

Professional Practice Research: Conversations about the uncertainties

***Tania Aspland, Ross Brooker, Ian Macpherson and
Eve Cuskelly***

***(Tania, Ian and Eve are from the Faculty of Education, Queensland
University of Technology; Ross is from the Faculty of Education,
University of Tasmania, Launceston)***

Contact Details

Ian Macpherson,

Faculty of Education

QUT, Kelvin Grove Campus,

Victoria Park Road,

Kelvin Grove, 4059

07 3864 3951 (Phone)

07 3864 5461 (Fax)

i.macpherson@qut.edu.au

Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for
Research in Education (An international education research conference -
"Problematic Futures: Educational Research in an Era of ... Uncertainty"), Brisbane,
Australia, 1-5 December, 2002.

ABSTRACT

This paper builds on the symposium presented at the 2001 AARE Conference in Fremantle. It proposes an expanded definition of professional practice research; it raises a number of ideas about professional practice; it highlights the uncertainties associated with professional practice research by posing a series of questions; and it addresses these questions with reference to a range of examples of what the presenters characterise as professional practice research.

The framework for professional practice research is situated within an approach to Action Research which is critical, collaborative and reconstructive. The framework includes the following ideas:

Professional practice research is an interrogation and investigation of professional practice by the professional practitioners themselves.

It is research that is critically-informed, politically-activist, and action-oriented.

It aims for a deeper understanding of professional practice, an enriched capacity to engage in professional practice and a commitment to an ongoing quest for quality improvement in professional practice.

It involves recognition of the fact that effective learning and teaching (as outcomes from professional practice research) is not a final state to be achieved; rather it is a way of thinking about teaching and learning to foster continual improvement.

The paper reports conversations and incites further conversations about what are considered to be the problematics and uncertainties of professional practice research. These conversations are framed within the framework for, as well as the ideas and questions about, professional practice research as outlined above.

INTRODUCTION

The paper begins with a theorised view of professional practice research. It continues with the development of a framework within which to interrogate and reconstruct professional practice via a series of conversations about the uncertainties. This framework is presented as two iterations of our theorising about professional practice research. These two iterations facilitate the development of a number of questions which probe our uncertainties in a series of conversations. The paper then contextualises our conversations within some of our recent research activities. (We do not provide the text of the conversations in this paper.) The paper concludes with a synthesis of significant points which arose during the conversations and of emerging themes. These significant points and themes provide a basis for ongoing reconstructions of professional practice research.

A THEORISED VIEW OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE RESEARCH

Professional practice research, as presented in this paper, derives from Stenhouse's (1975) view of the teacher as researcher and from the Action Research movement that his ideas spawned in the UK in the mid to late 1970's and in Australia in the late 1970's and into the 1980's (see Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988). In more recent years the Teacher Research and Practitioner Research initiatives have sharpened the

focus on professional practitioners as they have interrogated and investigated their professional practice as a basis for critically-informed advocacy and activism as well as transformative/reconstructive action. Somekh's (1995) view of Action Research in social endeavours is worth reading in this regard. A much more recent example is Groundwater-Smith's (2000) characterisation of evidence-based practice within knowledge-building/creating schools.

It has been argued that current educational practices do not develop true critical thinking at the school or teacher education level (Mangan, 2002). This lack enables the maintenance of an "ideological hegemony" by which dominant groups reinforce their legitimacy. As long as teachers do not question this ideology they will in fact be reinforcing it: schools have been identified as one of the central institutions for maintaining this hegemony. Developing a culture of critical reflection and action in schools, as engendered within a practitioner research culture, is essential to question existing policies and practices and provide rich data as a basis for change.

Maintaining and developing a research focus can be difficult within complex school systems: teacher practitioner research needs to develop a "critical edge", to maintain the emphasis on what is being researched. The research also needs to be framed within a value or belief system that forms the basis from which questions are addressed.

The concept of social justice is one such belief system that has widely informed educational research. Rizvi (1998), however, suggests that in the past a single, simple meaning of social justice has been employed. This idea of "simple equality" is not sufficient, as it is neither achievable nor desirable that everyone receive the same thing in the same form - different people have different capacities and needs. What is truly needed is "complex equality" whereby different social goods are distributed according to different criteria.

