to be found everywhere and anywhere, and especially (for her) in the arts and humour. So it was from these two creative persons that we learned to practise different ways of knowing and especially the skill of questing *beyond*. We learned to look for 'the other' and for paradox, seeking always the possibilities of 'seeing'.<sup>9</sup> But in this happy, coherent and reason-enabled life, we had yet to understand what 'the other' meant in terms of a pained and displeasurable negativity. Truth and beauty were still as one; abstract, singular, objectified and (commonsensically) certain. A negativity was still only understood as the abstract objectified notion of an unknown or a difference, to be experienced as a source of curiosity and of intellectual joy.

The third person to facilitate my epistemological journey was my father. Dad inherited and habituated both his parents' traits. He learned from his mother to love and laugh at life, and he never suffered a shortage of friends as he demonstrated the courage to think differently. In a life which reflected wonderment, invention and a predilection for social action, he cajoled us into acting on our thoughts by always asking, "Well. What are you going to do about it?"<sup>10</sup> Proving the value of praxis himself, Dad brought the technology of house-removal to the Southern Hemisphere; he invented manual house-jacks which enabled four men to lift a house in a number of minutes, and he experimented with making hardboard and particle board decades before they became commonplace 'woods' in New Zealand. Brimming with curiosity, he also exported our precious "emo" to Sydney for harbourside landfill experiments. For this man, action on reflection served the needs of a life concerned with extending 'the known'.

'The known', in this family, therefore, concerned certain beliefs about the nature of knowledge itself. Dad impressed upon us that the essence of a question lay in its ways of knowing, rather than in its answer. The clue to an answer lay in how it was thought about. By imagining the possibilities, by extending the questions of a curiosity, one found new places in which to find answers. A physician confirmed my father's epistemological stance by advising him that in its practice he should "... return the child's questions to her. Keep asking her 'why?' and 'how?'" As the number of children grew, Dad simply expected we should find the necessary logic for ourselves; that we should, would and could "work it out." This command could be serious, irritating or fun. For instance, he forgot to take his children's lack of physical strength into account when we had to "work out" how to fix bicycle punctures in the morning before school. On another occasion, I had to estimate the volumes of earth required for the oil-installation pads he was

<sup>9</sup> To call an unknown by the name of 'a negativity' was not to place emotional or intellectual displeasure on its meaning, for in this family the unknown presented first the newness of possibility, the pleasurable prospect of discovery.

<sup>10</sup> 'Reason also means the will to reason. In self-reflection knowledge for the sake of knowledge attains congruence with the interest in autonomy and responsibility. The emancipatory cognitive interest aims at the pursuit of reflection as such.... In the power of self-reflection, knowledge and interest are one.' (Habermas, 1978:314)

bulldozing, yet their awkward shape made it necessary to modify standard formulae, and I was just nine years old. Another time he equipped us with hammers, nails and suitable timber and the instruction "to try and build yourselves a stool each." Only through hours of giggling and falling from wobbly chair legs did we realise the need for bracing - and of thinking abstractly ahead to the possibility of problems. Amateur carpentry, engineering, or 'plumbing' maybe, but such escapades taught us the value and skills of spatial reasoning.

The family's beliefs about knowledge included the social component. This social epistemology included an understanding about the relations between people, truths and appearance. Knowledge was to be created and shared, not patented, peddled or suppressed. The pursuit of life was thus constructed not as the ever-seeking "to be better than ...". Appearances which did not honestly reflect the inner self merely showed a lack of integrity (personal search for truths) and such a facade was not to be trusted. Titles and status, as publicly-acclaimed 'signs of success', were nothing but short-lived social constructs, for such appearances relied more upon sophistry (the persuaded judgement of others), than upon one's own reasoned judgement. Life's authenticity was provided by a relation between the integrity of the personal and the trustworthiness of the communal. The integrity of the personal required each of us to establish our own forms of reasoning. It required us to create possibilities and to look for alternatives. The whole idea of life (in this family) was to manipulate ideas, not people.

This unified world of truth and beauty came to an abrupt halt from the age of thirteen, when my private world was battered by multiple deaths. Several of my 'teachers' of 'the art of living' died. Among them were my godfather who taught me to make sausages; a great-uncle who taught us of the magic of magnesium in fire but ended up illustrating the fragility of life by dying in minutes of a bee-sting while up a plum tree; two teenage friends who suicided separately over lost loves, then my grandparents, Sam and Laura and finally Dad. Having left home for the city to study during these years, I was without a confidante who had known these people. During the weekdays spent away from home, there was no connection between knowledge of my immediate past and knowledge of the present. During weekend visits home, this schism was exacerbated as the 'family epistemology' itself was upended. The family now became a negative space in which the remaining relatives carried on (outwardly) as if nothing had happened. Previous sensitivities to each other hardened. Consequently my thoughts, once communally-shared, now became intensely private as the pain of the losses intensified and I experienced what a negativity meant in real terms rather than realising it in an abstract or objectified way.

No longer was truth thus synonymous with beauty. While my early political and moral values had espoused a sharing of thoughts and ideas, now no-one was left who would "open up" and argue about the idea of life itself. All previous acceptance that the bad and the different and the pained were as much a part of social life (and thus open to semi-public discussion) as were the good and

the successful, was dismissed as a basis for shared thought. All open expression was smothered, as the parameters of knowledge were foreclosed, leaving me outside and strongly identified with its negativities.

It was within this new, confused and contradictory life setting then, that my personal epistemology developed.<sup>11</sup> The early life of childhood, in its joy and positivity, had inspired a recognition of challenge and continual curiosity. Adolescent life, in the negativity of trauma, had provided the circumstance to remain quiet and reflect deeply. As a very young child I had enjoyed being able to think through issues - to see, objectively and abstractedly, both sides of an argument. (At school I had listed 'thinking' as one of my hobbies. At home I quietly posed as Rodin's 'Thinker' and dreamed of becoming a scientist.) But as an adolescent, I was prevented, by circumstance rather than desire, from sharing my deepest ponderings. The purest of joys and the hardest of pains I had experienced across those eighteen years were the genesis of both the question and the method adopted in this thesis. The challenge of 'the dialectic' of life,<sup>12</sup> was all that was required and all that was given, but it would be years before I found theorists who 'thought the same'.

### *Epistemic explorations in everyday adulthood*

Hurt and confused by this unanswered (and unanswerable?) question about life, I moved with caution into adulthood. I settled my emotional life with marriage and children; my social life in medical studies, and my intellectual life with resolving my personal quest. The search for answers about difference in ways of thinking covered a wide range, including forays into cell biology, neurology and physiology. But the more I looked, the more I found ruptures rather than answers. While neurology provided reasons about the 'natural' (or unintentional) differences of intellectual ability, it did not answer issues of intellectual choice and intentionality. While I found cause and effect explanations for physiological matters concerning the brain such as migraines, phenylketonuria and hydrocephalus, I found no clues to understanding the matters of the adult 'mind'. Any potential 'resolution' merely increased the number of questions. Studies into the physical brain were sharply divided from studies into the mental. It became obvious that I needed to look to other than medical science for the key to understanding 'understanding'.

However those sciences had bequeathed an epistemological position which was socially supported in that it dominated the resources available in the community: there were no negatives allowed in the world of 'expertise'. But were experts *really* infallible? The dominant paradigm of the 1950's,

<sup>11</sup> As R.E. Young (1989:28) claimed: '*Background knowledge cannot normally be questioned, it can only break down. If we are to become aware of our imprisonment ... we must make at least some of this background knowledge explicit and so subject to the possibility of critique. Usually we are forced to this only when we are under pressure of a problem situation in which background-knowledge breaks down. Such situations are a fertile place for critique to start.*'

<sup>12</sup> The 'dialectic of life' challenged the very basis of one's personal epistemology. It did so by introducing competing (and often contradictory) elements. Such challenges included the separation of reason from emotion and the realisation of the lack of real and personal involvement in knowledge when ideas are maintained at an objectified distance. In epistemological terms, 'the dialectic of life provided the experience of having 'the positive' taunted by 'the negative'. As the challenge of dialectics, the reconstitution of these dichotomous elements provides a basis of a passion for knowledge.

logical positivism, still lingered on the bookshelves of the public library, and I do not recall even once reading of such apparent negativities as curiosity, error, ignorance or naivety. Rather as in medicine, where one was given to seeking absolute truths, or else ill people were given to dying, so too the single absolutes and perfections of argument seemed to be the aim of much that I read. If they did not mean to portray 'absolute truths', then at the very least their argument was set out in order to persuade and prescribe. No writer seemed 'real' enough to admit to their own doubts, unknowns, errors or changes in thought. It would be another 18 years before I found my forefathers' acceptance of the place of negativities in knowledge-formation was philosophically supported. Until then, a critical dialectical epistemology remained physically absent from my world, even as I attempted from my still commonsensical world to reconstruct each sub-issue which arose from the collection of writings within this other paradigm.

The first general sub-issue concerned the separation of theory from practice by geographic site. To some writers, it seemed that 'thinking' was done in one place by (perhaps) men in grey suits, while action was done by anyone else. The issue arose thus. Returning from the city to live in my rural home town, I had switched to reading 'Introductions' to philosophy - found in a musty-smelling corner of the local library, where I had parked my sleeping child's pushchair. This philosophic reading matter was quite limited: Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein, analytic philosophy *en masse*. (Who in the community ordered them?) Nietzsche and Ortega y Gasset were more interesting. But dense language and ideas painfully drawn out made it difficult to see where 'philosophers' *experienced* life. On seeing their abstractions of theory separated from the complexities of living, a sense of disbelief arose within me. How did these men speak with their wives?<sup>13</sup> Essentially, I was troubled by the apparent disjunction of the scholarly world of philosophising<sup>14</sup> from the 'real' world of thinking and by the fact that the search for truth was deemed the work of nominated philosophers alone.<sup>15</sup> Did that collective nebulous 'they' of the universities *really* believe that 'we' of the community were incapable of depth of thought? Why did 'they' never speak of the theoretical thoughts which permeated *our* shared everyday world? It was becoming increasingly obvious that my question had not been answered satisfactorily within the literature available and indeed, I wondered, could it ever be? Was the divisiveness of theory from practice a necessary fact of life? If the existing literature could only give rise to such questions as, '*in which section of the community should the really important thoughts arise?*' then its corollary needed also to be addressed: '*where was 'truth' really to be found, and what was its purpose anyway?*' But even the very idea of a *need* for a single truth seemed unchallenged. After all, what was the relation of 'truth' to 'reality'?

<sup>13</sup> The enigma of contradictory discourse sidetracked my curiosity. Traditional '*philosophers ... show a certain obstinate disregard for the verdict of the outside world. Ever since the trial of Socrates, it has been clear that they have a strained relationship with reality as it is and especially the community in which they live. The tension sometimes takes the form of open persecution; at other times merely failure to understand their language.*' (Horkheimer, 1986:257)

<sup>14</sup> It was with some very real relief that I later found out that many now-famous theorists experienced their intellectual breaks *outside* of the university setting. Among them Nietzsche - the religious, Schutz - the banker, Marx - the unemployed!, Descartes - the soldier who left school at 16, Cordorcel, Goethe, Gramsci and others. See, for instance, Bailey (1980).

<sup>15</sup> This reflects the essential Cartesian problem. As Will, F. (1974) recounted, *The justification of knowledge*

For a while, overcoming this issue by inclusively recombining theory and practice became my primary focus. Where was the logic that could validate the continued separation of these key aspects of life? Praxis was not simply an academic matter, but was an issue of concern for *any* thinking person, particularly for someone like myself who was brought up to look for the logic of an issue so that its answer(s) might contribute to social action. Part of the problem lay with me. I was yet to relinquish a conception of 'philosophy' as the discipline of absolute truths and so was unable to see the verbose abstractions of philosophers as simply various worldly points of view, whether discipline-bound, paradigmatic or whatever. Nevertheless, I believed that the potential for knowledge lay in life practices, rather than in the secret recipes of philosophy. Knowledge, to me, did not need to be tied to the abstracted and unreal notions of truth or legitimation. Eventually, as part of that belief in praxis, I decided there could be no valid reason why idea-formation (i.e., the act of coming to know) could not be empirically investigated. The very thought that ideas and reason were not part and parcel of life itself, and that this life could not be empirically studied was beyond my comprehension. If my reasoning was incorrect, then just how did academic problem-solving differ from an everyday 'way of knowing'?<sup>16</sup> Though they lived in different realities, did the academic searcher (whether philosopher, researcher or student) not seek and use knowledge in much the same way, epistemologically speaking, that Joe Bloggs learned what was wrong with his old washing machine before solving the problem? Did those in the academic context, at least privately, not have to acknowledge the place of doubts and errors and changes when the world reacted to their thoughts? If one removed the facade of objectivation,<sup>17</sup> could my question be framed as follows:

*Whether they were self or institutionally educated, in what ways did people investigate the complexities of life?*

At this time, the influence of reading alone in the public library was beginning to make itself felt in a deep-seated and highly problematic way. Being pulled here and there by various epistemologies led me to confuse 'the praxis of a way of knowing' with providing 'one single answer'.<sup>18</sup> Having initially decided I would study the epistemology of peoples 'ways of knowing' as theory *in* practice rather than theory *about* practice, (that is, do an empirical study) I began to conflate this attempted combination with simply finding one answer (rather than several related ones). Perhaps my mind was being coerced by a search for 'the truth'; for the one single correct version of 'how people came to know'. While it was my intention that an attempt at praxis was an attempt to be *inclusive of*

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*claims, the central obsession of analytical philosophers, cannot be solved unless one takes into account the material conditions of life and begins to view language as a complex social institution.'*

<sup>16</sup> Horkheimer (1986:199) decided that 'What is needed is a radical reconsideration, not of the scientist alone but of the knowing individual as such.'

<sup>17</sup> The words "objectify" and "objectivate" render two different concepts. "To objectify means to make into an object of instrumental value ... separate from and external to the subject....To objectivate means to give form in a symbolic system, that is to make into a vehicle of communicative action. The latter may become external to the subject in the sense that others can participate in it, but it is at the same time that in which the subject exists.... [Dilthey regards objectification as the limiting factor of objectivation.]' (Shapiro, in

the related complexities of 'coming to know', I had begun to confuse *including complexity* with the 'oneness' of a single answer. But I was wrong. 'Complexity' and 'correctness' were unrelated issues. Absolving *complexity* - making things simple - was not the same as making them correct. It would take many years before I would recognise and could unravel this problem. Instead, I was creating the tacit problem of reifying and normalising my vision, as I lost the focus of seeking 'the logics' of the question and increasingly focussed on seeking 'the answer'.<sup>19</sup> During late-undergraduate study, this normalising and identificatory effect would become even stronger.<sup>20</sup> It had taken eighteen years to find the question but then I lost it, and it would take another eighteen years to get beyond the coercion of this world of 'oneness', similarity, sameness and focus on answers.

By the time of my entry into the social science faculty, I had already developed disparate understandings to my basic question, while not realising how my original preference for understanding different ways of knowing was being firmly pulled in a second direction. Entering social sciences with the sole intention of resolving this issue (of how people came to know), I was already an adult, a parent and a medical professional. While I had sought, in my ignorance and naivety, to answer this perfectly *natural* question, it was to prove far from a *normal* one, for my own epistemology was now befuddled by the hegemony of positivist practices, although I still intended to be creatively dialectical. After all, if ever there was a gap, an error or a possibility to question what was known, it was there I would find my thoughts going. My paternal family had instigated this search for contradictions and reconstructions. Now I was going to find that the university ways of knowing, like my mother's, would challenge the view that a dialectical epistemology was socially acceptable and philosophically supported. In the meantime, I kept wondering why I was 'so different'.

### *The context of university study*

During undergraduate study, I was concerned with why psychological knowledge was so *exclusive*.<sup>21</sup> Psychology appeared unrelated to the complexities of real life because it was predicated more upon a fragmented proof of existence (a search for truth) rather than on a search for meaning. Because of this, I would spend years reconceptualising ways of investigating 'the processes of

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(Habermas, 1978:323,338)

<sup>18</sup> The epistemology of the study was being coerced by the primacy of ontological concerns.

<sup>19</sup> The logical positivism of my sojourns in the library was coercing my thinking into seeking only 'the positives'; that is, toward seeking the answers and not the questions.

<sup>20</sup> Was this a hegemonic effect of the very institution that claimed to widen reason.

<sup>21</sup> Psychological knowledge, I was later to find (Chapter Three), suffered the *exclusivities* of *positivist philosophy*. Rather than study complex problems and see how one set of information was related to alternative explanations of the same material, for instance, the initial problems were so closely defined and limited that any variety or difference was *excluded* from consideration. In a similar way, the interactive relationships between different meanings was seldom a case for concern and thus psychology became equated with the study of discrete 'facts' (like a science). I use *exclusive* as the opposite of *being inclusive*, and *inclusive* as meaning that alternatives, complexities, difference and changes are part and parcel of the information of critical inquiry. *Exclusivity* is a major criticism of *positivism* because that epistemological

knowing' in order to make them more inclusive. I held that by reforming a methodology, a meaning-filled, complexly-related, socially-transformative praxis could result from what had become 'known'.

To begin with, I had enrolled in a professional education programme<sup>22</sup> to seek answers to what I saw as a practical educational issue: *How do adults come to know?* Very soon a change in the focus of the question itself would occur. As a consequence of my teaching while also being an adult student who was being subjected to a problematic curriculum,<sup>23</sup> I had become increasingly interested in the sociology of emancipation. The question which had begun as a private realisation (of the need to understand the intentions behind different ways of knowing) now became the publicised and socially-inclusive study of curriculum practices. However, theories of social emancipation and the premises of the psychological epistemology I 'knew', were at odds with one another. Psychological 'knowledge' of 'cognitive acts' was replete with 'laws', 'causes', and the certainty of proofs while devoid of discussions of 'sharing meaning', or of challenges involved in 'coming to know'. Best expressed in the disjointed way it felt, a vocational degree in education did not include (a) theorising, reasoning or philosophising (b) about the formal *and informal* education (c) of adults, (d) in an *explicitly*-disciplined manner. Instead the curriculum was largely restricted to (a) the practices (b) of the formal education (c) of children (d) where 'discipline' related more to ways of behaving (whether or not to smack children) than to ways of knowing, and (e) to controlling others rather than controlling one's self. An overview of adults' differing ways of knowing was not possible. At the very least, within this reductionist world, I felt a desperate urge to take the concept of 'education' beyond the child's classroom. By establishing a new focus to the research question (curriculum), the individualistic quest (adult learning) would now become a social question (coming to know in a curriculum context) which involved studying social *relations*.

However, it was a long journey to argue against the methods of psychology, for even near the end of the degree I still did not recognise *really* what a 'discipline' was supposed to be, much less an 'epistemology' or a 'paradigm'.<sup>24</sup> These issues would remain unresolved as long as academics neglected to talk to students about the general nature of knowledge itself. Locked in a framework of befuddlement, where knowers were separated from the known, I was not sure if instead 'the person in the wrong' was not me, for in spite of all my background of being encouraged to ask

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form denies a reasoned place for the meanings of *negativities*.

<sup>22</sup> I studied part-time, off-campus, by correspondence.

<sup>23</sup> The very term 'problematic' is itself just that. I take this word to mean a disjunction in the relations of what I know and what I do not. A problematic may therefore equally emerge from a situation of identity and positivity, as from a situation of non-identity and negation. Though generally, I suppose, to address a problematic from a position of identity might more likely be seen to a non-dialectician as 'creative questioning'. Such is the force of language within discrete paradigmatic frames of reference.

<sup>24</sup> I enrolled for the subject matter as listed in the degree name, not understanding that 'disciplined' *methods* of enquiry rather than content of a discipline might be important. '*... Allotment to specific disciplines derives, in the last analysis, from the needs of mankind and its past and present forms of organisation .... part of that expenditure of human labour which is one of the necessary conditions of scientific and technological progress ....*' (Horkheimer, Max. 1986:256)

questions, I did not recognise that there was a question of logical determinism to be asked here.<sup>25</sup> Instead I thought we were being taught at the pinnacled heights of the knowledge, and that rigid exclusivity equated with an academic expectation to be objective, by distancing the abstractions of theory from practice.<sup>26</sup> Only privately did I resist that markedly narrow-minded world, as I began to see logical reasons for abandoning psychology<sup>27</sup> though the changes I reconceptualised would remain at the practical level of 'methods' until much later when the 'theory' of methods was found in the field of social epistemology. In the meantime, in order to instigate an *inclusive* search which was centred on finding meanings rather than truth, three issues were tackled by the process of imagining my way *beyond* them. These included (supposed) claims to universalism, the piecemealing and neglect of life's differences and changes, and the practice of narrowly defining operational definitions which indicated that meanings sought were already known to some extent.

First of all, the psychological knowledge we were taught appeared to claim universal applicability - though this claim, I can see now, may have had as much to do with the teachers' persuasions as with the researcher's provens. Whatever the real reason for my misconceptions of what we were being taught, I could show that based on my personal experiences, the objectified and other-determined 'recipe' basis of these psychological knowledges could not be applied unproblematically to life situations. The rule-bounded methods and 'law-like' results left little room for changing and adapting what had become officially 'known'.<sup>28</sup> For instance, at the same time as studying, I had shifted my employment from the medical sciences to the educating of the recently-blinded, assisting other adults to understand and action the most simple of everyday knowledges, such as dressing or replacing a button or using a kitchen stove without the benefit of sight. But the curriculum for blinded adults had to be continuously questioned as the presumptions of the educational profession offered little resolution to the educational problems we shared. Blinded persons could not be referred to a book. Neither could their learning be formally tested with pen and papers. Creativity thus became a standard teaching aid, as one reflected on anomalous situations and reasoned a way beyond difficulties. For the blinded adult, the actual writing of a letter was a major challenge to 'the ideology of the pencil', for all that was learned could not be expressed<sup>29</sup> and especially not in such conventional ways as verbalising on paper. While teachers

<sup>25</sup> This was regardless of the claimed eclecticism of education which implied that disciplines other than psychology might be available. Only later would I realise that seeking an inclusive theory would present the dilemmas of escaping such paradigmatic determinisms as the access to alternative knowledge, practical complexities with negotiation, the lack of a commonly-understood alternative language and the ideological negation of those who believed wholeheartedly in the dominant paradigm.

<sup>26</sup> Like others, I had needed to be counselled that alternative epistemologies were academically acceptable and available, though they needed to be accessed indifferent courses of study and different disciplines. Without counsel, this 'personal problem' remained publicly unquestioned and unanswered.

<sup>27</sup> This is where some of the less well-argued aspects of the thesis arose, often simply for the reason that as a correspondence-educated student, I was never made aware of such conventions or routines as the need to retain references and citations to ideas I might later use - that is, not made aware until I was already a graduate.

<sup>28</sup> cf Gerda Lerner, 1990.

<sup>29</sup> It is a supposition in itself that all that is learned can and will be expressed - regardless of questions of privacy, social ethics, communicative competences, or emotional displacement. Might there not be material *beyond* the expressible? G.H. Bantock (1971:216) expressed a similar idea. *fundamental to the culture of the school is the book; and it is astonishing how little we have asked the apparently simple question: 'When we teach people to read, what do we do with them?' .... Yet it is upon the subtle understanding of printed language that*

trained in 'formal education' obtained privilege in employment, and power from their objectified theories of teaching practices, the assumptions of their basic knowledge took little account of the fact that (for example) the curriculum for the blinded adult needed to be predicated more on self-sufficiency and the social relations of an active life, and less on the fragmented knowledges of other-dependence.<sup>30</sup> In spite of psychology-based theories, which claimed 'this is *the way* that people learned' (and therefore should be taught), when a blinded adult *needed* to know they required no cajoling or controlling.<sup>31</sup> Adults, when in situations of need, made their own claims back upon the world<sup>32</sup> and theories needed to include an account of those relativities and changes in the adults' needs, rather than 'enforce' universalised (yet exclusive and other prioritised) claims about needs. A social theory of how adults acquire understandings should prioritise and include the adults own needs and changes. In turn, this need for 'useful' meaning had implications for insisting upon establishing the centrality of truth.

In the second issue, psychology seemed to privilege legitimation as its endeavours focussed more on a search for truth than a search for meaning. The act of exploration had been replaced by the act of proving. But since the logic of truth was not the logic of life, the resulting fragmented 'theories' became socially problematic when this 'knowledge' no longer fitted meaningfully back into the complexity of society.<sup>33</sup>

The two problems involved in the scramble for proof were the *minute* size and the *positive* type of the information addressed. In the first case, in place of establishing understandings of the topsy-turvy nature of the social relations of life, the focus of the pieces of knowledge studied in psychology was so small and uncomplicated that there could have been no reason why such details should not be proven beyond reasonable doubt (as facts).<sup>34</sup> But this 'proof' did not necessarily prioritise the value of facts in life itself. All I could see was that research effort was wasted on investigating trifling details which in their focus, isolated 'facts' from their socio-epistemic relations

*the culture of the school continually makes demands.'*

<sup>30</sup> See also Cross, 1981. In this I differed from such 'famous' adult educators as Houle (1974) who saw the learning process of adults and children as '*fundamentally the same*'.

<sup>31</sup> All the published theories on 'motivation' in the world (for instance) were senseless when a newly-blinded father was already preoccupied by the need to learn to cook rather than learn to type, now that his wife had walked out of their marriage.

<sup>32</sup> Psychology cannot provide answers because '*social life is a total process in which human beings, surrounded, guided and formed by objectivity do, in turn, act back upon society.*' (Adorno, 1976:119)

<sup>33</sup> It should be noted that this author does not share the intense concern for the primacy of legitimation displayed by many in academic life. Indeed, I believe that foregrounding legitimacy issues has been one cause of the current stalemate in curriculum theory in particular. However, issues concerning legitimation are not covered by the topic of this thesis, though they are a premise of the epistemology adopted.

<sup>34</sup> Perhaps it should be noted here that often in this study I would refer to the provings of psychological positivism as 'facts' since that was Comte's term for proven details. I juxtapose his conception of 'facts' against my preference for the study of 'relations' which, although also eventually able to be proven were more readily able to explain social connections, such as why the blind father only half-heartedly played cards with the female students. I already believed that the social relations of knowledge activity occupied an actual rather than a separate ideal existence and that this required no more than an empirical study. But then I also believed that 'to theorise' was to conceptualise and critique from the evidence of *actual* relations whereas psychological reports gave the impression that they were 'theoretical' when all I saw them as were details abstracted from social practice, proven and reapplied to it.

and therefore excluded the complexity of meanings.<sup>35</sup> In the prioritised concern for proof, the interaction of related meanings within the whole were excluded.<sup>36</sup> For instance, without changing from psychology's fragmenting methodology, I would have needed for this thesis to have covered theories of motivation, intelligence, learning, teaching, evaluation, reading, and writing - at the very least - all the while being forced into narrow comers by separate priorities, each of which prevented the development of an inclusively-focussed, well-rounded theory of educational practice. To reverse the trend of privileging legitimation over the search for inclusive meanings, the complexity of such social relations needed to be evidenced empirically, even at the apparent cost of formal legitimation. To be inclusive of the 'real' meanings would also mean the researcher should methodologically acknowledge the place of their own ignorance, by engaging in exploration and also avoid providing operational definitions since these imposed prior limitations which excluded alternative possibilities of meaning. That would solve half the problem 'caused' by legitimacy endeavours.

The second half of the second problem concerned the *positive type* of knowledge addressed. The negativities of life and knowledge (those unknowns which included dynamics and pains) seemed to remain unexplored or (if they had been), appeared delegated to a level of social pathology. Seldom did one read of side issues, such as the source of questions or intentions. Neither did one read of such negativities as mistakes, disagreements or changes of mind, nor of the emotional tides of anger which might well permeate science. With the exclusion of 'negative' influences or alternative explanations, the resulting fragmented recipe knowledge of educational psychology was useless - at least in the dynamic confusion in which I daily lived and worked. A 'real' social theory would need to account for both the positive and the negative, without prior epistemological value being placed upon one to the exclusion of the other. Thus an intention to be 'inclusive' would not only mean being inclusive of the complexity of social relations, but also of differences, for negativities as well as positivities were elements of meaning. That was the second half of the problem.

Locked into a rushed world of employment, parenthood and study, it had become increasingly obvious to my ever-busy mind that we, that is, the psychologists and I, were simply not speaking the same language; we were not on the same wavelength. Three related elements had become important to my intention to search for meaning: inclusivity, focus and the control of the act of prioritising. They were my commensensical reactions to a psychological conception of 'theory' which I had found too prescriptive, fragmented and reductionistic in its attempt to prove the existence of the nature of complex 'real' meanings.<sup>37</sup> Initially, at least, overcoming of psychological reductionism would require the inclusion of the meanings of social and epistemic

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<sup>35</sup> They failed to recognise the sociology of their work and the determinism apparent in the social relations of their wider world (cf Althusser, 1977:168).

<sup>36</sup> For instance, so that the blind father tackled first those problems which exacerbated his troubles (such as income tax forms and the children's school notices) *before* the divorce proceedings which would 'simply' make him feel happier about himself.

<sup>37</sup> In this I was not alone. *When we began theorising ... we knew our task would be difficult ... But I doubt that in*

relations as well as facts and of negativities as well as positivities, and be focussed on the *social* actions which sought meanings prioritised by the students themselves. But there was still one other issue.

Language and literature was the last of the three areas I needed to reconceptualise. Psychology cemented its reductionism in the insistent practice of providing prior meanings. 'Learning' was one such problematic meaning I needed to take *beyond* these narrow limits. First of all, I did not know 'how adults learned', so the use of definitions was logically redundant. Second, the question arose in *my* life. To prepare a literature review would be a manifestly untruthful way to show that I was being 'objective', value-free or unbiased. I was not. I *liked* the question, and I desperately *wanted* to know its possible answers. I *was* biased. For me, genuine ignorance and a passion to know - as the questioning factors and the source of curiosity within research - were 'instruments' of method.<sup>38</sup> Acknowledged ignorance, manifest as the *asking* of questions, was a form of negativity, and the negativity of such a radical doubt was a basic element not only of dialectical reasoning but of acknowledging the existence of unknowns. As a consequence, this study would abrogate the traditional 'need' to predetermine the limits of meanings. There were reasons for this decision.

I had already experienced frustration with traditional definitions of 'learning' which saw learning as a procedure without an object, and as an act beyond influence. Moreover, the word 'learning' communicated beliefs of a single 'way of knowing', rather than opening the possibility of pluralistic differences in 'ways of knowing'.<sup>39</sup> In existing definitions, 'learning' was devoid of explanations of social determinism, and had no account to offer of the relations between the knowledge and potential knower. Essentially, where other researchers had wanted to define and prove the 'facts' about individual's *learning styles*, I wanted to explore the meanings of the dynamic social relations of differently-habituated, personal epistemologies. How was I to study 'the acquisition of knowledge' if the term 'learning' already carried so many traditional and ideologically-bound meanings; so much 'baggage'? To counter this reductionism - to be inclusively focussed on finding the meanings which were important to adults themselves - the methodology would need to be altogether different.

This research would involve exploring new territory, and a new vocabulary would assist in keeping the whole situation problematic and open-ended. To begin an exploration, I was more interested in the problematics of questions, and in the 'questioning of questions' than in finding or supplying tidy answers and already-understood terms. Thus, in reconceptualising this issue, not only did I deny myself the use of old definitions and an *a priori* literature review, but I also replaced the

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*our wildest dreams did we ever imagine that we would have to reinvent both science and theorising itself in order to make sense of women's social experience.* Mary Crawford and Jeanne Marecek (1989:482)

<sup>38</sup> Indeed, a passion to know could be quite a good signal of intending truthfulness and integrity.

<sup>39</sup> To have retained the use of narrowly-defined definitions would have been to tacitly claim for discrete words,

word<sup>40</sup> 'learning' with derivatives of the word 'knowing'. This act now determined that 'education' should become synonymous with 'knowledge-activity', and that 'learning styles' should be synonymous with 'personal epistemologies'. Not only were *the relations* between knowledge and the potential knower now made apparent and problematic, but the act of 'coming to know' was centred as a practical epistemology, rather than being seen simply as a cognitive issue.

Along with altering the language and putting the literature review in the background, this thesis also forewent the legitimacy or discursive concern with defining derivatives of the words 'knowledge' and 'knowledge-action'. Though the term 'knowing' would often appear, this *word* would not necessarily mean the acquisition of a publicly legitimated form of knowledge or the legitimated acquisition of knowledge, in traditional philosophic senses. For instance, there would be no continual concern for differentiating between 'information', 'knowledge' and 'beliefs' for I would need, at times, to use such terms as synonyms - if only to communicate more easily with others. Essentially the proposed change in words would indicate only the intention to foreground and to attempt to understand the 'educational event' as a complexity of socio-epistemic relations.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, several challenges to the traditions of educational psychology (and the centrality of psychology within programmes of professional education) were made as a result of 'questioning the questions' which had arisen during my own educational life. The intellectual journey had begun in a childhood of dialectical discovery, questioning and demystification, supported by an inquisitive grandfather, an imaginative grandmother and an innovative father. But multiple grievings had 'jerked' me into the realisation that people who were socially the same could make radically different epistemic choices, and this basic everyday experience left me asking 'why'? However, the search for answers was unsatisfied by the absolute truths of the medical world or the 'knowledge' found in the community library, each of which supported a world of oneness in which theory was separated from practice, and knowledge from knowers. I entered university only to find the same unnamed 'other way' of looking at the world, in which primary cognisance had not been made of either a society's authentic state of meaningfulness, or of the researcher's state of ignorance. It was my lasting impression of the psychological mode of thought that it was itself topsy-turvy. Methodological practices which ought to have been less rigidly bounded, like the search for complex and possible meanings, were straight-jacketed by the necessities of such recipe-bound rules as objectified provings and the creation of operational definitions, while other things which I thought ought to have at least minimal standards imposed, like the reasoning of contradictions and

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especially nouns, the notion of 'fact', which would lose any connection to understanding *dynamical relations* (and the centrality of verbs).

<sup>40</sup> Louis Althusser (1968/70:146) expressed this dilemma as: *This act of re-establishing an absent word may seem insignificant, but it has considerable theoretical consequences: in fact this word is not simply a word but a concept, ... representative of a new conceptual system, the correlative of the appearance of a new object. Every word is of course a concept, but every concept is not a theoretical concept.* (At the time, he was

social relations within theorising, did not. Claims of 'theory' had been made for things which explained only minute details of life. These 'theories' so hinged on the promises of *truth* within *proof*, that it seemed as if psychologists had lost sight of the broader (epistemic) issues of reductionism (the exclusion of full meaning) and of their own ignorance. Psychology's traditional empirical methods thus would not be useful for studying adults knowledge-activity as a curriculum for everyday life included learning to live with complexity, confusion and change, for which the epistemology within educational psychology (eventually recognised as positivism) could not 'really' account. There was simply a disjunctive void between how they and I conceived of the relations between the ideal and the real world, and of the search for meaning within it. Educational psychology's reductionist dimension thwarted full understanding,<sup>41</sup> while I craved to resurrect the praxis of an ordinary reasoned life, no matter how 'common-sensical' it may have seemed.

This study would not only centre on an exploration of meaning, rather than on a proof of existence, but it would explore ways to ensure that narrowed knowledge did not arise as a consequence of methodologically-narrowed ways of coming to know. At the theoretical level, I resisted the compulsion to form theory *about* practice seeing already that the prescribed meanings of (positivist) truth were not the meanings of a complex life theory *in* practice. At a practical level I had rejected positivism by arguing for certain changes to its traditional reductionist practices. This study of 'knowledge-action' would achieve *inclusivity* by adopting 'the curriculum' (as the publicly-inclusive realm of educational relations), and by acknowledging the researcher's state of ignorance it would focus on meanings as prioritised by the subjects, being studied. Other changes to this study included altering the terminology (from 'learning' to 'knowledge-action'), holding the meanings of terms open to question rather than foreclosing them with definitions, and searching for the meanings of negativities as well as positivities, and of social relations as well as facts. Even as a child in a commonsensical world, I had been inducted into a particular dialectical way of knowing, where the first action was to locate the logic (or to work out 'the way'). In this case, the logic I would be seeking would be a logic of method, because ultimately I wanted to provide the type of knowledge which was more useful to the give and take of life rather than to having its truth regularly dusted on a library shelf. I wished to engage in an exploration which enabled social action to follow the 'answers' found. To me, that was the 'real' final action of praxis within research.

The following chapter illustrates how early in my academic career these intentions led to the creation of visual mindsets which assisted me in seeking *inclusive, focussed and prioritised* meanings about educational practices within the curriculum. In essence, these mindsets enveloped

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speaking of Marx's use of the term 'surplus-value').

<sup>41</sup> Sarah Hoagland (1990) referred to this awakening to the issues of ways of knowing as an '*epistemic privilege*'. It did not appear to be a problem limited to women alone. Horkheimer, (1968:viii) also shared as '*... unwillingness to adapt to the present order of ... the educational values of our schools, colleges and universities.*'

'all' the possible educational relations of knowledge-activity , holding them open to inquiry. The possibilities of them, like the argument justifying their existence, was still very much set in everyday modes of reasoning, yet once they augmented the instrumentation of this empirical study, an explanation of their Being is a necessary adjunct to this investigory report.

## Chapter Two

### Search strategies centred on being inclusive, focussed and prioritised

#### *Introduction*

What initially began as visual insights of commonsense spatial reasoning would become concretised as research instruments for this study. While I was still an undergraduate, I proposed some methodological insights as a counter to my criticisms of psychology and much later, during the pilot testing of this study, a radicalisation of the research question resulted. Previously, knowing only that I could not study adults ways of knowing within a paradigm which was exclusive, fragmented, and concerned more with the limits of truth than with the breadth of meaning, (and still without knowing what *epistemology* meant<sup>35</sup>), it was intended that this study would be inductive. This choice was premised on the researcher's naivety of the subject's understandings of their ways of knowing. To counter psychological reductionism, the investigation would begin with an open-ended question in which the subjects themselves had the opportunity to express what was more or less important to them and the communication would often continue as an interview. To counter other criticisms of psychology, two visual mindsets (which might be known as research 'instruments') were developed, one to ensure an *inclusive range* of social information (the curriculum diagram), while the other *specifically focussed* information upon individual knowledge-action (the knowledge-act sequence). When, on reflection, it was realised that a combination of these two separate visualisations could centre the gathering of information directly on the social relations of educational practice, they were joined together in a grid. Instead of two separate 'instruments', information would be sought to complete each cell in the resulting matrix.

The following ideas essentially developed during an experimental course on curriculum research.<sup>36</sup> Then pilot testing and a radicalisation of this topic occurred over the next three years. The final justification of the value of these instruments is a function of this thesis. The opening interview question, and the development of the curriculum diagram, the knowledge-act sequence and the cue-card matrix are each discussed in turn.

#### *Initial open-ended questions*

To briefly cover my primary thoughts about interviewing. It was most necessary, I believed, to inductively examine the potential knower's evidence of the relations between the given knowledge

<sup>35</sup> Richard Pring explains this as there being 'no metalanguage through which one can debate the relative merits of rival schools or rival paradigms' (1977:130).

<sup>36</sup> Nolan and Wilson, 1977

of a course and their own ways of knowing. Within such answers, one might ascertain the different nature of relations of historical determinism, ideology, interests and intentionality. It was decided that the relative strengths and priorities (for the students) of the information they gave could be found by using an initial 'empty' question at the beginning of an interview. As a modification of Freudian 'free association' this 'opener' would be uncommitted in content and be the only really 'standardised' question of the interview. Indeed, the initial question would simply ask 'how things were going' (or words to that effect). Probing the parameters of each person's reply to that opening question would foreground the adults' significant experiences and also, paradoxically, highlight their backgrounding of other educational relations (of ways of knowing). It was believed that a later probing of those areas of which the potential knower might not be fully aware might also clarify possible influences on their knowledge-actions. As the interview progressed and one answer gave rise to further *related* questions (for clarification), details of the relative significance of all the students' *educational relations* could be established.<sup>37</sup> The primary problem was to surmount the difficulties of psychological reductionism by visualising what an inclusive set of educational relations might look like *before* interviewing began.

### *Curriculum as the practical dynamic of socio-educational relations*

First, to counter the exclusion of a complex vision of the whole, an account of the broad social context of education was conceptualised. I drew a diagram of an educational act as if it were the inclusive sequence of a curriculum in practice, with the potential-knower centred in a chain of socio-educational relations.<sup>38</sup> This diagram would act as a visual reminder for the researcher, illustrating the interactive nature of each relation existing in the social 'life' of the subjects' knowledge-activity, whether invoked during the adult's personal knowledge-act, or not.

To resist the exclusion of the whole from this type of study, all the social factors I considered essential to the social aspects of a knowledge-act sequence were included in the illustration in a generalised form (Fig.2.1). The five central 'actors' (or 'factors') were

- (i) the mediating educators (authority figures),
- (ii) the given knowledge (and its expert /author) bound within its text,
- (iii) the student in their personal socio-historical world,
- (iv) the student's newly expressed knowledge in its script (or in social action), and
- (v) the evaluations of that knowing by auditors, the student and others.

<sup>37</sup> It should be acknowledged that completely open-ended openers were not always useful. Some students would not tell of important experiences because they did not remember them immediately, they took them for granted, or they censored them for such reasons as that they (the pilot interviewees) were seeing them as personal deficits rather than collective issues.

<sup>38</sup> Baer-Doyle, T.F., 1984

Since a person is not separate from their biography and present situation,<sup>39</sup> the unique value of this pictorialising lay in its simultaneous inclusivity, possibility and immediacy, for the *relations* between educational factors as well as the factors themselves became quickly emphasised and thereby prompted by the interviewer.<sup>40</sup> When used as an instrument for researching, the investigator would now be continuously reminded to locate evidence of the *dynamics between two factors* ( the *influences* of 'x' on 'y').

In the interests of discursive consistency, the relation which directly connected the teacher to the student (as person to person) was referred to as a 'social relation' or a 'social-constitutive relation' because the primary intention of such activities involved the 'making of social contact'.(See Fig 2.1) Likewise, the direct link between given knowledge and potential knower was referred to as an 'epistemic' or 'knowledge-constitutive' relation (since the basis of the connection was 'making knowledge'), and a relation between the student and writing was called an 'expressive relation'.

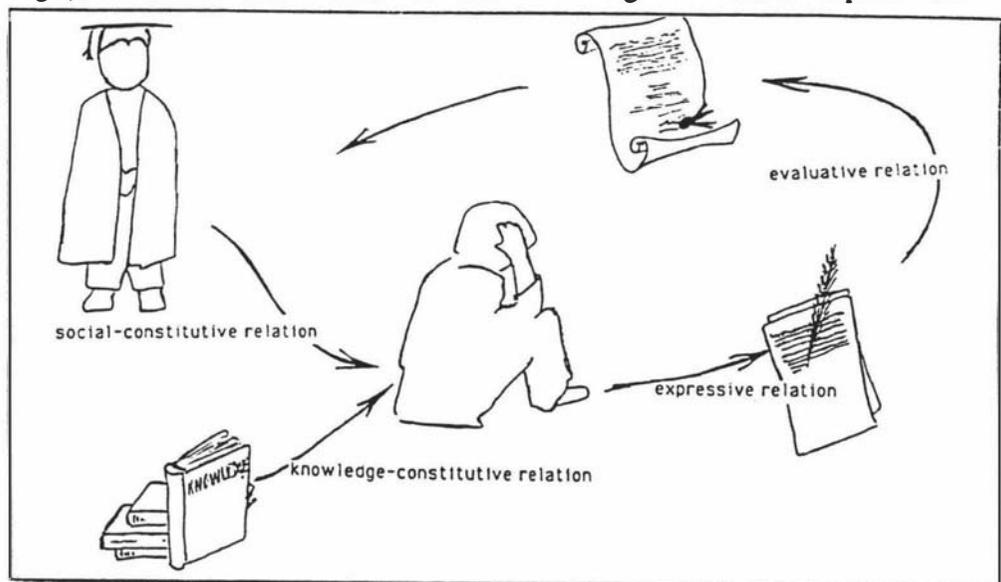


Figure 2.1:  
Curriculum as practice: 'Coming to know' as a sequence of various educational relations

These sets of names would be consistently used. On the other hand, the three-way link between the teacher, the 'knowledge' and the student was referred to as 'educational', since it indicated the supposed vocational intention of learning and teaching. However, the use of the term 'educational' was not retained exclusively for this relation, but at times would appear in conjunction with other relations, where 'education' was the intention though perhaps not the result. It is and was the difference between the former relations (the social and the epistemic), which would prove most important in the final analysis.<sup>41</sup>

As a counter to two limitations of psychological positivism (exclusivity and fragmented

<sup>39</sup> Barbara Adam, 1989

<sup>40</sup> Pictures also replace the pressure of the concreteness of nouns in verbal argument, where nouns appear to represent 'facts' and it is more difficult to sight and establish existing relations.

<sup>41</sup> It would in effect (I realised a long time later) possibly frame the study as a comparison between Cartesian and Marxian presumptions of the origins of determinism.

reductionism), the simple clarity of this symbolic representation would constantly remind the interviewer of the broad but relevant and related parameters of knowledge-action. It would also prove useful for distinguishing between the intentionality involved in the selected use of different educational relations. Searching for a breadth of complex meaning did not have to be difficult if it was conscientised by such a pictorial reminder.

Having invented the curriculum diagram as an undergraduate, I had initially used it to locate exclusions (and thus, possibilities) in current curriculum arguments. Those critiques, themselves, would eventually prompt various changes to this research topic and methodology, including:

- (a) widening the scope of the research topic to include (i) the negativities as well as the positivies<sup>42</sup> that (ii) inhabited the zone at the *margins* of knowing;
- (b) exploring the subjects' experiences with competing knowledges;
- (c) formally admitting my own ignorance by engaging in an inductive search for meaning and
- (d) realising that rather than simply finding 'a theory', I had to find an epistemology in common with my own; a publicly-authenticated way of theorising which included the potential for change, exploration and possibility.

The following discussion outlines those critiques. First, the tradition-bound educational philosophers and second, the Marxist critiques of educational sufferings, were examined for their exclusions of the curriculum diagram's 'necessary' factors and relations. The question directed towards these theoretical positions was, which educational relations in particular were marked by their absence, their unintended results or their possibilities when situated, in practice, in tertiary educational settings? In effect, though I did not realise it at first, I was seeking transcendental evidence of a range of negativities. The relationships between these two bodies of thought and the curriculum diagram showed how each approach identified either a positivity or a negativity, (as a prescription or a critique) but failed to be able to account for the tensions between the positive and the negative within themselves. Consequently, each theory demonstrated a position which provided little hope for a new beginning. It appeared, first, that the prescriptive philosophic theory emphasised the 'knowledge-constitutive' relation (in terms of the curriculum diagram), but justified it on 'social-constitutive' grounds. Then second, the Marxian-based social theory generally restricted its critique to the 'social relation' between teachers, students and evaluation. In all, I found that the sufferings produced in tertiary education by the exclusions of these theories, demonstrated the value of immanently analysing socio-educational theory *in practice as practice*.

One of the first issues that arose in reading *philosophers'* ideas was their emphasis upon knowledge selections that would provide the possibility of some 'good' in an individual's later life. Paul Hirst,<sup>43</sup> for instance, claimed that his 'forms of knowledge' provided the necessary cognitive content for a form of social '*curing*' by '*initiating others into a form of life which they regard as*

<sup>42</sup> Though I would remain unsure of the theoretical meaning of those terms (negativity and positivity) for some time (see Chapter Three).

<sup>43</sup> Hirst and Peters (1970) and Hirst (1975)

*desirable*'.<sup>44</sup> His claim was simple, so simple that when applied to an adult's education, to assume that some person could adequately judge and transmit what *'was good for'* another adult's future was itself highly problematic. Concurrently I had found in practice, for instance, that social work students at university (whose presumed duty in later occupational life was to provide a socialising curriculum for deviants), scored far lower on their possession of social skills<sup>45</sup> than did aberrant and imprisoned teens themselves.<sup>46</sup> From those limited findings it seemed obvious that the social reform of 'deviants' was not about to be achieved through indoctrination. 'Deviants' indeed had more to teach social workers about social skills than the reverse.<sup>47</sup> In terms of the curriculum diagram and the philosophers' position, what amounted to Hirst's 'social-constitutive relation' had been conflated with the 'knowledge-constitutive relation' and thus when merged, formed a combination which was fixed rather than flexible in character. Even so, in the dichotomous world of traditional philosophy, the negative reverse of a positive knowledge-constitutive situation was surely more accurately 'to not know' rather than something like the completely different aim (the social constitutivity of normalised social relations). Indeed, the philosopher's view of a negative knowledge-constitutive relation was left in need of investigation.<sup>48</sup>

While the antithetical side of each relation could have produced clues to different solutions, the full range of educational relations (according to my curriculum diagram) was never taken into account in our readings of Hirst and Peters.<sup>49</sup> The analytic philosophers' own discipline had advocated a 'way of looking at the world' that appeared to have limited their possibilities to full knowledge.<sup>50</sup> In addition to my former criticism, for instance, by externalising and distancing<sup>51</sup> a particular 'objective' conception of 'knowledge' within their discipline-blinkered vision, they had neglected to account for a student's private knowledge and subjective ways of knowing. I reflected upon the negative space of this exclusion. It seemed to me that within Hirst and Peter's truths, it was the negative conceptualisation of the knowledge-constitutive relation which provided a fruitful line of inquiry. It seemed quite likely that the disjunction created by experiencing conflicting forms of

<sup>44</sup> Hirst and Peters, 1977:48f

<sup>45</sup> Thorpe, L.P., Clark, W.W., & Tiegs, E.W. (1953) *'California Test of Personality'*.

<sup>46</sup> Baer-Doyle T.F. and Dixon, R. (1981)

<sup>47</sup> cf Richard Pring (1972:128f)

<sup>48</sup> In the material I studied, these particular philosophers (Hirst, Peters and the London School in general) seemed unable to account for the non-acquisition of knowledge. Neither did they (appear to) account for the alternative life-knowledge the students brought with them to school. Inside the blinkered boundaries of philosophy itself, the experience of personal life was apparently not considered to be 'knowledge' at all. Indeed, those absences (of the obverse of knowledge-constitutive situation) seemed to stem from the philosophers selective negligence of the subjective world, for only in a distanced way did they take into consideration its complex habituations. Perhaps if the philosophers had examined their own subjective experience then they may have recognised the omission of 'non-acquisition', (otherwise known as the negation (absence) of a negativity (error or ignorance) or an alternative), from their explanations. For instance, though students came to school with home-based knowledge and ways of knowing, these philosophers seemed intent on selectively negating this foundation by introducing the children to inherent 'syntactical' cues (Schwab, 1964:249f) of academic-aligned disciplines (Hirst, 1977:285f).

<sup>49</sup> *There is a gulf between the ideas by which men judge themselves and the world on one hand, and the social reality which they reproduce through their actions on the other hand.* (Horkheimer, 1986:268)

<sup>50</sup> Knowledge as both a personal and social constitutive act. *'Any disagreement among scholars is frequently more reminiscent of politics than scholarship. Philosophy, sociology and psychology jealously guard their respective disciplines, decide what is to count as good philosophy, sociology and psychology and close their ranks when alternative proposals are made.'* (Pring, 1977:129)

<sup>51</sup> Another meaning of 'objectified': that is, limited by notions of either intellectual space (abstractionism) or geographic context rather than either of the social distinctions: of 'I' from 'we' or of people from ideas.

knowledge in different social contexts, like home and school, could be the very reason for failing to 'come to know' or lacking 'success' within formal education. It was the idea of *conflicting knowledges* that thus appeared important. The difference between personal and 'public' epistemologies had certainly caused a befuddlement of my own ways of knowing when, as an adult, I entered university (Chapter One). Seeing how adults coped or were coerced by the competing or compatible forms of knowledge of home and school could prove to be a most fruitful nexus for inquiry.

As a result of this critique, the original research topic began turning about. It was becoming evident that a singular *positive* answer was limited and exclusive in its range of explanation (as psychology had shown), while within the negativity of an educational situation, there existed a wide range of possibilities. The negative knowledge-constitutive relation for instance, could embrace the *multiple* possibilities of 'failing to come to know' because of ignorance or inability, or mistaking an idea, or because of lying or deceiving about knowing (eg, selective negligence), or of never having accessed the ideas in the first place (naivety). Given this variety of 'negative' possibilities and the need for an inclusive vision, it seemed more important to investigate the *margins* of knowing if only because, there, on the polemical boundary between knowing and not knowing, one might find the interactions and results of competing knowledges *and* of competing ways of knowing or not knowing. Moreover, I came to believe, a study of the margins of knowing would be a useful tool for possible social action, because an emancipatory education<sup>52</sup> required more of a release from the state of not-knowing than an increase in the state of already-knowing. Once adults had *started* to come to know, they could often continue alone.

As this research topic grew in complexity, so too did my confidence for it to become an *exploration* of educational possibility, as opposed to a search for proofs. Two ideas from the critique of Hirst and Peters abetted this decision. First, there was the possibility of exploring a subject's concurrent experience of alternative knowledges (for instance, of public and private ways of coming to know). Such a study might provide detail on the different forms of negativity which exist in situations of conflict. Secondly, turning the topic about so that the marginality rather than the orthodoxy of knowing was studied, increased the possibilities of critiquing competing social definitions of 'successful' knowledge-action. Taken together however, this change in the topic signaled a need to explore further the theoretical writings on the nature of positivity and negativity (Chapter Three). A deeper understanding of the different explanations of this duality and the tensions between them, might clarify how one 'context' determined the knowledge-constitutivity of another,

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<sup>52</sup> At that time I possessed only the meaning of this term, not the term itself. Until then the terms 'just', 'liberatory' or 'humanistic' were more likely to have been used. 'Emancipatory' is however a more exact word for the purpose of expressing its political intent rather than only the moral or social.

so that eventually an adult habituated a marginalised (or 'radicalised') personal epistemology. In turning the research direction about, like Plato's allegory in the cave or Popper's upending of verification principles, I was determined to examine the boundary space in which a student was *capable* of knowing but *not yet* knowing.<sup>53</sup>

The second curriculum area critiqued with the aid of the *curriculum diagram* was the Marxian-based idea of the influence of power within education. Learning Marxian educational theory was restricted, because the model using it was founded on the same hypothetico-deductive lines of inquiry as the material being taught. Only when the objectified theory was overlain by the complex subjective experience of undergraduate study, did contradictions between the different educational relations of the theory and its practice become apparent. Thus, an initially-exciting experience of objectively analysing the abuse of power in different educational contexts turned sour when the subjective experience of learning the theory in our lecture halls, was itself fraught with sufferings of a linguistic, conceptual, and critical nature.<sup>54</sup>

There were several reasons for this. First of all, knowledge in general not only possessed a content and a way of knowing, but as 'public' knowledge it was often-times expected to be communicated within a particular vocabulary. Problems arose in class when students resisted using Marxian terminology in favour of their own synonyms, and then this lack of linguistic reproduction was interpreted by the tutor's evaluating our work as a situation of 'not knowing'.<sup>55</sup> Some education auditors obviously thought that *thinking* and *saying* amounted to much the same 'thing'.<sup>56</sup> Yet in terms of my curriculum diagram, different educational relations were implicated. A 'knowledge-constitutive' understanding did not include the social communication of an 'expressive relation'. For instance, not only did thinking and saying occur at different times in the sequence of learning, but when adults had experienced 'power and control', prior to attending university, for example, they had often developed their own words to discuss it. Thus, while adult students used university courses to access others' ideas, they did not always succeed (or even attempt) to access the others'

<sup>53</sup> Foucault (and Marx) also attempted to address this problem of studying negativity. Foucault's problematic was "a question of establishing a method. The problem is to know whether this mystery [sexual misery] should be explained negatively by fundamental interdiction ... or whether this misery is the effect of procedures which are much more complex and positive ... [Marx] refused the usual explanation.. He said in effect: given what capitalist production is in its fundamental laws, it can't help but to produce misery. ... Marx substituted the analysis of production for the denunciation of theft. Other things being equal, that's approximately what I wanted to say. It's not a question of denying sexual misery, but it's also not a question of explaining it negatively by repression. The whole problem is to understand which are the positive mechanisms that ... result in misery." Foucault, 1989:140-1 Foucault appeared willing to study the negativity as it arose from a seemingly positive situation. However, the nature of my question (i.e. adults 'coming to know') possessed a definite boundary (the state of knowing) which was reasonably clear even where the boundary between knowing and not knowing might be contested or resisted. As a consequence I would be able to examine that interface between the positivity (coming to know) and negativity (unable to come to know) to see what tensions existed within that epistemic space. The place of contestation would appear to be especially fruitful for understanding the *social relations* of knowledge-action.

<sup>54</sup> In a formal research project on graduate study (Baer-Doyle, 1981). This study fulfilled two functions. First, as graduate president, I needed to collect information to verify our request for a Faculty graduate advisor. Secondly, it was one of three pilot studies for this thesis.

<sup>55</sup> "...a social text interposes itself as a text between readers and the world as the world's reflection, thus hoping to reproduce it in fact." (Agger, 1991:45)

<sup>56</sup> R.E. Young (1989: 30) claims: "The closedness to non-experts has concealed the inner connection between rationality and meaning. It has produced a rationality which is meaningless and even meaning-destroying." ....The overpowering criticism of the misuse of the conceptual names is an extended form of instrumental reason. It provides a key ideological support to expanding and legitimising the interest of intellectual

language as well. Without this realisation, some tutors nullified the students *correct* knowings if, as the basis of their auditing, the tutor was looking for conceptual terminology, and thus conflated the 'expressive relation' with the 'epistemic (knowledge-constitutive) relation'.<sup>57</sup> The temporal sequencing of my curriculum diagram validated its usefulness as an instrument for the deconstruction of such ironies. These contradictions between the production and deductive reproduction of knowledge would become problematic in the second situation - of reproducing others concepts as if those were the only possible meanings - and this would eventually result in an altered state of the methodology of this study.

In the second problematic situation, *conceptual* dilemmas arose within the graduates' experience of being urged 'to choose a theory' for deductive research. This was tantamount to an exclusion, because being forced into deductive study effectively gatekept them from their own production of *new* knowledge. On the one hand, urging prescribed a view of theory as more universalistic than relativistic (if the graduate had to find new evidence of established concepts.) On the other hand, these graduates (who were more given to reasoning in social rather than epistemological terms), saw the deliberate reproduction of another's ideas not only as conceptual determinism but as plagiarism in its pure sense<sup>58</sup> - or poorly-conceived patronage to an intellectual hero.<sup>59</sup> There were however, a third set of reasons why this activity was poorly conceived. It seemed to me that adopting someone else's abstract meanings was essentially incorrect for it re-placed the potential knower's intellectual 'responsibility' to conceptualise and theorise.<sup>60</sup> After all, was the development of mind not the purpose of a university? Such a publicly-promoted (though diplomatically implicit) misuse of the student's mind (the explicit use of other's conceptualisations) reproduced my earlier comment (Chapter One) on the use of statistical formulations (of psychology) as recipes of proof, and legitimisation of what the graduates were supposed 'to know'. The expectation behind being urged to 'choose a theory' seemed to be that in 'adopting' theory, graduate researchers were 'guaranteed' of finding 'a correct answer', thereby producing a 'successful' thesis. The *guarantee* of this (limited) form of success seemed the paramount objective.<sup>61</sup> Thus those research students who were reproducing evidence of Marxist ideas such as hegemony, ideology and power in their thesis, were themselves embroiled in the very practices they were critiquing - whether by their

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[academic] power.'

<sup>57</sup> *The muteness of men today is largely to be blamed on language which once was only too eloquent against them.* (Horkheimer, 1982:39)

<sup>58</sup> cf 'Among those who appeal to the critical theory today some with full awareness degrade it to being a pure rationalisation of their current enterprises. Others restrict themselves to shallow concepts which even verbally have become odd sounding and make of it a levelling-down ideology which everyone understands because no thoughts at all pass through anyone's mind.' (Horkheimer, 1986:251)

<sup>59</sup> As Richard Feynman, Nobel Laureate in Physics, 1964, remarked, "It is like a lot of worms trying to get out of a bottle by crawling over each other. Its not that the subject is hard; it is that the good men are occupied elsewhere." (1988:92)

<sup>60</sup> Not all intelligent people are avid readers or possess portentous memories. As a friend remarked about his 'bookedness', *The trouble is, the university thinks it is 'the only show in town' for abstract thought.*

<sup>61</sup> Fear of error and fallibility seemed very powerful determinants in expressing what one knew, if not also determining how one came to know. '... truth is not merely the rational consciousness but equally the form that consciousness assumes in actual life. The dutiful child ... is possessed by a fear of departing from the

consent or not. Restricted to this deductive dependence on other people's ideas, how 'free' could the mind of an intending-knower be? The transcendent basis of objectified deductive methods in fact reproduced the very sufferings that an immanent critique could have avoided.

In terms of the curriculum diagram, both the knowledge and one particular way of knowing (the distinct epistemic form of deductivism) were being predetermined, as the potential researchers' intellectual space was ignored. With the urging to reproduce externally-referenced concepts, there was no dynamic 'epistemic relation' (between knowledge and the knower) since the potential knower could not invent or (publicly) see things in a different way.<sup>62</sup> And if the 'epistemic relation' was not invoked then, in turn, what did this definition of 'success' generally mean in terms of knowledge-activity within education? Was there any relation between the social logic and the epistemic? With this negativity, once again, the diagram of the social context of curriculum practice had validated its purpose. But how could this issue of ways of knowing be redressed in the investigatory activity of this thesis itself?

Overcoming some of those traditional assumptions about graduate research required inverting the issues surrounding deductive inquiry. I believed that methodologically, the centrality of the researcher's ways of knowing and theorising needed to be acknowledged immanently, and that the test of a thesis was its intellectual integrity rather than its (hidden) terror of error, and therefore its subservience to the concepts of 'famous' others, and the search for infallible truth. It seemed to me, that the problem for this thesis would be to find and maintain a theoretical position which included conceptualisations of ways of knowing, and yet possessed the epistemic potential for change and for exploring possibility. At the most basic level, it seemed to me that to 'find a theory' could also mean 'to find a way of theorising', if only because 'theory', like 'knowledge', was both a noun and a verb.<sup>63</sup> The urging to find a theory' could surely include a theory of knowledge and ways of knowing. For myself there was a two-fold reason for basing 'the theory' in social epistemology. Not only was the topic under investigation to do with knowledge-action and people's ways of knowing (epistemology), but also such a practice was carried out in the social world. To understand the relations between the individual potential-knower and the social context within which they acted, was paramount. Also, in terms of researching, rather than presuming that in 'finding a theory', one knew an answer(s) in advance but required external assistance with ways

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*facts which, ... the dominant conventions ... - cliché-like - have already moulded; his anxiety is none other than the fear of social deviation.'* (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972:xiv)

<sup>62</sup> On the one hand, 'external referencing' is a recognised state of psychological dependence. On the other, "Habermas argued that Marx [himself] failed to distinguish carefully enough between knowledge gained from causal analysis and knowledge gained from self-reflection and interaction. As a result, Marxism has not been able to secure an adequate ground in voluntarism, instead falling back on the fatalism of positivist determinism.... [Habermas] argues, we must work even harder to reconstruct Marx's historical materialism in a way that gives more credence than Marx did to the categorical difference between knowledge gained from self-reflection and knowledge gained from causal analysis and technique" (Agger, 1991:25)

<sup>63</sup> Adorno, in Rose, 1976

of proving it (following the methodological 'recipes' of transcendent and objectified hypothetico-deductivism), one could create some understanding of at least one alternative way of coming to know (e.g. the researcher's examined personal epistemology), but assume ignorance of the substantive understandings sought. This would still allow room for the researcher to accept the tutelage of a patron or mentor, but one with whom one shared more of a common way of knowing than a common knowledge. Convolved though this argument may seem, by coming to an understanding of one's own ways of knowing, and the possibilities or limitations thus entailed, the ways to study other people's knowledge-action was to become much clearer.

Thus, it was my subsequent claim that researchers in education (especially), needed to 'find a theory' that generally possessed the same way of looking at the world *as themselves*, and did not separate them from 'the wavelength' of their cultural base.<sup>64</sup> In other words, for me it meant I needed to find a public epistemology which matched my private epistemology; one that did not denigrate ignorance but nurtured the exploratory and imaginative nature of the reflective reasoning necessary to overcome it. Only with that premise could I authenticate my own ways of reasoning and claim intellectual responsibility for whatever eventuated. To create a critical theory, for instance, would mean to me that the epistemic basis of a genuine critical theorising was employed, not that the particular 'findings' and 'conceptualisations' of other critical theorists were set up for confirmation or rejection in the light of new evidence. I wanted to find a position which was not bound up in notions of conceptual absolutes, and I needed a theory in which the margins or pains of education were not hypostatised but were investigated for their emancipatory hopes. This alteration from a prescriptive and ontologically-focussed research aim to an exploratory and epistemologically-focussed aim still satisfied the essentially-social demand 'to find a theory' but in terms of the curriculum diagram, it also overcame the prescriptive dilemmas of deductivism by including my own knowledge-constitutive interests.

The third issue which arose for students in learning Marxian theory in education, concerned the urging 'to be critical', yet finding the request confusing for it countered the theory's notion of 'praxis'. Praxis was equated (by these students) with using the theory to take a subjective look at a social setting they already 'knew'. Within this, it seemed that the whole idea of 'being critical' meant to be subjectively empathetic with those living in that setting under conditions of unjust 'suffering'. But the subjective sensitivity necessary for empathetic reasoning was negated by the contrary demand of tertiary education to 'be objective'. So just how were these adults to be objective in their academic reasoning and simultaneously subjective in their understandings of how this theory applied to their world? This dilemma needed to be seen in practice. On the one hand,

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<sup>64</sup> Kvale, S. 1988

buried in the Marxian world of objectified and objectivated readings, people were no longer persons but were (for instance) gendered or classed identities. Personal pronouns did not exist. All too often the theorists addressed issues of distanced teachers and distanced pupils, distanced knowledges and distanced evaluations but not the too-close, too-painful, overly-subjectified world of the complex present. On the other hand, some teacher students (my study of graduates had found) had experienced profound guilt, as they recognised their own contributory negligence in the educational suffering of their pupils, but were unable to find anything they could even begin to do about it in these academic courses.<sup>65</sup> They felt they were 'allowed' to criticise the sexist practices of another culture or social class, for instance, but not their own university lecturer or the local school teacher who displayed the same shortcomings. In social as well as epistemic terms therefore, what did this notion of 'being critical' mean in the classrooms where these adults sat listening to public and publicised versions of radical doubt while embroiled in the situation of a contradictory praxis? Why was the basis of 'objectivity' not itself subject to critique, especially in its relation to 'praxis' and 'social action'?

In social terms, the urge 'to be critical' alienated the potential knower (whether graduate researcher or student) from the possibility of becoming a social change-agent and this was especially ironic for a theory which claimed dialectical relations at its foundation. In fact, the situation forced those students who felt a moral imperative to 'do something' in practical terms, to be left in a situation of oppressive suffering. This paradox between a theory and its tertiary practice appeared to assume that the educational intentions and involvement of a university were not to be equated with societal intention and involvement. Town was to remain objectively distanced from gown. If this was the case then it introduced a second issue. If these really were two different worlds, two separate and distinguishable contexts, then the fundamental basis of 'suffering' explained by a Marxist theory of *the educational context* should surely have differed somewhat from the fundamental basis of suffering explained by a Marxist theory of *society in general*.

If the world of education is to be seen as different from the world of social living, then I would argue that 'suffering' in the context of education should be an intellectual conception with social implications, rather than a social factor with intellectual implications. Surely *social* alienation alone could not be the key factor in preventing the state of coming to know. After all, although social sufferings such as sexism may determine a lack of *success*, the same suffering and pain (a questioning of the 'harmony' of reality<sup>66</sup>) could stimulate the reflective reasoning so often urged in

<sup>65</sup> Some may ask 'so what?', but a sensitive and caring person could have found little way out of the guilt, if only because even if they chose to change the culture and politics of their particular social class and context, they were unable to alter their race or gender. As this complex contradiction between the public objectified knowledge and personal subjectified ways of knowing caused a situation of 'not knowing', several students withdrew from the battle to overcome the academic's paradoxical obeisance to Marx while others quietly questioned the contradiction within which they lived and learned. Students who resisted the hegemonic practices by engaging in creative intellectualising would suffer either the discomfort of deliberate mis-use of word(s), or the guilt of their selective avoidance of concepts. Either way (in that public world of education), the student was 'bound' to look stupid or naive unless the quality of their use of mind was already accepted and trusted. This 'requirement' was extremely difficult ground for a new graduate student. There were easier theories to use in research, and unsociable-idealists or silenced graduates retraced their steps to them.

<sup>66</sup> Questioning the assumptions of the 'positive' in life.

a knowledge-constitutive relation.<sup>67</sup> Between 'social-constitutive' and 'knowledge-constitutive' relations there lay the potential for either a social action to influence thought, or for thought to influence social action. It was not a question of whether one was an idealist or a materialist. In formal education such polemical distinctions were superfluous. While everyday society might legitimately be critiqued for the negativities of the 'good life' (social 'sufferings' of racism, sexism, etc), the *essential* negativity of the educational sub-world was surely somewhat closer to the situation of 'not-knowing' than to 'not being'.<sup>68</sup> Had Marxist educationalists ever reflected upon their materialist privileging of social-constitutive relations (making 'friends') at the cost of denying knowledge-constitutive relations (making knowledge)? Educational practice might be (or even should be) as tied to idealist as to materialist factors. Perhaps it was the tension of the relations between these very factors which required critical examination.

Returning to the critique in tertiary education, in epistemic terms, urging the graduates 'to be critical' followed a similar line of exclusion. Teachers failed to encourage an idealist originality in the knowledge-constitutive relations of their students,<sup>69</sup> though the reasoning for this process was unclear. It was as if (in the graduates course work) the potential *to think* through future social action was aligned (by their teachers) with becoming too personal, too subjective and too relative - and that in turn this might somehow reduce the student's critical thinking from a conceptual level to the opinionated level of 'common-sense'. Yet was this really a question of objectivity versus subjectivity or of transcendent inquiry versus immanent? <sup>70</sup> What was clear was that the *flexibilities* inherent in the praxis of dialectical reasoning were not employed in these courses, in spite of the concept of the dialectic being treated with an objectified reverential respect. Where 'being critical' was concerned, the notion of critique appeared to relate only to identifying single negatives (contradictions) in supposedly-normative but distanced situations, such as the locating a social injustice that was contrary to an assumed social 'truth' (such as 'equity'). In other words, it seemed that 'to be critical' was to simply to suggest replacing one negative idea with one positive idea on the epistemic grounds that there was just '*one way to one truth*'.<sup>71</sup> Eventually I would realise that the difficulty lay in the positivistic adherence to the principles of identity (Chapter Three).<sup>72</sup> Later I would theoretically realise that some graduates had been markedly disenchanted with the identificatory thinking of universalised abstractions and that in place of such objectified practises,

<sup>67</sup> Habermas, (1971:73 and 1974:257), Paulo Friere (1972); Jack Mezirow (1981:3-24); and R.E.Young (1989)

<sup>68</sup> An epistemology rather than an ontology.

<sup>69</sup> "*Dialectical imagination* (Jay, 1973) is the ability to view the world in terms of its potential." (Agger, 1991:24)

<sup>70</sup> The 'unconnected' or non-integrable becomes mortal sin. Thoughts are drastically and fully brought under control by societal organisation. For every scientific assertion is on principle tested by every approved scientist of the discipline, irrespective of his mental (geistig) constitution. And all spiritual activity should be repeatable afterwards by any other arbitrary individual. Understanding must practically present its staff ID, if it wishes to be tolerated. It is 'evidence' sought not for its intrinsic merit or content, but rather as a print-out of directions for future data. Thus cognition does not linger over its object for the sake of elucidating it. It does not really refer to (meinen) its object at all, but rather degrades it to a mere function of the schema under which it is haughtily subsumed.' (Adorno, 1982:4)

<sup>71</sup> Reflecting an Hegelian synthesis, this hegemonic feel for 'one truth' may well have been exacerbated by compounding a teaching 'truth' with a research 'truth'.

<sup>72</sup> "Positivism suggests that one can perceive the world without making assumptions about the nature of the phenomena under investigation. Its notion that knowledge can simply reflect the world leads to the

they wished to critique situations more relative to their own. But until I had located this philosophical understanding, I too felt the graduates' discontent with a non-dialectical form of 'critical' reasoning, and felt conscious of a need for a new epistemic basis - especially those possibilities of conceptual flexibility offered by the ideas of *positivity* and *negativity*.

In terms of reconstructing a method for being critical in this study itself, the curriculum diagram's distinction between 'social' and 'knowledge-constitutive' relations, for instance, would enable one to locate the details of conflicting tensions of marginality and negativity, but such description did not allow for critical analysis or an argued reconstruction. The need to understand the epistemology involved was becoming apparent if ever I intended to metacritique such tensions. Locating and critiquing the complex involvement of multiple negativities (such as ignorance, naivety, or selective negligence) would eventually, I hoped, enable the resulting 'critical' theory to move beyond the current stalemate of Marxist critiques of education.<sup>73</sup> Until I understood more about different epistemic positions, critical reason was enabled in part by distinguishing between details of the social, epistemic and other educational relations within my curriculum diagram.

In conclusion, examining the linguistic, conceptual and critical dilemmas of learning Marxian theory had shown that the curriculum diagram was not only broadly inclusive of different types of educational relations, but also that its basis in a temporal logic (the sequence of social actions involved in coming to know) enabled the viewer to distinguish between particular actions and thus, maybe, different intentions and educational tensions.

However, the curriculum diagram was intended to be more than a normative representation. It also provided the potential for examining possibility and change. Indeed, the very 'logic' of a dialectical way of reasoning had been implicit in its formation but since this process could not be concretised pictorially, it would probably remain more a factor in the researcher's visual mindset (personal epistemology). However redirecting the focus of the research question would provide one way in which to overcome this issue.<sup>74</sup>

In the practical testing of the curriculum diagram (by critiquing two different theoretical positions) a change in the focus of the research question had occurred. It was my lasting impression that the analytic philosophers had denegated<sup>75</sup> accounts of both the nature of 'not knowing' and of personal

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*uncritical identification of reality and rationality. One experiences the world as rational and necessary, thus deflating attempts to change it.*" (Agger, 1991:24) Emphasis mine

<sup>73</sup> After all old age, out-size and ill-health were as equally valid as race, gender and class as reasons for 'not knowing', though perhaps these issues could be less well attributed to distinguishable social groupings.

<sup>74</sup> The contra-diction was, of course, that although the topic was complex and would focus on the nexus or boundary between knowing and not knowing, in terms of discussing the topic with others in daily conversation, the research question would still be communicated in the *positive* terms of 'coming to know'.

<sup>75</sup> Althusser, 1977:131. Meaning 'masking a discrepancy in order to negate it'

epistemologies and that Marxian sociologists,<sup>76</sup> on the other hand, had selectively negated the epistemic conflicts of educational suffering. If the theorists of either disciplined persuasion did not know - any more than I did - how it was that 'knowings' were acquired or why non-acquisition occurred, then this nexus between knowing and not knowing required exploration. Thus a study of the knowledge-act at the margins of knowing became the primary focus of this research. In this way an attempt could be made to unravel the complex multiplicity of relations of knowledge-action. The problem now became how to visualise the subjective structure of the knowledge-act, for if knowledge-activity really was as problematic as those psychologists, philosophers and sociologists had previously shown, then how could it be studied in its specific form without fear of exacerbating exclusions?

