

On bridges, roads and pathways: A personal journey toward 'tikkun'

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'Grade three is going out for physical education, the teacher has three large balls, three skipping ropes and three hoops. I watch with interest to see the creative use of these articles, but no first the balls, then the hoops and finally the ropes are used for relay races - three teams, ten children per team'.

'A nine year old has spent a considerable portion of his weekend writing about a ghost, and is rather pleased with the imaginative effort that is produced. He is excited about the teacher's anticipated response. After school this response is reluctantly shown to parents accompanied by a statement 'I'm sick of school'. Why? - The comment reads 'Your writing could be neater'.

'A thirteen year old is starting High school and is excited about learning Japanese. When asked how the first lesson went, parents are informed 'We colored in a map of Japan'.

Why is it that that I get annoyed about these incidents when teachers and other parents think they are 'normal'. Why do I feel frustrated when time and time again I see the three lines of children having relay races as their physical education. Why do I return from teaching practice visits frustrated that physical education was cancelled because the class was not behaving.

In this paper I want to explore some of the reasons why, and how these reasons relate to 'readings' of the various discourses we encounter. The way each of us 'reads' a particular situation or event is determined by our roots, background and environmental influences. For Shor and Freire (1987) these are 'moments' or experiences which are much more important than others, and which form the basis of our development, for these are the moments when we 'come to know' as part of the 'gnosiological cycle' - producing knowledge and knowing that knowledge.

I relate these moments of knowing to the signposts of life where at any moment we decide on a particular road or pathway and that decision not only affects the destination, but whether the journey will be smooth or rough. I present here three 'moments' of my own life which have resulted in major changes in direction and the frustration when in a Freireian way I see that too often knowledge in schools is presented in a passive way, as if it were a commodity to be banked with pupils and then withdrawn at a later date (Freire 1972). The Freireian notion that education is a political act and can serve the reconstruction of society along more just lines is also fundamental to the pathway I am presently travelling.

The view of working toward an overhaul of society through education is part of the rhetoric of a critical pedagogy (for example Giroux 1981, 1988, 1990 and in physical education, Kirk 1986, 1988), and critical pedagogy itself "resonates with the sensibility of the Hebrew symbol of "tikkun", which means 'to heal, repair, and transform the world, all the rest is commentary" (McLaren 1989 p160). For me, that is the logical destination we must travel toward.

Can we change education to bring about a more equal society? Does changing education necessarily bring about a change in society? A journey towards any destination must begin with the first step. The Chinese proverb that

gives us this knowledge encourages us also to be patient, persevere and above all look at our efforts as long term goals. We may not reach our destination even in a lifetime, but at least part of the journey will be accomplished.

For me, educating for justice and compassion is like a journey in the Chinese worldview. As many of us strive to introduce a pedagogy which foregrounds compassion, sharing, justice, harmony and dignity, many steps are needed and many cross roads will be encountered. As Toh Swee-Hin puts it:

'Guided in places by concrete signposts for transformation and in others by only a general vision, we move onwards, ever hopeful, undeterred by obstacles, set-backs, frustrations of slow results, and in many contexts, even repressive forces.'

1991 p115

This paper which describes one small journey toward justice and compassion is part of a much larger project and neither will end with the completion of the respective studies, but are reflective of the 'yin and yang'

dialectic of growing up, being educated and later being an educator while struggling on the one hand to find 'meaning in life', and on the other having 'meaning' thrust upon me.

My first 'moment' then relates to my childhood and the road my parents took while I followed. Being born in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and then transferring to a New Zealand primary school as a seven year old gave me early experiences that were not related to justice and compassion, but rather taught that to be 'accepted', one must not speak or dress differently from the majority. In this early schooling I learnt quickly the core values of a positivistic pedagogy where report card grades were tempered or highlighted by lengthy comments as to one's affective learning, and being 'well mannered', 'cooperative', or 'a pleasant boy to have in the class' helped considerably to off-set rather ordinary grades with British middle-class parents for whom these characteristics were particularly important and whose early views on parenting included the adage 'children should be seen and not heard'.