To achieve this, an organisational structure that enables the widest possible participation is needed, to develop context-specific meanings and criteria appropriate to particular spheres. This requires principles of social justice which are broad enough to allow for specific adaptation in different contexts, including schools and classrooms. Social transformation in ways that would change everybody's sense of self and address the culture within the school needs also to occur. Further, current conceptions of leadership as management need to be reviewed to incorporate a broader, more devolved definition (Macpherson, Aspland, Elliott, Proudford, Shaw, & Thurlow, 1998). Such change cannot be imposed from the outside, but must, as Rizvi noted, involve as wide a participation as possible - the whole school community. What is needed is to develop the idea of schools as learning communities, where everyone, not just the students, learns. "It is everyone associated with schools who, in the end, will change the world of the school by understanding it critically, collaboratively and transformatively." (Macpherson, Aspland, Elliott, Proudford, Shaw, & Thurlow, 1998, p150).

Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998) view participatory action research as a collaborative social process which is participatory, practical, emancipatory, critical and recursive, concerning actual (not abstract) practices. Action research's success is not in following a process, but in the development of a strong and authentic sense of development and evolution in practice, and of practitioners' understanding of their practice and the situation in which they practice. In their work with graduate students, Aspland and Brooker (1998) concluded that pursuing an approach to teaching and learning that centres on locating the subject in their everyday world of curriculum

work, focusing on how everyday experiences are shaped and how they articulate with the larger constructs that determine the everyday world of curriculum work, enables the learning community to be better placed to enter a phase of transformative action and to reshape their practice.

A FRAMEWORK FOR INTERROGATING AND RECONSTRUCTING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE RESEARCH - THE FIRST TWO ITERATIONS

The characterisation of research outlined above sets the scene for constructing a space for conversing about professional practice research. This space includes:

a view of Action Research which is critical and collaborative (Aspland, Macpherson, Proudford & Whitmore, 1996);

an approach to collaborative activities (Macpherson, Aspland, Elliott, Proudford, Shaw & Thurlow, 1998);

a stance about professional learning (Macpherson, Brooker, Aspland & Elliott, 1998);

a perspective of curriculum leadership in which a range of stakeholders collaborate in leading learning (Macpherson, Aspland, Brooker & Elliott, 1999; Macpherson, Aspland & Brooker, 2001); and

a position about collaborative research where people work with one another rather than on one another (Macpherson, Aspland & Brooker, 2000).

FIGURE 1

Elements of a beginning framework for interrogating and reconstructing Professional Practice Research

THE FIRST ITERATION

- *Professional practice research is an interrogation and investigation of professional practice by the professional practitioners themselves (in collaboration with one another and with others).*
- *It is research that is critically-informed, politically-activist, and action-oriented.*
- *It aims for a deeper understanding of professional practice, an enriched capacity to engage in professional practice and a commitment to an ongoing quest for quality improvement in professional practice.*
- *It involves recognition of the fact that effective learning and teaching (as professional practice) is not a final state to be achieved, rather a way of thinking about teaching and learning (as professional practice) to foster continual improvement (Macpherson et al, 1998).*
- *It does NOT deny the centrality of the practitioners' positioning in the research; rather it highlights the centrality of BOTH practitioners AND their practice.*
- *Professional Practice research conceived in these terms seeks to avoid*

the possibilities of researchers and the research becoming indulgent and introspective, if not incestuous.

It is increasingly being recognised that practitioner research enables participants to understand and change practice and to look at it in new and insightful ways (Noffke, 1999). However, while this work has generated theory, there has been little effort to bring the theories together and disseminate them to a wider audience. Further, only a narrow range of theories has generally been used in practitioner research, with the omission of areas such as feminist theory. As Noffke argues that any theory reflects the values of its authors, as well as those it may affect, the neglect of wider theoretical underpinnings in practitioner research has implications for the results of that research. This view raises questions about documenting and disseminating such research.