### *The knowledge-act sequence*

I was still living and learning in the common-sense world when I visualised a structure of knowledge-action that involved three discrete acts.<sup>77</sup> As with the curriculum diagram, time was used as the sequential logic for it had the advantages of being the classifier closest to being self-evident, least mediated by research activity, yet still inclusive of, and focussed specifically upon all the possibilities of knowledge-practice.<sup>78</sup> For purposes in the undergraduate class in which it was invented, I 'proved' (very inadequately<sup>79</sup>) that the act of coming to know consisted of the following broadly-inclusive actions:

- internalising (abbreviated as I/.),
- reflection (.R/.) and
- expression (. /X).(Figure 2.2)

That these three acts could be self-evidently distinguished was taken for granted largely because I derived them initially from reflection on my own teaching experience.

The subjective experience of real-life had demonstrated particular 'truths' that scholars might more usually have expected justified by citation, quotation or argument. During the teaching of newly-blinded adults, I had seen that an inability to read (I/.) was not a manifestation of intellectual incompetence, (.R/.), for blinded adults read (and expressed) ideas by other than the written word. Though the nature of their mode of internalising may have influenced their later thinking, the *necessity* of a functional influence did not universally exist (and therefore required study). Since

<sup>76</sup> for instance, the 'new sociologists' but not Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein

<sup>77</sup> Baer-Doyle, T.F. (1984)

<sup>78</sup> 'If we focus on time with an open mind, then the process of seeing with new eyes and rethinking can begin.' (Barbara Adam, 1989:464). This temporal sequencing was used as an analytic instrument and although time may not have been a determiner of particular learning strategies, the sequencing clearly differentiated one 'type' of learner from another. Monaghan and Saul (1987:85-120), clarify these positions as 'The Reader, the Scribe and the Thinker.'

<sup>79</sup> I had originally (objectively and officially) 'proved' this same tripartite sequencing of the knowledge-act by reference to Piagetian theory though my claims were tenuous to say the least. I called it 'inadequately' proven because, as an undergraduate still, the basic idea was my own but I had to find quotes from any and every source I could to 'prove' the subarguments I created. I felt like a cheat though why I should have done so was unclear.

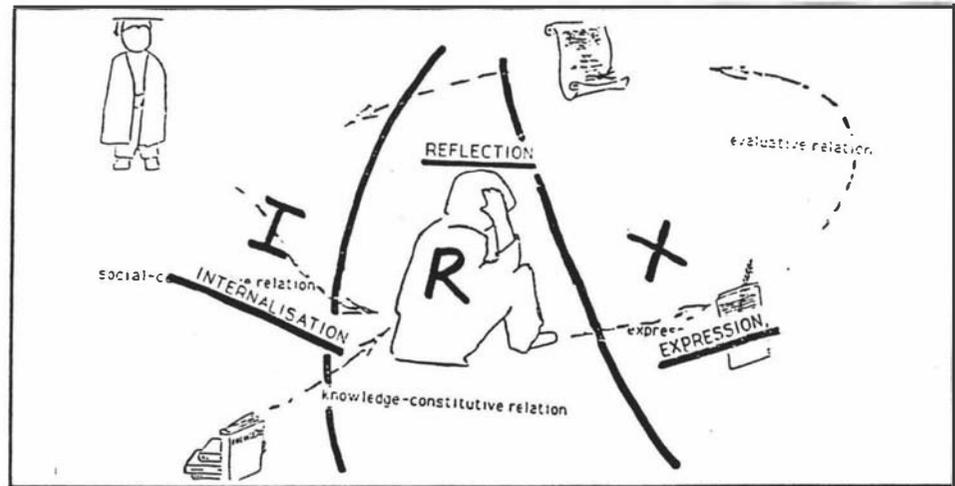


Figure 2.2  
The knowledge-act as a sequence of three 'stages'

reading and mulling things over were two different actions, 'internalising' could be separated from 'reflection'. In addition, subjective experience had also taught me that poor communication ( $J/X$ ) did not *necessarily* equate with poor reasoning ( $J/R$ ); that the silenced voices of blinded wives did not, *ipso facto*, indicate muted minds. So in my representation I divided 'expression' away from 'reflection'.<sup>80</sup> Did the sequential logic of time itself require more proof than this?

It was one thing to invent an 'instrument', but another not to let it determine artificial limits to the search for meaning. Unwilling to rigidify the discursive and conceptual possibilities of research exploration by the use of 'labels' and definitions, the distinction between and within each of the three stages of the knowledge-act was deliberately left vague. The open-endedness of these classifications could be justified on the grounds of the research intentions of inductivism, dynamics and marginalisation.

If *inductivism* was the seeking of meaning, then classifying these distinctions in the broadest possible terms held the meanings (and especially the limits of meanings) open to investigation. I wanted the study to be inclusive of the complex relations between factors even while specifically focussed on knowledge-activity. I did not want to exclude potential 'data' *before* it was even known and thus aggravate the potential for reproducing psychology's 'unreal' findings.<sup>81</sup> Definitions would have countered these intentions.<sup>82</sup> So it was that the widely-inclusive *names* ('internalisation', 'reflection' and 'expression') were invented for each stage. Had I used a less broad term such as 'reading' in the place of 'internalisation', for instance, then people may have assumed that listening, intuition, and the tactile perceptions of braille would have been excluded

<sup>80</sup> 'Communication is the consequence ... of artistic work.' (Horkheimer, 1986:290)

<sup>81</sup> Later realised as the fault of positivism rather than psychology per se.

<sup>82</sup> 'Necessity compels philosophy to operate with concepts, but this necessity must not be turned into the virtue of their priority... Initially, such concepts ... emphatically mean nonconceptualities; ... they 'mean beyond themselves'. Dissatisfaction with their own conceptuality is part of their meaning, although the inclusion of nonconceptuality in their meaning makes it tendentially their equal and thus keeps them trapped within themselves. The substance of concepts is to them both immanent, as far as the mind is concerned, and transcendental as far as being is concerned. To be aware of this is to be able to get rid of concept fetishism.... Reflection makes sure of the nonconceptual in the concept .... A philosophy ... that extinguishes the autarky of the concept strips the blindfold from our eyes'. (Adorno, 1966:11-12)

from discussion. Given my ignorance, the use of broadly-inclusive names, and the lack of definitions, I would now inductively seek others meanings rather than deductively determine the limits to the nature of each of these periods myself. Single words, without the 'benefit' of being defined, would retain the breadth of openendedness of each of the three stages of knowledge-activity.

Investigating the *dynamics* of relations between each stage of the knowledge-act was another reason for the open-ended classifications. I wanted to explore the influences on a potential knower as they moved from one stage of the knowledge-act sequence to another. Only in that way might a relationship be found which drew a behaviour more appropriately into the description of a preceding (or following) period than would normally be presumed by observation of the solitary act alone. Neglecting to cite an author in an examination essay (./X) for example, might be more authentically included in the second stage of reflection (./R.) if the student had declared that they had *reasoned* (./R.) that, 'the marker knows who said this'. If the research explanation had been left in the third stage ('expression') where the actual behaviour was manifest it would have been meaningless in terms of explaining the student's intent. Rigidifying the conceptual possibilities of each stage (./I., ./R. and ./X) could have prevented both the exploration of intentionality and study of the influences between them.

Finally, it was decided that different forms of *marginalised* (or 'radical') knowledge-action would be located within different parts of the knowledge-act. Discussed again later, the general knowledge-activity of any one person would be classified as radical if it was located predominantly within any one single stage of the knowledge-act. Thus, although information was to be sought about the complete act, by categorising answers in terms of the period of intent or the nature of the influence, the nature of radical knowledge-activity could be located where knowledge-action remained caught substantially in one period alone.

Thus, it was that the open-endedness of the classifications of the knowledge-act sequence allowed the research intentions of inductivism, dynamics and marginalisation to come to the fore.

However, in turn, this act of classification (or separation) introduced another epistemic issue. There would be little use in seeking evidence using the curriculum diagram at one time and the knowledge-act sequence at another, for this could have emphasised the investigation as being focussed upon finding static or discrete facts rather than relations of change and influence.

Moreover, given the different foci of each 'instrument', it would have ignored locating the nature of the relation between the intending knower and the social context within which they acted. The two 'instruments' required a converged focus. By creating a *matrix* of these two instruments, the multiplicity of complex dynamics involved between the individual and the social context could be found.

### Cue-card matrix

The next issue was how to locate evidence of those influential educational relations that existed between the individual and the social context. The picture of 'the curriculum' was useful for collecting a breadth of social information but could still be quite non-specific, whereas information gathered about an individual's 'knowledge-act sequence' would be specific but not necessarily socially-inclusive. A matrix could combine both sets of advantages. (inclusivity and specificity) as its axes (see Table 2.1) and in so doing precisely-focus on the topic. It would provide a known boundary to the interviewer, yet not limit the seeking of socio-epistemic relations. With the curriculum factors on one axis and the knowledge-constitutive sequence on the second axis, the former would provide spatial parameters to social action, and the latter provide temporal bounds to individual action. Information could then be sought to 'complete' each cell on the grid.

		Curriculum Influences on 'the learner'				
		1. Teacher	2. Knowledge Text	3. Learner's World	4. Expression	5. Evaluation
Temporal sequence of knowledge-act	1./.	✓	✓			
	./R/.		✓			
	./X	✓			✓	✓✓

Table 2.1

*Interrelational matrix for seeking information which was both specific and inclusive*

### Conclusion

As a part-time undergraduate living more in the everyday world of commonsense than in an academic context, and unaware that epistemology was a field of study (yet ironically, quite aware of it as a field of practice without a particular name), I created the methodological conditions for an exploratory study into adults' different ways of knowing. Since I was more concerned with inductively exploring breadths of meaning than with the deductive proving of truths, I first reconceptualised an educational context which was not exclusive or reductionist but instead reflected the complex whole of curriculum practice (the dialectical forms of different socio-educational relations). In so doing, I had argued the context should forefront the possibilities for change and difference (negatives) because my ultimate intention was to provide emancipatory hope for those who experienced educational suffering. Visualising the context (in the curriculum diagram, the knowledge-act sequence and the cue-card grid) was premised on beliefs that knowledge-action occurred in a social milieu, was capable of being influenced by a broad range of factors, and that the potential knower was central to the whole socio-educational enterprise. My intentions within these limits, were to be inclusive (of a whole range of educational relations), specifically-focussed (upon the knowledge-act stages), and to allow the intending knowers to prioritise their own information. So although the 'instruments' might have appeared technocratic,

they possessed a naive form of epistemological reason as their basis.

Though I believed a theory of education needed to get beyond the limits of (what I had yet to know as) positivism,<sup>83</sup> the appearance of these 'instruments' reflected a similar descriptiveness and prescriptiveness. The critical aspect of the study developed during the pilot testing of them. Then the focus of the research topic altered from its solely-positive focus (on simply understanding of peoples' 'ways of knowing'), to the margin between knowing and not knowing. There at the margin, for example, conflicting knowledges (such as those of home and school) and competing educational relations might radicalise potential knowers. How was such knowledge-action mediated? The question was.

In order to be critical, I had not only to alter the research question but also to *get beyond* taken for granted linguistic and conceptual boundaries. This somewhat contradictory intention (to be both opened yet focussed) was achieved by distinguishing between and providing 'broad' names for the acts of 'internalisation', 'reflection', and 'expression' and by qualifying the differences between 'knowledge-constitutive', 'social-constitutive' and other 'educational relations'. In its final state, the research was centred around a multi-faceted dynamic. I had created a new, inclusive telescope through which to view adults acts of coming to know. If the inquiry was to yield the promise it offered, there were other matters still to be considered.

Where did I go from here? In the next chapter, there was still both the theory ('finding' an epistemology in common with my own) and the practice (the scene of inquiry) in need of attention. On the one hand, the question was, how could I epistemically justify the unusual focus on negativity, radicalism and marginalisation and also, where was there a real 'context' in which to inclusively yet specifically study this quest? The grounds to combine both issues was originally located in the curriculum critiques of this chapter.

If I wanted the people of the study to be as aware of their educational situation as possible, and if it was true that social suffering could lead to a knowledge-constitutive consciousness, then I decided to study knowledge-action when it was deliberately sited in a situation of problematic socio-educational relations. Potential knowers should then be in a better position to recognise and articulate what was happening. First I would examine the bases of different epistemologies in order to justify selecting a site of conflict. Then, I would put this theoretical understanding into the practice of finding a problematic 'real' context for the empirical aspect of the investigation. These issues were only resolved, of course, when I moved from psychology into the study of social theory.

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<sup>83</sup> As reflected to me in the fields of educational psychology, philosophy and sociology.

## Chapter Three

### Contributions to contextualism of different views of social knowledge

Beliefs about the relation between knowledge and society are important. For this study, it is assumed that social knowledge occurs in an informal state in a society, and that the existence of this knowledge (particularly about 'ways of knowing') is often not recognised.<sup>84</sup> Facilitating such a recognition is the purpose of research. In this chapter, discussion centers on the relations claimed to exist between the society and each of two different ways of formalising this existing social knowledge. It is asked of each perspective, from where do questions eventuate, answers arise and proof, truth or other terms of value be assigned? Eventually, I reject the traditional positivist preoccupation with truth-bound answers, and engage in a critical contextualism centred on the potentiality of questions.

The claim is made that if informal social knowledge exists in the practical form, then it is those relations between ideas and material life which form the content of an inquiry. But expecting people to provide answers about their personal 'ways of knowing' is hindered by the fact that it is an informal knowledge which is seldom consciously recognised in its complexity. People find it difficult to articulate the details of their actions of coming to know. Therefore, I seek epistemological grounds to *forefront*, within a specific social context, the 'questioning aspect' (the problematic nature) of the informal social knowledge about 'ways of knowing'. A site in which this informal knowledge is problematic, heightens the probability that its participants are seeking their own answers and thus are both aware of and able to articulate the details of their trials in coming to know. That is, the critical contextualism of an investigatory site heightens the possibility that its intending knowers might be self-reflexively informed about the social relations of their own ways of knowing. I then use the epistemological grounds of that argument to form a method, and proceed to contextualise this study.<sup>85</sup> There are thus several stages to the development of the argument in this chapter and since this chapter has been much reduced, subheadings are employed to unravel some of its complexity. Following a brief overview, discussion centres on the limitations of Identificatory positivism, the different forms of negation, the negative dialectic as an epistemological basis for locating a problematic context, and the act of contextualising this

<sup>84</sup> Critical theory begins with a premise that people create knowledge in their active social relations. But the premise is not unproblematic. The relation between the conceptualisation of theory and its realisation in practice has long been a problem of knowledge. Even before Descartes claimed 'Cogito ergo sum', which Marx later countered ('It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness' Karl Marx, from 'A contribution to the Critique of Economy'. Cited in McCarthy, 1978:17), idealist and materialist traditions argued over the origin of theory while often paying scant personal notice to 'how our knowledge effects our living in it' (Fay, 1975:12-13). This thesis takes the premise that actualised society embodies the knowledge which both arises in it and seeks to explain it, whether or not the knowledge actually begins its life as thinking or as action. (In as much as thinking was not action or action was not thinking, and that there is an *a priori* Being).

<sup>85</sup> As reflected by Habermas, I put into practice his claim that, 'Critical Theory as a dialectical theory reflects

investigation.

### *A brief overview*

The basis for critical contextualism began with asking why my mother's reasoning had been so black and white, yet my father's so accepting of greys and charcoal. What was it about their different ways of knowing which had allowed one view to be so exclusively certain while the other inclusively questioned alternatives? Why also, had experts in teaching Marxian theory been so caught up with correctness, that they avoided discussing their own 'errors'? Epistemic explanation for each of these views was to be found in the 'Positive Philosophy' of Auguste Comte,<sup>86</sup> the views of critical theorists,<sup>87</sup> and in the reconstructive alternative of Adorno's 'Negative Dialectic'.<sup>88</sup> I came to believe that Comte, my mother and the experts had each wanted to identify the prior existence of *answers* to success (in various of its forms<sup>89</sup>) while Adorno and my father had still wanted to extend the boundaries of the known by asking *questions*. The concentration of their ways of knowing on *either answers or questions* was based (alternatively) in either Identificatory or dialectical epistemologies.<sup>90</sup>

The basic difference between these epistemologies was fairly simple. For his philosophy, Comte required a foundation in the Principles of Identity in order to formalise the proving of the 'positive' aspects of social life. Identification and positivity were his two key concepts but the things he excluded and avoided were what would prove to be important. To accomplish his aim, he excluded what could be called 'the negatives' from formal study, concentrating instead upon the certainty (or unchangeableness) of the 'facts' of life. Answers now became separated from and unrelated to the life of their own questions, divorced as theory from practice. With this exclusion, formalised knowledge became a static model *for* social life rather than *of* it. (Positivist identification '*lost all connection with any rounded knowledge that deals with historical reality*'<sup>91</sup>). Moreover, since Comte had negated the place of the reasoning subject, positivism was no place to be studying 'ways of knowing'.

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*upon its own origins and anticipates the context of its application.'* (1977:2)

<sup>86</sup> Isidore Auguste Comte. 1798-1857. Primary use is made of the *Positive Polity* (Vols. 1-4), along with Martineau, Marvin and Beesley's translations of the *Positive Philosophy*.

<sup>87</sup> Writings of Frankfurt School members are used for critique, most notably those (translated) primary texts of Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Habermas including *Theory and Practice*, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, *Traditional and Critical Theory*, *Negative Dialectics*, *Negations*, *Reason and Revolution* and *Critical Theory*.

<sup>88</sup> *Negative Dialectic* appears in a book of the same name, published in 1966

<sup>89</sup> Comte wanted society to settle from its current chaotic state into one of *harmony*; my mother sought relief from grief in *tranquility* while the educationalists presumably sought affirmation of their expertise. It will be seen that *harmony*, *calm and tranquility* and *correctness* are various social forms of 'positive' knowledge.

<sup>90</sup> While Comte was more explicit about the principles of a positivist ontology and methodology than an epistemology, some conclusions can be drawn. Unlike other critical theorists however, I am more concerned with identifying how the relations between questions and answers (the tensions between unknowns and knowns) relate to different understandings of social knowledge than with how Comte's objectivist principles prevented it.

<sup>91</sup> Horkheimer, 1986:246

The inclusive dialectical philosophy of the critical theorists, on the other hand, emphasised the relations between the 'positive' and 'negative' aspects of life, the centrality of rationality, and the changing nature of knowledge. The 'negative' and 'negations' of dialectical reason were key concepts in this form of theorising. Since a critical theory investigated the dialectical relations between questions and currently-identified answers,<sup>92</sup> then its epistemology could provide grounds for examining the complex and changing tensions of 'coming to know'. The discussion now proceeds in this sequence, beginning with Comte's positivist version of the Principles of Identity and moving towards the increasing inclusivity of Adorno's Negative Dialectic.

### *Identificatory positivism*

Identificatory principles, originally from Aristotle's *philosophy*, formed Comte's connection to the social *science*.<sup>93</sup> In his own version of praxis, Comte was attempting to join the theoretical strength of philosophy (the search for truth) to the practical strengths of everyday life (the employment of certainty in social action).<sup>94</sup> As can be seen in the following systematic development of three arguments, he attempted to identify the nature of existence through the marriage of two conceptions: singularity or 'oneness', and truth (the nature of which is explained later). The arguments were that if a truth could be shown to be 'at one' with knowledge, and knowledge to be 'at one' with life, then truth itself must be 'at one' with life,<sup>95</sup> and thereby formed the rule with which to guide life. While there was a clear line of argument for Identifying the philosophical principles of truth with science, his methods for implementing it contradicted the ways in which knowledge was formed in life itself. His truncated investigatory methods pared the complex whole of social life to the barest minimum before analysis (as well as failed to examine whether the problem even existed in the sphere in which it was studied). Indeed, within Comte's reductionist practices, within the sequential abridgement of both method and social life, the possibility of an investigation of 'ways of knowing' would be shown to have been eclipsed. Reflection on each of these three arguments of Identification begins with the claim that *truth be shown to be 'at one' with knowledge*.

In the first argument, the Aristotlean Identity principles demonstrated that for '*knowledge to be true*', a thing must be only what it is; it could not be what it was not, and it must be distinct from

<sup>92</sup> *Without a thesis of identity, dialectics is not whole*. Adorno, 1966:406

<sup>93</sup> Comte believed the Principles of Identity provided the grounds of '*an exact and complete representation of the relations naturally existing*' (Comte, 1910:8-9. Cited in Brown, 1977:14) The ontological object of the Aristotlean First Philosophy was the existence of a single entity independent of experience. *The first cause was that which itself was without cause.*' (Beesley, 1903:xii) 'It' was the essence of 'things'; the first principles, first causes and essential attributes of being as such; the science of fundamental principles.

<sup>94</sup> Comte, 1903:73 *When the relation between thinking and doing shall be properly systematised, idle and useless research will be condemned and discouraged*. (Comte, 1903:xxiii, para. 23)

<sup>95</sup> The intentions of these arguments were to form an image of Bacon's '*una scientia universalis*'. (c.f. Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972:7) Comte had found the Aristotlean Principles of Identity employed within Francis Bacon's '*philosophie prima*'.

any other thing.<sup>96</sup> While 'thinking much of certainty and precision'<sup>97</sup> of methods and results, Comte did not want scientists to engage in metaphysical reasoning as part of those methods. Instead these philosophical principles of truth provided the foundation for scientific notions of proof. That is, he thought that in the place of judgement by individual argument as method, a collectively-agreed recipe would be applied.<sup>98</sup> Though later criticised as 'tautology',<sup>99</sup> 'truth could be shown to be 'at one' with knowledge', by systematically substituting a mathematical equation for the figure itself.<sup>100</sup> By transforming questions of actuality into questions of number, Comte believed that the more people who shared the phenomena under study, the truer it would prove to be and those ideas which 'could not fit', were not obvious, or could not later be calculated, were to remain as informal knowledge - denied a formal Identity.<sup>101</sup> In the practise of my own life, for example, if what mother did (refuse to discuss bereavement) was equivalent to what everyone else did (a taboo), then she was correct or 'right' (and I was wrong). That Comte required such a 'truth' to be 'proven' by mathematics, was to be found in his thesis of 'the unity of all sciences',<sup>102</sup> where it was believed

<sup>96</sup> The Aristotelian Laws of Logic consist of (1) the law of identity ( $A=A$ ); (2) the law of contradiction (not  $A =$  not  $A$ ) and (3) the law of the excluded middle ( $A \neq B$ ).

<sup>97</sup> Beesley, 1903:137n6

<sup>98</sup> His premise was adapted from Francis Bacon, whose basic maxim was: *The course I propose for the discovery of the sciences is such as leaves but little to the acuteness and strength of wits, but ... goes far to level men's wits, and leaves but little to individual excellence, because it preforms everything by the surest rules...* (Cited in Van den Daele, 1977:34, and in turn in Harding, 1986:74) In philosophy, Kant separated science from pure reason, and further contributed to Comte's beliefs in the actual method. (Marvin, 1965:51-54) Claiming on the one hand, the unity of all forms of scientific knowledge, Comte developed on the other, the thesis of 'scala intellectus' (Comte, 1851:34; 1854:55; Roderick, 1986:53) in order to replace individual judgement (reason) with the collectively-agreed clearheadedness of mathematical formulae (recipes). First of all, mathematics not only required 'the smallest exercise of human reason', (Comte, 1903:135n62 & 158) reducing the use of mind to 'the famous tabula rasa of Bacon and Descartes', (Comte, 1903:77; 1954:165) but also gave Comte the grounds to claim that, 'once theological dogma and metaphysical jargon have given way to sober scientific research, ... men [will have] acquired real knowledge'. (Evans-Pritchard, 1970:4) Bacon and Descartes, he believed, had extolled 'the fundamental and direct affinity ... between the true philosophic spirit and universal good sense' (Comte, 1903:135). Comte also credited Cervantes and Descartes with the idea of a clearheaded directness of mind and he named this action 'rational prevision'. In his hierarchical system of the intellect, metaphysical reasoning was rated beyond mythology but as less than the 'rational prevision' of positivism. As Comte asked (1853/1954:142), 'Each of us, in contemplating his own history, does he not remember that he has been successively, with regard to his most important ideas, theologian in his infancy, metaphysician in his youth, and natural philosopher in his manhood?' As a consequence of his beliefs, in the Positivist philosophy, Law VII states, "Every understanding passes through three stages - fictitious, abstract and positive" and Law VIII continues that these stages are, "Analogous to human progress, i.e., conquest, defense and industry" (Comte, 1954:157). This thesis was subsequently rejected (e.g. Habermas, 1982: 239) and criticised as a 'one dimensional philosophy' (Marcuse, 1964).

<sup>99</sup> *The triumph of mathematics ... is tautology ... by the limitation of what it itself has already prepared and formed.* (Adorno, 1982:11)

<sup>100</sup> Comte, *Polity*, Vol.1. p378, 390. This form of equitability reflected Descartes claim of a relation between the abstract and the actual and was reflected in Comte's Unity of Science thesis. The additive and abstract qualities of mathematics were for Comte 'of all speculations, the most general, the most simple, the most abstract and the most independent' (Comte, 1903:158f) Mathematics thus formed the basis of Comte's *Law of Invariable Natural Relations: 'the fundamental doctrine within the positive logic ...'* (Comte, *Polity*, Vol.1:377) Mathematics, as the earliest of the sciences, was 'the one necessary cradle of rational positivity ... (where) common sense passes into abstract science'. (1903:158) However the act has since been criticised because science reduced society to 'the smallest number of axioms' in order to know it. (Horkheimer, 1972:138)

<sup>101</sup> The greater the number of people, the higher the possibility of signifying 'the normal'. (Comte, *Polity*, Vol.1. :390) The 'most' would form the 'normal' for, 'if we contemplate from afar, we can conceive of no more marvellous a spectacle than the regular and constant convergence of an innumerable multitude of human beings. This is the scientific picture of the phenomenon: and no temporary disturbances can prevent its being, under all circumstances, essentially true.' (Comte, 1976:121f) However, 'what does not conform to the rules of computation and utility is suspect.' (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972:6) The reduction of social life in compliance to the rules of Comte's positive science, led to accusations of 'scienticism'. For Habermas, 'scientism' is the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge but rather must identify knowledge with science.' (Habermas, 1981:4, 67)

<sup>102</sup> Comte's 'positive philosophy' was founded on the fundamental belief of the hierarchical unity of all scientific knowledge, extending from the apparent simplicity of mathematics to the complexity of sociology. The procedural logic of the lowest science in the hierarchy (mathematics) would inform the ideologic of the highest of the sciences (sociology). (Comte, 1903:41) If mathematics was studied early (Comte, 1903:164) and as a separate science 'for the ultimate purpose of equipping ourselves for sociological study' (Comte, 1903:41) then '... each individual can pass ... from the humblest mathematical ideas to the loftiest theories

that the equations of arithmetic and algebra (rather than either reasoning or statistics<sup>103</sup>) provided the first steps of social verification. Though Comte realised the resulting information might change over time,<sup>104</sup> this now-scientific *identification* would provide accurate evidence of the nature of 'common good sense'.<sup>105</sup> Truth would thus be 'at one' with knowledge in the form of a proof.

However, this reliance on mathematics produced two methodological problems for social science since Comte had concentrated on providing levels of certainty rather than levels of understanding (that is, truth of proof at the expense of meaning). First, the requirement to study social groups effectively and deliberately eliminated the study of the individual.<sup>106</sup> This exclusion of a subjective partiality<sup>107</sup> 'ignored the synthetic achievements of the knowing subject'.<sup>108</sup> Second, since phenomena needed to be 'fitted' to the rules of number prior to calculation, the complexities of human nature were reduced to those few human attributes which were both the most 'obvious' and the least able to be changed.<sup>109</sup> In fact, that same reduction to 'a few human attributes' had been

of sociology." (Comte, 1903:160, para.73) For Comte, 'the chief philosophic value [of the unity of sciences] ... arises from the fact that there is a constant and necessary identity between all these ways of comparing natural phenomena' (Comte, 1903:154f) This 'unity of sciences' formed 'one coherent system' (Comte, 1854:55; Roderick, 1986:53) which Giddens claimed expressed not only a logical order of relations but an historical one too (1976:12).

- <sup>103</sup> Statistics was, for Comte, 'the idlest discussion of nothing so hollow, indeed so absurd, as the accepted notions of modern algebraists upon the measurement of probabilities, nay of expectations ... the pretended calculation of chances'. (1903: xxii)
- <sup>104</sup> Originally, in the positivist philosophy, the study of change was enabled within the branch of 'social dynamics', with 'social statics' forming the second branch of this science. (Comte, 1976:90) The idea of statics Comte credited to Montesquieu's general law and the notion of dynamics to Condorcet. Social dynamics was the search for the laws of development, progress, movement and succession. *The consensus of the social organism extends to Time as well as Space. Hence the two distinct aspects of social sympathy; the feeling of solidarity or union with the present; and of continuity or union with the past.* (Comte, 1903:118, 1976:103, 157. Later, in the 'Journal of Social Studies' (July, 1935), it was claimed that post-1905 (the beginning of the American Sociological Society) "a strictly scientific age opened" and sociology concentrated almost solely on social statics. This, it was claimed, may have been mainly due to the influence of Herbert Spencer. (Marvin, 1965:166)
- <sup>105</sup> Comte, 1903:72 para.35; 1976:143
- <sup>106</sup> *The method of studying man apart from society is tainted with unreality. No real laws constituting a real science of man have been discovered by it.* (Comte, in Beesley, 1903:42n3) Positivist social scientists should 'avoid the puerile affectation' of 'confounding abstract research with the names of men, or even of nations.... avoid all such puerile affectation.' (Comte, 1976:173) because 'Man apart from society is a useless, or rather a thoroughly mischievous, abstraction of our psychologists or ideologists [Cousins and Condillac] which the positive spirit discards.' (Comte, 1903:42 para.21) While he required social information, he did not seek subjective or personal meanings for he believed those meanings were themselves socially determined. For instance, 'Famous men in history are heirs not authors. They do not make history, history makes them.' (Comte, 1970:24) Not only did the study of the individual introduce complications which Comte did not want in his clearheaded philosophy, but also the number of people was an important element of the proof of normality. *The man who has attained logically consistent opinions for himself has ... acquired the power of gradually rallying others around him, because there is a fundamental likeness between all members of the species ... the only possible sources of mental harmony .... How to give logical unity to each separate mind and how to bring about durable convergence between a number of minds is, in fact, one and the same human problem. The number of minds can only effect the degree of rapidity with which agreement is brought about.* (Comte, 1903:42-3)
- <sup>107</sup> as unmeasurable and subject to the whims of change or accidental appearance (Habermas, 1978:78)
- <sup>108</sup> Habermas, 1978:68. The elimination of the subject also relegated to the realm of negativities, people's illusions, distortions and error, forgettings, pains and fears, struggles, rationalisations and hopes, in spite of the fact that each of these might be part of the knowledge constitutive act of ordinary people. Only part of the investigatory world was researchable because anything that was incommensurable such as these unseen possibilities was excluded.
- <sup>109</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer, 1982. Once the particular had been chosen for study it was also necessary to carefully define the parameters of them: 'Before we can compute the amount of numbers, ... we have to state the explicit form of their relation to the numbers given.' (Comte, *Polity*, Vol.1:388) Whatever else could have counted as possible research evidence, Comte pared from reality, as the unknown particulars were mathematically attributed to independent variables, (Bolton, 1963:6) the operational definitions of which 'exclude what is not.' (Althusser, 1968/70:27) Independent variables, for instance, needed to be 'fitted' in current times, to measures of association, of dispersion, or of relationship, and to tests of significance according to whether they were nominal, ordinal or interval in character. It did not matter that the variables were most obvious and least able to be changed, and may also be the least meaningful. This reduction of the

apparent when educationalists' insisted that '*sexism*', '*racism*' and '*social class*' formed a normative basis of educational alienation. After all, true to both identificatory premises and mathematical requirements, the attributes of colour, gender or a father's occupation were both most obvious and least able to be changed. However, the most *obvious* attributes were not always the *most important* ones.

In all, these two issues would limit the inquiry into 'ways of knowing', for reasoning itself was the topic of this investigation, levels of importance were aspects of meaning and ways of knowing were subject to changes of mind. Indeed, as I was planning it, the stages of internalisation, reflection and expression (I/R/X) in the knowledge-act sequence (Chapter Two), could not even be 'independent variables' since they were deliberately unclear and imprecise in their predetermined methodological development. In developing those stages in the way that I had, this study was already excluded from the positivist possibility of locating a single unchanging certainty. So, in fact, a study of ways of knowing was outside the positivist's limits of proving even 'a truth at one with knowledge'.

The second argument centred around '*social knowledge being 'at one' with social life*'. Comte intended that research answers were to be initially presented as '*facts*' ('*for we can never 'know' anything else*').<sup>110</sup> In positivism, facts were discrete ideas, mathematically proven to exist which provided certainty to knowledge. But there was to be more than just facts. For Comte, the fundamental difference between everyday common sense and scientific knowledge lay not only in this mathematical eradication of doubt but also in the *a posteriori* connectedness of provings.<sup>111</sup> By '*connecting*' the facts' together,<sup>112</sup> Comte sought to establish a new meaning of the complex whole of social life. In a two-stage method of analysis, 'piecemeal'<sup>113</sup> facts were to be '*unquestionably*

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complexities of human life was challenged because, '*the dissection of man into his faculties is a projection of the division of labour onto its pretended substance...*' (Adorno, 1974:63) Comte claimed that the positivist science '*would be nearest truth in proportion as the phenomena in question are more important and more general, because then continuous causes are predominant and disturbances have less power.*' (1976:112) However, studying 'the obvious' was criticised for limiting 'access to reality'. (Habermas, 1978:89) '*What is gained by way of concretisation and irrefutability, is paid for by the loss of a penetrating force as the fundamental proposition is reduced to the dimensions of the phenomena used to test it.*' (Adorno, 1976:239)

- <sup>110</sup> Comte, 1853:unpaginated. '*All good intellects have repeated, since [Francis] Bacon's time, that there can be no real knowledge but that which is based upon observed facts. This is incontestable .*' (Comte, 1853: unpaginated. Vol.1. ch. 1)
- <sup>111</sup> '*Any department of knowledge is said to be in an empirical or unscientific state when facts are not yet linked together by any general fact or theory.*' (Beesley, 1903:163n5) '*No social fact can have any scientific meaning till it is connected with some other social fact; without which connection it remains a mere anecdote, involving no rationality utility.*' (Comte, 1976:104)
- <sup>112</sup> Abduction: the formation of researchable questions and foundation for the collection of evidence. (See Pierce, in Habermas, 1978: 115) '*Connection ... makes the chief difference between scientific and popular observation, embracing the same facts, but contemplating them from a different point of view.*' (Comte, 1903:30f)
- <sup>113</sup> Beesley, 1903

connected<sup>114</sup> into social 'laws',<sup>115</sup> which showed how 'all the parts ... vary together',<sup>116</sup> with 'each conforming to their own nature'.<sup>117</sup> Eventually (after the completion of many studies) the laws themselves would be systematised into 'the positive theory of human nature'.<sup>118</sup> Those facts which could be connected in this way, he claimed, demonstrated the predictable 'interdependence' of 'social solidarity'<sup>119</sup> and those facts which *could not* be connected, were to be discarded.<sup>120</sup>

It was Comte's belief that by systematically *connecting* the facts into 'one distinct and definite whole',<sup>121</sup> the underlying logic or patterns of a society ('sociology') would be formalised. However, over time such knowledge became reified, and in its forgetting,<sup>122</sup> people lost all thought of questioning the factual basis to claims. With its unchanging certainty having 'ensured' the lack of need to be critiqued, positivist knowledge became dogma,<sup>123</sup> providing the 'rules'<sup>124</sup> for 'altruistic'<sup>125</sup> social action<sup>126</sup> (or social control<sup>127</sup>) by 'regulating the wills of men'.<sup>128</sup> The certainty and legalistic nature of this simplistic positivist rationality has eventually dominated society as a form of conditioned reasoning.

It was as Adorno argued, a 'prop for the status quo'.<sup>129</sup> The social conditioning of this identificatory thought had been clearly evident to me also, in the selection of philosophical reading available when I took our baby to the public library. Logical positivism in various guises was

<sup>114</sup> Comte, 1976:114

<sup>115</sup> Comte, 1851:20. In Comte (1853: unpaginated) a 'law' is defined as the invariable relationship between facts. 'We want only the best known facts ... perfectly co-ordinated ... [to] form a ready and complete elucidation of the law.' (Comte, 1976:173; Positivist Philosophy, Vol.3)

<sup>116</sup> Comte, 1976:18

<sup>117</sup> Comte, Cours IV:p176. See also Evans-Pritchard, 1970 The positivist 'theory of human development' was to reflect '... the totality of the corresponding situation ... and the totality of the preceding situation' (Comte, Cours IV:214)

<sup>118</sup> Comte, 1976:114

<sup>119</sup> Ideological solidarity was, according to Bacon's unitary first philosophy '... a distinct whole; a whole which gives systematic form ... and must be our guide in our objective analysis.' (Comte, 1854:165) Social solidarity was a necessary response to ideological systematisation for only then could the disputatious claims of social and political life be settled. Comte craved stability though Andreski later referred to Comte's intention as an 'authoritarian utopia' (1974:7).

<sup>120</sup> 'In our search for the laws of society, we shall find that exceptional events and minute details must be discarded as essentially insignificant.' (Comte, 1976:173) Again, 'all inductions which cannot stand this test [of connection into laws] will prove to be illusory.' (Comte, 1976:114) The ultimate aim of positivism was 'the indispensable necessity of keeping in view the positive conception of human development as a whole'. (Comte, 1976:110)

<sup>121</sup> Comte, 1854:165

<sup>122</sup> Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972:230 (In translation, 'reification' was substituted for 'objectification'. Martin Jay, 1984:38)

<sup>123</sup> Habermas, 1978:89. Comte himself also used this term to refer to positivism.

<sup>124</sup> Rules were necessary for, 'working according to exact directions or a fixed routine, thinking much of certainty and precision.' (Comte, 1903:137n6)

<sup>125</sup> Comte (1851:11) defined altruism as 'the feeling that prompts the sincere and habitual desire of doing good.'

<sup>126</sup> Social action was the natural conclusion of scientisation: 'Science, d'ou prevoyance; prevoyance, d'ou action.' (Comte, 1976:69)

<sup>127</sup> Comte, 1976:69. While Comte thought the results of positivist study would provide 'a guarantee for social stability' (1851:9) yet others saw that 'positivist thought, by accepting the role of science as the careful recording of facts and limiting its generalisations to the unity of apparent reality, left the question of historical development aside and became instrumental in the prevailing system of power.' (Aronowitz, 1986:xiii)

<sup>128</sup> Comte, 1854:148

<sup>129</sup> Adorno, 1982

practically all there was in the shelves. The same dominance of a single conditioned way of thinking was reflected in my family's belief that death was a taboo topic. Reification was evident in the way 'you shouldn't think' and 'couldn't talk' about such things. Indeed it had probably been on similar positivistic grounds that Hirst and Peters (Ch. 2) had insisted that particular knowledges be taught in the school curriculum. In all, I had seen positivists pervading the public library, the home and the school, clinging to a belief that homogeneity of thought would lead to a better society. However, the extent to which the laws of 'the many' should regulate the rights and reasonings of 'the few' and 'the different' was questionable.

Comte's methodology would prove unsound as a basis to study 'ways of knowing' if only because the conditioned 'certainty' of positivist knowledge would likewise ensure a conditioned rule-boundedness to the belief that because 'most people think this way', 'everyone will' think this way. Comtean identification of 'the normal' as *a knowledge at one with life*, did not enable studies of difference or assist in the eventual public acceptance of alternatives to the status quo. In this tacit compliance to the *oneness* of the view of 'what was socially correct', somewhere Comte's notion of truth seemed to have been eclipsed by a notion of 'what was politic'.<sup>130</sup> Indeed, some clarification of how Comte expected truth to be identified with social life was still required since in there I might find some way to study pluralistic ways of knowing.

The third proposal was to identify the connection of '*a truth at one with life*', by joining the abstract and the actual as grounds for social action.<sup>131</sup> To do this, Comte rejected absolutism in favour of a somewhat universal form of social relativism, believing that the logic of one group would not mirror the logic of all groups.<sup>132</sup> Grounded in these pragmatic ideals,<sup>133</sup> relativistic truth would reflect a '*methodical extension of universal good sense*'<sup>134</sup> only one step from the concretisations of social life. Aiming '*solely at wise acceptance*',<sup>135</sup> he claimed that truth should be '*justified in action*',<sup>136</sup> '*not in an Absolute sense ... but sufficiently for our real needs*',<sup>137</sup> for the

<sup>130</sup> '... in the area of social theory, universalism quickly took over the function of a doctrine of political justification .... the totality is, as totality, the true and the genuine ... [it] is no longer the conclusion but the axiom.' (Marcuse, 1968:7)

<sup>131</sup> Positivist knowledge was '*...of the abstract and the concrete combined*'. (Comte, 1854:165)

<sup>132</sup> *Tout est relatif; voila le seul principe absolu: the only absolute truth is that all truths are relative.* (Comte, in Beesley, 1903:ix). Comte, it was claimed by Beesley, made this statement at age 20 and maintained the belief for the rest of his life, later saying that '*In the final state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions ... and applies itself to the study of their laws, that is, to their invariable relations.*' (Comte, 1853: unpaginated) Adorno (1982:7) was later to critically confirm that positivism's '*Doctrine of Being ...was the ineradicable opposite of the most abstract thought*'.

<sup>133</sup> Marvin 1965:74

<sup>134</sup> Comte, 1903:72. '*Popular good sense*' was Comte's reference to '*not too much insightfulness*'. This meaning can be detected throughout many of his speeches recorded in Beesley, 1903. '*Good sense*' was the '*mutual interaction between utility and reality*'. (Comte, 1903:73)

<sup>135</sup> Cited in Evans-Pritchard, 1970:5. It was Comte's constant cry that reality and utility be always kept in view. For instance, research tasks would arise because '*the complete body [of social knowledge] will indicate for itself ... the particular points which need investigation.*' (1976:72) Methodologically, Comte ruled that '*phenomena [facts] must be attached to matter; substances are cognisable only through their properties.*' (Comte, 1895:154) Finally, theoretical connection must test proposals '*in a constant return to reality*', (Comte, in Marvin, 1965:74) in order that they provide a reliable guide for social progress (Comte, 1903:72)

<sup>136</sup> Marvin, 1965:75

<sup>137</sup> Beesley, 1903:x

positivist necessity was to locate a society's 'constancy'<sup>138</sup> 'order',<sup>139</sup> and 'continuous progress'.<sup>140</sup>

I saw that his social relativism would have provided 'good sense' as a basis for truth in a study of 'ways of knowing' if only contradiction had not been apparent in its methodological application within positivism. While in choosing relativity as a basis for truth, Comte had demonstrated his acceptance of the social existence of *differences*, in contradiction he had persisted in methodologically requiring *certainty* of knowledge (the unchanging views of one social group only) and *singularity* of purpose ('regulating the wills of men'), neither of which allowed for pluralistic alternatives. An investigation of 'ways of knowing' would be eclipsed *not* by the desire for relativistic truth but by the *methodological exclusion* of its objects (the pluralism of many groups and changes in ways of knowing). The rule-bound methods of 'proof' could not accommodate difference within the singular stability of its facts.<sup>141</sup> Comte had simply emphasised the identificatory aspect of analysis, seeking the certain rather than the possible.<sup>142</sup>

### *'The limitations of 'the positive', 'identity' and 'the negatives'*

In all, Comte had possessed the foresight to systematically develop a whole new field of knowledge. However a study of ways of knowing was eclipsed within this Identificatory philosophy, for both subjectivity<sup>143</sup> and reasoning<sup>144</sup> were excluded as areas of study. Eventually,

<sup>138</sup> Beesley, 1903:155n2

<sup>139</sup> Comte, in Marvin, 1965:74

<sup>140</sup> Comte, 1976:89

<sup>141</sup> As Adorno (1966:332) claimed, 'Once again, as to Aristotle, the *actus purus* becomes that which does not move.' Researcher after positivist researcher had supported this growth of an externalised stasis. Deduced answers that proved correct, became frozen, unchangeable and often unchallengeable. Even positivists were to see that 'the most damaging criticism' was the claim that positivist social knowledge 'was inevitable, inexorable and necessary.' (Evans-Pritchard, 1970:19)

<sup>142</sup> Research problems should be based on 'simple good sense' because 'it was most difficult to penetrate the details of a society'. (Comte, 1976:93; cf Longino and Doell, 1986:94) Comte's intention was simply to understand 'the mutual interaction between reality and utility (good sense) with generality and colligation (philosophic spirit)' and consequently a positive tasks would aim at 'systematising the observations of good sense ... so conferring on them generality and solidity.' (1903:73) To Comte's well-trained positivist, 'research tasks' (not questions) would be apparent when 'the complete body [of social knowledge] indicates for itself ... the particular points which need investigation' (Comte, 1976:92) so enabling the researcher to form: '... the simplest hypothesis which [fitted] the case'; (Comte, 1976:143) a guessed answer rather than an articulated question. Research tasks (not 'questions') arose by separating out the 'peculiar' from the 'precise subjects' (Comte, 1976:90) and 'subjecting scientific conceptions to the facts whose connection has not been disclosed'. (Comte, 1976:88). 'Far from ever treating as questionnaire what has already been decided by commonsense, healthy speculation ... takes these notions, elaborates them systematically and so gives them a degree of generality and solidity which they could not have acquired spontaneously. (Comte, 1903: 72) Comte believed that when the question was replaced by the task, the relation between thinking and doing had been properly systematised, and 'idle and useless' research would 'be condemned and discouraged' (Comte, 1903: xxiii) He 'discarded all questions which were necessarily insoluble', cautioning wise positivists 'to abstain entirely from considering [these] mysterious questions' (Comte, 1903:54) and 'unfathomable mysteries' (Comte 1978:91) including the 'fatuous rashness of pronouncing on the most difficult questions'. (Comte, 1903:54)

<sup>143</sup> Comte, 1976:173. ('Positive Philosophy', Vol.3.) 'Man apart from society is a useless ... abstraction of our psychologists and ideologists [Cousins and Condillac] which the positive spirit discards.' (Comte, 1903:42)

<sup>144</sup> Not only Comte demand that scientists '... make a clean sweep of the multitude of useless or dangerous controversies bequeathed to us by ancient philosophy [including] necessarily empty and barren ... speculative researches ...' (Comte, 1903:73) but also he requested researchers to subordinate reason and the imagination to the observations of rational prevision (Comte, 1976:69) and to 'abstain entirely from considering mysterious questions' (Comte, 1903:54) or 'useless and dangerous controversies'. (Comte, 1903:73) Positivism allowed 'nothing to choice or intention; making people the spectator and not the shapers of their destiny.' (Evans-Pritchard, 1970:19) revision was a synonym for prediction, foresight, precognition or prescience. His insistence on replacing 'critical reasoning' with 'rational prevision', was much later criticised by dialecticians as 'robbing the intellect of any right to judge what was true or false'. (cf Goldmann, 1968) It turned reason from critique into 'a kind of adding chine', (Horkheimer, 1982:31) which it was claimed could only judge 'what is not', by 'what is'. Rational prevision, for Comte, primarily consisted of a dual act - first, the rationalising of facts into laws or systematic theory and second,

these and other ignorings would prove the undoing of positivism, in general, for while Identificatory principles eliminated doubt, it was also Comte's intention to focus only on one particular *type* of social life. Comte compounded the limitations of his philosophy by identifying only (what he called) 'the positive' aspects of life.

The distinction between Comte's key concepts of 'the positive' and 'identity' has become effectively blurred, resulting in the terms seeming synonymous when they are not. 'Identity' was the means by which he sought the singularity and certainty of 'facts',<sup>145</sup> but in 'the positive', the content of those 'facts' would consist only of what made life orderly for the majority, that is, '*predictable*',<sup>146</sup> '*normal*'<sup>147</sup> and '*harmonious*'.<sup>148</sup> Seeking 'the positive' required the exclusion ('negation') of 'the negative'. Positivity was in fact, the act of excluding those factors which did not illustrate the ordinary utilitarian values of social life<sup>149</sup> while *Identification* excluded those factors which did not fit, were not obvious and could not be calculated by his proposed method of proof. There was no suggested listing of what constituted 'the positive', but it was clearly a subset of all the informal social knowledge available to be scientifically Identified or otherwise formalised. 'Positivity', in its second and more embracive meaning, being both 'the positive' and 'the identity' combined, was thus essentially to be equated with *proving the certainties of social order* (of which people were not always yet fully aware.<sup>150</sup>) Indeed, identifying the positives which '*existed without exception*'<sup>151</sup> was necessary, for Comte, because '*it is our business to contemplate order; that we*

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'imaginatively 'seeking gaps in the system from which new studies could be appropriately begun. This foresight then acted first in synthesis and then in hypothesis formation. His denial of a more extensive use of the mind was based in his beliefs in number, normality, and the vagaries of influence. *'How to give logical unity to each separate mind and how to bring about a durable convergence between a number of minds is, in fact, one and the same human problem. The number of minds can only effect the degree of rapidity with which argument is brought about.'* (Comte 1903: 42-3) Again: '*... however grave such a disturbance of society may be, we are never at a loss to detect in it the laws of a normal state ... when we see what different opinions there are ... we may learn how completely relative all judgements are for they depend upon the notion we form of the normal type.*' (Comte, 1976:144) The vagaries of influence formed the final reason for excluding the use or study of the mind. Comte argued that the laws pertaining to the individual mind lay outside the realm of collective social logic being rather too '*dependent upon the environment*' (Comte, 1976:148) and thus illogical. *The natural tendency of our intelligence is to yield itself up to the spectacle of the world .... This is one of the vagaries of the mind.*' (Comte, 1976:148) Further, he claimed, the mind was vulnerable not only to external elements but also to the internal stimulus of the affect and vital organs. Being altogether too complexly influenced, the use of the mind by methods other than rational foresight mitigated against objectivity ('scientific' freedom and disinterest) because the mind '*disguised much error in experiment and reasoning*'. (Comte, 1976:113) Much later behavioural psychologists (notably E.L. Thorndike, cited in Marvin, 1965:196-7) adopted positivist premises and credited Comte for introducing scientific exactitude.

145 Habermas, 1978:68

146 '*voir pour prévoir, prévoir pour prévenir*'. Cited in Friedrichs, 1970:177, Evans-Pritchard, 1970 and elsewhere.

147 Comte, 1903:42, Fletcher, 1976:x

148 Comte, Cours IV:176

149 Comte's '*fundamental rule [was] that reality and utility always be kept in view*'. (Comte, 1903:77) For Comte, '*good sense*' was the '*mutual interaction*' between utility and reality. (Comte, 1903:73)

150 '*Men have, it is true, been for a long time ignorant of this order. Nevertheless we have always been subject to it and it's influence has always tended, though without our knowledge, to control our whole being.*' (Comte, 1851:21) As Comte had seen in Kant, if societies were studied on a large scale, we would '*discover in them a regular movement. What appears in the individual to be confused and irregular is seen, in the species, as a continual but slow development of original dispositions of mankind. Thus marriages, births and deaths, when regarded in the individual case, appear subject to no law which would enable us beforehand to calculate their number. Yet the annual tables ... prove ... laws of occurrence as constant as those observed in atmospheric variations.*' Kant, I. (1784) Cited in Marvin, 1965:51-54

151 Comte, 1976:93

may perfect it...'.<sup>152</sup>

### The negatives

In juxtaposition to 'the positive' was 'the negative'. 'The negative' was not a single alternative but the field of many alternatives. These 'negatives' consisted of the exclusions, the contradictions, and 'anything else that was left' after the process of affirming that which was *both* positive (orderly, patterned and normal<sup>153</sup>) and identified (shown to exist).<sup>154</sup> Comte simply 'identified' the negatives by negation (the '*continuous amelioration of the most imperfect*'<sup>155</sup>). But in 'throwing them out' without first investigating them, his Identificatory form of negation was in error, for he was now equating 'the positive' with 'the negative' (*keep this 'one' in, throw 'the other one' out*) when they were not in essence, equivalent.<sup>156</sup> Although Comte could also have Identified 'the negatives' in terms of mathematisation and factual bases, he excluded them not only because they were (he thought) socially unnecessary but also because they were the '*corollary of the fundamental laws already found in the normal type*'.<sup>157</sup> However, Marxists later Identified the 'negatives'<sup>158</sup> in, for instance, the 'race, class and gender' categories that they claimed *prevented* social order and harmony.

Comte's error was that 'the negative' was not a single exact opposite of the already-Identified (and thus mediated) 'positive', but represented the broad field of all positivity's exclusions. Among the many alternatives, a 'negative' could include those things which were (a) Identified but not positive, (b) positive but not Identified, or (c) both not identified and not positive. However, having woven all 'the negatives' into a single cloth, Comte believed the existence of them simply reflected the '*consequence of the coexistence ... of inconsistent principles of knowledge*'<sup>159</sup> or the result of '*illusory artifacts of the portentous and untrained mind*'.<sup>160</sup> He argued that these negatives could be overcome by adherence to the exact procedures of the identificatory method.<sup>161</sup> In any case, he said, negatives such as '*exceptional events and minute details should be discarded as*

<sup>152</sup> The quotation continues: '*not create it which would be impossible*'. (Comte, 1976:92)

<sup>153</sup> Comte, *Polity*, Vol.1. p 390; 1976:139

<sup>154</sup> In terms of his use of the Identificatory principles, not A = not (A<sub>1</sub> and A<sub>2</sub>) However, negativity was anything which was not A<sub>1</sub> or not A<sub>2</sub> or not (A<sub>1</sub> and A<sub>2</sub>) It can thus be seen that a negative was not in direct contradistinction to a positive.

<sup>155</sup> Comte, 1854:154 Negation was the process whereby the existence of a proposition or phenomena was denied or, as in Comte's case, was affirmed only by its contradictory.

<sup>156</sup> Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972:12. He was conflating the excluded middle (A≠B) and the contradictory (not A=not A), as one Principle of Identification.

<sup>157</sup> Comte, 1976:139 '*Early positivism ... separated ... the world into the realm of authentic, unchanging and necessary being on the one hand and a realm of changing and accidental appearances on the other ... Positivism declared a disinterest in a realm of essences that had been unmasked as illusion - in other words, in fancies.*' (Habermas, 1978:78) The Principle of Identity was so all-inclusive (or all-exclusive where not A=not A) that in time alternative strategies (such as social engineering) were formed within the positivist paradigm in order to explain why 'aberrations' were not always able to be 'drawn into the line' of expected normalcy. Because of these separations and divisions of knowledge, Adorno was to claim that the sciences are not epistemically fulfilling. (1966:5-18)

<sup>158</sup> Fay, 1975:96 This follows the Marxist postulate of material action determining thought.

<sup>159</sup> Comte, 1954:55

<sup>160</sup> Comte, 1903:35

<sup>161</sup> Comte had intended that the positivist researcher utilise a studied directness of mind working '*according to exact directions or a fixed routine while thinking much of certainty and precision*'. (Beesley, 1903:137n6) When '*minds were suitably trained*' (Comte, 1976:104f) for research work, the investigator would need '*only*

essentially insignificant<sup>162</sup> because 'it was the commonest sorts of facts which were most important'.<sup>163</sup> One could ask, however, whether Comte's confused and tacit tying together of all the negatives 'as one', would not matter if in studying the details of a way of knowing, the potential knower 'got it wrong' (that is, created 'a negative') because they had 'never heard of it', rather than that they 'could not understand it', or 'didn't use the correct words to communicate it back to the teacher'? After all, each of these alternatives concerned a different stage of the knowledge-act sequence (internalising, reflection or expression), and thus differing social relations and 'explanation'. In all, the philosophical principles of identificatory positivism were not a useful basis for explaining an unequal world,<sup>164</sup> since the two processes of positivism, that is, Identification and negation, magnified the inequitous situation of 'the negatives'. Moreover, since in fact 'the negative field' was that great variety of everything left that still begged the questions, it was there among the many possibilities, that the strength to knowledge would be seen to lie.

### *Different forms of negation*

Overall, it was the distinctions between the types of negation and the purpose of 'the negatives', that constituted the basic difference between dialectical and identificatory philosophies. Comte had adopted Bacon's *Identificatory negation*. He simply discarded negative instances. These negative instances then represented a patchwork of absences or voids within the totality of 'what was' positively known. Later it was argued that in leaving only the Identified to represent the totality of knowledge, the result was an illusion, an untruth, that had failed even to recognise that negativity was an inherent condition of its own formation.<sup>165</sup> The *dialectical negation* of critical theorists, on the other hand, made use of the negatives, adhering to reason itself as the power behind dialectical negation and to this form of *critique* as its exemplification in practice.<sup>166</sup> A variety of epistemic positions formed the bases to this form of critique, with the choice centering on whichever particular form of negation was preferred for the situation under review.<sup>167</sup> This variety of options

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*the smallest exercise of human reason*'. (Comte, 1903:158)

<sup>162</sup> Comte, 1976:173

<sup>163</sup> Comte, 1976:103 This criterion was later criticised as causing 'an inability to differentiate the unimportant from the essential.' (Horkheimer, 1986:21) It was this factor which I had already methodologically countered by allowing the subjects' to prioritise their information according to their attribution of importance. (See Chapter Two)

<sup>164</sup> Comte wanted to identify only that 'which is' and therefore 'would be' (the positive), while denying that 'which is not', and turning 'it' into that 'which would never be' (the negative).

<sup>165</sup> Arato (1982:220) who notes also that contrary to Hegel's faith that the true is the whole, Adorno and others asserted that the empirical whole was untrue. 'What is true is so only to the extent that it is not the truth about social reality'. (Marcuse, 1968:152)

<sup>166</sup> Marcuse, 1968:xiv, Marcuse, 1982:444. 'Critique, in the Kantian sense, is an analysis of the conditions of possibility and the limits of rational faculties undertaken by reason itself; assuming a self-reflective or 'transcendental' posture, reason analyses and criticises itself in the process of its world-constituting 'legislating activity'. (Piccone, in Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:ix) The dialectical logic of critique reveals, restores and reactivates modes of thought lost in history. Moreover, an advance beyond identificatory thought 'must be an advance of reason itself since the adjustment of reason itself to oppressive social institutions perpetuated unfreedom.' (Marcuse, 1982:450) Dialectical negation signals the return of the repressed. (Marcuse, 1982:449) 'Thinking is, indeed, essentially the negation of that which is immediately before us.' (Hegel, cited in Marcuse, 1982:444)

<sup>167</sup> Adorno claimed that it was important to distinguish which critique was required in which context. (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:513n1) For critical theorists there was 'no secure single meaning of dialectical culture critique ....various answers emerge ...' (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:188f) 'No method can claim a monopoly

not only avoided producing another monopolistic methodology as a scientism, but effectively countered the affirmation and reification of appearances as the singular, certain and unchanging truths of positivism.<sup>168</sup> The critical theorists' *dialectical negation* (in its various forms) was primarily a negative critique that took reflection on social relations into its very structure, at the same time countermending the certainties of Identification by making transparent the 'fact' that knowledge in contradiction and transformation could not at the same time be certain and static.<sup>169</sup>

In general, *dialectical negation* was a two-word verb used to illustrate how the enforced absence of 'the negative' from common knowledge obscured the existence of contradictory relations between people's given reality and their genuine potential.<sup>170</sup> Reinstating this absence was achieved by means of negative thinking on the dialectical relation. The first word, *dialectic*, emphasised not only the art of disputation<sup>171</sup> but the interconnected *relational* nature of all things, including relations of tension.<sup>172</sup> In the case of a critical theory, *dialectic* was primarily concerned with the complex dynamics of the relations which existed between theory and practice (the ideal and the material worlds) and 'the negatives' and 'the positive' (or Identified).<sup>173</sup> On the other hand, *negation*, as the second half of the two-word verb, was the means of finding and unfolding, or of subtracting and denying aspects of that dialectical relation. In Critical Theory, 'negation' was not an indication of things to discard, ignore or exclude in an unexamined state, as had been the case for Identificatory

<sup>168</sup> Critical theorists do not limit themselves to the critique of Comte's Identificatory positivism alone, but among other critiques include the self-reflexive recognition of critical theory's *own interest structure, self-correction in terms of the up-to-date results of social science, the point of view of totality and the dynamic relationship to its potential addressees...* (These specifications arise from Horkheimer's essay on *Traditional and Critical Theory*. Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:205) As a consequence of the breadth of their work, 'the positive' and 'the Identity' which form the focus of much of their critique do not necessarily refer simply to the scientific Identification of Comtean positivism, but cover a more general and inclusive base. This lack of a singular target, and a name for that target, has often led to them calling this focus simply that 'which is', or the currently prevailing condition of the status quo, especially as applied to those in political and technological control. Adorno criticised 'Identificatory' thought for producing reified monopolies (Arato & Gebhardt, 1982:515n48) and thus 'the emphasis on reason seemed appropriate under the circumstances where the facts as given had assumed an authority that made rational critique and thus rational alternatives, inconceivable'. Critical theorists claimed that not only were the 'facts' always conceptually - and thus socially - mediated, (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:513n1) but also that in utilising the dialectical alternative, one 'is well aware of the limits of human knowledge and rational social action, but avoids fixing these limits too hurriedly and, above all, making capital out of them for the purpose of uncritically sanctioning established hierarchies'. (Marcuse, 1968:15)

<sup>169</sup> 'Every thing and every relation of things changes in time, and thus every judgement as to real situations must lose its truth in time'. (Horkheimer, 1982:407-8) The dialectic is, in point of fact, a problem poser (McCarthy, 1978:259), a point of change (Adorno, 1982:208), a the 'driving force' (Marcuse, 1987:445), of reciprocating judgement. (Adorno, 1966:146)

<sup>170</sup> See, for example, Marcuse, (1968:xiv) *The tension between potentiality and actuality, between what men and things could be and what they are, in fact, is one of the dynamic focal points of this theory of society.* (Marcuse, 1968:69) *'Dialectical reason begins with the recognition that the facts do not correspond to the concepts imposed by commonsense and scientific reason. ... [which have] purged themselves from contradiction...in short, a refusal to accept them. To the extent that these concepts disregard the fatal contradictions which make up reality, they abstract from the very process of reality. The negation which dialectic applies to them is not only a critique of a conformist logic, which denies the reality of its contradictions; it is also a critique of the given state of affairs on its own grounds - of the established system of life, which denies its own promises and potentialities.* (Marcuse, 1982:445)

<sup>171</sup> Habermas, 1974:79

<sup>172</sup> 'dialectics says no more, ... than that objects do not go into their concepts without a remainder, that they come to contradict the traditional form of adequacy'. (Adorno, 1966:5)

<sup>173</sup> Logical relations are social relations mediated by thought, so making a critique of knowledge also a critique of society. (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:512. See also Adorno and Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.) Therefore a critical dialecticism 'subjects society to the idea of a theoretical and practical, positive and negative critique'. (Marcuse, 1968:15) *'Dialectical logic is critical logic: it reveals modes and contents of thought which transcend the codified pattern of use and validation ... [but it] does not invent these contents; they have accrued to the notions in the long tradition of thought and action.'* (Marcuse, 1982:449) In marking the 'return of the repressed', it recovers and restores them. In this manner of negating the truths of

positivism.<sup>174</sup> Indeed, as the investigatory purpose of Critical Theory was to locate the potential for transformation in the absences Comte had been complicit in creating, *dialectical negation* indicated the need to investigate relations in terms of their history,<sup>175</sup> and in 'going beyond' this, to question the relevance of its own categories.<sup>176</sup> The necessity of *dialectical negation* was essentially to investigate rather than to reify by proof of certainty. Taken together in an abstract form, the two concepts in *dialectical negation* reflected the power of negative thinking to destruct the fetishistic reification of Identity, by critiquing the ideological and social *relations* which obtained over time (history) and within the *totality* ('the negatives' as well as 'the positive'). Even in its simplest form, *dialectical negation* was the sphere of contradiction to the established order, of protest, dissociation and criticism.<sup>177</sup>

### *Variations of dialectical negation*

Among the various alternatives possible, *dialectical negation* could include the rejection of 'the positive' (after Marx's ideology critique); 'the positive' being held fast in 'the negative' in search of common ground (after Hegel's synthesis), seeking antinomy and potential within the totality (after Adorno's Negative Dialectic, in particular),<sup>178</sup> or various combinations of them all and maybe others as yet unfound. Most simply and generally expressed as 'thinking about the Other's side of the story', *dialectical negation* reflected my father's family's way of reasoning. Each and all of these 'methods' of critique held promise for locating the reality of different ways of knowing.

- former thought , dialectical thought 'is necessarily destructive.' (Marcuse, 1982: 49)
- 174 'Identity is only the continuous negation of inadequate existence, the subject maintaining itself in being other than itself.' (Marcuse, 1982:446) 'The power of negative thinking is the driving power of dialectical thought, used as a tool for analyzing the world of facts in terms of its internal inadequacy.... [It] invalidates the *a priori* opposition of value and fact by understanding all facts as stages of a single process - a process in which subject and object are so joined that truth can be determined only within the subject-object totality. All facts embody the knower as well as the doer; they continuously translate the past into the present. The objects thus 'contain' subjectivity in their very structure.' (Marcuse, 1982: 45)
- 175 'Mediation has its own implicit history'. (Adorno, 1966:52) '...progress in freedom depends on thought becoming political, in the shape of a theory which demonstrates negation as a political alternative implicit in the historical situation.' (Marcuse, 1982:450) 'Critical dialecticism implies the sorrow of concern with something which has disappeared. The concern ... was a concern with the past; remembrance of something that at some point had lost its reality and had to be taken up again.' This form of dialectical critique 'destroys the unhistorical illusion by uncovering ... the specificity of ... social formations and by pointing out the objective possibility ... of a future order based on entirely new and liberated formative principles.' (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:188f) 'To this extent, a critical theory must concern itself to a hitherto unknown extent with the past - precisely insofar as it is concerned with the future.' (Marcuse, 1968:xvi) 'It sees a historical relationship which can be transformed in this life by real men: the incongruity of potentiality and actuality incites knowledge to become a part of the practice of transformation.' (Marcuse, 1968:69)
- 176 Arato and Gebhardt, on Adorno, 1982:513n1, 515n48. 'The dialectic ... [is] qualitatively different from the positive philosophies ... it refers beyond itself.' (Adorno, 1982:3) 'The principle of dialectic drives thought beyond the limits of philosophy. For to comprehend reality means to comprehend things as they really are...' (Marcuse, 1982:446). 'The function of dialectical negation was to break down 'the self-assurance and self-contentment of common sense, to undermine the sinister confidence ... in facts, to demonstrate that unfreedom is so much at the core of things that the development of internal contradictions leads necessarily to qualitative change'.' (Marcuse, 1982:447) 'Dialectics is the quest to see the new in the old instead of just the old in the new. As it mediates the new, so it also preserves the old as mediated.' (Adorno, 1982:38)
- 177 Marcuse, 1968:xii
- 178 'The relationship of empirical social science to critical philosophy was always antinomic in Adorno's work. The ultimate reason: Adorno lost hope of discovering behind present social facts, dynamic objective possibilities.... He responded, therefore, to the antinomy of critical thought and instrumental reason, emerging ... with his own antinomic combination of immanent critique addressing (and mediating) the critical potentials of genuine work and transcendental critique denouncing the one-dimensional world of the culture industry.... He demonstrated in many of his writings the inadequacy of either immanent or transcendent critique, and the necessity of maintaining both in uneasy opposition' (Arato and Gebhardt,

The first alternative form of *dialectical* negation involved the negation of the positive, the rejection of Identity, the exclusion of the 'truth' of the status quo.<sup>179</sup> In its simple form, this alternative involved revealing systematically concealed interests ('the negatives'). Within the intention of *ideology critique*, it exposed the inherent untruths of a hierarchical valuing or privileging of 'the positive' ('what is'). In its depth form, as a '*determinate negation*', the positive was made to account for the negative by arguing the truth of the negative. In this way, the false (that which was) was confronted with the true<sup>180</sup> (that which was not) because '*the absent must be made present [part of the totality] because the greater part of truth is in that [large field of 'the negatives'] which is absent*'.<sup>181</sup> When 'the given facts' were confronted with the material that had been excluded, then the tensions of the hidden contradictory relations were also released. Thus the strength of *determinate negation* lay in revealing how aspects of life had been controlled and how the power of that determination had been systematically concealed in the interests of the status quo.<sup>182</sup>

Not unexpectedly, one of the absences or hidden 'negatives' made apparent by *determinate negation* was reason itself.<sup>183</sup> In fact, the act of *dialectical negation* drove rationality '*to recognise the extent to which it was still unreasonable, blind, the victim of unmastered forces*'.<sup>184</sup> In terms of the analysis of 'ways of knowing', the act of *dialectical negation* would prove useful for deconstructing beliefs about 'success'. A 'materialist' basis to argument could involve critiquing the 'ideology of success' in terms of what it was *really* supporting and *actually* commending. In other words, this form of *negation* would itself expose 'what was' in terms of 'what *else really* was'. But there were limits to this form of dialectical negation. When Identity was now denied its claims of truth in favour of those of 'the negative', the negative would become the new Identity. Here were its bounds. This new-Identity did not necessarily involve self-reflection on its own positing or its future as the new truth could also be hypostatized or reified by conditioned

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1982:202)

<sup>179</sup> '*...The principle of the dialectic drives thought ... to comprehend things as they really are, and this in turn means rejecting their mere factuality. Rejection is a process of thought [dialectical negation] as well as of action...*' (Marcuse, 1982:446-7)

<sup>180</sup> Piccone, 1982:x

<sup>181</sup> Marcuse, 1982:448

<sup>182</sup> Determinate negation is claimed to be '*the governing principle of dialectical thought*'. (Marcuse, 1982:449) '*The negation is determinate if it refers the established state of affairs to the basic factors and forces which make for its destructiveness, as well as for the possible alternatives beyond the status quo.*' (Marcuse, 1982:449) Ultimately, it is a political act. cf Habermas, 1978:18, '*...determinate negation applies ... to the mechanism of the progress of a mode of reflection in which theoretical and practical reason are one. The affirmative moment ... becomes plausible when we consider that ... categories of apprehending the world and norms of action are connected.*' Even in its simplest version, this form of dialectical critique reinstated the power of 'the absented', of 'the marginalised' and of 'the few' who had been denied Identity within positivism. Its power lay in exposing the very ethic used by the status quo to 'factualise' and 'totalise' their claims, so neutralising and obscuring their political intention.

<sup>183</sup> Marcuse, 1982:450. Revealing the negation of critical reason within positivism and other Identificatory philosophies was a central task of critical theorists. Dialectical negation, in this and in other epistemological forms, demonstrated how reason and reason alone, contained its own corrective. (Marcuse, 1982:450) '*The progress of cognition from commonsense to knowledge arrives at a world which is negative in its very structure because that which is real opposes and denies the potentialities in itself - potentialities which strive for realisation. Reason is the negation of the negative [which, in its factuality, has been absent.]*' (Marcuse, 1982:447)

<sup>184</sup> Marcuse, 1982:450. Dialectical negation exposed the power of reason over the false consciousness of reified thoughts.

reasoning.

A second type of dialectical negation, an adaption from Hegel's idealism, went a stage further than the previous *determinate negation* by proposing new insights based on the old, even though these too were simply new Identities. This form of *dialectical negation* involved 'holding fast' to the positive in the negative and seeking resolution of the contradiction from within the common grounds of the 'totality'.<sup>185</sup> In this way one could examine how the power and the politic of the whole (the totality of positives and negatives) was being influenced by a part. For instance, one could inquire into how particular ideologies had been reflexively influenced by a history of social relations (or vice versa), until the contradictions became internalised and taken for granted. Marcuse used this 'method' of critique to expose the hidden history of the 'abolition of the liberal mind'.