The formal curriculum at this time is a vague memory save for the fact that being called to the principal's office to read was a sign that academically one had come of age. However throughout primary and secondary school it was the dichotomy between what I read in books and my 'reading' of real life that was to supply an important 'moment of knowing' As a young 'kiwi' with English parents who had spent some years in the 'colonies' I became well versed in the literature that tied a Commonwealth country to mother England. Enid Blyton stories, Biggles, and especially Rupert Bear were all read and re-read and always my 'reading' of these books was from the idealistic and simplistic position - good always conquers evil and trusting, sharing and cooperation were the natural way.

As both a high school student and an Anglophile in the late 1950's early 60's my reading turned to non-fiction war stories, where the Battle of Britain heroes such as Douglas Bader fought against overwhelming odds to free the world from tyranny, or battled cruelty in their imaginative escapes from prisoner of war camps. At a different level a growing love of

the works of Dickens and Shakespeare reinforced the theme of justice, particularly when the underdog rose above institutional power such as in 'A Tale of Two Cities'.

My 'knowing' in relation to the books I read was therefore about heroes (always boys, men or anthropomorphic males such as Rupert) who were generally very English. My confusion which brought about my first real 'moment of knowing' was related to my growing love of the Maori people and their culture. On the one hand, my literary heroes modeled a way of acting toward and cooperating with other people, while on the other I was daily witnessing the tensions between Maori and Pakeha. I had reached a bridge which separated all I had taken for granted through my childhood and the real world which said that I had grown up in New Zealand but knew little of the history or traditions of the Maori people or the folk tales of New Zealand's history. A difficult lesson, and one which would lead to much soul searching in the post-school years.

From educatee to conveyor belt operator

A career in flying is not possible if one eye is weaker than the other. Sport, my second passion thus led me into a two year diploma of teaching specializing as a primary school physical education teacher. Teacher's college was devoted in the main to producing specialized craftpersons (Tom 1984) - names on the desk; be hard in term one, ease up later; 'demonstrate organisational capability' in order to become an associate member of the physical education association (NZAPER); and always wear a tie and long trousers at work. Teaching was about power and the transmission of knowledge.

The development of education in Australia and New Zealand which produced this view had followed similar lines and it is possible to trace this development to see how it paralleled industrial and economic changes. Following the First World War, mass production based on 'scientific management' saw the creation of two divisions of workers, those who carried out the repetitive assembly-line tasks, and those who were the designers and managers of the assembly-lines (Junor 1991). Education also expanded in order to produce both the obedient and punctual workers, the technical and managerial staff and the 'administrators, teachers, financial sector

workers, public servants and other(s)' (Junor 1991) that were required in greater numbers to support the production system.

The new workers (particularly the new management) needed credentials which were competitively acquired, and this 'merit-based' view of education was the forerunner of a system of schooling and assessment which not only has continued until this day, but has perpetuated the myth of individual inequality whereby some people are 'bright', some 'average' and some 'dull'.

In the 1960's education began to be seen as a form of 'human capital' whereby:-

'the traditional arm's-length relationship between schools and business (was) being dismantled for the purpose of aligning schools more closely with short and long term business and corporate interests'

Giroux 1988 p 178

Education had thus become a commodity and school credentials the products of education which are a form of currency in the job market.

The growth of the credentialling movement throughout the western world necessitated for me, a move to Australia to obtain a physical education degree at an Australian university. The process of gaining the degree at the University of Western Australia was both a cultural and professional shock. Cultural because I was introduced to the concept of prejudice based on 'State of origin' and the unequivocal boundaries set up between students in relation to where they came from was a form of cultural elitism similar to the boundaries set up between some Maori and Pakeha students at school and at teachers college.