Additional concerns about collaborative practitioner research which have been raised include: ethical concerns; moral and practical problems; value conflicts; issues of power and authority; democratic participation; inequalities in the actual circumstances of individual involvement and in the process itself; and contradictions and role dilemmas when teachers come to suspect a "hidden agenda" (Macpherson Aspland, Elliott, Proudford, Shaw, Thurlow, 1998, p149). Such concerns can, however, largely be addressed through thoughtful and open communication and a genuine belief in the value of all participants' contributions, and should not be seen as major detractors of the value of practitioner research.

As practitioner researchers, our ontological position is one of democratic participation and inclusion; our epistemological stance is associated with socially-critical constructions of knowledge; and our methodological approach is a "working with" rather than a "working on" people. For us, people are research participants and not research subjects. Our overall view of research sits within the view that the purposes of educational research are to extend theory, to illuminate practice and to inform policy. Ethical matters are, of course, of utmost importance in a characterization of professional practice research within what is a heavily value-laden position. We grapple with these matters by seeking to maintain a balance between what we term passion and responsibility in research efforts (Macpherson, Brooker & Aspland, 2001).

FIGURE 2

Further elements of a beginning framework for interrogating and reconstructing Professional Practice Research

THE SECOND ITERATION

- ***Professional practice research is an interrogation and investigation of professional practice by the professional practitioners themselves (in collaboration with one another and with others.***
- ***It is research that is critically-informed, politically-activist, and action-oriented in a transformative sense with a view to illuminating theory, informing policy and improving practice.***
- ***It aims for a deeper understanding of professional practice, an enriched***

capacity to engage in professional practice and a commitment to an ongoing quest for quality improvement in professional practice on the part of professional practitioners both individually and collectively.

- ***It does NOT deny the centrality of the practitioners' positioning in the research; rather it highlights the centrality of BOTH practitioners AND their practice. However, it does raise the importance, if not the moral/ethical responsibility, of professional practitioners to be transparent in stating the values and beliefs which motivate their thinking and practice. Such positioning is vital for documenting and disseminating research processes and research outcomes.***
- ***Professional practice research encourages democratic participation; but it may occur in hegemonic environments which militate against such involvement. An activist stance is therefore very significant in advocacy for this sort of research.***
- ***Professional Practice research conceived in these terms seeks to avoid the possibilities of researchers and the research becoming indulgent and introspective, if not incestuous.***

QUESTIONS FOR INTERROGATING OUR UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE RESEARCH

So, what does it mean to construct a space for professional practice research? The fact that we are asking questions indicates the element of uncertainty. It is not so much a matter of feeling insecure or threatened, as much as it is a matter of clarifying our thinking and strengthening our case in arguing and advocating for professional practice research.

Six statements about professional practice research appear below. Broadly, they flow on from the six points in the second iteration of our framework. With each statement there is a question (or two or more) which we address within the context of some of our research efforts in professional practice settings.

Thus, we are using conversation in a critically reflective way to interrogate our ideas about professional practice research. It is through this conversation that we elicit a third iteration of our framework - what we call a tentative construction of a space for professional practice research.

The statements and questions

The statements and questions are as follows:

ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

1. Professional Practice Research is conceptualised as critically-informed, politically-activist and action-oriented. It is a transformatively-reconstructive interrogation of and investigation into our lives as professional practitioners in a range of educational settings, systemic priorities and policies, and global contexts.

But,

How does this fit with a traditional view of research which is less personal and works on, rather than with, research participants?

EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

2. Professional Practice Research is contextualised within the issues and challenges which confront us as professional practitioners.

But,

How do we know that this specific focus is worthwhile within broader levels of the professional community?

3. Professional Practice Research is praxis-oriented, collaborative and constructivist in its views of professional knowledge and practice at the local levels; but, at the same time, it has the potential impact on theory, practice and policy at wider levels.

But,

Where does the existing and perhaps taken-for-granted canon of professional knowledge fit; and how does professional practice research have an impact on both local thinking and practice and wider policy formation, when it has been so localized in its emphasis?

