Toward a Phenomenology of Curriculum: The Work of Max Van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki.

Robert Kent Brown
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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Toward a phenomenology of curriculum: The work of Max van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki

Brown, Robert Kent, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1991

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TOWARD A PHENOMENOLOGY OF CURRICULUM:
THE WORK OF MAX VAN MANEN
AND T. TETSUO AOKI

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
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requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by
Robert Kent Brown
B.S., Oral Roberts University, 1976
M.Ed., Louisiana State University in Shreveport, 1986
August, 1991

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ABSTRACT

In this study an attempt was made at understanding contemporary thought and application of phenomenological research to the field of curriculum and instruction. More specifically, it sought to identify a place and need for a methodology in curriculum research that exposes and clarifies the dynamics of pedagogy as a result of investigating the existential/ontological nature of pedagogical activity. In accomplishing this, the works of two major North American phenomenological curriculum theorists, T. Tetsuo Aoki and Max van Manen were examined. The work of these two significant contemporary curriculum theorists was used due to the international recognition their seminal phenomenologically oriented research activities in curriculum has received.

The work of van Manen and Aoki was not only examined for its theoretical foundations and principal themes, but was also used as the guide to a modest phenomenological investigation by the author into the interpretation given to the phenomenon of experiencing "knowledge" by thirty-three Developmental Reading students from Louisiana State University. This portion of the study was prefaced by a review of three theoretical emphases from which the research of reading has been approached. This examination of the field of reading included a positing by the author of the necessity and benefits a phenomenological perspective of reading can offer to its curriculum development and instruction. Based on this discussion and the work of van Manen and Aoki, the phenomenological analysis of these students written responses to the reading of the novel Flowers For Algernon provided the researcher
with the basis for several recommendations to curriculum development and instructional approaches in teaching reading to developmental education students.

The conclusion of this study found that phenomenology, as part of an eclectic research methodology, can uniquely contribute to curriculum research and allows for the creation of a more "lifeworld sensitive" pedagogical praxis.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Thesis

This study explores the thesis that phenomenology can provide valuable knowledge for essential understandings of the existential relationships between pedagogues and students and by so doing inform decisions made in the process of curriculum development and evaluation. This study explores this thesis by first, contextually enframing the influence phenomenology has had as a major philosophical movement within North America in the 20th century (Chapter I). This discussion will also describe phenomenology’s introduction into curriculum research and theorizing as uniquely expressed by the pedagogical work of Max van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki. Secondly, an investigation of the phenomenologically oriented pedagogic research of Max van Manen (Chapter II) will be undertaken. Involved in this analysis will be an examination of the primary pedagogical and theoretical influences informing van Manen’s work. This section of the study will also discuss his particular interpretation of phenomenologically informed pedagogic research as well as the predominant themes that are evidenced in his work resulting from his phenomenological orientation. Thirdly, this study will proceed to an analysis of the phenomenologically oriented curriculum research of T. Tetsuo Aoki (Chapter III). Emphasis will be given to the pedagogical development of Aoki and the influence a non-Western cultural heritage has had in that development. Aoki’s administrative accomplishments will be discussed that reflect, along with the major themes evidenced in
his writings, the influences of a phenomenologically oriented perspective of pedagogy. The fourth section of this study (Chapter IV) will be devoted to an illustration of the contributions phenomenologically oriented investigations can bring into a Developmental Reading classroom situation influencing its instruction and curriculum. Discussion in this section of the study will involve a review of the predominant theoretical views of reading in comparison with a phenomenological view of reading. Particular examination will be given to the phenomenologically interpreted descriptions of the reading experiences thirty-three Developmental Reading students had with the novel *Flowers For Algernon*. The consequences for curriculum development and instruction in Developmental Reading will also be suggested. The last section of this study (Chapter V) is a summation of the major findings of this study, concluding with suggestions of possibilities and recommendations phenomenologically oriented curriculum research can offer to pedagogy.

The basic questions that frame this study are as follows:

(1) **What is phenomenology?** The answer to this question can be found in Chapters I, II, III, IV and V.

(2) **What are the primary theoretical/methodological characteristics of a phenomenological orientation to curriculum?** The work of Max van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki, Chapters II and III respectively, provide the characteristics of a phenomenological orientation to curriculum that serves as the basis of the answer to this question.

(3) **Why a phenomenological orientation to curriculum research?** This answer is not only found in the work of van
Manen and Aoki, but also evident in the phenomenological analysis conducted in Chapter IV.

(4) What is the nature of curriculum development and evaluation when viewed from a phenomenological perspective? Aoki's curriculum work, as discussed in Chapter III, provides the theoretical foundation and lived world examples of curriculum development and evaluation employed from a phenomenologically oriented perspective.

(5) What are characteristic elements of teacher/student relationships when viewed from a phenomenological stance? Van Manen's extensive research, summarized in Chapter II, endows this study with explanations and illustrations of the unique understandings a phenomenological stance unfolds of teacher/student relationships. Aoki's work, discussed subsequently in Chapter III, additionally provides singular understandings of the lifeworld of teachers and students as his work discloses them as living between the pedagogical worlds of curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived.

(6) What is a phenomenological view of reading? How does it compare with the predominant theoretical views of reading? In Chapter IV the phenomenological investigations conducted in this chapter are prefaced with a discussion of three varying theoretical views of reading with a phenomenological view of reading. This discussion is necessary because the phenomenological investigations conducted in this chapter are constituted upon the essays Developmental Reading students wrote as responses to reading the novel *Flowers For Algernon*. As
a result of this discussion and phenomenological analysis, the writer argues within this chapter for a view of reading that incorporates a phenomenological perspective in its attempt to understand the activity of reading.

(7) How can phenomenology inform curriculum development and instructional actions in Developmental Reading? Chapter IV concludes with a discussion of the resulting consequences to reading, including the raising of relevant issues to be considered in the development of an appropriate curriculum and instructional approach to teaching reading to Developmental Education students.

The importance of this investigation does not rest in a final set of specific curriculum development techniques and/or instructional methodologies but in the possibilities for curriculum work disclosed by the investigation itself. Rather than attempt to define phenomenology initially and specifically, my purpose has been to allow the description of van Manen’s and Aoki’s work, in the following two chapters, to personify phenomenology. Based on their work, the writer experiments with a phenomenological method of research to discover possible benefits to pedagogy which can be found through its utilization. The attempts in Chapter IV at phenomenologically viewing knowledge based on the reading experiences of Developmental Reading students is not offered as a seasoned or mature disclosure of this phenomenon. I offer it solely as an initial experimentation with phenomenology, a novice look at what it is to return to pedagogic activities as they are directly or phenomenologically experienced and described. As a result of this approach, this study is not an ending, rather the beginning of an
exploratory journey searching for a pedagogical praxis that better reflects and discloses reality as it is encountered and constructed in pedagogic situations.

Why the Work of Max van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki?

Although neither van Manen or Aoki classify their work as solely phenomenological nor consider themselves to be phenomenologists strictly speaking, both admit to the significance phenomenology offers to their examinations of curriculum and instruction (van Manen, 1979a, 1979b, 1982b, 1984a, 1990; Aoki, 1978, 1979).

Van Manen’s work exemplifies a strong phenomenological stance acquired initially from his early college studies at the Utrecht School in his native Holland. After migrating to Canada in 1967 where he completed his graduate work, van Manen was dismayed by the strong positivistic empiricism that guided most North American pedagogical research. His work reflects his desire to develop an alternative research methodology and pedagogical rationale that incorporates an articulate phenomenological orientation to research and theorizing in curriculum, with particular emphasis given to the dynamics involved in student/teacher relationships. As of this writing van Manen has authored three books as well as scores of articles and papers that address the nature and procedures of his alternative model for pedagogical research. He characterizes his work as Human Science Research. In recognition of his seminal contribution to education van Manen received the 1988 Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies’

1. The reasons for van Manen describing his work as Human Science Research are discussed in Chapter II.
"Award for Outstanding International Accomplishments in Research in Phenomenology and Pedagogy."

The evocative work of T. Tetsuo Aoki is utilized in this study due to his singular contributions to curriculum development and evaluation. Aoki has written extensively on the significance diverse perspectives such as phenomenology bring to the task of curriculum research. Chapter III consists of a summarization of the primary themes found in his insightful work. The formative insights Aoki has brought to curriculum scholarship is evidenced by the vast recognition his work has been given. Among the many awards Aoki has received are: (1) The 1984 "Certificate of Appreciation" awarded by the Korean Educational Development Institute, (2) The 1985 "Distinguished Service Award" presented by the Canadian Society for Studies in Education, (3) The 1985 "CEA Whitworth Award for Research in Education" presented by the Canadian Education Association, (4) The 1985 "Journal of Curriculum Theorizing Award" presented at the 1985 Annual Conference on Curriculum Theory and Curriculum Practice for his "distinguished contribution to curriculum studies," (5) The 1987 "Distinguished Service Award" granted by the American Educational Research Association, Division B, and (6) induction into the "The Professors of Curriculum Circle" (125 membership) at the 1988 Annual Conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Due to the widespread recognition their work has been awarded, I contend that the work of van Manen and Aoki constitute the leading North American efforts aimed at incorporating a phenomenological orientation to curriculum research. Their work, therefore, is essential to a study such as this that seeks to examine the possibilities
phenomenology offers to curriculum research.

Next and briefly, the following discussion places phenomenology as a philosophical movement and curriculum research methodology in 20th century North America. This is done to preface the work of van Manen and Aoki with a clearer understanding of the academic environment and heritage which informs their unique curriculum research.

**Phenomenology as a Movement in American Philosophy and Curriculum Research**

This section of the chapter investigates the process by which phenomenology has come to be, by the late 20th century, the third largest philosophical orientation in North America (Ihde, 1986a). Spiegelberg (1982) claims that worldwide the strongest representation of phenomenologists as far as number of organizations, memberships, university and college appointments are concerned is to be found in the United States and Canada. The philosophical/methodological emphasis referred to as phenomenology is broad and is found in a variety of manifestations upon this continent. The following brief history in North America traces its primary philosophical proponents as well as its burgeoning influence in curriculum theorizing.

**History of Phenomenology in America**

In the early to mid 20th century the predominant philosophical mode of reasoning in America was logical positivism (Tymieniecka, 1989). Diametric to this orientation came a new empiricism at the turn of the century, composed and intricately articulated by the German scholar Edmund Husserl, that challenged the "natural attitude" assumed by
these positions. Emphasizing a view of reality that "brackets out" preconceived notions of existence, Husserl posited a philosophical methodology for viewing existence that attempted to use information only provided by an analysis of one's direct conscious experience with the world. Marvin Farber, after studying in Germany in the mid 1920s, introduced Husserl's ideas in America through his work at the University of Buffalo, giving phenomenology its initial and very small foothold in this country (Tymieniecka, 1989).

It was not until the flight of numerous German scholars from Nazism in the 1930s that influential thinkers such as Felix Kaufmann, Fritz Kaufmann, Aron Gurwitsch, Alfred Schutz, Helmut Kuhn and Herbert Spiegelberg began to formally organize a body of phenomenologically oriented thinkers in America. In 1939, with Farber as the founder, they formed the International Phenomenological Society and the quarterly journal Philosophy and Phenomenological Research the following year. In spite of the growing number of scholars reflecting interest in phenomenology during the 1940s, American phenomenology was still primarily connected only to Farber and his work at the University of Buffalo (Tymieniecka, 1989).

By the early 1950's, however, a few other prominent universities were gradually becoming known for phenomenological scholars. These were 1) Yale University with George Shrader, Paul Weiss and Robert Brumbaugh; 2) Duquesne University and its visiting faculty from Europe including H. L. Breda, S. Strasser, and Wilhem Luijpen; 3) Fordham University, with Dietrich von Hildebrand, Balduin Schwarz, and Geuntin Lauer and; 4) The New School For Social Research. The New School For Social Research was founded in 1919 in New York as the first university
for adult education in the social sciences (Grathoff, 1989). In 1933, in
partial response to the significant number of scholars fleeing Europe, the
"Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Sciences" was founded. Among
its members there arose an influential group of scholars that utilized
phenomenological orientations in their work. Alfred Schütz is the most
noted social phenomenologist of the group (Tymieniecka, 1989). In 1950,
however, phenomenology was still not a major emphasis in American
philosophy.

During the 1950s other changes were beginning to occur that were
setting the stage for a second major wave of phenomenological thought.
The influx of European ideas, art and culture into America after World
War II brought with it the existentialism of Sartre, Camus, Marcel and
Heidegger. A backlash developed against the positivistic zeitgeist in
American thought (Tymieniecka, 1989). This post-war invasion provided
the opportunity for a renewed interest in metaphysics, i.e., "all the ways
of philosophizing which do not reduce philosophy to crude, empirical,
naturalistic and positivistic assumptions" (Tymieniecka, 1989, p. xvii).

During the late 1950s, various philosophers led by John Wild at
Harvard (after his conversion to phenomenology and existentialism),
formed the Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy. The
SPEP was loosely framed around Husserlian thought; however, it was
open to a variety of phenomenological interests. Such ecumenicism
helped phenomenology to influence other thinkers and disciplines.
Tymieniecka (1989) states that

we may give credit to this popularizing way in which
phenomenology entered the native American grain for it made use
of the various cultures, ethnic, and educational backgrounds of
philosophers and, hence, encouraged the wealth of ideas which now characterizes the identifiable community of phenomenological scholars here (1989).

John Wild's phenomenological conversion and academic tenures at three major American universities—Harvard, Northwestern, and Yale—helped extend phenomenology's influence. From these institutions departed scholars who became spokespersons for phenomenology in the decades ahead (Ihde, 1986a).

Under the umbrella of the Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy's influence, centers of phenomenology began to appear and flourish in America in the 1960s-80s. Added to the list of initial schools of the 1950s exhibiting varying degrees of support for phenomenology were universities such as: 1) Northwestern University with James M. Edie and William Earle; 2) State University of New York at Stony Brook with Don Ihde and Edward S. Casey; 3) Pennsylvania State University with Joseph J. Kockelmans; 4) Tulane University with Edward G. Ballard; 5) Southern Methodist University with Richard M. Zaner; 6) Yale University with Maurice Natanson (Spiegelberg, 1982); and Columbia University with Dwayne Huebner and Maxine Greene (Pinar and Reynolds, in press).

The History of Phenomenology in North American Curriculum Research

As stated previously, the 1950s provided an intellectual shift strong enough to precipitate an opening for a second wave of emphasis of phenomenology in America. Pinar (1988) credits this decade as also opening the door for a reconceptualization of the curriculum field that
began to occur within the late 1950's and early 1960s¹. He suggests that the readiness for new emphases in curriculum research was created in part by anxiousness over schooling caused by the early Sputnik successes of the Soviets. In response to the current "red scare" the Kennedy administration appointed specialists from within the academic disciplines, and not curriculum specialists, to spearhead a national curriculum reform movement. According to Pinar, the rejection of scholars trained in curriculum studies undermined the [curriculum] field's status and its legitimacy . . . (Pinar, 1988, p. 2).

Associated with the threat to curriculum provided by these events in the 50s was a growing dissatisfaction on the part of some pedagogues with the predominance given to Ralph Tyler's rationale for curriculum development. Pinar credits Dwayne Huebner and Maxine Greene, both of Columbia University, James MacDonald at the University of North Carolina (Greensboro), and Eliot Eisner at Stanford University with calling for curriculum activity to be informed by other disciplines and philosophies (Pinar, 1988). Maxine Greene's work in the philosophy of education exhibits strong phenomenological and existential components. However, Huebner is the scholar Pinar recognizes as initially attempting to make connections between phenomenology and curriculum in particular (Pinar and Reynolds, in press).

Within the decade of the 1970s a phenomenological orientation to curriculum became strongly evidenced in the work of William F. Pinar

¹. Pinar defines scholars associated with the reconceptualization of curriculum (or reconceptualists) as individuals who consider the "function of curriculum studies [is not to be concerned with] development and management but the scholarly and disciplined understanding of educational experiences, particularly in its political, cultural, gender, and historical dimensions" (Pinar, 1988, p. 2)
(the result of Dwayne Huebner's and Maxine Greene's influence), and his graduate students Janet Miller and Madeleine R. Grumet. Within this same time period critical social theorists, such as Michael Apple at the University of Wisconsin, were part of a body of scholars referred to as the New Sociology of Education (Wexler, 1987). Initially these scholars acknowledged the significance phenomenology contributed to a critical social theory view of curriculum studies (Apple, 1977). However, several scholars of the NSOE, such as Annette Kuhn (Kuhn, 1978) decried the micro-level emphasis of phenomenological analysis; a view which contributed to its eventual censorship from later works by members of the NSOE (Whitty, 1985). In spite of this rejection, other curriculum scholars, such as Pinar and Grumet, have continued to further extend and incorporate their phenomenologically oriented curriculum analysis into other discipline areas: Pinar in autobiography and Grumet in feminist studies (Pinar and Reynolds, in press).