Taking the 'freedom of mind' as the invisible 'negative', he examined its historical *negation* from the period when bourgeois reason had been the 'positive' Identity, until the period when technological or totalitarian reason became the Identities.<sup>186</sup> This 'method' and Marcuse's topic suggested hope for the analysis of the current study into 'ways of knowing'. One might, for example, examine the educational history of intending knowers, seeking contradictions between the actuality and the potentiality of their different ideologies of 'learning' and 'education'. In what ways in their history, had their potential 'to come to know' been systematically negated by society

<sup>185</sup> *The appearances of reality are first recognised as such, then detached from their immediate context and are finally related to the social whole, the vision of which is fragmented by reification.... The theory discovers reality. ... This is elegant Hegelian theorising.* (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:198) Hegel's particular idealist form of dialectical negation sublated the positive ['thesis'] with the negative ['antithesis'] in a synthesis of new insights. He separated *contraries* from *contradictions* in his philosophy and the act of 'negativity' resolved the dialectical contraries of thesis and antithesis (disunities of the same genus separated by the greatest possible difference) by finding common ground. With contraries being of the same genus, the possibility of a singularity of result (another identity) was inevitable. Indeed, Hegel claimed the synthesis was positive, since he resolved the contraries only within systems which were factual. However, applied to the social sphere, this singularity of result, the static facticity of knowledge, suffered similar criticisms to Comte's positivist facticity. The difficulty was that dialectical reason in Hegel's idealist terms, could not always be applied to the *actual* contradictions of social life since not all problematic, controversial or negative situations were resolvable within an irrational society. Contradictions, as a different philosophical category, should have been unable to be resolved through synthesis, because (as defined philosophic categorisations) they possessed neither factual bases nor shared common ground. Critical theorists and other materialist dialecticians however, tended to ignore such philosophical categorisations, employing the Hegelian technique for critiquing situations of social contradiction. *The Hegelian philosophy was a specific situation wherein contradiction became a form of truth and movement, only to find itself enclosed within a system and internalised. But by adhering to reason as the power of the negative, idealism [at least] made good the claim of thought to be a condition of freedom.* (Marcuse, 1968:xiv)

<sup>186</sup> In this task of Marcuse's, critical theorizing lay in 'identifying the tendencies that linked the liberal past with its totalitarian [and democratic] abolition .... The present did not appear to be in immediate opposition to the past: it was necessary to exhibit the mediation by means of which bourgeois freedom could become unfreedom. But it was also necessary to indicate the elements that opposed this transformation.... I investigated several concepts of idealism and materialism. Ideas ... bore evidence of inner disunity. In material terms, productivity bore destruction within it and turned technology from an instrument of liberation into one of enslavement. The focal point is the interpretation ... of ideology ... for it was mind, reason, consciousness, 'pure' thought that in traditional culture was supposed to constitute the autonomy of the subject, the essential freedom of man.... Normally it was not necessary for society to intervene in this sphere .... The productive forces had not yet reached the stage of development at which the sale of products of social labour, demanded the systematic organisation of needs and wants, including intellectual ones.... Bourgeois society did not yet have the means to administer soul and mind.... Today total administration is necessary, and the means are at hand: mass gratification, market research [etc]. These take care of autonomy and heteronomy.... The democratic abolition of thought, which the 'common man' undergoes automatically and which he himself carries out... make the established system into an insuperable framework for conceptual thought.... This society has appropriated dimensions of consciousness and nature that formerly were relatively unspoiled. It has formed historical images in its own image and flattened out contradiction which it can then tolerate. Through this totalitarian-democratic conquest of man and nature, the subjective and objective space for the realm of freedom has also been conquered.' (Marcuse, Foreword, *Negations*. 1968:xii-xvii)

and social systems? And in what ways, if at all, had this negation been opposed by these subjects themselves? Moreover, what hope for a resolution of this crisis might be found within that which already existed? A critical reflection on how 'the negative' had been mediated (made absent, ignored and invisible) by a valuing of 'the positives' in the social milieu, may provide new insights into how 'the freedom to come to know' might be released from the bondage of conditioned thinking. This was the potential for *constructive criticism* which had been initiated in Hegel's philosophy. The limitation of this form of dialectical negation also lay in the construction of a renewed unitary whole, a single Identity which would become subject to conditioned beliefs.<sup>187</sup>

The epistemological bondage of conditioned thinking was the belief that 'answers' (in any formal sense) constituted the identity of a truth<sup>188</sup> and that, in turn, this 'Identity' affirmed both 'the totality' (rather than the part) and 'the certainty' of the answer (even though breadth of cover and correctness, like the choice between Identification and 'the positive', were two entirely different matters). However, *dialectical negation*, (as opposed to *Identificatory negation*), was not expected to provide a new certainty but rather a new hope (for freedom) for it retained rather than renounced scepticism in its argumentation.. Secondly, while a claimed breadth of cover was an advantage to dialectical negation because it enabled an external 'over' view of the whole (a 'transcendent' critique of the totality), it was also disadvantageous because then 'the whole' was complicit in suppressing the independence of the parts, levelling and integrating them into a single uniformity. There was no inherent necessity to examine or accept 'the particular' in terms of differences rather than in terms of similarities or on common ground within the whole. Only a criticism from within the object ('immanent critique') could redeem this view of differences.<sup>189</sup>

As a third alternative of *dialectical negation*, Adorno sought antinomies within the negatives of the non-identity.<sup>190</sup> That is, he sought opposing positions which had equal claim to truth, potentiality or

<sup>187</sup> Hegel's 'neat and comprehensive system ... accentuates the positive emphatically.' (Marcuse, 1982:449) Hegel had claimed that '... because finding faults is easier than grasping the affirmative, one will easily fall into the error of letting specific sides make him forget the inner organism of the state [the essential moments of existence], itself.' (Hegel, in Adorno, 1966:335) However, this Hegelian claim was criticised by Adorno because, 'today this [belief] has become the clamour for 'constructive criticism' - in other words, groveling criticism. Because the identity ... is denied by reality, ascertaining that identity nonetheless calls, so to speak, for the obsequious special effort on the part of reason; the 'affirmative', the proof of positively accomplished reconciliation, is postulated, praised as a superior achievement of consciousness...' (1966:336) It was also criticised by Horkheimer (1986:204) because, '... in Hegel, reason has become affirmative, even before reality itself is affirmed as rational. But, confronted with persisting contradictions in human existence and with the impotence of individuals in the face of situations they have themselves brought about, the Hegelian solution seems purely a private assertion, a personal peace treaty between the philosopher and the inhuman world.'

<sup>188</sup> Though we can see through the identity principle, we cannot think without identifying. (Adorno, 1966:149)

<sup>189</sup> Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:203, 347n8. 'Immanent critique' as 'being immersed in the internal form and structure of the cultural objects'.

<sup>190</sup> Adorno's 'armour is a dialectics built on a relentless pursuit of the negative in every possible sense'. (Ashton, 1966:xv) 'At the core of totality is the principle of the excluded middle (A≠B) Whatever does not fit the principle is designated a contradiction, a nonidentity within identity [of the totality].' (Adorno:1966:5) 'Contradiction .... indicates the untruth of identity, the fact that the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived.' (Adorno, 1966:5) *Dialectical negation*, in the immanent critique of Adorno, 'lies in those internal tensions, differences, oppositions, problems and debates, in a word, in those 'antinomies' which drive the self-critique of critical theory forward as a forceful witness to the hope that theory is still capable of addressing itself to radical and liberating needs.' (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:viii) *Antinomies*, in Kant's sense, were contrary positions which could be more or less equally defended by logical argument. (Arato and

possibility, and thus which could not be resolved or reconciled into a single identity.<sup>191</sup> Where the *dialectical negations* of Marx had rejected the positive and then replaced it with Identity in a negative form and the *dialectical negation* of Hegel had resolved the Identity, the *dialectical negation* of Adorno was to probe deeper into the realm of the negatives of non-identity. To action the 'negative dialectic', this form of *dialectical negation* broke with the rational compulsion to achieve Identity<sup>192</sup> by '*looping the loop*'<sup>193</sup> in the logic of a disintegration that was suspicious of *all* identity.<sup>194</sup> At its worst, this search for the negatives of negatives might regress to endless scepticism and fault finding, though such singular 'nit-picking' was itself a negative Identity-formation. At its best, the negative dialectic could extend what was known through the seeking of possibilities,<sup>195</sup> for it was seen that negative knowledge was potential knowledge.<sup>196</sup> And even in potential knowledge, some negatives would not be resolved but would remain as antinomies. It was Adorno's foremost intention '*to rid dialectics of such traditional affirmative traits as trying to achieve something positive by way of negation*'.<sup>197</sup> He sought less to subtract, to reject or to exclude, than to add to or multiply the logical possibilities from within the negatives.<sup>198</sup> That is, rather than attempt to foreclose the gap between identity and non-identity rather than attempt to mend a contradiction, this

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Gebhardt, 1982:188) They were situations of equal force of argument as to correctness or truth, but with neither being justifiably correct or privileged at the expense of the other. One such antinomy is the difference between certain truths and subjective views.

<sup>191</sup> Adorno's *dialectical negation* involved the defence of his doubts (Ashton, 1966:xi), of the negatives that ran counter to identity and opposed non-contradictoriness. This pursuit of the negative was based centrally on his belief that '*nonidentity is the secret telos of identification. It is the part that can be salvaged; the mistake in traditional thinking is that identity is taken for the goal.*' (Adorno, 1966:149) '*Dialectics, the epitome of negative knowledge, will have nothing beside it; even a negative dialectics drags along the commandment of exclusiveness from the positive one, from the system .... Without a thesis of identity, dialectics is not the whole; but neither will it be a cardinal sin to depart from it in a dialectical step.*' (Adorno, 1966:405)

<sup>192</sup> Adorno, 1966:157.

<sup>193</sup> Adorno, 1966:115. Dialectics here is skilled argument in the search for other logical consistencies. (Adorno, 1966:xx) '*By means of logic, dialectics grasps the coercive character of logic, hoping that it may yield - for that coercion itself is a mythical delusion, the compulsory identity .... Critique itself, contrary to its own tendency, must remain within the medium of the concept. It destroys the claim of identity by testing and honoring it; therefore it can reach no farther than that claim. The claim is a magic circle that stamps critique with the appearance of absolute knowledge. It is up to the self-reflection of critique to extinguish it in the very negation of negation that will not become a positing. Dialectics is the self-consciousness of the objective context of delusion; it does not mean to have escaped from that context. Its objective goal is to break out of that context from within.*' (Adorno, 1966:406)

<sup>194</sup> Adorno, 1966:145.

<sup>195</sup> '*Even an indeterminate negation ... may be legitimate at first - to secure an arena in which alternatives become conceivable again.*' (Arato, 1982:220)

<sup>196</sup> Schutz refers to this claim in the following way: "*iv. Negative knowledge as potential knowledge. The relation of negative knowledge to knowledge can be described by analogy to the spatial arrangement of the lifeworldly experience. The sector of the world in which actual reach [Identity] is surrounded by sectors in potential reach, and indeed by a sector in restorable reach and a sector in attainable reach. Negative knowledge can, as far as it is not related to the fundamental intransparency of the life-world, be correspondingly viewed as potential knowledge. Potential knowledge consists of restorable and attainable knowledge.*" Schutz, 1974:176f

<sup>197</sup> Ashton, in Adorno, 1966:x

<sup>198</sup> One of Adorno's favoured lines to describe the negation of negation was '*a minus times a minus equals a plus*'. The act of dialectical negation in the negative dialectic is to gain rather than reduce. '*Denying the mystery of identification, by ripping more and more scraps out of it, does not resolve it.*' (Adorno, 1966:407). '*It is not up to philosophy [or science] to exhaust things ... to reduce the phenomena to a minimum.*' (Adorno, 1966:12) '*the Negative Dialectic ... will not come to rest in itself, as if it were total. This is its form of hope.*' (Adorno, 1966:405-6)

relation between opposing ideas was itself pulled apart for the purpose of closer scrutiny.<sup>199</sup> In this way, Adorno's form of *dialectical negation* allowed for the ongoing complexity and conflict of existence. For me, his epistemology reflected reality. As he claimed, life was the forcefield of a fluid constellation.<sup>200</sup> In practical terms, any account of 'ways of knowing' would also need to acknowledge this continuing condition of unfreedom and the probability of ongoing crisis and change, as when, for instance, an adult became so brain-damaged that they may never again achieve the full 'freedom' of a coherent way of knowing that they had once (maybe) enjoyed.<sup>201</sup>

### *Dialectical negation in the Negative Dialectic*

For Adorno, the purpose of *dialectical negation* was the investigation of extremes, the tearing apart, the opening and exposing of the wounds of contradiction, by the use of argumentation.<sup>202</sup> This 'blasting open' rather than rejection or synthetic unification of 'the positives' and 'the negatives', reflected Adorno's attempt to lift the 'veil' of affirmative thought which he believed obscured the vision of 'what was real' behind the fetishistic false impressions of conditioned thinking.<sup>203</sup> The richness of this Adornian conception was carried right into the heart of his investigatory practices.<sup>204</sup> Adorno's preferred essay form, like Bergman's film, was to leave the receiving audience with questions in mind rather than to produce for them a unitary reconciliation of antinomies by identifying *an* answer or *the* answer. His challenge was to cajole the *need* in the reader *not* to confirm the writer's argument, but to overcome their own conditioned response (affirmative thought) by employing the very thing that critical theorists had argued had disappeared (critical reason). This form of expressing *dialectical negation* to others supported Adorno's arguments for a pluralism of views and his desire not to control the mindset of others. In fact, Adorno saw academic inquiry not as an end in itself but simply as a mediation whose objects would continue to invite challenge. The challenge now was to use this dialectical epistemology for the prior siting of an investigation. Adorno's thoughts on *dialectical negation* and *investigatory mediation* have offered the possibility to search for a context, and in particular, for a problematic

<sup>199</sup> So 'the chasm between the two yawns the more visibly...' (Adorno, 1966:336) When the chasm was apparent, then this form of critique could 'loop the loop' in a logical swing between claims. (Adorno, 1966:115)

<sup>200</sup> 'Forcefield' was Adorno's favoured term for indicating 'the totality', for he wished not that things be taken for granted as complete in themselves, immovable, unrelated and unchangeable. This illustrated the motive principle of his Negative Dialectic. *The relational interplay of attractions and aversions that constituted the dynamic structure of complexity*. (Jay, 1986:14) The term 'constellation' indicated the juxtaposing and the disharmony rather than the integrated common core of elements. In this development of terms, Adorno was unwilling to privilege one element over another. For him, all elements were in the simultaneous construction and deconstruction of a fluid reality. (Jay, 1986:15)

<sup>201</sup> 'dark realities can eclipse dazzling ideas.' (Ashton, in Adorno, 1966:xi)

<sup>202</sup> In this sense, Adorno concurred with his friend, Walter Benjamin, on the task of critique. Benjamin believed critique to be the need to 'surgically remove (or to 'blast open'), collect and save the critical fragments of the past that could help transform 'cultural heritage' from a burden to a possession. *Dialectic could only reveal and express antinomy, and not surpass it.*' (Arato and Gebhardt, 1982:206)

<sup>203</sup> For Adorno, the 'technological veil' was the 'fullest subsumption of reality under the form of fetishism'. The 'thinglike' structure of 'objective' facts 'hide not only social relations but specifically human relations of domination and control. This is particularly apparent in unreflective empirical research which fetishises the false consciousness that adheres to the frozen immediacy of given factuality, serving the technocratic interest of control.' (Adorno, 1982:198-9)

<sup>204</sup> In an immanent critique, a criticism from the inside, dialectical negation is 'to use itself to break itself .... in its own measure.... through the appearance of total identity.' (Adorno, 1966:5)

context where people's constructions of understanding inherently reflected *their* critique of *their* social conditions.

Adorno had hoped that the people who read his essays would participate in 'the exposure of wounds' by reflectively forming their own judgement of 'what ought to be'. Instead of writing about, I intended to materialise these wounds at the research site so that people would actually experience them.<sup>205</sup> Then in turn, they could expose to me the marginalising effect of these problems during their interviews. This form of contextualism was grounded in a materialist argument. Judgements to knowledge (including knowledge about their various ways of knowing) are not only mediated during and after investigatory activity, but also prior to it. From a materialist point of view, people 'mediate' the daily production of informal social knowledge and this mediation process is reflected in the dialectical tensions (the 'positives' and the 'negatives') of everyday conflicts, conservings and changes in habit and the traditions of a society. It is this informal knowledge, which the representatives of a society can present to an investigator if they are aware of it, and it is the investigator who then repeats the mediation process in order to formalise this knowledge for its public re-presentation to the society.<sup>206</sup> What is required of the researcher in order that the representatives of a society be aware of this informal social knowledge, is to site the investigation in a place where they experience and 'expose the wounds' themselves, and recognise the challenges of these negative tensions in various ways.<sup>207</sup> My challenge was then to establish a method for contextualising this study from the epistemology of the Negative Dialectic.

### *Negative Dialectic as epistemic basis for critical contextualism*

The epistemological strength of contextualism required upturning Adorno's *philosophical* tendency, using himself against himself.<sup>208</sup> As 'the place' rather than 'the thinking' about non-identity,<sup>209</sup> the context rather than the idea becomes the problem-centre.<sup>210</sup> It is argued that in a problematic context, one experiences both the questioning of *potential* and the potential of *questioning* for in an antinomous situation (where one knows not what to do) lay both materialist and idealist possibilities. In a problematic context, idealism and materialism are set in opposition to each other.

<sup>205</sup> The context must be problematic in order to create a conscious need in the intending knowers: '*the system is not one of the absolute spirit; it is one of the most conditioned spirit of those who have it and cannot even know how much it is their own.... Their own reason, unconscious like the transcendental subject and establishing identity by barter, remains incommensurable with the subjects it reduces to the same denominator: subject as subject's foe*'. (Adorno, 1966:10)

<sup>206</sup> '*What dissolves the fetish is the insight that things are not simply so and not otherwise, [but] that they have come to be under certain conditions. Their becoming fades and dwells within the things; it can no more be stabilised in their concepts than it can be split off from its own results and forgotten .... When things are being read as a text of their becoming, that idealist and materialist dialects touch*'. (Adorno, 1966:52)

<sup>207</sup> This would allow the collection of 'data' to be less mediated by research effort though the same claim would not be made for the analysis of that evidence

<sup>208</sup> Society creates its own questions: Society is '*the objective determinant of the mind. The coercive state of reality ... must be retranslated from that region .... The object of a mental experience is an antagonistic system in itself - antagonistic in reality, not just in its conveyance to the knowing subject that rediscovers itself therein*'. (Adorno, 1966:10)

<sup>209</sup> Adorno, 1966:146

<sup>210</sup> as opposed to the views of Arato and Gebhardt, 1987:452

*What do I perceive? What shall I do? Do I think before I do, or do before I think?* That is one aspect but a central aspect of praxis, and that can be the strength of a social theory which is based on a prior critical contextualising of an empirical investigation. If the investigator were to 'find' not simply a context, but a context which was 'known' to be problematic (especially in knowledge-constitutive terms) then the *need* perceived by the intending knowers, would be the need to resolve exactly those tensions.<sup>211</sup> The questions they asked, and the 'answers' they chose to resolve those tensions, would be located either in their personally-habituated epistemology or in their conscious attempts to change it. Producing problematicity therefore, identifying and realising it, is a focal investigatory issue for a critical contextualism.

Problems about adults learning already exist and to recreate (or re-place) the already-known problematics of 'ways of knowing', two epistemological considerations were combined. First, positivist research (on 'adult learning') has focussed upon accumulating 'facts'. Like a positivist, I would use particular 'facts' as 'objects' which could be materialised. But it is the *relations* between the facts that are important to a *critical* study. Therefore I would need to argue that a *relation*, and in particular a negative relation, exists between those particular facts. The argument should not produce 'an answer' but simply to identify the existence of the negative relation between the two facts, so that 'the facts' (as eventually realised objects) reproduce the problematic tension in real life experience. Having argued that a negative relation exists, I wish to actualise the objects of that relation by placing them in a similar real-life relation for most of all I want to *realise* 'what is' *beyond* this non-identity. I will argue that *an unknown quality* exists between certain factual objects, and because I am unprepared to provide 'an answer' without empirical evidence, those objects need to be realised and their problematic relation (or 'juxtaposition') experienced and exposed by those who are actually coming to know. Not only am I unprepared to provide 'an answer', but I believe that more than one answer will be found in this 'exposure of wounds'. People's mediation of this deliberate experience of pain will reflect the variant ways of coming to know. To *realise* the problematicity of the objects of this 'apparently irreconcilable' *relation* then employs Adorno's idea of exaggeration.

In 'exposing the wound' of a contradiction, in '*tearing apart*' the unknown quality of the negative relation, I would choose a place where the opposing objects were intentionally polarised.<sup>212</sup> Exaggerating the opposition of contradicting objects should magnify the problematic tensions.. By so exacerbating the distance between the objects to as greater extent as a 'real' situation will allow, would enable one, in turn, to clarify and authenticate the knowledge-constitutive *differences*

<sup>211</sup> *The need is what we think from .... the need in thinking is what makes us think. It asks to be negated by thinking; it must disappear in thought if it is to be really satisfied; and in this negation, it survives.* (Adorno, 1966:407)

<sup>212</sup> Marcuse concurred with Adorno's position in suggesting that one must question whether 'the contradiction and negation [of the past] were not radical enough, that they rejected too little and held too little to be possible, that they underestimated the qualitative difference between the really possible and the status quo'. (Marcuse,

between intending knowers. This contextual act of drawing apart, of exaggerating the meaningful distance between objects, where the sundering of object from object is magnified in its opposition, effectively realises and reproduces the idealist tensions of non-identity and thus actualises its potential in its *need* to become known.

If I select a context in which the ways of knowing have been deliberately made problematic, then adults who experience the life in this context will be forced to examine the challenges of their own ways of knowing. As these challenges mediate their habits, so then they should be able to articulate the experience. In terms of an immanent critique, it was the life *within* this double-edged tension, which needed examination. In magnifying the tensions of the situation, this problematic context would cause the intending knowers to pause and question 'what to do next'. In this way, the issues surrounding their prior habituation of particular ways of knowing would become apparent, especially those issues which required action and change. If the questions which arose in that problematic situation were important to particular intending knowers, then those tensions would not only be apparent to them but also be able to be articulated to the investigator. Thus a prior critical contextualising of investigations, exposes both those *potentials to question* and *questions of potential* which already exist in social relations. It exposes a place where 'the negatives' of 'the negatives' give rise not only to antinomies but to possibilities and future freedoms.<sup>213</sup>

The next problem for this act of critical contextualisation was one of epistemological immanence. Finding a single problematic relation between two facts did not constitute the finding of a complex context. A multiplicity of relations was required so that in their synthesis, a *complex site* might be realised. But how was the investigator to identify an inclusive range of objects (known facts); a range whose breadth of cover was believed, on the one hand, to include 'the totality' of what was known (and thus prevented unwarranted methodological exclusions), but on the other hand, gave rise to a logically coherent series of relations within the conjunction of which lay the problematic context. In terms of immanence, how did 'the knowns' (facts about adult learning) produce a problematic context of itself, from within itself?

Briefly stated, the question was, what constituted the basis of coherent 'full range'? This issue was overcome by my uncritical adopting of the Standard Interrogatives since they are believed to constitute a coherent range of contextual-based questions.<sup>214</sup> If these basic questions were utilised by journalists in their search for a coherently-related breadth of information, then my (uncritical)

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1968:xvii)

<sup>213</sup> *Thought in contradiction must be capable of comprehending and expressing the new potentialities of a qualitatively different existence.... In other words, thought in contradiction must become more negative and more utopian in opposition to the status quo.* (Marcuse, 1968:xx)

<sup>214</sup> Austin, N. Professor of English. Personal communication. (14.11.1987)

adoption of who? what? when? where? why? and with whom? could be applied to this exploration.

Since the standard interrogatives were publicly recognised as coherently providing a breadth of cover of the totality (whether or not they actually did), then a synthesis of the 'answers' to that range of questions should likewise provide (to some degree) a coherent exploratory umbrella to contextualising this study. In gradually closing the umbrella, these relations would be drawn together in the synthetic Identity of a single site. But once synthesised, these problematic relations and the 'known' objects would not be assumed to identify the prominent or even the real objects of the knowledge-constitutive tensions which will arise in this context, for those objects arose under a variety of different social conditions. Those relations and objects may not even be vaguely related to the issues of knowledge-constitutivity which are to be 'found' in this new site, though that possibility always remains. The synthesis of problematic relations has merely produced a site of unknown possibility and it is within this context, that knowledge-constitutive activity will be explored.

This act of critical contextualism has required a complex movement from epistemology to methodology. Combining the use of the Standard Interrogatives with the prior epistemological decisions, the complexity is resolved. The method now required examining the positivist literature base on the topic of 'adult learning' in order to find (within the categories of what, when, where, why, etc) 'known' facts whose contradictory combinations could be exaggerated, so as to produce several coherently-related relations which were of unknown quality and which, when synthesised, would form the site of investigation. The intention of this whole method has been to make obvious (by insightful argument and magnified juxtaposition) those objects which formed an antinomial or contradictory relation which, in turn, was able to be materialised in its exaggerated form.

In all, it was anticipated that by fracturing the sites of negation, the knowledge-constitutive activities of intentional knowers could be more easily investigated. The original source of 'the negatives' was to be the positivist research on the topic of 'adult learning'. The procedure of contextualisation would begin with applying the Standard Interrogatives to the positivist literature - where did adults learn?, why did adults learn?, with whom did adults learn? (etc). After I had identified 'negative' situations and argued their contradiction, these objects would be materialised in an exaggerated condition. The primary point is to knit 'the facts' into a fabric which is problematical, realisable and examinable. So, in all, this epistemologically-based method analytically-sites the research in a problematic context where the actual situation is forced to 'speak for itself' in defining its own research questions. The *need* has been to lessen the mediation which is imposed when investigators predetermine the details of questions to be asked within a given topic. This critical contextualism has lessened such investigatory mediation of detail, by making the context a place where questions will *immediately* arise, for people to experience, mediate and expose.

### Contextualising this investigation

In the following presentation, each of the interrogative explorations is discussed in turn as a gradual synthesis of the empirical setting is formed.<sup>215</sup>

#### 1. *WHAT do Adults Learn?* - Knowledge

This interrogative search justifies 'coming to know' as an investigatory problem. In order to investigate this problem with as little research mediation as possible, there was a need to distance the epistemic space between 'knowledge as an act' and 'knowledge as the content to be learned'.

*Knowledge in general*, is an understudied area in *scientific* studies of adult learning, and though there has been little attempt to transcendently view this problematic, it is recognised by both academic staff<sup>216</sup> and adult students<sup>217</sup> as in need of investigation.<sup>218</sup> What research there is, has been concentrated *within* specific curriculum areas (such parenting, agricultural or medical education) rather than *about* them. But in fact, a transcendent examination of this literature locates its problematic in the complex, three-way conjunction between the threads of everyday and institutional sites, knowledge as content and knowledge as practice, and teacher-theorists on one hand and self-educating adults on the other.

(a). The central arena of this problematic is a lack of understanding about *knowledge as an act*. Adhering closely to positivist tenets, this topic has been generally studied under the guise of 'learning and teaching methods'<sup>219</sup> and then, in the differences between planned and everyday sites, self-educative 'learning' is dismissed as a 'negative' for exhibiting '*false starts*',<sup>220</sup> '*unproductive*

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<sup>215</sup> After reducing this chapter, only the briefest synopsis of each interrogative-argument appears here, with footnotes supporting the scientific basis of the claims made. The readings have not been up-dated from the time the arguments were first explored showing now the tensions that have existed in the past, and over which investigators are still attempting to climb. There was little point in updating the literature since that may negate the arguments established here, and already used in the choice of the site of study

<sup>216</sup> Dahlgren, 1978; Johanson et al., 1983

<sup>217</sup> Mohsenin, 1979

<sup>218</sup> That '*WHAT adults learn*' is a problem of knowledge in need of investigation can be justified by students who view currently offered course knowledge with suspicion or simply ignore it as irrelevant (Beach, 1974; Gibbs, 1980; Peters, 1971) believing that, for instance, '*higher education is not as successful as it might be in helping students to develop more sophisticated conceptions*'. (Dahlgren, 1984:35) Otherwise, the reasons for adults being so disenfranchised is unclear. According to some scientists, 'formal learning' is apparently negated if the course content is '*too esoteric*', '*mundane*', '*random*' (Kirkwood, 1976:151) or '*left to chance*'. (Little 1979:8)

<sup>219</sup> On reading, the topics addressed in some studies appear to relate to epistemological factors though the authors seem ignorant of the fact that it might be '*the grammar*' (Peters, 1965) of the knowledge they were addressing. For instance, one European metacognitivist referred to the epistemological aspects of knowledge as the '*nuances of the field*' (Dahlgren, 1984) and studied this as a psychology-based '*levels of thinking*' issue rather than a social-relations problem. Similarly, another study (Ycas, 1972) found that creativity and IQ level altered a student's subject-matter preferences. But these two studies were piecemealed exceptions to the rule. In a later study, (Shore, 1978:3) the emphasis on disciplines had been related to 'learning and teaching' issues, on the grounds that attempts to match learning improvement to '*the structure of knowledge in a discipline*' had been '*at best minimal or based on supposition*' leading, he contended, to a change of research focus away from the '*title of a discipline*'.

<sup>220</sup> As shown by the prototypical area of experience in life history, the experiences from which one learns are negative. The reversal of consciousness means the dissolution of identifications, the breaking of fixations, and the destruction of projections'. (Habermas, 1978:18)

avenues of enquiry',<sup>221</sup> and an inability of 'learners' to tell others of the nature of their enquiries.<sup>222</sup> The implied corollary is that such problems could not occur in formally-planned, other-controlled settings. Contradicting this range of 'evidence' are 'positive' views claiming that the knowledge-activity of the self-educators in the community is a subjectifying, socially constructed and continuous activity in which the learners want to know as much as possible, seeking always the possibilities to knowledge.<sup>223</sup> Indeed, it is claimed, everyday learners focus so closely upon features '*intrinsic to the subject*'<sup>224</sup> that often there seems no demarcation between their thinking and their doing.<sup>225</sup> In fact, that their knowledge and knowing seem 'as one' might explain why adults could not verbalise the knowledge-act to the previous researchers.

An issue arises in asking why knowledge and knowing are not also '*as one*' in formal education? What occurs in planned education that *differentiates* the knowledge-content from its process? The need when contextualising this study is to juxtapose one of these epistemologies against the other. Then the difference in knowledge-action between planned and everyday sites exaggerates the distinctions between this 'oneness' and 'difference'. The implicit relation between these sites is based in the idea of rigour. To exaggerate this relational 'space', the private epistemology of 'common-sense' would be set against the 'alien' public epistemology of 'academic-sense' since, in terms of rigour, it can be assumed that the 'academic-sense' of higher education possesses the most rigorous means to knowledge, while 'common-sense' possesses the least. Now, given this first and tentative decision regarding siting the study, the question which follows was: what knowledge-as-content could retain this epistemological separation of knowledge-action from itself?

(b). Briefly, when positivist adult educators plan their selection of *knowledge for content*, Comtean tenets are favoured as the criteria for suitability. For them, knowledge should reflect an objectified, unproblematic and unitary whole that 'learners' could acquire '*systematically*'.<sup>226</sup> And in spite of

221 Brook feild, 1983:14 Adult learners in their everyday lives are '*prompted by the innate fascination the field (of enquiry) holds for them and their chief reinforcement is the intrinsic pleasure gained from study. They offend against the insistence that observable, previously specified goals are a necessary condition of learning...*' (Brookfeild 1983:15)

222 Brookfeild, 1983. Coleman, 1976:56-58. *The associations that embed [knowledge] in memory are linked with the concrete actions and events to which affect was attached, and are not merely associations with abstract symbols or general principles expressed in abstract symbols.*' (Coleman 1976:58) One theorist thought the adults' lack of a consciousness of their 'learning act ons' was apparently shown by their inability '*to specify objectives, target cog tive or pyschomotor skills at the outset of their learning project.*' (Brookfeild, 1983:15; also Calder, 1989) This is seen by a philosopher in the following terms: '*... the acting subject belies himself (sic) only for others who interact with him .... The acting subject cannot observe the discrepancy; or, if he observes it, he cannot understand it, because he both expresses and misunderstands himself in this discrepancy. His self-understanding must keep to what is consciously intended .... Nonetheless, the intensional discrepant ... is as much a part of the subject's life ... as are subjectively intended meanings .... It also deceives itself about itself.*' (Habermas, 1978:218)

223 Brook fei d, 1983:15. This view is confirmed by Adorno's (1966) thoughts on the negative dialectic. That is, that the negations (quest ons) may never 'end' as long as one seeks the possibilities of knowledge

224 Peters and Brook feild, 1983:15

225 cf. Fay, 1975:11. See also, Habermas, 1978:18 and Horkheimer, 1986:202: *The power of healthy human understanding, or commonsense, ... is in large measure produced by an activity that is itself determined by the very ideas which help the individual recognise that world and to grasp it conceptually.*

226 See, for example, Little 1979:8

some adult learners' suspicions of those teacher selections,<sup>227</sup> knowledge-as-content is seldom seen as contentious by potential knowers if they decide that it fits their needs.<sup>228</sup> In fact, no investigatory 'negative' exists, between the views of students and the views of teachers.

Instead of contextualising a (nonexistent) 'negative', this 'positive' should be reflected in the choice of a knowledge-content. To use Comte's own words, one should choose a topic about which 'everyone knows', one which is common to both everyday and planned sites of study and is thus (I claim) relatively 'unproblematic'. In this way, knowledge-as-content (being an unproblematic 'positive') would be juxtaposed against knowledge-action (as a problematic 'negative') - an Identity in opposition to a non-Identity. Sincere knowledge-as-content is 'unproblematic', it is less likely to be negated (discarded or ignored) by students, unless for such epistemologically-based reasons as a questioning of the truth factors - and it just happens that it is upon these very matters of knowledge-constitutivity, that this study is concentrated. In other words, exaggerating and examining the relation between 'positives' and 'negatives' effects the separation, and thus creates the place to investigate, knowledge-as-action.

Given these conditions for investigatory selection, and combining it with the considerations of common-sense versus academic-sense. the least problematic knowledge-as-content would lie in social-science, where the adult has chosen a topic because it 'fitted' their needs. Here, the 'academic sense' of social science is centred around the 'scientification' (the development of a form of rigour) of 'common-sense' life knowledge. How it is done, rather than what it says, is most likely to be problematic to the adult student. It is argued that in this context, the *process* of knowledge is challenged more than the content is challenged. What is actually differentiated is the difference between common-sense understandings of social science subjects and academic-sense of the same material.

## 2. WHO is the adult learner?

Confirming the problematic of 'What do adults learn', is the 'known' personal identity of the adult learner, since it too is exaggerated most between a self-educator's private passion for knowledge and the marked anxiety of adults who are becoming involved in public education.<sup>229</sup> At the essence

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<sup>227</sup> Beach, 1974; Gibbs, 1980; Peters, 1971. Older adults negate what they regard as 'trivia', but have high levels of recall of 'meaningful' knowledge. The adults' acceptance and rejection of knowledge-offered are manifestations of their personal control over knowledge. (Meyer, 1980) Gendered differences in knowledge preference would be an example of this. It has been suggested (Spender, 1980) that women use their past experiences to invalidate the patriarchal biases in academic literature. However, the personal power that mature adults exercise over the selection of knowledge is hardly surprising since 'everyday' adult's must cope with (i.e. come to knowledge of the complexities of) life changes and family issues. (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980)

<sup>228</sup> Glynn, 1980

<sup>229</sup> Any adult had an almost 80% chance of being currently initiated in some learning task, somewhere, (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980; Brookfeild, 1981, 1982; Coolican, 1974; Johnstone and Rivera, 1965; Penland, 1979; Tough, 1967, 1968, 1971, 1978) though only a 30% possibility of being enrolled in an educational institution to learn about it.(Aslanian and Brickell, 1980) The 'self-directed' adult (who learned informally) was little effected in their current learning by the success or failure of their previous schooling (Sprinthall,

of the problematic though, is the need to relate the Identity of the adult learner to knowledge-constitutive activity rather than to affective responses, personality or other demographically-related features.

On the one hand, the 'autonomous' self-educator is claimed to be learning in a 'social and intellectual vacuum',<sup>230</sup> yet I argue that the possibilities of *complete* autonomy would be negated by the *knowledge-constitutive* mediations of the authors they read, for instance, or the memories they recalled and the histories by which they were influenced. On the other hand, teacher-theorists identify the adult entering university by their 'need' to be taught a public way of knowing (in as much as the 'student' shows a fear of the unknown<sup>231</sup>) yet, in other literature, the 'successful' university student has long been identified by their 'introverted' unsociableness - in other words, by their lack of a dependence on social relations as a means to acquiring a public epistemology.<sup>232</sup> What is known is that there are contradictions in beliefs about the *need* for social relations. What remains unknown is the knowledge-constitutive aspect of this problematic. Realising the negative of a negative would require relating the notion of *knowledge-constitutivity* to different conditions of publicity within social relations.

Public acceptance of knowledge-constitutive action could be exaggerated by juxtaposing a private epistemology (people being in independent control of life knowledge) with a public epistemology

1979), being unlikely to consider themselves 'failures' for having left highschool early (Willis, 1977). Indeed, they displayed none of the usual learning problems and in fact, 'the kinds of difficulties a researcher might label as 'problems' were regarded as enjoyable challenges or interesting diversions by the independent learners themselves.' (Brookfeild, 1982:29) This 'everyday' adult learner showed an interest in both growth and change (Duncan and Ughetto, 1980; Kahnweiler and Johnson, 1980) and often possessed a passion for learning (Brookfeild, 1982). This was not the case, however, within formal education. Fear or anxiety characterised the approach of many adults when they re-entered formalised educational settings. They simply 'felt lost in a sea of youth'. (Evans, 1978) 'One of the most striking features of adult students [is] their anxiety that they might be making themselves look foolish, or that they may be exposing themselves to failure ... it seems to apply right across the range of adult students.' (Rogers, 1977:33)

<sup>230</sup> Miller, 1964; Strong, 1977; Moore, 1980

<sup>231</sup> University counselors' thought the anxieties of enrolling students resulted from varying rates and intensity of previous life experiences, adult personality or social class. (Flavell, 1981) Working-class life experience was shown to be related to higher results in social science degrees, (Himmelweit and Summerfield 1951, Maclay 1968, Smithers and Bantock 1970) and under-representation among failures. (Entwistle and Entwistle 1970:147) Those most likely to fail at university were young immature students, (Entwistle and Wilson, 1977; Sexton 1965) or those who had university-educated parents, or those who had attended a (British) public school and had professional-worker parents. (Entwistle and Hounsell, 1977; Malleon, 1959) At first glance these findings appeared strange for one might have expected that such people were more closely 'socialised' to life in higher education. 'Adjustment' must have meant more than the simple social relation implied in those findings, especially as few adult learners saw themselves as needing counseling services. Indeed, counselling services were criticised by students for irrelevance and inappropriateness. (Gibbs, 1980, Kerr, 1980, Veres, 1979) The reasons that adult students gave for their feelings of anxiety included feelings of inadequacy and unfamiliarity with the environment (Knox, 1980), outdated skills, anxiety about study methods, a lack of *educational* counselling (Knight and McDonald, 1982), or concerns with the intellectual and temporal demands placed on them by the institution. (Brookfeild, 1982) To overcome the anxiety, younger adults (18 to 23 years) in university were more likely to gain confidence from affiliation and instructor support, but older women (34 to 43 years) seemed to gain confidence from feelings of autonomy. (Gerster, 1980)

<sup>232</sup> The desire for autonomy (or immediated social relations) was reflected not only by older adults entering university but also in the Identity of the younger adult who became a 'superior' university student. They were likely to be a worrier who engaged in lone-type hobbies as a child, (Jones, 1955) who was a passive, persevering teenager. (Meyer, 1972) with a stable disposition (Lavin, 1967) but who was socially introverted (Entwistle and Entwistle, 1970; Entwistle and Wilson, 1977; Furneaux, 1962; Kelvin et al., 1965; Lavin, 1967). In fact, introverts had a better chance of being accepted into academic studies (Cattell and Warburton, 1961; Child, 1969) they did better in examinations, (Bendig, 1960, Furneaux, 1962, Kelvin, Lucas and Ojha, 1965) and they were under-represented in dropouts. (Wankowski, 1968) But questions of social constitutivity arise, for these people did not appear to need other people in order to accomplish their formal learning.

(where, to some extent, one is dependent on others' planning of the knowledge-content). If a context were chosen in which adults had, for example, no institutional education in the last ten years but were enrolling for study again, then the habit-forming years of independent private ways of knowing would presumably come under some challenge.

Indeed, the alienation of this relation between private and public epistemologies could be magnified even more by selecting a sample group of 'common-sense' adults who had been 'undereducated' (having little or no post-secondary education), and who were about to acquire a disciplined academic-sense (university educated). This would require redefining 'common-sense' by adding a 'lack of post-secondary education' to any other descriptors. Then, knowledge-constitutive marginalisation for the development (from an undereducated private independent to a publicly-disciplined scholar) could be explored by seeking how, when, where and why the student chooses to depend on others for making publicly-acceptable, knowledge-constitutive decisions. Moreover, if possible, adults should be *included* in 'the sample group' if their last formal education was in highschool, and *excluded* if their post-school employment (such as teaching) has foregrounded the consciousness of a formalised epistemology, since their own 'everyday' knowledge-constitutive habits already may be mediated by such scholarly ideals.

Synthesising information on 'WHAT people learn' along with 'WHO they are', the study would now be sited in the problematic situation of changing ones knowledge-constitutive identity from being an undereducated independent learner whose habituated private epistemology was based in common-sense, to becoming a disciplined scholar who may be dependent on the control of others' plannings in order to acquire the rigorous academic sense of this public epistemology. In its realisation, developing a problematic context has so far been defined as the study of adults who had at least ten years of habituating self-educative ways of knowing, who had neither post-secondary education nor employment related to that field, who proposed to study in a university rather than any other tertiary setting, and who planned to study a social science subject which they themselves had chosen. This context reflected the inherent problematics of both 'Who' they were and 'What' they would study.

### 3. *WITH WHOM do adults learn?*

'Affiliation' is perhaps the central interrogative-problematic in adult education literature, though it is seldom examined as 'mediation'. Indeed even the sociological notion of a *social relation* is frequently ignored, yet in the magnified exaggeration of this epistemic 'gap' is to be found the contradictory triad of relations between self-educating adults, academic 'teachers', and the authors of texts (whose influence is usually ignored).

Juxtaposing the polemic positions, it is shown that while most 'adult learning' goes on alone in the everyday world,<sup>233</sup> it is believed by teacher-theorists to be an inherently inferior activity that will invariably come to grief.<sup>234</sup> But these beliefs are contradicted by the evidence that the adult who achieves 'significant learning' in a university also tends to follow an autonomous 'everyday' epistemology, in that they take responsibility for their own learning, exercise their own subject choice and learn through their less successful attempts.<sup>235</sup> In way of a doubled contrast, while *everyday* learning was seen as problematic by teacher-theorists, *academic* learning was seen as problematic by everyday adults. In university, the major affiliation issue for intending knowers concerned who was allowed to control the knowledge act<sup>236</sup> as, contrary to the claims of academics,<sup>237</sup> the affiliation that adults desired related to the need for 'teacher support of student autonomy',<sup>238</sup> rather than to a need for 'teacher control'.<sup>239</sup>

But these *facts* do little to clarify the actual nature of the *relation* between the self-educated and the academic teacher, other than to indicate that *communication* and consequently, mutual understanding appears minimal. In the unknown state of this communicative *relation*, it is the Other, not the 'I' who is seen as the source of negativity as the freedom of personal epistemologies appears to be under challenge. It is not even clear whether the request for 'teacher support of student autonomy' relates to absolving the knowledge-constitutive or social-constitutive relation (of my curriculum diagram) or some other educational relation. Indeed, the situation is complex for even the fact that a relation might exist between readers and textbook authors is substantially ignored. No-one seems much concerned that authors, though 'unseen', may also impose influence through their epistemology, text and content. Whatever the nature of reader-author relations, a bridge of dependency seems planned by teachers, and a bridge of independency planned by intending knowers. It is the nature of the blaming and the ignoring in this triad of affiliative relations which

<sup>233</sup> See footnote 229

<sup>234</sup> Rogers and Groombridge, 1976:58. Paradoxically, *The desirability of inculcating independent learning skills in learners is probably the most frequently cited purpose of education*. (Brookfeild, 1983:2) For instance, *'...developing an [adult] student into a truly independent learner takes years. That is why organised programs of instruction exist - to fill these years with learning'*. (Gagne 1975:120)

<sup>235</sup> Beach, 1974; Entwistle and Hounsell, 1977; Powell, 1974. It was claimed that Continuing Education classes were *'less difficult'* than academic classes (Kerwin, 1980) because instructors made use of the students' previous experiences, related new knowledge to the students' current life-situation, and offered personal encouragement. (Ayers, 1979) For some educators, adherence to the Friarian philosophy enhanced the intersubjectivity of knowledge-constitutive relations by concentrating on dialogic rather than *'banking'* strategies. (E.g., Vella, 1979; Paulo Friere 1972) Other writers have expressed a need for *'likemindedness'* or *'empathy'* (Baer-Doyle, 1980) or reported that although many adult learners appear to experience a loss of self-image on re-entry to formal education, (Brookfeild, 1978; Johansson and Ekerwald, 1976; Willen, 1981) this loss can be reversed by field experience courses (Levy, 1980) and teaching modes which allow students to make decisions. (Lipsett and Avakian, 1979)

<sup>236</sup> Moore, 1977:6, also Ayers, 1979; Gerster, 1980; Kerwin, 1980; Mohsenin, 1979; Lappia and Kirkland, 1988, Baer-Doyle and Komdorffer, 1981. Students' said their *'learning problems'* lay in excessive teacher-control as shown by staff ambivalence toward students (Collier, 1968), in teacher control of the processes of learning as well as the content (Smith, 1982), in instructor-insistence upon formal examinations or teacher-control through negation (withdrawal) of their own labour. (Wright, 1982:46)

<sup>237</sup> Among the problems academics saw as being overcome by teacher control and planning were *'problems' due to the students' pragmatism or utility-value* (Lamdin, 1979) *psychological limitations* (e.g., *'mental inertia'*) (Bligh, 1972), competition and self-doubt, (O'Rourke, 1984), the sheer volume of memorisation, (Collier, 1968) or the lack of family help for the first-generation student.(Collier, 1968)

<sup>238</sup> e.g. Gerster, 1980, and Musgrove, 1959

<sup>239</sup> Ayers, 1979; Gerster, 1980

requires detailed investigation.

To realise this contradictory situation in a research context requires making problematic the epistemological notion of 'relations' and the nature of the *communication* which maintains those relations in states of dependency or independency. If the mode of this communication between teacher, author and student was limited to print only, then the teacher, like the author, would be similarly distanced from the learner.<sup>240</sup> This would to some extent alleviate concerns that it is the *difference in modes* of communication in this triad of relations which is at issue. Furthermore, the choice of print mode communication would also foreground the students' relation with authors, making it a visible problematic. Finally, in the objectivated 'permanent' state of print, the communication would also be accessible to investigatory scrutiny. Putting it all together, the research context is now being realised as the place where an 'undereducated' private self-educator studies public social science knowledge in a university by way of print only.

#### 4. WHERE do adults learn?

In the tiny literature on 'WHERE adults learn', there is an irony between the assumptions of site by teachers and the intentions for success of learners. There are academics who believe that unless learning opportunities are offered within an institution, where learning is not left to chance and to 'dubious' resources, then the learning is of lower quality and may not be learning at all.<sup>241</sup> These staff presumably want to enhance *knowledge-constitutive* relations while the paradox is that some students, in their pursuit of 'success', choose on-campus as the place to enhance *social-constitutivity*, even to the point of neglecting the knowledge-constitutive resources provided.<sup>242</sup> For a different set of students however, off-campus study is preferred because they believe it enhances than *knowledge-constitutive* relations with teachers.<sup>243</sup> In other words, studying outside rather than inside the institution is more likely to provoke the very knowledge-constitutive intentions that academics believed only possible on-campus. Staff and students seem to be 'talking past' each other, each expecting the Other to seek the same educational relation as themselves as a means to

<sup>240</sup> In formal education, 'knowledge' is (usually) discursively objectified by being presented in a written format. The question of affiliation thus becomes 'With whom' does the adult primarily attempt to share a knowledge-constitutive relation - the teacher or the author of their readings? And does the student form different relations with the primary author to those of relations with secondary authors or translators?

<sup>241</sup> Apps, 1976:6. It was believed that learning in the everyday world 'is dominated by chance elements' in which adults are more likely to choose accessible resources than to choose those resources which may be 'best' or 'more true'. (Spear and Mocker, 1984:9) This 'learning' may be 'harmful' (Dickson, (1979:4) or socially or philosophically 'dubious' (Little, 1979:8, Verner, 1971) especially in terms of being 'so general as to be of little or no value ...' (Lawson, 1979:30). It is asserted that only in an 'hospitable' environment such as formalised education can the qualitative possibilities of the knowledge-act be enhanced (Azzaretto, 1984; Hiemstra, 1976; Knowles, 1980; Knox, 1980 and Vosko, 1984) for therein guidance is provided when teachers 'engineer' (Brookfield, 1983:13) situations of learning.

<sup>242</sup> When they wish to enhance group participation and camaraderie in university, potential knowers prefer semicircular seating patterns, and when they wish to enhance their social relations with their teachers, high achievers initiate entry into the lecturer's office or sit in the front seats of lecture theatres. (Vosko, 1984) The allusion to resource need and use is contradicted by studies which found that resources such as educational brokering services (Gross, 1979) or the library (Zehner, 1979) were not used once the student was enrolled

<sup>243</sup> Brookfield, 1980, found that distance education does not necessarily grant cognitive independence to the intending knower. For instance, while isolated students who requested audio learning tapes in their distance education packages appreciated 'a personal touch', they wanted the taped discussion to stimulate thinking

academic achievement, when in fact they may not. In this misreading of each Others intentions and assumptions, 'where adults learn' is a problematic relation marked by the nature and the extent to which *place* is used as a means for determining the locus of educational *control* in an effort to *succeed*.<sup>244</sup>

Within this contradictory relation of 'the control to the means of success', the 'unknown' is the interaction between *knowledge-constitutive* and *social-constitutive intentions*. Therefore each of these 'intentions' needs to be *objectified* for the group who claims it as the purpose for studying on-campus. That is, the *knowledge-constitutive* intention which teachers claim as the purpose, should be distanced from the teachers, while the *social-constitutive* intention which learners claim as a purpose, should be distanced from the on-campus siting (of learners). Inverting these ideas very briefly, to subjectify the *knowledge-constitutive* relation for students, would be to have the knowledge-content *always available*, in the home. To further objectify the teacher-student *social* relation (which has already been objectivated once by requiring a print mode of communication) would require temporal and geographic distancing (such as mailed study at a distance) since then the *social-constitutive* intention is mediated by time and space as well as by symbol. (This decision partially confirms an earlier choice, but is clarified to the extent that 'distance education' can neither simply be equated with face-to-face study in an off-campus setting, nor with telephone conferencing, or television or video education.) This context analysis would now site this investigation in home-based, print-mode, mailed, study at a distance. In the search for a problematic context, the investigation will now centre on the undereducated everyday adult who studies the social science knowledge they want to know, when it is mailed to their home.

### 5. WHEN do adults Learn?

Time is feature that is often taken for granted in the act of 'coming to know', yet it may possess a significant influence in the short term as well as in history. Briefly, this problem arises from a methodological mediation of the beliefs of two groups of people. On the one hand there are academics who argue that everyday adults need 'time for change' so that they can be formally taught 'how to learn'.<sup>245</sup> On the other side is the argument that learning is already a lifelong affair, a history of a person's move toward maturity.<sup>246</sup> However, whichever timeframe is believed to be the period

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about the knowledge-sought rather than engage them in informal 'chit-chat'. (Lappia and Kirkland, 1988) They requested a knowledge-constitutive rather than a social constitutive relation with their teacher(s)

<sup>244</sup> Taylor, 1984:254

<sup>245</sup> For those who espouse this direction, the ultimate aim of education should, it is claimed, be 'to shift to the individual, the burden of pursuing his own education'. (Gardner, 1963:12) See also Azzaretto, 1984, Dickson, 1979, Hiemstra, 1976, Knowles, 1980, Knox, 1980, Lawson, 1979, Little, 1979, Spear and Mocker, 1984, Verner, 1971, Vosko, 1984. Problems seem to arise from instructors' who find change so threatening that they deny its existence, (Hoare, 1984:18) who simply fail to believe a change in learning styles could happen, (Frank Musgrove, 1959) or who encounter adults claiming irrelevance or triviality of the material the instructors offer. (Glynn, 1980) The academics' claims of perceived problematicity (in having to cope with adults' everyday learning strategies) has been frequently used as a basis for forming different admissions policies. (Boucoulavas, 1980)

<sup>246</sup> eg. Lovell, 1980:10 'Lifelong' is a term used to describe WHEN adults' learn, (Boucoulavas, 1979; Lasker & Moore, 1980) for 'in a sense the whole of life is an educational experience, even for the ineducable'. (Hall,

of habituating personal learning strategies, its corollary is that time also supports habits of forgetting. During investigation, adults can recall *social* incidents surrounding the knowledge-act far easier than they can recall *knowledge-constitutive* details, except at times when the knowledge-act has been stimulated by a 'trigger event' (which might range from the relative simplicity of a mechanical breakdown of a car to the complexity of bereavement or divorce).<sup>247</sup> Then, when such an event challenges the very core of one's knowledge base, the adult becomes conscious of their attempts to either change or conserve the personal strategies for coming to know. When this happens, when knowledge-constitutive activity is challenged by traumatic incident, then in the movement from *potential* knower to *intending* knower, the person's response finds its foundation in the long previous period of habituating a personal epistemology. In their consciousness that their habituated strategies now seem problematic, they seek new ways to come to know, though it may not be long before they again background (forget or take for granted) these knowledge-constitutive tensions.<sup>248</sup>

Although on reflection this may seem to be a somewhat self-evident explanation of something we take for granted in life, what remains unknown, and needs to be questioned is whether the earlier claimed *need* 'to be taught to learn' is, in fact, simply a reflection of the time needed to change epistemological habits which are under stress. The problematic which is indicated here seems to lie in the relation between lifelong change (habit) and triggered change. '*Habit*' and '*change*' are thus the two elements of time in need of investigation. To actualise these temporal conceptions in a single context requires selecting a common 'trigger' point for all of the 'sample group'. Such a time is the moment of 'reentry' to formal education, when students change from common-sense to academic-sense. At this time, one group (the teachers) is 'triggered' by what they see as *the need* to mediate the others' ways of knowing, while the second group are similarly 'triggered', but by their anxiety about the institutions' (knowledge-constitutive) expectations. Each group thus identifies an

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1970:186) It has been found, (Tough, 1978) that almost 90% of all adults conduct up to five major learning projects in a year confirming a general acceptance of continuing change and lifelong learning. (Lasker & Moore, 1980; Simpson, 1980) Lifelong learning strategies may be related to such temporal factors as previous life experiences (Flavell, et al., 1981) and persistence. (Eaton & West, 1980) Through coping with life experiences, adults control their own knowledge-act. (Meyer, 1980)

<sup>247</sup> A 'triggering event' stimulates the need to know something new. *The event occasioning learning may have been accidental ... but the learning which arises out of this changed circumstance is rooted in the adult's desire to adjust to a new situation*. (Brookfeild, 1983:17) *'At the beginning there is the experience of suffering and desperation and the interest in overcoming this burdensome condition'*. (Habermas, 1978:234) This 'trigger' period, when adults initially struggle to challenge or accept a change of ideas, is thought to be highly problematic, (Hoare, 1984:18; also Toffler, 1970) especially when related to times of crisis resolution. (Aslanian & Brickell, 1980; Gould, 1979; Greer, 1980; Kahnweiler & Johnson, 1980; Spear and Mocker, 1984, Tough, 1978) 'Triggering' events cause not only a change in the adult's life-knowledge, but the new and unplanned situation provides the resources to pursue further change. (Spear & Mocker, 1984)

<sup>248</sup> In one of the pilot studies for this thesis it was found that, when interviewed, graduates kept referring back to the time when they first entered university as an undergraduate, for then they claimed they were '*really conscious*' of coming to know. (cf Habermas, 1978:18) However, they possessed awareness most of all, of the social 'moments' of that earlier study period. 'Time' had mediated and erased their consciousness of the knowledge-constitutive aspects of change as they recalled socially-stressful events. For instance, a partner screaming through clenched teeth that their shirt was not laundered while the second partner finished an assignment may have been a stressful period in the *social* relations of knowing but is now recalled as a knowledge-constitutive *influence* (which it may or may not have been in fact), yet being unable to locate supplementary texts in the local Public Library might not have been particularly stressful then, and may be forgotten now, yet it had a major effect on the knowledge-constitutive 'quality' of the student's learning. (source: 'Judy')

unknown, a 'negative' which may or may not have a knowledge-constitutive basis in fact.

As a consequence of basing these problems of habit and change in the trigger period of reentry, there is a need in this investigation to examine both the prior and progressing 'times' on either side of this historical 'moment'; first, to understand the basis of forming knowledge-constitutive habits in the adults' educational historys and second, the time embraced by the beginning and end of this 'reentry' period of *change*. This decision is realised by investigating the challenges of *change* both from childhood to adulthood and the beginning of an academic year to the 'end', seeking in both periods of time, the reasoned connections between their 'habit' and their 'changes'.<sup>249</sup> Time, however requires both broad and detailed consideration to overcome the forgettings which follow periods of change, interviews should take place '*as and when*' activity occurs but the knowledge-action has '*not yet*' become habituated. This decision will be realised by interviewing the intending knowers at the *time of submission* of assignments, and again *at the time* of the final examination, searching the nature of the challenges and their changes or conservatism of epistemological habit.

'Habit', 'history' and 'change' become the elements of time which, when synthesised with other interrogative decisions now formed a problematic context which could be described simply as home-based adult students having their educational history challenged by, and being examined upon, the scientification of 'first year' social science knowledge at university, by correspondence.

### 6. *Why do adults learn?*

In an extensive scientific literature, the reasons 'Why adults learn' are seen in terms of why they enrol and participate (i.e. motives) rather than in terms of why they choose particular strategies of knowledge-action (i.e. intentional action) and this issue arises from within its own philosophy. Historically, the endless replication studies<sup>250</sup> have adhered closely to the Comtean principle of Identifying only 'the positives' of 'what is obvious' (the appearance of motivations)<sup>251</sup>, although latterly this focus altered slightly, to seeking the basis of 'the negatives' of 'what is obvious' (deterrents to formal study<sup>252</sup>). Yet in spite of Comte's claims, there is little these 'facts' offer toward predicting rules for the future conduct of educational practices for adults. Findings are presented as overly-simplified typologies, piecemealed in the extreme and uncritically analysed. Indeed, given the deductive nature of most of the studies, the preformed categorisations may not

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<sup>249</sup> This was less intrusive than it sounds, for the research subjects were more the willing to express how they felt about what they had chosen to do, and why, often for over two hours or more. In effect, they said they were '*glad to get it off their chest*', (Val) or '*to have a chance to talk about it so someone who knew what they were trying to accomplish*'. (Alan)

<sup>250</sup> A complaint voiced by Knowles, 1979, Eaton, 1979, and Driver and Parer, 1981, among others

<sup>251</sup> e.g. Rogers, 1977

<sup>252</sup> e.g. Scanlan and Darkenwald, 1984

even reflect the actual reasons for the enrolment of the intending knowers themselves.<sup>253</sup>

It is 'known' is that both formally-educated and self-educated adults are far more often motivated into educational practices for knowledge-constitutive reasons (increasing one's knowledge or broadening one's interests) than for social reasons (making friends or careerism) Ironically, not only are social reasons more likely to deter adults from study <sup>254</sup> but also social deterrents are now thought not to be 'educationally' influential.<sup>255</sup> What clearly remains unknown is the relation between social reasons and knowledge-constitutive intentions.

There are two elements to this ignorance and a prior requirement to their study. The prior requirement is to choose *voluntary* commitment as the only necessary motive for enrolment, for then there might be some assurance that the adult is a deliberately *intending* knower with some freedom of will and influence in decision making. (Including only *voluntary* enrollees in this investigation would partly confirm the voluntarism inherent in the earlier decision - that potential knowers choose an area of study that 'fits their needs'.)

The two elements involved in the ignorance (of why and how social reasons deter knowledge-constitutive practices) are that previous research has focussed on collecting *facts* rather than

<sup>253</sup> Grigsby, 1980

<sup>254</sup> There are a variety of reasons why adults choose to learn outside of institutions. (Grigsby, 1980; Tough, 1979) The decision to self-educate is often self-initiated, pro-active; (Tough, 1979) not limited by age, (Grigsby, 1980) and can be triggered by the need to cope with life changes, (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980) or be stimulated by parents, spouse or peers. (Brookfield, 1981, 1982) Learning may be engaged in solely for its practical application, (Penland, 1977 and Tough, 1978) though researchers' have found (Brookfield, 1980; Gibbons, 1980; Gross, 1973) in many adults a 'perennial impulse' of intrinsic curiosity; a need to study either 'for the souls sake' (Gross, 1982:2) or to test one's intellectual possibilities. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982) Indeed, it has been speculated that there are 'hundreds of thousands' of such learners for whom '... the passion for knowledge is their joy, but not their job. They are impelled by curiosity, concern or compulsion, but not by academic careerism. They also have one hell of a good time ...' (Gross, 1982:5) One study (Harris and Williamson, 1975) found that by far most students felt the main benefit of self education was increased knowledge (84.7%) and a broadening of one's interests (52.8%). Social reasons were secondary and vocational reasons a poor last (4.9%). The adult who enjoys the 'ex ilaration' (Ziegler, 1979) of self-education may choose later to enrol in formalised study as an addition to their learning experiences. (Thompson, 1974) Indeed, they might even devote much of their later lives to university-level study because it affords them an extended involvement in creativity, abstract thinking, perceptivity and intellectual analysis. (Gross, 1982:4) Motivation toward knowledge-acquisition, as 'learning for its own sake', is the main motive for the enrolment by a wide age-range of adults, (Beddowes, Harris and Williamson, 1975) including for retired persons, (Boshier and Riddell, 1978) and people over forty years of age. (Parkyn, 1973; Ralston, 1983) Those intending-knowers appear to seek knowledge either for cultural enrichment (Lamdin, 1979) or maybe to fulfil thwarted desires. (Wolf, 1983) Again, 'social stimulation', is next most often reported motive for engaging in learning. This 'activity-motivation' (Houle, 1961) includes those adults who enrol more as a leisure time activity; (Carbone, 1982) for escapism, the seeking of friends, for community service, or for the joy of social participation. (Boshier, 1971; Boshier and Riddell, 1978; Carbone, 1982; Houle, 1961; Lamdin, 1979) The final group of motivational factors is 'goal-orientation', (Houle, 1961) which is usually directed towards a career, (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980; Carbone, 1982; Holmberg, 1980; Houle, 1961; Lamdin, 1979) and may arise from competition in the labour market (Cross, 1979) or a mid-life career change. (Tuttle and Decker, 1980) Barriers which deter adults from engagement in formal education include a lack of information, inconvenient scheduling, transportation problems and lack of confidence, (Cross, 1981) to which other studies added the cost, family restraints, work constraints, lack of a perceived quality in courses, doubts about the worth and need of study, and disengagement which included inertia, apathy and negative attitudes. (e.g. Scanlon and Darkenwald, 1984) These listings of factors related more to social than knowledge-constitutive relations. Davis, 1982, thought physical disability was a causal barrier, in terms of the person's unassertiveness, lack of awareness, or the over-protectiveness of those caring for the disabled.

<sup>255</sup> Why adults participate in learning activities is an important question, but the evidence of a universality of self-directed (everyday) learning among all populations suggests that motivation is not a problem. Indeed, it is unclear, given the nature of the origins of self-directed learning, how adult educators might act upon it in any case.' (Spear and Mocker, 1984:8) Similar considerations of voluntarism have been made by Knowles, 1979 and Brookfield, 1983:29-33

investigating *relations*, and that 'deterrents' or determinants have been seen in *social-constitutive* rather than in *knowledge-constitutive* terms. Relating these two ideas together, the need is to move *from the facts* about social deterrents *to* understanding the determinants of knowledge-constitutive *relations*. To understand the relation between social reasons for enrolment and knowledge-constitutive intentions, one could explore how epistemic practices occur in an isolated (virtual) 'social vacuum' - alone in the home, separated from other intending knowers (as well as from teachers); in a place where any attempts to create or avoid social influence will be objectified and thus made available to critical analysis. This decision can be realised by choosing a sample group of *rural-based intending knowers* who are separated from one another, and in choosing people who are enrolled in different social science courses, and thus who present different knowledge-constitutive or social-constitutive needs. In all, the question of 'why people learn' is now actualised by choosing adults whose voluntary intentions allow the influences of social relations on knowledge-constitutivity (and vice versa) to be investigated. In epistemic terms, the research now examines influential *relations* rather than isolated *facts*.

*Synthesis: the formation of a problematic site*

Methodologically, the reading of previous studies had identified negative conceptions in each separate interrogative context, and following argument about their realisation, a unity of those decisions was formed. Contextualism was thus an act of prior argument and synthesis.<sup>256</sup> This preformed site will now inclusively reflect a broad knowledge-constitutive problematic (or 'negative Identity'). The situation will reflect the challenges of moving from commonsense to academic sense within its 'frozen' but chosen social milieu. The *place* is a unified, but not-yet-understood 'whole' in as much as when one question simply led to another, a coherence developed from the use of the Standard Interrogatives.

It is this synthesis of negative factors which forms the context wherein to study the potential for marginalisation of adults ways of knowing. The development of this context has been based upon the epistemological concern to create an environment which is 'naturally' problematic rather than either contrived, or taken for granted as reflecting the correct answers, to the research topic. The world of a negative context is alienating by nature, and therein lies the possibility of epistemological challenge and change, and thus an indication of both what was and what will be (or can be) in terms of adults ways of coming to know. Based in the foundations of Adorno's Negative Dialectic, the formation of this context to some extent overcomes my major methodological concern about investigatory mediation. I wanted the context to present its own issues so that in its askings, those questions were more authentic than if I had created them from my own, and singular, point of view.

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<sup>256</sup> The study is established on the basis that 'every individual identity has meaning and significance only in relation to the totality'. (Marcuse, 1977)

The site of study would now present its own topics, its own variations and its own intensities, in the genuine way of a materialist determination, allowing its problematics to be differently perceived by adults according to their equally-different ways of knowing.

Critical contextualism, as the deliberate search for a negative Identity, had located a site of study where the knowledge-act would be challenging and thus the possibility of knowledge-constitutive marginalisation was imminent. As a result of the contextual synthesis, it would seem that the least 'known' and maybe the most problematic of all sites in which to be 'learning', was to be distance-educated by correspondence during the first-year at university after a number of years absent from formal education. Added to this, it would prove beneficial, for research purposes, if the student were studying social science courses. Being only epistemologically-contrived, the actual site of the investigation would be as 'natural' in its realisation as possible and as 'universally-inclusive' of problematic knowledge-relations as the use of the standard interrogatives allowed.

However, while each of these interrogative searches has highlighted particular problematics arising from within the literature (the idealist world of what is formally known), it is acknowledged and expected that in the practical complexity of the daily world, that which has currently seemed as problematic, in fact, may be simply a facade for entirely different issues. With the synthesis of many interrogative '*facts*' into a single site, new epistemic *relations* are formed and thus the forcefield of different or similar issues might arise, fulfilling the research aim of finding a breadth of view; an inclusive vision of what it means to come to know.

Epistemologically, the questioning of questions had accomplished Adorno's suggestion to use whatever form of critique (*dialectical negation*) was appropriate for the task at hand. Thus the combination of these searches reflects the need to find 'unknowns' in such relations as between positives and negatives (knowledge-content and knowledge-action); between contradictory negatives (autonomy or dependency), contraries (private and public epistemologies) and double positives (historical change and triggered change of habits); and in both an epistemological negative ('facts' rather than 'relations') and a negated epistemology (studying social-constitutivity to the exclusion of knowledge-constitutivity). Asking what? where? why? when? who? and with whom? offers a far broader epistemological scope than might have been imagined by the simplicity and taken for grantedness of the appearance of the standard interrogatives. When combined with the intentions of Adorno's negative dialectic, it would now seem that a research question of some import has materialised.

Critical contextualism, as the act of questing questions and siting the negatives, has now clarified the research task in both a conceptual and a realised form. In the theoretically-abstract, or conceptual form this investigation would now ask:

*What would the current history of change look like when the habituated 'oneness' of peoples private epistemologies are challenged by the expectations of knowledge-constitutive rigour in a public epistemology, so that within the stresses of the situation, a conscious differentiation of knowledge-as-content from knowledge-as-action results? In this process of change, to what extent might both one's educational history, and one's present locus of control in the social relations the adult students shared with educators, influence the dependency or freedom of their knowledge-constitutive practices?*

In this form, it is the researcher rather than the researched who is conscientised toward the aspects of education which have until now have appeared problematic but obscure. Perhaps it is in this conscientisation of the researcher's mind-set, and in the materialisation of the site of problematic knowledge-action, that the real strengths of a prior contextualism lay.<sup>257</sup> In turn this conceptual site possessed both a realisable form and a refined researchable 'topic':

*How might rural-based, undereducated, adults who possessed a habituated, private, and 'common-sensical' epistemology (but who are not employed in an educational role), voluntarily cope with the home-based 'reentry' period of transition to university, studying by mailed correspondence education, while 'learning' the rigorous and disciplined 'academic-sense' of social science knowledge?*

### Conclusion

Epistemological exploration of different views of social theory showed that the core of distinctiveness between different paradigmatic positions lay more in the theorist's use or negation of 'the negatives' than in different claims to truth, objectivity or whatever values might be given to the knowledge so formed. The different uses of 'the negatives' could be assigned positions on a continuum. Comte's Identificatory positivism created the most limited and exclusive method for formalising social knowledge, while Adorno's Negative Dialectic produced the most inclusive. Moreover, Adorno's epistemological intention (to use whatever form of negation was necessary for the task at hand), allowed a flexibility of critique into the examination of methodology itself.

Within the purposive seeking of potentiality and possibility, I had engaged in critical contextualism rather than a standard literature review, and this had enabled me to locate a site of study which was 'known' to be problematic. Critical contextualism identified a quest in both conceptual and realisable forms, reduced a broad and nebulous topic (adults ways of knowing) to a clear researchable task.

The more mundane and mechanical methodological aspects of the study (as outlined above) are now described in the chapter which follows.

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<sup>257</sup> *The ideological dimension usually comes to light less in its false judgements than in its ... its manner of posing problems, ... and, above all, in what it closes its eyes to.* (Horkheimer, 1986:8)

## Chapter Four

### Methodology

Though decisions concerning methodology have already begun this chapter outlines the methodical details of the empirical study. Areas covered include ethics, procedures and analysis.

It is the overarching epistemology rather than the technical details of a methodology, which eventually enable knowledge-constitutive freedoms. Therefore, the method had actually begun with the genesis of the question (Ch.1),<sup>258</sup> the visualising of the social milieu of the curriculum and the knowledge-action sequence (Ch.2), followed by epistemological exploration and critical contextualism (Ch.3). Since it seemed that no-one knew how adults knew (Ch.2), a critical method was needed to overcome the positivist dilemmas of objectivist exclusion and positivity. This was seen as being necessary, since locating the irrational conceptual elements of knowledge-constitutive marginalisation and proposing ways to achieve knowledge-constitutive freedoms, could provide a catalytic moment for overcoming oppressive educational practices.<sup>259</sup> First of all, since positive Identification of the knowledge-act was obscure, and concerns for legitimation outweighed the search for meanings, this study would instead investigate the negations of knowledge-action as if they were acts of potential educational marginalisation. This method aims toward inclusivity on the grounds that (a) the meanings ascribed to the realm of the negative are far broader and more complex (relational) than those allowed within positive and Identificatory limits, and (b) a critical study does not deny the inherent Identificatory aspect of the dialectic, whether that be positive or negative in form. Identifying *different* ways of knowing should now be possible, for when a habituated personal epistemology is challenged, it is subject to the requirements of its cognitive interest,<sup>260</sup> and in the past these interests may have lain outside or beyond the means to Identify them positively. But while other issues still needed to be resolved,<sup>261</sup> at least the location of a problematic-based research site (Ch.3), and its inherent empirical question had surfaced:

*How might a rural-based, undereducated, adult who possessed a habituated, private, and 'common-sensical' epistemology (but who is not employed in an educational role), voluntarily cope with the home-based 'reentry' period of transition to university, studying by mailed correspondence education, while 'learning' the rigorous and disciplined 'academic-sense' of social science knowledge?*

While this was the practical question, the theoretical question remained one of seeking the parameters for emancipatory curricula:

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<sup>258</sup> Historical predeterminations are indicated by a pagination in parentheses at the end of sentences.

<sup>259</sup> See also Fay, 1975:110

<sup>260</sup> cf Habermas, 1978:289

<sup>261</sup> I undertook pilot studies to check through epistemological/methodological problems before the major study.

*What would the current history of change look like when the habituated 'oneness' of peoples private epistemologies are challenged by the expectations of a knowledge-constitutive rigour in a public epistemology, such that the stresses of the situation result in the conscious differentiation of knowledge-as-content from knowledge-as-action? In this process of change, to what extent might both one's educational history, and one's present locus of control in the social relations the adult students shared with educators, influence the dependency or freedom of their knowledge-constitutive practices?*

The empirical study would merely highlight the materialist centrality of knowledge-action in curriculum questions. Through employing deductive methods, I would now seek "the subjective meanings of being capable of both knowing and yet not knowing", then limit the wealth of people's data collected to the analysis of the data of people who demonstrated marginalised ways of knowing. First I would illustrate their previous educational background, then reflect on the current history they made as they formed particular knowledge-constitutive relations between different types of knowledge during this investigation. As the theoretical fabric was being woven, 'irrelevant' material would be discarded, hidden material foregrounded and hegemonic practices and beliefs briefly addressed. Finally I would propose a way to enable knowledge-constitutive freedom, by seeking the ways these same educational relations were taught by different teachers during the student's moves from commonsense to academic-sense.

In this thesis, epistemological freedom (the freedom of coming to know) would be seen as the critical adoption and use of the given knowledge in the social milieu of everyday life situations. Educational relations which led away from enabling the student to use the given course knowledge in everyday life, would be seen as oppressive, whether or not such relations lead to *educational* success. Thus it was by investigating the epistemological implications of this research practice, that I had clarified and reconstructed a methodology which might overcome the inherent and exclusive limitations of positivism and conditioned reasoning. The technical details of the empirical study are now described.

### *Ethics, courtesies and consents*

#### *The Institution*

In order to undertake higher education research of a substantive kind, the relations between the formalities of officialdom and individual rights to privacy required special consideration. Personal contact was made, discussions held and letters of formality sent, before permission was granted by groups representing the various interests of the institution. Letters which similarly outlined the study were sent to each of these groups. They included the University Committee on Ethics involving human subjects; the University Committee on Extramural University Studies; the Deans of the Faculties of Social Sciences and Education; the Heads of Departments for the Centre for Extramural University Studies and Education and Sociology Departments. These letter(s) alerted staff to the fact that the research would focus upon epistemological matters pertaining to changes in the acquisition of knowledge rather than upon the substantive content of courses.

Long discussions with the leaders of the four courses which would be involved were also formalised by letter. In these discussions the nature of literature on adults' learning was explained. In particular it was stressed that teacher mediation in educational relations was of core concern to the study because, even while adults volunteered to learn formally, they still wished to retain control of their own learning. Course leaders were verbally informed that it appeared that adult students desired support yet were equally able to feel threatened when it was offered. Where the course leaders were concerned this matter (quite understandably) caused some tension, but following an in-house, pilot study on graduates' learning difficulties, the consent of these course lecturers was particularly encouraging. (One even suggested the types of questions I might ask since he also had questions which perplexed him.)

### *The people*

The informed consent of the sample group of students was sought by mail and a letter of appreciation was sent to those who volunteered to participate. As with the institutional letters, the original request for participation prewarned the student that the research would focus upon the acquisition of knowledge rather than its content; on 'the how' rather than 'the what'. The two letters mentioned, were then followed by an introductory meeting at the student's home. There I outlined the purpose of the study in terms comprehensible to the individual people. In particular, I expressed that through initial indepth interviews and a later reflexive critique, the investigator would aim at finding 'the problems' of coming to know as the adult student tried to understand the nature of the challenges they felt. This brought up the problem of the one-sidedness of social science research, especially the fact that there was always one who sought to 'know more' and to 'know better' than the 'Other' and of the other.<sup>262</sup> Though all the people I spoke with still agreed to continue with the study, I nonetheless left with them a brief statement of intent so that they could reflect on their decision while alone or later, with their partner. This proved useful as one person withdrew from the study the next week, explaining that she was already nervous enough about studying 'without the hassle of wondering what you are thinking too'.

One further group of persons who may have been effected in their study by the publicity surrounding the granting of a substantial research fund for this project, were the students for whom I was a teacher rather than a researcher. To clarify my status to them and allay possible fears of surveillance, an explanatory letter was sent to them prior to their first assignment.

### *The methods of confidentiality*

Several methods of confidentiality were employed. *The courses* were identified only by pseudonyms of X1, X2, Y1 and Y2. Since there was no time that the course content served as other than an illustration of an epistemological point, the identity of the disciplines of the courses

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<sup>262</sup> See Horkheimer, 1972:132f

was not required (though its social science base is quite obvious) of the *academic personnel*. involved. Neither course leaders, nor other lecturers or course tutors were named in any discussions and it was necessary for the students' themselves to raise staff-student issues before we discussed them. In fact, the only time that university staff appear in the findings is as the authors of academic texts to which a student referred. Tutors of students in the sample were aware only in a general way that they were evaluating students in courses that I was studying, and since they were my peers we made a prior informal agreement that we would not identify or discuss those students. Since the tutors and I were academic colleagues, we did however discuss general issues which arose in these courses. This was general 'teacher talk' and seldom bore any relation to the findings of this study except where broad issues such as the interpretation of an assignment question were concerned.