At the professional level, unlike the teacher's college experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes were not related to paradigms of knowing or to teaching, but were for the purpose of passing endless tests or formal exams. Nor did this banking education (Freire 1973) address the societal implications of being a physical education graduate. What it did teach was that lecturing in a university was about power and status, and if a student dare argue about justice issues, that student simply fails the unit - a painful lesson, but a signpost for my own university teaching career. It would take another ten years of experience before university life as I experienced it could be seen in a context that I understood - that of Foucault's (1980) 'regimes of truth' and his notion of discourse being 'not only about what can be said and thought but also who gets to speak, when, and with what authority' (Sparkes 1989 p116). This notion is closely tied to the concept of a dominant discourse in physical education teacher education (PETE). I will return to this concept, but meanwhile, I was about to travel a pathway that was to be the most difficult in terms of teaching and would lead to another signpost, another change in direction. A 'moment of knowing'.

As has been discussed, I grew up to have a fairly optimistic and idealistic view of human nature, and the early years of my career in education reinforced the principle we learnt at college that children need to have opportunities to discover and develop their individual talents and capabilities. If these abilities are frustrated, children are likely to be behavior problems, therefore part of teaching is to remove the frustrating conditions and thus 'give control' to children. For Hellison (1985), this means providing children with the conditions to recognize the levels of responsibility that they are working at.

My university education and a number of different teaching positions in West Australian high schools seriously challenged my conception that one treats children like the self-actualizing individuals we want them to become. I was socialized into a model whereby one has to take control rather than give it, thus having power over others.

The crisis between power and meaning that I struggled with for several years reached its zenith at a time when I had completed three years as coordinator of physical education at a newly built high school catering for two very diverse groups of pupils. There were those who were from the country and boarded at a local Anglican hostel, who arrived at school 'properly' fed, in full school uniform and conversant with attitudes and values relative to regular study, homework and respect for teachers³. The

second group were students who lived locally, more often than not in blocks of flats with a single parent, who arrived at school having attended to the

younger siblings but with no breakfast save some alcoholic 'leftovers' and perhaps a cigarette on the way to school.

How can you impress upon a student the need for homework and regular study habits when they don't know when the next meal will be? How can you (as a male teacher) exert power and discipline over a female student when she goes home to different violent men on a regular basis? On the other hand, I was to discover that not only these students, but their counterparts the 'boarders', were very amenable to a personal, approach which targeted their individual interests and capabilities. My 'moment of knowing' was about learning from children. I was to learn about a social and cultural system that I could not have imagined, but also how, given the right conditions, children could break down the barriers between class, race and gender. Teaching was about being taught not just exerting power from a position of superiority

After a further two years of putting what I was learning into action I determined that I needed more of a theoretical understanding if my teaching was to develop further. Thus armed with vision and purpose I returned to university for a M.Ed (Physical Education) degree, a necessary pre-requisite imposed by the still growing ethos of credentialling relative to 1980.

I wanted to test my theories about teaching, and expand my knowledge, but even though I had completed an undergraduate degree I was naive to the fact that learning in a Human Movement faculty is -

'...intimately linked to the strength of the professional socialization process that researchers go through in...universities that, more often than not, inducts them into a positivist view of the world in which propositional forms of discourse reign supreme. It is here that the process of objectification takes place, which is a process whereby social constructions like the 'scientific method' are made to look like a natural part of the here-and-now that is unquestioned and taken for granted.'

Sparkes 1989 p117

Rather than a more knowledgeable teacher, I became an exercise physiologist and researched my personal interest - road cycle racing⁴ The 'scientific method' was indeed the only method and rather than finding out what really made elite cyclists 'tick', I statistically predicted race time in a National championship based on a number of physiological, kinanthropometric (body measurements related to movement), and psychological parameters. So armed I secured a short term contract within a College of Advanced Education and later a permanent position in a community college in the far north of West Australia.

It was as a pre-service lecturer in PETE that I began to fully understand the notion of a dominant discourse mentioned above, and it is useful to pause here and explore my understanding of that notion and how it helped determine a different road for my own teaching.