In 1973 in Canada Max van Manen was completing his doctoral dissertation at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Van Manen, who was unfamiliar at this time with the growing phenomenological emphasis being given to curriculum work in the United States, attempted in his dissertation study to merge various instructional perspectives from General Systems Theory with a phenomenological analysis of student/teacher relationships (Aoki, 1979). In the midst of his study van Manen realized the inadequacies and "injustice" that existed in a General Systems approach to the "lived reality" of instruction (van Manen, 1973). From that point on in his dissertation and in his later research, van Manen shifted the emphasis of his study to a research of curriculum that maintained a strong phenomenological orientation.
Van Manen's dissertation study, in part, provoked an interest in his major professor, T. Tetsuo Aoki, in alternative approaches to systems theory analysis of curriculum development and evaluation (Pinar and Reynolds, in press). After his encounter with phenomenology in van Manen's graduate work, Aoki's interest in phenomenology was further heightened and secured when, in 1977, he participated as a speaker in a conference dedicated to the inauguration of a PhD. program in Art Education at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. It was at this conference that Aoki was introduced to an "embryo curriculum world" of phenomenological research through the work of Kenneth Beittel of Pennsylvania State University and Helmut Wagner (a student of Alfred Schutz) of the New School of Social Research (T. Aoki, personal communication, February, 1991). Added to this encounter was Aoki's discovery of the reconceptualists' work in Pinar's edited *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists* (1975). Coupled with the insights into the micro-level concerns of pedagogy phenomenology provides, Aoki has also added a critical social theory perspective that seeks to address the macro-level social concerns of such curriculum issues as ethnicity and program social relevance.

More than any other curriculum theorists, the work of Max van Manen and T. Tetsuo Aoki continues to lead the way into the frontier of phenomenologically-informed curriculum research. Chapters II and III of this study investigates the theoretical underpinnings and themes that characterize their work as well as the contextual influences that has helped shape it.
"The end of phenomenological research is to sponsor a critical educational competence: knowing how to act tactfully in pedagogic situations on the basis of a carefully edified thoughtfulness." Max van Manen (1984a, p. 36)

Introduction

This chapter explores the particular educational theorizing of Max van Manen, who is recognized as a foremost contemporary curriculum theorist in North America. In recognition of his work, van Manen received the 1988 Canadian Association of Curriculum Studies Award for Outstanding International Accomplishments in Research in Phenomenology and Pedagogy. He is the founding editor of the human science journal Phenomenology and Pedagogy and has authored various hermeneutic-phenomenologically oriented articles. Van Manen has authored two books. The first, published in 1986 and entitled The Tone of Teaching, was written as a pedagogic text for parents and teachers. The second, published in 1990 and entitled Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy, was written as a guide to conducting hermeneutic phenomenological research in education. A third book will be published in the summer of 1991 entitled The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness. I will reflect on particular moments of the rethinking of educational research and practice as revealed in van Manen's writings.
Emphasis will be placed on four aspects of van Manen's work. The first will be that of the philosophic tradition upon which van Manen has founded his work. In this section I will briefly describe the philosophy and methodologies associated with the Utrecht School that have provided much of the theoretical grounding for van Manen's work. Second, I will discuss those elements of van Manen's writings that distinguish it as hermeneutically "phenomenological." Discussion will center upon some of the major premises of hermeneutic phenomenology and how van Manen has employed them in his work. Third, I will discuss the primary themes discernible in his writings. The final section of this essay will be devoted to a summary discussion of his work in which implications and practical applications will be examined.

The Utrecht School and Max van Manen

Van Manen's Academic Influence

Max van Manen first studied phenomenology in 1962 while engaged in undergraduate study at the State Pedagogical Academy in the Netherlands, his homeland. It was there that he studied the works of phenomenological educational theorists such as Martinus J. Langeveld and N. Beets and received an initial understanding of the relationship between phenomenology and pedagogy. Langeveld and Beets developed a phenomenological view of pedagogy and pedagogical research in the 1950s at the Institute for Didactic and Pedagogic Studies at the University of Utrecht, which has became known as the Utrecht School. Its founder and principal pedagogue was Langeveld himself, and his work alone exemplifies the educational endeavors for which this school of phenomenological thought has become noted (van Manen, 1979a).
As noted, van Manen emigrated to Canada in 1967. He began his graduate studies at the University of Alberta, where he studied with T. Tetsuo Aoki. Because it had not yet been introduced in Canada, van Manen did not study phenomenology at the University of Alberta. Not until he encountered a "crisis of relevance" while working on his dissertation did he bring to the forefront the phenomenological views of pedagogy he had learned previously in his undergraduate studies in Europe (van Manen, 1988a). An important methodological and programmatic source for his master's thesis as well as his Ph.D. dissertation became an edited volume by J.H. van den Berg entitled *Person and World*. Described as one of van Manen's earliest and favorite phenomenological texts, it is a collection of works that reflect the phenomenologically grounded pedagogical, psychological and social perspectives of the Utrecht School (van Manen, 1988a).

**Van Manen's Theoretical Influences**

Though van Manen has been influenced by and incorporated ideas from other theorists, such as Gadamer and Habermas, in the formation of his ideas, it has been primarily the Utrecht School that has served as the basis of his work. Central to understanding the contributions of the Utrecht School to van Manen's work is their distinctive usage of the terms "phenomenology" and "pedagogy."

**The Utrecht School and Pedagogy**

The European notion of pedagogy includes both education and childrearing (van Manen, 1979a, p. 49). In the Utrecht view, pedagogy encompasses the entire realm of lifeworld issues that are encountered in
teacher/student/adult/child relationships. The concerns of these relationships can range from questions of curriculum and learning methodology to what it means to be a parent with a pedagogical responsibility to a child. A term given to anthropological and ontological significance, it reflects the view that pedagogy is not just an activity carried out in schools. Pedagogy is a particular normative stance one takes in the world toward children. Van Manen writes:

As new parents, before we have a chance to sit back and reflect on whether we can accept this child, the child has already made us act. And, luckily for humankind, this spontaneous needfulness to do the right thing is usually the right thing. As we reach to hold the child (rather than turn away and let it perish), we have already acted pedagogically. This is our practical "knowledge" of pedagogy . . . In other words, as soon as we gain a lived sense of the pedagogic quality of parenting and teaching, we start to question and doubt ourselves. Pedagogy is this questioning, this doubting. We wonder: Did I do the right thing? Why do some people teach or bring their children up in such a different manner? (van Manen, 1988b, p. 447)

For van Manen, the meaning of pedagogy is not derived from some systematic view of philosophy, politics, or culture. Instead, pedagogy receives its meaning from its own anthropological nature. To define pedagogy is to identify ways of being in concrete situations. It is to refer to "something that lets an encounter, a relationship, a situation, or a doing be pedagogic . . . [I]n short [it refers to] a relationship of practical actions between an adult and a young person who is on the way to adulthood" (van Manen, 1982b, pp. 284-85).
The Utrecht School and Phenomenology

According to Langeveld, "phenomenology" has been applied in two directions since Husserl introduced it in 1913. One is the philosophical sense in which emphasis is given to understanding as a logical system of thinking about the world. The other sense is that of "methodology" that attempts to use the attitude of phenomenology to construct patterns of research that reveal the lived formations of meaning. It is the latter that the Utrecht School has sought to develop.

Utrecht researchers employ a method of structural exposition known as "situation analysis." Adherents of this investigative procedure believe that it is possible to obtain insights into the meaning structures and relationships of pedagogical experiences from a careful study of concrete examples supplied by experience or imagination. According to Beekman and Mulderij (cited in van Manen, 1979a), phenomenologically oriented pedagogical analysis of lifeworld experiences consists of three primary components. The first stage of analysis involves the accumulation of life experience material. This phase comprises the gathering of descriptions given by individuals using everyday language to describe specific experiences. The second stage of investigation engages the researcher in the task of examining the lifeworld description for the structural elements contained within the description. This involves searching the description for language clues that perhaps signal deeper conceptual structures of meaning associated and consistent with that particular experience.

The third stage of situation analysis calls for recommendations and practical applications that can be derived from a deeper understanding of the experience studied. It is this difficult issue that has caused
pedagogical phenomenology to receive much of its criticism. Criticism for being subjective and lacking generalization has caused many to disregard this form of analytical research (Bernstein, 1976). It is the achievement of a practical phenomenological method with concrete applications to pedagogy to which van Manen has devoted much of his energies during his fifteen year tenure (as of 1991) at the University of Alberta. He writes:

Some argue that phenomenology has no practical value because "you cannot do anything with phenomenological knowledge." From the point of view of instrumental reason it may be quite true to say that we cannot do anything with this knowledge. But to paraphrase Heidegger, the more important question is not: Can we do something with phenomenology? Rather, we should wonder: Can phenomenology, if we concern ourselves deeply with it, do something with us? (1982b, p. 297)

The Influence of Langeveld

The work of the Utrecht School and its guiding purposes are suggested in the following passage by Langeveld.

As we all know, nothing is so silent as that which is self-evident. Thus it becomes our task to render audible, readable, articulate, that which is silent. As we all know too, humans are not simply born; they do not just grow up into mature adults. For what we call a child is a being that calls to be educated. (1983, p.5)

Here Langeveld reflects two aspects of the phenomenological approach taken toward pedagogy. The first is the imperative of the phenomenologically oriented individual to make "audible, readable, and
articulate" the realm of the silent "self-evident" (Langeveld, 1983, p. 5). This entails a continual process of interpreting the everyday world around us. Hermeneutic phenomenology is the process of describing the "essence" of something or, in van Manen's words, describing "that which makes a thing what it is (and without which it would not be what it is)" (1990, p. 177). It has been the project of the Utrecht School to develop this activity of pedagogical interpretation into a "science" of the self-evident, a lifeworld science. The effect of such a science would be the elucidation of those elements of our existence with which we are in contact most, our everyday lived world, those of which we are the most illiterate. Having practical ways of investigating our lifeworld would put us subjectively in touch with the knowledge of what it is to be-in-the-world instead of separating and alienating us from it by objectification. Objectification is the act of making the world fit into distinct dichotomous realms of subjects and objects. This dualism stresses the independent existence of things in the world and obscures the interactive, holistic existence of reality asserted by phenomenology. The latter is what Merleau-Ponty (1983) refers to as the "embodied" nature of existence.

Second, because children are not born knowing what it is to be human, and because they did not ask to be born, it behooves us as adults to assume a pedagogical role with children that assumes a determination "to bring into being for the sake of this child and with the help of this child, all that is essential to its being human" (Langeveld, 1983, p. 5). Van Manen comments on the importance of Langeveld's view of human nature when he writes:
Humanness is not something with which a child is born but rather something to which a child is born, he [Langeveld] says. The human child is born to the promise of educational potential; it is this "potential of educability" that distinguishes a young homo sapien from the newly-born among the rest of the animal species. A human child is not just someone who can be educated, says Langeveld, it must be educated, by virtue of its need for extended care, security, and the need for growth opportunities to become an autonomous human being. Every child wants to become someone, him or herself: a person—that is, someone with personality. (van Manen, 1979a, p. 50)

According to the above statements, children come into the world by the willful acts of others and bring with them the innate need to become who they can be. As the volitional beings who have made their existence possible, adults are to assume the pedagogical purpose of assisting children through the self-formative process of possible ways of being-in-the-world. This view stresses that the possibilities of being are structured by the child’s experience and therefore lie within the child’s world, not the adults’ world. Subsequently, the child assumes a primary, not secondary, place in pedagogical activity. Instead of being solely the recipient of instruction, the child also serves as its source. Phenomenological pedagogical investigation is therefore not only for children, but also by children. Adults provide the occasion for the lifeworld of the child and the potentiality that lies therein to appear.

According to van Manen, van den Berg’s edited work Person and World, "contains some of the best contributions to the phenomenological enterprise of the Utrecht School" (1979a, p. 58). The foreword of that
work, written by van den Berg and Linschoten, summarizes the program of the Utrecht School:

We want to understand man from his world, that is, from the meaningful ground structure of that totality of situations, events, cultural values, to which he orients himself, about which he has consciousness, and to which his actions, thoughts and feelings are related--this is the world in which man exists, which he encounters in the course of his personal history and which he shapes through the meaning he assigns to everything. Man is not "something" with characteristics, but an initiative of relationships to a world which he chooses and by which he is chosen. (van den Berg and Linschoten, 1953, p. 1)

Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Max van Manen

Hermeneutic phenomenology is often as varied an approach as those who choose to follow it and the interests to which it is applied. Rather than being a liability, this heterogeneity suggests the usefulness afforded by viewing the world from such a perspective. Phenomenology is a supple mode of investigation that allows itself to be in some respects recast by the subject it is committed to understanding or "seeing." While this is disdained by those who seek to order the world in tightly bounded and stable categories, it affords to others the tools of research necessary to allow the world to remain in its labyrinthine form and yet reveal the rich meanings of the lifeworld that is common to the researcher as well as the researched.

Due to this diversity, it is necessary to understand phenomenology as it is conceived by the particular researcher employing it. The following
discussion of van Manen’s view of phenomenology and phenomenological research may be helpful in introducing and discussing some of his unique emphases later.

**The Pursuit of Everydayness**

Following the lifeworld theme of Husserl, van Manen holds that the subject of phenomenological viewing is that of the everyday experiences of those in the world. Of special importance to him, of course, are those everyday experiences that relate to the pedagogical concerns and activities of parents, teachers and children. He writes, "phenomenology does not offer us the possibility of effective theory with which we can now explain and/or control the world but rather it offers us the possibility of plausible insight which brings us in more direct contact with the world" (1984a, p. 38). Emphasizing the need for "contact" rather than manipulation destabilizes the traditional, detached, and almost voyeuristic role of the educational researcher and places them more in the posture of active participant.

Curriculum research that employs a phenomenological approach is a self-reflective process that seeks to give us a sagacious knowing of the mundane that affords enlightened pedagogical actions. The purpose of educational research is not to put us in command of our own or others’ educational lives but instead to put us in "touch" with those lives. Phenomenology has historically been metaphorized as a "seeing" and a "hearing," which is a useful and significant characterization. Yet more than sight or hearing, it also involves the sense of "touching" or "being in touch" with those lifeworld experiences we seek to understand. Phenomenology brings a required sensitivity to understanding the
pedagogical relationships that exist between parents, teachers, and children, sensitivity that, according to van Manen, has been lacking in much educational research.

**The Discovery of the Primordial**

The universal aim of phenomenology is to discover the primordial nature of ideas and the intended object of those ideas before words or language captured it (van Manen, 1984a). Phenomenological research assumes a "standpoint" that attempts to reveal meanings and understand how they are connected to lived experience. Phenomenology, however, is not an attempt at giving meaning to lived experience. Meaning is already existent and found in the "things" that make up our everyday world. Phenomenology proposes to describe the revealed meaning in its most essential form.

According to van Manen, the phenomenological question is not, "How do these children learn this particular material?"; it is, "What is the nature of the experience of learning (so that I can now better understand what this particular learning experience is like for these children)" (1984a, p. 38)? This paring to the very essence of a pedagogical experience is only achieved when the basic existential nature of that experience is understood. The result of this understanding is the possibility of a more informed response to that particular pedagogical experience.

In one sense, phenomenology can be understood as the philosophical examination of lived experiences. Reflecting Merleau-Ponty's influence, van Manen frames this conceptual exploration in poetic terms when he writes that phenomenological research is "a
heedful, mindful wondering about the project of life, of living, of what it means to live a life" (1984a, p. 39). In fact, he encourages us to see that this whole process of wondering about life is itself a poetizing activity. In this sense, language is engaged as "a primal incantation or poetizing which hearkens back to the silence from which the words emanate" (1990, p. 13).