Issues of confidentiality with the *student sample group* were responded to right from the beginning of the year when the sampling survey was undertaken. All students in the original population were provided with sampling codes which included one digit for the course number and two digits for the individual. (Since four surveys (with a different sample of two hundred people) were administered at the same time as the interviews throughout the year, this matter of coding was a major practical component of the methodology even though the surveys are not reported in this thesis).

To counter attempts to identify respondents, the year of the empirical study is not mentioned anywhere. The quality of the data was rich, personal and extremely revealing, so issues of confidentiality in this regard were paramount. All that matters is that the students both studied and were studied for a full academic year in a New Zealand institution of higher education. Respondents whose quotations are used in the text are identified only by a letter and numeral. When the data was reduced to that of students who experienced marginalisation, typified groupings were formed, as these provided sensical parameters within which to analyse the radicalisation of shared meanings. Moreover, given the political dimension of information which arose in the data, each of the three groups was named. Knowers were identified by the non-de-plume of Noah, and since (in fact) there were three of them they are 'labelled' N<sub>1</sub>, N<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>3</sub>. Noah did not 'win' in the university courses as far as final gradings were concerned, but in a pseudo-oral examination (during the pre-examination interview) she was the 'person' who knew the course content to the extent that it was applied and used regularly to inform her everyday life. Winners were the most successful of the students in institutional terms and are identified as Wyna 1, w2, w3, w4 and w5. Winner achieved ahead of all others in the course when the raw scores of the final examination were compared. Finally, the losers, most of whom left their university enrolment early in the year, are identified only as Luisa 1, L2, L3, L4, and L5. Luisa the loser, did not achieve much at all in terms of either socialisation to the institution (she never felt she 'belonged') or in terms of knowing the course content. Much less could she identify her own epistemology and knowledge-action. In the

end the 'data' used in the findings of this thesis actually centres upon only thirteen students, although twenty persons were interviewed throughout the year. This in itself acts as another factor of anonymity.

In the interests of anonymity, the quotations of the interviews are maintained at a minimal length and wherever it was appropriate, the material of which they spoke, such as the identity of their hometown, was codified thus leaving the reader unable to identify it. Where quotations are attributed to the speaker, their personal identity (say, N1) is followed by the interview number. Where extra caution to protect identity was required, the Wyna, Luisa or Noah is identified only by the subtitle of 'x'. For instance, Wx.2 indicates material from the second interview of one of the Wyna's, unidentified. The interview number gives a partial indication of the time during the year when the interview took place.

## *Procedures*

### 1. Sampling

The initial and primary concern of this study had been determined in my history. What was the nature of the workings of *different* peoples' personal epistemologies? Given that the most revealing aspect of adults learning for the positivists seemed to be the possession of blonde hair or a brooding nature, how was one to get beyond such limitations? To prevent being personally prejudicial in the sampling process, I employed an element of objectivity to stop me from seeking people like myself (people who 'I would *like* to study') or alternatively, having them select themselves into the study. During one pilot study when several reentry students selected themselves to be interviewed, it became most apparent that political self-interest was a definitive factor in studying<sup>263</sup> and that 'the problems' they described of their learning may well have been censored. The problem was that the social-constitutive intentionality shown by their self-selection might also reflect one particular type of knowledge-constitutive practice when knowledge-constitutivity was a focus of the study. Self-selected students shared similar rather than different ways of knowing and they did not represent all socio-economic groups.<sup>264</sup> All students in the appropriate population required an equal chance of inclusion<sup>265</sup> if I ever hoped to locate the nature of difference. The first decision of sampling (objectification) had taken place in the pilot studies. The second decision was effected by the prior contextualisation.

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<sup>263</sup> Identity is rooted in a particular worldview. "What people do may not always be for the reasons they give, but deeper underlying socio-political forces in society (of which they may be unaware) may mediate what they think and do." Fay, 1975:21 Also Bernstein, 1976, Reason and Rowan, 1981

<sup>264</sup> The second pilot study had virtually consisted of students who attended a voluntary vacation course and while there self-selected themselves for interviews. This did not seem unusual at the time, yet during and after the interviews they seemed to be of a similar personality. Those interviews were in my office and the students' answers (and questions) often related to status seeking (*Oh! My children are such a hassle!!*) After that I decided to use standardised sampling techniques and to interview students in their own homes.

<sup>265</sup> Weisman and Bowen, 1977

Critical contextualism (in Ch.3) had effectively identified the population group as students in their first-ever university year, studying social science course-content, by correspondence, from a distance. Furthermore, those students would be 30 years of age or older. But how did this population 'fit' into the larger population of university enrolments at that time?

The full correspondence-educated population of this university in this particular year was greater than 10,000 students. Of these students, 63% were female, 59% were married and 0.5% studied full time course loads although the average course load of each student was only 1.8 papers. 22% of the >10,000 distance-educated students were first year students and 52% were enrolled in social science subjects. The major age group represented was 25-29 years of age and 29% were enrolled as 'provisional admission'.<sup>266</sup> By way of comparison, in the combined on- and off-campus population, 44% of students were women, 30% of all students studied part-time, and 33% were 'mature aged' (ie over 25 yrs of age). For the purposes of this project alone, there was an originally-enrolled population of 2059 students over the four courses. It was the already-determined characteristics of the problematic site which would further refine the actual sample of people to be investigated. Stratified sub-sampling was about to begin.

One decision already made concerned the course-knowledge itself. Given that the course knowledge to be studied by students was already defined as being based in social science, four lecturers of first year classes were approached. Having once obtained their permission, I was given access to class rolls and thus began a stratified sub-sampling process to take account of a further predetermined parameter.

In order to objectify the difference between academic sense and common sense, (so as to 'make the students' conscious of their knowledge-activity), the study would best be effected during the time when the adults' habituated self-educative practice was 'threatened' by the abstracted theoretical sense of the first year at university, when little (it seemed) could be taken for granted. Since second or third year students could also enrol in a level one paper, a stratified sub-sampling process eliminated from the 'population' (class lists), those students who were not in their very first year as university enrollees.<sup>267</sup> Since the data on year of enrolment was not available and because further details were required from each student, a sampling survey was constructed and sent to all students enrolled in those four courses.

#### *(a) Sampling Survey*

The sampling survey stratified the course-enrolled populations into cluster groups. In particular, it

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<sup>266</sup> Source: MU, the university newsletter.

<sup>267</sup> The university itself defined the 'first' year as the period until seven undergraduate papers or one third of an undergraduate degree were complete (ie ) - whether it was studied full time or a part time. (Personal communication with the University Registrar (Academic))

separated out those students with an unmediated 'novitiate' status, for whom the self-education of the everyday world was their primary source of knowledge. Twenty questions were used. Q.1 was simply related to identificatory coding.

Question 2 asked for age grouping (*seeking those over 30 years of age*) and this question was the first act of establishing the possible length of time since their childhood education was complete. Questions 10, 15, 16 and 17 followed up on this topic. This questioning was necessary for I wished to study the effect of change on habituated everyday epistemologies. In order to establish that the student in the sample had habitually-subjectivated an informal everyday epistemology, answers to Q.2 were cross checked with answers to Q.10 (studied more than one term at university?) and Q.15 (Have you experienced any formal education as an adult?). (This cross checking 'eliminated' 4 students.) Only students who had experienced at least ten years in a self-educative role were required for the sample group selection process.

Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 asked for occupation-related information and the relation of their proposed university study to occupation. This was to exclude from the research sample those people who were concurrently working in a world which foregrounded a formalised or semi-formalised knowledge-act. This would be an unnecessary confounding variable because such people may have (a) habituated an externally-determined epistemology and its justifications or (b) it might cause them to reflect in a way which did not demonstrate an authentic change from everyday to institutionalised epistemologies. After all, reflection was a central factor in the knowledge-act sequence in the research analysis itself. Furthermore, question 4 (is this course related to your employment?) could establish if voluntary commitment really did indicate self-selected rather than 'forcibly' Other-determined knowledge-constitutive intentions and actions (p.119). Thus the students own intentions could be seen as currently self-determining factors (beliefs or ideology) in their knowledge-act. (This group of questions removed 30 persons from the sample group selection process.)

Questions 7 to 9 asked for information on their family environment. This served two functions. First, it alerted the researcher to considering at what time of the day, or day of the week, to undertake the interviews so that the social relations of the research act itself would not be compromised, for instance, by children arriving home from school in the middle of a discussion. Secondly, it alerted the researcher to the possibility of the student having to cope with the social-constitutive mediations of family members or peers during the act of coming to know. Q.8 (is there a possibility of change in the family this year?) was to exclude students whose knowledge-constitutive focus was already sidetracked (or socially-mediated) to the extent that they were aware already of predetermined challenges to their university studies.

Questions 10 to 14 asked for information of previous university experience. Anyone who could provide an answer to Q.11 to Q.14 was exempted from the case study sample (but kept within the survey samples not addressed in this thesis). Interestingly, Q.13 (number of successfully

completed papers) was able to be answered by 2 students who in Q.10 had indicated they had never studied at university before.

Questions 15 to 17 asked about the nature of any *other* formal education received as an adult. By accident rather than intention, these students were not exempted from the random sample process which followed and indeed, the fact that they were included had an important bearing on the findings, since the knowledge-constitutive differences of typifications were marked by the nature of the former tertiary education experiences some of them had undertaken. (Students who had returned to secondary school as adults totalled 50 in the original population, and a further 137 students had studied in polytechnics or similar institutions after leaving highschool.)

Students who had previously been correspondence educated (Questions 18 and 19. N= 129) were excluded from the interview sample group on the grounds that they had prior knowledge of overcoming the difficulties inherent in the objectivation of knowledge. As such they might be thought of as being already-practising, 'autonomous learners'.

Questions 20 and 21 simply asked for the numbers of courses and the titles of the papers they were to study in this research year. Where I was able to choose between students studying one paper or more, I would choose those studying the least number so as to minimise 'social science fatigue' for the student. Furthermore, having this information available would alert the researcher to possible mediations of concurrent enrolments. (Concurrent enrolment did, in fact, become a positive knowledge-constitutive factor in the findings.)

#### (b) Participation rates

Voluntary participation in the sampling survey was between 82 and 92 % (see Table 4.1).

COURSE ROLL INFORMATION							
COURSE	NOVITIATES	PSEUDO-NOVS	PSEUDO-PREVS	PREVIOUS UNI STUDY	RETURNS N=	CONFIRMED ENROLMENT	% of RESPONSES
X1	85	36	5	81	207	226	91.59%
X2	496	65	23	189	773	930	83.19%
Y1	219	74	7	213	513	589	87.09%
Y2	63	30	4	162	259	314	82.48%

Table 4.1

*Stratified sub-sampling and response rate of the university course populations.*

#### Key

'*Novitiates*': Students who were completely new to university studies. Established from a combination of ID number and their responses in the sampling survey.

'*Pseudo-Novs*': Students with a current-year ID number but who indicated previous university learning to a specific question in the sampling survey.

'*Pseudo-Prevs*': Students with an ID number of any previous year but who had failed to complete any university course during that particular year of enrolment.

'*Previous Uni study*': Students whose ID indicated enrolment in any previous year and who indicated also that they had completed study at university previously.

'*Confirmed enrolments*': The number of students confirmed on March 31st of the current year

Participation rates may in fact have been higher since students were requested to return only one copy of the questionnaire (which had been included in their first posting of each course) yet 76 project respondents submitted duplicate response sheets, obtainable only if they had been enrolled in, and received initial postings for, more than one course involved in the project. Thus while their multiple enrolment still shows in the total course-enrolment figures but not in the aggregated 'returns' number, the proportion of responses is underestimated.

The 'population' figures were obtained by aggregation of all 'sampling survey' returns within each course and the response rate is measured against those numbers of confirmed enrolments (as at March 31st). The data on the 'population' was sorted (stratified) in two ways: into specific courses being studied and within that, into groups of novitiate, experienced, pseudo-novitiate and pseudo-experienced sub-groups.

*(c) Reduction of 'novitiate' population to interview sample*

The Sampling Survey provided a nominal 'population' of 1752 persons from the confirmed enrolment of 2059 persons. From this 'population' stratification and subsampling were undertaken.<sup>268</sup>

First, a full list of all 'true' novitiate students was collated for each course group and their addresses appended to their enrolment data. At this stage the sampling error was minimal in terms of having the research question addressed directly to the population which had been specifically nominated through prior critical contextualisation. After all, I was not about to use this 'population' to generalise the findings to the general populace of New Zealand, or even to the general populace of university students. However a minimal 'bias' was evident. 'Distortions' in establishing true course-related populations occurred. Students who had indicated (in answers to Q.20 and Q.21) enrolment in more than one of the project-involved courses, were allocated to the first appropriate course in the sequence of  $x_1, x_2, y_1$  or lastly  $y_2$ . This could provide an explanation for the different response rates indicated in Table 4.1.

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<sup>268</sup> The name 'population' should be enclosed within inverted commas in order to acknowledge that 1752 responses from a confirmed enrolment of 2059 persons *may* not have provided detail of the full population. On the other hand it also *may* have been closer to the actual population figure than the 2059 'confirmed course enrolments' indicated as the latter figure included enrolments by a single student across more than one course. 76 respondents returned two survey response sheets which were only obtainable if the student had been enrolled in and therefore received initial postings for more than one course involved in the project. The 'population' had consisted of 553 experienced students and 845 novitiate students (excluding the 'pseudo-novitiates' and the 'pseudo-prevs'). Of those, there were 65 experienced students and only seven novitiate students who sent back a second form though specifically requested not to. That is 11.75% duplicate respondents were experienced students but only 0.83% duplicate respondents were novitiate students. Why were experienced students more likely to misread a survey direction? A possible future study could be to check the end of year rolls for any correlation between sending duplicated responses and the rule-boundedness or other-determinisms of Luisa and consequently with withdrawal from study and those who 'DNS' (did not sit) final examinations.

Second, due to the geographic spread of the population (from one end of New Zealand to the other) and requirement for expediency in terms of research time and funding for travel, this list was reduced to all students who were within a radius of one hours drive of the university but beyond a 'legal' 25 kilometre radius<sup>269</sup> (the university-determined boundary for 'extramural' status unless an exemption had been granted). The 'population' was now reduced to 'true novitiates' who were geographically close. Until the geographic reduction of the population, the sampling procedure had been objectively systematic but now elements of sampling bias (and thus sampling error<sup>270</sup>) could be detected. However, these errors or mediations were less likely to be due to intersubjective or knowledge-constitutive bias than due to economy of scale.<sup>271</sup>

Finally, on the reduced population list for each course, a random sample of ten students was sought using a standardised list of random selection numerals.<sup>272</sup> A letter requesting participation in the research was posted to each of these ten students in four courses. The sample group now reduced itself to five persons per course as this was the number of replies received by the due date indicated on the letter of request. Two replies received to the affirmative had to be turned down as the respondents had moved their home and employment to within the excluded 25 kilometre radius. This move would give these students 'easy' access to university personnel and other resources, whether by enabling 'local' rather than 'toll'd' telephone calls or driving to the university proper. Such confounding would not be profitable.

The sample group was now established and contact made first by letter and then by a preliminary visit to their homes to talk about the nature of the study itself. A statement of intent was left with the student after this visit in order that they could think through the intervention of research on their lives and study. This gave them a further possibility to withdraw from the study and one student did so. To replace this person, I sent a further request for participation to four students in the same course, and accepted the first affirmative response. (This student had not received the first letter due to the fact that she too had moved home and her mail had not been forwarded.)

The original population of 2059 confirmed enrolments in four courses had now been reduced to twenty students who did not mind participating in a research project on their study habits and changes. It was not until the following year during the intensive period of analysis, that the sample of twenty would be reduced to the thirteen persons who displayed radicalised knowledge-activity by their responses to the opening question. Nineteen of the twenty respondents, and twelve of the thirteen respondents were women, and no effort was made to alter this 'objectively' established

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<sup>269</sup> Source: the Academic Registrar

<sup>270</sup> Weisman and Bowen, 1977

<sup>271</sup> For anyone considering undertaking a replication study, it might be wise to take note that my assumption of geographic distance having little effect, may well be false. All the Luisa's were sited in the district closest to the University centre, while none of the Wyna's or Noah's were.

<sup>272</sup> Babbie, 1979:534

proportion.

*(d) Sample size.*

The size of the sample group from each course was five persons since both internationally and locally there was between a 40 and 50% withdrawal rate from first year correspondence courses in university settings. In point of fact, these four courses had dropout rates<sup>273</sup> of between 37 and 49% during this particular year of study. (Refer to Table 4.2) Since in practice a group of twelve (across four courses) would provide an adequate workload for interviewing in a longitudinal research project, I chose five persons per course to allow for this expected dropout rate. In fact at the end of the year there were still eleven participants in the study, though it was the information from a specific group of people who had earlier dropped out (Typification Luisa) who provided much information on the marginalisation of the knowledge-act.

Course	Dropout rate
X1	46.0%
X2	49.4%
Y1	37.1%
Y2	42.8%

Table 4.2  
*Student 'dropout' rates in the four courses studied.*

2. Data collection

The collection of information centred upon locating the nature of the academe's hidden curriculum which seemed to act as a 'trigger' in causing students to change their personal epistemologies as they sought to allay a situation of educational marginalisation. To locate such socially-abstracted yet obviously evident information would require consideration of the complex interaction between the students' actual context; the researcher's nature of abstracting the students' meanings and the mechanics of recording the interview details.

*Interview context*

Since previous researchers were unable to locate the positivities of the knowledge-act, the search for its negatives as well as its positives had been indicated. Such an exploratory investigation required a methodology which was open-ended and inductive in taking a breadth of contextual factors into account. Consideration needed to be made of such elements as procedure, place, number of contacts, time and timing before the nature of abstracting meanings could be addressed.

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<sup>273</sup> 'Dropout' was defined as the difference in numbers of enrolments at the 31st March and the numbers of students who actually sat the final examination. These figures themselves are not overly accurate however, since some students of an undetermined status, but not all, seemed able to have their enrolment annulled from a period prior to March 31st, even if they withdrew from studies quite late in the year. Thus the figures represent an approximation only.

*(a.i.) Procedures*

My teenage question would no longer be the actual research question but its realised theoretical elder. Through interrogation the first question identified the problematic context but the educational factors which had caused the site to be problematic would not necessarily be the knowledge-constitutive factors which caused personal epistemologies to be different or contentious (though that possibility always remained). The problematicity determined only that the detailed sub-questions of the research would lay in the students' experiences of such problems. These problematics should hopefully make the students aware of and willing to articulate the 'real' mediating 'objects' and the parameters of change in their knowledge-constitutive activity. Knowledge-constitutive mediations would become the objectifications (and thus the intentional [research] 'objects') of the students' knowledge-act. Deductive processes had located the problematic educational site but inductive processes would now seek the students' understandings of their experiences. Seeking a critical understanding would be to seek evidence of a complexly-interwoven and contemporaneous nature.

*(a.ii.) Place*

The very idea of *problematizing* the context had been reinforced by a response in one of the three pilot studies. One woman had remarked that the problems of off-campus study were the same as those of an on-campus study '*but were more obvious*'. It was with the benefit of hindsight on the failure of the pilot studies to obtain a depth of information about personal epistemological change and reflection on this woman's statement coupled with Althusser's beliefs in the problematic, that I proposed to accentuate the place of epistemologies through arguing the negative identity of educational relations of dichotomised 'objects' and actualising this opposition in a real life setting. By accentuating the literature-located difficulties in a single problematic site, it was assumed that the students 'unknowns' would become experienced, exposed and thus self-evident. But there were other forms of justification for choosing this 'place'.

'Subjectification' was a methodological premise since this would clarify the separation of the students' knowledge-act from my research-act. While the student's learning experiences were being objectified as they were opened to scrutiny, the researcher's act (of acquiring *the students'* understandings) needed to be subjectified, for in the latter act I sought, as a friend, to obtain the their knowledge *unproblematically*. As researcher, I needed to clearly separate the relations implicit in these two knowledge-constitutive roles.<sup>274</sup> While the 'distanced' student's home and personal life objectify the place of their study from its knowledge-constitutive source, the researcher could use the student's home as a place for the subjectification of a friendly communication.

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<sup>274</sup> In a critique of objectification, the research mediations of positivism objectify the social relations of friendship and this only further objectifies and obscures the knowledge-constitutive relation of research rather than the (intentional) 'object' of (in this case) the knowledge-act itself.

Objectifying *the place* of the students' study from the institution, required the students to live beyond the 25 kilometre 'legal' bounds of the institution. Research expediency required that they live within an hour's drive of the same place. Subjectifying the interviews in the student's home allowed the students to attend to other things during the interview and thus not see the research as a mediation to their ordinary life. For this purpose, interviews were never conducted over the telephone or by correspondence. Moreover, in a place of friendship 'we' could stop for coffee if fatigue became evident. Questions in the sampling survey alerted the researcher to the counter the possibilities of mediations during 'our' communication. The first was Question 5 which asked how many hours a week they 'worked' in various situations. (This question proved to be only mildly useful for it was not specific enough in detail. One case of research attrition was due to the person's commitment to commute 40 miles each way, each day for employment, and to follow this by involvement in numerous community activities in the evening). Questions 7, 8 and 9 had asked about family factors and this information was invaluable not only for knowing who was likely to be around to mediate 'our' communications but also for negotiating the time for interviews. Place and time worked in concert in defining the subjectification of the research act itself. For instance, interviewing during the hours of schooling prevented interruptions of school children, and interviewing immediately after lunch meant the baby was likely to be asleep. Timing was to be crucial.

(a.iii.) *Time*

Although it is already apparent that novitiate (or 're-entry') students were chosen for the study, this section reiterates, supplements and supports the importance of the reasons for those choices. In the pilot studies, it had been difficult to elicit from the graduates any depth of reasoning concerning the knowledge act. It simply seemed that their learning had become so taken-for-granted that attempts to bring it to consciousness failed or remained at the superficial level<sup>275</sup> of simple descriptions (See examples in Table 4.3) having become an objectified act of the student's personal history. The problem of 'getting at' information needed to be addressed. Educational history's would clarify some matters.<sup>276</sup>

<sup>275</sup> *I never got an overall view of the subject because I never had the time [in spite of spending at least 30 hours a month on it] and I guess that was my own activities, family and a that. I never had time to read and assimilate a whole textbook. It didn't bother me at the time. I sti got through the exams, but I a ways had that feeling at the end of the year that there was a lot more I'd like to do but that I hadn't the time because we were building up to this wretched exam and that after the exams were gone I'd catch up and read this and the next thing but after that [exam] I never got onto it. (Graduate student)*

<sup>276</sup> To be methodologically other-determined by the advice of Habermas, would be to seek personal histories as a matter of course. But there were other reasons for doing so. 'Pi ot' students had been able to recall their educational history as readily as they had seemed able to recall their knowledge acts just a few short years before: *"The teacher went through the slides too quickly. We on y had time to copy his notes on them. And I wasn't the sort of person at that stage who questioned ... I just accepted it all."* (Erica) In the pilot studies, educational histories had provided information on the source of self and institutional-determinations (p30). Since the question remained - to what extent might the habituation of personal epistemologies mediate current university learning? - an ongoing examination of the students' educational histories was indicated (p115).

FAMILY; level of education in family (university as the norm; aspirations or exceptions) peace to study; encouragement or hindrance to study ; beliefs in availability of help (eg father E/M could help); conservative small towns; husband studying at the same time: "openly encouraged study, he read my essays"; no TV a help; studying while child was at kindergarten

Table 4.3

*Pilot study: brief notes on mediations in social relations*

To learn about the mediations that lead to changes of epistemological habit, one needed to be there while the change occurred. Broadly speaking, the inquiry should commence while 'knowing' concerned being self-educated in the common-sense world, and finish when 'knowing' was taken for granted as an objectivated and socially-mediated academic activity.<sup>277</sup> This indicated (as in Ch.3) the need for a longitudinal study.<sup>278</sup> To ensure the common-sense habituation of practices, the students should have experienced self-education for as long as possible, so the sampling survey sought persons over 30 years of age who had neither forefronted formal education in their current lives, nor had experienced very recent tertiary education. But what would cue the finish of change? But how long was too long and how short was too short to observe clearly and for long enough how adults coped with (what appeared to be) the oppositional epistemologies of home and university and the changes required to move from 'knowing' one to 'knowing' the other? It was decided that the end of the academic year would be regarded as the completion of change, for then the students were told what the institution thought of their learning (in terms of grades). Thus the student could confirm and accept the university epistemology or deny its evaluation efforts and choose not to re-enrol. Each would have 'a measure' of the other. So the inquiry would begin with habituated self-education and end after the examination period of an academic year. But, in turn, this required consideration of *how to objectify* the actual period of change in temporal terms. Already it was known that maturity indicated a time of *self-consciousness* to educational change especially during the triggering period of re-entry to study - even (*pilot study*) graduates attempted to recall their first rather than current year of learning. So the re-entry year became the objectified period of change for the study. The longitudinal period of 'time' of inquiry would cover the first full academic year of university education for 're-entry' students, but include also relevant elements of a student's educational life history.

*(a.iv.) Number of interviews*

Throughout the first full year of their 're-entry', the students would be interviewed at all points of change. In effect this amounted to five times. After a calendar of assignment-due dates had been constructed, I planned interviews to coincide with each assignment being due, and hence the number of assignments determined the number of interviews although there was an interview before the first period of learning and another when the final examination was over. The first meeting, when I introduced the study and asked for their consent, was a time I obtained preliminary

<sup>277</sup> NB. The researcher was not the change agent. This activity was the function of the context and the intention of the student. The researcher's activity focussed upon reviewing this period of change.

<sup>278</sup> "The more important issue of the flows and progressions of students over a long period ... has been neglected." (Charnley, Osborn and Withnall, 1980:9)

information on their educational history. The final interview took place within one or two days after their final exam, before the public assessment and grading was completed and known to them, but after they had undertaken some private evaluation of their own efforts. When university results became public some weeks later, I made a final visit to their home to congratulate them (no one failed) and wish them a Merry Christmas. From one or two questions only, I elicited their final feelings for the year now that they had formed 'a measure' of the institution's 'ways of knowing'.

(a.v.) *Timing of interviews*

*'Study... not what is beyond time, but what is within time.'*<sup>279</sup>

The detailed timing of the interviews provided a way to link these matters of time and space as a place in history. In detailed terms, when first *perceived*, a fact is 'co-determined by human ideas and concepts'<sup>280</sup> even before its conscious theoretical collaboration by the knowing individual',<sup>281</sup> and this radicalised the phenomenological experience<sup>282</sup> to the period of 'as and when but not yet'. It is the dynamic moment when things become obvious but not yet known. It is within this inductive moment that details of a student's initial beliefs about knowledge action are to be located especially if they have been under challenge. The methodology of this study will simultaneously overlay the period of investigatory induction, with the student's period of knowledge-constitutive induction.<sup>283</sup> This is the nature of 'our' collaborative investigatory intersubjectification. Given the nature of this study, each of us seeks to know what (in effect) each knows the other 'knows'.

The subjective induction<sup>284</sup> of self-understanding was the first of Husserl's phenomenological stages for re-establishing connections between theory and practice.<sup>285</sup> This 'interpretive' presumes that the students are capable of deliberately acting upon the world and so are capable of creating its meanings, for they are not simply the passive victims of happenings.<sup>286</sup> When a 'trigger' disturbs the intellectual equilibrium, actors' interpret the situation simultaneously through ordinary language and the habituated epistemic rules which already constitute their world. '*Such an interpretation is linguistic analysis and experience at once ... and [its] analytic insight converges in a singular manner*'.<sup>287</sup>

<sup>279</sup> Horkheimer, 1986:250

<sup>280</sup> '*Unlike empirical experience, phenomenological experience does not keep within the bounds of transcendentally grounded schemata. Rather, the construction of consciousness ... incorporates ... transformations of such schemata*'. (Habermas, 1978:20)

<sup>281</sup> Horkheimer, 1986:200-1

<sup>282</sup> Habermas, 1978:23

<sup>283</sup> *Through induction we examine whether and with what probability the predictions [made deductively] can be confirmed. Induction is the logical form of the actual process of inquiry .... Deduction is the least important ... logic of scientific progress. For we do not acquire any new information deductively.* (Habermas, on Pierce, 1978:114)

<sup>284</sup> '*All actions must refer to the phenomenological experience of actors involved*' Fay (1975:95)

<sup>285</sup> Habermas, 1978:304-5

<sup>286</sup> cf Fay, 1975:71

<sup>287</sup> Habermas, 1978:193-4

This investigation focuses its intentions within this reconstructive period of knowledge-action and it is here that the timing of interviews occurs. The students' conceptual classificatory system 'pigeonholes' these reconstructive meanings,<sup>288</sup> so although consciousness of the knowledge act is bound up with social conditions,<sup>289</sup> acting within the transference situation of a research dialogue offers clues to its reconstructive meanings.<sup>290</sup> Further narrowing the 'transference situation' to within the assignment-due dates (because they are assumed to be times knowledge-constitutive *tension*, would help expose the intending-knowers meanings of both pre-understanding and changes).<sup>291</sup> Choosing to time the interview for the assignment-due date rather than for the period when the student begins to study new material, shifts the locus of inquiry from seeking how students learn the substantive course content to how they attempt to constitute the 'academic' epistemology. Assignment-due time is the period when the students try to get on the same epistemic 'wavelength' as the institution to which they must communicate their learnings. Similarly, timing the interview *before* tutor feedback could be received, meant their changing guesses at epistemic expectations had '*not yet* been confirmed or denied by comments or gradings. In methodological terms, by eliminating the 'spare' time between the assignment happenings and the interviews as much as possible, the likelihood of the students' pains being suppressed or reified as facade, would be lessened.

The two principles central to the actual timing of the interviews were '*as and when*' their expression of coming to know was in culmination, '*but not yet*' understood. So from the very 'trigger point' of re-entry, the knowledge-act which is reported reflects the students' conscious and immediate happenings alongside aspects of their educational history. Information was sought not only contemporaneously, but also immediately, for in that way some attempt may have been made by the adults to interpret the need for change but it was *not yet* understood or cognitively mediated<sup>292</sup> or confirmed by the academe.

To enact these principles, a series of methodological decisions followed. First, I indicated to students that I wished to interview them in the days prior to their assignments being due at the university. (With a sample of twenty students, it proved useful to be studying students from four different courses since their assignment-due dates differed.) Second, I asked the subjects to indicate which day of the week and time of the day they thought might provide the best alternatives for them to be interviewed. Third, during our first face to face meeting and discussions of the study,

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<sup>288</sup> Horkheimer, 1986:218

<sup>289</sup> Horkheimer, 1986:269

<sup>290</sup> Habermas, 1978:232

<sup>291</sup> Habermas, 1978:309-10

<sup>292</sup> This timing might sound somewhat intrusive, and perhaps at times it was, but it proved to be a sound choice for the students as well as the project. The students could 'let off steam' (which they did); the mediations were not yet themselves mediated further and the students had little need to attempt to remember the very act which was already becoming part of their history. In its cathartic timing, an element of truthfulness could be captured in the releasing of tensions. "*All pain and all negativity are moving forces in dialectical thinking.*" (Adorno, 1966:202)

students were alerted to the fact that interviews may take more than an hour and be quite intensive and challenging.<sup>293</sup>

As a final time-related methodological decision, information on parts of the knowledge-act were computer-sorted into the three sequences of the knowledge-act (internalisation, reflection and the appropriate one of expression). In this three-step process, sequence-related mediations to knowledge could be seen and the change-related differences in ways of knowing established.

### Establishing meanings

A students' experience in the problematic site provided its own questions and answers.<sup>294</sup> The material world supplied the possibilities of its own knowledge. The methodological issue was to ensure that a breadth and depth of information was gleaned.

#### *(b.i.) Questions and themes*

Since it was necessary to 'come to understand these actors from their own point of view,'<sup>295</sup> the use of an open-ended conversation gave the student a greater freedom for the broad framing of answers.<sup>296</sup> The foregrounded problems of coming to know the problematic site and the timing the interviews during the period of tension) would expose students to the depth of their own knowledge-act experiences. It would call their taken for granted into question. If one is to believe the critical progression of a Freudian analytic schema, the student *should* then move from an initial state of repression where false beliefs form an oppressive ideological function, to a second stage where the student supposedly becomes aware of them. The problematic siting and timing of this investigation should assist the intending knowers to reach this stage of enlightenment, and so enable them to articulate their process of coming to know. (In the final ideal state of a critical theory, the student ideally should then reason themselves into a state of emancipation, where the true interests of the institution and themselves are revealed and it becomes possible for changes to a state of free and equal communication to occur.)

Having critically contextualised the site of the study so that students would at least be aware of knowledge action, an inclusive range of information was sought through the use of the cue-card matrix (Ch. 2). It provided a systematic way to 'probe' for supplementary and relational information. The full range of touchstones on which information was sought was discussed in Chapter Two. When a student addressed any section of the matrice it was to be mentally 'ticked off' and so the breadth of the interview would be determined by my attempt to complete all the

<sup>293</sup> This length of time was necessary because pilot study interviews with self-select novitiates took 45 minutes or longer compared with the graduates interviews which often took a mere 16-22 minutes, and yet there had been little challenge, even in the longer interviews.

<sup>294</sup> ... *the acting subject, aware of its own partisanship, is the only way to transcend the enslavement of social theory and practice to 'mere recording and prediction' of facts, that is, to mere calculation.* (Aronowitz, 1986:xiii-xiv)

<sup>295</sup> Fay, 1975:94

<sup>296</sup> Weisman and Bowen, 1977

cells. The matrice formed a hand-held checklist (see Table 4.4) which cued the researcher to find information on 'all' the possibilities of knowledge-action except personal histories.

	1. Teacher	2. Knowledge Text	3. Learner's world	4. Expression	5. Evaluation
I./.	✓		✓	✓	
.R/.	✓	✓			
.I./X	✓				✓✓

Table 4.4

*'Cue-card' matrix for seeking information on a breadth of knowledge-act relations*

Now, having systematically determined ways in which to include the breadth and depth of 'all' meanings, the relative strengths and priorities (for the students) of that information needed methodological-based clarification. To accomplish this within the interviews, it will be seen that the process of using an uncommitted 'empty' question was employed. It was a modification of Freudian 'free association'.

*(b.ii.) Openers and projections*

There was only one really 'standardised' question. An empty question was used as an opener to interviews and its purpose was to seek the student's view of the relative potency of knowledge-act events.<sup>297</sup> Given the predetermined problematicity of the research it allowed each of the students in turn to foreground and prioritise the determinants of their own personal experiences without undue prompting, for the question simply asked '*how things were going*' (or words to that effect), right at the beginning of the interview. In turn, this opener gave rise to a string of questions, as details related to actions were explored for the implicit parameters of their original meaning.<sup>298</sup> Sometimes the single opener occupied the interviewer and the subject (usually Noah) for most of the interview time and the use of the cue-card was unnecessary. At other times, especially with Luisa, the researcher had to commence content-oriented supplementary questions (as indicated in the previous Table) relatively early. (So regardless of any attempt to be objectively unbiased in interpretation, the data of the monosyllabic-replying Luisa is intimately bound to the deductive interpretive efforts of the researcher, if only because the investigator had oftentimes to supply closed-selection options for Luisa to confirm or deny.) In Luisa's case there was a delicate balance to be maintained between probing and induction.

<sup>297</sup> cf Weisman and Bowen, 1977:50f

<sup>298</sup> It should be acknowledged that completely open-ended openers were not always useful. Some students would not tell of important experiences because they did not remember them immediately; they took them for granted; or they censored them for such reasons as that they (according to pilot interviewees) saw the experiences as personal deficits rather than as collective issues. Open-ended questions retained importance most of all where the student was asked to be projective. Thus, sometime during the interviews, a projective question was to be asked. For example, what they would advise another person to do, if the other person "*wished to enrol in this same paper next ye r*". This asked the student, in effect, to divulge a part of themselves; to subjectively reflect on what it meant for them. The answers provided clues to the relational matters of experiences.

*(b.iii.) Reflexive probing*

While philosophers posit various views on the knowledge-act, its practice in real life has not been (scientifically) understood in terms of relational acts and inter-complexities. But how did one locate the meanings of conceptual-level relations? Pilot student's had not been able to answer direct conceptual-level questions. According to the pilot study graduates who were asked 'How do you know when you know something?' their minds "did not function at that level" (Barry).<sup>299</sup> Due to such comprehension difficulties direct questions required the imaginative exploration implicit in the negative dialectics of questioning of questions.

However, to be limited to asking only those questions which *all* people could understand would have reduced the production of worthwhile knowledge to the lowest common denominator - the very act Comte has been criticised for accomplishing.<sup>300</sup> So, in the end, different levels of probing were accepted as a necessary epistemological factor of the research methodology.<sup>301</sup> If I was seeking different ways of knowing, it would of course become apparent in our joint communicative efforts as well as in what they were saying. In questioning the students' reasons for various actions and points of view, the probing stopped only when each of the students could no longer provide reasons for holding them. Luisa's interview sustained less probing than Noah's for example. Thereafter, the interpretation became the researcher's analytic issue as she critically reflected on the totality of the student's information.

There were practical as well as theoretical considerations to the decision to probe. The researcher is a woman and mother whose 'training' for those roles was to sort through and understand 'others' struggles *as and when* they occurred but were *not yet* understood. I had habituated a way of 'pandering within inquiry' into other peoples' anxieties. Getting to the source of pain is the kind of questioning mothers gradually get used to. It is the basis of their subjective strength. And this research inquiry sought to subjectivate the communicative relation between the researcher and the researched in the same way. Having habituated these investigatory actions, it was in my own emancipatory interest to acknowledge them as a researcher rather than delude myself into thinking I could create and authentically-sustain a change of style. I intended to interview the students *as and when* they had 'just finished' writing and *not yet* come to terms with this period of tension. It was the period of time in which mothers' made useful confidantes and could (usually) sensitively probe at will.

<sup>299</sup> Although I had initially planned a conceptual question in order to see if anyone could answer it, the effect of it being asked was "too negative and off-putting" (Anna. Pilot study). Perhaps if questions such as this had asked for the exclusive theoretical heights of a positive knowledge-act when the students were still grappling with the practical experiences of negativistic lows. The difference between the knowledge-act and the research-act experience was too great. The research-act was objectively-mediating its own inquiry.

<sup>300</sup> "While the whole world is an oyster, some people still see it as a pipi." (Anna. Pilot study)

<sup>301</sup> Noah could be probed for up to two hours, as she established her own contradictions and explanations. Luisa could be probed least of all. Often one extension of a former question was as far as she could go.

## (b.iv.) Research language and communication

Since the language of possibility for the intending knower was the commonsense language of everyday, this style of communication was considered most appropriate for interviewing.<sup>302</sup> It created the possibility for dialogical communication, but the information received remained [bracketed] for the investigator until the deliberate silences, distortions and censoring efforts were reflected upon. In Wyna's case, because of the number of contradictions which became apparent in her interview, the object of analytic attention became not her actual knowledge-act so much as her investigatory expressions.<sup>303</sup>

Supplementary resources

Although interviews were the primary source of information, as and where it was appropriate, other materials were found to accomplish the research task. The researcher received copies of the same study packages as the correspondence-educated students and this enabled the perusal of material when students raised difficulties, or when the claims by students needed to be clarified or verified. Course leaders provided a little background information verbally, but were seldom used as resources. However their course records and course rolls were important sources of information at the year's beginning and end. The tutors with whom I worked as a colleague, highlighted difficulties in courses during the normal course of day to day communication and at times I asked students about such problems.<sup>304</sup> (I never revealed to students that tutors had highlighted these problematics.) All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Limitations to the study of different and changing personal epistemologies

"A question, as with an answer, is imbedded with the potential for exclusivities" The most important limitation of this methodology was related to the topic itself. Its effect could have been foreseen, since in asking about the nature of people's epistemologies, and in sorting them into groupings based in difference, of course different methods of acquiring and interpreting information, of levels of analysis and ways in which the negative is employed in critique would also be necessary. Moreover, this difficulty would lead to examining and extending the form of presentation in this document, so that the ways in which these differences, mediations and similarities are educationally mediated could be made explicit, and thus offer, in Adorno's terms,

<sup>302</sup> As Kant observed in his discussion of obscure ideas, the old Russian proverb held the solution: "One receives a guest according to his clothes and accompanies him according to his understanding." (Dowdell, 1978:20)

<sup>303</sup> To some extent this objectification of the communicative relationship between student and investigator would contradict the initial research subjectification. It is the act of making problematic that which was intended to be unproblematic when the focus was the knowledge-act itself, rather than the intersubjective communicative act (p86).

<sup>304</sup> This would be a useful comparative source of research information for future studies as the correspondence-educated element of 'talking past' each other became extremely clear the two or three times it was used. I would use the tutors who acted as course auditors or student evaluators, not the course producers. It is the auditors who source the dualistic negativities of both students and course. Moreover, I would attempt to gain the opinions of a group discussion by tutors as well as, or instead of individual opinions as the element of change in interpretation provides a rich background of understanding and theorising. Tutors are conscientised to epistemological theorising though they may not recognise it in those terms.

some hope and possibility to the readers.

*(a) Data collection*

Although the data collection had been standardised to some extent, (by use of the cue-card to ask about the 'same' educational relations), equal breadths and depths of information could not be gained from each of the students. This 'deficit' I see as being a function of the overlaying epistemic nature of my quest and theirs and in particular, of their differences in ways of knowing. Both activities are explicit forms of knowledge-constitutive inquiry. For Luisa (1,2,3,4,5) the limits of their self-reflexivity were the limits of their comprehension (of their own knowledge-act). That is, the limits of mind marked the limits of data. On the other hand, Noah (1,2,3,) were so self-reflexive, that once or twice it was necessary to ask the student whether they actually believed the interpretation they had given, or had they spoken imaginatively '*off the top of their head*' so to speak? Then the third typification, Wyna (1,2,3,), was recognised as monitoring the information given, and this selective negligence would eventually lead toward a more politically-inclined form of analysis. No matter what I asked of Wyna, I was finding that each response contained the potential for occluding the view of its own mediant interests.<sup>305</sup>

Interviewing the latter group of people was extremely exhaustive work as I found myself simultaneously analysing our communicative act; thinking of ways to find 'the truth'; listening disbelievingly as their answers built complex webs of intrigue, and disliking their politic while at the same time trying to maintain the subjective stance of friendship. However Wyna's was to prove worthwhile in the end if only to illustrate the politic or ideology of 'success'. All of these 'limits' however confirmed the decision to engage in a prior problematising of the context. As particular unknowns were foregrounded, the differences in students' ways of knowing became analytically obvious, and the bed of information enriched.

*(b) Methods and levels of analysis*

The ultimate analytic purpose was to establish and critique the nature of the hidden curriculum (the social relations of education that marginalise different efforts to move from common-sense to academic sense). At the core of this quest was the need to establish how adults came to know. This two-fold analytic activity required a multidimensional analysis. At the first level, identification was sought of the different students' educational histories, their different ways of knowing and of the types of knowledges they used as standpoints and touchstones. At the second level, the relations and mediations between these standpoint and touchstone knowledges was established, compared and critiqued. Contradictions and coherences had become apparent as the synthetic connections were made. In this complex way, it is claimed, the resulting critical theory of adult's marginalisation moved beyond the level of the piecemealing evident in Comtean positivism. As a

<sup>305</sup> '*From knowing not what they do methodologically, they are that much surer of their discipline, that is of methodic progress within an unproblematic framework. False consciousness has a protective function.*' Habermas, 1978:315

dialectical theory, it relates its identity as well as critiques its evident contradictions. Though the theory is ideologically abstracted, it is none-the-less socially-founded and grounded in its detail.

*(a.i.) Level one analysis: creating typifications*

Objective and subjective analyses moved in concert. As the interviewing and transcription got underway during the academic year of the study, I reflected upon my intuitions concerning the students whilst at the same time categorising their statements into the systematised knowledge-act sequence of internalisation, reflection and expression. What I had begun to have subjective 'gut feelings' about was finally confirmed by this objective evidence.

Classification of evidence (into I/R/X) took the form of listing the facts of the opening question to the interview. In this opener, the students had prioritised the positive and negative tensions of their knowledge-act. Each 'fact' was listed under the stage of the knowledge-act sequence (I/R/X) to which it most appropriately belonged. When all the discrete statements (with the speaker's name appended) had been listed appropriately under internalisation, reflection or expression (I/R/X), it became clear that while some individual students had experienced joys and pains across the whole range of the knowledge-act sequence, (I/J., J/RJ. and J/JX), other students' statements predominated in one section only. These latter people I interpreted as being the radicalised knowledge-actors from whom knowledge of marginalisation would be sought. They were radicalised in that the events they prioritised occurred in only one stage of the knowledge-act sequence rather than across the full (and thus possibly-emancipatory) sequence. Luisa preferred internalising, Noah preferred reflection and Wyna selected expression. Excluding from further analysis those students who had experienced the full range of problematics (since their issues were not only covered by the other students but also not radicalised), the objective analysis now formed around these three groupings that the I/R/X analysis had produced.

When I realised these groupings had 'fallen out', I experienced an 'aha' period. I realised that in concert with my gut intuition, all the students clustered under 'internalisation' had been those with whom I had been most perplexed.<sup>306</sup> The 'reflective' students were those with whom I felt on the same wavelength and had could have easily become long-term friends. But the students who had concentrated their knowledge-act within the 'expression' section of the knowledge-act were those who stirred my ill-feelings. So whether through subjective or objective analysis, the same groupings reappeared (especially when the students with the full range of issues was excluded). Moreover, in examining the detailed content of the students' statements, each person in a grouping shared similar experiences of institutional relations to other students in the same group and these were markedly different from the students in each of the other two groups. As a result, these three

<sup>306</sup> *Their practices came to be seen as adopting the ways determined by the status quo'. (Fay, 1975:91). Their consciousness would now 'anchor itself in the unity of a stable ... identity of immutable Being' (Habermas, 1978:307)*

groupings formed idealist 'typifications' of knowledge-activity. In Schutz's terms, each named typification represents a logical group of meanings (reflecting the researcher's childhood belief that seeking the essence of a question was not to seek its answer but to seek its logic). Thus, it was that the logic of the material relations of knowledge-constitutivity became the logic of its ideal relations also. At this stage of the analysis, having established the (positive and negative) identity of three typifications, I now had a baseline for further analysis.

Searching now for the commonalities of experience of each typification, I searched for the knowledge they sought. The positions the typifications took as the beginnings of this action I call their 'standpoints' and the knowledge they sought or reached out for was a 'touchstone'. This aspect of analysis foregrounded and identified the different touchstone and standpoint-knowledges as it identified the knowledge-constitutive relations of each typification as they moved from common sense to academic sense. By this stage of analysis, the seven areas of knowledge identified in the hidden curriculum included administrative know-how; language; social contact, academic conventions, epistemologies, course content and evaluation. The abstract (hidden curriculum knowledge-base) was now clarified by the practical (actors' knowledge-action). The facts of coming to know had been related to knowledges. Now that theory and practice (or knowledge and knowing) was reconnected, it could be critiqued.

*(a.ii.) Level two analysis*

By the second level of analysis, this epistemological exploration had gathered momentum, but it still took many hours of reflection to understand the relations existing between the three typifications and the seven standpoint/touchstone knowledges.

One of the first activities was to re-examine the totality of information from each individual's series of interviews. For the moment, the idea of typifications was undone as I searched in each student's interview data. Now not only were the prioritised replies to the 'opener' used, but now also all the subsidiary details gathered through the use of the cue-card matrix. The full transcripts of all the one and a half hour interviews were searched for clues to the student's beliefs about social mediations to knowledge-constitutive actions (in particular) and the changes trialled as a consequence. It was within this inclusive plenitude that, for instance, the more exact details of how Noah's social contact differed from both Luisa's and Wyna's use of the same touchstone became apparent especially in their beliefs and reasons for making changes. However, this left the relations between the student-typifications and the institution still more related to the subjective interpretation of the student or the researcher than legitimated by any form of 'objective' evidence. Until, that is, the institution made public its evaluations of each student's learning at the end of the year. Within the typifications, this final rating of 'success' or 'failure' provided the 'objective' supplementary

confirmation that there is indeed an educational politic<sup>307</sup> which is to be found in the acknowledgement of those whose social constitutivity was preferred more than the knowledge-constitutivity of others.

The full period of analysis had now ended with finding three major sets of typically-radicalised knowledge-constitutive relations. It was clear how each typification changed, how the institution related to each typification and how one group of radicalised behaviours differed from the others. The difficulty now lay in explaining this to others, and maintaining the tone of the politic that wove its thread through the fabric of the inquiry.

One consequence of the institutional ratings was to provide a name for each typification according to this educational politic. Wyna was 'the winner' whose 'success' was marked by her alignment within the social-constitutive relations of the institution and her befriending of educational authorities. Luisa was 'the loser' who was so other-determined that she withdrew from study less than half-way through the academic year when she found herself unable to make knowledge-constitutive decisions. Noah was 'the knower' who enjoyed knowledge for knowledge's sake and almost immediately began applying what she learned in university to her everyday life. It was she who, when frustrated by the mediation of teachers, and emancipated from the bonds of educational ideology, demonstrated no desire to re-enrol after completing the year.

Such a spatially-related complexity of findings required a uni-directional sequence in which to be expressed to readers. In order to present this complexity as clearly as possible, the findings are now first presented as a single truncated university-based knowledge-act (*URX*) which moves from educational history's and the period of enrolment (Ch.5) to the knowledge-activities of internalisation, expression and then reflection (*m* Ch.6). Time is taken to reflexively discuss the relations between different knowledge-actions and emancipatory curriculum development. The combination of systematisation and reflective reason had provided a way in which to view the depths, the breadths and the importances of the knowledge-act for each typification. But just as any thesis produces antitheses, this study produced further limitations.

#### *(b) Different forms of critique*

Taking Adorno's dictum to use the most appropriate form of critique for the task at hand, several different uses of the negative and of negations (as outlined in Ch. 3) are utilised in this study.

Identificatory negation occurred during the first level of analysis when the information from students who were not considered radical, was simply discarded. However, in the outline of each set of typificatory actions, it was the similarities within each typification of both negatives and positives that were identified. Of particular concern in outlining the current history of their knowledge-

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<sup>307</sup> "The objectivist illusion ... deludes ... with the image of reality-in-itself consisting of facts structured in a lawlike manner; it conceals the constitution of these facts" (Habermas, 1978:304-5)

actions, was the contradiction between what each typification was attempting to do in its preferred educational relation, and the mediation to that preference by either university personnel or other students. Within the details of 'the story' of each typification, which is outlined in the following chapters, different forms of the negative and negation are outlined as they are discussed. Finally, in a Hegelian form of critique, in an outline of teacher mediations to the education relations preferred by each typification, a view of the positive within the negative has been sought (Ch.7).

*(c) Shifting from analysis and critique to presentation*

These limitations arise from the qualitative nature of this quest. To search for differences between typifactory knowledge-actions is to show where and how difference existed, not to 'level out' the dialogue for its presentation of evidence. As a consequence, Noah's story is foregrounded in the findings (Ch.5 and 6) for she alone was able to coherently identify with both the facts of her own knowledge-act and its theorised relations. The other two *types* of learners presented evidence which was discrete and piecemealed. Wyna identified discrete facts and explained the reasons or relations of some but objectified her selective negligences in other actions. In that particular case 'the facts' and politics that were explicated on Wyna's behalf were reflexively located by the researcher and therefore Wyna sometimes becomes the discursive second-person in the descriptions of her knowledge-act. Luisa's knowledge-action was backgrounded most, because often she could not recognise what happened or give reasons for it. In this situation the researcher interpreted her actions where she felt able. (Interpretations were suggested to Luisa. Where she was unable to confirm or deny it, the script indicates the tentativeness of such reasoning with "Maybe ....")

This matter presentations was further complicated by another issue. Each of the typifications concentrated the concerns of their act within either internalising, reflection or expression. Therefore when the written presentation of this report was sequenced in the same way, almost all of Luisa's story appears prior to Noahs, while Noah's story was concentrated most of all during the period of reflection. Only Wyna's story was immersed throughout - generally because her politic was so intimately intertwined in others ways of knowing. But I believe the totality makes interesting reading.

*(d) Presentation*

The analysis is presented over three chapters. Chapter Five discusses the educational histories of the three typifications, outlining the common themes which emerged within each set of histories. It is claimed that within the educational determinisms of these 'persons' histories of social relations within education lays the predisposition to adopt and habituae a personal epistemology which later demonstrates itself in its predisposition to becoming educational marginalised during the adult experience of being university educated.

Chapter Six demonstrates the actual movement from the 'common-sense' world to one of

experiencing 'academic sense' in a polarised way. The experiences of each typification are presented as they move from entry to university, negotiating the administration of reentry, into and through their year of study. Once or twice in their somewhat individualistic experience of tertiary education, their paths converge and there the propensity for one type of learner to influence the knowledge-act of others is demonstrated and critiqued. The description of their year of study is collapsed and presented as a single sequence of one knowledge-act (from internalisation, through reflective periods and into expression), with changes described as they occur. In each 'persons' act, the touchstone and standpoint knowledges they use to form personal preferences of educational relations are exemplified. Finally this chapter ends with a description of the experience of final examinations.

Chapter Seven takes the educational relations preferred by each typified knowledge-actor, and seeks the teaching practices which encourage or oppress the use of each set of educational relations. Noah prefers the relations between *personal epistemology* and *course content* but finds only one lecturer (across all four courses) who acts out his teaching role using the same educational relation. How other teachers repress it is discussed. Luisa finds no teacher or any administrator who works on the same 'wavelength' of establishing relations between *language* and *the conventions of administration* or *scholarly conduct*. Wyna is 'fortunate' (?) to find many teachers who share aspects of her educational preference for joining *social contact* to *evaluation practices* but this preference is strongly critiqued in terms of its having a political rather than epistemological basis, and particularly one which leads directly into the ideology of educational 'success'.

### Conclusion

The methodology adopted for this thesis was based in a prior examination of its epistemological basis. This proved necessary as my research act of 'coming to know' the topic (of how others came to know in their different ways), had to take into account the compounded complexity of the task.

By using what was 'normally' taken for granted as a literature review, to site the quest in a problematic setting, the social setting itself had defined the research task. From thereon in, the methodology followed the parameters of rigour by, for instance, undertaking random sampling. Rather than allow the parameters of the methodology to limit the bounds of the information received and analysed, as little negation as possible occurred prior to shifting into analysis mode. Only then was the data of those students who did not display radical 'learning behaviours' discarded and the analysis concentrated upon understanding and critiquing radicalised knowledge-action and the mediations to those students preferred educational relations. It has been envisaged that this lengthy prior reflection into the nature of research procedures, and the 'elimination' of unnecessary methodological mediation will in the end provide an enriched view of what it means to move from common-sense to academic-sense for certain typified kinds of adult students.

## PART TWO

### **Into academic-sense: exploring epistemic radicalisation in ways of coming to know**

*'If one takes Adorno's Negative Dialectics ...  
seriously and accepts them, and if one then wishes  
to advance just one step beyond ...  
then one has to become something of a post-structuralist  
to conceptualise it.'*

Jurgen Habermas, 1986:98  
The Dialectics of Rationalisation

## Chapter Five:

### Educational histories: determinants to the habituation of personal epistemologies during the school years

In their personal history's, more than in any single-act during their university study, stood the evidence of three basic differences in ways of knowing. These were confirmed by foregrounding the collective similarities and basic differences in the habituated epistemologies of Wyna, Luisa and Noah. Each typification would identify their knowledge-act, by preference or resistance to either sociological, discursive or ideological determinants. The following discussion of their educational histories includes not only descriptions but also questions which arose as a consequence of 'the facts' they gave.

#### *Luisa.*<sup>308</sup>

Luisa had habituated an everyday way of knowing and certain beliefs about education which were determined most of all by her early promise and then gradual development of a resistance to the discursive aspects of formal education. This problematic determinism would prove very difficult for her to identify or to change.

Luisa (L1,2,3,4,5) was brought up in a medium-size stable nuclear family where the parents encouraged education but left the homework "all up to us" (L3) because the parents' "didn't have time" (L3) It transpired that Luisa's parents did not figure prominently in her *educational* history at all. Instead, Luisa was *epistemically dependent* on her school teachers for actually acquiring "an education" (in contrast to acquiring 'knowledge') and was *socially dependent* upon her parents for their encouragement, but not their challenge, of her epistemic 'self'. She never remembered the family discussing ideas or politics or books and she thought they had actually possessed few of the latter. (L1,2,3,4,5) However Luisa's parents themselves had left school as soon as they were legally able (L1,2,3,4,5) and then, as parents, had expressed to their child Luisa, their hopes that she "would do well" (L2) and succeed beyond their own "level of education". (L1,2) Luisa (L1,2,3,4,5) obtained her primary education in a rather small rural (or private) school and later progressed to a larger

<sup>308</sup> This history pertained to all the five students who typified Luisa. They shared a remarkable common family and schooling background. Methodological note: The difficulties Luisa had experienced in her early education also became apparent during the research interviews. She often said that her 'major problem' was understanding what she was being asked, particularly where it concerned asking her to think about her thinking. In this latter case she said she was unable to explain what was happening. This was in spite of my attempts to change the style of questioning or the words I used. Yet Luisa appeared happy to participate in the project and she said she knew she had the right to withdraw from it whenever she wished. Together we enjoyed socially chatting in the times of contact before and after the interview i elf, and she was given to phoning me at home when she wanted some advice about her study or other things. Indeed it was to transpire by the end of the first term (when it appeared she was about to withdraw from university because her work was so behind) that Luisa was the only typification where I felt morally compelled to suggest ways in which to overcome her study difficulties

highschool in a medium-sized town.

Luisa had read avidly when she was a younger child, showing "*all the promise*" (L1) of an early reader by "*being able to read before*"<sup>309</sup> (L1,3,4,5)<sup>310</sup> entering the formal schooling system. But literacy both reflects and determines education.<sup>311</sup> Where does this ability to read leave the very young child? From the evidence I received in this study, I believe it was probably these early reading skills that had kept Luisa "*near the top of the class*" (L1,2,4,5) until puberty. She was constantly praised by teachers and parents for her reading skills (L1,2,3,4,5) and appeared to become increasingly dependent on their measures of praise and evaluation for establishing whether or not she 'really' knew. From being other-dependent (for) measures of success from an early stage of her education, Luisa never did (even later) develop the confidence or ability to self-evaluate her own knowing, or to recognise the personal rights or responsibilities to make her own decisions. This raised many wonderings which will require further study at another time.<sup>312</sup>

Perhaps it was from this time of primary school achievement that Luisa's ideology of education was to see learning and reading as one single synonymous activity. Even as an adult university student she failed to differentiate one as simply the skilled means to the other. This could be seen in the fact that when, in later childhood, when the meanings she was being taught became more abstract (or less concrete and less socially-embedded), Luisa simply and continuously referred to them as "*hard words*". (L1,2,3,4,5) This false consciousness ('learning as reading') was also reflected in the fact that Luisa (L1,2,3,4,5) never once, during interviews, used words relating to ideology such as 'knowing', 'ideas' or 'knowledge' or any synonym.<sup>313</sup> On reflection, the contradictions inherent in this belief of 'learning as reading' raised many questions, still unanswered.<sup>314</sup>

In childhood, Luisa appeared to become immersion-dependent, moving herself (or being moved) into a narrowly-limited and stilled socio-epistemic space. To further complicate this issue of sociality, while she maintained a real-life dependence on adults, her reading matter was also concerned with feeling herself immersed as "*a [social] part of*" (L2) the imaginary text. While the

<sup>309</sup> The extent of this ability Luisa was unable to be recalled. She simply remembered her parents telling her this.

<sup>310</sup> During her primary years she had '*read all the Enid Blyton stories*' (L1); '*loved Winnie the Poo and the Secret Garden*' (L5) moving as she grew older toward a preference for biographies and historical novels.

<sup>311</sup> Lankashear, 1991

<sup>312</sup> REFLECTIONS: In spite of the fact there are those who privilege literacy because it supposedly helps one "*to think straight*," might this claim not be an unrealistic, theoretical reflection of the Cartesian mythology? Maybe the 'thinking crooked' of the Imaginary would have been of more epistemic worth to Luisa's growing mind than the skills of recognising words at such a young age. Maybe the educational emphasis ought to have been on young children practising pluralistic 'ways of seeing' before particularised 'ways of saying'. If literacy does indeed mean power, one might well ask for whom the power tolled? For it did little to empower Luisa who had been the first of these typified students to gain educational 'success' and she did so through her literacy skills.

<sup>313</sup> Belenky (1986) also found that this type of student failed to conscientise epistemic details of her own mind.

<sup>314</sup> REFLECTIONS: Was this period of "*being able to read early*" (L1,3) amidst strong social encouragement/pressure from elders/controllers actually limiting her development of a personalised way of knowing? Did she become totally dependent upon Others to evaluate her abilities rather than on her self to make such decisions? Was Luisa negated in her childhood attempts to question-ask rather than answer-give, or did she herself see no need to query? Was it here, in young childhood, that she habituated a social means to knowledge and its judgement, rather than personal constructions to it? Had Luisa become constituted by the possession of a knowledge-skill rather than constituting of knowledge?

perplexities of her early life would raise many still-unanswered questions, the same problems would be reflected during her brief university sojourn, when Luisa's personal ways of knowing were once again closely linked with the need for unproblematically-acquired, socially-constructed meanings and externally-determined decisions. This preference for being passively involved in socio-historical determinism had already shown itself in her preferred styles of reading during childhood.

In childhood, Luisa's leisure reading had offered the feeling of "being part of the story"; (L3) "among a group of friends" (L2) and wanting "to learn what those times were like". (L1) However there was a limit to the intellectual difficulty of Luisa's reading matter. "Deep stories like *Silas Marner and Lorna Doone*" were too hard "because they had too many long words". (L4) In theoretic terms,<sup>315</sup> Luisa's form of linguistics decentred the author by placing the locus of meaning in the text itself. Luisa never expressed any wonder as to what the author might have intended beyond those ideas which were explicitly expressed. All she realised (L1,2,4) was that her attempts to understand the abstract meanings of those "hard" words slowed her reading process, so that she lost her social involvement of the story line. As a consequence she "gave up" (L3,4) reading them. In what would be a reverse experience to Noah, Luisa read to sympathise with "how [imaginary] people lived" (L1,2,5) rather than to examine the author's actual state of mind. She 'listened to' rather than 'engaged with' the objectivated text and failed to question or to "see between the lines". (N2)<sup>316</sup>

It was not until the passivities of her small rural or private school were exchanged for the challenges of the larger secondary school, that the pressures of education oppressed Luisa. "Suddenly Luisa's academic success waned from being "near the top of the class" to becoming "an average" pupil "getting 50 to 60% for work". (L1 & 2) Now she saw herself as "a failure" (L1,2,3,4,5) because she was being displaced as the classroom forerunner. To her, the blame was individual, personalised and related to the static quality of mind: either one "had it" (L1,3) and was a "brainy-type person" (L3) or one "didn't". (L1,3,4) Luisa, in her own view, was one of the latter. She failed to recognise that there might be social as well as educational reasons for her apparent demotion, such as her recent enrolment in a highly populated urban school. Instead Luisa both now and then was unable to account for this "depressing ... lack of promise" (L5) because she "still tried" (L1,5) just as she had at primary school:

*I never had a clue. I always presumed that it was obvious that I had missed out some facts .... I just couldn't imagine what it was .... I was floundering around. I had no idea.*

*Luisa 1.3*

Luisa felt that if she "did all the work" (L3) her level of education would improve. 'Work' was a favourite term of Luisa. Yet the word 'work' was reserved (by either Wyna, Luisa or Noah) for any surface-level activity which did not simultaneously require the use of mind. Surface-level

<sup>315</sup> Gadamer, in Hekman, 1990:66

<sup>316</sup> cf Belenky et al, 1986

'work' was, it seemed, a deliberate act of ideological reductionism; a move from the inner depths of epistemic imbeddedness to the outer surface of social appearances; from a type of theory to a type of practice. It seemed to refer to a mental action which did not require reflection or the judgement of ideas. However Luisa said her teenage answer to achieving better grades lay in one of two 'work'-related alternatives. Either she could increase her social connections with authority figures through such means as "*becoming the teacher's pet - which I didn't do*" (L2), or by spending "*more time at [her] work*". (L2 et al)

To Luisa, '*more of the same*'<sup>317</sup> - either in terms of a continued appeasement of her elders' desires, or more "*work*" - rather than change of epistemic strategy - was her suggested answer for educational success. Her earlier practical reading skill seemed to create an ideology of work that dominated and repressed the development of further thinking skills. Overall, Luisa equated 'knowing' with the fact that "*either one had it or one didn't*". (L5) This particular claim concerning the silencing or muting of Luisa's use of mind I should like to explore at another time. However, it may also be somewhat confirmed by her educational experience in the years following highschool.

After secondary school and before this period of university study, Luisa (1,2,3,4,5) had successfully engaged in different forms of tertiary education<sup>318</sup> though she "*found some parts of it a bit of a struggle*".(L1) She had "*enjoyed*" (L1,3,4) her chosen career where she was commended by her teachers for her "*practical skills*".(L1,3,4) However she had found the effort of "*memorizing all that theory*" (L1) for examinations a problem and so she chose to answer examination questions where she believed "*you didn't need to say why*".(L1,2,5) This once again reflected yet again her ideology of education as being '*learning as reading-related work without the involvement of a mind*'.

As she had moved into self-educating adulthood, Luisa spent less and less time reading, ("*because I never have time to myself*" (L1 et al)), instrumentally-confining that activity to the seeking of essential knowledge for her home "*work*" as a mother and wife. Her reading now predominantly consisted of seeking the abbreviated knowledge contained in such books as cooking and gardening guides, and the use of womens' magazines (especially for 'knowledge' of knitting patterns),<sup>319</sup> school circulars for her childrens' education, advertising circulars for budgeting, and personal mail for news of family and friends. But rather than recognising the reading of text (even in its abbreviated presentation) as a form of 'coming to know', Luisa considered her self-education was now primarily focussed upon "*finding things out*" in a social way.(L2,5) To Luisa, learning consisted mainly of "*finding out really interesting*" information (L1,2,4,5,) through discussions with friends (L1,2,3,4,5), her husband (L2,3,4,5) or her older children (L1,5) rather than in consulting books. Luisa never commented (to me) on any need for stimulating her own mind though she preferred these social

<sup>317</sup> Belenky et al, 1986

<sup>318</sup> The people of whom Luisa is composed had variously qualified in nursing, primary and kindergarten teaching and dental nursing.

<sup>319</sup> Surely no knowledge could be more abbreviated than '*KI, PI*' of a knitting pattern which would take a page of words to explain fully.

constructions of knowledge through conversation . Busily involved in community affairs such as "the church" (L3,5) and children's club activities, (L2,3,4,5) it would be social rather than personal constructions of meaning that controlled Luisa's life.

During Luisa's adulthood leisure reading was no longer the personal joy it had been in early childhood because she simply "did not have the time for it". (L2,3,4) All her personal time was allocated to the family and friends, particularly those in need. Her life revolved around relating to people, not to ideas; around actual meanings not abstractions; around being ideologically-constituted rather than constituting. Her epistemic life was backgrounded to her subjectified social life. In a world that seemed very externally-determined by her familial "others", Luisa's need "to feel part of it" seemed to have shifted from the passive plots of her childhood 'stories' to the active plots of real life in adulthood. She continued to imbed her 'self' in others' lives, others' beliefs and others' problems. In all it seemed that she denied her reasoning self "by living through others."<sup>320</sup> Solitude, alone-time or private time, such as required for reading and study, was rare (L1,3,4,5) and taken by Luisa with feelings of sometimes-intense guilt (L1,2,3,4,5) ,either because she felt she was "not getting on with proper work" (L3, 5) or attending to the needs of "the Others" (L1,2,3,4,5)

Thus it was that Luisa would enter university with a background of beliefs that education was the "hard work" of learning and the "hard work" of reading "hard words". She failed to recognise that her self-education consisted of those enjoyable times of socially "finding out" from other adults. She did not see that her interpretation of "hard" might relate to her other-dependence on public-reception rather than to personal-constructions so meaning. Her two most educationally-"successful" periods in formal study (till the date of university enrolment) had been her early reading-skills and her ability at "practical work" (L1 & 2) (during her tertiary-educated career). Only at those times had she experienced a "fusion of horizons"<sup>321</sup> with her teachers. Since subconsciously she already knew that she disliked the "struggle" with theory and the "work" of "hard words", how was she to fare in the academe?

### Wyna<sup>322</sup>

Wyna was not at all like Luisa except in as much as she also became subject-centred in education. Wyna thought her schooling had been "a breeze, ... not a problem at all". (W1, and 2,4) She grew up in an urban family that commodified formal education. Although the family possessed them, only seldom were self-educative items such as books, politics or ideas openly shared or discussed. (Did possession mean more than challenge or change?) The children 'learned' whatever facts they did from Wyna's authoritarian parent-figure when 'he' dogmatically asserted his political views and

<sup>320</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:77

<sup>321</sup> Gadamer, 1975: 421

<sup>322</sup> Wyna was a typification shared by three women with some strategies shared by another two persons. However the quotations used in this analysis focus in particular upon Wyna (1) who articulated all the strategies which were shared in common. She stood out as the typical member of this typification.

and opinions on current topical events while everyone else in the family "just listened".<sup>(w1,2,4,5)</sup> This single-minded authoritarian denial of the children's subjectivity would stultify the development of their potential as, reasoning people in their own right. Even when Wyna was grown up and she approached her parent to say she wanted:

*... to enrol in university, he didn't like it. He said all those Reds in the University were dangerous ....When he said I should be careful, I didn't know what to think.*

Wyna 1.3

In place of this authoritarian-related, determinate negation, the parents instituted the practices of a positive hidden curriculum. To assist her children's success, Wyna's mother had excused them from housework, instead invoking the 'invisible pedagogy'<sup>323</sup> by allocating a time and a place for study<sup>(w1,3,4)</sup> and instilling the spirit to compete for higher grades.<sup>(w1,2,3)</sup> Thus from her earliest, Wyna's education was differentiated between epistemic means and social ends with 'the means' to education now related to the personal acquisition of grades rather than to knowledge-constitutivity. Wyna's educational world was abstracted from ordinary life, just as theory from practice, and education became not only objectified but also privileged in that it was seen as superior to the humdrum drudgery of everyday life. Wyna "freely admitted"<sup>(w1,3,4)</sup> to "taking the easy way out"<sup>(w1,3)</sup> as she chose and excelled in "the easiest subjects"<sup>(w1,2,3,4)</sup> of the top stream<sup>(w1,2,3,4)</sup> in highschool - such as "french, biology and english"<sup>(w1)</sup>.<sup>324</sup> She said she chose these subjects because:

*you just had to feed the facts into yourself at school. The teacher said, "learn this and this and that" and you did.*

Wyna 1.1

Perhaps because her highschool years had been "easy", or perhaps she was selectively negating the negatives, Wyna offered little other concrete historical information, relating her educational history instead to such public conventionalities as the enjoyment of the teenage social life where she felt she was part of the "in crowd".<sup>(w1)</sup> She claimed later<sup>(w1,4)</sup> that "school learning had been easy in comparison with university" because in higher education she found "you had to put your own interpretations on things rather than just being told what's what". Wyna's aversion to reasoning was not, like Luisa, because it was hard work. It seemed more that she perceived reasoning and critique to be like a family argument. It was simply not socially-acceptable in the public world. The social 'logic' of her public shared life was more important, even in her educational experiences, than the development of her private epistemology:

*I didn't ever ... I don't ever want to be like my sister. When she came back from university all she could do was argue with Mum and upset everybody. It was like she knew everything and we knew nothing. It was just awful ... I can't explain what it was like ... We were relieved when she eventually left home.*

Wyna 3.2

<sup>323</sup> Bernstein, B. 1990:60

<sup>324</sup> All Wyna's had chosen to study English and biology in the upper secondary school.

It appeared that the familial manifestations of 'reason' (as either dogmatism or persuasion) controlled Wyna's development of an epistemic 'self' during childhood. The tension behind the social negations of reasoning were hidden from public scrutiny, becoming privatised, unseen and politically backgrounded. While ignoring (or otherwise negating) her imbedded contradictions about argument and reason, she reported, her earlier years had been "*a bit of a cruise*" (w1,3) (though her 'pregnant' silences yawned during our interviews). Wyna would tell no more. She seemed to feel that my research probing was as much an unacceptable intrusion into her private life<sup>325</sup> as her sister's or father's challenges to the harmony of the family had been. Instead she (w1,2,4,5) eloquently glossed attempts to discuss anything but the immediate circumstances with an "*Oh, I can't remember that far back!*" (w1,3),<sup>326</sup> or instead she would turn the questions back on me. Her articulate communicative confidence and her memory for 'the facts' (in retrospect) seemed to have been her keys to an *educational positivity* (w1,2,3,5) while her purposive avoidance of reasoning sourced her *epistemological negations*.

Wyna (1,2,3,4) had actually said, at first, that she had never had to overcome any particularly conflictual situation in her pre-adult life (w1,2,3,4,5) other than those "*infrequent family scenes*" (w1,2,3) during which she tried to remain silently on the side. (w1,2,3,4,5) Perhaps it was really her habituated withdrawal from family scenes that caused her to say she "*was never taught to think*", (w1) but she attributed the blame for not being able to reason to "*the education system*" (w1,2,4) on the grounds that she "*was never allowed to argue with the teachers*". (w1, 2) It was interesting that from the relative safety of her everyday world of today she would blame this shortcoming on the objectified mediation of 'others'; the "*teachers who thought they knew everything*" (w1,3,5) - rather than, like Luisa, on her private self and her educational ideology. In fact this blaming of others effectively negated her previous efforts to present a positive face of the relationship between her self and her schooling. Now it was the contextually-distanced, objectified, education system's fault that she could not argue. Her practice of not ascribing 'blame' to family discord would become relevant again later in this study, particularly in her relations with her husband. Issues of discord and negativity would however, never be fully addressed by Wyna even in the anonymity of research. Was this deliberate 'silencing of the private' how she habitually attempted to keep her subjective self in-tact, in-cluded, in control and foregrounded as an Id-entity? As with Luisa, Wyna's educational history was raising more questions than it was answering.

Directly after secondary school, Wyna chose not to go on to university (although she had qualified for entry), (w1,2,4) "*because [she] couldn't be bothered doing anything that would strain [her] - in*

<sup>325</sup> Wyna(1,2,3,4,5) virtually took control of the interview situation from the very beginning of the research year. For instance, although she set the time and place of interview, Wyna invariably greeted me at her door with a statement such as "*It's not really convenient today but I suppose we'd better do it anyway*".

<sup>326</sup> This became quite disturbing as increasingly it became a repeated attempt to control the interviews in spite of the fact that we had, at the outset shared an understanding in which I stated I could not give answers to their questions. While it was a moral issue for me, I gradually became aware it was a political action on Wyna's part.

brain strain for no reason".(w.1) Though she did not complete any tertiary studies, she had "married well".(w1,3,4) Now that she had finally enrolled to study in university as an adult, Wyna brought to the situation a somewhat nonchalant ease with the English language; a habit of rote learning "the facts" (w1,2,4); and a habit of seeking educational success in subjective social terms as well as a politic of selective negligence. Wyna believed in the strength of her own social agency in education. If she could cope socially, she would cope educationally. (She saw little question in that.)