A Dominant Discourse

It is useful then to consider how one educational discourse can become dominant over others. In PETE for example, the discourse is structured around the central 'problem' of 'how' to teach physical education (Tinning 1991). How do we choose 'problems'?, and why do we foreground particular problems ahead of others? To answer these questions, it is necessary to consider problem setting in teacher education.

Hal Lawson (1984) uses this notion of problem setting to explore professionalization and deprofessionalization within physical education. Essentially, the notion posits the view that once 'problems' are identified they are able to be 'named' and 'framed'. However, problem setting is a value-laden process, because our conceptions of problems relate to our individual values. Further, problem setting is frequently 'initiated when people locate troublesome, controversial, or potentially dangerous trends and conditions that threaten their (personal) ideals' (Lawson 1984 p 49). The process of problem setting is a social act, for problems are not only socially constructed, they are also preserved by individuals and groups within society. Further, according to Schon (1987) our biographies, our roles in society and our political and economic outlook determines how we frame problematic situations. When a problem is set Schon maintains, we choose and name the things we will notice.

'Through complementary acts of naming and framing, the practitioner selects things for attention(,)... organizes them,... and sets a direction for action. So problem setting is an ontological process-... a form of world making.' (Schon 1987 p 4)

As a social act, and as a form of worldmaking, problem setting can be understood as both an expression of power relations and ideological assumptions. In teacher education for example, particular practices and/or methodologies will be named and framed as problems, while others will be discounted. As will be seen, my students and I are creating a 'New Age pedagogy' as an attempt to frame and name different central problems than those that currently dominate.

I will return to this notion of power relations later, but first, I will outline how and why the dominant discourse within PETE is a technocratic discourse within a pedagogy of performance. This discourse has framed and named its problem as 'how' to teach physical education.

According to Schon (1987), the model of technocratic rationality and its positivist epistemology of practice is based on three particular divisions, each of which leads to technical decisions, procedures or controlled experimentation. These divisions are: '(T)he separation of means from ends,...the separation of research from practice,...the separation of knowing from doing...' (Schon 1987 p 78).

Citing Whitson and Macintosh, Tinning (1991) demonstrates that a discourse of performance, promoted by 'sport scientists and performance technocrats' also promotes this 'positivist, technically oriented knowledge structure that seeks to map the way to increased levels of achievement in high performance sport...' (Tinning 1991 p 15).

Similarly in PETE, the dominant discourses are claimed (Kirk 1986a, 1986b and Tinning 1991) to emphasise science, and, most importantly are based on

scientific logic in that teaching is seen as a set of skills which can be broken into 'parts' for learning and then practiced prior to joining as a 'whole' at some later stage. As Siedentop says in his popular text 'Developing Teaching Skills in Physical Education':

'The development of teaching skills is approached in this text as if it were a science that is, amenable to systematic evaluation and capable of being broken down into a series of tasks that can be mastered.' (Siedentop 1983 p4)

According to Tinning (1991) the language that constitutes the discourse of performance pedagogy is concerned with efficiency, and this is reflected in the use of terms such as 'effectiveness' and 'objectivity'. Tinning also posits the view that the process of 'naming' within such a pedagogy is moralistic in that terms such as 'good teaching,, 'efficiency', 'rationality' and 'objectivity' are used in this discourse without being thought of as problematic (p7).

If this is what a dominant discourse is, how does it come about?

'Discourses are not composed by randomly choosing words and statements' (Cherryholmes 1988 p 3). It is rules which govern our discourses and in turn specific discourses are produced by discursive practices which in turn are themselves shaped by rules.

Similarly, educational practices are based on sets of rules which are in essence 'expectations of the members of a social group as to what performances are appropriate in a certain situation which is itself definable by means of those rules' (Fay 1977 p 75). Educational practices though are a result of choices which are related to values criteria or interests. Although we may appear to be free to choose what to do however, invariably we choose activities related to the rules and norms of established practice (Cherryholmes 1988).