**Contextualized Humanity**

While Husserl contended that by use of "reduction" or "bracketing" one could somehow distance oneself objectively from that which was to be phenomenologically investigated, later theorists, especially Heidegger (1962), disagreed. They argued that such abstraction from the world was impossible because being-in-the-world and being-of-the-world meant to exist in constant interactive relationships with the world. It was impossible to abstractly assume a position that put one out of the context of the whole. Phenomenological investigation illuminates contextualized humanity. The primary phenomenological pursuit became to describe what it is to be human with the understanding that the phenomenological standpoint was not one of detachment. Max van Manen’s research reflects this existential legacy when he writes:

As we research the possible meaning structures of our lived experiences, we come to a fuller grasp of what it means to be in the world as a man, a woman, a child, taking into account the sociocultural and the historical traditions which have given meaning to our ways of being in the world. (1984a, p. 38)

Phenomenology is an investigative process that restores to the subject the autonomy of subjectivity and yet locates quintessential
humanity in the descriptive interpretation of individual experience. It is not an analysis of subject-object encounters in the traditional Aristotelian sense, but more similar to an inquiry into what Whitehead refers to as the "ego-object amid objects" (1925, p. 151).

**Phenomenology Is a Human Science**

Van Manen chooses to characterize his hermeneutic phenomenological methodology as "human science research." He prefers to classify his work as "human science," because of how the term was employed by William Dilthey (van Manen, 1990). Dilthey denotes human science, or Geisteswissenschaften, as investigation concerned with those areas of human existence involving consciousness, purposiveness, and meaning. For van Manen, these areas of human existence are the necessary fields of pedagogical inquiry. In contrast, Dilthey posits the notion of natural science, or Naturwissenschaften, as research preoccupied with "objects of nature, things, natural events, and the way that objects behave" (van Manen, 1990, p. 3). Van Manen regretfully acknowledges that the methodology of "natural science" predominates in North American educational research.

Van Manen synthesizes contributions from the theoretical fields of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and semiotics. According to him, these are not used due to personal preference but because each is required to understand fully the phenomena of pedagogy. He writes that:

- pedagogy requires a phenomenological sensitivity to lived experience (children's realities and lifeworlds). Pedagogy requires a hermeneutic ability to make interpretive sense of the phenomena of the lifeworld in order to see the pedagogic significance of
situations and relations of living with children. And pedagogy requires a way with language in order to allow the research process of textual reflection to contribute to one's pedagogic thoughtfulness and tact. (1990, p. 2)

**Major Themes in van Manen's Work**

Van Manen's work can be seen as phenomenological research into the concrete relationships encountered in educational practice. His desire to understand more about the existential relations experienced in pedagogical acts can be thematized as follows: (1) the interconnection between theory and research, (2) the place of "tact" in pedagogy, and (3) the place of the child in pedagogy.

**The Role of Theory and Research**

**The Decentering and Isolating of the Child**

For Max van Manen, much of current educational research suffers from a disinterested view that lacks a "practical pedagogic orientation to children in their concrete lives" (van Manen, 1988b, p. 438). This lack of a pedagogical perspective and child orientation can be noted in various ways. One is the way in which curriculum theorists refer to themselves. Van Manen finds disturbing the trend among theorists to classify themselves as other than educators. He writes:

Educational theorists exemplify their unresponsiveness to pedagogy in their avoidance of it. They would rather think of themselves as psychologists, sociologists, philosophers, ethnographers, critical theorists, and so forth, than as educators oriented to the world in a pedagogic way. (van Manen, 1988b, p.
For him this reflects an attitude that shows educational researchers as being over concerned with how they perceive and position themselves within the profession at the expense of the child and teacher/parent pedagogical relationship. He argues that studies emanating from the field give evidence to the professional posturing and primacy assumed by many researchers through their claims of being able to control educational settings by their research methodologies.

The assumption of manipulative roles by researchers in educational research exemplifies how contemporary research lacks a true pedagogic orientation to children. The result of this has been the decentering and discrediting of the relationship between the child and those significant others who approach the child in a pedagogical way. These "significant others" include teachers, administrators, and parents. Van Manen argues that the way that we as researchers position children within our research reveals our intentions toward them and identifies the relationship we have with them. He maintains that "rather than teaching us to live our lives with children more fully, educational research so often seems to be cutting us off from the ordinary relation we have with children" (1988b, p. 439). He particularly criticizes ethnographical researchers who mistakenly assume that they capture the "true settings" of children and teachers through their research methodology. He writes:

But what we are offered on the basis of these studies are texts of lives of children, teachers, administrators, and so forth that distance and estrange us from those lives rather than bringing these lives closer into the field of vision of our interest in children as teachers, parents, educational administrators, and so on.
According to van Manen, it is a misguided endeavor to isolate moments of educational activity between children and educators. It is a commonly held assumption that isolation from as many intervening variables as possible will make the activity under investigation clearer and more verifiable. In van Manen's view, what is accomplished by such practice is the constitution of an unnatural pedagogical setting. The scene of the pedagogical act becomes a contrived world fashioned after the interests of the researcher, not the researched. It is an investigation that lacks the moral presence of the children researched. He states:

The children may be there as objects of our human science interest in them--but they are not morally present in that they force us to reflect on how we should talk and act with them and how we should live by their side. (1988b, p. 439)

How damaging a critique of modern educational research one regards van Manen's statements depends of course, upon one's epistemological view. Scientific realists, with their contention that the world is nothing but the sum of its parts, have no epistemological difficulty in attempting to isolate parts from the whole in order to understand the independent identity vs. dependent relation those parts have to the whole.

Human science researchers, such as van Manen, instead stress that the world is the experiential domain of "being" and interminably connects with the experiential domain of other "beings." Understanding of what it is for human beings to be-in-the-world is possible by a descriptive phenomenological analysis of the nature of concrete experience. As a result of such analysis it makes no sense to imagine
that one can sever pedagogical experience (or any experience) from its highly complex and interwoven context. Although experience cannot be severed, it can be understood. To do so involves a phenomenologically empirical methodology that recognizes this contextual complexity and works hermeneutically within its existential framework.

Van Manen asks:

Is it ever possible to observe a child closely and to see the child's experience in a pure way? Outside of our relation to this child? Is it possible to describe a child, and his or her lifeworld, in a fashion that is disinterested, that lacks orientation? (1988b, p. 439)

Van Manen's answer to his last question is, of course, no. Since it is not possible in the mainstream research paradigm, another theoretical model is necessary that understands a child's experience without reducing that experience to one's own (van Manen, 1988b). What we need is "edifying theory" (van Manen, 1982a, p. 41).

The Misunderstanding of "Theory"

For van Manen, educational theorists are raising many questions about educational theory but are missing the most essential one. It is the question of "how the subject of (educational) theory should even be spoken" (1982a, p. 41). According to him, we have lost the vision of the initial purpose of reflecting on pedagogical practice. A major cause of specious educational research is the misguided desire to conceptualize, and even reconceptualize, educational experience. Instead of approaching pedagogical practices directly in the original context of the lived experience, the majority of educational theorists are satisfied with manipulative reconstructions of experience. Modern curriculum theorists
attempt to capture conceptually the replicative essence of pedagogical practice. The common result of their efforts is existential alienation because, as he writes, modern theorists "attempt to exchange the living rationality of the spontaneously experienced with a reconstructed rationality derived from a theoretic (reconstructed) account of desirable (because more rational) practice" (1982a, p. 46). It is theory construction that seeks as its primary task to "find the permanent in the fleeting, the commensurable in the incommensurable, the conceptual in the unique, the measurable in the poetic" (1982a, p. 46).

Van Manen argues that practically all modern curriculum theorists fail, to some degree, in capturing the nature of pedagogy. This failure occurs because research into curriculum theory, development is seen as an epistemological—not ontological—inquiry. It is a search for the theoretic principles of knowledge that succumbs to an emphasis of "method, certainty, . . . structure and rigor" (1982a, p. 46). For van Manen, strong curriculum theory is not that which philosophically and conceptually analyzes curriculum and pedagogy. Instead, strong theory is that which is committed to the orientation to or edification of the pedagogic good. By pedagogic good, he refers to "the end . . . from which all our hope, love and inspiration for our children draws its meaning" (1982a, p. 47). He contends that curriculum theory's role is not to inform us as much as it is to remind us and position us toward the pedagogic good of the student. Good curriculum theory, or curriculum theory of the good, helps us as pedagogues build a place, or edifice, for students to experience being-in-the-world in all its dynamic variances. He writes, "As the poet poetizes to create speech which we experience as poetry, so the theorist edifies (builds, speaks, theorizes) in order to create
theories which we may experience as edifying pedagogic consciousness" (1982a, p. 44).

Pedagogical theorizing takes on the hermeneutical role of interpreting the spontaneously experienced meanings found in the relationships that teachers, parents, and administrators have with children in specific pedagogical moments. It is reflective and interpretive and not manipulative or condescending, keeping in mind that pedagogical practice as an event is prior to pedagogical theory. Considering this van Manen writes that curriculum theory could be seen as edifying displays of examples of pedagogic praxis: relations and situations of thoughtfully "leading" the child into the world, by mediating tactfully between the original self-activity, the deep interest of the child, and the spiritual, cultural meanings and objectifications of the world. (1982a, p. 47)

What edifying theory pursues and provides for those involved in the activity of educating children, is "pedagogic wisdom" or "tact."

**Pedagogic Tact**

**The Technical Versus the Nontechnical**

Pedagogic capability or competence has been conventionally approached from positivistically oriented research paradigms that use means-end methodologies to enhance the technical aspects of teaching. The objective is to create improved teaching competence in the classroom that will make learning more efficient and systematic. New teachers are annually ushered into classrooms with a myriad of learning and student management strategies. They have been given preservice practice as well
as continuing inservice training in various new technical skills that research has shown to be effective. What the research does not show, but teacher experience soon acknowledges, is that teaching is much more than the dutiful execution of technical acts. While most involved in education would agree that good teaching is more than technical skill and performance, van Manen questions why research has not attempted to investigate the nontechnical dimensions of teaching. By the nontechnical, he means those aspects of teaching where the issue is not skill-based strategies but the necessity for "pedagogic tactfulness" or the "sensitivity or sensitiveness to a situation that enables me to do pedagogically the right thing for a child" (1984b, p. 158).

For van Manen, such tactfulness is not so much "a body of knowledge" one possesses but rather "a knowing body", a way of being with students that recognizes the pedagogical actions that are appropriate in a given moment with a particular child. It is an improvisational thoughtfulness that involves "the total corporeal being of the person; an active sensitivity toward the subjectivity of the other, for what is unique and special about the other person" (1988c, p. 5).

A teacher who exercises tact is one who recognizes the highly subjective nature of learning and is responsive to the uniqueness of the student. A tactful teacher is also one who knows when to exert influence and when to withhold it and enjoy a continuing sense of pedagogic confidence and capability in spite of the varying learning situations they encounter (van Manen, 1988c). For van Manen, tact is pedagogically vital because it maintains the child's preeminence in the learning environment; it strengthens what is good and enhances what is unique in the child. Tactfulness is also important because with it, teachers are
suspicious of that which could hurt the student, and yet tact also "heals (makes whole) what is broken" (1988c, p. 6).

The pedagogue has opportunity to implement tact in speech as well as in silence, in a particular glance or gesture as well as by example. Obviously, tactfulness is not something that can be inserted into the daily lesson plan. Van Manen emphasizes that although it cannot be planned for, one can prepare or ready oneself for it. This readiness demands engagement in a "profound process of humanistic growth, education and the development of thoughtfulness" (1988c, p. 2). This process should lead to an ability to "read" and interpret the social context enveloping the relationship between the child and the teacher. Such reading is possible only by learning the language of unique experience. As van Manen writes:

From a phenomenological point of view, to research is always to question the way we experience the world, to want to know the world in which we live . . . Phenomenology is, in a broad sense, a philosophy of the unique, it is interested in what is essentially not replaceable . . . Phenomenological research sponsors a certain attentiveness to the details and seemingly trivial dimensions of our everyday educational lives. (1984b, pp. 160-68)

**Pedagogic Tact as "Resistance"**

For van Manen, the greatest enemy of pedagogical tactfulness is "the hegemony or desire for control" (1984b, p. 164). Agreeing with critical theorists such as Apple and Giroux, van Manen asserts that this desire for control encourages research methodologies and classroom practices that emphasize rigid educational outcomes as well as
manageable behaviors:

This process often turns politicians into educational powerbrokers, academics into pedagogic entrepreneurs, educational administrators into so-called executives, and teachers and other subordinates into replaceable workers, who now merely carry out what the technological educational bureaucracy has blueprinted. Insofar that creative technique, skill and tact are still required in the execution of externally planned and organized curriculum or social service programs, they are now interwoven in the methodological apparatus of the rational planning system. (1984b, p. 164)

Unlike critical theorists who emphasize neo-Marxian critique as a tool of social and thereby educational reform, van Manen's emphasis on moving to resistance and reform from technicratization lies within the broader adoption of hermeneutic phenomenological research in educational theory and practice.

Phenomenological research into the so-called theoretical basis of pedagogic tactfulness is a way of resisting the technologizing effect of pedagogic lifeworlds by claiming and exercising personal autonomy over our pedagogical actions. This personal autonomy is authorized, not primarily by the legal-rational power structures of bureaucratic institutions, but by our very pedagogic commitment to children. (1984b, p. 164)

Van Manen describes phenomenology as a "philosophy of action" well suited to radically reforming educational practice (1984b). His argument is that phenomenology, because of its ontologically oriented methodology, provokes serious and original thinking about the world. It
raises radical questions concerning preconceived ideas of what it is to be-in-the-world and what is the nature of truth. A deeper understanding of the lifeworld of the student through phenomenological research precipitates a greater likelihood of one actively articulating questions and dissent concerning ideas and programs that violate the good of the student. "It is on the basis of understanding what serves the human good of this child or these children in need that one may engage in collective political action" (van Manen, 1984b, p. 165).

Secondly, phenomenology is active, not passive, especially in the pedagogic setting, because pedagogy is the practice of action (1984b). Pedagogy, by its nature, calls for active involvement in the lives of others. It is a way of being-in-the-world that interactively responds to the way of being-in-the-world of others, primarily children/students. Pedagogical tactfulness responsively manifests itself only after others have acted. It is therefore a life of action that is primarily one of re-action. Phenomenology aids the parent/teacher/administrator by providing for informed pedagogical action/reaction based on a greater understanding of what it means to be-with-the-student in a pedagogical way.

A third and final reason van Manen cites in his argument for phenomenology as a philosophy of action is that phenomenology requires a sense of situated personalness (1984b). The commitment to the child inherent in pedagogy is underscored by the personal engagement required in doing phenomenological research. Van Manen writes:

When I act towards a child I feel responsible that I act out of a full understanding of what it is like to be in this world as a child. And so, for the sake of this child or these children, I want to be suspicious of any theory, model, or system of action that only gives
me a generalized methodology, sets of techniques or rules for acting in predictable or controllable circumstances. (1984b, p. 165)

For van Manen, what is needed most from educational research and training is not the enabling of teachers with the ability merely to think but also to be thoughtful, that is, pedagogically tactful (1988c). The personal commitment to the child reflected in the above passage echoes the third major theme of van Manen’s theorizing.

The Place of the Child in Pedagogy

The Child’s Orientation

In his view of educational research, Max van Manen supports allowing the child to dwell in his or her proper place. He contends that mainstream educational theorizing and research have decentered the child and his or her perspective of the world, instead emphasizing the values and goals of the observer of the child, that is, teachers, curriculum theorists, administrators, and researchers. What he holds as essential is for educational research to orient its observation to view principally the "meaningful" experience of the child (1990). For van Manen, true pedagogically-oriented observation assumes this type of relational emplacement in the child’s life. Van Manen writes:

The . . . pedagogue is oriented toward the child in a special way. While being concerned with maturation, growth and learning, I do this: I immediately enter a very personal relationship with the child. There is a fellow feeling between us but at the same time another and new distanciation which makes me "his observer." Since I "know" this child I can hold back superficial judgments about him. And in this holding back I create another "distance".
but now of a different order of objectivity than the distance of the outside observer. "Simultaneously I stand closer but also further away." There is a maximal closeness with the maintenance of distance. This is what Beets means when he says "pedagogic observation is: discovering and meeting the other in the heart of personal existence". (1979b, p. 14)

Parents and teachers are given a unique opportunity of relationship with children. Their eyes, if properly focused, can see children in ways other adults cannot. A striking example of this is offered by van Manen in *The Tone of Teaching* (1986). In a section entitled "Pedagogy Is Child-Watching," van Manen describes a story of how two people, one a passerby who has stopped for a moment to enjoy watching children play in a schoolyard, and the other, the children's teacher who is supervising the children at play, experience seeing a girl skipping rope. The passerby quickly looks past the girl in his mind and sees himself skipping rope as a child at play at school. He senses regret, for seeing her has stimulated a desire to revisit his childhood days. He knows, however, that those days are gone and so he too goes by. Van Manen then shows us the same child skipping rope in the schoolyard but this time through the eyes of her teacher. The teacher is also touched with remorse, as he watches the girl jump rope, but for entirely different reasons. He senses regret because he knows the child. He sees and hears the anguish of the child's life in every skip of the rope caused by an overdemanding mother and the consequential loneliness that haunts the child.