### Noah

In general terms, the Noah's were three individuals in a typification, who were diversified in the details of their material experiences but whose experience shared common ideological qualities. The three key common elements of their history that effected this typified personal epistemology were that Noah was brought up in a family which was conscious of ideas and change; continuing conflict between home and school caused Noah to reflect long and often, as she sought to understand how other peoples' minds worked and, in the circumstances of so doing, Noah became aware of differentiating the ideas of both theory from practice and the use of language from the use of mind.

The typified Noah came from a family where books were commonplace, political viewpoints were known and ideas debated and exchanged, if not always harmoniously. (N1,2,3)<sup>327</sup> At the very least, knowledge was continually constructed through different forms of collective discourse.<sup>328</sup> Notions of changing ideas were in the forefront of her life and impinged on her ways of knowing. Then between the life of school and the life of home, there existed the constant contestation of two epistemic viewpoints: Noah should both complete housework before homework (N1,2)<sup>329</sup> and be discouraged from thinking beyond the limited bounds of the given school curriculum. (N1,2,3)<sup>330</sup> Between these two worlds was the constant tension of exclusionary or inclusionary thought. For Noah, this tension created the unchanging chore of judging what was "most essential" (N2)<sup>331</sup> as she created her daily priorities for action.<sup>332</sup> It was perhaps these years of practice at analytic decision-

<sup>327</sup> Noah's family (N1,2,3) were more attracted to listening to the radio than to watching television.

<sup>328</sup> Hekman, 1990:63

<sup>329</sup> Noah(2) had to constantly juggle the demands of a dominant father against the needs of her schooling and was 'always in trouble with the teachers' for her late or incomplete homework. After years of serious clashes she absented herself from school permanently after being mocked and threatened by a teacher with failure for yet another late assignment - in spite of the fact that she usually obtained top grades.

<sup>330</sup> Noah(1) was an orphan who was 'sent away' to boarding school where she was horrified to find that 'everybody knew everything about everyone else' and there was no place or time for private thoughts. Noah(3) felt her creative way of knowing was constantly stifled by the rigid epistemic control of the curriculum; a view counter-supported at home where 'ideas were considered more important than education itself' The types of ideas the parents' had discussed with their child differed. "My father used to talk a lot about the more abstract things - things that don't relate so much to what you're having for dinner. But my mother and I - our conversation was more related to logistical things ... Dad and I would talk about philosophical things; life, time. We talked about science-oriented things - space and the planets; some historical things like the war and what it was like here in New Zealand. We used to discuss BOORRRRING things (that I love!); the broader issues. We used to talk a lot about art; we share music and art in common. My Dad doesn't paint. He's creative in a different sort of way - more philosophical. But we used to talk about artists and the meaning of art and things like that."(Noah 3.1)

<sup>331</sup> Use of the terms 'essence' and 'essential' in this script are taken to mean the in-depth or important 'core' of a specific situation rather than, as with some uses of essentialism, to seek an absolute, a universal or a single undeniable truth.

<sup>332</sup> For instance, Noah(2) who was expected to help with the daily milking, "had to decide whether it was worth arguing with Dad so that I could get time to finish my homework or not." (N2,3 546)

making which later enabled Noah to readily differentiate levels and priorities of knowledge, particularly in sorting the important general points from specific details.<sup>333</sup> Noah's early resistance to these conflicting home-school ideologies could be found in her response: while still a young teenager, she began to engage in private reflective thought and critique. For Noah, reflective reasoning was a private way of reasoning<sup>334</sup> whose development had frightened her especially as its beginnings coincided with the pubescent onset of home-school conflicts:

*Thinking about thinking? I was so scared! I thought I was going crazy or something. I think that's mainly why I was getting so upset.*

Noah 2.3

Noah<sup>(3)</sup> spent years cogitating on the problems of thinking differently. Like Noah<sup>(1)</sup>, she had decided - "at age nine or so"- to study education itself on the grounds that "the education system had a lot of scope for change" and she felt she had "an undeveloped role there". Paradoxically, the school was seen by Noah<sup>(1,2,3)</sup> as the mediator of her personal ways of knowing, yet even while it limited her public thoughts, it induced private reflection and pondering. On the one hand for Noah its public epistemology explicitly limited the personal while on the other, the *conflict* implicitly encouraged it. In habituating the practice of self-reflective thought, Noah appeared able to deliberately objectivate and examine her epistemic self.<sup>335</sup> But within this growing recognition of her analytic "inner self" (N2.3) she also differentiated the substantive content of thoughts from "the workings of the mind" (N1,2,3). It was in this way that she began foregrounding her curiosity in the authors' epistemic play and began reflexively comparing 'his' mental workings with her own. Overall, as she decentred her 'self' from The Education System by resisting the school's systematic determinations to knowledge, she increasingly subjectified this reflective form of self-education.

The more Noah resisted other's definitions of education, the more she developed her own ideas on what it meant to come to know. Whereas it appeared the school had 'Identified' the knowledge she should learn and it seemed to her that it expected that she should just accept 'what is', Noah came to see that school knowledge was just another single and subjectivated "point of view". (N1,2,3) She believed "the minds" (N1,2,3) who chose the curriculum were not always as promising as their employment and political control implied. But in foregrounding her epistemic self, in choosing to be alone, be different and be engaged in reflective thought, she sidelined her social self. Moreover, Noah developed a scepticism or doubt about immediately accepting single points of view. (N1,2,3) She preferred to observe for some time and from a distance, how other people intellectualised, (N1,2,3) by objectifying 'their points of view' in her reflective epistemic space. Subsequently, much in a post-modernist frame of mind, she would also differentiate the mediacy and immediacy of

<sup>333</sup> Noah<sup>(1)</sup> deplored the boarding school intrusion into her thinking, the evident excuse for it (boarders were not allowed solitude 'because the nuns were suspicious someone might be up to something') and the monological reasoning entailed in the excuse, "There was no time for daydreaming or thinking how things might be .... It seemed as if someone always wanted to know what was in our minds but they never told us what was within their own."

<sup>334</sup> For instance: Noah<sup>(2)</sup> reflected on how a system of education could 'fail people' on the basis of uncompleted work when the teachers already knew of her ability 'to do it'.

<sup>335</sup> During Noah's teenage period of subjective idealism she would, in effect, "lay down procedures for systematically learning and analysing experience ... Strategies for knowing grew out of [her] very

language from her "need to think";<sup>336</sup> (./R/. from I./J. and ./JX) using reading only as a means to an end and seldom communicating her still-developing ideas and dwellings, even to those who were relatively-close to her.(N1,2,3) These changes in her ideas of what it meant to come to know, showed in the different details of Noah's approach to written language.

In the details of their different experiences Noah (1), the childhood-bookworm, loved English literature and history as a teenager because she could privately seek "the interpretations of various authors" and the source of their ideas. However, because she thought her own ideas had not been valued by Others in boarding school, she "began hating having to write about it". Noah (2) loved geography where she could begin to understand the essence of "Nature's interpretations" of the world but in adulthood she shunned books in preference for "listening to the 'National' radio" channel "and talkback" sessions; engaging "sometimes for hours" in private debate on the ideas she had just heard.<sup>337</sup> And although she would write long letters to her (submissive) mother expressing her latest thoughts and trying to support "Mum" into taking power for her own life, Noah (2) did not write to others, or for herself, at all. The type of knowledge which Noah (3) found "interesting" and chose to study in the self-educative process was "always some else's ideas about something ... Like philosophies interest me. Not the technical process of philosophy itself .... but more down to earth approaches to ways of seeing."(N3.3.1102) She also avoided writing and only used reading as a means to finding the basic ideas within different viewpoints:

*I wasn't one of those kids who'd say I liked reading. It was never a hobby ... Even now ... it's a means to an end. Like if I haven't got anything I'm particularly interested in and WANTING to know, over a period of three months, then I won't read anything. I don't read for reading's sake; I read for a purpose .... I could never really get off on novels and fiction ... that was trash. I really got into reading Zen, into Eastern thought, in my early twenties .... But I can go through periods where I don't read much at all. Then another time you'll find me with five (books) on the go at once. They're all be stacked up beside the bed and I just grab whichever one interests me and pick up where I left off .... Like here - the 'Living Bible' I read daily and I tend to read this [other book] in conjunction with it to get a broader idea; to get two perspectives on the same point because all the translations are quite different. William Barclay gets into what the Greek words mean and all the alternatives and what-have-you so it also gives a different perspective. And I'm into reading the Old and New Testaments at the same time and then I'm clarifying that in the King James version.*

Noah 3.3

To diffuse the conflict between home and school "for once and for all", (N1)<sup>338</sup> Noah chose, in the negative fashion of a dialectician, to leave highschool at age 15 (N1,2,3)<sup>339</sup> for she knew no other way

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*imbeddedness in human relationships and [her] alertness to the details of everyday life". Belenky et al, 1986:85*

<sup>336</sup> As in the curriculum differentiation between reflection (./R/.) and expression (./JX).

<sup>337</sup> with her 'inner voice'. (Belenky et al, 1986, also refer to this phenomena.)

<sup>338</sup> Middleton (1988) also located the double bind contradiction between domestic life and school culture. But in this study Noah(1) felt her aunt had 'paid for enough' schooling. Noah(2) 'couldn't bear' the battle 'to learn' any more. Noah (3) was simply 'bored' with having to still her brain.

<sup>339</sup> Belenky et al, 1986 also found resistance among these like-minded students.

to care for her 'self', (N1,2,3) without being "driven crazy".(N2)<sup>340</sup> With this absenting action, Noah's formal (but not self-) education was materially negated for at least another fifteen years.(N1,2)<sup>341</sup>

Even before entering the university, the focus of Noah's epistemic attention was almost solely on ideas and the (un)conventional, self-purposive activity of (re)constructing abstract understandings, from books or radio, though she seldom sourced books from a library.(N1,2,3)<sup>342</sup> Noah had already developed a restlessness in thinking and a desire to "keep things on the move". (N1) She (N1,2,3) habitually dwelt upon the potential for marginalisation in the human world of "politics and power", (N1,2,3)<sup>343</sup> identifying with people's oppressions after having learned "through sometimes-bitter experiences ... to think seriously" (N2.4.756) about social issues, justice and morality. (N1,2,3) Noah's worldview seemed to include a feeling of personal and social responsibility for knowledge; a social conscience bound inextricably to an epistemic consciousness, (N1,2,3) reflecting that for her, ethics was part of her sphere of rationality.<sup>344</sup> Noah said she had been typically sceptical of the ideologies she was confronted with during adolescence and retained a practice of examining and challenging, rather than accepting them.

As an outcome of the conflict she was confronted with during her previous formal education, Noah approached university study with a fairly well-formed personal 'philosophy' (which she referred to as just that - "a philosophy"). (N1,2,3) Noah appeared to be already long-practised in the analysis of ideas and the differentiation of phenomenologic from social or systems logic. Her independent life in a world of ideas had set Noah apart from both Luisa and Wyna. Whereas within the context of education, Wyna and Luisa's lives were determined by and dependent upon social conventionalities, Noah's life was ideologically evaluated on the basis of knowledge she sought and reconstructed. All told, these three typified actors demonstrated the different ways in which theory and practice divided them in everyday life.

On entering university, whether or not their habituated knowledge-constitutive action was centred in the institution's ways of knowing was the epistemic-problematic.

All over it seemed that the adults' personal epistemologies arose from childhood experiences of powerlessness particularly in the imbedded compulsion of home-school relations. These same relations (between the everyday and institutional epistemologies) would now be open to challenge

<sup>340</sup> cf Belenky et al,1986

<sup>341</sup> Noah (3) began Teachers College but did not complete the training period

<sup>342</sup> One of the problems to become clear during Noah's university study was that she(N1,2,3) did not know how to use a Library indexing system at all. This lack of basic knowledge may have been due to either of two factors: first that the time when it was taught in schools was after she had already left. However, such a simple level of technical knowledge could not, I suspect, have been the primary reason she avoided them. Less superficially, I wondered if the lack of indexing knowledge could have promoted her *tangential pursuits* through the shelves which in turn could have become quite intellectually-irritating, causing her to give up using libraries.

<sup>343</sup> to the extent of interrupting our research interviews to listen to current affairs news items!(N1,2,3) Cf Belenky et al.(1986:227-8), report the same fact as does Bernstein, B (1990:83) "As a strategy of self-defence by which she excludes her self by withdrawing."

<sup>344</sup> Habermas, 1972, Landers, 1991

because these adults had gained power from their self-educative role, their maturity and their voluntaristic status in university. As a mere glimpse at Wyna, Luisa and Noah's fragmentary and partial histories has shown, relations between the self, social and ideal worlds and between the epistemic and discursive practices which we use to decide, to communicate and to share meanings had been woven into some well-differentiated but complex relational webs. To this point it has become clear that Wyna, Luisa and Noah, as three radicalised typifications, had brought to the university very differing knowledge-constitutive habits which showed in their social, epistemic and linguistic conceptualisations.

Noah had habituated the private independence of an onlooker to the publically-identified and social world of education, all the while maintaining an epistemic-imbeddedness in a world of contesting 'minds'. Noah differentiated her sharing of her social from her ideological discourse and life. The reflexivity of her ideological discourse arose from coping with conflictual home-school relations and from habituating the intellectual practices of differentiating and selecting, and including and excluding. She had finally excluded formal schooling from her real-life at age 15, along with '*the art of oneness*'—that is, the single-mindedness of examining only mediated singular points of view. These absenting acts reinforced Noah's silence and self-educative continuance of "*armchair philosophising*". (N3.2) It also raised the rather odd question of whether the experience of conflict and marginalisation in *formal* education might indeed be *necessary* as well as sufficient for forcing self-reflexive practices?<sup>345</sup> Was formal education, by its act of negation, paradoxically able to determine a student's self-constituting epistemic practice?

Luisa, on the other hand, was a socially-inclined, 'immersion-dependent' knowledge-actor who put all her efforts into trying to identify *with* Education. For Luisa, to come to know was to engage in the work of socially 'seeking out' rather than intellectually 'seeking within'. Knowledge was an externalised entity that Luisa depended upon having socially-constructed or legitimated through it being "*worked*" upon with family or friends. Luisa was imbedded in a complex world where the social and the ideal were inextricably tangled, and she did not appear able to subjectively differentiate her 'self' from within that mixup. She was as an Other in the world of Others. Without the conscious control or foregrounding of an epistemic 'self', Luisa was denying, excluding and resisting any form of knowledge-constitutive engagement with the abstractedness of meaning. Like Noah, Wyna could be selective in differentiating the social from the ideal worlds in education, but - like Luisa - she chose to habituate her epistemology within the social world of practice. Therein she identified with people who were 'the same', excluding those (like her sister) who were socially or epistemically 'different' including the positivistically-inclined, competitive leanings of her parents.

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<sup>345</sup> Such as is promoted in the middle-class premises of 'action research'.

It would only gradually be revealed that Wyna privileged her own socio-educational status in making knowledge-constitutive decisions. She used such methods as publicly foregrounding what she needed and privately backgrounding (through silences and denials) what she could give. In order to win, she could present a public face of her self as being 'dumb' (ie situated in an epistemically-excluded position) and 'apparently' 'requiring' help. Therein, I claim, would lay her politic.<sup>346</sup>

Overall, the central epistemic issue of these three typifications was to be found in the tension between two views of educational purpose. One view (Wyna and Luisa) focussed upon knowledge as a *socially grounded Identity*, and the other (Noah) focussed upon knowledge as *ideologically abstract though socially founded*. Moreover the marginalisation of each typification was in the main due to either resisting or preferring the social or the ideological or the discursive. Only in a fluid and broadened epistemic space which included *all* of these interrelational standpoints would emancipatory education be found. First it would be necessary to locate not only the institutional touchstones each typification sought, but also what occurred in interaction with it.

<sup>346</sup> **Methodological Note:** It was the negative relation between Wyna's ability to negotiate such social situations as a research interview and her resistance to discussing where, how and why she came to know what she knew, that lead me to recognise that knowledge of the hidden curriculum was quite so powerful and political for some adult students. By repeatedly saying that she "*could not remember*" (W1.2.3) or she "*never experienced conflict*" (W1.3.4) a facade of non-experience was presented which only the accidental finding of contradictory evidence would uncover during the longitudinal study. Her major differentiating activity was a purposive selective negligence which would have effectively excluded my finding any socio-historical determinism to her epistemic self. The nature of these silenced voids (which she may have thought had positivistically-ensured the non-Identification of her *actual* educational practices), included 'pregnant pauses' during the interviews, comments in passing, momentary off-guard remarks and under-breath comments or conversational 'sighs' when she was either out of range of the tape recorder or it was already switched off (and thus, maybe she thought, no longer transcribable as formal 'evidence'). Indeed it may have been the constancy of pressure to censor for the hour and a half of each interview that caused her to remark on "*how exhausting*" (W5.2) the interviews were. (W1.2.5) Wyna was indeed, I think, more to be recognised by her negations than by the positive self-Identifications she gave in her interviews. Such negations gave rise to many questions, some of which may prove to be fruitful avenues of inquiry later. Whilst Wyna appeared to be independent within her socially-imbedded Identity, was she not perhaps ideologically-alienated and Other-dependent (though not Other-acknowledging)? Since the experience of the dogmatic home practices of one parent, did she resist the challenge of the world of ideas because it was a cause of social disunity and distrust (rather than philosophic disbelief)? Did she publicly-foreground conventional wisdoms as a facade for her epistemic fears? Why did she imply that (a) it needed to be her teachers rather than her family who (b) "*gave her*" (W1.3.4) the power or ability to think and debate? Why did she deliberately objectify this 'wrong' by disassociating it temporally and spatially from her subjective current adult world?

## Chapter Six:

### Identifying the marginalisation of typificatory knowledge-action by the preferred knowledges and educational relations

From their educational history, it could be seen how each of these potential knowers' habituated epistemologies played a central role in coming to know. Before the move from common-sense to academic-sense could be actioned within their correspondence-based university courses, it was necessary for the students to enrol in the institution. During the period of enrolment, the adult version of these epistemological and social habituations would become ever more clear.

#### *Enrolment and Luisa's period of internalisation*

At the time of entry to university, each typified student in this study was already demonstrating different knowledge-constitutive interests. These historically-situated and socially-constituted typifications represented somewhat stable (habituated) ways of being and seeing.<sup>347</sup> It seemed that their power-less childhood experiences of being caught anywhere between mutually-exclusive (conflictual) and mutually-inclusive (supportive) home-school relations, had caused them to relate either eccentrically or concentrically to formalised education, where they situated their typified self profoundly reflected their personal intentions and their basic understandings of what 'coming to know' might mean. The locus of this question was whether the potential-knower saw themselves as educationally and socially dependent or independent. This would lead to questions of power in the area of epistemic transformation. Was it the place of the Institution or the potential knower (or both) to change? Whose 'game' is 'coming to know'? Why (in this study) would the formalised epistemology of the academe appear foundational, superior and 'necessary' to students, as well as (supposedly) non-mediatory?

It was during the common period of enrolment and receiving the first mailings of study materials that each potential knower encountered the first of the touchstones of the institution, administrative knowledge, and endeavoured to 'come to know' it. While the rest of the touchstone knowledges formed an integrated whanau for complex knowledge-interactions, this first (administrative) form was perhaps more discrete in time and place. As such it serves to clarify the actors common search for knowledge as they tackled the problem of possible marginalisation.

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<sup>347</sup> Heidegger, in Hekman, 1990:65

Negotiating the bureaucracy of university was the first knowledge of the hidden curriculum that the adult students' encountered. It included understanding how the system functioned at its interface with students on such formalities as enrolment, the selection of courses, understanding department structures and hierarchies of professional status and (maybe also) the formalities of withdrawal from study. Seeking this institutional knowledge was a matter of establishing the personal control of "knowing my way around". (W4, L1 et al) Until the student (of any typification) felt at ease with this form of knowledge, study-proper seldom began, for it seemed that the first job of study was *to feel included* by social or epistemic relation with this institution. This was evidently much less trouble for Noah and Wyna whose *need* 'to belong' (rather than *wanting* 'to belong') seemed minimal compared to Luisa.

For Noah the lesser need to belong may have been related to the habitual independence of her 'self' during her observations of other's minds and her history of eccentric relations with formal education. Noah was "not unduly worried" (N1.3) by knowledge of the system. She was already well aware that such information existed and also that "systems try to control people". (N1.2,3)<sup>348</sup> Noah chose not to socially-'belong' within *the system* of formal education because she had enrolled at university "only to" (N1.3) extend her own mind with knowledge she "was interested in". (N1.2,3)<sup>349</sup> She realised that bureaucratic knowledge of the university system was not knowledge one "had to learn" (N2.3) so she only 'skim read' the administrative mailings "because there might be useful information in there" (N1.1) - such as on-campus course dates and times - and because she was "new to the system". (N1.1) But Noah "never really read all that junk" (N2.3) and indeed it often remained unopened on the sideboard for several weeks. As Noah 3 explained toward the end of the academic year:

*I am annoyed at receiving all this unnecessary mail! It's seldom I ever read it. I actually contemplated writing to the [Student's] association saying, 'I'm not really interested. You are wasting money sending me these bloody glossy little things that you churn out because I'm just not interested. I don't want it. (I've felt like that all year).*

Noah 3.3.67

It was to liberate her 'self' from bureaucratic ties, that Noah selected to remain unsociable and unmoved by these institutional attempts to include her. For Wyna, attempts to centre her self were of a different nature.

To Wyna, the administrative knowledge was not the social 'key' to either university or the wider world. Wyna skimmed the mailings when they arrived, "noting anything important", (W1.1) but, like Noah, she did not 'require' the objectivated mailings either in order to belong within the social

<sup>348</sup> Noah's daily life consisted of trade union negotiations (N1,3) and experience in the social welfare system (N2,3).

<sup>349</sup> "I believe in education as an idea and I like broadening my base of thought .... The gain to me is the actual study itself; to see things in a different way." (Noah 3) Noah(1) had enrolled in university only to help her answer, "some of my deep, long-felt queries about education."

system or to ideologically engage in the knowledge-act. In order to feel include, Wyna would rely on actual social contact, even though she was supposedly being distance educated.

It eventually emerged that Wyna's socio-political goal lay in a different social system and that university education was simply an instrumental means to a specific social end. To pursue what she required of life, Wyna (1,2,4) had already "consulted" (w1,2,3) powerful others in the other social system she wished to enter *after* she had completed this current university study. Wyna(1) had "consulted the Chairwoman of the Board because you may as well go to the top to find out if university study is the best plan of action". She then proceeded with her university enrolment because this other person had the power to know what to do.

By apprenticing herself to powerful others it was no wonder that Wyna found "little difficulty" (w1,3,4) with the administrative understandings of the educational institute. Indeed "enrolment was a breeze; all those forms and things". (w1.1 a a) But it would transpire, by a chance comment from an accidental informant,<sup>350</sup> that Wyna "had friends whose friend was a lecturer there" (later confirmed in W1.4) and Wyna (1) had in fact driven for two hours to seek his help and advice. This visit had proved to be a powerful political tool, for later she reinforced her claims to the possession of an institutional Identity by ensuring that all the other students in her study group knew that she had this "friend" whom she could contact at any time.(w2.2) However, at the first and second interviews, when I had prompted Wyna about enrolment assistance and suggested that "other interviewees had found people in the system to consult", this meeting with the "friend of a friend" (w1.4) had never once been mentioned. Instead Wyna attributed her apparent ease with understanding the system to "being good at language and such things". (w1.1.1.2.2, a a) However, things would be far different for Luisa. Where knowledge of administrative matters was under some element of control by Wyna, for Luisa it became a traumatic and emotional marginalisation factor.

Generally speaking, where Noah could already establish ideological hierarchies before she entered university (based upon social need and *importance* rather than on philosophic notions of an abstract idea which was devoid of a reality) and Wyna could do much the same thing in order to become socially enculturated, Luisa did not appear able to establish hierarchies and priorities of any educational value at all. Indeed, she had difficulty even differentiating an informal meaning from a formal one. Within her confusion lay a complex contradiction. It centred around her habituated belief of doing 'more of the same'. From her educational history it was already apparent that Luisa was 'other-determined', preferred social conversation to reading as a means of obtaining

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<sup>350</sup> On reflection over the period of analysis -and many times since- I have credited Wyna with a real confidence and ease at censoring information. I had not been prepared for such behaviour to occur during research interviews except where very private issues were at stake, and I had little means of recognising it when it began to happen other than being aware of her 'glossing over' of various questions (which had not seemed like terribly important questions to me at the time). But I did become increasingly aware during interviews of Wyna's ability to swing my questions around until they became her questions of me

information, thought of knowledge-acts as 'work', and obtained only abbreviated and essential knowledge from her few engagements with the written word. Her particular recognitions of the relationships between language, social contact and knowledge-sought were already so habituated that "*finding out*" (L1.1) how the system functioned proved extremely problematic.

Coming to understand the administrative touchstone was for Luisa the main, the dominant - and sometimes the only - event in university. Immediately after enrolment, Luisa (like all students in this study), was figuratively pummeled by the random arrival of fifteen separate mailings in five weeks. Luisa's particular dilemma centred in her continuing belief that the written word contained only essential knowledge, for to her it felt "*like you have to know every skerrick of information*". (N3.1) that was received in those fifteen mailings. What was more, Luisa experienced a double-edged confusion. She neither separated her own private needs from those of others, nor did she differentiate the course-related mailings from the concurrently-arriving administrative mailings. At her emotive worst, she was unable to separate informal comments from formal instructions and unable to separate academic conventions from course content. Had Luisa been both self-determining and able to differentiate what was most important to do first, then she may have seen that the main concern was to accomplish some actual study within the given time. Instead she was crawling her way through all sorts of newsletters.

By week five of the formal academic year, the fifteen mailings had included three Extramural Department booklets; a letter advising of Vacation Courses with forms to return; a letter advising of administration matters for the course itself; a form letter about Regional Tutors; Study Guide postings (two postings which together included three guides); two letters about participating in this research project; a note about on-campus parking with a car 'sticker-request' form to return; advertisements for the university bookshop; advertisements for a university-produced study-techniques book; newsletters from different sources and an enquiry for a handbook being produced:<sup>351</sup>

*You get all these booklets just for one course. I wouldn't be one to criticise, but I think they could have done it a whole lot better.*

*Luisa 1.2*

With the constant and unexpected "*barrage*" (L3) of "*official looking brown envelopes*" (L1, 2 and N2) the institution had effectively invaded the Luisa's private life-space "*without rhyme or reason*" (L1) oppressing her, she said, with the same urgency "*as letters from the Inland Revenue or something*". (L4.2) This was in spite of the fact that chatty newsletters among the mailings had been

<sup>351</sup> It was curious that no two students (of whatever typification) had received completely the same sets of mailings, even when they were all first year students and even when they were enrolled in the same courses. It somehow appeared that the institution mailed a single run until it ran out of paper and then changed the materials being included. This was particularly apparent with correspondence students who had either enrolled very early (in December) or very late.

designed to assist her in her needs to belong and feel included in the university setting. However difficulties other than inclusivity impinged on Luisa's efforts, for what she saw as complex terminology negatively mediated her understandings. Luisa resisted the authorial intention of mailings just as she had in teenage readings, instead panicing again over the "hard words" (L1,3,4,5) and coming to feel increasingly alienated. (L1,2,3,4,5) It will be recalled that in her everyday abbreviated knowledges, she had found it necessary to understand each and every symbol in its entirety, for each abbreviation carried such essential information as the 'K1, p1 (tbl)' in her knitting patterns. So from within her everyday common-sense world, she already 'knew' that "words themselves prescribe the only ways in which we can put them to use."<sup>58</sup> Almost every sentence in every piece of her fifteen university postings included terms she "could not understand". (L1,2,3,4,5) For instance, to Luisa<sup>(1)</sup> "regional courses" and "tutor networks" presented the same semantic (and epistemic?) hurdles as "referencing", "bibliography", "vignette", "concepts" and "objectives". With all this terminology muddled in her mind, Luisa resorted to her usual way of finding out. She asked Who understands these university words? of those within her tightly-circumscribed world of family life.

However, Luisa's chances of receiving successfully-understood replies were limited by communicative difficulties. Conversational reconstructions of obtuse terminology proved difficult because often she was "unable to pronounce the long words". (L1,2 & al) While Noah and Wyna were not confident in saying them either, they were at least less likely than Luisa to make gross errors. Being unable to say "vignette" rather than "vig-netty" (L4,2) and "Piaget" rather than "Pee-jay" (L1,4) or "Pijit" (L2,1) meant Luisa felt muted in continuing to "ask others for their help." (L1,4) Finally she took the path of least resistance - to a place where she thought "no-one would laugh" at her mispronunciations, (L1,2, L3) but even then, when she "asked the kids about them ... they remained absolutely lost in those." (L1,2)

Luisa (L1,2,3,4,5) herself would not entertain the idea of actually asking university experts and authorities for help or advice for it seemed almost rule-bound to her (L1,2,3,4,5) that one should maintain a respectful social distance from such wisdom. But she was not able to clarify the exact reason for this belief other than to say "one shouldn't" (L1,2,5) or "couldn't." (L3,4) It was all the more remarkable therefore that eventually Luisa (1) would phone her lecturer and Luisa (5) would semi-formally correspond with her tutor. However, in both situations a friend had first made the suggestion to Luisa and supported her in carrying it through. (In the first case the unwitting supporter was myself, and in the second example it was her parents.)

Generally speaking, after it had proved unhelpful to ask those close to her, Luisa's next attempt at understanding these fifteen mailings was to consult the household dictionary (L1,2,3,4) but this trial could also be thwarted if she had not previously differentiated between lay and academic vocabulary. (L1,2,3) On finding that supermarket-purchased dictionaries had a limited capacity, she

(1,2,3,4) then bought a [study-guide suggested] specialist dictionary only to find the lecturer's informal lay words like 'pithy' were excluded. "What", she asked herself out loud, "was the use of this [specialist] dictionary when the words the lecturer uses are not in it?" (1,3,2) She (1,3) had realised that this man's informal corresponded comment differed from his formal academic (but also corresponded) vocabulary. To Luisa, an objectivated subjectification meant just the same as an objectivated objectification. On the surface this conflation reflected beliefs that 'an objectivation = an objectivation'. The [A=A] of non-reflexive Identificatory thought. 'Pithy' had been but an informal conversational comment and no understanding of its meaning was needed. Maybe because Luisa was in the everyday habit of *seeking* knowledge by asking and in the habit of unproblematically-accepting and *using* it without challenging its truths, she (1,1,2,3,4,5) misunderstood *the variety* of writings from the university. Maybe to her, *all* written language was formal, rule-bounded, useful 'work'-wise and therefore, necessary. Maybe it was only verbal face to face conversations that were conditional enough to allow a degree of misunderstanding to occur, because 'the written' reflected the ideological rule-bounded exclusivities of publication whereas 'the verbal' reflected the broader social-imbeddedness of private life itself.

Where Luisa was concerned, her social attempts to come to know (the fifteen mailings at the year's beginning) were attempts to '*bring things together*'. After all, she was used to the fact that a social chat over a cup of coffee, as a means of coming to know, abbreviated the 'work' required to understand long words. The less-problematically that a conversation resulted in constructed and shared meanings, the more-easily it enabled her to avoid having to form judgements for her 'self'. Yet Luisa was not at all conscious of avoiding making judgements. She was, indeed, more concerned that the decisions were correct. Luisa (1,2,3,4,5) had brought this everyday way of 'finding out' to her university study and was 'finding out' that its expected ways of knowing (via distance education) differed quite markedly. *Social* constructions and face to face decision-making had been, after all, expedient knowledge-work. But for her individualistic university '*work*', Luisa needed to stop talking and to start thinking and making decisions for her self. Right from the very time of choosing to enrol, Luisa gave evidence of 'other determinism'. She had enrolled only at the behest of others<sup>352</sup> and when asked why, her explanations invariably began with words like "*when I finally AGREED*" (1,3,2) rather than '*when I finally DECIDED*'. Her Other-constituted 'self' had persisted into the formal educational sphere.

Coming from a home-world which was so 'other-determined', Luisa seemed to look upon the university system as just another institutional Other whose meanings and needs were to be attended

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<sup>352</sup> Enrolment in university study was never an idea Luisa had considered for herself. (1,1,2,3,4,5) "*I would never have thought of it if they didn't suggest it*" (Luisa 5). Luisa(2,3,4,5) was "*pressed by friends*" to study maybe because she had expressed the idea that she "*might like to work where they were*" (1,2,3,5) (kindergarten, primary school, dental nursing). The extent of study being her personal primary commitment was difficult to establish because in her world 'others' always came before her.

to, before Luisa could engage in what she *personally* wanted to do. What she delayed in 'really wanting to do' (L1.2) was to study "the really interesting bits" (L1.2.2.5) of her academic course-work - "though I sneaked a look when I was alone in bed at night." (L1.2.3) But by spatially and temporally backgrounding her academic study to administrative material, she was forming an Other of her 'self' and her private rights. It finally transpired that Luisa was more likely than not to withdraw from her enrolment after the first assignment had become extremely overdue and was not yet completed, (L1.2.3,4) unless she received very specific and persistent support from those around her, (L5) especially those with some knowledge of the formality of the education system itself.

Until then, Luisa maintained a determination (L1.2.3,4,5) to overcome her study difficulties, even as the situation was becoming increasingly more taut with emotion. From suggestions made by the local bookshop or in university-mailed advertisements, Luisa (L1.3) purchased every single book she could find on 'how to study.' Yet all she really required was to think through a way of sorting out the important from the less essential, and a way to categorise the source and intention of communications before she chose which dictionary to look them up in or sought which knower to ask. When the strategy of purchasing 'experts' books failed (mostly because she didn't have the time to read the lengthy prose anyway), she again resorted to asking family members what to do but *none* of them (L1.2,3,4,5) had university experience so that strategy was of little use. By now, for Luisa a withdrawal fever had set in. (L1.2,3,4,5)

Recognising her preference for social learning, Luisa (L1) had finally phoned the course leader and asked if she could attend an on-campus lecture. However the lecturer pointed out that Luisa could only come in to university on one evening unless she formally changed her enrolment to become an on-campus student. This course of action Luisa felt she was unable to do "because [she] had to be home to cook dinner for everyone at that time." (L1.2) However, she said, the lecturer:

*let me come to one lecture and then that thing after where a whole group get together and talk about it [the tutorial]. That was good. If only she'd let me come again and listen, I'd have been alright'.*

Luisa 1.2.56

Displaying a heightened anxiety by this time, Luisa's friends were urging her "to relax" (L3.2.1,4,5) but to little avail. After all "how can I relax when I can't even understand what they're talking about?" (L3.2) she inquired of me. Perhaps if Luisa had become immersed in the social contact of on-campus life she would never have withdrawn from her studies. However, she did. Usually Luisa *unofficially dropped out* of study leaving her first assignment incomplete, at the time the second term began. (L1.2,3,4) Telling no-one of her plight, she felt alienated, anonymous and silenced, believing, "they're not worried about me. They'll just cross me off". (L1.3) It left me wondering how much the international constancy of a 40 - 50% withdrawal rate from adults' distance education studies may in fact be most of all due to these fear-filled, social-immersion dependent Luisas. Luisa in general failed to get beyond this touchstone of administration (except for Luisa 1).

Altogether, these typified actors' different ways of dealing with the administrative knowledge of enrolment and their first fifteen mailings, not only reflected their habituated pattern of common-sense but also signalled the manner in which their study would proceed as they moved from the period of enrolment and social inclusion, into the world of academic-sense. Already it was evident that Noah was ideologically-foregrounding her study and backgrounding the sociality of it; Wyna preferred the opposite in seeking the sociality, and Luisa was resisting the determinations of academic discourse. From within the dominance of their personal epistemologies, different preferences for educational relations were emerging. Seeking the knowledges inherent in those different educational relations, would determine the conditions of educational marginalisation at university.

### *The habituated background of their personal epistemologies*

Noah now kept her 'self' excluded from within the sociality of the Institutional bounds; Wyna made sure her fellow students' knew she had an 'in' through the gate of a lecturing 'friend of a friend'; and Luisa had trouble choosing which information she needed first in order to even find the gate. The story of epistemic marginalisation continues now by collapsing the several knowledge-acts (assignment times) of the academic year into a single sequence of internalisation, reflection and expression. In a situation of contestable tensions, how will the institution manage to marginalise potential knowers through its systematic exclusions, backgroundings or objectifications, whether in social, ideological or discursive terms? This chapter elucidates how each intending-knower creates knowledge-constitutive relations between their preferred standpoint and the different touchstone knowledges of the hidden curriculum during their act of coming to know. It is in the variance of these educational relations that different typificatory styles become apparent. Touchstones represent the type of knowledge the student seeks from the educator, often unknownly, while standpoints are the baseline knowledges from which the student moves into this relation with the touchstone. It is this relation between standpoints and touchstones which can be either knowledge-constitutive or social constitutive in character. Although all students would share exactly the same curriculum touchstones, each typified 'self' would touch the stones differently from the others, preferring to rest longer in different places as they sought the 'conventionally-required' skills and information of that stone. It was not only where they sought to linger longer, but also how they negotiated and formed different educational relations *between* one standpoint and another touchstone, which determined the extent of their finally coming to know as well as their Institutionally-defined 'level of success'.

Whether a particular educational-relation becomes a factor of educational marginalisation appears to relate to the development of a likeminded empathy; that is to whether or not the educator and the student are together intersubjectively involved in a knowledge-constitutive relation. But therein lay a contradiction. For while a subjectified or empathetic relation was required with one's teacher, the

Institution in general would be shown to be focussed primarily on an objectified, externalised and singular view of knowledge. An empathetic relation did not appear possible under these circumstances.

The institutional requirement for the students to have this singular 'it' appeared to be based on several premises; that some touchstone knowledges were more important than others; that individual knowledges rather than the educational relations between them, held the epistemological clues and finally that the students' touches would not effect a change in the knowledge given. The explicit curriculum simply focussed upon what the Institution wanted the students 'to know' passively rather than actively. While expecting this, the Institution failed to account publicly for its own ways of knowing even though the students wanted to imitate this. The students' very need to search doubled the difficulty, for they did not recognise themselves as already the possessors of an habituated, personal epistemology rather than a void into which they could unproblematically place what they thought the university expected of them. They did not realise what they had to undo as well as to acquire; what they had to objectivate as well as to subjectivate. Nor did they know where to begin. But then how does one make explicit the epistemic grounds to knowledge?

### *Recalling habituated backgrounds*

The educational experience of actually learning begins with each of the typificatory adult students locating her 'self' on the first touchstone of '*social contact*'. The purpose and nature of '*social contact*' displayed by each typification differed markedly. Basically the type of *social contact* riveted around choosing to invoke either an epistemic relation (refer to curriculum diagram, Ch.2) with experts (e.g. authors) or a social-constitutive relation with her educational-authorities (e.g. teachers). Luisa thought both of those educational relations were exactly the same and did not differentiate between them. With her concept of 'keeping a respectful distance', teachers *were* the experts. Wyna preferred to use the social-constitutive relation with teachers, because she would see them as keys to educational success (*success*, 'she knew, was quite a different matter from knowing). But in terms of an avenue to *social contact*, for Noah the choice of social relations actually depended upon which stage of her knowledge-act (I/R/X) she was at.<sup>353</sup> She differentiated the sequence of the knowledge-act between the activity of 'coming to know' and the activity of sharing what she already knew. She preferred to be socially-isolated and uninterrupted during the first activity, but gregarious and giving once she 'knew'. That is, during 'coming to know', she engaged with knowledge-creators (the experts) rather than with knowledge-acquirers (people who asked her 'to explain') or knowledge-evaluators (educational authorities and auditors). Only later would she feel somewhat obliged to share her knowings with these latter groups of people and she

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<sup>353</sup> The tale of marginalisation continues with what might seem to be a 'biased' foregrounding of Noah's knowledge-act. This foregrounding was not intentional except that Noah's multi-factored act offered much more information than Luisa and Wyna's minimalist expression of their own acts. (Perhaps 'quantity' in this case related to 'quality', particularly in terms of widening the theoretical possibilities of the information.)

seldom asked them about why they believed what they did, unless together they each shared the same interests, ideas and 'wavelength'.<sup>(N1,2,3)</sup> She did not inquire of their reasonings, ask for their advice, or feel inquisitive about their thoughts, because she had habituated a concern for "working things out for [her]self".<sup>(N1,2,3)</sup> Even with problems she could not solve, she tended to keep them private:

*I tend to think 'It's just a little thing', you know or, 'Well, that's MY problem'. I always think that the reason that I don't ask is because I suppose I don't want to be a pest. [Other's] are probably busy. If I can't get [what is required] then it's my own fault. I know I can think for myself. I've always had to.*

Noah 2.5.973

Aloneness was very much a feature of Noah's act of coming to know. Her intellectual aloneness was reflected in her habitual use of the self-referencing phrase: "at least that's what I think".<sup>(N2)</sup> This choice for social apartness was reflected in her desire to live alone, <sup>(N1,2)</sup> and in her need for a private space or room in which to study.<sup>354</sup><sup>(N1,2,3)</sup> This self-imposed social exclusion appeared to be more for the purpose of ideological-protection from, and resistance to threats of social alienation than for purposes of epistemic elitism. She found that other people often denied her epistemic needs while imposing their own social expectations on her life. For instance, blamed for "always having her head in the clouds", one Noah was "too untidy" for Wyna(x) with whom she shared a home and who 'required' the 'housework' to be completed before 'homework' (just as Noah's parent had once before). Noah recognised that at times social demands should override personal wants. She admitted there were some chores which took precedence over study - especially when she was an impoverished student. At the beginning of the New Zealand academic year, when staff and students were beginning to find routines, the tension produced was quite extreme if a parent-student was sidetracked from study because, for example, the fruit was ripe and needed bottling in order to supplement the years' groceries on a now-lowered income, <sup>(Nx.1.1212, Lx, Lxx)</sup> or because a young child was school refusing, <sup>(Nx.1.203, Lxx, Wx)</sup> However, when economic or family necessities gave way to more general social expectations, 'the pull' for Noah was toward the requisite aloneness of her university 'study'. Noah was made to seem 'different' by her preference for aloneness and her challenges to accept social expectations. For instance, Noah <sup>(x.2)</sup> found it required a conscious self-determination to counter the peer pressure that came when she sent her children to school without home-baked biscuits. Left alone, such social appearances were of little concern, for her life centered around her epistemic inner self - though she was not particularly aware of that need. But she knew she seemed different to other people.<sup>355</sup> How was this 'different' person to tackle the first stage in the sequence of the knowledge-act? How did she 'internalise' knowledge?

<sup>354</sup> cf Belenky et al, 1986:151f

<sup>355</sup> 'I am different. I'm not on the same wavelength.' <sup>(N3.3)</sup> 'Questionnaires never 'fit' me. They always say 'yes, no, or lemon' and I'm a pear.' <sup>(N3.3)</sup> 'I get the feeling I'm different. I don't know whether it's just me. I often have to ask myself, 'Is it only me?'. I'm sure it's really there, that strange way people react. But you don't ask for it do you?' <sup>(N2.5.1354)</sup>

### *Internalisation, especially by Noah and Wyna*

Noah possessed an extremely inclusive view of knowledge. She felt a strong need to "know it all". Knowing that she seemed 'odd' (N1) to other people because she actually enjoyed the "disciplined subjectivity"<sup>356</sup> of exploring "all the possibilities" (N3) to knowledge, it was her conscience, she said, that effected the ways she chose to "study everything" (N3) in a search for the "beauty of an idea" (N1.1) or the "guts of it" (N3). She allowed neither other people nor institutions to restrict this aspect of her study, for to know anything, "you should really know it all" (N2.5.608). This dominant epistemic belief had been reflected in Noah's common-sense activity of reading several books on any one topic. It would be reflected again in her consistent manner of studying at the university, the details of which will be examined shortly. Noah differed markedly from the other typifications in one crucial respect, and this was in the combined effort to ignore social contact while she 'came to know', and the need 'to know it all'. Generally speaking, 'knowing it all' meant the given course-knowledge was read completely before she allowed the intrusion of other people's essay questions into her thoughts. Then, she thought, the assignment topic "would not bias" (N2.3) her into early and unintelligible decisions. Only *after* she felt she had come to grips with the essence of the given topic did Noah read the assignment choices and refine her understandings to those relevant to the question she chose.

The flexibility of a deliberate open-mindedness appeared to be the intention behind Noah's "coming to know it all," especially prior to the need to make decisions about what she 'knew'. In taking care not to jump to conclusions, Noah realised (N1.2.3) that "events are open to more than one interpretation, and some interpretations make better sense than others"<sup>357</sup> because people possess different ways of seeing the world. As a consequence (she thought) there must be many truths rather than a single one and if knowledge and knowing really was relative to time, place and person, then it was necessary to "build a good foundation" (N1) of general knowledge, not search solely for an Absolute. (N3.4)

The 'foundation' of knowledge each typification formed was sourced from a variety of social contacts and each source was approached differently by each typification. The sources included primary experts, alternative viewpoints, teachers, other students, family and friends and their own taken-for-granted beliefs. The most obvious distinction between these sources of information was whether they were objectivated (which enabled an undisturbed quietude for reflecting on the written materials) or subjectified (which enabled the immediacy of a social construction of knowledge).

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<sup>356</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:226

<sup>357</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:94

Noah formed a dialogical relationship with experts, and the originators of ideas, seeking what was on their minds and 'asking' questions of their ideas by 'conversing' with her 'inner voice', as well as comparing what was in "the mind's eye" (N2.1) of several different authors. In this way she found the essences of specific information could be located. Experts were, to Noah, persons whom she thought "earned" (N3) such a title. They were likely to be the authors of original ideas or arguments or people who "knew their subject matter inside out". (N2) But rather than simply accept what they said, from an uninterrupted textual distance, she explored their meanings with part of her 'self-removed', "arguing through the eyes of the authors" (N1), and "picking the eyes out" (N3.2) of related points of view as she "stood for a while in their shoes". (N1.3) Interestingly in this study, Noah was alone in her use of this visionary metaphor, and her inquisitive use of epistemological types of questions. How did the minds of idea-originator's work? (N1.2.3) How did experts justify what they knew? (N1.3) For Noah, the challenges of internalising were the ideas and the arguments, not the people themselves.<sup>358</sup> For instance, she challenged:

*Some of Gidden's arguments against Industrial Society are not sound. He does not justify them well .... His mind goes all over the place but I find that quite exciting, quite challenging.*

Noah 3.3

The only time that the typificatory ideal of this study broke apart for Noah, was once she was making preferential judgements about particular theoretical 'models'. (N3) For Noah (3), Weberian interaction appealed more than other paradigms because it could be used to legitimate smaller social situations than Marx could explain. (N3.1) However Noah (1) found the same theory "left me stone cold dead ... because I didn't see any particular logic in it". (N1.5) But such judgements could only arise when Noah felt she already "knew it all" (N1.2.3) as completely as she could:

*If I was going to be a sociologist, I would be an interpretive sociologist ... I find it more relative. It relates more to life as I understand it. I can see some of his concepts ... I buy into the idea about it being an individual's meaning ... that the situation creates the reality. I mean the Marxists and the structural-functionalists say society makes the individual ... That doesn't allow for individual change but I'm quite an individualist, being creative and different and all that.*

Noah 3.4

The act of internalising new theories had its problems while Noah was a first year student. Sometimes the distance educator had sent the students "too much" material written by experts. (N2.1.1.225) Although interpretation was not much of an issue because of her prior reflection on the topic (N1.1.332), and her habit of rereading the material anyway, (N1.2.3) for Noah 'too much' material gave rise to several overlaying issues - of time, of lecturers' expectations, of the retaining the special characteristics of theorising, and of mental stimulation.

<sup>358</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:226. While "systematically empathising with the [objectivated] participants,[she] participated in what they were studying".

When the lack of time for internalising the given knowledge became an issue, later in the first term, Noah was forced to reduce the amount of reading per session. She moved from her habit of comprehensively reading 'it all' (every word in a complete article), to the select reading of "*smaller bites*", (N1.1; N3.1) otherwise she found she would find the due date for assignments drawing near and her work still incomplete. However 'select reading' gave rise to the issue of having "*too little*" of the teacher's material so that in fact, she could not use the lecturer's criteria for *selecting* what to read, because the teacher's epistemic expectations were unclear. For instance, Noah had been sent a study guide in which "*there was extensive use of other people's work .... There was forty pages for just one article alone, when I think all they wanted you to get was the concept and an example of it*".(N3.4) Noah was given to voicing remedies for such issues:

*It would be better (if you were going to ask students to use the whole article) to say 'You don't need to know every detail of this work, but just have a look at how she applies this concept.' Or the lecturer could use less statements, like 'Try to understand it'. You have to know where the hang to go. This isn't easy stuff you know.*

Noah 1.3

Another of Noah's problems which related somewhat to the quantity of reading material, and the lack of teaching details, was the acquisition of specialist terminology. This feeling of a need to acquire the terminology correctly was especially an issue for the correspondence-educated Noah, when it came to preparing for assignments and 'swotting' for examinations or tests. Moreover, it was especially an issue with the 'interpretive' paradigm which had "*no linguistic handles*". (N1.2) Noah (2) herself gave an example of this dilemma when asked to name the theoretical positions she used in her exam - "*Functionalist, Marxist and Imperialist (sic) .... but there was one of them I didn't do. Imperialist, that's it. I couldn't remember it*".(N2.5.41)

*There are no actual words to cling to ... like 'forces or modes of production'. I think everyone finds that. No black and white things ... [the interpretive theorists] all talk about the same sorts of things but there are no standard sets of words.*

Noah 3.4

Another of Noah's more usual problems was an overstimulation of her mind.(N1.2.3) Noah (1) "*couldn't afford to read too much because reading stimulated too many thoughts*".(N1.1.294) Even after she began select reading, her tutor would remark to her that she "*got a lot from a little*".(N1.1.305) Mental over-stimulation as well as a lack of time had been the reason that Noah (2) began select reading in the first place. "*Too many details led [her] to sidetrack*"(N2.5.492) from the institutionally-given focus on the assignment questions. Instead she switched to reading the lecturer's study guide statements of learning objectives, presuming that in these statements she might find the criteria for select learning. Such information helped keep her centred and "*on track*".(N1)

All the issues that arose in the study of experts' ideas then, arose from educational or linguistic mediation. To overcome this absence, Noah needed the time to accomplish all the reading before

the institutionally-imposed due dates. She required a standard list of 'the conceptual words' in order to express her knowings academically. She needed to understand what the teacher expected the students 'to know' from each reading (whether concepts, or arguments, or applications to life) and Noah needed her teacher to realise that her own mind was overly alert when it came to reconstructing meanings. Without these understandings, Noah's study was becoming marginalised and limited as she felt the effects of educational determination, and became dependent on the teacher's mediation to keep her mind centred in this narrowed conception of 'what to know'. By the middle of the academic year, this reductionist set of acts made study "*much easier*"<sup>(N2)</sup> than working in the way she had always done, on the full number of readings she had been given, but now she admitted she no longer 'knew it all'.

Changing from reading 'all' the given materials on the experts knowledge to select reading, was only one of Noah's problems with internalising knowledge. After reading 'the experts', Noah had been used to checking their ideas against a second source: the viewpoints of alternative experts. The second writers rewordings and differing interpretations of the same meanings could be used to test one idea against another. However, when the supplied study materials did not include alternative viewpoints, Noah felt compelled (by her epistemic habit) to first spend time seeking them from library books or the national news or other sources.

Noah found that concurrent enrolment in the second of the 100-level university courses in the same social science discipline, <sup>(N2,3)</sup> usually also afforded alternative explanations of the same theoretical frameworks and thus reinforced the depths of her understandings and critiques. This doubling of the theoretical sources was "*most useful*", Noah claimed, because the easier version of the theory gained from the more applied first-year courses could be reflexively used as introductory understanding to the more complex readings in the theoretically-based first year course. This situation caught her in "*a happy medium*"<sup>(N2,2)</sup> because there was little direct educational teacher mediation of the 'applied' theory. Noah could work on the readings uninterrupted because in the 'applied' course she had to understand the theory in terms of its societal use-value, rather than its current educational value, which she would judge later.

One might expect that finding supplementary material in Libraries would not have been educationally mediated, but this also was not so. The University Library and "*finally finding out how to use the town library*"<sup>(N3.3)</sup> was another source of viewpoints, but libraries were a technically-mediated problematic for all typificatory students, including Noah.<sup>359</sup> In no small part

<sup>359</sup> For the students whose course timetabled only one month's study per topic, the sending of postal requests and the receipt of replies from the University Library was interminably long. Worse still, as happened to Noah 3, was the experience of a reply which stated that there were only three books in the Library on the given topic and presently they were all out on loan. If, the letter continued, Noah 3 cared to wait their return, the books would be sent immediately to her. Alas, this would have meant receiving the texts after the final examination! Noah 3 had by this time spent over half her planned study month waiting for either a reply or the recommended material and now had to find an alternative topic with just ten days before its due date. Similar experiences occurred to most other distance education students in this study. Alerted students might

the problem of distancing these potential knowers from the material expected to be known, in this study, was due to lecturers setting assignment topics for which insufficient supplementary material was available or made available in the University library.

The positive aspect of this issue (though it was of little direct consequence to their University studies) was that some students who hurried to use the (limited) resources of their local town library(s) (N1,2,3) found out "what Dewey [classification] actually meant". (N3,3) Otherwise attempting to overcome this major problem of objectification (insufficient copies of suggested readings) had a marked effect on both Noah's and Luisa's educational marginalisation. Most of the students interviewed tried to overcome this (library) problem by driving to the University in a spare weekend. All students I spoke with mentioned real feelings of trepidation as they entered the "imposing" (L2, W2, N1) large building, centred as it is on the University campus. Luisa (L1,2,5) was so afraid of "looking like a fool" (L2,2) when she failed to find appropriate material by quietly "perusing the shelves" of the three-floor library (L1, 2, 3, 5) "in a spare half an hour" (L1, 5), that she never approached the University Library again. (L1, 2, 3, 5) Noah just got angry at the futility of trying to work the library system out for herself. When she found she could invoke the Dewey classification scheme of her home-town library to her own advantage (N1,2,3), her propensity for self-education was so reinforced that she continued to use her town library rather than the University one. (N1,2,3) Different to both Noah and Luisa however, the more socially-confident Wyna did not allow herself to feel as harassed by exactly the same difficulties. She simply returned to the Library Desk and persisted with asking the weekend Librarians for help (which was willingly given once the Librarian had identified Wyna as a distance-educated, off-campus student). (W1,3,5) This social construction of meaning, this 'asking of others', reflected the value of *social contact* as a touchstone to making academic-sense.

'Seeking help' in the library differently marginalised Wyna, Luisa and Noah according to whether they were prepared to "make others do the work for them" (N2,5, L1,5) and also felt confident about doing so. In Luisa's and Noah's acceptance rather than resistance to this position of marginalisation, they blamed their own personal ineptitude, even though a lack of library skills was a general problem for all the adult students interviewed. Only one of the interviewed students who entered the university library had quite soon found the kind of material she wanted. She was, in fact, the only student who had gone immediately to the desk and identified herself *at once* as a distance-educated, first year student who "needed to be told what to do". (W4) Once recognised by the Librarians as a marginalised student (because of her distance-education status), the staff

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drive to the University in the weekends or evenings in order to obtain materials. But during 'after-hours' visits, they were at the mercy of little-trained or unspecialised part-time staff as well as a closed New Zealand Room, no Serials assistance and a locked Statistical Section. The Institution seemed to recognise their library requirements as desirable rather than epistemically necessary. NB. I believe this rather major problem has been generally rectified by this University since it was brought to their attention in the year of data collection.

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"willingly" (w3, L1) assisted her. The quick and upfront confession of Wyna (4)'s marginalised status was the key to changing it. In the relation between the touchstones of *social contact* and this *academic convention*, both the Librarian and Wyna had lessened the tensive distance between themselves as knower and potential knower. There was a direct correlation between the immediacy of assistance given and the student's 'confession'. Unlike Wyna, (4) Noah maintained her deference to *social contact* even where it concerned learning *academic conventions* and skills. She had tried 'to learn for herself' by locating advice leaflets in various places in the library, and even though her efforts were fruitless, she refrained from asking for help. (N1,2,3)

Another *social contact* used as an authority was the teacher herself, but the teacher seemed to possess a minimalist view of their educational function. Teachers and tutors were not recognised as experts but were 'authorities' whose job, Noah thought, was to "lead me to the right sort of books" (N3.5.12) as well as to later audit Noah's own judgements of the knowledge. Noah had expected first, that the experts' books would clarify essential understandings and second, that her authoritative teachers would confirm both that she had it, and that she "had it right". (N1.1) Such a belief came under challenge when Noah found that her lecturers did not even expect her to know "all of the given course materials" (N1), let alone all those materials and ideas that she was used to collecting together. The teacher's minimalist view of the required knowledge was at first quite a shock to Noah (N1,2,3) but she later became resigned to it:

*When they said 'you don't need to know it all', I suppose I just thought 'well, you can't be expected to know everything'. But you should really.*

*Noah 2.5.619*

It certainly appeared the lecturers 'sample' of knowledge was much smaller than the sample Noah had been used to collecting and studying when she was self-educating. (N3.5.217) The University's sample was in fact similar to positivist research, for the courses studied in this investigation all presented a piecemealed breadth rather than a unified depth of information, which was perhaps the nature of a first year university course anyway. But in this way, was the academe unwittingly imposing an exclusive, reductionist, and positivistic rationality on all of its students? Or was this form of exclusivity experienced as different only by Noah whose habituated self-educative methods were usually more inclusive? To Noah, the minimalism of academic sense was excluding the richness of knowledge as well as its relevance to New Zealand reality:

*I think to myself, 'Well, where is this [study] really at? ... Eastern philosophy wouldn't hold with [academic minimalism]. It's a kind of 'mind trip' if you like ... getting into the rational frame of mind and going off to these narrow clouds of academic whatevers. I mean, a Zen Master wouldn't do sociology at university. He would go and sit under that pear tree. He would have a completely different approach to what I was going to say 'life', but I'll say 'existence'. For instance, if we were studying spiritual matters then there are people here (in town) who know more ... than anyone up at university who approaches it from a rational point of view .... The academic approach ... (this great intellectual analysis of the smallest things ... ) this worshipping of the*

*rational mind above all else ... this isn't appropriate to spiritual things in life. That's why people can't see it. That's why people don't see beyond the rational mind, because they are coming at it with a rational mind. That's where I think you [in the university] miss out.*

Noah 3.5.564

As she said, Noah now saw the course knowledge as narrowly limited to the educationally-required rather than the ideologically-central.<sup>(N1,2,3)</sup> Since their beliefs in what was essential differed, she wanted the teacher to confirm that she had learned the teacher's core of the given knowledge. This epistemic intentionally contains an inherent paradox for people may seek to fill 'the gaps' in what they already know about the given topic, rather than extend what they do know. Thus 'the essence' of new learning for person A may well not be 'the same core' for person B, given their different life experiences. Moreover, one person may select the positivities of the substantive content while another seeks the negativities inherent in its debates. While not explored in depth, this epistemological point was observable. Students' chose completely different sections of prose to highlight (in coloured inks) in their study guides. And though the teacher offered only one of several possible points of view, Noah realised the necessity of sharing that view in terms of evaluation. Comments about an on-campus lecture confirmed this point:

*Having read the textbook ... I had a good background to what [the lecturer] was talking about .... His talk [at an on-campus weekend course] confirmed for me that this was the core. He gave us a kind of summary of the core. I could link up with what he was talking about. I found that good. Very valuable. If I hadn't read the textbook before, I wouldn't have known what he was talking about because I would have selected different points [of his lecture] to note down. The notes I made were relevant to what I knew already, they linked it together.*

Noah 2.3

However, such *social contact* with her teachers caused obtrusive mediations to Noah's knowledge-act, and this she found difficult to cope with. As one example, during an official on-campus visit, the lecturer contradicted one advice given by another lecturer in the course study guide:

*It was my impression that the guy at the Regional Course had not conferred with the person who wrote the course.... Someone asked a question about the assignment and he just said: "Oh! You don't have to send those in. It's optional." But that wasn't true. Someone pointed out to him that they were worth 20% and so he said, "Well in that case you'll have to do them." After that I really didn't put much weight on what he said about the contents of the assignment .... If he didn't know the other thing, how was he going to know precisely what the other chap wanted for the assignment? Why didn't he check it out? And he didn't talk about it until late afternoon yet it was a top issue for most people; a real panic, especially at the lunch.*

Noah 3.3

During the act of internalisation, selectivity was a problem not only of the course-given knowledge but also of educational intention. Even though in her early schooling history, Noah had seen it was necessary to be on the side of the teacher's epistemic standpoint,<sup>360</sup> she now thought that because

<sup>360</sup> cf Heidegger, in Hekman, 1990:65

she was in adulthood and at University, things would somehow be different. She thought her own self-educative practices might be valuable and valued. However, these continuing contradictory events in her university study reflected back to her old 'school experience' and confirmed, for her, the educational politic:

*It's not just a matter of you go there and you take notes and then you prove you've learned something. Not that sort of thing at all. It's much more political. There was all this business about "The test will be nothing. Its all just a waste of time. I have to sign a paper to say that you sat a supervised test. Do you really want to sit it?" That was CLASSIC game! The lecturer said in a mocking laid-back voice, "Do you really want to sit this test?" It was a classic con because then everyone said, "Yes, Yes. We'd better sit it then." And then you played the whole thing right down. Everybody marked their own papers and everything. It was a real farce. The standards are much lower than we'd really expect.*

Noah 3.3

While Noah found this imposition of politics on her knowledge-act morally distasteful, for Wyna relationships with her teacher(s) were very different. Wyna desired the intersubjective mediation of formal and informal educational authorities as long as they showed her "what to do". She wanted these mentors to subjectify the particulars of the hidden curriculum, so she sought their labour at both the periphery and the centre of the university workings. She befriended people on the periphery of the university culture to act as her personal teachers and editors, but not evaluators. Wyna<sup>(1)</sup>, for instance, befriended "Pan. She's a graduate who I've been to meet...".<sup>(w1.1)</sup> These mediators always seemed to be referred to by Wyna as being her "personal friends",<sup>(w1.2)</sup> and their mediation in Wyna's life was referred to more by way of hints than by detailed explanation. When probed for more information on Pan, all I was able to establish was that "Oh, she lives out near here".<sup>(w1.1)</sup> It was not for many months, and not from Wyna, that I was to learn that Pan was a recent graduate of the same University and Faculty. Pan acted as Wyna's nominator into the hidden curriculum of academic culture. She was actually the figurative 'tutor' who taught Wyna that the 'necessity' of study was not only the actual course content but the politics of what to do with it once she had acquired 'enough' of it.

To 'acquire enough' of the course content during the period of internalisation, Wyna attempted to have it reconstructed for her. First she <sup>(w1,2,3,4,5)</sup> connected the touchstones of *social contact to evaluation* by finding others to interpret the assignment question. When I heard her attempt this strategic action, her questions were framed as a social sigh or conventional theory-practice despair - "How could these ideas ever be relevant to melus/NZ?" In effect, of course, this left the person being asked in the position of 'giving' Wyna answers.<sup>361</sup> She <sup>(w1)</sup> also asked Pan "the best way to

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<sup>361</sup> On many occasions the person 'asked' was me.

*study*".(w1.1) Then, when Wyna actually began perusing her study materials for herself, she first searched the contents page or the index or the subtitles in order to limit her reading to only the specific detail that was required for the assignment itself.(w1,2,3,4,5) She would not pursue supplementary reading, even in the very same article, unless she "*was really stuck*".(w2.2) In an academic text, Wyna's selective reading habit consisted almost solely of reference to conceptual terms, by use of an index, and thus her detailed understanding of individual concepts was reinforced. This method showed how Wyna would piecemeal study, sampling pieces from here and there, knowing this and knowing that, but seldom knowing how the ideas were related. Unlike Noah, Wyna never read it all or found the connecting arguments. Instead she consolidated her understanding of a few carefully chosen concepts.

To accomplish the act of internalisation, Wyna employed exclusive selection methods which related more to '*evaluation strategies*' than to understanding the *course content*. For instance, she (w1) studied intensively only two topics for the final examination and these were chosen on the grounds that they were broad and "*not too theoretical .... Open enough to be used in many ... [pause] over a few exam questions*".(w1) However, when I asked if she learned to be selective from Pan, the question was simply ignored as she moved to put the jug on for an unrequired second cup of tea. This politically-advantageous knowledge of *evaluation strategies* had been gained by Wyna subjectifying the social-constitutive educational relation (her social contact with authority figures), but who exactly the people were and the nature of their authority was not always able to be ascertained. With this latter knowledge (of selecting a theoretical position which was able to be cross-referenced), Wyna could now limit her real understandings of the course content even further, acquiring only a sample of the educational sample already required by the teachers for achieving success within the course itself. Both at the conceptual level and theoretical level Wyna had found ways to limit what she 'needed'. Wyna marginalised her potential as 'knower' of the course content, but she centred her self where 'the known' consisted of the educational politic inherent in the hidden curriculum. It will be seen that Wyna's educational intention was focussed on manipulating the control of educational mediations. Thus teachers (and their implicit form of selecting knowledge) rather than experts, were the focus of her attention.

On the whole, however, one could say that Wyna had little trouble establishing at least a minimal and somewhat hesitant understanding of the course material. But her understanding was piecemeal and surface related rather than deep.<sup>362</sup> Wyna's epistemology raised more questions than she chose to answer. Her real expertise lay in developing a socio-political knowledge of the educational process, though such 'expertise' would remain privatised and exclusive, for central to the politics of "*the game*" (N3) was its limitation through selective negligence. If anything, the real 'negative' of Wyna's education was her manipulation of the educational control which would serve to privilege

<sup>362</sup> Saljo and Marton, (1972)

her social position in the university. But its evidence would not easily surface, at least not yet. For the time being the story would return to Noah's expressed attempts to internalise material.

To this time, the dominant touchstone sought by Noah was '*course content*' where for Wyna it had been '*evaluation*'. *Experts*, whether given or personally-sought, were Noah's primary and objectivated sources of knowledge. Establishing a *knowledge-constitutive relation* with experts was denied only by lack of access to materials - whether due to technical or discursive problems. Noah used the *social constitutive relation* with educational authorities only in terms of this providing of access and once she had been determined into the reductionistic methods of select study, she used teachers to confirm the shared 'essence' of their knowings. Ironically, though, while she had critiqued their monologic in epistemic terms, not once would her teachers reciprocate in a like manner. She began to believe that they did not really care to maintain high intellectual standards. Sometimes this did not matter anyway, because apart from textbook experts, teachers themselves were just one of many sources for Noah to obtain supplementary information on the *course content*. Students who were already trusted friends, were the dialogical sharers of Noah's clarifications, as long as the friend gave, as well as received, information. In a situation of social reflexivity, the mutuality of their beliefs was reinforced in discussions on such topics as the basic theoretical ideas, institutional expectations and national concerns. But Noah's ill-concealed feelings concerning the naivety of teachers was brought home (literally) when the latter actually *expected* students to internalise knowledge through working with other students in the same course.

To Noah, the students she met in study groups were a source of the negativity of competitiveness, and the politics of knowing. Caught in this situation, Noah would withdraw from or feel silenced by those (like Wyna) who possessed conflicting ideologies to her own. One example of this will suffice. It is a situation in which several educational relations (as in the curriculum diagram) overlaid each other in a way more reminiscent of social-constitutive power than of knowledge-constitutive confirmations.

The 'study group' had been set up by a number of rural students in order to help each 'other' to study. This was ironic for a start, for how were non-knowers to assist other non-knowers into the knowledge? The suggestion for regional students to get together to study had been made by lecturing and administrative staff, through study guides and newsletters. The students contacted each other through a University-appointed, regional-liaison person. However, not only did the whole suggestion of students learning from one another objectify even further the students' wishes for closer ties to the University or for understandings of academic sense, but also its basic ideology was flawed. Suggestions to establish study groups invoked the positivistic use of the Principle of Identity. 'Learning' was seen, in this ideology, as an altruistic unitary activity which assumed that the students shared common intentions. It was both this faulty ideology and the deliberate negation of dialogical teaching responsibilities (non-knowers being expected to induct other non-knowers

into 'the knowledge') which set the scene for study group failure.

In this study, it was one of those beneficial accidents of research that two Wyna's joined the same study group as two Noahs,<sup>363</sup> and a major clash of intention occurred. It saw Noah's knowledge-constitutive intention competing with Wyna's social-constitutive educational politic. Noah's response to this conflict was to further privatise her already-isolated knowledge-act by silencing herself from Wyna's seeming attempts to determine Noah's educational marginalisation. In a complex choice of relations, Wyna became socially-inclusive by befriending the like-minded other (Wyna), ideologically-inclusive by stealing Noah's ideas, but sociologically exclusive of Noah's self. It seemed that for Wyna, Noah was only an object of intentionality in a situation of social-construction. Wyna used Noah as a mediator to knowledge of the course content. How this happened, follows.

A study group meeting was seen basically as a place where one's internalisation of knowledge was shared and confirmed, because *"the whole point of asking questions was to enlighten each other"*.<sup>(N1.4)</sup> But among the students there were implicitly agreed limits. The study group members were not inclined to tell each other how they would relate the course content to the assignment itself for this was considered 'private' or individualistic business.

The first study-group issue arose when Noah<sup>364</sup> wrote to a lecturer to clarify an obtuse assignment question but received a terse reply which these students collectively thought implied *"Read the question, you dunderhead."*<sup>(Nxx.4)</sup> The study-group response to his reply was that they *"were all lost about what was required ..."*<sup>(Nxx.3)</sup> and they then proceeded to discuss the shortcomings of academic staff *"who think they are better than everyone else"*<sup>(Nxx.3)</sup>, and in so doing, negatively reinforced each others ideas of *"Ivory Towerism"*:

*The implication [in the letter] was that if she'd read the question in the first place, she wouldn't have asked such a simple-minded question. That response smacks of the Ivory Tower rather than of 'We're here to help you understand all this .... She didn't get an answer to her query ... no direct answer. So it was no help to us [in the Study Group] as we tried to interpret the assignment requirements .... It was no positive kind of thing.*

Noah xx.3

Rather than the lecturer's reply being seen as one individual writing to another, for them it represented a collective university voice to a collective of students. For these students this one letter became part of the myth-building baggage. The study group collectively agreed that the University supported the competitive nature of formal education rather more than it supported students efforts

<sup>363</sup> In the interests of anonymity, the identifiers have been excluded from this section. As far as I was able to ascertain, from the time of the study group's beginning to its demise, no-one shared the fact that they were being researched. Only at the end of the project did the two Wynas meet again and talk together about this study.

<sup>364</sup> This was a generally agreed purpose for all participants interviewed in this study.

to come to know, but their typificatory responses to this ideology differed. To Noah it represented knowledge-constitutive exclusion while to Wyna it represented *the promise of socio-constitutive inclusion*. The conversation over the problem of interpreting the assignment requirements continued. Noah (x) found the study group's collectively-voiced, superficial decision of "*this is it, and its all that's needed*" was "*too easy*". (Nx.3) She continued to reflect aloud on what she thought of the nature of the question, and explained how her interpretation related to the lecturer's terse reply, but watching the others she began to realise:

*They just couldn't see between the lines. They just couldn't see it even when it stared them right in the face. I tried to show them, to argue about it, but they ALL seemed to shout at once and then they just ignored what I was saying and turned to listen to someone else.*

Noah x.3

Wyna (x) reacted to this argument of Noah (x) by physically "*turning her back on [Noah]*" (Nx) as if to deliberately appear to exclude the latter's logic. The implication of this gestural "*I don't know what you mean*" could have been Wyna's intentional political putdown or a genuine concern to continue the search. But, when the second Wyna (xx) also immediately re-traced the conversation to a former stage "*as if nothing had happened*" (Nx), Noah felt the conjoint acts were deliberate exclusions though she said nothing "*in case they thought I was paranoid*". (Nx) This occurred in a living room where the study group had just met for the first time ever. These people were not a collective of friends or even acquaintances and they did not know (or trust?) the skills of each other's minds. That these exclusionary behaviours were apparently collectively obvious was confirmed by later referrals to it by other members of the group. Noah (xx) said the study group "*was a bad experience .... it never really went .... We didn't get anything much out of it. Nobody did.*" Wyna (xx) confessed that she had "*dominated the conversation too much*". With that single "*bad experience*" (Nx) the study group failed to collectively meet again.<sup>365</sup>

The second student-to-student exclusionary action occurred between the same people, some time after this study group meeting. Having collectively agreed to share a vehicle to an on-campus course, one Noah (x) was later excluded by one Wyna's privately-phoned excuse (from Wx; related to me by Nx) but the excuse eventually proved to be false. However political competitiveness continued during the journey. As the other Noah (xx) listened, the Wyna's (x and xx) planned ways to "*chat up*" the lecturer(s). Noah (xx) found this "*chatting up*" behaviour morally "*repugnant*" but did not elucidate her feelings further than:

*It's all sort of "We'll chat up the lecturer and show a bit of interest" and that*

<sup>365</sup> Methodological note: It is interesting that the exclusionary and competitive behaviour evident in study groups or between other students was referred to in interviews by all Noahs but by no Wynas (apart from Wyna (xx)'s comment on monopolising the conversation). Maybe it had something to do with the private politics of the situation. The occurrence of intentional-alienation outlined above may be more common in correspondence study than realised, for similar experiences were conveyed by seven of the nine research subjects who attended study groups - and the other two persons of these nine were these two Wyna's themselves.

*sort of stuff. Urghhh!*

*Noah (xx)*

Whether excluded from social contact with other students by personal moral choice or by the social determinations of others, Noah generally accepted her aloneness or marginalisation from the social-constitutivity of educational practices and concentrated again upon solitary learning.<sup>366</sup> But not before an insidious form of exclusion had occurred also, it transpired, within that one study group meeting. It was a competitive politic which I found only by reflecting for many weeks on the connections between four differently-timed and unexplained comments-in-passing,<sup>367</sup> and 'testing the hypothesis'. My guess was confirmed at the end of the last long interview (after the exam) when I asked the [tired] Wyna (xx) in passing, if she agreed with 'my'<sup>368</sup> theoretical connection between two ideas. She did but said she was *unsure why*. What I had done was to reflect to her the very same argument that Noah (x) had put forth in the study group; the explanation which 'caused' the others to turn away and apparently ignore her. Although they seemingly disbelieved her interpretation, Noah stuck fast to her belief and:

*I wrote about [that contradiction] anyway. I got good feedback and an 'A', so I suppose I was correct .... I've never asked them what they got.*

*Noah x.3*

What Noah (x) would never find out was that in Wyna's turning away, (and in her later exclusion from the car ride) that she was being intellectually raped. This 'dominating' Wyna had quietly noted Noah's critique and without a word to its originator used it to her own advantage in her own assignment and also achieved an 'A'. Wyna the scribe, had expropriated the lines rather than searched between them for herself. This was the main study group advantage for those who did not wish to use their minds, or who were unable to do so. Though this specific example would never become known, this expropriation of other's ideas was mentioned as a source of disgust by *all* the non-Wyna's in this inquiry who had attended *any* study groups. It was the main reason given for the failure of study groups by anyone who was not a Wyna. As could be seen in this specific example, while Noah had attempted to be both socially and ideologically inclusive in the study group situation, it was to her own detriment. Wyna's advantage would now be further enhanced because, unlike Noah, she also possessed the skills of linguisticity. These would help her to express the stolen ideas with minimal or implied theoretical justification.