PETE can be seen to follow the discourse of performance pedagogy therefore because this is the discourse that is most often represented by the research that is reported in physical education journals, and at national and international conferences

To return to the idea that as a social act and as a form of worldmaking, problem setting is both an expression of power relations and of ideological assumptions, it is useful to note the two reasons offered by Cherryholmes as to why we follow the rules and norms of established practice. Firstly he maintains it is because of ideology - acting according to ideas we perceive as the truth, and secondly because of power arrangements (Cherryholmes 1988).

The notion of ideology is generally thought of as a 'system of ideas beliefs, fundamental commitments, or values about social reality' (Apple 1979 p20). However, Apple points out that although there is general agreement about the notion of ideology in this way, interpretations are related to the scope and function of the ideological phenomena. For our purposes in relation to performance pedagogy, it is the functional aspects that are of most interest.

An understanding of the function of ideology is given by Paul Ricoeur

(cited in Winter 1987). According to Ricoeur, ideology is the very social bond of a particular social group:

'its tendencies are thus to simplify, to reduce to a taken-for-granted orthodoxy, to justify, the authority which pervades and preserves the group, and to treat its own representation not as a representation but as a reality itself' (p 72).

In this way we can acknowledge the power that taken-for-granted understandings have in producing and reproducing meaning. In relation to PETE, it is these taken-for-granted assumptions which form the 'implicit' dimension of Kirk's (1988) continuum of ideologies.

'When related to the hidden agendas communicated to pupils through the curriculum process, we are most likely to be interested in ideologies that are less explicit. Indeed, it is in precisely this sense that they are 'hidden', because they are not immediately obvious to teachers or pupils since they exist at the level of taken-for-grantedness and assumption' (p 139)

Further, '(a)n ideology becomes hegemonic⁵ when beliefs and values are accepted totally and without question, and no alternatives ... are considered possible' (Kirk 1988 p139)

Within the context of problem setting in PETE, ideology is related to the nature and purpose of teaching and schooling, curriculum content, teacher knowledge and so on. Sharp et al (1975) in describing ideology in teaching, put it this way:

'A connected set of systematically related beliefs and ideas about what are felt to be the essential features of teaching ... assumptions about the nature of the tasks teachers have to perform...(and) criteria to assess adequate performance...In short, a teaching ideology involves a broad definition of the task and a set of prescriptions for performing it, ... (p68)

The ideology of technocratic rationality within practice of performance pedagogy is about achieving stated objectives as efficiently as possible. Thus text books for PETE feature chapter headings such as: 'Preventive classroom management; Discipline techniques; Assessing teaching and its outcomes; What we know about effective teaching, and so on (Siedentop 1983 Contents pg.).

The second reason why our discursive practices are related to rules and norms of established practice and therefore some discourses can become dominant, is because of power arrangements. Truth and power are linked in

circular relationship (Foucault 1980) or as 'regimes of truth'

'Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true' (Foucault 1980 p 131).

Gore (1989) cites the Foucauldian idea that a power/knowledge connection operates within discourse, and McLaren (1989) takes this idea further by arguing that dominant educational discourses can be viewed 'as 'regimes of

truth', as economies of power/knowledge, as multiple forms of constraint' (p 181). Gore (1989) however would argue that all pedagogical discourses operate as regimes of truth for the pedagogical process⁶ highlights relations of power between teachers and students over issues of knowledge: whose knowledge is most worth (cf. Postman and Weingartner 1971).

How we think about ourselves and the way we act is shaped by the ideology and power arrangements discussed so far. According to Cherryholmes (1988), this is one way in which our profession is re-created, because individuals think and behave in ways that are accepted and rewarded. We do not scrutinise the way we think about practice (which we must do in order to take control over it),

'because our professional subjectivities are already shaped: we have internalized appropriate rules and ideologies, have accommodated ourselves to dominant power relationships, and are more concerned with performing expected actions than with analyzing them' (Cherryholmes 1988 p 6)

Performance pedagogy as the dominant discourse of PETE can be seen as a response to power. The questions we consider worth asking as well as the ones we do not ask are influenced by these power relationships. As Postman and Weingartner point out, education for the future will need to change so that what is learned by students is based on their own questioning, and the problems dealt with by those questions will need to be seen as useful and realistic by the learners -

'there is no learning without a learner. And there is no meaning without a meaning maker. In order to survive in a world of rapid change there is nothing more worth knowing, for any of us than the continuing process of how to make viable meanings' (Postman and Weingartner 1971 p85).