For van Manen, it is important to note that both adults saw the child, but only the teacher saw the person. The passerby saw the child
as an opportunity to see himself and remember his past, whereas the teacher saw the child and found an opportunity to be even more aware of this girl and her needs. It is too easy for professional educators to assume the orientation of the passerby, especially when traditional research paradigms encourage such a nonpersonal view. He warns that educators must not adopt a control-oriented observational style that displaces the child into categories of adult interpretation. Instead, educators must adopt the child's orientation (1973, p. 181). For van Manen,

The theoretical language of child "science" so easily makes us look past each child's uniqueness toward common characteristics that allow us to group, sort, sift, measure, manage, and respond to children in preconceived ways . . . Putting children away by means of technical or instrumental language is really a kind of spiritual abandonment. (1986, p. 18)

To be oriented to the lifeworld of the child is to discover what a particular experience is like for the child. Van Manen contends that knowing what a particular pedagogical situation is like for a child is the first question that educators should seek to answer (1986). Such knowledge is vital because it gives to the teacher a clearing through which to approach the child. The clearing sets the tone and prepares the way for an educative encounter between the teacher and the student. This encounter is founded on the student's view of her world and establishes a relationship that is more prone to recognize what is pedagogically good for the child (1989).
The Teacher's Orientation

In view of van Manen's emphasis on the experience of the child in directing the pedagogical relationship, it follows that, for him, the place of the child in pedagogical research is not just the place of a student but also that of a teacher. He writes:

Parents and teachers are good pedagogues when they model possible ways of being for the child. They can do that if they realize that adulthood itself is never a finished project. Life forever questions us about the way it is to be lived. "Is this what I should be doing with my life? Is this how I should spend my time?" No one can reawaken these questions more disturbingly than a child. All that is required is that we listen to children and learn from them. In this, children are our teachers. (1989, p. 13)

To van Manen, children serve as a type of primordial form of adult existence. Children are seen as archetypal beings disclosing primordial human existence. By approaching the world through the experiences of a child we not only learn what it is like for the child in that situation, but the essences of human existence are also discovered.

"I wish I could be young again but know what I know now." Many of us are nostalgic about our childhood, and not because we want to be children again. What we really want to do is be able to experience the world the way a child does. We long to recapture a sense of possibility and openness--a confidence that almost anything is possible . . . All kinds of things are possible when one is young, and the reward for both parents and teachers is the presence of hope. That is what a child can teach us. It is what a child must teach us if we are to be true and good parents and
teachers. (1986, p. 29)

Van Manen criticizes educators who see themselves as competent and superior in their adult understandings of the world. Their attitude is one of not needing anything from children in the pedagogical relationship but their devotion, diligence and cooperation. Such educators contend that children have no lessons to teach them other than possibly those of patience and the professional reward found in self-gratification when the students perform as predicted and desired. To van Manen, such educators turn education into a "pedagogy of oppression--an authoritarian form of domination of adults over children." (1986, p. 15)

**Conclusion**

Van Manen is a strong advocate for the voice of the child to be heard in research, in theorizing, and in everyday pedagogical activity. His writings reflect a deep sensitivity and commitment to children that are foreign to many adults. In part, his work attempts to give administrators, teachers, and parents a way to begin developing and extending their understanding of children. Though very beneficial, van Manen's work is restrictive in the sense that it articulates the young child's voice as the student. Noticeably absent are distinctive student voices of adolescents and young adults. The factors contributing to this emphasis are possibly two. One involves van Manen's close relationship with his own child, and the second is his view of children as an expression of the primordial essence of human existence. In fairness, van Manen has never maintained that his research addressed all of the complexities of pedagogy. By insightful descriptions into the nature of pedagogical relationships with children, he indirectly reveals the need of
phenomenological research that describes pedagogy in the context of older students; that is, secondary, college, vocational, and so forth.

Another strength of van Manen's work is its responsiveness to the criticism that phenomenology is too esoteric in its methodology. Van Manen admits that for "newcomers to the enterprise of phenomenological method, such [phenomenological] descriptions are virtually impossible to reconstruct" (1979a, p. 57). He has sought, therefore, to make phenomenology more accessible and to extend the work of the Utrecht School by developing more explicit procedures for doing phenomenological research. His latest book, *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science For An Action Sensitive Pedagogy*, is an effort to accomplish these aims. This book is clearly written and includes a glossary to aid those not familiar with the vocabulary of phenomenology. Within the text, van Manen identifies six dimensions of conducting phenomenological research. Part of his discussion includes advice in formulating a human science research project and how to outline it in a research proposal. This book is beneficial to educators because it uniquely contextualizes phenomenological research and pedagogy as one and the same project.

Van Manen's book is also helpful in examining the status of phenomenological literature. Many of the phenomenological research works available to newcomers are essays published in various phenomenologically oriented educational journals. Many of these essays rightfully give explanation and defense of the value this type of research affords to our understanding of the world. Other essays give us the results of phenomenological study in beautifully written prose and poetic descriptions. The difficulty for interested readers is that these essays
usually shield them from the concrete processes the researcher may engage in conducting the study. Van Manen recognizes that the processes of phenomenological research and writing are messy and difficult (1990). His book gives an "inside" perspective into the basic philosophical and methodological processes constituting this type of research and writing. Such insight aids in understanding the phenomenologically oriented reasons behind the various twists and turns taken by the researcher in framing the final description. Without this type of assistance, inquirers into phenomenological research often leave an encounter with a phenomenological text perplexed. The lingering impression is that to do this type of research, you need only be a "sensitive person" in the colloquial and not the phenomenological sense of the term.

Simply stated, Max van Manen has contributed immensely to curriculum and, more broadly, to educational theorizing and research by his explanation and application of phenomenology to pedagogy. Hopefully, in the years ahead, more of his work will become known to a wider and more diverse population of North American educators.

Making the work of phenomenology known to a wider audience has been one of the accomplishments of T. Tetsuo Aoki, to whom we turn next.
"In my being and becoming the tensions that were there created a dynamic world within which I acted" (Aoki 1983, p. 335)

Introduction

This chapter consists of an investigation of the pedagogical life, work and ideas of a leading North American curricularist, T. Tetsuo Aoki. My examination involves discussion of four major aspects of Aoki's work. These are 1) his pedagogical development, 2) specific characteristics of his administrative tenures at the University of British Columbia and the University of Alberta, 3) specific curriculum development and evaluation projects undertaken by Aoki, and 4) major pedagogical themes that are developed and exemplified in his curriculum work. It is hoped, through this discussion, to capture the significant innovations to curriculum Aoki's hermeneutic/phenomenological stance provides.

The Pedagogical Development of T. Tetsuo Aoki

To understand T. Tetsuo Aoki and the significance of his seminal work for curriculum scholarship in North America, one must not only grasp the themes of his labor but also understand the "dynamic" context of his being and becoming as a Japanese/Canadian and as a late 20th century citizen of the world. Acknowledging and reflecting upon his ethnicity is important because it has provided for Aoki the local psycho/social and cultural setting for his development as a child,
student and young educator. Contemplating his citizenship in a world experiencing paradigmatic transition from a modern to post-modern condition is important in understanding the global setting his being and becoming as a noted international curriculum scholar has occurred.¹

Born in British Columbia to Japanese parents Aoki always had difficulty finding total and consistent identity with either the Japanese or Canadian populace. With the former were strong ancestral ties to Japanese culture, exampled by his grandfather being a Samurai. Yet in a visit to Japan as a child, a few years before WWII, he sensed even then areas of estrangement with the Japanese people. In reflecting upon this experience Aoki (1983) wrote,

When as a youth, I first walked the sidewalks of crowded Tokyo, I experienced a strange feeling that stemmed from being thrust into a sea of blackheads, a feeling of belonging and not belonging. For the Japanese throng, their "geographical here among blackheads" must have been taken for granted, whereas for me "my here among blackheads" (at least at that moment) was vivid to me. (p. 322)

He continues to reflect upon this experience by saying that "In Japan I felt that as a Japanese Canadian, I was both Japanese and non-Japanese. I felt that I was both insider and outsider, "in" yet not fully "in," "out" yet not fully out" (1983, p. 323). In attempting to answer the question of why this sense of alienation, Aoki contends that "for me to be one with the dominant mainstream group has never been my way of life ever since I was born" (1983, p. 322).

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¹ For a review of awards and recognition given to Aoki’s work refer to Chapter One.
Not being part of the dominant mainstream was a realization that was also forced upon Aoki throughout his childhood and adolescent school years in British Columbia. From grade schools divided into "occidental" and "oriental" classes, to college entrance requirements that blatantly restricted Japanese Canadians from certain disciplines, such as law, medicine and education, the cultural imposition of marginalization was clear. A most telling example of this socially enforced estrangement occurred while Aoki was a college student at the University of British Columbia, after having served two years as a cadet in the Canadian Officers Training Corps. He recalls the incident as follows.

Early in the Fall of 1941 our Commanding Officer, Colonel Shrum, summoned me. In the basement of the present University Administration Building I appeared before him. He fired me a terse question with his typical bark: "Aoki, what would you do should there be a war between Japan and Canada?" I responded in what I thought was a voice assured: "I am a Canadian, Sir." That was a damn good honest answer, I thought. But I guess my old physics professor didn't think so. For about two weeks later I got a piece of paper--an honorable discharge from his Majesty's service--this before Pearl Harbour! (Not being a historian, I ripped up that curriculum document!) Rough? Yes! Rough! Rough on a fellow seriously trying to find meaning in his life, a reason for being.

(1983, p. 324)

Aoki, by his statements and career choices following a childhood and adolescence of tension-laden treatment, does not convey any sense of isolating embitteredness. Nor does he portray a life that has
continually fought the harder to belong to the mainstream that marginalized him. Rather in word and action Aoki exhibits a strength and thankfulness for the experience of dialectical living his environment provided him (1983).¹ He expresses appreciation for the opportunity to probe into not only the realm of ethnicity but of humanity itself.

the more I probed, the more I felt I was beginning to touch the essence of what it means to be human; the essence of what it means to become more human. I guess I was on a search for the inner meaning of my "isness"—what Viktor Frankl was later to call aptly Man's Search for Meaning. This kind of probing does not come easily to a person flowing within the mainstream. It comes more readily to one who lives at the margin—to one who lives in a tension situation. It is, I believe, a condition that makes possible deeper understanding of human acts that can transform both self and world, not in an instrumental way, but in a human way. (1983, p. 325)

With the outbreak of WWII, many Japanese Canadians, including Aoki, were ushered off into the countryside of southern Alberta to become sugar beet workers and part-time lumberjacks. Such work must have seemed excruciatingly tedious and unfair to a young person who recently had received a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University

¹ My use throughout this chapter of the notion of "dialectics" differs from its Marxist use where negation is seen as the elan vital of existential change. My conception of "dialectics" agrees more with Merleau-Ponty in which the dialectic occurs as a way of "being in which a junction of subjects occurs [it is the] global and primordial cohesion of a field of experience wherein each element [marked by its difference] opens onto others." (Merleau-Ponty 1973, p. 204) Therefore, dialectical living is a way of being in the world where experience is constituted by the continual interaction with the others of a person's lifeworld.
of British Columbia. In 1944, however, Canada experienced a teacher shortage due to the war effort and advertised a reduction in the Normal School entrance requirements and length of training, hoping to entice more people to become teachers. Aoki quickly applied for admission. Upon acceptance to the Calgary Normal School (now the University of Calgary), he left the wilderness forests of southern Alberta for the opportunities he sensed awaited him in Calgary.

After the completion of his training, his war heightened ethnicity still served as a cultural barrier blocking opportunities to teach in metropolitan schools. Aoki was given three vocational choices: to teach in a remote one room school at an obscure Hutterite religious community; to do propaganda broadcasting for the BBC; or to teach Japanese to the Canadian Intelligence Service. Aoki's choice was very telling for a person who had experienced social estrangement all his life. Either of the latter two choices could have afforded him significant amounts of cultural capital that could lessen the barriers of alienation. In effect, either job would have given him the opportunity to deny before other Canadians, his ethnicity; either directly by engaging in propaganda broadcasts against Japan or indirectly by teaching Canadian operatives the language of the enemy to aid them in their conquest of Japan. Such denial could be seized upon as a cultural rite of passage into a domain of greater acceptance by Canadian society.

Aoki however chose the former offer and "launched a pedagogic career--a move . . . I have never regretted taking" (1983, p. 328). Though he has not said specifically, one might speculate that it has been the acquiring of sufficient inner strength and stability within his realm of marginalization that encouraged and enabled Aoki to reach out to other
marginal groups and risk even further rejection. This strength and acceptance of the "tense" existence found where one dwells in-between two different cultural worlds is evidenced as a major theme in his work, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Aoki later went on to serve in various pedagogical capacities over the next nineteen years, including a thirteen year tenure at Lethbridge Collegiate Institute as an assistant principal "in charge of locker keys, student attendance, student assemblies and really not enjoying being assistant principal" (1983, p. 330). It was while he was at Lethbridge that he acquired his Master's degree as well as an uneasiness with his gradual assimilation into the mass culture. He writes

I was becoming one of the many; I did the many things that many did; I had come to own many things that many owned; I had come to value the many things that many valued. I was becoming very comfortable in the city, yet discomforted by the very comfort that seemed to surround me. (1983, p. 330)

In response to this cultural incorporation that has the effect of existential anesthesia, Aoki ventured into the realm of estrangement once again by assuming a position as a junior professor at the University of Alberta. This time however his estrangement was by choice and not force (1983).

During the next 11 years at Alberta, Aoki received his PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Oregon and served as Max van Manen's major professor. In 1975 Aoki accepted the position of Professor of Curriculum Studies at the University of British Columbia. Three years later he returned to the University of Alberta as Chairman of the Secondary Education Department and remained there until 1985.
where he now serves as Professor Emeritus in addition to serving as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Victoria.

The Administrative Accomplishments of T. Tetsuo Aoki

During his administrative tenure at the University of British Columbia and at the University of Alberta, Aoki's leadership reflected the dynamics of his dialectical being and becoming. This period of the 1970's saw significant new voices and happenings occurring in North American education. Post-positivistic emphases in empirical research, neo-marxian critical praxis, phenomenological hermeneutics, ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies were all part of the reorienting or reconceptualizing movement of education theory and practice taking place in limited areas within North American academia (Pinar, 1988). Aoki recognized the call for more openness and less closure these various manifestations of rethinking educational practice were requesting. As coordinator for the Centre for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction at UBC and later Chairman of the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta, Aoki characterized his leadership by an alertness and sensitivity to his students' and staff's "embryonic sayings/happenings/interests" and gave support "one way or another to what I saw were possibilities . . . I began to see the department polyphonically" (T. Aoki, personal communication, February, 1991). Inherent within this polyphonic view is Aoki's argument for the true notion of competence. It is this view of competence that witnesses his manner of pedagogical leadership. He writes,
To help explore this view of competence, let us uncover the root etymology of "competence." The disclosure of the Latin root reveals a fresh view. The Latin root is "com-petere": "com" meaning "together," and "petere" meaning "to seek." In a root sense, then, to be competent means to be able to seek together or to be able to venture forth together. This root meaning of "competence" as "communal venturing" holds promise for a fresh view of what it means to be a competent teacher . . . In this framework of competence as communicative action and reflection, reality is constituted as a community of actors and speakers. (1984, pp. 75-77)

A sense of "community" or "communal venturing" into openings and clearings became characteristic of an Aoki academic department. The following remarks, made to his departmental colleagues at the beginning of his final year as chairman of the Secondary Education department at Alberta, resonates this.