As with Noah, for Luisa the social constructions of knowledge in study groups were difficult but for different reasons. In her dependence on others, she allowed herself to be *socially* excluded.

<sup>366</sup> Was this preferred solitariness the very 'introvertedness' of which several personality-based learning theorists enjoined. Was the reason Noah gave (in the script above) the same as these other assumedly 'Noahs'?

<sup>367</sup> The second Wyna "suddenly got an 'A', which I wouldn't have expected from what she said before" (Nxx); "We stopped sharing ideas .... we started arguing" (Nxx); "I got an 'A', of course, ... just one of those things." (Wxx); "I'm sure she was listening carefully to what I said. I wouldn't be surprised if she wrote it down later." (Nx).

<sup>368</sup> Noah's original study group argument.

Only one Luisa (x) attended a study group. She had *"been informed that there was a meeting for students"* (x.2) and she felt compelled to attend because *"it would be important"*. (x.2) But Luisa forgot to take her hearing aid *"and was too scared to ask them to talk up"*. As a consequence, she said, *"I got nothing out of it. Everyone else seemed to know what they were doing but no one told me"*. Later she added *"they were laughing and talking but no one came and talked to me. I just sat there, glued to my chair."* Shortly after this meeting, Luisa (x) discontinued her studies, informing no one at the University (including myself). Her feelings of being excluded had been exacerbated by the course lecturer who *"never replied when I wrote and told him I needed longer for my essay. So I didn't know what to do."* (x.2) Failing to recognise her own contributory negligence, Luisa (x) *"really thought 'they' could have been more helpful"* (x.2)

It became clear during this project year that the whole premise of study groups in Distance Education needed reflection and reexamination. Unsupervised study groups, if they reflected in general the sorts of behaviour which happened in this example, acted more as a place of epistemic negation than of positivity. In the experiences of these students, the University was being an incompetent controller of knowledge. This fact confirmed for Noah the real power of her knowledge-constitutive-centred common sense, and its superiority over these epistemological fractures of academic-sense. Study groups seemed to need the supervision of an academic (a confirmed knower) where the conditions of dialogic could prevail. The only feasible community-based alternative for the distanced-educated person seemed to be the situation where students already knew *and trusted* each other in terms of being able to comment on each others' ideas. Until then Wyna and Noah would continue to find their knowledge-constitutive intentions 'talked past' each other, (but were reflected by the actions of one asking the questions and the other telling the answers.)

Another difficulty of 'talking past' each other occurred when two course leaders sent their students previous essays saying just that they represented *"good examples"* (but of what?) and also when copies of previous exam scripts were included in the study materials of three of the four courses but without any knowledge-constitutive explanation. Everyday knowers did not recognise these extra materials as representing implicit knowledge of the *'evaluation touchstone'* rather than *'course content'* or *'personal epistemic'* touchstones. These potential-knowers simply *"couldn't work 'it' out."* (N2.2) Noah commented on the explicit use of 'big words' in the exemplars, and thought the epistemology *"lacked any real argument making [the essays] boring"*. (N3.2) Wyna (1.2) looked immediately to the substantive content. When she could not find one written in the same area as her current assignment she *"didn't bother with them ... Couldn't see the point"*. In neither case had the giving of the old essays or the premise of their 'goodness' been explained to the students, leaving the material to be seen by students as an objectified ideological entity without an epistemological purpose. Similarly, the inclusion of examination scripts from previous years in the current study guides was not recognised by any student interviewed as a means of realising how the course was

classified into sub-sections and that those classifications could assist them to select-study rather than guess-study for their exams.<sup>(cf N1.5.559)</sup> One comment on an exam script that proved to be "useful" was that "each question had a different marker".<sup>(N2.5)</sup> But this was the script of Noah's own end-of-the-year examination. She read the comment when she was already seated in the exam and thus it was of no use as a criteria to take into account in the reduction of the quantity to "swot" beforehand! Instead this information would have been better passed on to the students earlier, because during the exam they "had little time to think through its implications."<sup>(N3.5.667)</sup> Wyna though, had already learned this evaluative knowledge from Pan and it was this knowledge which had enabled her to use common theoretical conceptualisations in more than one answer since more than one marker would not notice its repeated use. In effect, knowing this fact reduced the amount of prior study required. In all, by choosing broad theoretical arguments, Wyna had used various combinations of only two concepts in all her assignments and then in the final examination, and within that, in some way or another, in nearly every examination answer. In a large class, and with different auditors, who would be any the wiser? Wyna's befriendings had proved useful primarily in terms of selective negation.

Getting back to the matter of internalising course content, there were other 'social contacts' who assisted Noah. Sometimes she chose to study with a long-term trusted friend "so that we can explain it to each other."<sup>(N3.2)</sup> Student friends were often more helpful than family members unless the latter were also enculturated into academic-sense. With these trusted friends, Noah could "argue",<sup>(N1.3.573)</sup> especially if "after spending two days gelling [Noah] still didn't trust the result or feel sure of knowing it".<sup>(N3.1.241)</sup> This shared internalising of information was important because together:

*We form our own tutorial group I suppose. Bouncing ideas off each other. It's quite important I think, ... certainly confidence-building, .... If I can read something and talk about it a couple of days later, then I know I've got it .... You know the feeling? You can have it reflected back on to your 'self'. Good psychoanalysis isn't it?*

Noah 3.2.143

'Coming to know' with someone they already trusted seems to have been one of the most beneficial ways of socially constructing knowledge for any one of the adult students in this study, except that the pairing of a Wyna with a Noah kept the situation problematic.<sup>369</sup> In this situation, the problematic appeared to centre on the issue of differentiating social trust from epistemic safety:

*We agreed to do the essay separately and not to compare notes because that would affect each others approach ... We would be forced to wonder if I should include that idea too.*

Noah (xx)

How was Noah to juggle the maintenance of this epistemic safety while also trying to improve her

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<sup>369</sup> cf Belenky et al (1986:227) who also found that trustworthiness was an issue for potential knowers.

ways of coming to know? She inspired curiosity in her viewer. What was the basis of Noah's intellectual standards? How did her mind attempt to 'work' while engaging with educational material? Subjectivation - a objectivity *within* subjectivity - seemed to be her epistemic key. Noah had shown a particular way of internalising information which included epistemologically-integrating several points of view. Before she felt forced to select read, Noah read everything in order to "*know it all*" from several vantage points; focussing on finding the essences shared between each piece of material. It will be seen that once understood, the 'interesting' material became part of her self and was subject to critique and creative reconstructions through what appeared to be spatial reasoning capabilities. As the knowledge-constitutive Noah now moved from the touchstone of *social contacts* necessary for internalising information and toward phenomenological self-reflexivity, her knowledge-action shifted to relating her *personal epistemology* to that of the given *course content*. [Initially Noah really enjoyed her study, but in the later triangulated juggling between her personal epistemology, the received knowledge *and* the academic expectations, the increasing number of objectifications would result in a decline in Noah's interest in formal education.]

The period of internalising information had seen various combinations of use of curriculum touchstones. Luisa had connected '*social contact*' with language and the seeking of the *conventions* of academic-sense, implicitly believing in the rule-boundedness and other-determinism of education. She 'expected' that she would have to attend study groups and she expected 'them' to show her how to use the library. She also experienced trauma with her fears of big words which meant, in effect, that "*they wouldn't tell [her]*". She objectified the tensions of intersubjective relations in her other-determinism through expecting knowers to ask her, tell her or include her without similar effort on her own part.

On the other hand, the social-constitutive dependent Wyna connected '*social contact*' first and foremost with the '*evaluation*' touchstone, befriending mediators and locating the minimum course-content she thought was required for educational 'success'. She subjectified her relationships to authoritative others (knowers) or politically-likeminded students (other Wynas) while at the same time socially excluding or objectifying other students such as Noah. Already Wyna's focus was targetted to (1)earning institutional success and this radically contrasted with Noah's intentions of knowing.

People already enculturated in the academe, authoritative mediators, had proved very useful to students attempts to come to know because they subjectified the relational tension between themselves and the students. For instance, recent graduates (such as Pan) could assist with outlining the epistemic nature of the hidden curriculum, though the political purpose of its use might be questionable. On the other hand, librarians, including weekend and part-time staff, could usually be very helpful once they knew the visiting adult was a distance-educated, first year

student. These acts of subjectification or social inclusion provided the adult student with the beginnings of an identity as a potential-knower. Not the same could be said for the students' relations with their teacher-evaluators. During the period of internalisation, teachers set the stage for educational exclusion. They often failed to ensure there were enough alternative readings (especially books) for large classes; some did not provide sufficient direction on how to select and précis academic writings; and yet other teachers expected students to learn from other students (non-knowers from non-knowers). Primarily the stage was set for educational exclusion when the teacher-mediators failed to clarify the nature of academic-sense, especially the epistemological nuances of knowledge (e.g. why were these essay examples 'good'?).

Of all three typifications, Noah sought the broadest range of materials so that she could internalise the course knowledge inclusively but the marginalisations caused by authority figures' actions and the lack of time would begin to enhance her prospects of returning to self-education. This issue would become increasingly pronounced during the study period of reflection.

## Reflection

Reflection refers to the stage in the sequence of the knowledge-act when the potential knower privately mulled over those ideas which they had internalised.

\* It was the stage which markedly differentiated each typified student from the others, for it was the period when Luisa and Wyna were virtually silent (or silenced) but Noah had a lot to report. To start with Noah was the only typification who defined herself as "*an ideas sort of a person*".(N3.2) Noah "*liked using [her] head*",(N2.1.783) felt fairly confident about her intellectual skills (N2.1.820), and comfortable with her private thoughts: "*I like the idea of study ... I like the idea of education in its purest sense ... broadening my way of seeing life*".(N3.5.835)<sup>370</sup> Perhaps it was these facts more than any other which clearly differentiated her typification from the others.

After making *social contact* and locating the knowledge the university teachers had selected for her to come to know, a period of quiet reflection was, she said, a necessary "*prelude*"(N3.1.1314) to preparing assignments. Noah named this time of intentional deliberation her "*period of study*".(N1.2.3) During this time she (N1.2.3) "*always*"(N1.4) followed a particular sequence of activities. During internalisation she had read the required textbook chapters completely followed by any supplementary books she could find, so as to "*broaden*"(N1) her "*way around*"(N2) the topic. She took notes on her readings in order to remember bits and pieces. Then, with all these ideas in her head, she "*thought about it*"(N2) and "*mulled it over*"(N1) for a period of up to a week. In analogy to laying all the cards on the table, she said she "*laid out*"(N2) her own ideas alongside the experts ideas, searching between all of them for logical "*links*"(N3) both between different sets of ideas and the relations or applications of theory to life situations. Sometimes she made notes on these developing thoughts and arguments but just as often did not. (Note-making, for Noah (N1.2.3), differed from note-taking, in that the results of the former act were her "*own ideas on the subject*".(N1))

It was in this time of reflection that Noah was involved in the act of *subjectivating*. She would subjectify her relation to the experts ideas while at the same time objectifying a part of her thoughts as a 'self-removed'.<sup>371</sup> She treated all ideas (both hers and theirs) as of equal value to begin, analysing them collectively for their ideological power to make sense of the world Noah knew. (She also 'treated' the persona of experts as "*equals*".(N1.2.3)) During this week long act of subjectivation she made notes as she "*planned her own point of view on the subject*".(N1) Only after this activity did she choose and analyse the actual assignment question for she (N1.2.3) had deliberately ignored its presence until she felt she finally "*knew it all*".(N1.2.3) Now, as far as the

<sup>370</sup> This reflects Heidegger's phenomenologic notion of truth being not so much an objective agreement between subject and object as a subjectivated uncovering or unhiddenness. (Hekman, 1990:65)

<sup>371</sup> An analogy is the vision or observing of events surrounding one's body during a near-death experience.

university assignment went, she narrowed her collection of ideas to those required; planned a focussed essay argument and reread the texts to find supporting evidence. This act of rereading she described as looking for the "*flesh for my argument.*" (N3.1.36) Sometimes the workings of her own mind were made apparent in her notes as she would have "*the bones of MY argument on one side of the notepaper and the flesh [from the readings] on the other.*" (N1.1.254)

Whereas reflection was a positive knowledge-constitutive time for Noah, where Wyna and Luisa were concerned it was non-identity, since the educators had defined 'what was necessary to know' within the choices of the assignments they offered. Noah's intentional reflective period was a 'study' time in which she simply thought about "*everything*" (N2.1) she had been reading *before* she ever read the choice of assignment questions. The personal *epistemology* of her 'common sense' was directly related to the *course content*, and if possible without the intervention of mediations. In a contrary way, Luisa and Wyna both commenced their period of 'reflection' by ignoring any notion of developing their own ideas and personal arguments, and negating any notion of spending time "*mulling things over.*" (N2.1) Instead they commenced the whole knowledge-act by immediately studying the requirements of the assignment and narrowing their (still-in-the future) first readings to its exclusive needs. Unlike Noah, Luisa and Wyna both forewent deliberate periods of prior reflection or the formation of a coherent personal point of view, for when their reading began it was immediately focussed upon forming a relationship between the given ideas and the assignment topic. When the *course content* was directly related to *evaluation*, then internalisation (I/I) was marked by the needs of expression (J/X). Whether or not the answer Wyna chose for her assignment related to either notions of truth or to her everyday world, it was of little if any, consequence to her. [The application of her own ideas (rather than the experts theory) to her life experiences was an issue to Luisa and this will be explained later.]

✂ For Noah, the negation of the use of one's mind to reflect (./R/-) would probably have been inexcusable because she still thought (initially) that the purpose of a university education was to "*enlighten .... It should be an illuminating experience ... to throw more light on our everyday life.*" (N1.5.1097) Unlike Wyna, her educational intention was knowledge-constitutive.

✓ For Noah, becoming 'enlightened' meant one had found an articulating principle or the "*pivotal idea*" (N3.1.297, 319, 1987) which connected the core of given theory to the core of everyday life by "*making sense*" (N2.2) of the combined realities of theory and practice. But realising that there was not just one single truth, likewise for Noah no *single* expert could provide a complete view of a theoretical position. It was only the combination of viewpoints (including her own) which confirmed this essence. And it was only later that this combination was triangulated with the core of the assignment question. In curriculum terms, for Noah to study in her habituated *common-sensical* way, was to relate the touchstones of her '*personal epistemology*' to the given '*course knowledge*'. These two completely different types of study, informal commonsense and formal academic-sense,

involved three separate knowledges; course content, personal epistemology and evaluation - and Noah's predominant reflexive activity was bound to the relation between the first two. To Noah, even the second connection (of her ideas to the assignment question) lay in locating her own new thoughts and arguments rather than experts' conceptualisations and reasons.

Reflective thinking was a period in which several knowledge-constitutive characteristics were demonstrated which were peculiar to Noah alone. Noah "*couldn't stop [her] mind*" thinking.<sup>(N2.3)</sup> "*Brilliant ideas*"<sup>(N3.1)</sup> would "*wake [her] during the night*"<sup>(N1.2)</sup> or "*come to [her] in the shower*".<sup>(N3)</sup> "*It just suddenly seemed so obvious*" when the articulating principle "*fell into place*".<sup>(N2.2, N3.1.132)</sup> Until it did, these never-ceasing reflections were beyond her conscious control and she "*didn't know how to stop*" them.<sup>(N3.1.135)</sup> Though she found it exhausting to search for what was eventually to seem to her "*so obvious*", this would lead to difficulties in her *formalised* knowledge-act when her argument and now self evident conclusion were so abbreviated that she could "*put [it] in a nutshell*".<sup>(N3.5)</sup> Then she would have the added difficulty of "*how to pad [the assignment] out*"<sup>(N1.1)</sup> to the lecturer's required word limit.

Even during this period of the knowledge-act, the course teachers held control, and the students had to self-reflectively cope with this silent mediation. In effect, the Institution defined how much time (in general) it should take to come to 'know it'. All typifications saw the 'assignment due' date was rule-bound rather than negotiable. When the due date was tomorrow but Noah's articulating principle "*only came to me yesterday*"<sup>(N2.3)</sup>, she felt intellectually compromised by the Institution because there was "*no time*"<sup>(N2.3)</sup> to rewrite the essay which she was sending to auditors but now herself judged to be "*all wrong*".<sup>(N2.3)</sup> Thus between formal and informal acts of knowing a major hegemonic issue was powerfully effected by a timetable which deemed it necessary to shift on to different material. For Noah, no topics became fully known in her own temporal space. But then again Noah's time-less period of reflection did require a more complex set of comparisons between theory and practice than formal education was requiring from her.

Noah's "*internal dialogue*"<sup>(N1.1)</sup> centred around one perceptual characteristic which I now 'see' as her basic intellectual difference from the other typifications, and this formed the basis of the claim that Noah 'subjectivated' the given knowledge. She pictured the understandings in her mind. This reflective period of "*thinking about thinking*"<sup>(N2.5)</sup> involved Noah in objectivating (symbolising) the contents of her mind, looking at them and interrogating them with a dispassionate "*inner voice*".<sup>(N2.5.141)</sup><sup>372</sup> To describe this rudimentary perceptual action, Noah would use terms of spatial thinking and visual imagery. "*To understand it a lot more ... I try to picture it.*"<sup>(N1.5.796)</sup> Noah,<sup>(2)</sup> who had always preferred 'Classic' comics to wordy tomes of the same stories, also preferred "*illustrated*" links such a "*models and diagrams*"<sup>(N2.2)</sup> rather than a narrative based on the

<sup>372</sup> Belenky 1986:168, 172

assumptions of 'thinking straight'. At high school, Noah had chosen to study spatially-related topics such as mathematics,<sup>(N1.2)</sup> geography <sup>(N2.3)</sup> and art <sup>(N3)</sup> and still searched for:

*an image when I am talking about capitalism or what have you. I see it in the concrete; put into boxes. Like the groups of the social classes are easy to see ... more kind of black and white.*

Noah 3.1

For Noah, the perceptual action of visualisation enabled the conceptual action of theorising. Locating connections and relations marked Noah's commonsensical ways of knowing. Theorising for Noah, was always the process of "visualising links" <sup>(N1.5.1018; N2.5)</sup> and "seeing the logic between" ideas.<sup>(N3.5)</sup> In the visual as well as ideological sense (of applying ideas), Noah was continuously recontextualising<sup>373</sup> her acquired theory. Diagrams were, to Noah, abbreviations "to remind me to link up those ideas".<sup>(N3.4)</sup> In a way that seemed to "just come naturally"<sup>(N2.1)</sup> Noah was:

*just interrelating things spatially. That's how I'd do it in geography. I'd see all the colours on a map and I'd just remember 'Yes, the industrial region is red and that's over there' and so on. Its easy to do. The only trouble you have is trying to express it [to others]*

Noah 2.5.671

The common-sense propensity for spatial ways of coming to know, caused problems in its need to change to a lineal form of expression in academic assignments. When it came to writing she would find it "really hard to push the mosaic together".<sup>(N3.1)</sup> Moreover given her propensity for non-stop thinking and visualisation, Noah sometimes was inclined to "side track"<sup>(N1.2,3)</sup> so far from the original theory that it appeared lost in the "hotch potch"<sup>(N2)</sup> and could end up "looking very different to"<sup>(N3.4)</sup> the knowledge she was first given to study. For instance:

*The 'sociological response' was created by the stimuli and that led me to link it up to the artistic response and just the way we respond, you know? Is art a response? Then is 'to initiate' itself actually initiated by something outside of it?*

Noah 3.1

Visualisation or verbalisation as different means to the reflective process marked the symbolic preferences of Wyna and Noah. Noah preferred to be given visual examples by her teachers. When the Regional course lecturer illustrated 'a norm' by juxtaposing the examples of a door swinging horizontally from its hinges and a door dropping vertically to the floor, "that was excellent"<sup>(N3)</sup>; "it was quick to understand"<sup>(N2)</sup> and "I could visualise the meaning of that".<sup>(N2)</sup> This preference for the visual and spatial showed also when it came to Noah's reflective period of 'swot' for exams. She <sup>(N2.3)</sup> had single words scrawled all over a page. Generally, the key term was placed about mid-page and the other words surrounded it, linked by lines and/or colours.<sup>(N1.2,3)</sup> The iconic imagery of spatial thinking possibly enabled Noah to be more inclusive and constructive of ideas than could be the case with the symbolic textualism<sup>374</sup> of Wyna's quite different strategy.

<sup>373</sup> cf Bernstein, 1990:60

<sup>374</sup> Landers, J. 1991

By way of contrast, Wyna's means "to remember" (w25) was to rote memorise long tracts of narrative, or the teacher-sequenced lists of headings and subheadings in her texts and study-guides: "Ai, Aii, Bi, Bii, Biii ... and I just went over and over and over them, until I could remember them". (w1.5) After all, to Wyna (she said) the lecturer-chosen headings "were obviously the most important things to know". (w23) Once again Noah was being knowledge-constructive and judgmental while Wyna was directly using her teacher's verbal mediations to knowledge. Wyna did not need a *reflective* period in her knowledge act, though she did need time to socialise and memorise.

Without an understanding of this marked difference in ways of thinking, academics inclined toward Wyna's preference for linguisticity may be inclined to negate Noah's time spent in bracketing<sup>375</sup> judgements and fail to understand her need to either present arguments in pictures or model diagrams, or her delay in posting assignments while her mind moves at its own pace from the reflective period of speechlessness. The institution's combination of an oppressive lack of time and the need for communicating ideas in one set fashion disadvantaged Noah in terms of a quick reply or quick recall even though she usually found "[her] idea was correct in the long run". (N1.5.391) She said this apparent *lack of speed* was a "very important" (N1.1) and "necessary" (N1.1) aspect to her way of knowing [and she demanded that I "should write it into the research". (N1.1)]

What others saw as a 'lack of speed', was the period of time taken by Noah to incorporate a period of reflection (./R/.) between the knowledge-act stages of internalisation (I./.) and expression (./X) but claiming the right to take this time was to be subject to powerful social sanctions. This time was the actual time taken to reflect upon and reconstruct knowledge. Reflection was, in fact, the primary stage of knowledge-constitution itself. Yet Noah's socially-noticed silences or a lack of speed seemed (to Noah (N1.2)) to be understood by non-reflectors (teachers and Wyna's in particular) as an implication of her stupidity or unknowingness. But this evident false consciousness only supported their power-filled complicity in sanctioning both Noah's mutedness (for example, in the study group) and her desire to 'study' alone. These 'silences', the 'aleness' and the slowness were in fact the time, the space and the language of Noah's reflective knowings. The oppression she felt were the same other-determining alienations which had caused her to want to be alone in the beginning, and these reactions would be exacerbated when (as she saw it) her academic auditors 'demanded' to think *for* her by judging her own judgements to knowledge. This was an aspect of study she did not enjoy - particularly when 'they' hadn't allowed her the time to complete her knowing anyway.

Noah's propensity for spatial imagery and visual epistemic practices may have been related to special characteristics within her relation to the knowledge. She found "*ideas just popped up*" (N3.3)

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<sup>375</sup> Schutz, A. 1972

as long as the material was interesting, new, and able to be related to her life.(N1.2.3)

*I suppose its just easier if you're interested in it. You have applied the theories and everything already, in your head. You are probably more aware of it.*

Noah 2.5.649

In the circular movement toward 'knowing it all', "really interesting ideas" (N3.1)<sup>376</sup> presented Noah with creative possibilities, the praxis of real world applications and theoretical connections all at once:

*At work we had a discussion of the direction of Social Welfare. I could see it as a hierarchical structure and could recall what little I knew about Weber's [claim that] bureaucracy is a manifestation of that kind of rationality; that pyramid structure and I could see that in our discussion ... I just saw the way we are. It just fell into place. That was relating to the reality .... But that was my own view.*

Noah 3.1

Sometimes Noah recorded these "flashes of inspiration ... but often [she] did not".(N1.1.264, N2.3) In fact, Noah was not clear about where her creativity ended and critique began although she was confident that she could argue well "in [her] own sort of way".(N1.5) It may have been that creativity and critique together were simply related to "seeing things differently".(N2) Negating and creating were aspects of the same dialectical activity of reflexivity. That activity was itself 'different', she thought, from what other people generally did. Yet it caused her to enjoy new ideas (N2.1.992) and the idea of change.(N2.1.967) For instance, she was "never aware of critical thinking, just of nit picking".(N1.5.1137, also N1.5.609) Since early in the academic year, Noah had found herself creating ideas as she read the study guides. (N3.1.2045) "One note just triggered the next thought".(N1.5.148)<sup>377</sup> Initially, this support lead Noah to believe that Formal Education was as open to challenge and change as she was, and that university study presented "an expanding situation ... rather than a railway line; leading somewhere still to be known ... probably because [we] use someone else's theories".(N1.5.752) In support of this belief, one of the study guides had stated that 'A' grades "were for originality and that extra bit of polish".(N3.1) This claim was restated (though in a negative fashion) by a lecturer at an on-campus course when "he told us that very few people get A's and the work has to be exceptionally good".(N3.4)<sup>378</sup> The lecturer's subjectified cautionary note was Noah's only hint that the University might not be as open to creativity as she had wished. But she had yet to confirm that belief.

In the meantime, using the period of reflection as the knowledge-action of creatively applying the given theories to her everyday practice (N1.1.370, N2, N3) involved both a judgement of ideas and the

<sup>376</sup> "Uninteresting things won't change the world .... With interesting things I get more enthused ... I'm speaking relatively .... When I decided to write on of my essays on [x] and I could see that in New Zealand and I interpreted it in my own sort of way, I found that quite exciting." Noah 3.3

<sup>377</sup> "Things that once appeared simple now appeared problematic. [They] recognised and respected the complexity of objects they tried to understand .... Their inner voice turned critical." Belenky et al, 1986:94

<sup>378</sup> She continued, "he said 60% will get a 'C' - so if we're going to get 'C's" why bother rewriting it and putting all the extra effort in? I mean, you'd have to make an extra extra extra effort to make a big difference. Why put all that blood into the thing, you know?"

possibility of changing the theory to suit the situation in a relativistic manner. For instance, she might apply new ideas to try to understand old personal issues such as "*why Eketahuna became a ghost town*".<sup>(N2.5.392)</sup> Being primarily involved in the common-sense relativism of praxis was important to Noah, for she did not enjoy the academe's solely "*metaphysical dreams*".<sup>379 (N3.2)</sup> Noah believed that objectified and socially abstracted theoretical ideals and "*philosophies of the rational mind*"<sup>(N1.2)</sup> were part and parcel of an "*armchair philosophy*"<sup>(N3.3)</sup> rather than part of the real world. She could see this objectification of theory from practice occurring even while children were still in school:

*Maybe because schoolwork is taken from textbooks, children instinctively know that because it is written it has (i) already been proven and (ii) a solution or explanation must follow. It is all there. They know that somewhere in there is the answer. Whereas in the living situation there is no script. The outcome is much more likely to be surprising and children are stimulated to ask questions. That is, knowing is not already predetermined.*

Noah 1.5.1103

It appeared that Noah of the everyday also already functioned in an epistemic praxis.<sup>380</sup> Indeed, in answer to a specific query for a definition of 'a concept' and 'a theory' and 'the connection between them', Noah<sup>(1)</sup> confirmed her understanding of epistemological differences in knowledge.

Concepts:

*like dialectical materialism or commodification ... [were] basic self-contained ideas ... abstract or concrete ... [whereas] a theory was a relationship between several self-contained ideas.*

Noah 1.5.796

Moreover, 'a theory' was "*a philosophy behind the concepts*"<sup>(N1.5)</sup> or "*a model*"<sup>(N3.1)</sup>:

*I have always seen [theory] as a model of reality. You step outside that and use it as an index to explain what's happening in reality. You have got to step out of reality into the model and then start to interpret.*

Noah 3.1.1071

But Noah<sup>(2 and 3)</sup> were more unsure of explicating a connection between 'concepts' and 'theory' beyond recognising three points in common - a theory was relative to the person who created it<sup>(N1.2.3)</sup>; a theory was abstracted "*rather than concrete*"<sup>(N2.5)</sup> and a theory was not a guarantee of a single truth, proof or legitimation because it "*could be different things to different people*".<sup>(N3.5)</sup> Still somewhat confused though, Noah<sup>(2)</sup> sighed when I clarified the connections between these academic words ('theory' and 'practice') and her own meanings. She had been "*trying all year*" to understand the exact nature of the relationship between them:

*I WISH they'd told us that before. I REALLY WISH that! I used to try to nut it out, but I couldn't get it... couldn't get it at all. Yet I knew it was just there. Just, just. (pause) Oh! It's so much clearer now.*

Noah 2.5.756

<sup>379</sup> Like Comte!

<sup>380</sup> Noah (1.5) thought that the conservative National Party "*was individualist in that it subverted language for its own means .... For instance, politicians use the term 'humanitarian' as if they mean a concern for others, but it really means, in the way they act it out, 'pity' or 'patronising'. What a measure of social justice!*"

All typifications resisted, fretted or failed to recognise conceptual terminology as apolitical and knowledge-constitutive, and in need of a period of reflection. Sometimes the students failed to make the words problematic because either they did not recognise them in the monotonous typeface of the text or (especially) if the concept was also a lay word to which they applied their own lay understandings. The use of specialised "jargon" (N1.3) was already a source of political irritation to Noah (1,2,3) who saw its *social* use as "a way to exclude others". (N1.1) She therefore chose not to use conceptual terminology in her everyday communications, retaining conceptualisation as a reflective act rather than a matter of expressed language. At first, it did not occur to her to make jargon a problematic of her move from commonsense to academic sense.(N1,2,3) During the period of reflection, Noah at first retained her use of her own words, insisting that it was easier to reflect on new meanings if you used your own language, particularly in later adulthood.(N.3) Luisa and Wyna, who did not particularly engage in a period of reflection, were less politically-resistant to conceptual terminology. Luisa saw conceptual terms as more exclusionary "big words" (L1) and Wyna (1) checked with Pan to see if they were important meanings to "understand".(w1.1) Without problematising the specialist nature of these words such misconceptions as Wyna's (1) remark occurred. For her, Marx's critique of 'capital' was "always the same: money, money, money".(w1.3)

For all students, the first hurdle was to realise *the existence* and epistemological purpose of these conceptual terms in their correspondence-educated (totally-objectivated) form of education. Where Noah already shared the institutional meanings for particular concepts she had also already developed her own words for them. For instance, 'a theory' to Noah was synonymous with "a generalisation" (N1,2,3), and 'a fact' was "a detail", as seen in the statement: "I guess what I'm expected to do in this course is to have a general idea rather than know every little detail of everybody's idea or the details of their conversations, you know?"(N1.4) On the other hand, if Noah and other students did not problematise specific terminology, and if such words were of primary epistemic importance, then it would be necessary for the institution to recognise that its publications (in distance education) needed to foreground the identity of terms, otherwise students were being discursively and ideologically marginalised. This could be seen most clearly with the ideologically-articulate Noah. Her habituated use of different words for the meanings she already shared with the institution, and her political resistance to engaging with the exclusivity of institutional 'jargon,' discursively mediated Noahs' knowledge-activity.

Wyna overcame things quite differently. Where she was aware of the presence of new 'jargon', she negated her commonsense understanding and actively sought out its academic sense. One way she did this was by getting to know people "on the inside" of the academic culture.(w1,2) In doing this she turned what perhaps should have been a personal period of reflection, into a social event. She identified the "main words"(w1.1) by checking them with other people and followed this, as mentioned before, by searching indexes. It was as if to her "the words" simply represented a discursive reflection of discrete facts rather than deeper, more inclusive meanings. This action

reflected Wyna's dependence upon the intersubjective (social) skills of linguisticity. But while her communicative use of 'jargon' could have effected a conceptual development for her, this was unclear, especially when she still saw Marx's idea of capitalism as "*simply money*" at the end of the academic year.<sup>(w1.4)</sup> Whereas the discursive use of 'jargon' might be a necessary condition for the agreement of shared meanings with her teachers, it was not a sufficient condition for ensuring personal epistemic development.

However, neither Wyna nor Noah was being condemned to the same extent as Luisa, by the touchstone of academic *language*. At this stage, she was still struggling with her dictionaries. This difference in the typifications perceived difficulty with language, gave rise to a set of often-contradicting thoughts. First of all, the value of a pragmatized language<sup>381</sup> might be usefully explored as an alternative for Luisa, after all, the adoption of a language closely related to action would have legitimated Noah's argument for the depoliticisation of academic language, but then to what extent might it hinder as well as help, especially in terms of the development of a capability to theorise? Would the simpler words help Luisa to develop the knowledge-constitutivity of her thinking and reflection, or simply help her social-constitutivity by accomodating her need to share what she came to know? How else then, through the use of new words, might meanings be problematised and the requirement for a depth of reasoning to be communicated to students? I would claim that introducing students to 'new words' which were as epistemically-embrative as conceptualisations were supposed to be, may assist the potential knower to share and further refine her self-reflective period of theorising.

As the year progressed, other knowledge-constitutive changes occurred. Until this time, the distinctive aspects of the period of reflection for Noah included the need for uninterrupted (unmediated) time which, in turn, allowed her to visualise theoretical connections, and to creatively and critically form judgements to knowledge, as long as the material given was interesting in that it was relative to Noah's social life. But as all four of the courses moved from metanarratives toward 'applied' material, Noah's <sup>(1.2.3)</sup> preference for metatheoretical readings showed. She now began to get "*bored*" <sup>(N1.2)</sup> with the "*impurity*" <sup>(N3)</sup> of 'applied theories'. Noah <sup>(N1.1.336)</sup> had earlier enjoyed reading R.S. Peters' abstraction's but found no intellectual challenge in the "*reified atmosphere*" of Rousseau's 'Emile' ("*what codswallop!*"), and her reaction in the second term to Paulo Friere's applied position was "*so what? Mothers have known that for centuries*". It is interesting that in contraposition to Noah's epistemic beliefs, Luisa <sup>(4.3)</sup> thought "*R.S. Peters was for a brainy-type person .... but Friere's ideas are easier to understand*". Variations in each typificatory student's preference for either theory on the one hand or practical ideas on the other, differently identified their beliefs in the purpose of knowledge and formal education.

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<sup>381</sup> Benhabib, in Landers, 1991

During reflection, students made judgements about whether the given ideas "made sense" (N23) of the social world. Noah could bring metatheoretical principles to apply to her own world, but Luisa could only relate already-'applied' ideas to the world of everyday. Neither her ownership of the ideas, nor her experience in her own world mattered. This could be *any* theory that she learned, as long as it was already-applied to *any* world. Luisa wanted to be given the judgement rather than make it for herself. It did not matter if the world the theory was being applied to was unknown to Luisa. Life was Life. Universal in conception. The (A=A) of identificatory thought). Luisa, like Wyna, was dependent on substituting phenomenological self-reflection with socially constructed *and already-reasoned and judged* meanings. But this action was not adequate for Noah. Noah preferred to compare and relativise course knowledge to her own New Zealand context.<sup>382</sup> Again Noah related the touchstones of *course content* to *personal epistemology* while Luisa and Wyna substituted a learning of *course content* for the other-dependence of *social contact*. For Noah, overcoming theoretical negativities was often a matter of 'seeing the possibilities' in the relative situations of 'our' everyday world and other theorists' ways of 'seeing':

*... I didn't always agree with [this theory] ... A lot of it didn't really apply to New Zealand society, only parts of it did ... But a theory is not necessarily right is it? Everybody has their different theory ... I knew it wasn't what I agreed with or what I could see happening. But I still stuck with it ... Sometimes I'd challenge it with other theory.*

Noah 2.5.704

Altogether, the different uses made of the period of reflection by each typification seemed to be related to beliefs that Education was the social world, rather than that the procedure of educating was an epistemic practice for use in the wider social world.<sup>383</sup> Only Noah saw this period as reflecting the purpose of the latter. She habitually searched in her everyday world for examples of the metatheoretical conceptions she had learned in her course-work. This two-way form of praxis was her favoured form of reflection; "I just can't be without it!".(N3.4) To come to know, for Noah, seemed to represent being in a constant reflexive state of flux. For instance, a judgement on the worth of functionalism centred on its negativity:

*I chose functionalism because its all rocks isn't it! All set out and no critique required .... It was so easy; so boxed up and ready ... so horrible, so fascinatingly rigid. I had a morbid fascination with it. I rejected it almost as out of hand because how could we ever use it?*

Noah 1.5.850

Noah also considered the supplementary viewpoints to be dialectical ways of challenging the conventional wisdoms of the world including her own:

*I should have picked something that I hated so I would know more about it. But I picked something I was good at anyway. With hindsight, that wasn't educationally sound.*

Noah 3.5.961

<sup>382</sup> Very few readings in any of the university courses studied, provided New Zealand-based studies or theory.

<sup>383</sup> That is, by implication, were academics in education more highly represented by the socially-inclined Wynas and Luisas than by the phenomenologically and ideologically-inclined Noahs and did their theoretical teachings reflect their personal epistemology as much as the power of their argument to sustain those ideas?

Noah did not appreciate formal education limiting the period of self-reflection, whether it was through a lack of time to reflect or a lack of access to either alternative viewpoints or the given-contexts of 'applied' theory. Under these circumstances, she saw her reflective judgements being reduced to the state of needing to accept rather than to judge the given ideas, and so she believed that education was reducing itself to a state of rote memorisation. Noah argued against this determinism: "*regurgitation doesn't even score as a mode of learning for me .... Concretising it, getting ideas and spreading them out, and looking at them, that is the grasping part of the learning process*".<sup>(N3.1)</sup> Noah's standpoint of *personal epistemology* reflected her predominating interest in 'knowing how'. For her, form dominated content in several subtle ways.<sup>384</sup> For instance, if she lost interest in the given material, her creativity lessened and "*great thoughts just dwindled*".<sup>(N3.3)</sup> Focussing on the '*bigger*' metatheoretical ideas had enabled her to see a broader field of application. It was as if the higher up the literary scale, the more she could 'see' and inclusively incorporate into her knowings. With her two-way reflexive movements of seeking and judging viable links and contradictions in praxis, Noah was also capable of recognising the difference between inductive and deductive modes of reasoning - although she did not use those terms for it. [In fact, she was given to gesturing as a symbol of the movements of her mind - as can be seen in the following quotation.] To Noah, academic-sense often appeared to be a rigidified, one-dimensional deductive viewing of reality - from theory "*down [to the real world] through [the theorists] glasses*"<sup>(N1.3)</sup><sup>385</sup>:

*Academics seem to look at the world from theory down .... If you try to go the other way up, its like trying to fit it into a mould. Like what I saw in court. I saw, 'Yes, its a structural thing'. But then I changed to seeing it the Marxian way by the end of the day; having seen what happens to the people who actually go in there. But I didn't go in there thinking, 'This is a courtroom, therefore structural functionalism and show solidarity, I thought, 'There's such a system here, such a formal little game goes on. It's a real structure therefore it is... I didn't think it out in such little terms. I just went Choewww [an arm arcs through the air!] ... you know, just recognised it. But it was in that [inductive] direction of real life to theory that I was going rather than going in thinking in a Durkheimian frame of mind and then seeing how it automatically fitted .... (The person who marked my exam), if he's a real Durkheim freak, then he would be looking for that [deductivism] though.*

Noah 3.5.315

In a sense, what Noah was alluding to was not only two-way reasoning but also two-way Educational legitimation. Should the student write the story of her knowings as an everyday tale with theoretical explanations or as theoretical tale with everyday evidences? Was one method deemed to be more correct than the other, for, and if so, what was the basis of its truthfulness? Was one tale epistemically different to the other (if they both told tales of similar social explanation) or was each tale simply discursively and sequentially different?<sup>386</sup> Was the auditor who judged one sort of tale to be epistemically privileged over the other, merely reflecting a personal epistemic

<sup>384</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:95

<sup>385</sup> cf Belenky et al, 1986:200f

<sup>386</sup> Did a realist have less claim to truth or truthfulness than an idealist; or an empirical scientist have a lesser

preference for either objectified or subjectified ways of constructing social knowledge and not making a judgement of truth at all? After all, all that deduction and objectification had established, it seemed, was that real human beings could no longer be so easily recognised.<sup>(N1.2.3)</sup> But to Noah, the purpose of being educated into formal social science was to have it enrich her social world.

<sup>(N1.2.3)</sup>

Eventually it happened. Noah's resistance to the reductionistic, rule-bounded nature of formal education peaked. Noah had found the predominantly 'one way' privileging of deductive reason in her study guides as disconcerting as the 'imposition' of *already-applied* theory and the "*pompous labels*"<sup>(N1.3)</sup> used to name everyday happenings (jargon). Eventually she related her loss of interest to the fact that her formal education (from midyear onward) resembled "*a great sea of junk. If only they'd kept it a little more pure perhaps*"<sup>(N3.3)</sup>:

*Once you've got a grip on the major perspectives it was really the application of those things. When we got into that really boring detailed stuff like Parson's pattern variables, I said, "Really? Who'd pick this up? Who cares?" It was a killer ... there was a lot of detail about Joe Bloggs came along and so and so criticised him. And so and so criticised him. And so and so's idea of such and such which introduced these three concepts of so and so. I mean, it was TOO MUCH by then! ... All the extra guys ... [with] minor schools of thought.*

Noah 3.3

Her anger was expressed by relating her understanding of commonsense to her understandings of academic sense. Noah rejected 'applied' theory, preferring instead to examine the metaphysics of "*bigger ideas*".<sup>(N2.2)</sup> She rejected the "*pettyness*"<sup>(N1)</sup> of using "*big words for little meanings*"<sup>(N1.1)</sup> because some *ordinary* people already took those meanings for granted, so the words she was now being expected to use could only be necessary to socially-privilege scholars (she said) by simply providing a route to publication.<sup>(N1.3)</sup> For Noah<sup>(1.1.454, a 21)</sup>, the state of knowing was a praxis of the material of New Zealand social life with an ideological imbeddedness. 'Already-applied theories' simply negated her desire to construct that knowledge for herself:

*If I did a study about something I was really interested in, I would do it with more earnestness, more integrity .... I'm really interested in the thing from a purists' point of view.*

Noah 3.3

Noah's commonsense seemed already to be critical in purpose and intent. The whole purpose of knowing, for Noah, was to use knowledge "*to change the world*"<sup>(N1.2, N2.2, N3.4)</sup>, not to make it even more obscure and unknowable. (Noah's personal attempts to change the world ranged from acting to overcome the oppressions of rural women in New Zealand<sup>(N2)</sup> to coping with the dis-ease of one's 'self'<sup>(N1)</sup> or the oppressions of the Welfare state<sup>(N3)</sup>.) Understanding metatheory had helped Noah to subjectivate her understandings of the social world. It enabled her to "*see things quite differently ... like the effort in Court*"<sup>(N3.5.499)</sup> when she could "*see through the theorist's eyes*".<sup>(N2.5.1126)</sup> Earlier in the year, before she experienced frustration at being given the applied

theories to learn, Noah was:

*enjoying seeing things in a different way. I'm finding that very valuable .... I'm quite interested in relating it to other things in my life so that it overlaps a bit more - rather than being quite divorced from it.*

Noah 3.1

Implicit in the praxis of applying the "biggest ideas" (N2.2) and the "broadest theory" (N2) was the process of subjectifying and relativising the material, of bringing it close to her self and our world.<sup>387</sup>

"Since we're all subjective" (N3.5.550) it was small wonder that when confronted with feminism, Noah would see it as an issue that "needs to be an active process not an abstract [meta] theory .... [which is] the antithesis of the reality" (N1.5) For her, feminism "needed to be worked on" (N1.5)

*Its difficult. It exists for me as a theory but I also try to apply it ... its theory I do put into action in my own little life.*

Noah 3.5

Sometimes, after reflection, Noah's resulting beliefs were so "raw", so much a part of her 'self', that to have them publicly challenged or put under scrutiny was actually disabling. For instance, Noah (1) choose not to prepare an essay on feminism "because the information is so new, so painful, so extreme. How could I have been so blind? .... (pause) It hurts too much .... (pause) *awwrrrgggh. I can't write it for someone else to see*". (N1.3)<sup>388</sup> At such self disintegrating times, Noah felt like "a soul in limbo" (N1.3) But the paralysis arising from this unstable flux in knowledge-constitutive relations seemed more related to her morality and conscience than to fears of socially confronting the 'error':

*Ages ago I used to feel conscious that it was me; that I must be dumb. But everyone else is as dumb as I am sometimes, so I don't worry so much now.*

Noah 2.1

Noah's "personal involvement" (N3) could be seen in its relation to her social conscience. Although she realised that other people often did not think as deeply as she, (N1.2.3), Noah had an empathy with other people's resistances to new ideas because of the social upheaval such ideas could cause. She was able to place part of her 'self-removed' within the viewpoint of Others and see that, for instance:

*Feminism is an issue because it is actually happening. Ordinary women would be more feminist than not if you get them down to it. They may not recognise they are feminists .... I have an empathy with them because that's what I tend to think: "Oh! That's them. They go too far." But if it came down to it I'd be a*

<sup>387</sup> cf Belenky et al (1986:3) "Self concept and ways of knowing are intertwined." Noah found, for instance, that, 'interesting material could be retained, because it tied in with my life a bit more. If its something that's interesting, that's human, like Durkheim's suicide things, then I can retain that a heck of a lot easier than I can something obscure - that's way out there.' (Noah 3.1.1668)

<sup>388</sup> *When, some have found, the inner voice turns critical, it warns them their ideas might be stupid. [They] must think before they speak and because their ideas must measure up to certain objective standards, they spe in measured tones. Often they do not speak at all. But this is not a passive silence, on the other side of this silence, reasoning is stirring.* Belenky et al, 1986:5

*feminist. Its the word that frightens them, and what other people say about feminists.*

Noah 2.4

Noah often reflected upon the misuses of discourse. Observing powerful Others "going too far in foisting their different ways onto other people"<sup>(N1.2)</sup> caused Noah to act in the defence of people being marginalised. For instance, during this research inquiry, Noah<sup>(N2)</sup> was called to Court. As the principle (and at times, willing) witness for the prosecution, Noah<sup>(N2)</sup> then found that her truths were being subjected to the piecemeal mis-appropriation of prosecution lawyers. After this had gone on for some time, Noah took a moment of reflection and then requested an uninterrupted reply, during which she explicitly foregrounded the epistemic juggling of her evidence. The case was dismissed shortly afterward. Noah's moral basis of engaging in such action was that "no-one had the right to twist knowledge to suit themselves; not when it was someone else's life that was being tampered with".<sup>(N3.2)</sup>

Unlike Noah, Wyna and Luisa's period of reflection was marked not by matters of personal conscience, but by a dependence upon mentors to reflect judgements of what they should come to know. Wyna, for example, said she had to take care in her 'social contact' with her lecturers ("Bob" and "Jenny")<sup>(W3)</sup> because they "could be sticky buggers".<sup>(W1.4)</sup> The closer her social contact with her teachers became, the more dependent she became on the use of linguistic academic conventions. Eventually the situation across the year would alter until social contact was related separately to both language and academic conventions but this movement was really more relevant to the next (expressive) stage of the knowledge act:

*When they said 'use quotes', I did. It made the theory easier. (Wyna 1.3)  
She said 'no quotes', so I didn't. I put his ideas in my words instead and hoped they wouldn't notice. (Wyna 3.2)  
He said 'use more material' so I made a longer bibliography next time. Wyna (2.3)*

In conclusion, for Noah the period of reflection had once been a long and intensive experience. In the creating of reflexive relations between the touchstones of her personal epistemology and the course content, Noah had engaged in spatial reasoning through visualising and quizzing ideas. This practice distinguished her from all other persons studied. As she had moved around and between the relational spaces of given ideas, reflexively creating new connections, 'seeing' theory in practice, 'structuring' her own arguments and 'empathising' with the socially-marginalised, it certainly appeared that part of her 'self' was moved into the epistemic space of her reasoning and in its mirror she sought reflective judgements by juggling others' ideas with her own. Through subjectivations, she had reached within her visual structures and had ensured that she finally 'owned' the judgements of her re-creations and re-constructions. Ownership of the new ideas would account for why she believed the truth had to be relative:

*people are quite different .... [Those] ideas are from her world, her expressions. So how can I possibly fit my life into that ....*

Noah 3.3

However, relativity (or relationalism) was going to prove a major problem for Noah. During the period of reflection Noah not only concentrated on the experts' aspects of the *course content* but she had also *altered* the given knowledge so that by the time she came to write her essay, the course knowledge had been reconsidered, reconstructed and creatively changed from its original given form. Noah's issue then essentially became a question of triangulating the expert's ideas, her own judgements of them and the educationalist's expectations, as she moved from the period of reflection to the time of expressing her knowings in Formal Education. This was a problematic time for Noah and it would give rise to a major issue. Would she present her evaluators with what she knew now, or what she knew formerly? Thus the main point of fracture was exposed. Would the university authorities accept that a first year adult student could reconstruct theory? (Sometimes she couldn't accept that idea herself as when she reflected upon her earlier work and "*felt ill with embarrassment*".(N2.5.432)) Reflexivity had brought Noah the satisfaction of 'coming to know' but its negative side was that she worried about worries. Noah's knowledge-act was now moving from what was to her a common-sense period of reflection (./R/) to the anguished state of expressing understandings in an academic-sense(./A/). What knowledge would she choose to share?

## Expression

Expression was the final period of the knowledge-act.(Ch.2) It was the time, in formal education, when the student prepared the material they now knew for public communication, social action or educational auditing. This stage of the knowledge-act was primarily a positive concern to Wyna, but a negative concern to Noah. Now the inherent contradictions between the common-sense of her personal epistemology and the academic sense of the university world would become public. Noah's self-educative practices had not previously been synonymous with getting others to legitimate her self and her judgements to knowledge. Unlike at University, 'to study' was not synonymous for her, with telling others what you were coming to know but instead, was to see how new ideas applied in different parts of the world. Coupled with this problematic, Noah never thought of writing as a hobby, so to have to have to write at all, and have to write *her ideas* as well, doubled the anxious moments of the task of expression:

*having to stop and write (and learn how to write) was stopping my thinking and my getting up more ideas. What I am most enjoying about doing this course is that it is effecting my thinking ... I think and I apply it to things on the way down the road. Things just seem to occur to me.*

Noah 3.1

*After leaving the study to do the essay I find it very difficult to get back into the study again - to actually get back into reading and enjoying and wanting to keep reading. I really see this writing out thing as quite different you know; as almost the opposite.*

Noah 1.3

Expression would encompass tensions between the curriculum touchstones of *language, personal epistemology, course content, conventions* and *evaluation*.. The paradox of this period would centre upon the purposes of writing and legitimation. For instance, Noah saw the educational purpose of writing as relating *personal epistemology* to *course content*, and (in its permanency) as proving that she had both done it and knew it. But cutting across this link, the academe made connections between *academic conventions* and *formal language*. Eventually this cross-purpose of educational relations would lead Noah to remark that:

*Academics don't want integrated life knowledge ...[pause] probably because we're all armchair philosophers at heart .... They just want to know that I have the course concepts and they want to evaluate whether I believe them or not - but not to argue them.*

Noah 3.4

It was the constant awareness of irony that Noah felt most. The time of expression reawakened Noah's long-held belief that "*knowing it and writing it are two different things*".(N3.1.1847) In reflectively worrying about worrying, she asked herself whether she should follow her own study pattern (her personal epistemology) or modify it for her teachers: "*I wondered if it would be preferable to write the thing for myself and not select chunks out of the study guide - for MY overview*".(N3.1)

At the beginning of the year, Noah did not recognise she was about to develop dualistic ways of knowing, one for her formal education and one for her self-education, She spent hours trying to combine the two by expressing her common-sense arguments in a convincing academic form, deciding:

*You get all this information and sort of absorb it and pick the eyes out of it and condense it. Then you regurgitate it in a different sort of way. That's what I had first thought the process of writing an essay was. You cut the whole thing down, get the guts out of it and then regurgitate it in a different kind of way altogether.*

Noah 3.1.

In some ways the Institution determined Noah's thoughts. Noah was cajoled into thinking that 'they' wanted her "to think for herself" (N1.1) both when she read they valued originality and when, with early relief, Noah recognised an empathetic fellow student in her friendly tutor. Tutors subjectified their social contact with the students (of all typifications) through handwritten assignment feedback which was signed informally. This deliberate breaking of the objective facelessness of the students' correspondence education was seen as:

*quite a friendly touch ... That made quite a difference. It says "We're here to help you" rather than "We're here to make it difficult." If he'd never signed ... it wouldn't have done anything about my image of tutors. Whereas signing it [John Smith] has made me feel that he's human and ... if I got into difficulties I could write to him .... He had opened a channel of communication*

Noah 2.2

However, the period of expression was not to remain so easy. Noah's recognition of the contradiction inherent in "being allowed to think for yourself" (N1) first materialised as she analysed the nature of the assignment topics the students were given. Answering other people's questions rather than her own required her to reflect, for she was used to an everyday epistemology which tested ideas by seeking her own real-life evidence. But more often than not, the given assignment questions already prescribed the context of application and often this field of application was beyond Noah's (and Luisa's or Wyna's) immediate experience. Sometimes, when Noah found she knew nothing of the area or setting prescribed in the assignment question (to which the theory was to be applied) she "still answered it. I used natural logic and what I already knew".(N3.5.63)

One troublesome example of such a question, asked the students' to relate a given theory to a period of nineteenth century history. This was a problematic assignment topic for every interviewed student who was enrolled in this course. The key issue for all of them was the context. For those who were not Noah, the issue centred around the fact that this obtuse context had to be studied separately to the given theory, and this additional assignment requirement doubled the amount of work for those first year students who knew little of European history. Not one of the interviewed students saw the assignment as an attempt to demonstrate that the social and historical contexts had an important bearing on the development of theory. The idea of socio-historical determinism was too far removed from them who, in their second-ever university assignment, were still perhaps concentrating on acquiring social facts and not abstract connections or arguments. These student's

collectively saw the assignment topic as an objectification or distancing of their own ways of coming to know. It exacerbated the separation of the knower from the known. Noah's reaction was that this question "was not a connection to real life. How I apply [theory] to real life would be where I would fit in my own ideas".(N3.1) Other peoples' comments were less kindly but shared similar sentiments.

Differentiating the type of 'work' involved was another consideration in selecting assignment topics. Noah was confused by the range of epistemic variation. She felt she could (eventually) answer theoretical questions in very few words, while incorporating her own imaginings,<sup>389</sup> but practical-level questions required a lot of specific detail, and therefore, a lot of words with little room for imagination:

*Some questions asked for simple connections, others asked for comparisons of major theoretical ideas and each placed the same word limit on it. But 150 words doesn't give me enough space to even attempt a simplification because I wouldn't be able to say what Marxism was and how it came to be here without actually saying the details of what they are and are not.*

Noah 3.1

Of concern was the connection between types of assignment work and the allocation of grades. Assignment questions could be perceived as too large, epistemologically, or too small. In searching the imagined eyes of her surveillants,<sup>390</sup> in effect Noah asked what was the important "academic connection"? (N2.3) Did one get higher grades for attempting the harder questions?(N3) or for producing exactly 150 words? or for incorporating personal ideas? or for correctly using conceptual terminology?(N1.3) At times the given word limit of assignments was too vast an amount of work for Noah, for here was a student who - in "picking the eyes out" of the given theory and the assignment questions - could now express it in a much abbreviated form:

*I just used my knowledge of Durkheim's total quantitative idea. In Durkheim's exploration of suicide ... I said he's looking at the social reasons why, instead of the individual. He's not saying, 'This person is off his head.' He's looking at the social reasons and pressures - the external thing. So that makes it sociological. It's so OBVIOUS to me. And I could have said that in a sentence. It seemed like a stupid question, in a way .... It's superfluous to rave on about it if you can put it in a nutshell.*

Noah 3.5.205

If Noah was required to expand the essay to which she had the answer "in a nutshell" (N3.5.219) with what was she to fill the word limit? With the expert's argument or her own?(N1.2.3) And did she have to use their prescribed setting or could she incorporate her own context of application? (N2)

Knowledge of these evaluation criteria was not made available to students. These and similar problems of semantics, symbolism and space could also be found in other evaluative situations. One assignment option which could be defined as 'too large', gave the students the freedom of triangulating their own choice of a social context with two theoretical positions which themselves had to be compared and contrasted. Although the technical word limit was greater than before, so

<sup>389</sup> re-creations and re-constructions

<sup>390</sup> cf Belenky et al, 1986:209

too were the hurdles of this task, especially for those first year students who could already recognise the epistemic options opened by the question:

*If I was to do an argument or a comparison, it would probably be over just one or two points. It wouldn't be over the whole wide [context]. I would just single out one thing and look at it with many theories .... It was almost as if the assignment was too much at that stage of the course. I took situation [x] and Durkheim. While doing that I was conscious I could use Marx's arguments against it because I was using functionalism for it. But that would be a major exercise for me - too big. After all you were restricted to 1500 words and it all had to tie up. So you're not going to drag something in like a critique of theory because you'd only have room to toss it in without fully explaining why.*

Noah 1.5.1040

While the connection between technical expectations (word or page limits and due dates) and epistemic need was difficult, so too were Noah's problems with evaluating the evaluators' intentions. While academic teachers may dislike student's attempts to 'find out what you want', there was more to the complexity of this issue than met the eye. In any assignment, when both the theory and the social context were predetermined or when both theory and practice were open to choice, the very nature of the assignment questions became problematic. Either the theory or the context, but not both, required the element of choice. Could this problem have been resolved if questions of 'the theory' were prescribed but questions of 'the practice' or application were left to the individual student's choice?<sup>391</sup>

At the basis of the problem of providing options and choices was the employment of a form of truth (relativism) which would not always allow the course knowledge to remain in the 'pure' form in which it was given. Noah (N1,2,3) chose to answer theoretical questions and to use her own imaginings. As she applied the given theory, she could see where it in turn needed modification and adaption in order to retain the essence of its explanatory power. She would expand the essay around the given conceptual "pivot" (N3.5.286) with work that was "my very own. My main focus was that this is the way I am seeing it in this particular framework".(N3.3) But this awareness that she was changing aspects of the theory as given, worried her. Would her educational auditors expect her to ignore these changes which she saw as necessary? Did they only want back her memories of what they had formerly given her? In other words would the teacher negate Noah's efforts by expecting her to go into a mental 'reverse' and to rote-memorise?:

*I accept and I appreciate that regurgitating [course knowledge] is some kind of proof that it has had an effect on me. But it is giving someone else proof. It is proving to them ... rather than to me.*

Noah 3.1

<sup>391</sup> Recognising this as a serious dilemma of 'talking past' one another across a theory/academic versus practice/everyday divide, I took the action of doing a supplementary investigation. With the assistance of twenty lecturers, I deconstructed the nature of their final examination questions and their reactions to the ways in which students answered them, especially concentrating on questions which differentiated easily between 'good' and 'poor' answers. Beyond reasonable doubt, 'good' questions offered one conceptual term in a question which was worded so that the students chose their own settings to apply it to (just as Noah wanted). 'A' grade students tended to relate the single given concept to other theoretical concepts and weave a story around a setting. 'C' grade students simply applied the one given concept to any number of everyday examples they could locate, and made few theoretical or practical connections. (This study of 'Examination Expectations' has yet to be publicly published.)

The issue of the relationship between forms of truth and the type of knowledge which resulted, could be seen in both material and epistemic terms. Right from the very beginning of the year, the issue boiled down to how would the (expert's) epistemology of the course content, match the epistemology of the evaluation methods (teacher and tutor), as well as (for Noah only) how would 'my' epistemology match both of them? The answer was most often seen as a problem of politics in interpersonal relations. From conversations Noah had with others after receiving assignment feedback, and after her personal reflections on the ever-surveillant nature of Formal Education, Noah would eventually cynically empathise with the thought that:<sup>392</sup>

*they want me to give them back only what they had given me to feed back. And I can see that it makes sense. I mean if I was a senior lecturer and said, 'the world is flat', and the student said it back to me, I would say 'Good child, ch ch ch' ... I can see the logic behind that. Rather than arguing that it is round with someone who knows [so little.] Me? A peasant!*

Noah 1.4

A separate issue concerning the employment of relativism during the period of expression was the need to objectivate what was now subjectively known and understood. The ways in which knowledge became objectified were complexly mediated and the mediation was perceived by Noah as educationally alienating. The more she became conscious of it the more she tried to understand the tacit nature of 'it'. Her attempts included evaluating the tutor's own omissions and evidences of knowing. For instance, when the tutor wrote, '*Be careful of using that kind of absolute idea*', Noah (3) commented, "*But I knew that already. I don't know quite why I'd said it because I was aware of that*". Noah also commented on such inexactitudes as the tutor's failure to remark on her own omission of a publisher's name in the bibliography.<sup>(N1)</sup> No matter how large or how small the epistemic detail, Noah "*was determined to suss IT out*".<sup>(N1)</sup><sup>393</sup> But for a long time 'knowing it' and 'expressing it' remained a problematic division of two very different things: "*I was capable of doing it in my mind, but to have to verbalise it was like trying to wring jam out of a pumpkin*".<sup>(N1.5.697)</sup>

A central element in the problem of objectification was the type of language used. In attempting to "*act on the same wavelength*"<sup>(N2.2)</sup> as her educational authorities, Noah would find she had to divide her discursive as well as epistemic world into two different languages; into that which communicated her ideas to her friends and into that which communicated her ideas to her teachers. Her adversarial problems with the politics of jargon were about to resurface. In usual everyday times, Noah's life was centred on creating meanings rather than communicating them. In her everyday life and self-education she was not in the slightest interested in using 'jargon' because she<sup>(N3.1)</sup> translated theory into her own everyday language<sup>394</sup> and discussed what she was 'learning'

<sup>392</sup> cf Jane Haggis, 1990. The knowledge of marginalised others often bears little relation to the view of their Educational Identifiers.

<sup>393</sup> Until this hidden curriculum was fully understood she would then simply: "*identify some common sources of challenge ... First ... old ways of knowing were challenged ... [by] the absolutist dictates of the authorities and the women's own subjectivism. At the time the women experienced the conflict not as an invitation to growth but as an attempt to stifle their inner voices.*" Belenkey et al, 1986:88

<sup>394</sup> cf Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives.

with her friends and family. (N1.5.677) In fact, she openly problematised the privileging of discursive practices as "something which excludes others." (N1.1) Noah's politic of discursive inclusivity was evident in her employment. Noah (1 and 3) prepared written material for community use and "when you wrote anything it had to be both right and expressed as clearly as possible; without any gobbledey gook, so that it couldn't be misinterpreted". (N1.5.687) Thus it was for Noah (1 and 3) most contradictory to act for forty hours a week in a 'real world' which required her to subjectify ideas into 'easy' language, and then to turn her back on that reality and prepare objectivated assignments in objectified language for the university. To add to this linguistic confusion, at times the correspondence-educated Noah (like Luisa and Wyna), could not even pronounce the given theoretical terminology. In general, this conflated two-fold issue of language (at which conceptual level, and in which kind of words - informal everyday or formally objectified) created more difficulties when students were either afraid or unable to articulate ideas to one another or to their teachers. However, in her ordinary everyday world, Noah would not let it worry her further for:

*If I was talking about one of these ideas with someone else I wouldn't use the words, necessarily, even though I associated with the meanings of the jargon. I mean, I would be talking about the idea in my own vocabulary because [my friends] would never understand. They're not going to understand what his flaming 'methodology' means!*

Noah 3.5

The apparent need for formal objectified language in university leads not only to issues of social exclusivity, but juxtaposes social exclusivity against a supposedly unproblematic form of intellectual inclusivity. Noah recognised this discursive contradiction as derived from political issues of power (N1,2,3) but it was Luisa who experienced them as such. Noah simply resisted the pressures by omitting the use of conceptual terms from her assignments and exam, choosing instead to express herself in everyday language. Noah resisted the conflation of ideology with discourse, by recognising the relation between objectivity and objectivation. However, in the profundity of her political awareness, Noah either omitted to make a connection between the possibility of epistemic strength and conceptual terminology - or she selectively negated a privileging of her intellectual self at the expense of engaging in any form of social exclusivity of others. But then the personnel of the four courses involved in this investigation had made no attempts whatever to explain the epistemological purpose of conceptual language to the students. Luisa's "trouble with words" (N2.2) doubled when the authorities (teachers) and the 'experts' apparently shared a common understanding of the uses of it but Luisa could not "figure out" why.

In all, the Institution reinforced the marginalisation of these correspondence-educated adults by expecting them to understand the intentions and purpose of big words and obscure meanings without ever fully explaining the implications of objectification, or objectivation and formality to them. That students would be unproblematically expected to objectivate their knowledge-act rather than subjectively express what they had come to know, seemed to be part of an oppressive enculturation process. Yet the institution could also have employed, for instance, dialogical speech

situations in which knowers (e.g. tutors) were present at study group meetings or they could have made oral examinations possible at the end of year.

The oppression of objectivation was most evident when, in the reified stillness of written assignment feedback, the student and the staff member engaged in a process of 'talking past' one another. This was illustrated by the "rude feedback" Noah received on her very first assignment.<sup>(N1, N2, N3.1.1847)</sup> In her creative excitement in writing the assignment Noah had "let (her) mind flow".<sup>(N1.2)</sup> However, in feedback, the tutor had remarked that Noah "needed theory", to which Noah retorted, "But I could have gone through and lined it up with various theories that we had".<sup>(N1.5.507)</sup> Of all the educational relations the tutor could have chosen to criticise, this was the very one (epistemology) in which Noah intensively centred her 'study'. This particular act of oppression (the tutor's comment) referred to more than simply 'the omission of theory' (whatever that might mean). It also acted as a social and epistemic exclusionary device. The tutor's full feedback was finally read to me at the end of the year by Noah <sup>(N1)</sup> with her own disbelieving comments interspersed:

*The essay is well organised and generalisations well substantiated' and again 'It's not enough to expound a pet theory, no matter how articulately, and relate it to personal incidents. One of the aims of the course like this is to open your mind to a wide variety of information and help you learn ways of developing your ideas;' GOOD GOD! 'both in terms of your own experience and the readings. You are not expected to support all these ideas but it is expected you will read about them, discuss their merits in terms of your own experiences and use the logic in research to evolve a reasoned conclusion.'*

Noah 1.5

The objectification (where this tutor was concerned) included challenges to the relativism of truth, the application of theory to everyday practices, and the privileging of one unexplained form of logic. Implicit in the tutor's comment was a concern for work ethics and (perhaps) the use of conceptual terminology. And Noah's resignatory comment of her tutor's expectation for objectificatory 'out of context'<sup>395</sup> learning?:

*I titled the essay "A Subjective View", so I should have known what to expect!*

Noah 1.2

Legitimation involved thoughts of relativism, but relativism (in university assignments) ironically included objectification. The extent to which Noah and the tutor 'talked past' each other was unclear, for mediating the issue was Noah's ideological flexibility:

*What I was writing down would trigger the next thought so I didn't keep going back to the [set assignment] question. By writing, your mind starts to expand a bit and you can sort of expand the question too. Otherwise it might end up as a two sentence answer. What I was finding was that I'd go back to the question and could read a lot more into it from what I'd already written for myself. But you have to be careful of those triggers.*

Noah 2.5.449

The second possible reason for 'talking past' may have revolved around the connection between the touchstones of *language* and *evaluation* - particularly in the connection between the use of

<sup>395</sup> Belenky et al, 1986:200 This tutor demonstrated that 'authorities are certainly positional. Their control functions to clarify, maintain and repair boundaries' (Bernstein, 1990:83)

theoretical terms and the students intentions of legitimation: *"I use my own language to the extent that I am trying to prove it to myself, almost, that I understand the situation. Not to deliberately change it"*.(N1.5.549) It was part of Noah's legitimacy judgement that had involved the application of ideas to the everyday practices via the use of her daily vocabulary. And there were still other examples of 'talking past'.

In contradictions between the social-constitutive and expressive educational relations (curriculum diagram - Ch.2), sometimes teachers 'spoke past' each other's directions and this situation ultimately resulted in students 'talking past' their marker. A lecturer at the Regional Course, for instance, told the assembled class that the only source material required to complete the up-coming assignment was to be found in the text book and the study guide. But having used only the suggested sources, one student later had assignment feedback from a tutor that basically said: *"Use more materials"*.(N2.3) If the student was ever to become Institutionally-identified as a knower, whose commands was she to follow - the one whose social contact brought the knowledge to her or the one whose evaluatory determinisms took Noah's knowledge from her? Was it so necessary for the Institution to contradict itself when, in its controlling monologic, it penalised those who followed a simple directive from the (senior) authority figure rather than the (junior) auditor?

Hegemonic social-constitutive relations in formal education may not only determine someone's alienation (as with Luisa), but also determine the nature of the social reaction by those being marginalised. It was within such a contradictory setting that Noah gradually withdrew from furthering her friendly (subjectivated) social relations with the tutor. She now communicated only that which was civil or necessary. And she questioned the educational basis of his authority even more critically - changing from *"... we've opened the channel of communication"*(N3.1) at the beginning of the year, to *"He said I didn't know what 'methodology' was. But he was wrong. I checked it .... But I didn't bother telling him. He would not have agreed he was wrong anyway"*(N3.5.1029) at the year's end. In the search for shared meanings the triadic relation between *language, evaluation and social contact* was under strain. The correspondence-educated student was in need of a dialogical situation for adjudging the truths of academic-sense.

Further inquiry is required to determine the extent to which university education might involve epistemological practices. In spite of Noah's need to understand the evaluatory touchstone in epistemological terms, and in spite of the few attempts she made to find out (such as [in the study group experience] the letter which led to the lecturer's terse reply), the teachers did not once, to any student interviewed, outline the *epistemic* details of university study. This was a contradiction in terms of the judgements the evaluators' seemed qualified to place on the student's work. This lack of epistemic exemplification was illustrated yet again by one lecturer who, when asked the nature of the final exam, would only matter-of-factly suggest that it *"would be no harder than the test"*.(N2.3) To Noah, this single comment was markedly objectifying in character:

*I'm not sure what the expectation is. I think the exam is going to be fairly detailed and ridiculous - a low-level looking for the facts- ... [because] the test we went through was VERY specific. I was expecting they would ask such things as 'Tell us what the two approaches, generally, are' ... But no! It was quite specific like 'Anne Oakley's study to so and so said such and such according to so and so. How does this relate to such and such?'.... That's what I suspect the exam will be like. So they won't be saying, 'Discuss the Interpretive Approach'. Instead they'll be saying 'Schutz's critique of so and so brought up the issue of such and such. How did this effect so and so's view of whatever?' It's going to be quite specific. But if the questions are full I'll be O.K. Like if they say the three views on ['X'] are this and this and this. How do these relate to so and so?' that will be O.K. If they give some of the detail itself in the question. If they put some of the answer into the question then I'll be able to pick it up and elaborate on them. But simply rote learning and remembering which three or four points go with so and so's concept, that is what I find is rather difficult.*

Noah 3.3

The challenge to academic-sense is the extent to which common-sense may reflect a stronger epistemological bases. Here was Noah, the common-sense learner, saying that if the question outlined several discrete facts and clarified the setting to focus upon, then Noah would provide the theorised relations which linked those facts under such and such conditions. The dilemma seemed to be that the lecturers' did not (or could not) clarify these epistemic details of evaluation and in so doing, only succeeded in further objectifying this touchstone of the hidden curriculum. Without some understanding of the epistemological problematic of *evaluation*, how was the student expected to choose reasonably, rather than to guess at, the kinds of study useful for the final examination? (At least the guessing could put Noah at an advantage over other students if she found a question she "*believed in*"<sup>(N3.5)</sup> and so "*could use [her] logic to answer*". But the seriousness of the question remains: why was the epistemology of evaluation a matter of chancing upon a shared understanding? Why was this aspect of the academic culture hidden? The students were reduced to the study of substantive content while its epistemic character remained unclear and exclusive. For instance, Noah had asked (in the situation just described) whether the exam questions would be pitched at a general theoretical level and so seek the student's ability to make reasoned connections, or would the questions be levelled at listing discrete 'facts' of practical life which might, in turn, require a more evidential judgement than argument (and therefore memorisation of more facts)? Between theory, facts and context was a problematic void of expectation that was not made being clear to the students.

Unanswered challenges to the relation between 'knowledge' and 'reality' may result in strong and reasoned emotional responses, as well as in an objectifying of formal Education itself. As confusions compounded within these obfuscations of evaluation, Noah increasingly doubted the quality of educational mediation and remained sceptical of her educational authorities ability 'to know' throughout the rest of the academic year. In fact, Noah wondered if "*[she] didn't have a clearer view*"<sup>(N1.3)</sup> of the epistemological elements involved in 'knowing' than they had. Indeed was it the academics' reductionistic, objectified view of knowledge which narrowed their vision of the world? Instead of brewing on this intense problematic alone, Noah <sup>(1,2,3)</sup> shared it with her friends

and found her beliefs were about to be mediated and supported. Friends, family and acquaintances, the people with whom she could positively identify, re-affirmed for her *those "niggling"* (N1) contestable tensions, until the tensions themselves became the source of a generalised brewing resentment. After all, what was the claimed value of An Education when compared in its parsimonious relation to the "*real world*"? (N1,23) The tutor's act of equating university study with superficial time-consuming labour, for instance, was an analogy reinforced further when the students' family-time, spare time and study time impinged upon each other:

*Who the hell cares about functionalism or capitalism or studyism or academic bull-dustism? I really up to here with it. I just thought to myself, 'It's just unreal,' and it is, you know. I can relate all this academic stuff to real life but this is a world of its own as well, isn't it? It's so 'over-there' somehow, compared with making coffee, and doing dishes.*

Noah 3.3

The hidden curriculum was pulling her away from her former self - yet it was not even on the basis of a higher standard of reasoning or knowledge. These everyday occupiers in Noah's 'real' life positively reinforced her feelings of epistemic alienation by confirming the prevailing mythology. The friends' power to convince Noah that it was an institutional problem and not one of her own making, lay both in her feelings of alienation and in their collective subjective immediacy and support. She was being educated in a distance from the university but they were her day to day social group and part of her self-educative process. They had, in the past, offered their authoritative viewpoints to Noah but now found they were replaced in that chore by the objectivated metatheoretical 'experts' and educators who currently were supposed to be Noah's dialogical 'Others', but who did not seem to be fulfilling that role. Time for the maintenance of these local friendships with Noah had been pushed aside and in reciprocation, she was now experiencing a similar social pain to Luisa who also missed her friends. Again, for Noah, time was proving to be the luxury of self-education and everyday life only. Both the nature of *social contact* and *personal epistemic practices* were changing.

The compounding tensions of formal education reinforced Noah's desire to relocate her study in the self-educative world, for she saw that the formalised negativities were not being counterbalanced with formalised positivities. The rewards of enlightenment which she had first sought from the university simply were not forthcoming. Instead, it was the people in the common-sense world who countered the negativities of academic-sense. For instance, an agreeable graduate-friend proof-read Noah's assignments.