Changing the notion of a dominant discourse-practice related to ideology and power to one that is 'meaningful' is to think of pedagogy as text (after Gore 1990). In this context meaning is a part of language and language is socially and historically located in discourses (Gore 1990 p105). As we have seen already power and ideology are established within the functioning of a discourse and where pedagogy relies on particular relations of power such as in PETE, truth or meaning making is an intimate part of the discourse.

If we accept as I do that the concept of pedagogy here relates to the process of knowledge production.

'Pedagogy addresses the 'how' questions involved not only in the transmission or reproduction of knowledge but also in its production. It enables us to question...under what conditions and through what means we 'come to know'. How one teaches...becomes inseparable from what is being taught and, crucially, how one learns' (Lusted 1986 p3).

The 'how' of pedagogy within PETE is, as we have seen, often associated with technical problem of how to teach physical education. However in combining the notion of power as proposed by Foucault and Lusted's notion of pedagogy (after Gore 1990) we can focus on the process of teaching as meaning making, for in this process negotiation between teacher and student in the way pedagogy is received requires the student to be an active maker of meaning. For PETE this implies that we can read a discourse-practice in a similar way to reading a text in that we move from what is written to what is not written in order to understand it.(Cherryholmes 1988).

The process of teaching as meaning making is the focus of a third year action research project discussed below, but first let me return to the third major 'moment of knowing' which was to determine the pathway I am presently traversing.

Having moved from a CAE to a community college in the far north of Western Australia, I discovered I was becoming an administrator rather than

teacher, so I returned to Perth (capital city of WA) and a position as Senior Master in physical education in a catholic girls senior high school. Initially I felt this return to school teaching would be a retrograde move, as I had decided that the justice model I had been working with prior to returning to university was ideally suited to pre-service teaching. In three short years however, my life would be irrevocably changed, my vision would be renewed and strengthened and destiny (or fate) would lead me on a new path.

St. Thomas Aquinas College was (according to my 'reading') the epitome of religious schooling, for although not a catholic myself, here were all the values I had been taught or had learnt to revere. An educational community all working to the same vision; a philosophy that included 'practice what-you-preach', and the wholistic functioning of people; and an educational environment where it was possible to give power to students rather than take it. These attributes were to be demonstrated time and again and became central to my ability to cope with a new and somewhat unfamiliar position, while also working through my own very personal grief process.

It was March 1985, my first term at St. Thomas Aquinas, that my eldest daughter was hit by a car while walking home from school and died after a week in intensive care. Having experienced all the psychological reactions of a bereaved parent as outlined by Kubler-Ross⁷ (1969), I was to walk many different pathways and travel many journeys as I started searching for answers to questions posed by my work, and those which would help me accept what had happened. These included: what did religious education really teach children about their time on earth?; did we as educators provide any real meaning for people whether they were here for eleven years or one hundred and eleven?; did any education articulate questions such as why am I here?, where did I come from?, where am I going? Most importantly, could physical education contribute to meaningfulness in a child's life beyond subject knowledge?

Throughout 1986 and 1987 I wrestled with questions such as these, and the implications of them for my own teaching. I soon realised that not only had my life changed, but my relationship with all my students had changed and my philosophy of teaching was irrevocably influenced. I did not know then, but the view of teaching I was to adopt over the next six years included many aspects which Dona Kagan (1991) so eloquently describes:

'It is no accident that in many cultures the word for priest and teacher is the same, or that initially the sole purpose of higher education was training for the clergy. Education is inherently moral, teaching a profoundly religious act. For at the heart of ... any great lesson, (lies a) belief in the divinity of nature, in the integrity of creatures smaller than ourselves, in the awesomeness of mysteries. To discover a physical or

mathematical law is to understand the symmetry of God. To fall under the spell of literature is to be enchanted by the divine magic of creation. ... For as our forbears understood, the primary function of a teacher is to touch another human being's soul and, in doing so, to turn it irrevocably to the light. p83