As we open our doors to the 1984-85 academic session, I wish to welcome staff and students to places of gathering which we call the Department of Secondary Education. I see these places, whether they be offices, classrooms, lounges or hallways, as gathering places, openings which allow people who are open to others to enter into dialogue. I wish to understand the "Department" essentially as gatherings of people who by opening themselves to self and others engage in their own and others' unfolding dedicated to revealing answers to the question of what it means to educate and be educated . . . I hope, that each of us gains a measure of insight and understanding of who we are so that in the end, having
lived well during our stay, we can with R. S. Peters say: "To be educated is to walk with a different view." (Cited in Jacknicke, 1987, pp. 41-2)

Aoki views "clearings" as existential moments, or what Alfred North Whitehead might refer to as "occasions" (Whitehead, 1925), that serve to provide a meeting place for previously unseen or differing vistas to be viewed concurrently. It is such a place that dialogue and creative dialectical engagement can occur. Aoki recognized the voices of curriculum and pedagogical reconceptualists as calling for such places and moments to dwell in with students and colleagues. It was a call to which his hermeneutic/phenomenological voice could contribute.

Having discarded systems theory management as extraneous to the concrete experiences of everyday living, Aoki spearheaded insightful innovations in the graduate program. Two of the most significant changes he introduced was in curriculum assessment and course requirements. A nine point grading system was converted to a simple 2 point "credit/no credit" system. In doing so, Aoki considered the department to have "cut to the core of what we mean by education." (T. Aoki, personal communication, February, 1991) This "cutting to the core" also included reducing required courses to a minimum and leaving ambiguously open the maximum courses a student could take in their particular program of study. His conviction is that students ought to take the greater responsibility in defining what a master's degree or doctoral degree in curriculum really meant. For the students, the "yet to be decided" on the formal program sheet became most fascinating; reflecting possibilities and promise. (T. Aoki, personal communication, February, 1991)
As early as 1972 and continuing to the present Aoki has engaged in a variety of curriculum development and evaluation projects. The discussion in this section highlights some of those projects describing their purpose and Aoki's unique contribution to each one. First discussed is his initial curriculum development undertaking in 1972 at the Hobbema Native Reserve in Alberta, Canada. I examined this project because it offers a chance to see Aoki's initial expression of curriculum work before the later influences of the Reconceptualists. The second project examined is his 1986 evaluation of the Ts’Kel curriculum program in educational administration. I chose this project because it examples Aoki's more recent and seasoned curriculum endeavors and serves as an appropriate seque into the next section dealing with major themes in Aoki's curriculum work. Situated between these two projects chronologically, and in the following discussion, is an examination of a key essay of Aoki's (1979) entitled, Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key. It is valuable because it reflects a resolute, skillful effort by Aoki to challenge traditional curriculum thinking and encourage the acceptance of diverse research orientations to curriculum; notably, the hermeneutic-phenomenological orientation.

The Hobbema Curriculum Development Project

This was one of Aoki's earliest curriculum projects prior to his involvement with the reconceptualist movement in the mid 70s'. Though prior to the influences of Macdonald, Pinar and Apple, the Hobbema curriculum story resonates with initial sounds that would later vibrate...
into fuller themes in Aoki's later reconceptualist works. Concern over cultural marginalization and domination through curricular reification was a fundamental issue that guided much of his work in this endeavor.

Aoki's primary curriculum task was to assist the Hobbema Natives of Alberta, Canada in developing a curriculum for their reservation schools that reflects the Hobbema worldview. He defined this effort as a developmental project in which community action is crucial and whose action is directed towards the following intended payoffs for the Reserves: (1) change in the curriculum content and instructional materials content of the Reserves school to accommodate educational goals defined by the people of Hobbema, goals which emerge from the community's socio-cultural context; and (2) change in the process of curriculum development such that the process accommodates meaningful involvement of the Reserves' community parents, students and teachers. It is believed that such meaningful involvement will provide opportunities to accommodate the community's socio-cultural imperative. (1972, pp. 2-3)

The curriculum project lasted for over 10 months and involved numerous developmental meetings with individuals, families, and small to large groups consisting of parents, teachers and students. Workshops were also held to compose the list of curriculum materials and resources the Hobbema people wanted transmitted to their children through their schools. Tribal legends written as children's stories as well as social studies materials (including manuals, maps, and transparencies) reflecting six interpretations of the discovery of America are partial examples of the resources and materials that became the Hobbema
curriculum.

Aoki's childhood experiences with schooling acquainted him with the ways education can be used as a tool of marginalization by the predominant members of a society. Sensitive to that realization, Aoki described the political dimensions of this project as a *devolution* of the education system of the Hobbema Native Reserves.¹ He writes

The Hobbema Curriculum Project was conceived along devolutionary lines, convinced that community or local curriculum development to be meaningful to the people of the community must be based on autonomy of action. To trigger the movement for social action in curriculum development... we as a mediating team of two moved into this domain... in touch with but outside the Department of Indian Affairs and not of but in close contact with the Reserves. We see this mediating role as a limited, ad hoc self-destruct kind, to have organizational life only for the duration of the need for the mediating role. (1972, p. 7)

Rather than change the Hobbema educational system from without, Aoki assisted in providing a setting for the Hobbema's to reconstruct their curriculum program from within their world-view. The final result was a curriculum plan that emanated from the Hobbema's unique pedagogical intentions reflecting their cultural experience. Aoki never usurped the curriculum process from the Hobbemas but allowed the primary curriculum formulation to remain within the control of those it would most affect. The acceptance of Aoki's stance can be illustrated

¹ "Devolution" is a term coined by Frank Sherwood (1969) and used by Aoki meaning a "process of power reallocation [where] the identifiable group situated outside the headquarters feels free to act without the constraints of some hierarchy." (cited in Aoki, 1972, p.6)
by one native participant who stated that "If I am aware that someone is trying to change me, I am very reluctant to change, but if I know no one is trying to do this, I will do anything to change myself" (Aoki 1972, p. 19). Theresa Wildcat the, then, Chairman of the School Committee on the Hobema Reserve examples best the enthusiasm for the project in stating that

Many of us Indian parents had at one time or another dreamed about a project where Indian people themselves could sit down to write their own history, their legends—in other words, their own culture—to teach their children. Today we are doing just that. (1972, p. 1)

Aoki reflects, in this early project, his desire and commitment to the integration of lived experiences with curriculum activities. Over the next seven years, Aoki's hunt for a clearer and proper understanding of the relationship between abstract curriculum thinking and everyday pedagogical/lived experiences brought him into greater contact with Critical Social Theory and phenomenology. The search also led him further from general systems theory and more traditional ways of viewing curriculum.

**Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key**

In 1979, after completing an evaluation of the British Columbia Social Studies Curriculum two years earlier, Aoki wrote a pivotal essay entitled *Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key*. In that essay, in almost evangelistic tones, Aoki called for a multi-perspective approach to curriculum development and evaluation. He concurs with the pejorative critique of mono-dimensional traditional curriculum research offered by...

What seems to be needed in curriculum inquiry, therefore, is general recognition of the epistemological limit-situation in which current research is encased, i.e., a critical awareness that conventional research has not only a limiting effect but also to some degree a distorting effect . . . we need to seek out new orientations that allow us to free ourselves of the tunnel vision effect of mono-dimensionality. (1979, p. 4)

Aoki continues by discussing his evaluation of the British Columbia social studies curriculum and his utilization of Habermas' (1972) tri-paradigmatic framework to acquire a new orientation "appropriate for our evaluation research interests" (Aoki, 1979, p. 6). Aoki argued that curriculum research needed to expand its horizons to the extent that the individual in the context of her relations to the world occupy the center of the researcher's view. From such a stance the multi-dimensional relations between the individual and society become paramount to the researcher. According to Aoki these varying relationships have primary forms. Drawing upon Habermas, he writes that "Man experiences three root activities: WORK, COMMUNICATION AND REFLECTION. These activities yield three forms of knowledge:

1. By "mono-dimensional traditional curriculum research" Aoki refers to the predominance educational research gives to documenting and quantifying observable actions. The primary interest of this orientation is "the utilization of predictive knowledge, as in behavior modification, technology, engineering [and associated with] a number of control oriented theories such as cybernetic engineering, management theory, general systems and structural-functionalism" (1979, p. 10).
NOMOLOGICAL, SITUATIONAL INTERPRETATIVE, AND CRITICAL” (1979, p. 8). Aoki translates these three activities into curricular orientations through which curriculum researchers directly view the individual-in-the-world.

In curriculum inquiry, there is an array of orientations that a researcher might adopt . . . First, there is the empirical analytic inquiry orientation in which explanatory and technical knowledge is sought. This research mode is familiar to us as "science." Second, there is the situational interpretative inquiry orientation in which research is conceived of as a search for meaning which people give in a situation. Such an account is called phenomenological description. Third, there is the critical inquiry orientation which is gaining some visibility in research literature. Researchers within this orientation are concerned with critical understanding of fundamental interests, values, assumptions and implications for human and social action. (1979, p. 7)

Aoki has given preference in his work to the second orientation, situational interpretive or hermeneutical phenomenology. He favors this view because it goes beyond the quantification of second-order experience to an interpretive analysis of first-order experience descriptions. The purpose of first-order analysis is to probe the essence of an individual's reality. That reality is seen as the sum of meanings the individual has given to her experiences encountered in relationships with others in her lifeworld. To understand the significance of an intended pedagogical activity for a student, the students' interpretation and
meaning given to that experience must be known.\textsuperscript{1} Aoki writes

At this point in time we are asking the question: "Descriptive knowledge, phenomenological or otherwise, what for?" We take a cue from the first line of Tao, "The way that can be described is not the way" . . . some of us feel that the inherent logic of "application" often found in education talk--the notion of applying thought to practice--should be made problematic, at least when reference is made to the world of people. . . . For too long we have not been aware that second order thoughts were being "applied" to the first order social world of practice. A phenomenological study of the phenomenon of "application" is called for . . . . This is our current interest and thrust in curriculum inquiry. (1979, p. 17)

\textbf{The Ts"Kel Educational Administration Program Evaluation}

In 1985 an appraisal was made of the educational administration curriculum program at the Ts"Kel Native Indian Reserve School. A primary recommendation emanating from that study stated

Doubts have been expressed about the direct applicability of concepts, conceptualizations, and theories of public school administration to Native Indian settings. Hence, it is suggested that efforts be made to investigate these doubts and to determine the extent to which the language and the concepts of traditional administration "fit" the Native Indian situation. (Aoki 1986b, p. 3)

In the fall of 1985, Aoki was invited to undertake an evaluation that specifically sought to understand how Ts"Kel graduate students,

\textsuperscript{1} A more detailed discussion of Aoki's view of hermeneutical phenomenology is given in the next section of this chapter.
enrolled in the educational administration program, interpreted the idea of "program relevance." Aoki was asked to make problematic the mundane acceptance of what it means for a program to have "relevance." In other words, how do students who are to benefit by this curriculum program interpret its relevance from within their lifeworld experiences. Aoki agreed to undertake the task and discovered two additional concerns strategically associated with his initial investigations. These are the notions of "situatedness" and "language." He writes

To come to an understanding of what "a Native Indian situation" is requires . . . a break away from the language world of concepts, and enter into the language world of concrete lived experiences . . . . Speaking of the language world of lived experiences assumes an understanding of language as embodied language wherein we understand man as the language he speaks. (1986b, p. 6)

With this awareness, Aoki proceeded to engage each of the graduate students of the Ts'Kel educational administration program in a series of two conversations, each lasting approximately one hour. The topic of the first conversation was the question, "What does program relevance mean to you?" Following the first conversation with each student, Aoki wrote a 2-3 page interpretation of the student's response to the question. In his writing he looked for the appearing of "emergent themes" regarding "relevance." Aoki then had each student review his [Aoki's] interpretation of the conversation to confirm its fidelity.

The second conversation dealt with: (1) the student's review of Aoki's interpretation of the first conversation and (2) the student's response to another question of "How do you find the relevance of the
Ts"Kel Educational Administration program?" Emphasis was placed on the student addressing particularly the specific features of the general courses and special seminars within the program.

From these conversations and his interpretation of them, Aoki's evaluation disclosed and discussed six various areas of concern involving the Ts"Kel graduate students and the notion of "relevance" to the educational administration program. Based on the students' comments and their verification of his interpretation of their conversations, Aoki framed these concerns within four "zones of program relevance" (1986b, p. 9).\(^1\) He writes,

In this report, "program relevance" is to be understood from the standpoint of the Ts"Kel students' lived situation. From such a standpoint, we can sense the existence of multiple zones of relevance. . . . These zones are not discrete and hence it would be better to think of them as four emphases. (1986b, p. 9)

Aoki identifies these areas of program relevance as Zones A, B, C, and D and configures them in relation to two thresholds through which the students experience "program relevance." These two forms of experience are (1) abstract/theoretical experiences and (2) concrete/lived experiences. Aoki summarizes each zone as follows:

**Program Relevance Zone D**

Zone D is a world in which students experience the program as somewhat distanced from their being . . . a world of others . . . a world of concepts and theories . . . a world in which "practice" is

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1. Although Aoki identifies six areas of concern, he only discusses 4 of them in this evaluation.
understood as "applied theory."

**Program Relevance Zone C**

Zone C is much like Zone D, except for the fact that the abstraction experienced is that of "Native Indians" . . . although the content is of "home," [i.e. what is the Native Indian conception of leadership] talk is "talk about." The preposition "about" suggests a distancing.

**Program Relevance Zone B**

is a world [embracing] Native Indians and Native Indianness. Zone B differs from Zone C in that the speaking is in and of concretely lived experiences . . . What does it mean to be a Native Indian administrator?

**Program Relevance Zone A**

relevance is experienced as flowing from an acknowledgement that the dwelling place of the Ts'Kel students is the current historical time and place . . . It is the Ts'Kel students' lot to constitute in their "here" and "now" a meaningfully relevant life, including life as educational administrator as they in-dwell in this zone, experienced as a zone of tension. As such, the realm of between entails possibilities of constituting a life of hopelessness or one of hopefulness. The Ts'Kel students seem to be driven by hopefulness for both themselves and their people through education. (Aoki 1986b, pp. 20-22)

As a result of his study, Aoki concludes that these disclosed zones of program relevance and the ways of experience associated with them, offer a developmental schema that can guide instructors in:

(1)delineating statements of intention in the courses related to the
Ts"Kel program, (2) deciding the forms of activities involving instructions and/or students associated with the Ts"Kel program, (3) selecting or designing "resources" (texts and/or people) for the program/courses, (4) designing evaluation approaches to guide the appraisal of the program/courses. (1986b, p. 23)

The concerns illustrated in Aoki's work proceed from his experiences of being and becoming and find pertinent expression in his reflexive endeavors to understand the manifold ways and dimensions of being-in-the-world as students and pedagogues. In the next section of this chapter, I will explore more deeply these primary themes of Aoki's work. The themes examined are those that, I contend, find the most consistent expression in and serve as foundational convictions for Aoki's broad range of curriculum activities.

Major Themes of Aoki's Work

What Is It To Be Educated?

Aoki's pedagogical contemplations have always been prefaced and postscripted by the question of "what is it to be educated?" It is a question that has directly and indirectly, repeatedly surfaced in the writings of reconceptualists (Aoki, 1990a) and was additionally enkindled in Aoki by circumstances in British Columbia in the 1980's resulting from information coming to light concerning educators charged with sexual abuse. One such thought-provoking episode occurred in a particular court proceeding when a superintendent of schools stated in court of one teacher/administrator, that "He was an excellent educator but he violated children" (Aoki, 1989c, p. 24). The contradiction inherent in such a declaration prompted Aoki to disclose more clearly what it is to
be educated.

For Aoki, the provenance of the answer to "what is it to be educated" is the same as that of "what is it to be human." He writes

An educated person, first and foremost, understands that one's way of knowing, thinking, and doing flow from who one is. Such a person knows that an authentic person is no mere individual, an island unto himself or herself, but a being-in-relation with others and hence is, at core, an ethical being. (1988b, pp. 8-9)

In the above passage Martin Heidegger's influence upon Aoki is evident. At the heart of Aoki's pedagogical investigation is a search for "being." Heidegger describes this type of ontological examination as an interpreting, which we have described as the working-out and appropriation of an understanding. Every interpretation has its fore-having, fore-sight, and its fore-conception. If such an interpretation, as Interpretation, becomes an explicit task for research, then the totality of these "presuppositions" (which we call the "hermeneutical situation") needs to be clarified and made secure beforehand, both in a basic experience of the "object" to be disclosed, and in terms of such an experience. In ontological interpretation an entity is to be laid bare with regard to its own state of Being; such an Interpretation obliges us first to give a phenomenal characterization of the entity. (1962, p. 275)

In laying bare the entity of an "educated being" Aoki discovers several characteristics of this type of existence or being-in-the-world. Foremost is the notion, as stated previously, that an educated person understands the reciprocal relationships between what we know, think and do and who we are. For Aoki (and Heidegger), to be human is to be a
place-holder In a network of internal relations, constituted by a public language of the communal world in which we find ourselves. As human beings we find ourselves to be caught up in and dependent upon a cultural context from which we draw meaningful possibilities for concrete ways of being engaged in the world. Consequently, we are a being-in-relation-with-others and by that an ethical being. To be educated is to be aware of contextual connectedness and thereby exist "aright in thoughtful living with others" (Aoki, 1990a, p. 114).