4. Professional Practice Research informs professional practitioners about their ever-evolving professional knowledge to the point that is difficult to draw the boundary between theory and policy on the one hand and practice on the other.

But,

How valid is professional knowledge constructed in these ways?

METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

5. Professional Practice Research challenges hegemonic views about research agendas, how they are generated and who owns them (and their outcomes); and it also raises questions about ethical principles and practices associated with this type of research which in some ways is unpredictable and uncontrollable compared with the more traditional or positivist forms of research.

But,

On what bases do we argue for matters of rigour and validity, for example?

A SYNTHESIS OF PERSPECTIVES

6. Professional Practice Research opens up new possibilities for constructing a territory for professional practice research regarding who drives it, who owns it and who benefits from it?

But,

Do our "answers" to these questions create a confidence to construct a territory for professional practice research?

Are the "borders" between existing research territories and this one more imagined than real?

Are we in a position to map and construct this "new" territory?

What is the place of practitioner research in this "new" territory and where do we find our space as practitioners?

The first three statements and their associated questions were considered together. Similarly, the fourth and fifth statements were grouped. The sixth statement and its associated questions were treated as a synthesis of our thinking to date and led into the third iteration of our definition.

CONTEXTUALISING OUR USE OF THE QUESTIONS IN OUR CONVERSATIONS

Before talking further about our conversations, we provide brief snapshots of the research efforts upon which the reported conversation is based. These snapshots are not comprehensive reports of the projects. They simply provide a context for you to situate our interrogation of the statements relating to professional practice research. The interrogation and reconstructions of professional practice research in the conversation are the focus in this paper - not the detailed reporting of these professional practice research projects.

The conversation occurred in three parts. The text of the conversation does not appear in this paper; but a copy is available if you wish to read it.

FIGURE 3

The brief snapshots of the research efforts referred to in the conversation which follows

FIGURE 3 a

Mooloolaba

This research project involved a partnership between the Education Queensland Mooloolaba School District and members of the Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology. The project focused on a futures-oriented perspective on curriculum planning and implementation. District personnel in schools identified the need to develop a research base for their school-level curriculum initiatives within the complex contexts which demand, for example, outcomes-based approaches to

curriculum and assessment, the incorporation of key learning areas into the curriculum, and the consideration of new basics and productive pedagogies as a means of contributing to the Queensland initiatives to develop a "Smart State". Case studies of four schools in the district were conducted as these schools explored the question: *how can schools at the local level respond to a multiplicity of demands in developing curriculum programs that meet the diverse needs of learners, and take them on pathways leading to worthwhile learning outcomes?*

Funding from the Mooloolaba School District and from the Queensland University of Technology Industry Collaborative Research Scheme is acknowledged.

FIGURE 3b

Home Economics Curriculum Evaluation

Traditionally, trialling new curriculum in the Queensland secondary school context is a very formal process in which the curriculum-making activity of teachers in the trial is monitored through a sponsored evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide feedback to the curriculum developers on the implementation of the new curriculum in the school context. The principal focus of the evaluation is the efficacy of the curriculum document in terms of its substance and the ability of teachers to translate it into teaching and learning programs for students: the effects of the trial process on teachers' personal resources for curriculum making are rarely studied. In this two-year study of the implementation of a trial senior secondary (years 11 and 12) school curriculum in Home Economics (Brooker and Macpherson, 2001) the perceptions of teachers about their competence and confidence in curriculum-making was investigated. The study is an example of professional practice research which sought to go beyond the primary purpose of syllabus evaluation.

This project was commissioned by the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies in Queensland. Funding for the project came solely from the Board.

FIGURE 3c

Evaluation of the Pilot Senior Syllabus in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

In Queensland, a curriculum authority has completed the development and evaluation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies syllabus. The evaluation of this syllabus was conducted at a time when Indigenous issues are open for scrutiny and debate in Australia. It is thus argued that the traditional model adopted for the processes of syllabus development, implementation and evaluation must be challenged. This research study explored an alternative approach to curriculum evaluation that pushes the boundaries and is responsive to social justice and equity issues. In particular, the evaluation was guided by a range of principles identified by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy, to which the Queensland Government has subscribed. It attempted to establish a more inclusive and culturally-responsive approach in its undertaking. Thus, in designing the research project, key evaluation principles from the relevant literature in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education were juxtaposed with the traditional

criteria set by the curriculum authority. These principles and criteria provided the framework for the evaluation of the syllabus.