The challenges of academic sense became recognised as 'a game'. Under the alienating pressures of university work, Noah's friends enhanced her feelings of this existence of a university-based mythology. Noah's (xxx) student friend, George, gave advice on how to "*play the game*" (Nxxx.5) because he too had experienced conflict in trying to think for himself in university assignments:

*George had written an assignment, which I saw, in which he said what he thought and they had just put red lines right through it .... He said he then learned [that] the way to do it is to give them back exactly what they give you.*  
Noah (xxx.2)

The scepticism of university credibility and the truth of its claims was not immediate, but arose as a result of negative experiences and negations. Noah did not initially believe these "Georgisms". However, when the study guide advice that had said 'A' grades required originality', was later contradicted by the tutor's feedback, Noah began to see that George was correct:

*I had expected an 'A' because I used distinctly original arguments .... But prior to this assignment I had got better grades when I gave them back exactly what I'd been fed out. Regurgitating works!!!! So I've been using Georgisms up till this set in which I used two very original ideas. But it may have been that it lacked something else. I just don't know.*

Noah (xxx.3)

In real life, academic-sense was experienced as the employment of a low-level work ethic and as a game of appearances. Feeling perplexed and missing her 'former' friends in the everyday, reinforced both Luisa and Noah's belief in formal education as being simply individualistic 'work' and labour. Noah's feelings of increasing alienation, were becoming increasingly confirmed by both negative feedback and day to day conversations until finally she "got the feeling right down the line"<sup>(N3.5.1033)</sup>:

*I don't think that they believe that I've got a mind, you know. Anyway, that's what I think about university staff. They're not interested in my ideas.*  
Noah 1.5.179

Discrediting or disproving such mythology may be difficult when those who have supposedly been enculturated some time ago, also reflect the negativities of academic-sense for all to see. For instance, there was the disagreeable graduate-citizen who, reflecting a belief that his own Degree was a commodified sign of superior intelligence, (but "without the wit to read [another's] mind"<sup>(N3)</sup>), courted Noah's friendship with compliments of likemindedness. But Noah, quite embittered by the acquaintances' elitist behaviour,<sup>396</sup> thought he was "a snot"<sup>(N3.4.537)</sup>

*When I said it was my first paper and I wasn't interested in reenrolment he didn't believe me. He said, 'Really? But you're SO intelligent'.*

Noah 3.4

Belief in the strength of one's common-sensical, 'epistemic-self' was required to resist academic oppression, but then one's epistemic needs also required balancing with one's social needs. With the tensions mounting, "the sheer volume"<sup>(N2.3)</sup> of increasing pressures eventually caused Noah to modify her personal epistemology rather than leave the institution along with Luisa. Noah simply knew she "could do it" if she persevered through the tensions.<sup>(N2)</sup> By midyear, the tension between personal "sacrifice"<sup>(N3)</sup> and "the disagreeable odour"<sup>(N4)</sup> of the public mythology

<sup>396</sup> He had repeatedly decried the death of a woman, not because he was related to her and loved and missed her but because her education had been 'wasted'.

(university education as non-intellectual,<sup>397</sup> rule-bounded,<sup>398</sup> individualistic work) became overwhelming. Being "very aware" that university study was dominating her personal time, Noah (3) "wrested with this sacrifice":

*It's my own personal division of labour if you like. I would rather be a parent than a student because I only have so many hours in a day.*

Noah 3.5.91

Not all students felt the same pains as Noah. For those students like Wyna, whose strength lay in the social-self rather than the epistemic, the world of academic-sense was not seen in terms of ideological marginalisation. Wyna had already befriended people who identified with the Institution in some way, and thus her attempts to socially construct the meaning of the hidden curriculum of academic sense were less problematic. While Noah and Luisa had felt increasingly alienated, Wyna herself subjectively identified with the Institution. Her new friends were also Wynas, the University's Regional Liaison person and, as will be seen later, her lecturer(s). However, she was perhaps becoming more distanced from her family, unlike the other two. Her former friends and partner were now (somewhat) in her past. Wyna cultivated these new 'friends' rather than maintained her old friends, because she thought the new ones "would be of more benefit to me in my study".(w1.4) Wyna had her life and her study securely under her control - or so she believed - because she "made [her] own decisions"(w1) and "took what [she] wanted ... [and] if those other tarts haven't it's their fault".(w2.4) None-the-less, the conflict would make its appearance by challenging her changing social affiliations. For instance, Wyna's self-control effected her partner for "he says I'm quite different now"(w3.4) and "we argue a lot actually. It's quite hilarious".(w1.5, also w2.2) While Wyna blamed this marital discord on 'his' unwillingness to accept her enthusiasm for learning in a university, as researcher I began to wonder if (in other words) it was not a discord caused more by Wyna's politics. For it was only she who made any reference to a partnership struggle, and it was only she whose controlling of others actions differentiated her from other typifications.

*I've started to wonder if my [ university study] worries him actually. He doesn't say much .... He never says anything to me about it. But his secretary told me she hears about it all the time.*

Wyna 3.5

In the complexity of these multiple negativities and positivities, the confirmation by family of different academic myths was one of the main social influences upon the distance-educated student. The pain of the recognition that University Education did not equate with Noah's search for mind was compounded by her awareness of the quiet submission of her family and friends as she sought alone-time to study. The families of Wyna and Luisa, on the other hand, resisted their mothers' attempts to become formally educated. These families expressed the view that education in adulthood was less of a way to find actual social success than just getting on with work and life.

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<sup>397</sup> Noah

<sup>398</sup> Luisa

However, where these resistances would give Luisa reason to quickly return to home life, Wyna would in turn resist her resistors and choose to qualify for academic identification.

Paradoxically, all these typificatory students quietly shared a common concern that formal education was an objectification of the real world, and not necessary for 'successful' engagement in 'real life'. It was only the nature of their understandings of educational 'success' which differed. While Noah thought success was implicitly knowledge-constitutive, Wyna thought it was social and politically-constitutive, and Luisa was not sure what it was at all.

For Noah, the epistemic challenges inherent in academic sense, coupled with the social pressures about university, resulted in her deregistering her original epistemic goals and 'playing the game' as she saw it. The reasons for her educational marginalisation had increasingly related to and legitimated each other. Noah had two main evaluation concerns: whether knowledge should be expressed in general or specific detail (abstract theorising, or everyday explanations) and whether it should be "*regurgitated*" unchanged, or could she add her own ideas, arguments, and concerns? <sup>399</sup> As she (N1,2,3) tried to cope with the mounting pressures of things like the unread material, the motivation to "*learn it all*", and assignments due while families were neglected and friends were confirming "*how awful*" (N3,4) university was, Noah found the institutionally-offered technical measure of study (six hours 'work' per paper, per week)<sup>400</sup> coerced her further into adopting a quite different epistemology, one she identified with the University's academic sense, and with 'playing the game'.<sup>(N3)</sup><sup>401</sup> In effect, Noah was adopting Wyna's learning strategies.

*Originally I planned studying [the basic material] for about an hour and a half each night after dinner ... but I was finding that either I was too tired by that time or the study material was too long ... something just wasn't working. I was making notes and I found I just didn't have a clue about what I'd just read!*

Noah 3.2.1840

But Noah was not easily decentred from her locus of self-constituted meanings,<sup>402</sup> as she continuously struggled to reclaim the subjective power of her mind.<sup>403</sup> Before realising what other people thought, Noah had referred to herself as "*lazy*" (N1,2,3) or as "*a minimalist*" (N3) if she neglected such '*know it all*' acts, as reflection or finding alternative readings. Moreover, she had usually spent more than twenty hours per week in these now-neglected activities themselves, thus studying way beyond the university-suggested timeframe. What Noah saw as the "*cheating*" (N1,3) inherent in the academic game ('work' for a minimal period of time in a non-reflective way) would later reflect

<sup>399</sup> "I've got the concepts they're trying to sell - so should I take bits straight out of the their questions - because its my fear that if I put my own things down they won't want that. The assignment question didn't say "Argue" or "Explain" or "Give your own ideas", so I wouldn't unless it said specifically for me to justify one particular stance.

<sup>400</sup> Handbook for Extramural Study.

<sup>401</sup> This has also been referred to as 'academic prostitution' (Belenky et al, 1986) as it is a situation where one must "*suppress one's own voice and adopt a new and alien vocabulary ... and all that garbage.*" (p.89)

<sup>402</sup> cf Derrida, 1970; Gadamer, 1975; Giddens, 1979; Jay, 1982:96; Hekman, 1990:66.

<sup>403</sup> Cf. Belenky et al, 1986:3

her retreat from deep to surface ways of being Educated. When Noah (1,2,3) came across the six-hour suggestion she realised that it was impossible to incorporate alternative readings and reflection along with the basic reading inside the prescribed 'six hours per week', so she somewhat reluctantly (and with mixed feelings of guilt and relief) gave in to a more superficial work ethic so that she could "catch up".(N1,2,3)

Noah (N1,2,3) never once doubted her own intellectual ability, but by 'completely' replacing commonsense with the only version of academic-sense that she could find, Noah now had to find a way 'to show' (rather than to argue) that she had learned the given material. This move from essences to appearances would not prove easy or particularly successful for her.(N1,3) It seemed unfortunate that *social contact* between her self and her educators could not have become more direct, for then she may have coaxed their educational logic from them, and been less subject to the pains of objectification.<sup>404</sup> Without the direct *social contact* of on-campus, face to face study, Noah felt increasingly alienated as she experienced the separation of knowledge from *knowing*. In all, the geographic distance had objectified the social distance, and the correspondence mode objectified the discursive and ideological distance, so now her essays simply formed just another object in all that problematic and marginalising knowledge-action.

To counter educational alienation required inclusion in the social group of myth believers, myth makers, and myth perpetrators. As Noah joined 'the education game' she had learned from George, Wyna (in the study group), and her everyday friends, not only did she (N1,2,3) stop her former practices of time-consuming reflection and seeking extra reading, she now concentrated more on the lecturer's than the 'experts' writings (the social constitutive rather than the knowledge-constitutive relation).

A deterministic game of *academic sense* was how Noah (1,3) now perceived the university's relationship between *course content* and *evaluation*. For Noah (N1,3), the academic "game" included any activity which gave the evaluator *the appearance* of epistemic activity without actually spending intellectual time and energy on it. Such limited 'reasoning' ignored epistemic considerations and concentrated upon the behavioural, as it cast the core into the mould of the obvious.

For Noah, the first reductionist solution was to copy Wyna's activity of selective or piecemeal reading (N1,2,3), though this would make her feel guilty for not studying all the course material. (N1.5.391; N2.5.598)<sup>405</sup> Select reading would lead Noah away from her practise of theorising connections to simply conceptualising discrete facts, in much the same way that Wyna already did. But at least by select reading, Noah could *partially 'know'* enough to 'regurgitate' back to the educator.(cf N3.1.1847) The 'single' ideas (which Noah now studied one at a time) were, in general, the concepts

<sup>404</sup> "to elicit more data with which to infer his logic." Belenkey et al, 1986:9

<sup>405</sup> "In a way I feel I didn't deserve a pass because I don't know it all at all." (N2.5.598)

inherent in Luisa's "big words":

*[Now] I just try to deal with one idea at a time, giving it time to gel in my mind; just assimilating it a little bit.*

Noah 3.3.1847

Noah was to find that ideas piecemealed by selective reading were difficult to express in a logically coherent manner. Now that she neglected the complete fullness of her reading, and no longer developed her own arguments, Noah (N1,2,3) would find it difficult to "push the ideas together". Instead she found she had to "force connections rather than a coherence". (N3.4.838) This reduction of epistemic quality made her feel that "If this hotch potch method gets me an 'A' then I'll definitely use it ... regardless of how amazed I'd be at the [university's] standard." (N3.2)

There were other conventions to the game as well. Noah(3) would give in to her tutor's suggestions "to use more material" by adopting the superficial appearance of having done so. For the first time she invoked the touchstone of *academic conventions* as she began to include piecemeal-selected quotes from the theoretical experts' writing for intellectual support, and she included extra references in her bibliography. Yet to Noah(N1.4), these actions were (1,2,3) a mark of 'cheating' because they "pinched other peoples' ideas" and words. This use of quotes and references was, in essence, a "minimalist" (N3) behaviour to Noah (N1,3) but at least it made the assignment "appear that she had read [the experts' articles]." (N2.3).<sup>406</sup>

*I just want to put a very brief sentence from each one. Just to make it look like I've read them. No! That's not true. Make it look like I've found them; got them out the Library. (I haven't done that before actually.)*

Noah 3

Playing 'the academic game' had negative moral implications for Noah but positive political connotations for Wyna. However, Noah's guilt for doing so little 'work' was somewhat appeased when she found her own "original ideas"(N1,2,3) had previously been published by someone else. But still she did not know if she should write her self in to her script or if she should reference this other person, since, after all, she "had thought of the argument before [she] had read their work".(N1.1.234) Noah (1,3) felt that to exclude her self was further denial of subjective modes of common-sense reasoning.

Even though they were now engaged in a similar 'game', Wyna still remained quite unlike Noah. Select reading and using other people's ideas was knowledge-activity she (W1,2,3) almost took for granted. She had wanted to go to the study group because she "needed to get some ideas" (W1.2) and the others in the group "could teach you to interrelate things".(W1.2) Rather than think for her self, Wyna would "use my words for his ideas so he wouldn't know I pinched them".(W1.2) She appeared almost glad she could do so, and certainly never expressed feelings of guilt or regret in

<sup>406</sup> It should be mentioned here that Noah (2) had previously shared Noah (1 & 3's) scepticisms for academic conventionality. However, in the year immediately previous to this year of study she had returned to highschool as a seventh form adult student and had therein learned (by asking) the reasons for such a convention as citations.

her interviews. Wyna's knowledge-constitutive relations were socially-constitutive in actual practice. Her knowledge-activity was securely bound between the touchstones of *social contact* and *evaluation* and she was merely the juggler in the action. Education for her consisted of the *social contacts* she made with people who she used to refine and define 'the knowledge' she required.

When such oppressive determinisms abounded, who was educating whom? Noah remained confused by the negative effect of the game's mediation on her knowledge-act. In this 'no-win' situation, Noah reflected on contesting tensions: when "*George*" had advised her to '*give it back to them*', she found using 'their' words (quotes) felt like cheating for it contested her own work ethic (N3); using their meaning (in her own words) was a moral issue concerned with plagiarism (N1.3) yet it seemed that using her own meanings was deemed "*wrong*" anyway. (N2.1.57) Was the purpose of writing assignments to illuminate the reader or the writer? And illuminate them to what? 'They' required evidence of her knowings so quickly after her study that she had barely made any judgements about it. Then 'they' told her she was wrong, without also saying how it could be right.

When neither the positives nor the negatives were identified, how was the adult student to find out what 'education' meant? Was academic sense supposed to be a qualitative extension of common sense or not? Bound in frustration, how was Noah ever to include some semblance of her own 'coming to know'? In the beginning, Noah had bracketed her own reasonings and "*didn't put any critique in [her] essay*" (N3.1) because she thought she "*didn't know enough*". (N2.1) (i.e. did not 'know it all' because she thought she had not read 'enough' argumentative sequence or supplementary materials.) However, since 'they' apparently welcomed originality, she had creatively linked the theory to her everyday world. But by the end of the year she thought 'they' did not want that kind of creative endeavour either, and she confirmed that belief with the comment that an examination topic "*which grabbed my creative instincts ... would have lost me a few marks ... because the answer to the question was just so obvious to me, I included an analogy instead of a boring  $a=b$ . So I probably lost marks for being creative*". (N3.5.126-95) Noah was figuratively in limbo at the university, and even more so at the year's closing than she had been at its opening. But the situation for Luisa was the obverse.

When the meanings of different issues of academic sense remained obscure, a postivistic response would be to lump them all together in a single complaint. Like Luisa. Only one of the five Luisa's in the research completed a year of study and in that endeavour she was successful. For Luisa (5), creating a relation between *social contact* and *evaluation* (like Wyna) finally ensured her 'success' in the institution, though this educational success itself marked very little increase in her understandings of either the substantive content or its epistemic base. Luisa (1,2,3,4,5) subjectified everything without differentiation so that the abstract and actual combined to overwhelm her epistemic awareness and in turn, this was reflected during the period of expression, in her "*flow of*

*consciousness*" writing.(L5.1) However Luisa(s) succeeded within the university course when she received the continued social support of trusted people, particularly during the period of time that she prepared her assignments.

Identifying academic-sense, positivistically, involved seeking similarity and a sharedness of meaning from others. Supported by her parents in her endeavours, they suggested that Luisa's first assignment task sounded similar to one in her neighbour's Playcentre training. Luisa(s) obtained and used the neighbour's assignment as a model when she undertook her own study but "*unfortunately*" the response of her tutor was not encouraging. Luisa(s) achieved only a 'D' [fail] grade and comments to the effect that she needed "*to be more objective*". Luisa's family supported her perplexed response to this tutor's feedback and urged her to write privately to the tutor requesting help. With the combined backing of shared and trusted familial meanings and decision making, Luisa did as she was urged. She requested a clarification of how she should have analysed the minor 'research' study since her own interpretation had been based upon her taken-for-granted experience of mothering. Surely her "*own opinions as a mother counted for something?*" she asked me in a voice that seemed to see truth as a matter of *opinion and taste*.<sup>407</sup> Luisa had in fact asked her tutor to explain the epistemic difference between subjectified opinions and objectified evidence, though she did not possess those words or the meanings. Likewise, the tutor did not respond to the epistemological matter explicitly. Instead, she too positivistically responded by listing for Luisa a sequence of 'learning' strategies which began, essentially, with 'take notes from the textbook and use them'. So Luisa's lesson confirmed Noah's thought. The educators seemed to be expecting students to somewhat unproblematically adopt the ideas and arguments given in study materials only, as they were not promoting the students' own powers of mind. What other reason could there be that the evaluator was unable to answer the epistemic perplexions of students, even when explicitly asked (by whatever means) to do so?

The tutor's list of strategies had included ensuring that Luisa knew to relate the knowledge from the course text to the information she had collected. Still somewhat confused about exactly 'why' this should create a better understanding than the one she had thought out for herself, Luisa at least carried out the tutor's instructions and resubmitted the assignment. Thus, with a very minimal understanding but with parental support and continued dinner-time discussions of the course knowledge, Luisa completed the other course assignments of the year. Maybe the sociality of the communicative contact with the tutor had some effect also, for each of them continued the year appending small encouraging notes to one another. Luisa was finally successful in the exam and completed the year remarking "*I don't know what I did, but I must have done something right*".(L5.5) Although still epistemically-confused, she now had the understanding that, in university, one used only the received knowledge and aimed to reproduce it. She now believed it

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<sup>407</sup> This variation of truth was also reflected in Luisa's upsetness when the High school teacher's had not liked "her little stories". Belenky et al, (1986:11) found a similar version of truth among her sample.

was not correct to use one's own subjective understandings.

For each typification, the hidden curriculum of academic sense had been represented by relations between different standpoints and touchstones, with Noah's relations being knowledge-constitutive in character while Luisa's and Wyna's were socially-constitutive. Luisa still found the logic of language so difficult that she could not penetrate the conventions of academic sense. Wyna's main educational connections had begun and still lay between the *social contact* and *evaluation* touchstones. Conversely, Noah remained very concerned right till the final examination to understand the relationship between her *personal epistemology* and *evaluation*.. Her inability to clarify 'what it was' reinforced her negative understandings of 'what IT was not: 'they' did not want her to think for herself. While her *personal epistemology* became a marginalised negation in the academe, the university epistemology was its dialectical opposite; socially identifying yet (ironically) not socially identified. It would require some formal instruction for these students to come to understand the know-how<sup>408</sup> of the university 'ways' of knowing. But this instruction was not yet available to distance-educated students. However, the time for preparing assignments was drawing to a close and students moved on to studying for final exams.

### *Final Examinations*

The final examination was one situation of evaluation where students had the most to lose both because of its secret nature and its level of weighting in their final grade.<sup>409</sup> For the students, it was also the study situation about which the least was known and the most had to be guessed.

Regardless of what was required, Noah was the one typification who was "*determined to sit the exam*" (N2.5.1.3) so that she could evaluate her performance against the lecturer(s) judgements (although she already felt she had "*passed for herself*" (N3.5.421).) Noah's determination (N1.2.3) not to miss this event was so strong that even though she was ill, for instance, Noah (2) sat the final examination without asking for consideration of 'impaired performance' because she "*wanted to know what was expected .... Otherwise I'll still be wondering next year*". (N2.5.1430)<sup>410</sup>

Where 'nothing' was known about the contents of the forthcoming exam, all typifications invoked the social-constitutive educational relation, sometimes to their detriment. The one thing they might have learned was that retaining an element of scepticism about advice itself would have been useful. Noah and Luisa followed any suggestion that seemed academically viable, but this included contradictory advice from educational authorities. At a regional course, a lecturer had suggested to the assembled class of students that they focus their examination study upon just one self-chosen

<sup>408</sup> Belenkey et al, 1986:53

<sup>409</sup> At the stage of this project, students still did not have access to their final examination scripts.

<sup>410</sup> However her own reasoning was flawed here for she was never to know either her raw or normed examination

and preferred theoretical position. However, once inside the examination room, "many students"<sup>(N2.3)</sup> found that the one position they had chosen to study (the interpretive paradigm) was not included in any question. This exclusion was unfortunate for more reasons than just the contradictory advice given by the lecturer. It was also the paradigm with which "many"<sup>(N3)</sup> everyday people identified because it was closest to a reflection of their own subjective lives.<sup>(N2.3)</sup> Being forced into a situation of answering<sup>411</sup> other paradigmatic positions was beyond their choice, their expectations and their experience. <sup>(N2.3)</sup> It was simply a further example of educational objectification and alienation.

In the absence of understanding examination expectations and intentions, students recalled from their educational history, the experience of 'sitting exams' for in spite of searching for advice, all students had realised quite early on that they would have to rely on guessing what topics might be included in examination scripts. All the students interviewed recalled Highschool experiences of rote learning and now found themselves having to rely on that self-same procedure to "clutter the mind"<sup>(N3.5)</sup> with as many facts, concepts and theoretical names as they could. But "rote learning" was not a preferred style of 'work' for Luisa or of 'study' for Noah.<sup>(N1.5.584)</sup> Noah (1,2,3) found she had "real trouble remembering,"<sup>(N3.5)</sup> because (she said), "my mind just doesn't want it" <sup>(N2.4)</sup>. "Its totally overloaded"<sup>(N3.5)</sup>

These educational contra-indications reinforced Noah's belief in her self-educative strengths and distanced further her Educational identification (though she no longer appeared overly concerned with this realisation <sup>(N1.2.3)</sup>). The power of this negation lay in both Noah's reclaiming of the right to think for herself <sup>(N1.2.3)</sup> and in her confirmation that educationalists' could be more epistemically fallible than she.<sup>(N1.3)</sup> In locating this dichotomously-opposed re-assurance of her own intellectual abilities, Noah was:

*quite surprised, quite pleased really, to realise I could do university study and do it well. I could get 'A's' if I was really in love with it and putting an effort into it .... I recognised I had the ability to do it. That was quite a nice feeling ... Other than that it hasn't been a big year [in terms of coming to know anything].*  
Noah 3.5

Without the authority's confirmation of the student's beliefs, the students felt unable to understand the criteria implicit in *evaluation*. Among the unidentified elements were the questions of how much to write in an examination essay, and whether or not to include quotes: "Although they don't require them, they're useful aren't they? I know they can get you extra marks"<sup>(N3.5)</sup> Neither did Noah include her own arguments in her final examination script <sup>(N1.2.3)</sup> because of her "own uncertainty"<sup>(N1.5.272)</sup> as to whether or not they should be included. Noah "didn't think [argument] was appropriate"<sup>(N2.4.3)</sup> for inclusion but felt rather "tuned into thinking, This is what they want to

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score since it was buried within the total course score which also included normed assignment scores.

<sup>411</sup> ie accepting, Identifying with, in terms of the lecturer's criteria of preference

*know'.*" (N3.5.446) Nor did she include extra theoretical ideas if she "*hadn't tested them in an assignment first*". (N2.5.480) Where the purpose of an examination was supposedly to test what the student knew, Noah was not about to include that which she was still uncertain of.

However, like all students interviewed, Noah was capable of reading what she wanted into the epistemic bases of examination questions: *'The exam question asked us to 'discuss the ways in which [x] might relate to [y]'. That was a front-up request for creativity but I got off on a tangent ... and then realised I was off on a tangent .... I thought 'well, that's really a bit slightly extreme', but it's fair'*". (N3.5) Noah had interpreted *'how [x] might relate to [y]'* as *'imagine how'*. She had required, in fact, prior and explicit feedback on the legitimate uses of her methods of reasoning within the bounds of academic sense.

The nature of the university knowledge Wyna sought, predominantly lay in the general relation between *social contact* and *evaluation* just as it did with Luisa. In effect this social-constitutive relation shifted Wyna's learning sequence directly from the stage of internalising (I/I.) to the stage of expression (./X) without her thoughts being mediated by any stage by deliberate self-reflection. Not only was her view of knowledge one of an external, social and static entity, it was also an act of seeking the exact and precisely-limited knowledge which would ensure her success. Wyna's reductionism was not only implicitly politically-inclined but in its preciseness, her activity sought the singular one and only opinion on *"How do I do 'it' successfully?"*. The knowledge that she had sought from her authoritative others' was the knowledge of legitimation strategies and, for the purpose of the final examination, she would find this by conflating her social-constitutive relation with a relation between the knowledges of *academic conventions* and *academic language*.

Within this form of expressive relation, Wyna demonstrated a communicative competence which *socially* earned her inclusion into the academy. But she depended upon the assumption that the university conflated 'linguistic competence' with 'knowledge-constitutivity'. In practice, Wyna's knowledge-act centred on how to express herself correctly, and privately-limiting the number of people with whom she shared this knowledge. Her intention was to prevent a problematic reading of her work. But how long could this subterfuge of knowing, last? In her focus on language, Wyna used technical skills, she said, of *"writing concisely "* (W2.2) and *"to the point"* (W1.4) and including, where she could, any appropriate conceptual terminology. (W2.3) Even as a first year student, in her first ever assignment she (W1.1) had invoked the use of such conventionalities as an extensive bibliography and in-text quotations, though she *"wasn't sure if it was quite right but it sounded OK."* (W1.4)

In the political search for examination success, memorisation and privatisation were also to prove to be important strategic elements for Wyna. It began with her early start to privately *"sussing out"* (Wx.xx) the lecturer. During the on-campus course (ref. study group experience) she said he had suggested *"to the class"* that the students *"just needed to study both their essays."* (Wx) She gave this as the reason

she had gone home and memorised every word, dot, comment, comma and reference in her own essays, along with the long bibliographies of each of them. This information she reported to me on the day before the final exam. At that time, she asked me to "test her"<sup>(w.s)</sup> on a lengthy piece of rote memorisation.<sup>412</sup> Although Wyna<sup>(s)</sup> vaguely reported that the lecturer had given the advice "during his lecture or something", not one of the other four people who attended the same lecture had heard this suggestion - and when I later checked it out again, Noah (3) said "I would have noted anything like that, that he'd said. It's not in MY notes."<sup>(N3S)</sup> This left the researcher with a perplexion. Who did one believe? It did not appear to be public or common knowledge that the essay topics of the year could be used in the exam, and this private seeking of evaluation information put Wyna<sup>(s)</sup> at a distinct competitive advantage when it came to her successful inclusion in the University. But there was even more politic to it than that.

Wyna's pursuit of educational success was not marked by any concern to come to know in a knowledge-constitutive sense. In spite of my repeated askings and hints on 'how to do it', Wyna<sup>(1,2)</sup> was unable to apply the course-given theory - or even single conceptualisations - to her everyday life. While giving her<sup>(w.s)</sup> help at the last interview, I gave her the example of how the concept of social class might be related to her experience of sitting her family aside from "the others"<sup>(w.s)</sup> at her child's Private School picnic. She said she had "never thought to look at it that way" and she "didn't think other people would feel excluded."<sup>(w.s)</sup> Then, in the interview which followed the examination, Wyna<sup>(s)</sup> thanked me for "giving" her that particular suggestion because, she claimed, she had "used it .... That was good. It should have got me a few more marks." She continued by remarking that during the year of interviews she would have "picked [my] brains more often, if only [she] could".<sup>(w.s)</sup>

All through the year Wyna had required the mediation of University-identified others to give her 'the knowledge' while she continued to feel content with being unable to think it through for herself. This same Wyna, however, went on to win the highest marks in the final examination itself in a class of approximately 600 students [though she would never really find this out since her raw exam score became imbedded in the total-course, normed score that she was officially given]. In ideal terms, her academic success was entirely due to her year-long, single-minded pursuit of a connection between *social contact* and *evaluation*, through employing skills of persuasion and conventionality. Educational authorities had been complicit in her reach for success for not only did they fail to ascertain whether she *actually knew* what she inferred she did, but one lecturer also gave in to her persuasions for private knowledge, and this set her at a distinct advantage to the others.

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<sup>412</sup> As part of that research ethic, I had promised students I would give them help after the final pre-exam interview was complete, as thanks for their year of being a research subject.

Wyna, occupying the Institutional space assumedly set aside for a knower, effectively marginalised the real Noah. Wyna had successfully demonstrated that one student had the ability to exclude other students. But that exclusionary activity relied upon the 'private' existence of a hidden curriculum, commonly called 'the game'. Her success could only eventuate because educational authorities made the curriculum hidden and political rather than public or explicit, particularly where its epistemic expectations were concerned. In return, students chanced their way around the limits of its bordered unknowableness and Wyna was thus able to adopt the facades of knowing. The privatisation of clues which formed part of 'the game' could only be overcome if the nature of the hidden curriculum were made explicit and if educational authorities found alternative ways to assess a genuine knowing rather than mere acquisition or guessing.<sup>413</sup> To begin with, these distance-educated students needed to come to know in a dialogical relation, with a genuine knower, and in a place where the students had the power to ask questions of the hidden epistemology of academic-sense.<sup>414</sup>

The possibilities for a change to the politic of the hidden curriculum required an immanent critique of its practices, particularly in terms of its knowledge-constitutive negotiations. If the institution of these students' formalised education wished to change, it would need first to come to see that it advantaged politicians<sup>415</sup> over Knowers and that, in effect, this was due to an epistemological view where knowledge was reified as an external static entity - as shown in the evaluator's evident desire to have knowledge reproduced, unchanged, in assignments.<sup>416</sup> Until such epistemological changes were effected, Noah's only come-back would be to rejoin her everyday friends in the world of a common-sense knower. Noah (N1.23) had achieved a final overall grade in the range 'C' though she had 'B's' for assignments. At the end of the year, when I asked her if she felt she had a good grasp of the total course material her now typically angry reply to questions of academic-sense was:

*No. Because you only skim the surface. And therefore I don't think its even a GRASP at all. I picked up some very interesting FACTS. I found them STIMULATING; but I wouldn't think I had a particular grasp of them at all. I can understand what they are about, I COULD APPLY THEM, BUT I COULDN'T ARGUE THEM. I can see their applicability but I couldn't argue any of them, I don't think, because I DONT THINK I KNOW THEM ALL. I think I just have a good measure of it.*

*Noah 1.5.282*<sup>417</sup>

The better side of course evaluation was that Noah acknowledged, that in terms of her differentiated common-sense world and her need to think deeply, she had:

<sup>413</sup> Socially organised but not socially constructed as a knowledge-in-itself.

<sup>414</sup> Continued mystification of the curriculum (Young, 1973).

<sup>415</sup> Matthias Finger, (1989:15) in discussing the crisis of modernity links it to Adult education saying that "if adult education follows the same path as traditional education it will end up like modernity, in crisis too." Increasingly split between institutional determinism and personal preference - them and us.

<sup>416</sup> Smith and Lovat (1990:7) find that by the very nature of what is included and what is rejected, the curriculum creates a reality for potential-knowers. Its influence is direct and "conveys views of reality, truth and knowledge in its practice."

<sup>417</sup> The capital letters indicate Noah(1)'s unusual emphasis on what she thought. She was seldom as explicit as this.

*passed for Me. I was really pleased to realise I could do it and do it well. It started to change my way way of thinking. It gave me an alternative way of seeing things when appropriate ... like thinking on a different plane almost.*

*Noah 3.5.474*

When 'change' was a valued epistemic principle, it was incorporated in social action as well as one's life ideology. The notion of change was central to Noah's world view and she felt she had accomplished this aim. When I had suggested she might continue study of a similar discipline the next year, the very idea of 'more of the same' bored Noah (N1.2.3) into commenting, "Oh Gawd no! Not another hour of this, ... I've got sick of it really".(N2.5.1175) Her social action was to withdraw from the alienating university context and to return to life in the everyday world. On reflection, this self-emancipatory act would become the act of finding her own voice - of being enabled to publicly think, say, and argue in a situation where she would find mutual respect for pluralistic independence. While the research situation may have been emancipatory to some extent for Noah, she felt the institution within which she had studied was not so inclined.

### *Final Note*

Although all Noah's 'passed' their university courses, none subsequently chose to return to university. Neither did the four Luisa's who had left their study in the first half year. Of the Wyna's, I was unsure even when asked as none expressed a desire to enrol for another year but also none challenged the possibility. From their completely different typified positions and within their different knowledge-act relations, each type of student felt marginalised from the institution because of various contestable tensions that they were unable to satisfactorily resolve. Their knowledge-actions spoke volumes of the social and knowledge-constitutive relations within the academy they had experienced. The question which followed would probably be - to what extent were these same typifications evident in other educational situations of life? The last word on this exploration of the learner's version of educational marginalisation belongs to those who suffered from it:

*I imagined the University would be far more straight up. There was all that wonderful knowledge we could get into and prove we could do ... but I think I can do it anyway [at home] .... It's not really as tough as I would have imagined ... You just have to be buddies with some of the lecturer's and they can give you guidelines and you can chat about the stuff. You have to have the ability, but I would have thought it would be mostly ability, with less of the political-type stuff.*

*Noah (xxxx.5)*

## Chapter Seven:

# Positive and negative mediations of the preferred educational relations: implications for emancipatory change

*'the problem of knowledge is to change it'*

The exploration had now established which different forms of knowledge the adults had similarly identified, yet differently prioritised and actioned. These knowledges acted as 'situational variables'<sup>418</sup> in forming the dynamic whanau of the hidden curriculum within which the students sought congruence with the university's epistemology. Having established the dominant educational relations between these previously-habituated and now-expected knowledges for each typification, the next quest was to find the social interruptions of these particular epistemic spaces. In the previous chapter, the onus was to provide evidence of the existence of standpoints, touchstones and mediations to the educational relations of knowledge-action. This chapter now briefly reviews and discusses some positive and negative aspects of that mediation in order to provide some hope for emancipatory change in educational settings, whether that setting be in homes, in schools or in university lecture halls. This chapter would enable one to see the part that particular mediations played in this whanau of educational relations, as students attempted to come to grips with the formalised expectations of academic-sense in their acts of coming to know.

### *A whanau of knowledges and educational relations*

So far in this exploratory investigation, seven standpoints and touchstones had been identified and sourced. The standpoints were the similarly-grounded features prioritised by these marginalised students, and the touchstones were the institutional meanings the students sought in 'formalising' their education. The shared standpoints consisted of the students' personal epistemologies, social contact and the language of communication. The institutional touchstones, apart from that concerned with administration, consisted of the conventions of scholarly conduct, the course content, and the institutional forms of evaluating written expression. But the hidden curriculum of academic-sense consisted of more than static features and dominant relations. In its dynamic nature, it mediated the students' educational intentions and this action typified the basis of the marginalisation. In an abstracted sense, the standpoints and touchstones themselves simply formed the 'hidden' parameters (or polarised 'ends') of the epistemic space between these different educational relations. In a social sense, the standpoints represented where the student 'came from',

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<sup>418</sup> Cross, 1981; Darkenwald and Valentine, 1985

while the touchstone was where they thought the teachers 'were at', so the relational 'space' (between standpoints and touchstones) represented the place where the students and the teachers supposedly interacted by sharing knowledges. However, within this space, marginalisation occurred when only some of those relations were academically prioritised while other relations were ignored or forgotten and generally remained unlegitimated. Noah chose to prioritise the relation between her 'personal epistemology' and 'course content'; Luisa forefronted the relation between 'language' and the 'conventions' of acting and knowing, while Wyna concentrated upon the relation between 'social contact' and 'evaluation'. (See the summarised basis of these relations of the hidden curriculum in Table 7.1) The positive and negative mediations to each of these radical educational relations will be discussed separately in a moment. In the meantime, this set of choices would result in Noah becoming radicalised as a knower, Luisa losing and 'dropping out' of formal education and Wyna winning the highest grades. Their private search for the university's preferred educational relation had been that essential 'it' the students had sought when they first entered this tertiary institution. The 'it' was the knowledge of 'academic sense'. The difficulty this complexity of relations now presented was where to begin its critical analysis.

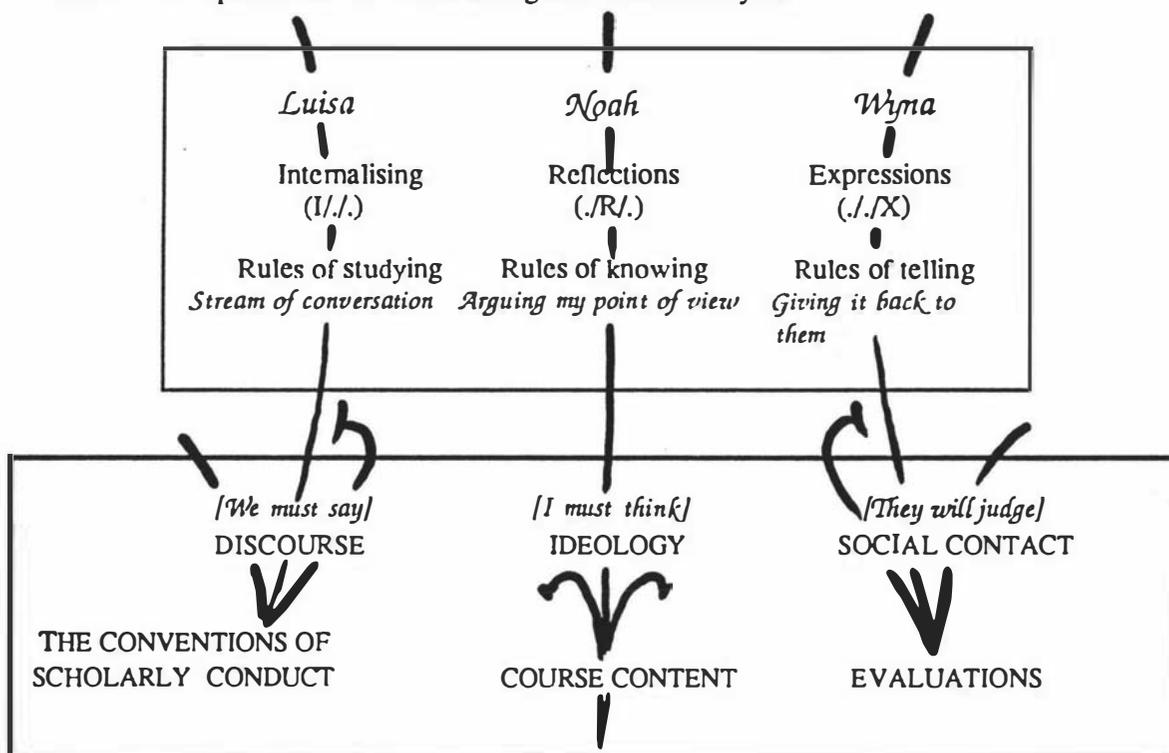


Table 7.1

*Predominant knowledge-constitutive relations for each radical type of intending knower*

Critique would centre on the positive and negative nature of teacher mediations. This chapter explores how the academic teachers involved in this study had mediated these dominant educational relations of Wyna, Luisa and Noah. As the first of the standpoints of the hidden curriculum to produce evidence of itself in the life-time of the students, the habituated 'personal epistemology' of each typification undergirds each educational relation, but it is only Noah who problematised her

common-sense *'personal epistemology'* as an explicit standpoint.

What was forefronted, Identified (and therefore perceived as 'positive') in each educational relation, was complexly pivoted about the valuing of either subjectification or objectification and about knowledge-constitutive or social-constitutive educational relations. For instance, it was Noah who was altogether different from the other two typifications in the positions she chose. She was an idealist while they were materialists. Her *'personal epistemology'* centred in ideas and knowledge-constitutivity, while their epistemology was primarily concerned with a social view of educational purpose, and an externalised or objectified view of knowledge.<sup>419</sup> She was the intellectual who loved ideas and self-reflective practices but did not enjoy the hegemonic altering of her habituated way of knowing. To her, the move from common-sense to academic-sense was primarily a subjective activity, but this hegemony was experienced as an objectified and mediated separation of the knower from the known. In this investigation then, the relation between objectification and subjectivation was the site of the epistemic fracturing of the knowledge of 'academic-sense'.

Subjectivation, as the dialectic between what was self and what was not self,<sup>420</sup> was the key to Noah's personal epistemology. Interesting subjectively-accessed ideas were a *'heck of a lot easier'* to come to know than were things that were objectified *'way out there'*.<sup>(N3)</sup> To Noah, knowledge and thought (as the conjunction between knowledge and knowing) were the necessary labour to transformative social action. Consequently, by means of subjectivation, Noah very explicitly related her standpoint of *'personal epistemology'* to the touchstone of *'course content'* as she 'came to know'.

The chapter continues with a critical discussion centred on both the positive and negative mediations to the dominant educational relations of each typified way of knowing.

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<sup>419</sup> Margaret Mary Denis (1979) found a similar style of personal epistemology which she referred to as 'intuitive' learning. She listed its basic processes as knowing with unwavering certitude that learning will occur; trusting one's own intuitions and the intuitive process; remaining open to the unexpected as well as the expected; being absolutely honest in action and reflection; delineating generic boundaries for the area of learning; reflecting upon and drawing new insight from one's own experiences; developing a sense of multiple realities; focussing attention on ground rather than figure; attacking learning obliquely; embarking on a pilgrimage in learning; developing a sensitive awareness of the proper timing of processes and events; suspending or minimising deliberate conscious rational processes; being aware of and responding to energies outside of oneself; dialoguing with the materials; allowing oneself to be led or drawn in a particular direction; surrendering to the intuitive; being aware of and following one's feelings in the learning process; being in touch with the influences and the dynamics of the unconscious; appreciating meaning in synchronicity; and recognising the giftedness of revelation in the learning process. Similarities between the intuitive learner and the Noah could provide a fruitful source of study; particularly in the social relations of education they encounter(ed).

<sup>420</sup> Ibid

### *Relations between 'personal epistemology' and 'course content'*

The relation between 'epistemology' and 'course content' specifically focused upon people's ways of reasoning about the given course knowledge but in the movement from common-sense to academic-sense, the teachers' control of the students' ways of knowing negatively mediated the students' personal epistemologies. This mediation began with the first posting of the study material to the enrolled student.

The social mediation of educational practices in the first posting reproduced the paradox of an ideology of success. In all four courses most, if not all, of the potentially epistemic content (which explained the basis of academic-sense to students) was to be found in the 'Administration Study Guide'. In sending it prior to the study guides (on course content), already the theory of being educated was divorced from its practice. Knowledge and the (expected) ways of coming to know were separated. Not only that, but also no course lecturer discussed the purpose of including this material even though from page one of booklet one, they had begun to practice it. In the end, this material would be shown to have no positive epistemological basis but its material existence reproduced an educational paradox. This chapter would demonstrate that 'Education' was 'successful' only when both knowledge and its ways of knowing were each objectified and then separated, one from the other and both from the learner. The irony of this situation was that only for Wyna (winner), who valued and practised this form of educational objectification, did the course-given knowledge remain obscure, even though, educationally, she was the most successful of all the typifications. On the other side of the coin, the course-given knowledge would become known (able to be used in the practices of one's life) only when it, and its ways of knowing, were together subjectified. This was the action of Noah (knower) and it set her typification apart (from Wyna especially). But how could teachers be complicit in creating this paradox?

First of all, academic-sense was most often explained in material rather than ideal terms; that is, as technical work rather than intellectual. In the first posting, three courses provided clues to academic-sense by including several pages of 'study' suggestions. One course really extended itself by including no less than 29 consecutive pages of 'study skill' material.(X2/1/39-68) But 'epistemology' was too refined a word to use as explanation for its content, since the given commentary seldom focused on, even superficially, the development of knowledge itself. Where it was so, advice ranged from only one phrase to three sentences in length. It was more common for the bulk of the material to relate directly and only to behavioural manifestations of learning ('study skills' or 'study habits'). The absence of information on intellectual procedure and the exclusion of theoretical discussion on the link between knowledge and ways of knowing further objectified the student's understandings of the academically-expected 'intellectual quality'.

Educational mediation which focussed on enhancing the personal epistemology was a rare

commodity. The scarcity of rare commodities decreases the likelihood of forming empathetic relations with likeminded persons in actual practice, but nonetheless, these students (in a typificatory sense) and these teachers still exist, even if they were not working together at the time of this investigation. Only for Noah, among the typifications, was the connection between a '*personal epistemology*' and '*course content*', a direct and dominant educational relation. Her intentions dovetailed with the like-minded Lecturer 13 who foregrounded this relation systematically and consistently, with his epistemologically-centred dialogue imbedded within the given knowledge rather than separate from it. Like Noah, Lecturer 13's epistemology appeared to centre in ideas rather than in the sociality of education. Beyond that one teacher, in one part of only one course in four, the students' subjective and subjectified ways of knowing received little mention or attention in the year of this investigation. In this chapter, his positive attempts to teach academic-sense provide a constructive basis against which to contrast the stated intentions of the other twelve educational mediators (teachers).

The empathetic nature of educational relations is shown by shared meanings, intentions and actions. Generally speaking, this educational relation (between *personal epistemology* and *course content*) had specific characteristics for Noah. She desired to subjectivate the '*course content*', to image and argue it along with her own ideas, in her own mind. She wished to theorise the given material and to consider a variety of ways of seeing. Finally, she would legitimate given ideas only after imaginatively 'testing' the applicability of them to the social world she knew. Likewise, Lecturer 13 shared Noah's view of education as being an intimate relation between knowledge and knowing. It would be shown how he foregrounded the characteristics that accessed for the students the possibilities of subjectivation, theorising, legitimation as plausibility, and application to the New Zealand world. It was the dynamic of subjectification or access which, above all, marked the abilities of this teacher. Within this particular relation between '*epistemology*' and '*course content*', the choice between objectification and subjectification was not so much a theory-practice or legitimacy issue as one of the social distance of the learner from knowledge-constitutivity. In theory, to value *educational* objectification was to deny the existence of both personal epistemologies and knowledge-constitutive relations. It was to negate the person's right and response-ability to reason. Indeed, it was to negate the very authenticity of the period of reflection with knowledge-activity (JR/).

An empathetic teaching about the nature of academic sense, required the teacher to enhance the knowledge-constitutive relation between the student and the expert. In all, three factors were relevant to Lecturer 13's teaching activity and the process of subjectified access, these being the adults habituated ways of reasoning, their background knowledges and the academic-sense of disciplined ways of reasoning. As well as mixing these three factors together, Lecturer 13 strengthened this educational relation by communicating informally. That is, he used the language of commonsense to indicate the meanings of academic sense and in so doing, enhanced and

foregrounded the social relation between the student and the expert. When he subjectified the student-expert (knowledge-constitutive) relation, he drew the potential knower's interest toward the experts' ideas in an ideological (or ideas-centred) interpersonal relation:

*Many of you will be pleasantly surprised just how relevant these theories are to an understanding of [issues] today. The more you can appreciate the question [the theorists] are grappling with, the more insight you will get into contemporary problems .... After coming to grips with these writers you will be transformed: ... [and] 'travel with a different view'.*

Lecturer 13

An empathetic form of educational mediation required the teacher to negate their personal social-constitutive relation with the student by backgrounding their own presence. In this way Lecturer 13 presented to the students, the possibility of claiming this expert's knowledge as their own, rather than his own. Not once did he make reference to himself in his discussion, instead maintaining an objectified teacher-student distance. In clearly distinguishing the expert-student knowledge-constitutive relation from the teacher-student social-constitutive relation, and in prioritising the former, he drew the expert and student into the possibility of a 'conversation'. His own mediation was used directly for the enhancement this epistemic relation between the expert's knowledge and the student's ways of knowing. While it would take more than an overturning of the dominance between these two educational relations to create a scholar of the student, no other lecturer so clearly distinguished these two relations from one another. In fact, the mediation of these other teachers was practically all centred in the sociality of the teacher-student social-constitutive relation.

The educational relation between knowledge and coming to know, is negatively mediated by a forefronted enhancement of the social-constitutive relation (between themselves and students) and consequent backgrounding of the knowledge-constitutive relation (between experts and students). All the other twelve lecturers had attempted to make their courses 'user-friendly' (or socially-dependent?) by directly enhancing the *social* relations between themselves and the student(s). As this *social* relation was forefronted, the expert's course knowledge became further socially distanced from the potential knower, and the difficulties of this objectification factor were now compounded in a four-fold way for these adults. First - 'study skills' had been separated from the course content; second - epistemological explanation of expected ways of reasoning was markedly absent from behaviourally-manifested study skills advice; third - rather than enhance the experts relation with the student, these teachers foregrounded their own relation with the student, and fourth - 'the knowledge' was already objectivated in their correspondence text anyway.

Enhancing the social-constitutive relation at the cost of the knowledge-constitutive relation seemed to be based upon a non-reciprocated form of sympathy and other-dependence rather than on empathy. These teachers who enhanced the social relation between themselves and their students

did so by such methods as introductory welcomes,<sup>421</sup> personal mail and with humour when, for instance, study guides were delayed.<sup>422</sup> However, without negating the value of relaxing the students, this bond of friendship was often perplexing, since the informal intersubjectivities of 'you' or 'us' in one paragraph might soon followed by objectified references to 'the students' and 'they' in following ones.<sup>423</sup> The double message in this confused form of address was reciprocated by the students who soon referred to their lecturers as 'they'. Thus, in spite of the teachers' contrary attempts, the relations between student and teacher were apt to become formally objectified rather than intersubjectively enhanced, by the students themselves. This did not worry Noah who was not seeking her teacher's friendship anyway, but Wyna would find this situation somewhat difficult because she wanted to subjectify her 'social contact' with her lecturer. If she had met him, she probably would not have found Lecturer 13's self-objectification particularly 'helpful'.

Subjectifying the knowledge-constitutive relation for the students provided a base point so that they could move their ways of reasoning from common-sense to academic-sense. Having subjectified the knowledge-constitutive relation between student and expert first, Lecturer 13 now moved on to develop the depth of their reasoning, but he did not impose the expectation of *an* answer or *the* end point. In epistemological terms, he did not impose *standards* of legitimation or particular forms of truth on his first year students. He appeared to recognise legitimating as a second-stage purpose of knowing. Rather, Lecturer 13 required the student to concentrate more on disciplining their own ways of knowing:

*Begin by reading [Theorist 'x'] .... He sets out a view ... (not the only possible view) .... For this course you do not have to take the discussion about the theories too seriously. It is sufficient to ... [get] insight .... Do not worry too much about ... but take careful note of ..... Finally, read ... to get a general idea .... Now in a relaxed fashion read .... Do not try to understand the details ..... That will come later. Try to 'get a feel for' ...*

(X1/2/1-2)

By forefronting knowledge rather than truth, along with the common-sense notion of 'generalising' (rather than 'theorising'), students may be coaxed beyond the trepidations of a terror of error. In fact, implicit in this teacher's statement was a realisation that coming to know ought not to be rigidified and dichotomised into what was right and what was wrong, but should accept 'truth' and 'error' as part and parcel of coming to know. Lecturer 13 reflected to the students the value of theorising legitimately rather than legitimating theoretically. This absolved the everyday adult from the tension of certain teacher expectations. Lecturer 13 did not expect his students to search for one

<sup>421</sup> "Welcome to the course .... We look forward to helping you through the year"(Y1/1/1); and "Welcome. I'm [Joe Bloggs] and I head a team ...."(X1.1.1)

<sup>422</sup> "Study guide will be late ... For some of you this will be a welcome reprieve ... So do not despair - keep reminding yourself that like a fibre diet it is good for you."(X2)

<sup>423</sup> Among the many examples was this one: "Our course ... para 1 ... What do students need so they can think ... para 2 ... Our belief is that as students become familiar they will ... para 3 ... There has been no effort to make up your mind for you ... para 5" (Y1.1.2)

particular point of view or a single truth. He was implying the possibility of multiple viewpoints and its corollary was that his was not the only valid judgement. He did reflect himself as 'the expert' to the students.

Inherent in building and strengthening the epistemological standpoint of this preferred knowledge-constitutive relation, was a concurrent devaluing of the myths of privilege surrounding social-constitutive relations. Lecturer 13 attempted to negate the objectification which, for instance, was part of Luisa's belief in '*keeping a respectful distance*' between herself and her teachers and experts. To do this he reinforced the idea that teachers were not the only judges of truth(s) when he included the decision-making of unknown others in an everyday, opinionated form. This act in itself reflected and forefronted the 'commonality' of reasoning whether in a common-sense or academic-sense mode:

*Its probably fair to say that [the expert's] social blueprint has not impressed many. Its vagueness has annoyed even those who feel some sympathy with his social critique.*

(X1/2/8)

Strengthening the knowledge-constitutive relation between experts (as knowledge-makers) and students (as potential knowledge-makers) involved the educator in the relativism of a constructivist philosophy. This world-view negated the boundaries between knowledge and coming to know. By lessening the epistemic tensions of 'rigorous' legitimations, Lecturer 13 was calming the fears of students and enabling them to ask their own questions; letting their own inquisitiveness and curiosity motivate them into seeking a deeper understanding of the course content. In this way the teacher was acknowledging not only the possibility of the existence of relative forms of 'truth', but also the pluralistic relativism involved in different ways of 'seeing things'.

Grounding educational practices by starting from the standpoint of a student's personal epistemology, enabled the intending knower to 'move from' as well as 'move beyond' the supposed limits of common-sense. In effect, Lecturer 13 was cajoling the student to develop the habits of their '*personal epistemology*' further ('*get a feel for*'). This continued use of 'the personal' would create what has been called, '*a feeling of being connected*<sup>424</sup> in an educational space which is more complex and holistic in nature.<sup>425</sup> Researchers have confirmed<sup>426</sup> that the use of a student's 'personal method' of common-sense reasoning can enable the student to reflect and

<sup>424</sup> Davies, 1979.

<sup>425</sup> Gibbs, 1981, Belenky et. al., 1986. At this moment education begins to centre epistemology as a discipline - and if the teacher carried on centering (or subjectifying) this relation between the students personal epistemology and the experts knowledge, then formal education could be seen as an epistemic development. Perhaps this was basically the development a university hoped to achieve, for in Australasia over a long period of time, a period of everyday experience (which includes epistemological experience and habituation) has been seen as advantageous to the university system in terms of having students complete a degree. (Eg, Thomas, Beeby and Oram, 1939:112; Foster, 1962; Eaton, 1980.)

<sup>426</sup> Percy and Ramsden, 1980. Gibbs, 1981.

make judgements as they had previously done and this in turn, would encourage them to abstract meaning from materials rather than simply reproduce them. It was in this way that Noah used her habituated, flexible ways of reasoning to subjectivate knowledge. What was given to her as an expert's objectivated theory was first subjectified, then imaginatively subjectivated and, if accepted, resulted in being 'owned' and believed. Thus, while the teacher had enabled *physical or social access* to thoughts and theories, Noah had gained *intellectual access*, by reinvestigation of the ideas through her reflective act of subjectivation. Even in her common-sense world, Noah would not unproblematically accept others' opinions. For a knower, while educators gave one form of access, 'knowing' itself involved personal intellectual access by the student. It was this personal movement which Lecturer 13 was encouraging in a non-threatening way. In doing so, he seemed to implicitly understand both Noah's passion, and Wyna's reluctance, to develop the challenges of their minds: "If you want a flying start, read ... (a small book). Do not read ... (a large book) yet unless you want intellectual indigestion." (X1/2A)

<u>The theory of [Theorist x]</u>
Read: [Text] pp... Make brief notes on (i)..., (ii)..., (iii)..., (iv)....
(1) <u>[X's] life</u> , ... <i>Get a picture of the society he lived in, the problems he faced, what influenced him. While not essential, this can help with understanding the theory.</i>
(2) <u>His view of the person</u> , [X] argued that there were three aspects of the human [trait] .... [synopsis] <i>We all have a measure of each ... From this he derives a position on [social activity] ... [synopsis]</i>
(3) <u>His view of society</u> [synopsis]
(4) <u>Key notions</u> [synopsis and questions]
(5) <u>Summary so far</u> [synthesis draws together all the above work in general fashion]
(6) <u>Ideal intentions or purposes of the theory</u> [synopsis]
(7) <u>Application of the theory in relation to specifics of the discipline</u> [synopsis]
(8) <u>Conclusion</u> [synopsis and questions]

Table 7.2

*Subheadings used as a systematic form of analysis for each theoretical position which was taught*

While expressed in common-sense language, Lecturer 13's systematic development of academic-sense involved demonstrating to the student, the circularity of (a) the relative influence of the material world on the development of ideas, (b) the key conceptualisations of the ideology and the intentions of the theorist, along with (c) applications of the theory (ideas) back to both the common-sense and academic-sense (disciplinary) worlds. In Lecturer 13's systematic development of the student's ways of reasoning, three methods were used. First, he modelled to the students a consistent (or 'standardised') method of analysing a single theorist's work through the subheadings he used. (See Table 7.2) Second, in his conclusions (subheading 8 in Table 7.2 and reported in full in Table 7.3) he urged the students to form their own point of view, all the while gradually moving their reasoning from subjectively-related and common-sensically expressed questions of how they *'felt about' 'x'* towards an academically-disciplined and formally-expressed modes of reasoning, such as *'are his claims plausible?'*. It seemed that the whole point of Lecturer 13's systematic and inductive sequence of questions had been to link the theorist's reasons to the potential knower's

ways of reasoning, and effecting this relation between substantive content and procedure included acknowledging the difficulties apparent in the theorist's writings. Having shown that anyone can make mistakes, Lecturer 13 then effectively informed the student of where they might begin to analyse any theories and how they might begin to be 'critical' given the entry level of their studies. This seemed to be an essential connection. In linking the less-than-perfect everyday epistemology to the less-than-perfect course content, Lecturer 13 was foregrounding the potential, the possibility of possibility itself, in a student's ways of reasoning. Lecturer 13 was, in fact, employing the very use of negativities and negations that Adorno's theory of the 'negative dialectic' enabled.

Theorist One:

8. Conclusion: It is not easy to criticise a theory such as [X's] without a good grounding in philosophy (to attack his ideals and arguments) and an understanding of modern sociology and psychology (to criticise his empirical claims). At this point this cannot be expected nor is it necessary. For the moment ask three questions:

1. Do [this theorist's] ideals appeal to you? Why or why not?
2. Is he consistent in his claims and arguments?  
If not, that is a negative element; for a theory ought to be consistent. (Why?)
3. Are his claims plausible? Do they fit your experience?

Theorist Two:

8. Conclusion: [This theorist] is difficult to criticise not because his ideas are difficult but because he does not express himself clearly and is often quite inconsistent. You might ask:

1. Do his ideals appeal to you more than [Theorist One's] did?
2. Do his inconsistencies and muddles destroy the value of his theory or does something important remain despite them?
3. Are his claims about [the application of the theory] plausible? Do they fit your experience?

Theorist Three:

8. Conclusion: As a start to the task of criticising [Theorist Three], ask:

1. Does his [ideals] excite your interest? Would you like a society of [people of this ilk]?
2. Do his arguments about [these ideas] seem correct?  
(Are we, for example, interested in knowledge only in so far as it furthers our own purposes?)
3. Are his claims about [these applications] plausible?

Table 7.3

*Questions at the conclusion of teaching each theorist. Lecturer 13's systematic ways of 'disciplining' subjective ways of reasoning*

Providing a clear and concise synopsis of what it meant for the student 'to be critical' in a disciplinary academic-sense, may also have been a necessary step for the qualitative and flexible development of a student's personal epistemology. After acknowledging the expert's less-than-perfect personal epistemology and foregrounding the potential of the student's personal epistemology there was a further somewhat-nebulous discipline-related issue which needed to be addressed and that was the link between the ways of knowing of academic disciplines (i.e. a disciplined form of academic-sense) and the ways of knowing of students (common-sense). Only Lecturer 13 and the writer of Course(71) privileged the direct curriculum relation between 'the discipline' and the student's social world. Each did it in a different way. Lecturer 13 rounded off his section of the course with a list of some general or perhaps 'universal' strategies for critique within his discipline (see Table 7.4). The list suggested factors on which to focus reason during the

period of reflective thinking (R/). This procedural knowledge was foregrounded rather than the substantive knowledge of the course.

Critique of three Theorists

Read [author], Ch.'X'

Do not worry too much about not being able to criticise the theorists in any full or convincing way. Note rather the general strategies:

- (1) Pointing out the lack of arguments (eg ...)
- (2) Showing that terms are vague or ambiguous (eg ...)
- (3) Suggesting that metaphors are misleading (eg ...) or question begging (eg ...)
- (4) Showing that a claim is unfalsifiable (eg ... and ...)
- (5) Suggesting that some claims are false in the light of recent evidence (eg ...)

Finally, read [author] pages.... for a final plug for the contemporary relevance of these theorists.

(X1/2/15)

Table 7.4

*The 13th lecturer's emphasis on a particular disciplined way of reasoning*

While Lecturer 13 had forefronted an abstract form of the procedural knowledge of his discipline, the course writer(Y1) indicated the link between his discipline and the students' social world.<sup>427</sup>

*Our hope is that once again you will be inspired to want to apply [the discipline] for yourself. After all, there is a great deal of [discipline] work to be done in New Zealand*

Y1/2/(v)

The extent to which knowing content rather than knowing procedural knowledge would qualitatively develop the academic reasoning of students remained open to question. The difference between Wyna and Noah's epistemological intentions was reflected by this course's link of a theory to everyday practice. It was within this particular course(Y1) that Noah(2,3) had found the freedom to think of her everyday world in terms of the theories she was learning, whether she was in the shower, the courtroom or driving in the countryside. Where Noah was concerned, this course(Y1) intentionally linked the subjective common-sensical '*personal epistemology*' with the '*course content*' and in so doing broke the barrier between the everyday and the university as disparate sources of knowledge. It effected a congruence with Noah's intentions and ways of knowing. However since Wyna was unable to see where '*theories fitted*',(w1) she retained a belief that knowledge was an external and static commodity. Instead of looking at the procedural aspect of knowledge and reflecting for herself, she preferred to ask others for 'it' and to passively listen to the answer. Other than this, it remains unclear to what extent references to the substantive basis of courses rather than to the procedural knowledge of a discipline would be of epistemological use to

<sup>427</sup> "What seems more important is to get students to be able to use the discipline for themselves. This approach makes [the discipline] 'come alive' for the student. Indeed, unless [the discipline] can help make sense of the everyday life, it probably has limited value."(p.2) "This course is oriented toward doing [the discipline] and is intended to lay the foundation for students to become active learners."(p.5) [In spite of its objectified language, each of these references was addressed directly to students!]"Follow your own interests .... the more you read the deeper will be your understanding."(p.5) "The basic principle is to get thinking about [the discipline] in a way that interests you personally."(p.13)

first year students themselves.

A paradoxical situation arises (in terms of social inclusivity and enabling epistemological potential), in the educator's choice to employ common-sense, informal language when a class of students display variant levels of ability to reason. Although Lecturer 13 did not emphasise the name of his discipline or discuss rather than prescribe its epistemological basis, his exclusion of the 'big words' ('philosophy', 'concepts' and 'discipline') may have lessened Luisa's fears of 'big words' since she<sup>(1,2)</sup> thought '*the course got a lot easier here*' referring to Lecturer 13's material. But Luisa was about to leave the university anyway having been 'gatekept' by another matter (discussed later). However, in relation to both discursive issues (what kind of words to use) and epistemic issues (what depths and kinds of reasoning to encourage and why), Lecturer 13's prescriptions may have been underteaching Noah's potential. For instance, Noah could have used those big words to clarify to herself what she was learning in terms of academic-sense (critically examining philosophy as a 'discipline'), since she was the one typification who was already reflecting upon various ways of thinking and had read philosophy for pleasure. However, within this issue of teaching 'the disciplines', one must acknowledge inherent teaching problems. Beyond all else, perhaps, this investigated sample of radicalised ways of knowing provided a view of divergent levels of reasoning and uses of language. Noah was perhaps more theoretical, Luisa was more practical, and Wyna was determinedly atheoretical. Providing a diverse-intentioned and intellectually-diverse population of students with multiple levels of access to understanding 'a discipline' and its ways of reasoning and its particular linguistic codes, could have presented challenges which may not have been appreciated for their complexity. For any teacher seeking to enhance this educational relation between '*epistemology*' and '*course content*', it would be foolhardy to suggest a single ideal, if only because this would ultimately be a matter of social and political, as well as intellectual, and philosophical consequence, particularly if the educators 'being taught', were themselves winners and these winners were about to lose the place they had in the social hierarchy of education.

The intimate relation between the didactic nature of teaching and investigatory deductivism may also be influential in determining educational marginalisation, though variations on this sequencing of theory to practice were not able to be explored in this investigation. Likewise, but from the opposite point of view, the sequential relation between inductivism and the movement from common-sense

to academic sense might provide a useful line of inquiry.<sup>428</sup> Whatever the outcome, a dilemma for the curriculum developer would probably always remain the question of whether to teach material in the sequence of practice to theory or as theory to practice - or as something entirely different again. All four courses in this study had engaged in a sequential deductivism, by moving from the teaching of theory early in the year toward more factitious and less theoretical topics at the end. Thus instead of providing for a multiplicity of intellectual levels at any one time, there was a distinctive reduction in the level of reasoning required across the year. For Noah, it was a longitudinal exercise in how to lose the need for your mind, while for Luisa it was a way to gain simplified forms of information! The courses and the students reflected this very symbiotic relationship: Noah '*really enjoyed*' study at the beginning of the year, when things were '*general*'<sup>(N2)</sup> and '*lost interest*'<sup>(N2)</sup> from mid-year on. On the other hand, Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> found '*things got easier*' and she thought she was '*learning better*' toward the end of the year. One can only speculate on what might have occurred if the courses had moved inductively (from applied content and 'everyday' levels of reasoning toward conceptualisations and theorising) or alternatively, if each section of the course had offered access and explanation to both 'abstract' and 'concrete' material together. Certainly the '*loss of mind*' was a '*great sadness*'<sup>(N1)</sup> for Noah who felt '*plagued*'<sup>(N1)</sup> and undertaught by it later in the year. Only Wyna seemed unaffected by any epistemological notion of sequence.

To enable students to connect theory to practice (and vice versa) required educational practice to be based on a philosophy which facilitated understandings of the positive value of relativism, subjectification and relationalism. Now that Lecturer 13 had both subjectified the knowledge-constitutive relation for the students and relativised their 'ways of knowing', he also subjectified the students' and experts' personal background knowledges. As can be seen in reference back to Table 7.2, the first three considerations Lecturer 13 requested of students, concerned contextualising the theorist's life, their view of 'the person' and their view of 'society'. Only after this relativism had been suggested did subheadings relate to further developing theoretical ideals. First, Lecturer 13 required the student to realise that both they and the expert were but two persons who existed in epistemically-determined social worlds, and to understand that it was only through various processes of objectivation that the experts' social experiences had become dis-connected from 'reality' and resulted as conceptualised 'ideals' on paper.

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<sup>428</sup> To begin with, the everyday student's unwritten background ideas were probably still recognised by them as 'concretisations' of the 'real' social world. This relation between the expert's social 'ideals' and the student's social 'reality' could provide the possible opportunity for explicitly rather than implicitly teaching the notion of 'relativity', especially in seeing of how ideas inductively 'arose' from material life rather than how ideas ideologically and determinedly were 'applied' to it. After all, in the relativity of *inductive* educational practices, the students could pursue their own qualitative development of reasoning (procedural knowledge) rather than begin to engage in the deterministic deductive practice of ideological application. It may be that what is taken for granted in educational circles as being 'the application of ideas to reality' ("*looking for examples*"), from the materialist view of an ideology critique, is to see the real world as being determined by ideas. The educational value in 'applying ideas' is itself to be critiqued as being a form of systematically distorted communication, for it initiates the students into the practice of ideological and social determinism, and in so doing, conceals its own interests.

As adult educators value,<sup>429</sup> and the 13th lecturer explicitly acknowledged, the need for practising relativism required the students to relate a diversity of theory to a variety of experiences in everyday world, and in so doing, demonstrated the value of a flexible mind once the simplicity of particular relations had been recognised.

*This is a profound comment. Have you read or seen the modern play by McGee called Foreskin's Lament? Does this New Zealand play have a lesson similar to the ideas of [this theorist]?*

X11/2/2

The notion of relativism requires analytic deconstruction, for it can be as easily criticised as absolutism when thought of in terms of its polarised extremes, and thus in terms of its supposed usefulness to social life. This one question (above) illustrated specific details of relativism. Lecturer 13 indicated *the size* of his 'applied' world, thus giving the student an indication of 'how big' the context of relativity perhaps ought to be. His given context was beyond yet within the everyday scope of experiences of his New Zealand students.<sup>430</sup> His world is not so global that the whole practice of 'application' became once again a lesson in social and epistemic objectification. Nor was the question so expressed as to indicate a preference for deductively determined rather than inductive reasoning.

Thus, through several processes, Lecturer 13 had accessed the potential knowers' common-sensical ways of reasoning and provided the conditions for students to systematically 'discipline' their mind into an academic-sense. He had subjectified the expert's social background for each student as he demonstrated the interrelatedness of their two social worlds. In a likeminded way, when Noah required '*to know all the possibilities*', part of that 'all' included not only her self-removed, but also her own social world in this country or community. Her 'place' of application was larger than 'the family' but smaller than 'the world'. It may be general practice for teachers to take their students' recognition of the idea of relativity for granted, but I claim that it may prove necessary to discuss this epistemological concept in class and so provide critical understandings to the everyday adult (like Wyna and Luisa) who still views knowledge as external, absolute and unchangeable.

The relativity of social *life* to social *science* was not always made clear by teachers. At times, in this investigation, the scientific nature of social science tended to dominate the given knowledge, and so lessen the possibility of the students' forming empathetic understanding of the connections between their informal ideas and experiences and other people's more formal ideas and

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<sup>429</sup> Ayers, 1979, Beach, 1974. Ford, 1975; James, 1983. "It is important to impress on the student that a lot of knowledge is common-sense - all knowledge does not come from books or assignments, but much comes from taking an active interest in what is going on and by asking questions." (James, 1983:90)

<sup>430</sup> If only via the evening news on television.

experiences. Twelve of the thirteen lecturers had generally ignored exploring the expert's personage and their social world (in the study guides) and instead simply presented the objectified [theorist's] ideas as abstract, externalised ideals. The consequence of the educators failure to acknowledge relevant or related social conditions was that it presented the theorists to the students as 'heroes of the mind' whose ability to 'abstract' and 'theorise' was awesome (to Luisa) and forceful (to Wyna). This action reduced the possibility of those particular typificatory students establishing epistemic forms of empathy with the theory itself for they found nothing to connect it to themselves.<sup>431</sup> Both ways of knowing and the knowledge were separated and distanced from these potential knowers. But empathy (in terms of understanding) was expected of students who would be urged, in effect, to 'look through the expert's eyes' or 'to stand in the theorist's shoes' as new theoretical positions were learned. Empathising with a different worldview, was (I suggest) not only a preliminary and necessary activity but may have been easier if the student could understand and interrelate the expert's social world with their own experiential knowledge. But this avenue to theoretical activity had been effectively negated when the twelve teachers had failed to clearly, consistently or systematically relate the social conditions of the experts' lives to the students. Altogether, access to the *social* aspect of the 'social' science was not all it could have been.

Objectification in education gives rise to epistemological confusion and social alienation, as it exacerbates the distance between the knowledge and potential knowers. In those four courses, this educational relation between the student's *'personal epistemology'* and the expert's *'course content'* was in a reductionist form, with the epistemic difference rather than epistemic similarities being foregrounded. In effect, this matter of distancing had unnecessarily privileged the appearance of the theorist's 'ways of reasoning', since both discursively and conceptually the expert's ideas *looked* like the difficult *'big words'* which, to Luisa especially, were synonymous with difficult ways of reasoning. The ways and means of reasoning could have been demystified (for Wyna and Luisa especially) by a demonstration of how social science ideas were in fact relative to social 'reality'; at seeing *how* abstractions arose from social life; and of recognising the inductivism of social or historical determinism that preceded the deductivism of its later teaching or communication. The dichotomous and distanced understandings of 'real' and 'ideal', of 'theory' and 'practice', of 'subjective' and 'objective', and of 'everyday' and 'academe' would remain objectified for as long as these connections could not be seen. It was these dichotomies which negated the relating of the given knowledge to students' own 'ways of knowing', and thus it effected reinforced a view of knowledge as an external entity.

Valuing objectification rather than praxis, in educational practice, had provided the central condition

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<sup>431</sup> Empathy, defined by this author as a form of reciprocated (and therefore, understood) subjectification. cf Dilthey.

for a negative epistemic break. When the knowledge-constitutive, expert-student relation (as a four-fold relation between two sets of knowledges and two ways of knowing) was subjectified for students by the teachers; (i.e., brought to them, for them) then the cued student might come to recognise the relative form of truth. However, knowledge divorced from the practice of knowing, was something 'out there' and difficult, separated from something 'in here, inside me' and easy. This unnecessary difficulty was the reason Wyna gave (in different words) for choosing not to engage in 'brain strain'(w1) and was why Luisa hated 'big words'. Without these twelve teachers explicitly providing a view of the expert's own knowledge-constitutivity in relation to their lived-in social world, there was little likelihood of students like Wyna and Luisa being able to authenticate (and later 'scientificate') the social nature of knowledge.

The central tensions of this potential epistemic break exist in the conflict between the social-constitutive and knowledge-constitutive relations of educational practices. There simply seemed no way *in* to the expert's world. The prior down-playing of the *social* relationship between teacher and student seemed to be crucial in overcoming the difficulties of knowledge-constitutive objectification. At least in overt intention, if the 'peopled' part of knowledge (experts) rather than the 'peopled' part of teaching (authorities), formed a context which was interpersonally 'congruent' to the student, *life to life*, then the conditions for effective knowledge-action seem enhanced<sup>432</sup> by the epistemological praxis of 'the real' being related to 'the ideal'. In foregrounding this knowledge-constitutive situation, the expert was re-placed into a subjective world of social and historical importance, and thus reflected the ways in which ideas are abstracted while still retaining a link to the 'real' and 'relative' world. In turn, when a theorist's theory and practice were combined an authentic form, it assisted in developing the connections and confidences of the student's own ways of knowing. This may have explained, for instance, why students such as Luisa looked first and wrote first of biographical material (it related life to knowledge) or why, in its absence, positivistically-inclined students (such as Wyna and perhaps Luisa), resisted critiquing. Until this form of education was actually taught (like Lecturer 13) and experienced, the student (Wyna and Luisa) would retain a view of knowledge as being and remaining external. Maintenance of this objectified and 'not understood' view of knowledge was educationally supported more often than not during this study.