St. Thomas Aquinas was to amalgamate with its 'brother' school and become a large co-educational college in 1989. All positions had to be re-applied for and thus toward the end of 1987 I found myself thinking about my career and how I could best pass on some of my experiences in an educational context. I was again wrestling with the notion of tertiary teaching. So it was, with the support and encouragement of the school principal, I set about applying for such a position and in March 1988 settled in Darwin and a lecturing position at the then Darwin Institute of Technology, which became the Northern Territory University in January 1990. Yet another bridge to be crossed.

New Age Pedagogy

My reading and searching at a personal and professional level continued, and the spiritual awareness books of Dawn Hill (1982, 1987, 1989) and Doris Stokes (1983, 1984) introduced me to an understanding of 'New Age' philosophy. In turn, my interest in the educational implications of what I was reading led to authors who were analysing religious and New age thinking in light of educational response. In 'Worlds Apart' (1991) David Millikan (an orthodox christian) and Neville Drury (a devoted New Ager) discuss the similarities and differences between their views. Mathew Fox

(1983, 1990, 1991), the Director of the Institute in Culture and Creation, and David Purple (1989), an educational theorist, both posit the view that society and education is faced with a moral and spiritual crisis and if we are to survive, compassion, justice, wholistic thinking and the notion of the global village must be integral parts of education in the future Drawn to theories such as these, but not knowing how to put them into practice, I was excited by Schwab's (1969) argument that teaching should be a 'practical' discipline in that such a discourse is about acting in order to realize ethical values and goals. As my views about the content and context of education for pre-service physical education students began to take shape, Schwab's ideas seemed to supply the means for applying my educational values to practical situations.

Schwab's basic premise was that teaching, as a 'practical' rather than 'technical' activity, involves numerous problematic situations which teachers have to make judgements about relative to how best to translate the educational values they hold dear (for example developing a sense of justice and compassion toward others) into classroom practice.

Stenhouse, Schon, Friere, Giroux and others gave momentum to my journey for now a glimpse of new possibilities was afforded me. The lenses for viewing educational discourse and the new possibilities are the substance of a much larger study mentioned previously, but suffice to say that glimpses of other educational discourses, apart from the 'technical' model I had continually experienced, were providing me with a framework for my teaching, and a basis for the present study by some third year pre-service

students.

I learned that the discourses that have been framed and named as: critical; feminist; peace; futures; and postmodern, seemed to be saying things that were similar to what a New Age discourse was saying. Could a new pedagogy be developed that would encompass the 'best' of what they were saying, 'a New Age pedagogy of justice and compassion?' As Simon (1987) says, 'to propose a pedagogy is to propose a political vision' for he says if we talk about pedagogy, we also talk about 'what students and others might do together and the cultural politics such practices support' (p371).

'I am proposing that as educators both our current problem and our future project should be an educational practice whose fundamental purpose is to expand what it is to be human and contribute to the establishment of a just and compassionate community within which a project of possibility becomes the guiding principle of social order.'

Simon 1987 p372.

A 'moment' for pre-service students

If we take a critical rather than technocratic view of education, our framework for teaching becomes somewhat different, for we are forced to ask of ourselves - 'what's worth doing?' This perspective, unlike a functionalist perspective also enables us to view the social order as being socially constructed - that is created by people, based on subjective judgements of what's best for them and in this regard is open to analysis, criticism and change.

What's worth doing then is a key aspect of this perspective, for since my own earliest 'moments' as a pre-service student it has been my conviction that teachers teach themselves first and curriculum second. Every day teachers face decisions that are closely related to why they teach what they are teaching, what their goals for the children they teach are, and what the children need for life, not just for this year.