This project was commissioned by the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies in Queensland. Funding for the project came solely from the Board.

FIGURE 3d

Case study of the implementation of a multi-disciplinary curriculum at a school site

In contemporary school education in many western countries the process of implementing centrally formulated curriculum policy into pedagogic practice in schools is a frequent occurrence and curriculum-making has become a regular part of schools' and teachers' routines. Historically, such curriculum-making has been located within school subjects which are themselves established within subject departments. However, in recent years in Australia and the United Kingdom national curriculum initiatives have organised school curriculum in different ways (eg "Key Learning Areas" which have brought together knowledge from a number of traditional subject areas). While the development of these contemporary discourses for school knowledge may be considered innovative, the readiness of schools to develop pedagogical practices which respond to such innovative thinking has been problematic. This research involved a twelve-month case study of the implementation of a "more holistic" multidisciplinary (Health and Physical Education Key Learning Area) curriculum into a high school context, to examine the ways in which an existing subject based curriculum structure framed the curriculum-making discourse and practices.

This study was based on recently-completed doctoral studies at the University of Queensland by Brooker.

SOME IDEAS AND THEMES EMERGING FROM THE CONVERSATIONS - A THIRD ITERATION OF OUR FRAMEWORK

We elicited a third iteration of our beginning framework for professional practice research from the conversations. We present it here, still with a degree of uncertainty; but with optimism based on the potential of professional practice research to inform and empower us in what this conference theme calls "problematic futures".

FIGURE 4

THE THIRD ITERATION

A tentative construction of a space for Professional Practice Research

Significant points from the conversations	Significant elements of the third iteration	Suggestions for further constructions and navigations of the territory
<p>FROM THE FIRST CONVERSATION</p> <p><i>Time is required to establish relationships with people engaged in professional practice.</i></p> <p><i>Negotiation of research agendas within the contexts of professional practice are necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Authentic blendings of theory and practice occur in interrogations of professional practice.</i></p> <p><i>It is important to confirm and affirm emergent constructions of professional knowledge.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing sharing and dialoguing about this emergent professional knowledge is necessary both within the immediate professional practice context and other professional contexts.</i></p> <p><i>Meaning-making at four levels via all of the above is a significant basis for advocating for professional practice research and for</i></p>	<p>Professional practice research is an interrogation and investigation of professional practice by the professional practitioners themselves (in negotiation with and in collaboration with one another and with others.</p> <p>It is research that is critically-informed, politically-activist, and action-oriented in a transformative sense with a view to illuminating theory, informing policy and improving practice.</p> <p>It aims for a deeper understanding of professional practice, an enriched capacity to engage in professional practice and a commitment to an ongoing quest for quality improvement in professional practice on the part of professional practitioners both individually and collectively.</p>	<p><i>Time spent in establishing relationships is time well-spent in the early stages of working together in professional practice settings.</i></p> <p><i>A praxis approach where there is an ongoing and dynamic interplay of theoretical ideas and professional work is highly desirable.</i></p> <p><i>In order for this sort of research to claim authenticity, validity and rigour, it must remain open to scrutiny by the professional practitioners themselves and their colleagues and others further afield. Furthermore, this scrutiny must be framed by appropriate conceptual and methodological</i></p>