Still involved in the relation between 'personal epistemology' and 'course content', it was the students themselves who would move from subjectifying to subjectivating the learned material, as they symbolised the ideas in their mind's eye. This was the perceptual characteristic that differentiated Noah from Wyna and Luisa, as it allowed her to subjectivate ideas while she visually

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<sup>432</sup> This idea of equivalence or congruence has been alluded to by persons as diverse as Eric Berne in '*Games people play*' and Jurgen Habermas, in theorising on communicative competence.

'shifted' its theoretical connections and disruptions, until she either discarded it or altered 'the knowledge' into 'her beliefs'. Noah seemed to be able to 'stand apart' from herself, as she characteristically abstracted meanings from script and intellectually applied them<sup>433</sup> to her everyday world with the assistance of imagery which was, for her, quite a deliberate as well as 'natural' reflective act. She mentally enacted the praxis of a 'to and fro' process by 'seeing' from, and moving around, two or more points of view, deconstructing that which was given. This almost ceaseless mental activity demonstrated her attempts to 'make sense' of experiences.<sup>434</sup> If, during the shift from common-sense to academic-sense, Noah *required* anything (she said), it was to discipline the flexibility and endlessness of these movements of knowledge::

*When trying to grasp an idea, I need to keep all the nuts and bolts churning around in my consciousness .... the whole thing going around in my mind ... floating around ... and try to get it into some coherent fashion by the time I get to the end of page three.*

Noah 2.2

In this study, only one course<sub>(Y1)</sub> writer (and it was not Lecturer 13) gave the students any suggestion that he may have recognised this intellectual 'to and fro'ing' as relational or reflective thinking when, in the midst of an exposition on study skills, it was suggested that *drawing* was a useful practice for reflecting on ideas. However, the suggestion was curiously out of place, for it did not relate well to the material around it, and its use was not explained in epistemological terms. It seemed that several pages of 'study' suggestions from disparate resources had simply been 'lumped' together, so that the skim reading student probably did not 'see' it at all. No student who was interviewed recalled having read the suggestion, even though Noah<sub>(1, 2, 3)</sub> used pictorialising as a method of theoretical recall, (especially when memorising for final examinations) and would most likely have recalled it, had she read it.

No positive aspect of knowledge is without its negative side. Apart from this apparent difference in ways of coming to know, in the educational relation between 'epistemology' and 'course content', only Lecturer 13 had demonstrated how to inclusively teach from the students' personal epistemology, but his teaching efforts were about to be negated by a tutor employed to evaluate the students' responses to Lecturer 13's work. The tutor denied Noah's '*subjectified view*' (see the example described in the previous Chapter) on the grounds that '*knowledge was objective*' and that she (Noah) was at University to '*learn about*' (said the tutor) '*other people's ideas*', not to develop her own. Perhaps from this example, there was reason for Lecturer 13 to explain his view of 'knowing' more widely, and especially to his tutor-evaluators. This one tutor had ended Lecturer 13's labour with several strokes of a pen. Such evaluation practices merely added to the number of

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<sup>433</sup> Gibbs, 1981.

<sup>434</sup> cf Davies, 1979.

ways in which students had found the connections between their *personal epistemology* and *course content* severed.

The move from formality to informality in social relations was not the same thing as enabling the students to use their personal epistemology. The other twelve lecturers inhibited the workings of the knowledge-constitutive educational relation when, in their study guides, they separated 'study skills' material from 'course' material; or seldom, if ever, mentioned procedural knowledge (and never in those terms). Moreover, when these other twelve teachers had reflected the experts' knowledge as an abstracted ideal (unrelated to his or her social world), they were giving (by default) no explicit credence to the students' ways of thinking. Instead the teachers had forefronted the social-constitutive, teacher-student relation by their attempts to be informal and intersubjectively related. These teaching authorities themselves had determined the minimalisation and reduction of the chances students had to come to know, through objectifying knowledge-constitutivity rather than social-constitutivity.

In conclusion, Lecturer 13 was a teacher for whom the link between the expert's knowledge and the student was forefronted, cemented and dominant, while the teacher-student social connection was informal, backgrounded and somewhat objectified. The cementing of the relation between student and expert displayed two facets which, when combined, effected a third. Lecturer 13 effected a *social relation* between the student and expert by supplying access to understandings of the expert's socio-historical context and by accepting and incorporating the student's own experiential life-background. The teacher also effected a *knowledge-constitutive relation* between student and expert by foregrounding, in simply-worded script, the expert's 'theory', alternative readings, and the reactions to those ideas by other (unknown) people. Together these two relations (social and knowledge-constitutive) provided the basis for the student to effect the third *epistemic relation* with the expert by recognising how the experts ideas could be related to the social conditions of their own 'real' worlds. This *epistemic relation* was aimed toward theoretical activity. Thus in total effect, Lecturer 13 had facilitated in his students, the potential to move from common-sense reasoning into a disciplined mode of academic reasoning, and all within the stage of reflection (*R/*). This teacher had established the '*epistemic relation*' between the expert and the student by systematically developing the student's own ways of reasoning, showing them where to look for questions and leaving the judgement of 'answers' up to them. Where the other lecturers were concerned, there was virtually no explicit teaching of epistemology which would enable the students to link their common-sense into academically disciplined ways of reasoning. The very fabric of creative theoretical activity was denied, as were the possibilities of disciplining and deepening one's ways of coming to know.

In the absence of developing a knowledge of academic-sense from the students' own ways of knowing, what abstracted ideal did those in the university expect, for in general, neither the

personal nor the public (academic) ways of knowing were identified. This double negation reduced the available conception of 'epistemology' to *presentation protocols* since in place of information on 'ways of knowing', the students were given materials on 'ways of writing'. In other words, since only one-quarter of the students in this study encountered Lecturer 13's teaching, and then for only one-fifth of one course, the very conception of 'epistemology' was reduced to the behavioural superficiality of study habits and the writing skills whose very 'appearances' affected different touchstone relations in the hidden curriculum. Those different educational relations did not concern qualitative matters of the mind, and thus they did not concern Noah.

One such different educational relation, the one Luisa preferred, linked '*language*' to the '*conventions of what to do and how to think*'. Luisa believed such information, like all knowledge, was externally sourced, so she searched among the 'hard words' to find '*the conventions*'. While her hassles with administration had already been discussed (Ch.6), Luisa's dominant educational relation had arisen within her educational history where, early on, her learning processes had been mediated until she was now quite reliant on her teachers to tell her the conventions of scholarly conduct.

*Relations between 'language' and the 'conventions of scholarly conduct'*

The connection between 'language' and the 'conventions of scholarly conduct' had been the dominant curriculum relation for Luisa since early childhood. Within this thesis it is claimed that she believed that 'learning correctly' was related to the act of doing as she was told. 'Doing as she was told' had provided her with an understanding of the formal conventions of scholarship during primary school and later. For Luisa, the conventions of scholarly conduct were the rules of academic sense. Being teacher-determined, the rules of classroom-conventions had become synonymous with the externalised rules of academic reasoning and conflated with an externalised view of knowledge. As she grew older she sought the rules of reasoning which would enable her to cross the boundary between internalising knowledge and reflecting upon it. This gave rise to a series of questions. '*How did 'they' want 'it'<sup>435</sup> done? What did they mean when 'they' told her to 'do it'? What did they expect of her?*' These quests pre-formed the externalised touchstones and standpoint of Luisa's educational relation. Being epistemically-dependent on others, Luisa linked her teacher's 'language', the telling of knowledge-externalised, with information about scholarly conventions. She believed the teacher's telling of answers would provide the power to her own success. Whether it was the childhood knowledge of how to read or (years later) the adolescent knowledge of how to [e.g. nurse], Luisa had focussed on those teacher-determined 'recipes'. Now, I contend, Luisa sought the same rule-imbedded connection of the other-determined conventions of academic sense:

*The case studies were quite hard because I didn't know what they expected ... A couple I thought I knew ... I wrote them out like a story ... I kept thinking 'how was [the tutor] wanting it written down?'*  
Luisa 5.5.793

When educational authorities failed to provide explicit information on the disciplined conventions of scholarly conduct, not only did Luisa attribute its absence to her own inability to get beyond the standpoint of language, but without establishing the actual *relation* between language and conventions (the students standpoint and the teacher-provided touchstone), there was, in effect, no educational relation between Luisa and her teachers. A situation of 'losing' was now set in place. Luisa was beginning university without the prerequisite skills<sup>436</sup> and, most importantly, she did not recognise the specific shortcomings of her own epistemology which seemed devoid of any notion of scepticism. Luisa seemed neither to doubt the value of objectivity, nor to engage in question asking, conceptualising, or dialectical challenge. Even the simple politics of 'asking authorities' would have been a useful skill for Luisa. But this depoliticised student had little reason to suspect that the university, with its publicly espoused standards, would deny access to the rules of

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<sup>435</sup> 'It' as 'reasoning' about.

<sup>436</sup> Wright, 1983

scholarly conduct. Luisa was innocently searching for rule-bound conventions which reflected the expected and accepted thought patterns<sup>437</sup> of the institution. When she failed to locate the patterns of academic sense, she blamed her self. She said, in effect, that if she could first get through its semantic blockade,<sup>438</sup> away from her standpoint of 'hard words', she might locate the university's expected epistemology.

Even where the standpoint of language was concerned, academic teachers appeared to mediate not only the students' intentions to *fully* come to know, but also their own assumptions about communicating *fully*. As with Noah, Luisa believed you could only 'know it all', if you 'read it all'. Luisa's state of perplexion was reflected in her act of digesting every word of the correspondence.<sup>439</sup> To Luisa(1, 2, 3, 5) the verbosity of the students' postings seemed to indicate that those essential meanings *must be* buried somewhere in the terminological thicket,<sup>440</sup> if only she could find them. From a standpoint of expecting the conventional rules to be communicated to her, Luisa sought the thoughtfulness of an empathetic logic and an empathetic language from those in authority at university. After all, she was new and she thought they would tell her '*what to do next*'. (L1, 4)

The relation between '*language*' and the '*conventions of scholarly conduct*' essentially consisted of communicating the rule-bound traditions and taken-for-granted expectations of the academic act of 'coming to know'. This particular facet of the hidden curriculum concerned how the institution communicated to students the ways they could and ought to act as novitiate scholars. The correspondence-educated Luisa continued to digest every word of her materials while she sought to subjectify these official ways of knowing.

During Luisa's first year, three critical epistemic moments mediated her habituated educational relation and resulted in her becoming a marginalised student. Those moments were centred on essentialism, theorising and praxis. When her assignment was low-graded, the tutor's explanation had prescribed how to change its written appearance without explaining its discipline-related essence. Secondly, when Luisa could not understand the request for theorising in one course, she used the ritualistic study-skill recipes from a different discipline; and finally, when Luisa (who did not drop out of study earlier) 'succeeded' in completing the year she still did not know why, for right through the year her view of knowledge as objectified, other-determined and inapplicable in the praxis of ordinary life was supported rather than challenged. At the end of the year Luisa's view of knowledge had been muddled by the mediations of teachers who supplied illogically-sequenced

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<sup>437</sup> c.f. Bourdieu

<sup>438</sup> Woodward, 1978:192

<sup>439</sup> Noah read everything of the '*course content*', but only skim read '*administration*' material. "*Women who rely on received knowledge think of words as central to the knowing process.*" (Belenky et al., 1986:36)

<sup>440</sup> Woodward, 1978:192.

and minimally-explained statements on the conventions of academic sense.

The first critical incident concerned one aspect of academic sense. It required the students to understand that different ways of writing was related to different ways of reasoning. Problems arose when the first assignment was based in common-sense reasoning, experience and language, while the second assignment was its opposite - a rigidly bounded positivistic research report. When teachers had provided no explanation of this marked distinction, but in fact provided information which supported a relation between the writing of one and the writing of the second, Luisa employed similarly-related ways of reasoning and then later, could not interpret the low-grade she was given. Following the successful completion of a personalised 'vignette' of a life experience, Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> chose to do an observational [research] project for her second assignment, not realising that research reports required different protocols to the writing of essays. She began the research assignment comfortably because, confident in her possession of a mother's knowledge, she already knew something of its expected content. Following the empirical work, she wrote up her results with her own interpretations imbedded '*like [they do] in the textbook*'<sup>(L5.1.1115)</sup> because to her that style of prose sounded '*authoritative*'.<sup>(L5.1.1125)</sup> Though she was conflating descriptive essay requirements with objective reporting, she believed her intentions were correct because her study guide had indicated a similar connection when in it was stated that the '*Practical Exercise*' would be '*graded on the same scale as were the essays*',<sup>(X24/23)</sup> and the instructions explicitly stated how to make use of an essay sequence.<sup>441</sup> Feeling '*quite pleased*' with herself<sup>(L5.1.669)</sup>, since the assignment logically followed on from the 'personalised account' in Assignment One, Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> was somewhat dismayed weeks later to find she achieved a 'failing' grade of C-/D. She '*knew*' her research report had reflected the previously-acceptable ways of reasoning. Nowhere in the study material had indications been given to the students that this type of exercise was in fact a standard positivistic empirical 'research' exercise, nor that one 'should' be objective, or analytically piecemeal life, nor that there were certain protocols of presentation where psychology-disciplined research writings were concerned. Yet Luisa's auditor's remarks all indicated that specific well-established conventions had been breached:

- *Not an observation. Comments and discussion*
- *two years old, not 2 yrs old'*
- *Again you should be saying just what you saw, and in this section of the assignment, making no comment or supposition.*
- *You should describe in some detail exactly what he did that showed great precision!*

The course writers had mediated Luisa's search for the scholarly conventions of research, by

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<sup>441</sup> The second and following sentences of instruction indicated that '*Setting out should be as for essays ... [followed by] .... That is, describe ... describe ... and give examples ... [and then] .... Discuss ... using the concepts and theories of this course .... clearly linked to the observations recorded ...*' (X20/30-31)

engaging in selective negligence. Not only had the word 'research' not appeared, but also where the lecturer could have taught the specific rules of scholarly conduct pertaining to psychological 'research reports' and the tutor could have explicitly addressed the breach of those rules, instead this evaluation experience had been trivialised into a criticism of the protocols of presentation. Yet the essence of the issue was *how to think* objectively and analytically, not *how to say*. For instance, where the teacher required an uninterpreted ('objective') description in the first section of the report, he appeared to have failed to clearly clarify this requirement. In its place, Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> the ever-mother, had taken the initiative in providing common-sense reasoning for the children's behaviour since after all, she '*knew how mother's thought about these things*'. (LS.3.79) At the end of the year Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> would recall that confusing assignment and evaluation experience, although now, at a superficial level, she understood the basis of the tutor's equally superficial requirements:

*I think now I know what they wanted. I should have just sat down for half-an-hour and done a blow by blow account of what [the children] did and listed them. But I had no idea how that [explanation] would be different from what I did [originally] in terms of learning [the content of this course]. But that is what they must have wanted. That's how my sister-in-law got A's for it when she did it. She showed me afterwards .... I think I got too personal. It wasn't clinical enough. I tried to humanise the children ... I saw them as human beings with personalities and emotions and reasons for why they had these emotions in these situations. But 'they' didn't want that. I shouldn't have done that. They didn't want you to assume or make assumptions.*

Luisa 5.5.115

The course writer's negation was transferred to the student and then became labelled (by the C-/D grading) as a student's error. In appearance Luisa, not the lecturer, was wrong, while in essence it was the other way around. Why she should have been grade-penalised (a) for interpreting and (b) for employing *everyday* ways of knowing was unclear since in the absence of an alternative explanation she had merely reflected the '*rules of reasoning*' accepted in her first assignment.

This university course was not alone in underscoring the student's ability to cope with understanding the conventional basis of disciplines. For instance, in relation to the conventional use of abbreviations, where this particular course had prescribed limitations but abstained from providing lists or explanations, two other courses (Y1 and Y2) provided inappropriate and equally unexplained examples. In their lists of ten 'acceptable' abbreviations, only four were appropriate to social science usage, the rest being mathematical. Excluded from the list were the Latin short forms used in bibliographies which could have been quite useful to the social science studies of Wyna, Luisa and Noah. Providing information on conventions surely should require them to be appropriate to the course itself, and to include explanations of usage, purpose and limitations. Without such information a fallacious or contradictory underteaching was occurring, especially for Luisa who sought this externalised, recipe-bound, other-dependent, touchstone knowledge. Again, it was the *access* to specific forms of knowledge where the problem began yet it was *evaluation* where the problem was evident and had transferred attribution of its source from teachers to

students.

The second critical incident related also to mediation by negation. In the move from common-sense to academic-sense, students were confused by whether academic-sense possessed universal protocols or ones which were relative to disciplines. In particular, the convention sought in this example related to ways of theorising and 'being critical'. This gives rise to the question of whether Luisa's second issue (using study skills guidelines from another discipline) was a consequence of the first critical incident, since it followed that if the conventions of scholarly study were not (in the students' eyes) being sourced from individual courses and disciplines, then there must still be some universal or general academic principles that differentiated the university's supposedly-superior ways of knowing from those of the everyday.<sup>(A.2.1.578)</sup> Since at no time in this study did the students of this one department<sup>442</sup> receive an explanation of the eclectic differences between its disciplines, then Luisa<sup>(2)</sup> had no reason to question possible differences in its conventions. Yet this differentiation was at the very heart of this second issue. On this taken-for-granted presumption that either 'the university' or 'this department' had one particular way of knowing, Luisa<sup>(2)</sup> cross-referenced an assignment question in her (philosophy-based) 'theory' course with the study skills instructions presented in her (psychology-based) 'practical' course. She was going to attempt to join knowledge from philosophy with the ways of knowing of a science. In seeking a commonly-shared view of the expected rules of reasoning, Luisa<sup>(2)</sup> turned to a section in the twenty-nine provided pages of study skills advice and proceeded to adopt meanings from its list of definitions of how to think. This cross-referencing of meanings was not problematic at all levels of reasoning. There would probably have been some agreement between each course on interpretations of 'describe' and 'discuss'. However, in psychological terms, 'to compare' meant '*to show the similarities and differences ... with particular emphasis upon the similarities*'.<sup>(K.2.1.144)</sup> Yet the philosophy-based assignment for which Luisa was adopting this meaning, had centred its problem on three diverse claims to a single truth. Luisa was being asked to examine difference not similarity. Difficulties now arose. Eventually, critically '*muddled*' and confused<sup>(A.2.1.215)</sup>, Luisa returned to the first study guide<sup>(A.2.1.259)</sup>, rereading the assignment task as suggested, but its given 'Assignment guidelines' simply added more discursive and philosophic confusion, for to Luisa, the rules of reasoning were still as mystified as the protocols of presentation:

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<sup>442</sup> This is a dilemma which arose when a department was vocationally rather than discipline based.

... You will not always find explicit or direct statements about what each [theory]... actually entails, but will have to extract from the various articles, statements which most clearly reflect the viewpoint you are maintaining applies to each writer. The use of quotation will be helpful here in identifying for the reader the connection between your own interpretation and what the writers each have to say. You may also have to 'digest' from the general sense of what each is saying, the particular goal each envisages .... Organise your essay carefully along these lines and take time to plan how you are going to support the claims that you make by either references to quotation or a general description of what the writer actually says.

X1.01.16

Terminology that appeared in both the world of common-sense, and the world of academic-sense needed its discipline-based conventionality explained, otherwise Luisa's confusion had been predetermined. In this experience above, the source was in other than *her* head. When academics had forefronted single words as indicators of ways to reason (eg, 'critique') but had failed to provide supplementary explanations on its intellectual actioning rather than its behavioural manifestation (in written expression), and when they had also failed to explain the difference between similar everyday and 'disciplined' ways of thinking (eg, being critical or arguing), then Luisa was forced into a marginalised studentship by the non-existence of the external procedural resources she was looking for in this touchstone of the '*conventions of scholarly reasoning*'. She might as well have asked: '*Did the discrete words indicate ways of reasoning that differed in meaning from the lay usage?*' Unable to find an answer, Luisa(2) absented herself from this philosophy-based course shortly thereafter, for she had many questions and could not see the epistemic pattern amongst them. With reference to the preceding quotation, among those questions she had asked(1.2.1.748f) in quick succession were:

What does 'explicit' mean? ....

What 'viewpoint' am I 'maintaining'? Where do I do that? ....

What is a quotation? [Answer] How does that prove anything? It's only what someone else said ....

What's he going on about? .... How do I 'support' a 'claim' and what is 'a claim' anyway? ...

All of Luisa's questions somehow revolved around the conventions of philosophical reasoning, but how was this everyday adult ever to have understood that? She expressed the view that she '*thought the course got easier after this*' [when Lecturer 13's conversation and in-text questions appeared] but this first-ever assignment was an effective gate-keeper.<sup>443</sup> To Luisa, this first lecturer's objectified confusion was '*totally abstract*'.(1.2.1.732) All she had wanted to do was to subjectify the ways 'they' expected her to reason with given material.

The third critical problematic of this educational relation concerned the praxis between common-sense and academic-sense. How could Luisa(5) finish the year, be successful in passing her course,

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<sup>443</sup> It was at this stage, with this student, that I contravened my own research protocol. Unable to maintain a non-interventionist stance any longer as I saw how Luisa cried herself into losing, I tried to explain to her what to do.

and yet still claim she '*didn't know why?*' (LS.5) Having spent a whole year seeking the '*rules for scholarly reasoning*', why did she emerge using the skills of scholarly appearances and with her '*rules*' of everyday reasoning still intact? What mediations had so dichotomised this student's knowledge-act that now the split between the everyday and the university world was evermore visible and confused? It seemed that the answer to this complex and multifaceted issue was riddled with paradox.

First, Luisa was confused by how knowledge could be both objectified and relative at once. Where she was able, she had chosen to do '*interesting*' assignment topics that were relative to her life,<sup>444</sup> but she was unsure if her subjective relativism was an acceptable intellectual behaviour especially when the assignment '*did not [explicitly] ask*' (LS.1.395; LS) for application of the knowledge to her real world. This was an important issue for both Luisa and Noah because while their teachers failed to discuss the social application of knowledge<sup>445</sup> these students, who lived connected lives and were '*motivated by interest*', saw this new knowledge as being able to be integrated into it.<sup>446</sup> Once again, the essential curriculum issue was whether or not the students should be taught the protocols of presentation which effectively reproduced knowledge for the evaluator or be taught the '*rules of reasoning*' which enabled the '*disciplined view*' of this knowledge to be taken directly back into everyday life.<sup>447</sup> In part, this issue arose for Luisa because of a confusion between knowledge and ways of knowing. Could '*the knowledge*' be objective, while its '*ways of knowing*' (especially application) were relative? Luisa had valid educational reasons for asking this question of the relation between common-sense and academic-sense.

The conventions of scholarly conduct, particularly the rules of reasoning in an academic-sense, differ between educational institutions but this difference was unclear and not articulated. The adult Luisa<sub>(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)</sub> had earlier graduated from tertiary education in a polytechnic institution where assignments were aimed at expressing how knowledge applied directly to daily situations<sup>448</sup> and in those assignments she '*never had to explain why*' (LS.1.542) In other words, she never had to legitimate knowledge in an ideologically-objectified rather than real or actual way. Now, in university, the converse applied. Assignments did require idealist legitimation, in spite of the fact that this ideal of proof or truth was being confused, in its presentation to the students, with '*correctness*' of the protocols of presentation. It was how she should action this abstracted, legitimacy-centred act that Luisa now sought.

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<sup>444</sup> '*I thought to myself that [this theorist] was fairly feasible. His stages fit well in what I see in people and how they grow and all that. No one said it was a hard and fast rule but I tried to see how I'd look in [his view]. The other [views] here too upsetting because they made me look like a terrible parent. Behaviourists, well I tried to be like that when I was studying it, but its too hard on everyone.'* (LS.5)

<sup>445</sup> Y1 was the only course exception to this claim.

<sup>446</sup> Luisa wanted to know about her children's development and Noah used knowledge as a necessary change agent.

<sup>447</sup> cf. Boucouvalas & Pearse, 1985. Only course Y1 expressed this as a course goal.

<sup>448</sup> For example, drawing what a respirator looked like and where and how it was both used and plugged in.

The value of abstract reason, of its critical potential in the praxis of life in particular, failed to be made clear to students. Objectified and objectivated, the resulting knowledge often did not appear (to Luisa and Noah) to be applicable to life, especially if the student found they had to concentrate most of all upon formalised ways of writing. Complicating this epistemic turnaround in the purposes of knowing was the fact that the new terms for intellectual conventions (e.g. 'theory' and 'critique') lacked the methodological explanation of their intellectual actioning, as well as an epistemological explanation and justification. 'Big words' appeared without their equally 'big' meanings. In all, the difference between polytechnic and university tertiary education seem centred on a premise that in the university, mental abstraction was more important than physical application. Again 'the university world' was distinguishable from 'the everyday *real* world'. But the epistemic basis of this difference was unclear to Luisa who had attempted to become conversant with the university's knowledge-activity through searching for the '*rules of reasoning*'. Yet another matter now intervened in this search.

The conventions of scholarly conduct include rules of reasoning (*/R/*) which are distinct from the rules of presentation (*/X/*), but usually only the latter were made explicit. This led to conflation and confusion. In particular, this paradox concerned the matter of 'order' or sequence. Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> and Noah<sup>(1,2,3)</sup> were trying to understand the intellectual order of raising the mind from the level of facts to the abstracted level of concepts and theory, while (apart from Lecturer 13) their teachers' study skills instructions were expressing the behavioural sequence of writing assignments as '*introduction - body - conclusion*'. The 'teachers' talked past the students as each went in a different direction. In the end, a frustrated Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> combined both sequences: '*I just jotted down the eight stages of [x's] theory ... to get them in the right order*'.<sup>(LS.5)</sup> These courses 'taught' 'horizontal' study sequences in the place of the 'hierarchical' '*conventions for coming to know*', and no courses even referred to the directions of 'inductive' or 'deductive' thought or to the movements of 'to'ing and fro'ing' in a theorised praxis. This doubled shortcoming was of little value to those students who sought to theorise during reflection (*/R/*). These students had in effect been searching for an understanding of intellectual movement and direction, but educational advisors were telling students how to discipline themselves into habit of the appearances of studying instead of telling the students about habituating the disciplined ways of reasoning. Luisa, however, already practised such suggested study habits as how to budget her time and arrange her essay. Those '*rules of scholarly conduct*' were everyday common-sense knowledge that she was teaching to her own children. Without knowing how to action the dynamics between knowledge and knowing (or theory and practice), Luisa remained confused<sup>449</sup> and continued to translate

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<sup>449</sup> *The tutor initially said 'no' to using quotes from our own life experience - but then said we could only if we could apply it to the theory we had learned*'.(LA.2)

unexplained academic language into everyday understandings.<sup>450</sup> Thus she effectively maintained her own common-sense rules of everyday reasoning without developing them any further, unless she went and sought help elsewhere.

Among the academic suggestions which mediated Luisa's understandings of the '*rules of scholarly conduct*', was advice which conflicted with her intentions to '*read it all*' and the assumed intention of her teachers to provide 'full' explanations. Luisa sought guidance from specialised instructional texts. But rather than teach readers how to subjectify knowledge and discipline their own ways of reasoning, one university-produced contradictory lure, offered advice on such knowledge-reductionist and objectifying strategies as selective reading and sequential sub-heading use.<sup>451</sup> The assumption of the writer seemed to be on how to study in a protracted period of time, whereas Luisa was seeking the '*rules of reasoning*', not time-related suggestions. Yet, 'to come to know' for this study skills instructor was to plagiarise other people's forms of presentation (lists of subheadings) and reproduce them in assignments as personal ways of knowing. A second university-based instructor was similarly inclined toward prescriptions for political objectivism: '*do not answer the question by your personal opinion, but by the opinion of the author or lecturer*'.<sup>452</sup> To Luisa, these suggestions only further objectified the already objectified. Suggestions in instructional texts addressed behaviours of appearance and by obstructing the students' intellectual action these texts led Luisa even further away from her primary aim of '*knowing it all*'. When Luisa was faced with a lack of advice, the study skills suggestions for objectification proved of no epistemic use at all, though they would prove later to be of political use for Wyna.

In the absence of prior explanations about the '*rules of scholarly conduct*' which are central to academic sense, it was evaluators rather than teachers who informed students. However, this only occurred after students had suffered from this mediation by negation, by being awarded low grades. Most students in this study (Wyna, Luisa and Noah) found this knowledge of '*scholarly conduct*' was acquired through tutor's comments on assignments, and that their reliance on evaluation as a form of teaching reinforced a form of dependency on auditors.<sup>453</sup> Across the year, the students increasingly deferred to those in control of their evaluation, even in the face of

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<sup>450</sup> Question: '*Did you use argument and critique in the exam?*' Answer: '*For and against, you mean? Yes, I said things like 'on the other hand this could happen and not that at all.' I think I stated why. Some things had a reason.*' (L5.5)

<sup>451</sup> Tremaine, 1982:35 The sequence and indications of subtitles indicates the levels of importance and theoretical depth of ideas.

<sup>452</sup> Zika, 1980:7.

<sup>453</sup> Luisa(3) '*needed this feedback to know when [she] knew*' (L3.1.468) and Luisa(4) '*wouldn't be bothered [or worried] by the next assignment because then [she'd] know exactly what to do*'. (L4.1.533) The tutor's comments would help her '*to know if I gave what was asked for. To know where I was going*'. (L4.1.54) It is perhaps due to this tutor-te ching aspect that some guidance instructors now offer '*remediation writing*' to students whom they believe are '*academically salvageable*'. (Managhan and Saul, 1987:111 )

contradiction.<sup>454</sup> Students adopted and even prioritised the need for drafts and typewriting (1.2.2.64); fitting expressions of knowledge into given word lengths (1.2.1.4.1.629) and as well, some of them quoted the clichés of lecturers or famous people.<sup>455</sup> The flip side of Luisa's early resistance to presentation protocols could be seen in Wyna's acceptance and use of them. When the tutor said Wyna had '*left out all theory*', she replied she '*only had 1000 words*' so she '*just left a hint*', hoping the tutor '*might give [her] the benefit of the doubt*'. (w3.1.193) Behind the facade and frustrations of these students lay the serious epistemic tension of whether to *appear* scholarly or to *actually* come to know. By the end of the year, Luisa(s) had decided she had had enough of trying to appear scholarly without understanding why and so she:

*said a lot of tongue-in-cheek things. ... like, 'Human life, as it still is' .... and I thought to myself, put it down, put it down. Put my statement down as [this essay] is really sounding too highbrow and too stupid. So I wrote, 'On the other hand, human beings, being what they are ...', etc., etc.*

Luisa 5.5.1035

Throughout her year Luisa had experienced three critical moments in her search for the rules of scholarly conduct, with no issue being resolved. First, when the auditor evaluated her research report in terms of its appearances, Luisa was never shown understandings of the conventions of an objectively-disciplined way of thinking. Second, when another lecturer embedded discussion of his conventions in obscure discursive objectivations and then conflated the ways of knowing with the protocols of presentation, Luisa attempted to use the recipes of reasoning from a different discipline. When those given explanations did not fit the given question, she despaired of ever finding how to intellectually action the assignment and left the course. Finally, for she who did successfully reach the end of the year, her view of the purpose of a university-given knowledge was as confused as was her understanding of the academically-expected ways of reasoning. Without the words to explain why, she recognised knowledge as compartmentalised into '*hers*' and '*theirs*'. '*Their*' view of knowledge, '*their*' academic-sense, in her eyes, was '*clinical*'. It meant not to theorise, critique or reason, but to reproduce given ideas within the nebulous objectivated formalism of the protocols of presentation. Without those protocols of objectivation she had almost failed, but with them she had passed the course. Paradoxically, it was her complete mystification concerning academic sense that had been deemed to be an educational achievement by her educational evaluators.

In spite of the negativism this critique appears to expound, there were genuine attempts in all four courses to offer information on university conventions but these did not include *epistemological* conventions or epistemological explanations. While some students sought explanation of the

<sup>454</sup> For instance, though one course suggested quotes should be '*brief ... relevant and apt*', (WrA4/p2) the first two quotations used by the lecturer were alternatively 23 and 30 lines long. (X1/01/9-10)

<sup>455</sup> For instance, "*Workers of the world unite. You've nothing to lose and he's so right.*" (LA)

expected rules of scholarly reasoning, this was not given and so gradually the essential gave way to the apparent and 'the apparent' became the centre of 'the academic game'. The curriculum issue of the piecemealed 'teaching' of superficial conventions resulted in superficially piecemealed responses by the students. To overcome the problems about to surface (in the next section) with 'the academic game', the convention of 'asking for help' and making its specific problematic clear (the university's rules of reasoning) seemed imperative. How else was the student to overcome the mediation of this educational relation between '*language*' and '*conventions*'?

For adults who entered the university believing that both the given knowledge and its ways of reasoning were external and objective, the critical connection between '*language*' and '*conventions*' needed to be addressed by curriculum programmes. Beyond this negated educational relation lay the possibilities of a distorted connection between 'success' and 'knowing'. Within the relation lay the possibility of intellectually actioning the given knowledge in terms of the expected scholarly ways of knowing. At the end of the year, without having confronted material on the expected ways of reasoning, Luisa<sup>(5)</sup> had been institutionally-enabled to claim that she '*never knew why*' she passed the course. Wyna would not make this claim however, since she prioritised the expectation of '*asking for help*', particularly the face-to-face help of like-intentioned others.

### *Summary so far*

The educational relations of '*epistemology to content*' and '*language to scholarly conventions*' are marked by similarities of intention. Each typified potential knower who inhabits these worlds seeks a similar knowledge through a similar course of action. Either by 'knowing it all' or 'reading it all', each centralises 'ways of knowing' in their move from common-sense to academic-sense. Noah wants to develop further her subjectified ways of reasoning, while Luisa seeks the objectified, formal ways of doing things. However except for Lecturer 13, educators mediate these relations out of existence by failing to recognise the epistemological needs of the act of 'coming to know'. Instead they incorporate instrumentalist details and activities, which result in the potential knowers being unable to invoke these relations. Noah finds that when critical elements become instrumental (e.g. the tutor's lack of understanding becomes a need 'to read more'), these notions force her to move from her intention to 'know it all', toward playing the minimalist 'academic game', wherein expression is centred as the focus of the knowledge-act, and coming to know is an activity of forefronting the appearances rather than the essences of knowledge. Luisa's personal epistemological needs are ignored. When her educators failed to teach her the objectified scholarly conventions of academic sense (and Luisa had no words to ask), they instead instructed her in the protocols of presentation and she, like Noah, then began the 'game' which centred expression in the knowledge-act. Luisa failed to understand the necessity of these protocols and finished the year not knowing how she got there. What is it about the epistemological aspects of academic-sense, that draw everyone (teachers and students alike) to the written product?

### *Relations between 'social contact' and 'evaluation'*

An 'ideology of success' was intimately imbedded in the educational relation between '*social contact* and '*evaluation*'. Not only did educators teach about the touchstone of '*evaluation*' (where assignments but not the final examination were concerned) but they joined the students on the (student's) standpoint of '*social contact*'. Thus a strongly-bonded educational relation could be formed between the teachers and the students who prioritised this particular educational relation. In this educational relation, two differing attitudes were demonstrated by forms of mediation. One politicised view was dismissive of the knowledge-constitutive aspects of academic sense, whilst the other, more prevalent view, seemed naive (unknowing) in its forefronting of these social relations and consequent backgrounding (but not discarding) of knowledge-constitutivity. It is the politicised view which is forefronted in this section of the thesis, for herein can be seen the extreme negativity of 'the academic game' which was spoken of by all students who were interviewed. This politicised version of the educational relation was inhabited by Lecturer 1 who seemed to be entirely in tune with the political strategy of Wyna, and it was in his course that all three Wynas achieved, and Wyna<sup>(1)</sup> in particular excelled.

Wyna's standpoint of '*social contact*' included matters of strategic competitiveness, intentional avoidance, selectivity and privacy, and social relations with authorities rather than knowledge-constitutive relations with experts. At the teachers' end of this educational continuum, the touchstone of '*evaluation*' included matters of assessment, assignments, and the protocols of presentation. The case for demonstrating an 'epistemological' congruence between Wyna and her particular teacher (Lecturer 1) in this educational relation was strong, but complicated by the fact that all the courses which were part of this inquiry, promoted '*social contact*' with teachers through an interpersonal presence as well as by specific suggestions to meet each other.

In this educational relation, in spite of expressed intentions to the contrary, the purpose of education seemed not to be related to social life and subjective living. The acquisitive 'Wyna' (winner) typified the radicalised student for whom the '*course content*' remained objectified and distant, and was to be acquired in a reductionist, objectivated and external form. The purpose of knowledge (for Wyna) was to achieve 'success', not to engage (like Noah) in social action or personal change. '*Social contact*' with teachers provided 'the necessary' study skills and power to define and approve the 'success' she desired.

Lecturer 1 showed (in Study Guide One), a readiness and willingness to share the protocols of presentation and a tardiness for illuminating the rules of reasoning, so enabling Wyna to concentrate on acquisition (1.1) and exposition (1.2) alone. Where Luisa sought from her touchstone, ways of knowing, and Noah sought the knowledge, Wyna simply sought the strategic information of correctly expressing herself. A certain confidence in initiating '*social contact*' and telling

authorities of her need probably cemented her success rate. People (both teachers and students) who like-mindedly-shared the intentions of befriending within the standpoint of 'social contact', shared Wyna's educational life. But she particularly concentrated on finding the knowledge of this form of 'academic sense' from like-minded people who were already enculturated in the institutional ways.

In this study, generally, this bonding of the *social relations* between all teachers and all students occurred in many ways and centred around degrees of informality and consideration for others. For instance, in its mild form, lecturers made informal suggestions such as 'bring your lunches' (X2/Y1.Y2) to on-campus courses and not to worry if other students had different study habits (X201(i)). Even in the correspondence materials, all courses presented an interpersonal face to students through such things as the use of photographs and vignettes of staff. Teachers also reduced the facelessness of text through the use of personal pronouns; computer-drawn pictorial symbols used as 'road signs' in the script and the use of humour and comic strips. Moreover, one course requested the students to evaluate the teachers because that would 'help us write better study guides'. (X2/Admin(i)) But therein, the similarities of reinforcing staff-student social relations ended.

The educational benefit of *social relations* for Lecturer 1 and Wyna was its juxtaposition with the *epistemic relation* of knowledge-constitutivity. In the study guides of other teachers, the *knowledge-constitutive relation* was simply absent or implicit, but for Lecturer 1 it was present, politicised and denigrated. Lecturer 1 trivialised it by the use of black humour, and bland statements. Of his two full-page cartoons, one picture was the serpent tempting Adam and Eve with the apple of wisdom, and suggesting - like Wyna's father, - 'Besides, who needs an education?' (p.8) The other picture was a caricature of a robot, eyes shut, with 'memory tapes' turning in his brain while he rote-recited into a microphone. (p.18) The implicit message to correspondence-educated students was 'if you can't beat them, join them. Play the academic game of rote learning because who needs 'the knowledge' anyway?' In the second example, Lecturer 1's course did not once (in its initial study guide) link its given knowledge to the students own ability to apply it, change it or own it, and any reference to reflection and intellectual work (.R/), like the cartoon references to 'education', was also trivialised. His concern for students was directed more to intelligibility than to intellectual ability.<sup>456</sup>

*Obviously do some thinking before you write, but do not waste too much time in navel contemplation before putting pen to paper ...*

Y2/Admin/22

Empathy or like-mindedness between teachers and students may be an undervalued educational

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<sup>456</sup> "clarify your written thoughts by finding some understanding parent ... who will listen..." (Y2/Admin/22)

concept. It was particularly pertinent in an educational relation whose standpoint concerned *the politics of 'social contact'*. Wyna was receptive.<sup>457</sup> Lecturer 1's study-skills advice was the only course material she read in full, even to the extent of 'reading between the lines' and personally asking him for clarification when she<sub>(w1)</sub> (privately) met him on-campus. Rather like the writings of the university's study skills instructors (that Luisa had encountered), he 'explained' the reasons why Wyna felt insecure in the world of academic-sense<sup>458</sup> and suggested that the reductionist way to dispel those fears was through skilled writing - an ability she already possessed.<sup>459</sup> Wyna copied his suggestions for the acquisition of public ideas, even though his epistemic prescriptions were the opposite of Lecturer 13's and Noah's inductive and self- rather than other-centred ways of knowing.

*"For your discussion to be regarded as sound you must present supporting evidence. In other words, you must substantiate your argument. This process involves referring to particular facts and authorities, making quotations and summarising the opinion of others; then make your own deductions in detail and in your own words. Your facts must, therefore, be accurate and verifiable, and your deductions valid. There is no point in duplicity [sic] evidence, unless you wish to make a deduction that depends upon frequency; learn to select the most appropriate evidence. Remember, too much evidence is as bad as too little, because it may obscure what you want to say. Treat your reader as a reasonable informed person who needs his [sic] attention directed to particular points to be able to follow your argument."*

(Y2/Admin/p21)

Implicit in the epistemology of the politicised version of this educational relation, and particularly the knowledge of evaluation, was a conflation between the ideas of objectification and objectivation. Lecturer 1's prescription for the protocols of presentation gave Wyna evidence of how writing could *appear* to be objectified knowing. For instance, Wyna<sub>(1)</sub> '*translated his words into mine*'.<sub>(w1)</sub> The implication of his statements, if one read between the lines, was that it was to the students' advantage that the actual criteria of university success were neither fully known to staff nor universal in character. Then students would best to concentrate on expressing themselves well.<sup>460</sup> Obviously his form of educational evaluation was to be based more upon 'how knowledge

<sup>457</sup> Wyna<sub>(1,2,3)</sub> were all in course Y2. Wyna<sub>(3)</sub> was also in course X2, and Wyna<sub>(2)</sub> in course Y1.

<sup>458</sup> "We are not naturally logical. Our natural thought processes do not begin by defining a problem and work through it to a logical conclusion. Most of us think in flashes - dodging from one point to another. It takes skill and discipline (plus time) to construct a lucid and cogent argument" (Y2/Admin/19)

<sup>459</sup> "Try to say exactly what you mean. Slang and colloquialisms are neither appropriate nor precise forms of language in a scholarly essay. At this level there is no excuse for errors of grammar, sentence construction or spelling. To be sure, we all err! However, carefully proofreading your work after it is finished should help to keep these kinds of errors to a minimum. Good style is hard to define and even harder to teach; moreover a [discipline] course is not the place to teach it, or grammar. Nevertheless, strive to write in a direct straightforward manner; use active rather than passive verbs and concrete rather than abstract nouns. Avoid being woolly [sic] and prolix - both are signs of incomplete thinking. Try to cultivate your writing skills and within these limits, be yourself" (Y2/Admin/p21)

<sup>460</sup> However, some of the other lecturers also concurred with the idea that different people might have different criteria. "In other words ... that the marker is convinced that you know what you are talking about.... Markers may include other criteria in their marking and they will attempt to make this clear in their feedback." (Y1/Admin/15)

was written' rather than on 'how it had been thought out'.

Empathy between the teacher and student, and the confluences of thinking with doing, were not always unproblematic. Not knowing what to do, led to the belief that the *appearances* of the prose were important. Resolution of these problems took the form of facades, the appearances of which were often, but not always, effected by negation. On reading that '*too much evidence is as bad as too little*' (and not understanding that 'evidence' usually equated with 'fact' rather than 'theory'), Wyna excluded theory from the assignment because she did '*not know it*'<sup>(w1)</sup> or '*like it*'<sup>(w1,2,3)</sup>, and only had '*1000 words anyway*'<sup>(w3)</sup><sup>461</sup>. The teacher portrayed the same 'skill'. For instance, to confirm his students' fears of being '*forced to think differently*'<sup>(w1)</sup> within this academic 'game of luck', Lecturer 1 stated:

*BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR COURSE FOR THE COMING YEAR - WE HOPE  
THAT YOU FIND IT STIMULATING.  
E HOA MA, E NGAA TAUIRA, HAERE MAI, KIA PAI O MATTI I TE TAU  
HAU NEI. KIA ORA KOUTOU KATOA.*

Y2/Admin/32

This conclusion was a piecemealed and contradictory mask, for it appeared to create a socially-inclusive situation for a specific ethnic group, but immediately before this statement in the script there were several pages of study skills presented in blatantly sexist language. How much did social marginalisation, by any method, *really* matter to this lecturer, or was such an issue '*only academic*'?

As well as facades, a competitive strategy was 'required' in order to '*convince*' the marker. Lecturer 1 had reinforced this idea of competitiveness by his statement that '*the tutor does not mark assignments until they are all received .... For comparative purposes, they need to be marked together.*'<sup>(Y2/Admin/17)</sup> This strategy involved reduction of the field of competition and the acquisition of others' thoughts and arguments. Just to make sure there would be as few competitors as possible, Wyna<sup>(1)</sup> had wanted to be '*the only one doing something different*'.

Lecturer 1 was quite open about his attitudes to knowledge-constitutivity. He attributed student failure not to a '*lack of ability but to not knowing how to study effectively and efficiently*'<sup>(Y2/Admin/25; Y1/Admin/26)</sup>. He expressed the view that '*good organisation rather than academic brilliance was the key to success*'<sup>(Y2/Admin/26; Y1/Admin/26-27)</sup>. But having shared these 'secrets of success' with the students, Lecturer 1 was determining the educational success of students who

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<sup>461</sup> Moreover, on being told by this teacher to '*treat your reader as a reasonably informed person*', no student (Wyna included) had any reason to believe (a) they needed to fully explain each (new) conceptual term or (b) that they might have to repeat the same definitions over and over again for the multitude of markers in their final examination.

were organisers and efficiency-experts rather than thinkers.<sup>462</sup>

In essence, educational success involved taking advice from educational authorities and taking knowledge from peers. Having now centred his students behaviour firmly in presentation protocols, evaluation success and competitive instinct, Wyna listened carefully to Lecturer 1's other hints for success. When the lecturer had also said '*much could be gained from regular contact with others*', (Y2/Admin/15; Also X2/Admin/16; Y1/Admin/15) Wyna (1) and (2) had set up the study group meeting (reported in Ch. 6) and though each of them gave little, they acquired much.

All courses were complicit in reinforcing this 'ideology of success' and backgrounding knowledge-constitutive relations. Lecturers had suggested, for instance, that on-campus courses (for distance educated students) would be the place to have their '*early confusions resolved [by] contact with lecturers, tutors and other students*'. (X2/Admin/17) These lecturers seemed to recognise the politics of contact for they explicitly avoided 'privileging' lecturer-student contact at the on-campus courses and instead strengthened the bond between students and auditors.<sup>463</sup> But Wyna's like-intentional Lecturer 1(Y2) strategically suggested that direct '*social contact*' with authority figures was important.<sup>464</sup>

In enforcing the ideology of success, the potential for acquiring a knowledge-constitutive sense of ways of knowing was negated. Lecturer 1 directly linked expression (././X) to '*educational evaluation*' rather than to general social action or change. In this situation, the course-given knowledge had no intentional place beyond the institution's four walls and even within them, it was tied to achievement rather than to a student's personal knowing:

*Throughout this course an important part of your work will be the ability to understand and to relate your reading to your assignment and exam work.*

Y2/Admin/17

Forefronting presentation protocols as criteria of success was a general strategy of all teaching staff in this inquiry, except Lecturer 13. The difference between the teachers use of the presentation protocols was that alongside them, Lecturer 1 also forefronted lecturer contact, peer gains and competitiveness and denigrated reflection and the social purposes of knowledge. This complexity of '*strategic knowledge*' not only directly connected '*social contact to evaluation*' in an '*explicit*'

<sup>462</sup> Although Course Y1 presented these same statements in its instructions on study skills, it did not give rise to the same connection with teacher intention and determinism, for the writer of Course Y1 disconnected the student-lecturer relation in favour of a tutor-student one.

<sup>463</sup> For instance: "*Our intention is to ensure ... a close working relationship builds up between student and tutor .... Tutors are the main source of feedback ... and are thus very important. Students should make sure they are gathering all the guidance they require from tutors, writing in whenever they are unclear about the grade or remark*". (Y1/Admin/12)

<sup>464</sup> 'For the benefit of those students who want to have direct contact with lecturers ... Attendance ... is voluntary though recommended .... If you come to [the university] the staff who teach [this course] will be available to answer your queries or help with problems .... We look forward to meeting you.' (Y2/Admin/12,14)

social relation, but provided Wyna with yet another weapon. For instance, when Wyna read that to Lecturer 1, the presentation protocols produced work that was not only '*fruitful but more polished*' (Y21A4min/19), she read only one text, but later listed six books in her bibliography.

Other course writers were less explicit in linking the standpoint (of *social contact*) to the touchstone (of *expression* or *evaluation*), though their study skills advice emphasised the stage of expression (.I./X) and, by default, backgrounded the stage of reflection (.R./). One department (representing courses X1 and X2) privileged the period of expression by relating it solely to *written* work prepared for *evaluative* purposes, rather than knowledge prepared for social action.<sup>465</sup> Their standardised four-page, several years old, folded leaflet of study skill expectations was sub-divided into just three areas, 'Written Assignments'; 'Suggestions for writing essays' and 'Presentation of written assignments'. It was small wonder that Lecturer 13's and Noah's knowledge-constitutive intentions were negated - they were simply and critically outnumbered. Lecturer 13 was the only person teaching that '*evaluation*' was a student-centred form of judgement that was concerned with the knower's legitimation of knowledge during the stage of reflection, while the others were more concerned (it seemed) with evaluation as an externalised teacher-centred-and-controlled form of legitimating writings. Thus, for all those courses who placed emphasis upon written work, if the student could effect the game of *appearing* formal, how ever could the auditor 'know' what the student really 'knew'?

The game of academic appearances was relatively easy for anyone with strategic intentions, though at times one had to read between the lines - even lines of contradiction. For instance, Lecturer 1 instructed his students to have no grammatical or spelling errors in their assignments, yet the same unedited types of mistakes appeared on the very same page as this instruction! In spite of these contradictions (or perhaps because of its mind-less and masking purpose) these instructions became, for Wyna, the prescriptions to playing the academic game.

### *The academic game*

This chancive '*academic game*' consisted of several moves of advantage and very few of disadvantage - it would seem. The 'rules' of this game were somewhat obvious once the reader came to know which knowledges (or touchstones and standpoints) to link together.<sup>466</sup> '*Social contact*' was dependent upon '*language*' while '*evaluation*' was dependent upon '*study skills*'

<sup>465</sup> In many ways, though Wyna used '*social contact*' as her primary standpoint, the connection between this and the touchstone of evaluation was definitely imbedded in '*language*'. The educators themselves would perhaps be more correctly identified as prioritising the direct link between '*language*' and '*evaluation*'. This was the view they were presenting (in this investigation) of their primary educational relation.

<sup>466</sup> Since the foundations of almost every 'rule' appeared in some form in each of the four courses, and a concern for the ethical consideration of confidentiality of course teachers ought to be preserved, the source of the given example is not identified herein.

rather than 'course content'. Thus the core connection of this 'educational' relation lay in using 'language' as 'study skill'. But 'language' was a mode of communication with variant forms and it was 'the academic game' which linked these forms together in the specific sequence of objectification outlined below. (In expressing the meanings of this 'recipe', a cynicism toward political strategy has been maintained). The italicised and indented writings are quotations from study guides used by students during this investigation.

*The political 'game' (version) of the academic-sense:*

**Rule 1.** Different reading skills, carefully selected, will aid your intended political strategies. Though ideally the lecturer should tell you to read widely, in effect you can learn all you need to know from this course with very little effort to internalise 'all' the given knowledges at all. Selective and skim reading skills help. You need to carefully and deliberately 'read between the lines' of the teacher's study skills advice, but then only skim read the course knowledge for it is knowledge of learning strategy rather than knowledge of course content that you should be more concerned to understand. E.g.:

*How to read better*

*Survey the material first ... (scan the table of contents; the introduction, headings, emphasised sections, summaries, exercises and final paragraphs'*

*'Don't be afraid to skip paragraphs and whole sections if you can see that they are not relevant to your purpose. (There is no rule that says you've got to read every page in a book.)'*

**Rule 2.** You need to believe that knowledge is objective, objectifiable and objectivable because this reinforces the implication that education is and must be based upon deference, obedience and ideological control by your Lecturers. In turn this will give you advantage as you seek success in the competition for grades even if your auditor does not privilege the powers that they possess. Since you already 'know' that knowledge is objectively-distanced from your self, then you also realise that your ways of knowing are, and must be objectively distanced for the purposes of auditing. Specifically, make 'social contact' with your lecturer in spite of any suggestion to the contrary and then concentrate on obeying your lecturers' study skill suggestions and especially concentrate on getting the language and the 'conventions of presentation protocols' correct for the aesthetics of skilled writing can obscure absence of meaning. E.g.:

**BEGINNING OF STATEMENT**

*'[Assignment question]....  
1500 words. Due May 29th*

*Please note: The essay should have  
1. A careful plan and structure to it  
2. Footnoted evidence of your reading  
3. A fully-documented bibliography.'*

**END OF STATEMENT**

**Rule 3.** Literal translation of the 'course content' is more important than wasting time on actual inquiry, investigation and reconstruction, because its translation is directly related to the 'elegance' of reductionist thought. It is more important to translate the expert's words into your own than it is to spend time finding his or her meaning and then trying to think about how it relates to your world because (a) your essay needs to be concise and (b) it needs to be accurate. Direct translation is the easiest way to ensure both these principles are enacted because in so few words you can obscure your unknowings anyway. E.g.:

*'.... overview the main points of the author. This should comprise not more than 200 words ... show the marker that your interpretation ... is accurate and to the point. Do not simply repeat what the author says but use your own words to express the important points.'*

**Comment:** It was on this basis that Wyna<sup>(1)</sup> "put his words into mine". (The irony was that it took the Lecturer 1 nearly 400 words to explain what he wanted from the students' 600 word assignment!)

**Rule 4.** Reductionist strategy has a valid empirical as well as political basis. Since you are bound to run out of time and anyway you only have to write what I want to see, not what you want to know, I'll give you another tip on the 'academic game' of reductionism. E.g.:

*When time is a problem.*

.... One suggested method ... is the skimming by paragraph method .... it is a good quick way of getting the main points out of a chapter or article .... the main sentence is the first one in the paragraph ... Try it out'

**Rule 5.** Reductionist relations between language and evaluation are obviously crucial to success. Just to reconfirm 'the game' and links between its suggestions, it is how you write and the rules you obey that are more important than your actual engagement with ideas. Check the protocols, don't worry too much about checking for meanings if you've written it concisely. E.G.:

BEGINNING OF STATEMENT

'Editing checklist

1. Departmental format

2. Proofreading, punctuation, spelling and grammar

3. Quotations accurate

4. References accurate'

END OF STATEMENT

**Rule 6.** Memorise or rote learn the five rules above and keep them private. Elegance is a private game of epistemological, sociological and ideological exclusivity.

#### END OF GAME

After investigating how ways of knowing are educationally determined, the question one is left with is to what extent is education a social or epistemological enterprise, and to what extent has this question ever been critically examined? Twelve of the thirteen lecturers reflected a view of education as an activity of *social* rather than *epistemic relations*, a view which forefronted 'the protocols of presentation' (and formalistic language skills) rather than 'the rules of reasoning', and so effected the dominance of this particular educational relation. Only Lecturer 1 compounded this conflation between the social and the epistemic when he made this 'game' an explicit effort of knowledge-reproduction rather than knowledge-constitutivity. All that was required was for a student with strategic intention, to link onto the same standpoint and touchstone.

To join the politicised version of the same educational relation as Lecturer 1, students had to locate factors of both positivity and negation. The factors of negation (or political-based silence) were the competitive intentions of making personal lecturer contact, gaining knowledge from peers without their permission; not bothering to engage reflectively with course-given knowledge and not worrying about the actual social purposes of the knowledge either. With a careful reading, the 'positive' factors of the whole 'game' could be easily summarised in the lecturer's own words:

*'Get well organised' in order to 'learn effectively and efficiently' (ie 'in a workman-like way') the expected ways of reducing the knowledge-act (especially the stage of reflection) to the appearances of 'rules' and 'standards'. In terms of internalising material (I/I.), reduce the given material 'to its most concise form' through such means as 'select reading' the 'first sentences in paragraphs' or 'skim reading' the 'table of contents and index'. In terms of expressing (I/X) the knowledge, merely*

*'convince the marker' by 'substantiating the lecturer's position in the given assignment question'. One could 'supply supporting evidence' by 'translating' others' opinions and then judiciously 'incorporate facts', 'quotes and references', 'all accurately reported' and 'cited' in 'a full bibliography'.*

Such was the radicalised way of *appearing* 'to know' which was located in this study, but having successfully accomplished assignments, how was this educational relation (between *social contact* and *evaluation*) useful to achieving success in the final examination itself? Lecturer 1 to the rescue!

### *Final examinations*

Lecturer 1 again provided explicit instructions on how to reduce the course material to a manageable form, for the purpose of examinations, in his first study guide. In light of the interpretation which is presented later, perhaps it is useful to peruse it in its raw form:

#### **EXAMINATION**

*...There should be sufficient choice for students to write on topics that they have found interesting during the year.*

**IMPORTANT.** *There is a lot of material in these study guides. You are not required to learn all of it for exams. You have the opportunity to select areas of interest, to write essays on these [during the year] and then to focus on these same areas ["essays"] for your examination preparation.*

*Similar advice applies to a lot of the factual / statistical material. It is not expected of students that they should be able to recite extensive statistical material but simply to cite material relevant to arguments presented in essays or exams.*

Y2/Admin/16

I believe that when Wyna (1) had 'read between the lines' of this advice for long enough, she (w1) clarified his somewhat obscure use of terms by actually asking him to translate them. She had (after all) "*bumped into him on his way to the lecture*" (w1) and it was on this particular day, she later claimed, that he had revealed this information (in square brackets) although Noah (2,3) denied hearing it being made public in class. Whether or not this suggestion was true in point of fact, Lecturer 1 had at least been the only lecturer who provided clues on how to reduce the quantity of course content to be studied for examinations. Lecturer 1 did not expect his students either 'to know' or 'to know it all', and this reconfirmed the interpretation of his full-page, cartoons of which indicated his empathy for rote memorisation. Together, the cartoons and this written examination advice linked Lecturer 1's educational beliefs and advice.

Lecturer 1 provided students with the implied suggestion to 'rote memorise' the 'same essays' they had completed during the year. But Wyna went even further. Wyna (1) combined these 'ideas on the examination game' with 'the presentation protocols'. In her examination script, she actually incorporated subtitles, listings, quotations, references and bibliographies along with her skilled precise and concise forms of expression. This must have impressed Lecturer 1 when he was

marking examination scripts, for he left a note for the next auditor warning them to turn the page to see where she had presented a full page bibliography.<sup>467</sup> The consequence of Wyna (1's) use of presentation protocols was that, in a class where true first year or novice students were outnumbered 3 to 1, Wyna (1) achieved the highest raw score in the final examination. An example of just how well 'the game' can prove to be is attested to by comparison of Wyna's(1) and Noah's(2) answers to the same question in Lecturer 1's paper. The final examination question had asked for an understanding of the concept of 'social mobility'.

Wyna(1) wrote:

*Social mobility: There are two types inter; generational [sic] and intragenerational. Intragenerational is the mobility a person may experience within the same generation, while intergeneration is the mobility experienced from one generation to the next. This is the one most often studied by sociologists.*

Grade given : 6/6

Noah(2) wrote:

*Max Weber concerned himself with social mobility. Social mobility can be defined as being able to move up or down the hierarchy ladder of class. This can be achieved in today's society by way of education. Weber argued that if people were inspired and motivated enough, this could be achieved, especially if people from the working class aspired to do better for themselves, improving their life chances as well as their status in society. Although it must be recognised that a degree of closure exists within each class, and it can be easier to move within classes rather than through classes (although that too can be achieved). Intragenerational social mobility occurs when a person has made a significant change within the class structure. This occurs in a short period of time, say ten years. The person may have been a process worker in a factory and then a few years later becomes an accountant. Intergenerational social mobility occurs within a single generation. For example, a father and son. What the father's occupation is can have a great effect on what the son may do and will therefore have an effect on the son's life chances.*

Grade given : 2/6

It appeared, by the grades given, to have mattered little in either this question or others that Wyna(1) was unable to apply the words she had so carefully recited, either to the world in which she lived or to the theorist from whom it originated. The corollary of the elegantly-reductionist answer was the reduction of the likelihood of error or impreciseness. From the grades given to each answer, it seemed to matter little whether or not she actually knew, only that she had the communicative competence to make it appear that she did.

At the base of this dominant educational relation (between 'social contact and evaluation'), a competitive communicative competence was both the rule and the standard, but it required things *not* to be said; it required the political privatisation that an objectivated linguistic exclusivity offered,

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<sup>467</sup> "Peter, turn over."

to cover to the epistemic unknowableness and unknowingness of both the teacher and the student. Thus it was that Wyna, of all the students in this study, effected the winning streak that the university offered through its privileging of either the discrete touchstones of 'social contact' and 'evaluation' or the dialectical relation (of positivity and negativities) that existed between them within the hidden curriculum.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the three types of radicalised knowledge-action had demonstrated the life of entirely different educational relations and intentions during the move from common-sense to academic sense. Noah had focussed upon the subjectivity of knowledge-constitutivity and Luisa concentrated upon the objectification of the same educational relation. However, each found their preferred relation negated by academic educators. For Wyna the matter of academic sense was altogether different.

In Wyna's case, several points of her preferred relation (between 'social contact and evaluation') can be summarised. Firstly, Wyna forefronted her standpoint of 'social contact' by befriending teachers, authoritative others and students, because they were each sources of different forms of knowledge. For her, teachers determined the type of knowledge (touchstone) which was most important. Student-peers were the supplementary sources of the 'course content' and authoritative others who had already been enculturated in academic sense, were the source of both 'the game' and the editors of formalistic language skills. Lecturer 1 especially, was ready, able and willing to share his beliefs that university education be *reduced in knowledge-constitutive effort* through such means as the efficient and correct use of *presentation protocols* and *rote memorisation*. Wyna read between the lines of all his study skill information, privatised his suggestions and selectively neglected any other form of knowledge-constitutivity. She forefronted her skills of precise and concise exposition, all the while reproducing her 'plagiarised' understandings. Wyna<sup>(1)</sup> had re-enacted her teenage belief that there was little point in '*brain strain for no reason*'. Though she had found that slightly different strategies had been necessary for the final examination, to a marked extent the aesthetic protocols of the English language had provided an obscured the absence of an authentic state of knowledge.

The majority of course writers had forefronted *the possibilities* of this strategic knowledge-action from the moment they had suggested that meeting other students (in study groups or at vacation courses) "*would be useful*", and from the time that the teachers' lists of 'study skill' conventions consisted mainly of '*presentation protocols*'. Those two suggestions provided Wyna with information on reductionist knowledge-activity.

Each of the conventions of presentation protocols deceptively conflate expressed language with reasoned argument. The written form of logical argument presents a view of sequential deductivism

(from proposition to conclusion). In turn, this implies epistemological sense, which is, in turn, further enhanced when the relative importance of ideas within the argument is illustrated by the typeset indentations of subheadings. *Knowing* this is strategic knowledge itself. Wyna wrote lucidly and placed subheadings in her essay scripts. Her auditors could *see* that she *knew*. Later she also rote learned the reproduced knowledge of her assignments. Teachers had themselves been complicit in determining this strategic reproduction of knowledge, if for no other reason than that there was no option of *oral* examinations for these students. Wyna had determinedly avoided theory and the willing teachers proved to be her authorities to 'the game'.

To untangle this strategic web of educational deceit, required first and foremost that teachers became authorities who were equally ready, able and willing to share the epistemology of the '*rules of reasoning*', and that instead of forefronting their social relation with students they emphasised the knowledge-constitutive relation (between experts and potential knowers). But the issue of subjectification, forefronting and prioritising was complexly dependent upon the type of knowledge for which each student-typification searched.

Different students from those whose actions and beliefs were investigated here, may have chosen entirely different educational relations. But where these radicalised forms of knowing were concerned, the like-minded, epistemically-congruent Lecturer I had subjectified knowledge of the 'academic game' for Wyna and thus aided her coming to know the strategies of '*evaluation*' rather than the '*course content*'. Lecturer 13 had subjectified and Noah had subjectivated the '*course content*' and thus one empathetically aided the other's '*epistemology*'. Luisa could find no one to subjectify the '*conventional rules of reasoning*' for her and thus, personally objectified and alienated, she left the institution (or muddled on through the year with the help of parents). Yet all *courses* prioritised the social teacher-student relations over the knowledge-constitutive expert-student relations. Thus the teachers' mediation had determined the nature of the hidden curriculum, and it took a confident and habituated '*personal epistemology*' to resist this mediation of moving from common-sense to academic-sense.

## Chapter Eight:

### Conclusions

Sources of educational marginalisation within first year studies (distance educated) at university had been identified after an investigation into educators' mediations of student's typified educational relations. Indeed, marginalisation of students related as much to teacher-promoted *access* (I/J.) to different forms of knowledge as it did to *evaluation* (J/X) itself. Teachers particularly emphasised social constitutivity over knowledge-constitutivity. In turn, some students' attempted to subjectify the particular knowledge which was important to them. This was most apparent with Noah who '*juggled ideas*' along with her self-removed.

The marginalisation of students who prioritised the relation between '*personal epistemology and course content*' occurred under two circumstances. First, because a minority of teachers (1:13) foregrounded and taught to this relation, students had little chance of experiencing epistemological congruence, especially when Lecturer 13 was teaching only one fifth of one of the four courses under study. Both the one knower and the one loser who experienced his congruence with their search to come to know, found the activity '*easier*' (Luisa) and '*really great*' (Noah). In essence, Lecturer 13 acknowledged, taught from and attempted to discipline, the students' ways of knowing and background knowledge and experience. He foregrounded this in the knowledge-constitutive relation to the expert's knowledge and the background of social conditions within which that knowledge had originated. Thus 'the knower' was enabled by the epistemic basis of this access, to subjectify a particular form of knowledge. On the other hand, Lecturer 13 backgrounded the social-constitutive relation between himself (as authority-figure) and the students by his neglect and substitution of a direct interpersonal relation, with the use of informal access-enabling language in communication.

The second circumstance which marginalised students who typified the relation between '*epistemology and course content*', occurred when Lecturer 13's tutor-auditor failed to understand the epistemic assumptions of his educational practice. She negated the student's 'subjective view' of the topic at hand and in its place admonished the potential knower to adopt the objectified view of knowledge as if it was both a necessary and sufficient condition of academic study. Thus the oppressive and taken for granted 'ideology of objectivism' marginalised not only the student's behaviour but also the teachers.

Where Luisa was concerned, no lecturer foregrounded, discussed or taught the students of the objectified, externalised ways of reasoning that Noah's tutor had intimated were 'necessary'. Nor did any lecturer address the very 'real' issue of discourse and the need of students to adapt to a 'second' formalised language (even when the same meanings were shared between everyday

knowers and academics). Thus any student who foregrounded the relations between 'language and the conventions of scholarly conduct', was effectively marginalised from the institution, when they had no ways in which to articulate their needs and no-one to whom they could address them.<sup>468</sup> In finding no institution-based reciprocity for her needs, from the time of enrolment itself, this student (Luisa) became emotionally frustrated, her emotions froze her into rigidified inaction, and she unwittingly accepted the objectified role the institution 'offered' to her by silently withdrawing from study. There was neither subjectification nor sociality in Luisa's university experience, just a total social, educational and epistemic alienation.

The most dominant educational relation was that between 'social contact and evaluation'. Twelve of the thirteen lecturers foregrounded this relation which allowed students to feel comfortable in their new surrounds. Perhaps as part of the teachers' intentions to allay unnecessary student fears, they had anticipated that students would ask about 'what the lecturer wanted' in terms of evaluation, so they provided more information on 'how to write essays' than they did on 'ways to think about the knowledge', though they did not negate this possibility. However, one lecturer openly promoted the strategic linkages of this relation.

Lecturer 1's strategic action was especially important for Wyna, to whom the 'formal course content' was an objectified, external entity. This lecturer, through his writings, foregrounded university education as a tempting game of reductionism in which one could 'win' by rote memorising a minimum of material while retaining a primary focus upon the protocols of presentation. He even openly suggested, in his first study guide, that students needed only to learn for their essays and then could reuse them in studying for the final examination. This lecturer privileged the act which was commonly known among the students as the '*academic game*'. Proof of the strength of this relation between teaching practice and learning was the fact that four of the five Wyna's were enrolled in his class. Since the majority of lecturers (12 of the 13) also befriended students and 'helped' them with knowledge of 'how to write and present' academic material, they too were drawn into the rubric of '*the game*'.

### *Summary*

This inquiry was answered only by altering the initial issue due to epistemological considerations of how it might be studied empirically. Whereas the primary quest had been to understand why and how my mother's way of looking at the world differed so substantially from my father's, and was particularly manifest in the months following his death, it shifted to a quest of examining how this

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<sup>468</sup> Although one Luisa found Lecturer 13's acknowledgement of her own ways of knowing much 'easier', she absented herself from the university before officially reaching his material, having been gatekept by the discursive objectifications of a prior lecturer. As a consequence it would never be known whether she would have maintained her search for the external expectations, or whether she would have adapted to Lecturer 13's open acknowledgement of 'her' ways of reasoning which drew attention to her need to discipline her own ways of reasoning.

difference in ways of knowing manifested itself educationally. The study's changing focus could be seen as an investigation of the moves from common-sense to academic-sense.

This study finally became a sociological look at how 'ways of knowing' were educationally determined, because I had seen that others had failed to identify the unitary, positive and conventional nature of 'adult learning'. In taking this 'negative' perspective, I had now wanted to creatively investigate the pluralistic differences (of 'ways of knowing'), at the limits between knowing and not knowing.

To find the limits to different ways of knowing, required focussing the study on problematics. I ensured these 'negatives' were available by siting (critical contextualising) the study in a problematic setting. Then I sought the radicalised educational relations (within that setting) by focussing upon students whose typical ways of 'coming to know' were each concentrated within one specific stage of the knowledge-act (ie internalisation, reflection or expression). Now I had information which would negatively identify the boundaries to 'academic-sense' through differently typified personal epistemologies.

To change this way of looking at the investigatory problem had required an intensive examination of the epistemological nature of different sociological paradigms, as I sought a position which was not only fluid in nature, but also one which 'fitted' my own personal epistemology (or way of looking at the world). Within the Negative Dialectic of Adorno, the theorist is able to differentiate between forms of negativity and negation, employing whatever form suits the needs of the critique required. Such a dialectical form views knowledge as changing and open to the challenge and creative exploration of seeking possibilities. These same possibilities were evident in the different typified forms of 'coming to know'.

Each radicalised form of 'coming to know' was seeking some form or other of knowledge. However, 'the knowledge' did not automatically pertain to the substantive knowledge of the course content. Instead it was reflected in the nebulous 'it' each student sought as they entered the university institution and, from the preferred standpoint of their own epistemology, was reflected in the different touchstones each sought from their teachers. The whanau of knowledges in the hidden curriculum demonstrated how particular relations existed between these standpoints and touchstones, and it was in the actioning of those relations that the potential for educational marginalisation lay. Enabling access to the relation between personal epistemologies and expert's version of the course content 're-produced' a knower (Noah), or could have, had the evaluator shared the teacher's epistemic premises. Failing to access and address either the individual touchstones or the relation between the university's 'second' language and its conventional expectations of knowledge-action, produced losers (Luisa). But it was the promotion of the relation between social contact and evaluation that intentionally or unintentionally promoted winners

(Wyna) to the 'academic game'.

Only Noah used her personal (common-sense) ways of knowing to seek course content. She was attempting to combine the knower with the known by subjectifying both the procedural and substantive knowledges. On the other hand, both Luisa and Wyna were other-dependent in terms of the different knowledges they had sought. From within the social world of education, Luisa sought understanding of the objectified 'ways of knowing' of academic-sense, through seeking the conventions of scholarly conduct. But not realising that specialised knowledges are enveloped in specialised 'hard' words, she had difficulty even moving from her own standpoint of language. On the other hand, Wyna sought neither the procedural knowledge (like Luisa) nor the substantive content (like Noah) but instead concentrated upon locating the hidden secrets of educational 'success'. She found this information by befriending people who were already well enculturated into academic-sense, and by continually seeking their advice. To achieve her goal of 'educational success', she also privatised this information, secreting it from her peers in learning, by such means as pretending to ignore them or deliberately excluding them from her efforts to come to know.

The difference between ways of knowing reflected a concern by both the intending knower and the teacher, to either subjectify or objectify the knowledges of academic sense that were sought. Teachers mediated this knowledge in both positive and negative ways. One (Lecturer 13) subjectified the procedural ways of knowing for the student and in so doing, forefronted the knowledge-constitutive relation (between expert and student) for the similarly-intended potential knower (Noah). Other staff subjectified the social-constitutive relations (between themselves and the students), but mere befriending did not always prove to be a worthwhile strategy for locating the nature of academic-sense, as Luisa found. While they subjectified and forefronted the social-constitutive relation, at the same time these teachers negated (backgrounded or made absent) the epistemological bases to a knowledge-constitutive relation. They taught neither the subjective nor objective ways to proceed from common-sense to academic-sense. The middle position to this dilemma (of whether to subjectify or objectify), was to conflate both the knowledge-constitutive and social-constitutive positions as one. Here the teacher-mediation (of Lecturer 1) represented an attempt not only to befriend the student, but to inform them of the minimalist strategies necessary to give the merest appearance of knowing, without having to overly engage with the given knowledge or in reflection ("*navel gazing*"). This political form of academic sense was referred to by the student as 'the game', and in Wyna's case, it eventually proved to be the route to educational success.

Since 'curriculum' in practise merely reflects 'education' in theory, the argument that would remain long after this thesis was complete, would be to identify which educational relation was the most important for each of these courses, or for this university, or for that matter, the university system

of this country as a whole. The initial decision to define the nature of academic-sense, is essentially one to be made by those in the institution in which it forms the culture. If the culture of academic-sense is to remain hidden and obscure, as was seen in this investigation, then the current hide and seek 'game' played by students in seeking 'it' may prevail. On the other hand, transformative change could take place in one of two ways. If academic sense is to be reflected in the ideology of its culture, and centred in an idealist sense, then the methods of Lecturer 13 could well be adopted. He positively demonstrated a way to take the students common-sense ways of knowing and to informally and gradually discipline those personal procedures into an academic form of reasoning. On the other hand, an institution may decide to adopt less subjective methods than Lecturer 13, and so have the students adopt the objectified conventions of scholarly conduct in place of actioning their personal epistemologies. However, the students who seek this objectified understanding, seek a *reasoned* understanding of these procedures, not a behavioural recipe on 'what to do next'.

Though students may not have the words to make their questions *appear* epistemological to the educator, nonetheless this 'deep' meaning was implicitly requested. This raises the question of whether teachers could recognise an epistemological question if they saw one. Such material could be studied and taught. If such knowledge was imbedded in the script of the course content itself (an action practised by Lecturer 13 ), then 'the knowledge' could be *disciplined* by 'the ways of knowing'. This thesis answered my questions but in so doing has produced another and the answer to that question could have profound socio-political implications as well as educational consequences.

This thesis has attempted not to dwell on the negativity of epistemic fractures which were evident in the movement from common-sense to academic-sense, but to offer these hopes and possibilities for the transformative future of intending-knowers, whether they be staff or students.

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