With this in mind my students have been considering a personal-social development model of curriculum which foregrounds justice and compassion, and which might provide a framework for the subject matter of physical education whereby 'what's worth knowing' and 'what's worth doing' could be combined to achieve the personal-social benefits of organised and instructional physical activity that have been held dear by the profession but which have not been substantiated very well by research. In moving toward 'tikkun' we believe that if we want a better world, we need to teach for it.

Theories-in-action

Third year students within the diploma of education at NTU are therefore grappling with the concept of teaching a personal-social development model. In order to build a framework they are firstly trying to clarify 'what is

worth knowing' by examining new curriculum models (eg Hellison 1985; Hellison and Templin 1991); through experiential learning and by critical reflection. As the framework becomes more clear, strategies are defined and programs and lessons planned. These are then tested in schools, reviewed, re-worked and tested again, prior to being written as a script for a video-taped record.

An example of the process thus far from one of the class groups indicates that the teaching process has taken on a new dimension in that students are now thinking about physical education in terms of individual children's lives rather than simplified behavioral objectives or motor skill outcomes. The group has selected a justice model as their framework and within this model they have defined self esteem and moral/equitable education, as the key objectives. Strategies identified for improving self esteem include re-defining success so that individual improvement and effort are the focus, paying attention to children's inner selves by emphasising one-on-one teaching and conferencing, giving children choice, and decision making responsibility.

Strategies to promote moral education are based on the idea that in a violent, aggressive, elitist and competitive society a new ethic - a cooperative ethic is needed for physical education activities. Strategies therefore in movement activities, games and creative dance experiences all stress cooperation and the engendering of good-will and equality towards and amongst others in the group.

It has been said that physical education and sport often makes enemies out of children rather than friends. If in the next stage of putting our theories into practice in schools, we can reverse this trend, I believe we will be well on the way to really discovering what quality physical education is about, and in the process create a new pedagogy for PETE.

Critical pedagogy and a journey toward 'tikkun' may provide a:

'historical, cultural, political and ethical direction for those in education who still dare to hope.' McLaren 1989 p160.

This personal reflection began with a Chinese proverb about taking the first step, if any journey is to be accomplished. Several steps have been taken, many pathways have been trodden, but the journey will not be accomplished with the completion of this or its parent project, for to create or contribute to a peaceful, compassionate, just and humane world through PETE is a journey without end given the disempowering logic of institutional hierarchy, but each step may be the start of a new journey for the fledgling teachers who accompany me.

'A New Age pedagogy in teacher education: Justice and compassion as the dominant discourse in pre-service physical education'. PhD dissertation in progress.

In the introduction to his book 'Righting the Educational Conveyor Belt' Michael Grinder notes that in the first five years of teaching the educator is acculturated into a life of bureaucracy and operates as if s/he were not empowered. It is in this educational mood Grinder maintains that every fourth student is dropping off the educational conveyor belt.

Metaphorically, the left hemispheric way of thinking which is dominant in schools creates a centrifugal force which throws the right brain student off.

3 In other words these students had correctly 'read' the white middle class system that was operation.

4 'A Physiological, Kinanthropometric and Psychological Analysis of Elite Road Cyclists' Unpublished M Ed thesis A. Pettit UWA 1982.

5 Hegemonic is 'an ideology that defines the limits of discourse in a

society by positing specific ideas and social relationships as natural, permanent, rational and universal' (Giroux 1980 p11)

6 In using Gore's argument above, it should be noted that I am here subscribing to the concept of pedagogy as a process of knowledge production as described by Lusted (1986). This definition highlights both the instructional practices and a social vision of justice and compassion central to this study.

7 Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, a pioneer in the study of death, interviewed hundreds of people who were in the process of dying. She then identified five psychological stages which they and those left behind typically experience: denial, a refusal to accept death; anger, manifested as why me? questions; bargaining, making deals with God, physicians or 'fate'; depression; and finally acceptance.

ON BRIDGES ROADS AND PATHWAYS: A PERSONAL JOURNEY TOWARD 'TIKKUN'

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