<p><i>maximising the impact upon local thinking and practice as well as upon theory and policy.</i></p> <p><i>The four levels of meaning-making are the professional practitioner's individual level of practice, professional practice in collaboration with others locally, interactions with the broader local community (professional), and interactions with wider systemic (or policy) and research (or academic theory) communities.</i></p> <p><i>FROM THE SECOND CONVERSATION</i></p> <p><i>Networking is significant for sharing and validating the experiences and outcomes of professional practice research as well as for contributing to the local picture and the larger whole.</i></p> <p><i>Networking may be a vehicle for developing a sense of empowerment to shape the local picture as well as to have an</i></p>	<p>It does NOT deny the centrality of the practitioners' positioning in the research; rather it highlights the centrality of BOTH practitioners AND their practice. However, it does raise the importance, if not the moral/ethical responsibility, of professional practitioners to be transparent in stating the values and beliefs which motivate their thinking and practice. Such positioning is vital for documenting and disseminating research processes and research outcomes.</p> <p>Professional practice research encourages democratic participation; but it may occur in hegemonic environments which militate against such involvement. An activist stance is therefore very significant in advocacy for this sort of research.</p> <p>Notions of participation and networking in professional practice research imply a multiplicity of levels at which meaning-making occurs. These levels are the professional practitioner's individual level of practice,</p>	<p><i>approaches so that egocentrism, introspection and an ill-informed navel-gazing are avoided.</i></p> <p><i>Besides the conceptual and methodological dimensions mentioned above, those who engage in professional practice research must remain politically alert and astute in both their advocacies and actions. This alertness and astuteness applies to both the research as an approach and to the research practices and outcomes associated with it.</i></p> <p><i>See above re political alertness and astuteness. Note, too, the potential for frustrations on the part of professional practitioners when engagement in professional practice research may possibly raise awareness of the issues which may militate against an ongoing democratic involvement.</i></p> <p><i>An ongoing recognition of the complexities and multiplicities inherent in the world of professional practice should encourage a vigorous contestation of research concepts</i></p>
---	--	---

<p><i>impact on the larger whole (although it must be conceded that this sort of awareness-raising may cause frustrations within professional practitioners when they realise both what could be and what the contextual hegemonies are).</i></p> <p><i>Professional practice research has the potential for giving voice to professional practitioners in areas of advocacy and action at the various levels.</i></p> <p><i>How and where professional practitioners position themselves in this sort of research is very significant for considerations of validity, authenticity and worthwhileness.</i></p> <p><i>The ways in which criteria are identified must be with reference to the ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings of professional practice research as well as to the multiplicities of purposes as they relate to the various levels identified for this sort of research.</i></p> <p><i>Rigour in this sort of research must be defined differently from the way it is defined in positivist forms of research - it should remain a contested notion with which we continue to</i></p>	<p>professional practice in collaboration with others locally, interactions with the broader local community (professional), and interactions with wider systemic (or policy) and research (or academic theory) communities.</p> <p>Multiple views of positioning, participation, exercising voice and so on suggest that criteria for judging the worthwhileness of professional practice research may well vary from level to level according to such things as purpose (for example to improve practice at the first level or to inform policy at the second and third levels.</p> <p>Rigour in professional practice research is defined in ways that are different - not for the sake of being different; but that are appropriate for the multiplicities of levels and purposes characteristic of this sort of research.</p> <p>Professional practice</p>	<p><i>and strategies which we may seek to transfer uncritically from positivist research traditions.</i></p> <p><i>A willingness to remain open to the challenges of these complexities and multiplicities should be the driving force in the identification of appropriate criteria for judging the worthwhileness of professional practice research efforts.</i></p> <p><i>Those engaged in professional practice research must advocate for this sort of research in a rigorous way - a way that emphasises that this research is conceptually-based and critically-informed on the one hand, and systematically and sustainably undertaken on the other.</i></p> <p><i>A blending of ongoing advocacies and actions are essential for the field of professional practice</i></p>
---	---	--

<p><i>struggle in our defining.</i></p> <p>FROM THE THIRD CONVERSATION</p> <p><i>The underpinnings which give purpose, meaning and method to professional practice research must be made explicit.</i></p> <p><i>Multiplicities of people and levels, of purposes and contexts/audiences, of determining worthwhileness, validity, rigour and authenticity, and indeed of ownership and potential benefit should be recognised.</i></p> <p><i>Advocacy for places and spaces for professional practice practice research is a continuing priority.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing conversations for reconstructing representations and reinscriptions of professional practice research are necessary.</i></p>	<p>research conceived in these terms seeks to avoid the possibilities of researchers and the research becoming indulgent and introspective, if not incestuous.</p>	<p><i>research to gain increasing acceptance and respect. It is highly complex and demanding; and the challenges which it presents require an ever-vigilant and unrelentingly-open and transparent approach to documenting and disseminating research experiences and outcomes. Anything less is to accept second best!</i></p>
---	---	--