Secondly, Aoki sees the features of an educated person, in part, as a person that actively seeks to sustain the uniqueness of humanness in the daily existence of human beings. Aoki challenges the use of curriculum terminology such as teacher-centered, child-centered, discipline-centered curriculum, etc. Such attempts are too confining and have failed to produce any meaningful advances in pedagogical praxis. He advocates centering curriculum thought "on a broader frame, that of 'man/world relationships,'" for it permits probing of the deeper meaning of what it is for persons (teachers and students) to be human, to become more human, and to act humanly in educational situations" (Aoki, 1979, p. 4). Therefore an educated person

guards against disembodied forms of knowing, thinking, and doing that reduce self and others to things, but also strives, guided by the authority of the good in pedagogical situations, for embodied thoughtfulness that makes possible living as human beings.

(1990a, p. 114)

Finally, Aoki posits that an educated person, mindful of the constraints of human existence, enters the pedagogical relationship humbly acknowledging "the grace by which educator and educated are
allowed to dwell in a present that embraces past experiences and is open
to possibilities yet to be" (1990a, p. 114). It is a humility that causes one
to "be ever open to the call of what it is to be deeply human and, heeding
that call, to walk with others in life's ventures" (1990a, p. 114). An
openness to being-in-the-world has allowed Aoki to develop a view of
pedagogy that privileges relationships with others, and is differentiated
and discovered through various phenomenologically interpretive themes.

**Tensionality and the Lived World of the In-Between**

For Aoki (1979), curriculum inquiry and development that is
person/world relationships-centered consists of that that is the
irreducible element of human existence. As such, questions
contemplating and searching for the essence of the concrete/lived world
experiences of teachers, students, and administrators, when they
encounter one another in pedagogically imbued situations, become
primary. Of particular concern to Aoki is how these pedagogic situations
are perceived and experienced by teachers. His explorations reveal a
unique sensitivity resulting in penetrating descriptions of the
everydayness of pedagogical being.

Even before Day 1 of the term, our teacher, Miss O, walks into her
assigned Grade 5 classroom. Because Miss O is already a teacher,
by her mere presence in the classroom as teacher, she initiates a
transformation of a socio-cultural and physical environment into
something different. Even before a pupil walks in, she silently
asks: "Can I establish myself here as a teacher?", and the
classroom's desks, walls, and chalkboards, floor, books and
resources reply, albeit wordlessly, by what they are. (1986c, p. 8)
Aoki's disclosure of the lived world of being for a teacher reveals among other things its tensionality, "a tensionality that emerges, in part, from in-dwelling in a zone between two curriculum worlds: the worlds of curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived-experiences" (1986c, p. 8).

The curriculum-as-plan is the world of educational administrators and curriculum designers. It has a pedagogical worldview that does not originate in the lived experiences of the classroom yet attempts to fulfill its intents there. These intentions, "imbued with the planners' orientations to the world, which include their own interests and ways of knowing and about how teachers and students are to be understood" (1986c, p. 8), are placed within a set of curriculum-as-plan declarations known and referred to as objectives, activities, resources and evaluations. Within this world teachers are often seen instrumentally as the official (i.e. certified) trained implementers of the intentions of the curriculum-as-plan. Such a view forgets that "what matters deeply in the situated world of the classroom is how the teachers' 'doings' flow from who they are . . . teaching is fundamentally a mode of being" (1986c, p. 8).

Juxtaposed to the curriculum-as-plan world is that of curriculum-as-lived-experiences. This is the everyday world of the classroom individualized by

- face-to-face living with Andrew, with his mop of red hair, who struggles hard to learn to read; with Sara, whom Miss O [the teacher] can count on to tackle her language assignment with aplomb; with popular Margaret, who bubbles and who is quick to offer help to others and to welcome others' help; with Tom, a
frequent daydreamer, who loves to allow his thoughts to roam beyond the windows of the classroom; and some 20 others in class, each living out a story of what it is to live school life as Grade 5's. (1986c, p. 8)

It is a world alive with the curvilinear sets of intentions students bring into the classroom. Intents and perspectives that comprise, among others, the concreteness of this pedagogic situation.

Another contributing element to the curriculum-as-lived-experiences world is the lifeworld of the teacher. As stated previously, Aoki sees teaching not as a profession but as a way of being. As a way of being, circumscribed as teacher with all the cultural and individual meaning attached to it, there is interminably interconnected to it other ways of being such as spouse, lover, father, mother, friend, employee, writer, artist, etc., all which interact with teaching-as-a-way-of-being to compose the goals and manner of the teacher in the classroom. Added to this constellation of existential ways-of-being is the teacher's awareness of the dynamically changing interests and concerns of the students' lifeworld. Therefore, to initiate or continue in an effective pedagogic relationship with her students, the teacher understands the importance of hearing the voice of each child within the context of that student's lifeworld.

It is a difficult task for a teacher, "trained" in a cultural mindset that sublimates childhood into the perceived advantages of mature adulthood, to be sensitive to the lifeworld callings of the students and simultaneously accomplish the pedagogical tasks assigned by outsiders at the district, state and/or federal level. Added to this is the constant awareness of the teachers own existential callings and needs that so
often contradict the intentions of the "others" involved in the pedagogic situation. Therefore the curriculum-as-lived-experience is a compendium of intents and perceptions in which, moment by moment, students and teachers negotiate the boundaries and structures of the pedagogic situation.

Aoki contends that for a teacher to dwell in such a state is to dwell "in the zone of between" (1986c, p. 9). He writes,

in this way Miss O in-dwells between two horizons—the horizon of the curriculum-as-plan as she understands it and the horizon of the curriculum-as-lived-experiences with her pupils. Both of these call Miss O and make their claims on her. She is asked to give a hearing to both simultaneously. This is the tensionality within which Miss O inevitably dwells as teacher. (1986c, p. 9)

To dwell in the zone of between, for Aoki, is to live within a state of tension. It is to be alive to the diversity of the pedagogical situation caused by often contradictory aims of those involved in the situation. It is to sense the anxiety and resulting care that the right choices and actions be enacted that best serve the pedagogic good of the students.

For Aoki, to be a teacher is to dwell in a tension-filled dialectical realm where negotiation between the curriculum-as-plan and the curriculum-as-lived-experiences is perpetual. He acknowledges that such a state of dialectical existence is what many teachers flee from in great fear.

Miss O knows that it is possible to regard all tensions as being negative and that so regarded, tensions are "to be got rid of." But such a regard, Miss O feels, rests on a misunderstanding that comes from forgetting that to be alive is to live in tension: that, in
fact, it is the tensionality that allows good thoughts and actions to arise when properly tensioned chords are struck, and that tensionless strings are not only unable to give voice to songs, but also unable to allow a song to be sung. (1986c, p. 9)

In 1987, Canadian Brian Orser won the Men's World Figure Skating Championship in Cincinnati, Ohio. Aoki watched as Orser reflected and commented on his achievement in an interview with Barbara Frum the day after he won the championship. In Brian's words Aoki found a lucid example of the benefits of living in tensionality and has since referred to it often (1987b, 1988a, 1989b, 1989c, 1990a, 1990d).

On March 12, Brian Orser touched many of us when he, standing tall on the podium, eyes uplifted, unabashedly allowed tears that welled up to roll down his cheeks uncontrolled as the swell of "O Canada" resounded through him. He was being crowned in Cincinnati as the men's world figure skating champion. In an interview with Barbara Frum the day after, Brian was asked about his experience of the 4 1/2 minutes of his free skating number. "How calm were you as you were skating?" Frum asked. Brian answered, "No, I was not calm. Calmness was not what I wanted. I was in tension--in a good tension that surged throughout my whole body." Then, he spoke of the practice sessions geared to allowing him to experience different forms of tension, firmly regarding that skating well means not the presence of calmness or tranquillity but rather the appropriately tensioned in-dwelling that allows his body and soul to resonate well with the surface of the ice, with the music, with the spectators."
When later in the interview, Barbara Frum commented how in his performance his skating seemed to reflect well the shift in mood of the music, Brian responded, "When I skate well, as I feel I did in my number, I become the music. I do not skate to music as if it were outside of me. I become the music. My skating is the music."

In my view Brian speaks not from the world wherein subject and object are twin poles. His is a world beyond such fragmentation; his is a world in which his very being shimmers and pulsates, a world in which his skating sings, a world in which he is the skating. (1990d, pp. 182-83)

For Aoki, to be alive is to dwell in tension. It is to be aware and open to the anxiety that exists in venturing forth into new frontiers of existence and to use that tension as a compelling force for creative interaction with the world. Orser shunned calmness for the graceful potency he found performing in the midst of tension. So would Aoki have teachers find their creativity and fervor in teaching by disclosing it as a way of being in all its complexity and ensuing difficulty. He realizes however, that most teachers flee from this tension birthed in the complexity of our existence.

Aoki (1990a) finds intriguing and challenging to this discussion the work of John Caputo (1987), Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project. In it, Caputo argues for diffusing the haze of simplicity regarding human existence that metaphysical philosophy, since Plato, has provided for humankind. He calls for a methodological view of existence that exposes us to the ruptures and gaps... the textuality and difference, which inhabits
everything we think, and do, and hope for . . . radical hermeneutics is not an exercise in nihilism, which wants to reduce human practices and institutions to rubble, but an attempt to face up to the bad news metaphysics has been keeping under cover . . . It [radical hermeneutics] provides an approach to the question of human existence that does not fall through the trap door of subjectivism and humanism. It opens us up to the question which we "are" . . . The point is to make life difficult, not impossible—to face up to the difference and difficulty which enter into what we think and do and hope for. (1987, pp. 6-7)

Aoki (1984) criticizes instrumental/technical programs of teacher education as so rule-oriented that they transform teachers into technical implementers and classify good teaching as technical effectiveness. "As such, the teacher, the curriculum developer, or the curriculum evaluator are seen as rule-oriented, rule-governed beings cast within a manipulative ethos, an ethos in which even the future is conceived in terms of rules" (1984, p. 73). Teacher-proof instructional packets are an example of the acquiescence of many pedagogues to an existence that sees the future predeterministically designed by curriculum planners and administrators. Some teachers and administrators desire such materials because they are a means of flight from the tension of day to day pedagogical dwelling in the world of the in-between.

Aoki, however, encourages teachers to learn how to stand tall in the midst of the tensionality of the zone of between (1986c, p. 9). The task of pedagogues is not to prepare students for life but engage them in a communal venturing into life as it phenomenologically is. A life full of risks and possibilities where
in-dwelling dialectically is a . . . mode of being that knows not only that living school life means living simultaneously with limitations and with openness, but also that this openness harbors within, risks and possibilities as we quest for a change from the is to the not yet. (1986c, p. 10)

In his emphasis of the in-between and its indigenous tensionality, Aoki admonishes educators to participate in reflective engagement with the dialectic of pedagogical existence. Allowing that engagement to open before them new possibilities of dwelling with students where hope, trust and the essentialness of humanity is always present. In so doing, teachers, as well as their students, participate in a pedagogy that is the most basic to human existence; they are learning to reside in each moment or occasion of their fluid and tangled existence (Heidegger, 1977). In the tradition of Western culture such a disorderly interpretation of existence has not been the prevailing or preferred view. Aoki senses that since Plato we have been entrapped in a monolithic diatribe that associates harmony with oneness. Historically as a culture, we are taken with a notion of harmony as a goodness that is thought to be in accord with that which is natural and true. But could it be that such an understanding of con-joining is a reflection of our caughtness in our own creation, a metaphysical notion of oneness, a harmonic oneness . . . Could it be that the . . . belonging together of Orser's skating "with the ice, with the music, with the spectators" could be understood as a polyphonic tensionality? . . . Could it be that such an understanding allows us to let go of our inclination to totalistic harmonic wholeness and to open us to the threshold of a space
which like a frontier acknowledges both the limits of the is and the openness to the stirrings of sounds yet silent? (1989b, p. 7)

Aoki invites a curriculum where learning involves communal interaction that explores what it is to be in the midst of an existence characterized by multiplicity. He contends that, in part, this existential complexity for the teacher is the two worlds of curriculum, curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived, that she stands at the threshold of. It is feeling the formidable pull of both worlds and yet allowing the tugs to create a resonance of pedagogical being that creatively vocalizes both worlds into an environment where students learn to dwell.

**Theory and Practice vs. Praxis**

In the late '60s and early '70s Joseph Schwab (1972) declared the field of curriculum to be "morbid" and "moribund" and in dire need of transformation from its present state of theoretical inertia to one that shifts its efforts "from the theoretical to the practical" (1972, p. 79). Aoki (1977) viewed this as a call for curricularists to "shift the very ground they stand on... to assume a new stance" (p. 51). It was especially Schwab's emphasis upon the "practical" that particularly stirred Aoki's interest. He writes,

I concur with him [Schwab] that the practical day-to-day world of curriculum development merits intensive attention. I feel, however, that merely moving to the practical is not sufficiently fundamental... An authentic radical departure calls for not only a lateral shift to the practical but also a vertical shift that leads us to a deeper understanding of the program developer's theoretic...
Aoki calls for a shift in theoretical perspective that emphasizes the notion of the practical as not only the "practices or 'doings' of a teacher" but urges a grounded standpoint that sees no dichotomy between who we are existentially and what we do experientially.

In *Competence in Teaching as Instrumental and Practical Action: A Critical Analysis*, Aoki (1984) criticizes educators who view the notion of "practice" as synonymous with that of "technique" and associate "competence" with that of "Instrumental action" (p. 72). Through the usage of expressions as competency-based teacher education and competency-based testing, Aoki alleges that "competence" becomes usurped as a sacrosanct utterance of devotion to "the belief that problems and conflicts can be managed through purposive rational action based on precise quantification and systemic decision-making" (1984, p. 73). Lost in such an efficiency based curriculum world is the lived-world of teachers and students. In its place is the manipulated world of "beings-as-things" suffused with teacher-proof curriculum packets and students seen as empty vessels waiting to be filled with the how-to-do knowledge of a technologically focused culture.

Aoki considers the segregation of theory and practice as key in the dehumanization of teachers and students in education. He recalls his first experience with the dichotomizing of theory and practice as occurring in his first teaching assignment in the Hutterite colony. The primers used to teach first year students to read were entitled *We Work and Play* and *We Think and Do*. Being a first year teacher Aoki was naïve to the hidden curriculum presented to the children through such material. Unknowingly he helped introduce them to an instrumental
world that emphasized separating into various compartments of existence working and thinking and playing and doing. It is a view of the world that stresses

1. that "thinking and doing" are acts of first importance to our culture, highly prized; 2. that "thinking and doing" is a way of life in which one says, "First you think; then, you do"—a way of life in which "thinking" is primary and "doing" is derivative—a way of life that edifies one understanding of "thinking" to the neglect of other possibilities. (1989c, p. 4)

A curriculum conviction where reading is only a skill to be learned and language serves as its primary tool. Aoki asks

how was I to know that in teaching reading as mere skill, I was being caught up unconsciously within a technological ethos within which . . . tended towards a machine-view of children as well as a machine-view of the teacher? Within this ethos, was I not understanding people, teachers and children, not as beings who are human, but rather as thing beings? Is this not "education" reduced to a half-life of what it could be? (1989c, p. 4)

Though it was over 40 years ago when he first used the We Think and Do primer, Aoki contends that the dichotomy still exists between thinking and doing although reformulated to read "We Theorize and Practice" (1989c, p. 5). He examples teacher education departments that have a student's learning experiences divided into theorizing (course work) and the practicing of theories (teacher practicum); secondary schools divided between academic programs and vocational programs. In higher education universities fill the compartment of thinking and technical institutes provide for the province of doing.
Aoki responds to this pedagogical schizophrenia by asking if we must be "caught up totally in the linearized form of from theory into practice?" (1989c, p. 5). His answer is "no" and supports his reply by developments over the past two decades that indicate a different stance taken by some educators to the notion of practice. He writes,

One of the promising re-understandings of "practice" views practice as praxis, wherein even the notion of theory requires a reunderstanding. I see at this time two major interpretations of praxis—one, in tune with the critical social theory of the neo-Marxist persuasion, and the other, hermeneutic praxis which seems to flow out of the existential posture of Heidegger and Gadamer. I note that at this cutting edge, forceful work is ongoing. (1986a, p. 4)

Citing the work of Karol Wojtyla (1979, 1981), Aoki (1984, 1989c) posits a view of praxis that offers the alternative, existential view of thought-full-of-action and action-full-of-thought for the traditionally accepted Cartesian dichotomization of theory and practice. Praxis viewed as such is the conjoining of thinking and doing into the activity of reflective action. Reflection not used here in the ordinary sense of simply being mindful or in remembrance of what was said or done by an individual, but rather to probe beneath words and deeds to the motives and assumptions that underlie them. It is to question the manner or way of being out of which such actions arise. But reflection, in the context of praxis, doesn't stop there. Aoki adds that "reflection is not only oriented towards making conscious the unconscious by dis-covering

1. Karol Wojtyla is better known as Pope John Paul II.
underlying assumptions and intentions, but it is also oriented towards the implications for action guided by the newly gained consciousness and critical knowing” (1984, p. 77).

For curriculum developers, substitution of the segregated concepts of theory and practice with the notion of praxis would mean, among other things, an acknowledgment of the subjectivity intrinsic to the pedagogical situation. It would initiate a reflective return to the originary grounds of being and learning where teachers and students are seen as a community of independent actors each contributing to the shape and focus of the pedagogical situation.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenologically oriented work of T. Tetsuo Aoki seeks even less to describe its processes of analysis as does van Manen’s. However, in my view, Aoki’s work reflects more of the significant ramifications of phenomenological investigation. As evidenced in this chapter, intuitive, thick and impassioned descriptions of the lifeworld of students and teachers characterize much of his writings. Whereas van Manen’s work has concentrated primarily on student/teacher relationships, Aoki’s work has successfully incorporated the broader pedagogical concerns of curriculum development and assessment to phenomenologically oriented research. In doing so, Aoki has sought to require the world of curriculum planning and evaluation to be more relevant to what it is to be-in-the-world.

A fitting summation of T. Tetsuo Aoki’s work is a reflexive extension of his work to a particular moment of classroom instruction. The next chapter accomplishes this by utilizing the hermeneutic/
phenomenological stance taken by Aoki and van Manen in beginning to understand how the notion of "knowledge" is interpretively experienced in the lives of undergraduate students in a developmental reading course.
CHAPTER IV
READING AND THE PHENOMENON OF EXPERIENCING KNOWLEDGE

"Why then do we assume that reading begins with alphabetization, that it is a set of observational skills, to be developed in isolation from story, from engagement, from the drama of lived experience?" Valerie Polakow (1986, p. 37)

Introduction

This chapter explores how students experience reading as an opportunity to construct their world in a meaning-laden way. I will examine this process specifically as an opening into understanding the phenomenon of experiencing one's relationship with knowledge as described by developmental education students. Central to my phenomenological investigation will be the novel Flowers For Algernon (Keyes, 1966) and the written, descriptive responses thirty-three first-year college students, enrolled in a Developmental Reading course, gave to it.¹

My discussion will first survey the present realm of reading theory identifying what might be considered as three varying theoretical approaches: a bottom-up emphasis of reading; a top-down emphasis of reading; and an interactive/schema reading emphasis. In this section I also will discuss the significant contributions a top-down and interactive/schema emphasis brings to our understanding of reading.

¹Developmental Reading is a required remedial course at Louisiana State University for incoming freshman who demonstrate academic skills below the designated levels deemed necessary for college success.
I additionally will discuss the openings these theories provide for significant contributions from phenomenology to the understanding of the phenomenon of reading.

Second, I will attempt a phenomenological description of a reading experience the aforementioned Developmental Reading students encountered with *Flowers For Algernon*: a novel that conveys the fictional story of one man's encounter with knowledge. These students are appropriate for this study because of the struggle they have confronted in trying to acquire knowledge successfully in an academic setting. I will examine their descriptions of experiencing knowledge and discuss the pedagogical consequences that follow from the insights gained by this investigation.

The discussions that follow will also be guided by the work of van Manen and Aoki. By doing so, I hope to reveal the suggestiveness of their unique orientation to understanding aspects of reading. Elements of the phenomenological works of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are used to help inform the following discussions. The work of Madeleine Grumet, Margaret Hunsberger and Thomas McCormick will also be presented in illuminating a phenomenological approach to reading. Supplementing these contributions will be other voices not strictly defined as phenomenological but appropriate to a phenomenological discussion of reading, such as Henri Bergson and Alfred North Whitehead. Their work is quoted to further illumine a phenomenological view of reading.
Current Reading Emphases

Reading has been approached from a variety of theoretical perspectives that reflect alternate views of how students read, comprehend, and acquire meaning. The teaching methodologies applied from these varied theories range from viewing reading as an empirically based skill, which gives attention to the physiological processes involved, to emphasizing the psychological role of "prior knowledge" the student brings to the reading experience.

The Bottom-up Emphasis

Physiologically based theoretical approaches to reading are the oldest and are commonly referred to as bottom-up theories (McCormick, 1988). In general, reading scholars working from within such a framework maintain that a reader acquires meaning by decoding the individual words, phrases and overall content of a text. A noted scholar associated with this perspective has been Charles Fries. This approach has also been referred to as "text-driven," "data-driven" and "outside-in." (McCormick, 1988, p. 1)

In explaining his particular theory Fries writes,

The process of learning to read . . . is the process of transfer from the auditory signs . . . to the new visual signs . . . Learning to read, therefore, means developing a considerable range of habitual responses to a specific set of patterns of graphic shapes. (Cited in Chall, 1967, pp. 120-121)

For Fries, a reader acquires meaning reading through "the lexical meanings of the words, the structural meanings of the sentences, and the cumulative meanings of the succession of sentences as connected by
sequence signals into a unit . . . " (cited in Chall, pp. 120-121).

According to Fries, reading is a stimulus/response process or a "decoding" of graphic symbols into language meanings. The meaning is found in the text itself. For him, meaning arrives as the result of a series of linkings of lexical codes progressively revealed from an analysis of the lower order level of individual letters and syllables to the higher order level of words, sentences and paragraphs. Though he is unclear exactly how meaning can exist a priori in oral language, he does give primacy to the notion that reading is merely a translating of writing into oral speech (cited in Chall, pp. 120-121). As such, Charles Fries relegates reading to the behavioristic realm of reflexes. He subjugates the reading process to a physiologically based series of "causes," i.e., graphic symbols on paper, and "effects," i.e., meaning responses activated by symbols encountered in the text.

In the early years of his pedagogical career at the Hutterite colony, Aoki regretfully admits to naively teaching reading from a utilitarian understanding of "language as a mere tool of communication" (1989c, p. 4) that is inherent in the bottom-up approach to reading. Aoki characterizes these early attempts at reading instruction as a "war". He writes,

Obediently, following the curriculum guide, I helped students "attack" words and sentences as if reading were a war game. So, as in warfare, we indulged as teachers in "strategies" and "tactics," guided by targeted ends (many of them behavioral), the achievement of which meant VICTORY, and the failure to achieve, DEFEAT . . . [it was] an instrumental view of reading, reducing [reading] to mere skills and techniques, transforming reading to a

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half-life of what it might be. (1989c, p. 3-4)

It is Aoki's contention that not only is reading reduced to a half-life, but education as a whole suffers. At the core of such an attenuated view of pedagogy is an understanding of existence, influenced by an infatuation with technology, that fragments human activity into pure behavioral actions.

In *The Structure of Behavior*, Merleau-Ponty (1983) argues that no human activity can be understood solely from a singular isolation and analysis of any particular feature of human existence. He maintains that some researchers have attempted just that in interpreting human acts solely from a physiological base. Merleau-Ponty contends that it is ludicrous to see life as a linear progression of rigid causal events. Behavioristic theory is seductive to some because of the "messy" complexities found in any view that gives place to consciousness and because of the convenience found in the "obviousness" of human behavior. He writes:

> as soon as one ceases to place confidence in the immediate givens of consciousness and tries to construct a scientific representation of the organism, it seems that one is led to the classical theory of the reflex—that is, to decomposing the excitation and the reaction into a multitude of partial processes which are external to each other in time as well as space... one becomes accustomed to treating as "cause" the condition which we can most easily influence. (1983, pp. 8-17)

For Merleau-Ponty, reading would not be an activity explained by physiological reduction as a bottom-up emphasis might contend. In such a model the body operates only as an object of the stimulating...
input received by graphic symbols. This, in turn, makes reading a manipulative and predominantly one-sided affair where the reader assumes a passive stance. Merleau-Ponty would maintain instead that activities such as reading, involve much more than blind physical automatism in response to given stimuli (1983, p. 40). He would argue that the reader brings to the reading encounter not only physical/neural motor skills but also intentionality. Every human action is an adaptation to the global situation encountered by the individual at the particular moment of excitation. It is not the excitation alone but also the existential state or lifeworld of the individual at the moment of stimulus that decides the response given. Because of this Merleau-Ponty writes,

It is within the organism then that we will have to look for that which makes a complex stimulus something other than the sum of its elements . . . the form of the excitant is created by the organism itself, by its proper manner of offering itself to actions from the outside . . . It is the organism itself . . . which chooses the stimuli in the physical world to which it will be sensitive. The environment emerges from the world through the actualization or the being of the organism . . . (1983, pp. 12-13)

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1. The phenomenological notion of intentionality has undergone a variety of changes since Brentano first introduced it. For Merleau-Ponty, intentionality is the existential orientation of the self in its conscious perceptions of the other. Underlying this is the notion that an individual never experiences consciousness as a thing but rather as an activity. Part of the phenomenological endeavor is the attempt to isolate or bracket various aspects of this activity; the ego, the object of consciousness and the act of conscious itself. Doing so reveals the intentional structure of consciousness (van Manen, 1990).
Applied to reading, it could be said that it is not the stimulus of the symbols alone that gives signification, but also the intentionality of the reader, at the moment of perceiving the textual signs, that create the opportunity for meaning to appear. Will the meaning found be the "pure" meaning of the author? Or will the resulting meaning be that wholly of the reader? Merleau-Ponty would answer no to both questions. For him the "properties of the object and the intentions of the subject . . . are not only intermingled; they also constitute a new whole" (1983, pp. 12-13) that transcends the Cartesian dualism of subject and object. This new whole is the "new meaning" that comes as a result of a dialogical encounter between the text and reader. More will be said of this in the discussion of an interactive/schema emphasis of reading.

The Top-Down Emphasis

Dissatisfied with such a narrow view of language, Canadian journalist turned academic and educational researcher, Frank Smith began in the 1970s advocating a humanistic/psychologically based theory of reading that became associated with other similar theories known as "top-down theories" and are also referred too as "hypothesis test," "concept-driven" and "inside-out" models of reading (McCormick, 1988, p. 8). In his early work, Smith (1975) drew heavily upon information-processing psychology and psycho-linguistics to develop a view of reading that places the reader and not the text in the primary role of acquiring meaning in reading. Initially this view emphasized a computer model of learning. He argued that

the primary function and activity of the human brain--at least with respect to its commerce with the outside world--is actively to seek,
select, acquire, organize, store and, at appropriate times, retrieve and utilize information about the world. (1975, p. 2)

Smith (1983) later revised his view to include more specifically the reader's prior knowledge and present state of anticipation as important factors, stating that reading is more of "a matter of "making sense" of text, of relating written language to what we know already and to what we want to know" (p. 15).

Not only did he revise his theory, Smith (1983) also drastically changed his concept for reading to that of a constructionist model of learning.

My alternative [model] is that the primary, fundamental, and continual activity of the brain is nothing less that the creation of worlds . . . My metaphor pictures the brain as an artist, as a creator of experience for itself and for others, rather than as a dealer in information . . . the term create literally means "to cause to come into existence, to generate possibilities of experience." (pp. 118-19)

Though more sensitive to the place of the reader in the reading/meaning-making experience Smith's theory has received criticism (Lovett, 1981) for not specifically accounting for how the brain creates meaning through reading. Top-down theorists view meaning a priori as something the reader brings to the text already situated in the mind (McCormick, 1988). It posits an ego-centric view of existence that does not account for the interplay with the world (including the recognition of "signs," "symbols," or "words") that exists as part of being-in-the-world. Like bottom-up theorists, those scholars whose reading research reflects a top-down emphasis therefore present only a partial
Alfred North Whitehead’s notions of "prehension" and "event" give an illuminating perspective to a non-ego-centered view of existence that is relevant to viewing reading comprehension more holistically as a way of being-in-the-world.\(^1\) For Whitehead, existence is, in part, a continual transitory process of interaction among actual entities or individual experiences. This is a creative process by which every interaction among entities causes recreation within themselves as new entities. As a compendium of entities or experiences, I am constantly reacting, in the sense of grasping, or relating to entities that come into awareness. Whether physically, mentally and/or affectively, I am continually relating to my environment. This grasping or relating activity that Whitehead coins as "prehension" never leaves us unchanged. At every moment I am a synthesis of the "continuation of the antecedent world," the active immediate interacting self of "self-creation," as well as the purposeful aim of some anticipated ideal. As such, Whitehead refers to existence as an "event" or a "grasping into unity of a pattern of aspects" (Whitehead, 1925, p. 119).

Whitehead not only views "being" as an "event" or collection of experiences but stresses that the event is not a static result of those experiences but a continual process of making relentless "links" or connections with our world. This in part is what Whitehead means when he states that "I find myself as essentially a unity of emotions, enjoyments, hopes, fears, regrets, valuations of alternatives, \(\text{--------------------------}\)

\(^1\) Though I am not a Whiteheadian and Whitehead cannot be called a phenomenologist, I do find many facets of his process philosophy that are conducive and attractive to the present phenomenological orientation to reading.
decisions—all of them subjective reactions to the environment as active in
my nature" (1938, p. 228). Each connection reflects the uniqueness of
the active self-creative being and alters its uniqueness even more. Which
is what Whitehead refers to when he says, "I shape the activities of the
environment into a new creation, which is myself at this moment"
(p. 228). Whitehead encourages us to broaden our understanding of
existential experience. This includes the reading experience also. For
him "the subject which enjoys an experience does not exist beforehand,
neither is it created from the outside; it creates itself in that very process
of experiencing" (Lowe, 1962, p. 40).

The positioning of the self as one among many factors influencing
the creation of the meaning-laden lifeworld of the reader is a conception
that top-down theories do not recognize in their work (McCormick, 1988).
However, Smith has realized that his rejection of a computer metaphor,
which forces the notion of cognition into a mechanistic model of
existence, for a more aesthetic metaphor placing comprehension within
the sole control of the reader, was not without its problems. He
envisions the dilemma as a choice between two extremes stating that,

a considerable difficulty with perceiving the brain as an artist is
that it does not facilitate control or "accountability" in educational
contexts or replication in psychological experiments. Creativeness
is not easily quantified . . . . The question is which metaphor is the
most productive, and the answer will depend on what one's
intention is in the first place—to measure and control human
behavior or to understand it. (1983, pp. 133-34)
The Interactive/Schema Emphasis

A third theoretical emphasis in the field of reading, known as the interactive/schema theories of reading, attempt to arrive at a more explicit explanation of reading and comprehension by merging the falsely dichotomized physiological and psychological components of human existence (McCormick, 1988). A significant scholar whose work is associated with this view is Kenneth Goodman. Goodman states that reading is,

constructing meaning in response to text... It requires interactive use of grapho-phonetic, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning. My model is thus interactive. (1981, p. 477)

He goes on to define an interactive model as,

one which uses print as input and has meaning as output. But the reader provides input, too, and the reader, interacting with text, is selective in using just as little of the cues from text as necessary to construct meaning. (Goodman, 1981, p. 477)

Typically, as indicated in the above passage, interactive theorists such as Goodman give more attention to the role of the text than top-down theorists such as Smith. Unlike the bottom-up theorists, however, Goodman does emphasize understanding the role of the reader in making meaning with a text. Due to this synthesis interactive theorists see reading more as a mutual engagement between the reader and the text. This engagement is a purposeful one with the intent being the making of meaning (Goodman, 1979, p. 658).