As you read this third iteration you will, hopefully, have seen the connections between our initial theorizing of what we are calling professional practice research, and the ongoing construction of a space for it via the first two iterations. The construction, however, is only partial. We invite you, as the reader, to use the suggestions for ongoing constructions and navigations of the space (See the right-hand column of the third iteration) to proceed with your own constructions and to share them with us.

REFERENCES

- Aspland, T. & Brooker, R. (1998) "A pathway for postgraduate teaching" In Atweh, B., Kemmis, S. & Weeks, P. (1998). *Action Research in Practice: Partnerships for Social Justice in Education*. London and New York: Routledge
- Aspland, T., Macpherson, I., Proudford, C. & Whitmore, L. (1996). "Critical collaborative action research as a means of curriculum inquiry and empowerment." *Educational Action Research*, 4 (1):93-104.
- Groundwater-Smith, S. (2000). "Evidence-based practice - Towards whole school Improvement", Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Sydney, December.
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (1988). *Introduction: The Nature of Action Research. The Action Research Planner*. Geelong: Deakin University Press
- Kemmis, S. & Wilkinson, M. (1998) "Participatory action research and the study of practice." In Atweh, B., Kemmis, S. & Weeks, P. (1998). *Action Research in Practice: Partnerships for Social Justice in Education*. London and New York: Routledge
- Macpherson, I., Aspland, T., Elliott, R., Proudford, C., Shaw, L. & Thurlow, G. (1998). "A journey into a learning partnership: a university and a state system working together for curriculum change", In Atweh, B., Kemmis, S. & Weeks, P. (1998). *Action Research in Practice: Partnerships for Social Justice in Education*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Macpherson, I., Brooker, R., Aspland, T. & Elliott, B. (1998). "Putting professional learning up front: A perspective of professional development within a context of collaborative research about curriculum leadership." *Journal of Inservice Education*, 24 (1):73-86.
- Macpherson, I., Aspland, T., Brooker, R. & Elliott, B. (1999). *Places and Spaces for Teachers in Curriculum Leadership*. Canberra: Goanna Print and Australian Curriculum Studies Association.
- Macpherson, I., Aspland, T. & Brooker, R. (2000). "Is there a future for collaborative research?" Paper presented in a symposium, " Interrogating collaborative research - Who is inside and who is out?" at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Sydney, November.
- Macpherson, I., Aspland, T. & Brooker, R. (2001) " Passion and Responsibility in Qualitative Research - 'Both/And' or 'Either/Or'? A dispassionate reflection and a deliberative reconstruction". Roundtable Paper Division D - Qualitative Research) presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, 10-14 April.
- Macpherson, I., Aspland, T. & Brooker, R. (2001). "Traversing a decade of curriculum thinking and practice: A conversational case study of curriculum leadership from down under". Roundtable Paper (Division B -Curriculum) presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, 10-14 April.

Mangan, J. M. (2002) "Critical Teacher Education: Problems and Possibilities" Paper presented

Noffke, S. (199) "What's a nice theory like yours doing in a practice like this? And other impertinent questions about practitioner research." *Change: Transformations in Education* 2 1 pp.25-35

Rizvi, F. (1998) "Some thoughts on contemporary theories of social justice" In Atweh, B., Kemmis, S. & Weeks, P. (1998). *Action Research in Practice: Partnerships for Social Justice in Education*. London and New York: Routledge.

Somekh, B. (1995). "The contribution of Action Research to development in social endeavours: a position paper on action research methodology", *British Educational Research Journal*, 21(3):339-355.

Stenhouse, L. (1975). *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*. London: Heinemann.