According to McCormick (1988), all interactive theories admit the essential function of the prior knowledge a reader brings to the reading of any text. Most contemporary interactive theories give substantial
consideration to the "form or organization of this prior knowledge. These are the schema theories" (p. 107).

Recognized as one of the foremost contemporary scholars of schema theory, Rumelhart (1980) states that schema theory is "basically a theory about knowledge" (p. 34) that in turn makes his reading research an epistemological investigation. According to him, "our schemata are our knowledge. All of our generic knowledge is embedded in schemata" (Rumelhart, 1980, p. 41). By this view Rumelhart emphasized that the source of knowledge or understanding rested primarily in the utilization of mental data structures that harbor memory. These data structures are internal cognitive representations of previously perceived external events, objects, situations, and so forth, which provide comparative examples to interpret incoming data by. Later, however, Rumelhart (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland, and Hinton, 1986) felt compelled to revise schema theory from its rigid model of fixed mental data structures to a view that saw "schemas" less as things and more as process. He writes:

If schemata are to work as a basis for models of cognitive processing, they must be very flexible objects—much more flexible than they really ever have been in actual implementations. This is a sort of dilemma. On the one hand, schemata are the structure of the mind. On the other hand, schemata must be sufficiently malleable to fit around most everything. None of the versions of schemata proposed to date [including Rumelhart's] have really had these properties. (1986, p. 20)

His alternative was to shift from viewing schemas as explicit entities to that of
being implicit in our knowledge and are created by the very environment that they are trying to interpret—as it is interpreting them. Roughly, the idea is this: Input comes into the system, activating a set of units. These units are interconnected with one another, forming a sort of constraint satisfaction network. The inputs determine the starting state of the system and the exact shape of the goodness-of-fit landscape. The system then moves toward one of the goodness maxima. When the system reaches one of these relatively stable states, there is little tendency for the system to migrate toward another state. (p. 20)

A Place For A Phenomenological View of Reading

This brief overview of reading research over the past three decades reveals the trend in reading theory to reach for the "intervening variable" of existential being in the act of reading. Smith’s shift to a constructionist metaphor and Rumelhart’s reinterpretation of schemas as process are hopeful signs and clearings into the discussion of reading in which a phenomenological voice can contribute significantly. Van Manen (1990) would still argue, however, that most research on pedagogical activities, such as reading, is based on existentially distanced data, consisting of second-order descriptions of first-order experience. He would emphasize that to understand reading is to understand what it is for students to experience reading as a first-order encounter. In other words to understand how the experience of reading is related to what it is to be in the world. This resonates with Aoki’s criticism that "[for] too long we have not been aware that second order thoughts [or theories] were being "applied" to the first order social world of practice" (1979, p. 17).
McCormick (1988) contends that a significant contribution interactive/schema theory offers is a combination of three major theoretical emphases concerning reading that posits reading comprehension in a way similar to what it is to be-in-the-world. For him, "schema theory makes a very clear claim about what comprehension is--it is the filling of schemas, the matching of information from the text with slots in the schemas" (p. 109). This "filling" and "matching of information" process described by schema theory, does suggest resemblance to the view of "reference" as viewed by Heidegger. According to Heidegger (1962) part of how we understand our own being-in-the-world is by means of an interaction between our recognition (or lack of it), and our response to that recognition (or lack of it) in what we experience in our world. Therefore existence is not characterized by a one-sided relationship of the internal to the external or vice versa but instead is a reciprocal interdependence. Due to this notion, schema theory allows space for the uniqueness of the individual in determining the success of the learning situation.

According to McCormick, allowing space for the individual is an additional strength of schema theory.

schema theory can account for both the similarities and the differences in comprehension which occur in text comprehension . . . Reading is not passive, but active and motivated by the expectations and desires of the individual. Thus the purposes of the reader as well as the peculiarities of his/her own schemas . . . account for the differences. The similarities in comprehension derive from the similarities among schemas which are themselves derived from personal experience which is
thoroughly social and thus in many, if not most, respects similar.
(1988, p. 109)

The recognition of the uniqueness of the individual in social experience and the role played by intentionality are primary preconditions to understanding who we are. Heidegger (1962) argues that "a person is in any case given as a performer of intentional acts which are bound together by the unity of a meaning" (p. 73). The understanding of ourselves and of our world is not based solely on these acts but more on the purposive stance underlying them. In other words, our actions, and the meanings we give them, are only understood by disclosing the intentional stance of the actor. Rather than concentrate on the physical/psychical acts of reading, a phenomenological view stresses the importance of understanding how an individual creates meaning by investigating the existential/hermeneutic process of intentional engagement with the other of the individual's world. Traditional research methodology is ill equipped for such investigation.

McCormick summarizes the strength of schema theory as allowing for a subject, the one who comprehends and who in some sense transcends and controls the process. The control is not absolute, though, since the schemas are presented to the subject with a high degree of givenness by experience which itself is influenced by the social fabric of culture as well as by invariants in nature, even perhaps, the nature of the subject, a question not taken up by this theory . . . For those who value the freedom of the human subject in the process of production and interpretation of discourse, this is a welcomed aspect of schema theory. (1988, p. 111)
Despite the contribution schema theory brings to the field of reading, there are important, basic questions yet to be answered. Most obvious is the question of whether reading can be understood by interpreting human acts solely from a psycho/physiological basis? In Heidegger's (1962) view all "acts are something non-psychical . . . Any psychical [o]bjectification of acts, and hence any way of taking them as something psychical, is tantamount to depersonalization" (p. 73). For Heidegger the act of reading would not be understood by envisioning it in terms of biomechanical motion. Machines do not possess, among other things, the vital feature that characterizes human existence; the constitutive feature of the awareness of the self, of one's being-in-the-world. Understanding what it is to be-in-the-world is more than amassing the sum of one's physical/psychical acts. A phenomenological view of reading esthetically sees reading as a way of being-in-the-world and not simply as something involving "thinking and doing" (Hunsberger, 1988). A phenomenological view of reading involves an acknowledgment and commitment to apprehend the question of "what is reading" as an issue concerning existential experience and not merely psycholinguistic activities.¹ Morgan and Sellner state that,

the impression one gets from story schema literature is usually that a good story is one that fits well with some story schema, as if the enjoyment and judgment of stories were derived from trying to fit events into schemata. But this misses the point entirely. The essence of a story is the imaginary experience it evokes in the

¹. Ontology in a Heideggerian sense it to ask, what is it to be a being aware of its own as well as others being? With reading the question becomes a search to understand reading as a phenomenon that is part of what it is for humans to be.
reader or hearer. People enjoy stories via the experiences that they
develop from understanding the story, not through the sensual
pleasures of fitting information structures into an abstract
schema. (1980, p. 190)

Rumelhart (Rumelhart, Smolensky, McClelland and Hinton, 1986)
revised his view of "schema" but not-in my judgment-to the point of
allowing the reader's experience with texts to be a creative one. He still
contends that "although [his revised schema theory] is a much more
activist view it is still a "data-driven" view. The system is entirely reactive
[as opposed to creative]-given I am in this state, what should I do (p.
40)?" To see reading comprehension as solely a reactive. cognitive
activity is not sufficiently far enough from Fries' stimulus/response view
of reading to escape the theoretical notion of objectified knowledge. As
such, imagination and creativity are at best by-products of external
stimuli and therefore are not in the control of the reader. Such a view
subjugates the inner, private world of the reader to the external world of
dominating "reality." Instead of an interaction with the word/world in
which I bring meaning to each reading engagement, I can only bring
passive memories awaiting to be wakened by my environment.
Rumelhart is not mistaken in asserting that our existence is reactive.
The problem is that it is only half the story.

In contrast Henri Bergson, the noted French philosopher of the late
19th and early 20th centuries, attempts to explain consciousness, prior
knowledge and engagement with external objects such as texts from a
position that allows the individual to assume a greater role in the
creation of their lived world. For Bergson, human experience is the
result of a dynamic movement linking memory to that of intentionality
via one's immediate perception of the material world. He writes,

We will merely say that with regard to matters of experience— which alone concerns us here— existence appears to imply two conditions taken together: (1) presentation in consciousness and (2) the logical or causal connection of that which is so presented with what precedes and with what follows (1988, p. 147).

According to Bergson, consciousness, chiefly associated with the perception of the external, concerns that part of our existence that is present and actual (1988, p. 142). Though dwelling in the present, consciousness/perception is a synthesis of retained images of the past with the determination(s) of the immediate future and has as its primary concern the immediate implementation of intentional activity. He states that,

our present . . . is that which acts on us and which makes us act; it is sensory and it is motor . . . [it is] the state of our body. Our past, on the contrary, is that which acts no longer but which might act, and will act by inserting itself into a present sensation from which it borrows the vitality (1988, p. 240).

What Bergson describes is an existential flow that originates in recollection of past images and has as its goal not the revealing of knowledge about the external world but the achievement of the fulfillment of intentionality. In other words, what we see and the acts we creatively perform, literally and figuratively, are not the results of what we immediately perceive materially, but instead are causally affected by what we have seen and by what we hope to see.

Consciousness, then, illuminates, at each moment of time, that immediate part of the past which, impending over the future, seeks
to realize and to associate with it. Solely preoccupied in thus determining an undetermined future, consciousness may shed a little of its light on those of our states, more remote in the past, which can be usefully combined with our present state...

(Bergson, 1988, p. 150)

Bergson contends that prior knowledge, as recollected images, dynamically fuses with futuristic desires to shape present experience. In the center of this synthetic stream of existence is the body, the seat of consciousness, mediating the initial experience of the past with the purposeful designs of the future and effecting an active response. For Bergson, as well as for Merleau-Ponty, the body becomes a "place of passage". Bergson writes:

But this special image which persists in the midst of the others, and which I call my body, constitutes at every moment... a section of the universal becoming. It is then the place of passage of the movements received and thrown back, a hyphen, a connecting link between the things which act upon me and the things upon which I act... (1988, pp. 151-152)

In Bergson's view, the body serves as the "connecting link" between the immaterial and material, between the domain of the personal and the external. His view attempts to unify human experience in such a way that does not sacrifice one part of our existence for that of another by Cartesian dualism. On the other hand, positivistic-oriented education has in effect tried to silence the lifeworld of the student by classifying and evaluating the student solely on the basis of overt actions. An example of this is the traditional approach where reading is taught as a mechanistic educational skill. Implicit in this approach is the belief that
the purpose of possessing the skill of reading is to provide the individual with a tool necessary to advance in learning about the "sacrosanct" objective world. Readers are evaluated as "good" or "bad" based on their recognition of vocabulary, speed of reading and comprehension of the writer's ideas presented in the text. Even at the university level, reading is used as a standard for assessing an incoming freshman's educational promise or potential. As such, reading has fallen prey, as so many other facets of human experience, to the cult of utilitarianism in which the key to acquiring the skill of reading is the successful manipulation of words and texts, while the value of ultimately having such a skill is the manipulation of information which in turn leads to "success." The pedagogical process of learning and reading is coined in a conventional phrase in which one first learns to read and then reads to learn.

From a phenomenological standpoint, Madeleine Grumet (1988) argues that reading has become an exercise in "disembodiment" in which the reader replaces and loses her voice for the voice of others. For Grumet, this occurs because words are viewed as symbols of objective meaning that have value within themselves. Texts become objective entities in which the value and purpose of the text is found within the text itself. Grumet further criticizes the traditional view of reading because it has the reader assume a passive stance toward a text much the same as we are inclined to assume a passive stance when watching a sunrise or sunset. We behold its beauty and splendor and realize that we have no control over it happening. It is an act of nature that happens to us and not we to it. We transfer this passive viewership to reading and assume the belief that we have no control over this engagement with words and text but are there as spectators only to behold its beauty and
let it speak to us its message.

It is this same conviction that says one must learn to read the notes on a scale and keep proper time before it is possible to engage successfully in the creation of music. Perhaps what is needed in reading education is more emphasis on being able to read by our existential "ear" than by grasping all the mechanical elements of the act of "reading". The use of anecdotes and stories in the form of literature, autobiographical writings, storytelling, etc. serves not only as excellent ways of teaching reading, that is more sensitive and therefore relevant to lifeworld experience, but also provides a phenomenological researcher with excellent passageways into existential explorations. Van Manen characterizes the pedagogical and phenomenological benefits of stories as stemming from their ability:

1. to compel: a story recruits our willing attention;
2. to lead us to reflect: a story tends to invite us to a reflective search for significance;
3. to involve us personally: one tends to search actively for the story teller's meaning via one's own;
4. to transform: we may be touched, shaken, moved by story; it teaches us;
5. to measure one's interpretive sense: one's response to a story is a measure of one's deepened ability to make interpretive sense.

(1990, p. 121)

Van Manen summarizes the pedagogical/phenomenological power of stories by stating that "if done well, [stories] will create a tension between the pre-reflective and reflective pulls of language" (1990, p. 121). As discussed in Chapter III, Aoki (1986c) contends that it is tension,
emanating from the state or "zone of between" inherent in being-in-the-world, that characterizes in part what it is to be a teacher contending with the pull of the pedagogical worlds of curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived. Similarly, van Manen argues that, for the reader, the task of synthesizing *words* and *world*, i.e., recognizing graphic symbols while also maintaining awareness of the lifeworld of the self, characterizes the tensionality of being-in-the-world as a reader. As such Aoki's following comments could be equally applied to the experience of reading stating that,

> to be alive is to live in tension: that, in fact, it is the tensionality that allows good thoughts and actions to arise when properly tensioned chords are struck, and that tensionless strings are not only unable to give voice to songs, but also unable to allow a song to be sung. (Aoki, 1986c, p. 9)

For many, however, reading is encountered as an unnatural exertion repressing the reader's own drive for purposeful engagement, i.e., a creative singing of the world. Some scholars through their theoretical approach to reading attempt to preempt the collaborative, interpretive struggle to create meaning that is reading, by viewing the reader as a slavish detective of the author's meaning. A meaning that is stored infallibly in the text. Grumet (1988) criticizes such an approach to viewing and teaching reading arguing that:

> Meaning is something we make out of what we find when we look at texts. It is not in the text. Now this is hardly news, but I am sorry to tell you that the myth of the meaningful text still flourishes in the secondary classroom. . . . Using single textbooks, sometimes supplemented with library readings or handouts, the
students are sent to read unburdened by motives, interests, questions, tasks, rationales, or expectations. (p. 465)

Grumet further criticizes Harold Herber's theory of how students understand what they read in the content areas (1988, p. 465-66). She considers absurd his contention that students follow a three step process by which understanding of a text is achieved by emphasizing what the author says, what he means by what he says and how it applies to previous knowledge possessed by the reader. In such a view, lip service is given to the prior knowledge of the reader, however the text still serves as the sole dispenser of understanding and meaning. If this power to possess meaning is shared at all, it is done so with the view of the teacher's understanding as primary and represses any involvement of the student other than as a passive audience witnessing the power of some to "make meaning." She writes,

Only in schools does the text become a spectacle, and do we, the dazed spectators, eyes glazed, sit in mute reception, waiting for something to appear. No, television has not ruined reading. Reading in school has trained us for television. (Grumet, 1988 p. 466)

I contend that reading must be reconceived as important "moments" of making meaning in the reader's lived world involving a reflexive interchange of viewpoints: those of the author of the text; the parents or teachers who have presented the text for reading; and more importantly the lifeworld of the reader. Only when reading is allowed to reside in such a domain of embodied existence, where experience is not fragmented into objective parts, will students begin to encounter reading as a much more pleasurable experience.
Reminiscent of Bergson's notion of the body as a passageway, Grumet also recognizes the role embodied reading has as a "place of passage." She writes,

But what reading is about, very much like writing, is bridging the gap between private and public worlds. Its purpose is not to reduce mystery to what is obvious, patent, nor to confirm solipsism, but to provide a passage between the images, impulses, and glimpses of meaning that constitute being in the world and our encoded representations of that world . . . . Every text, every symbol, every word, is a passage between one consciousness and another. (1988, pp. 459-62)

In light of Bergson's and Grumet's comments, one might also reflect on the Husserlian notion of the "epoche"; the suspension of the world but not the belief in it, that accompanies an encounter with a text. It is within this "free space" imagination can create, play with, and reflect on meanings. Readers then let those meanings engage the sovereign otherness of the external world claiming their right to interpret it; to see it as this or that kind of place. Additionally, reader's need to be encouraged to linger in the passageway dialogical encounters with texts provide, cautioned to not transverse it too quickly.

Phenomenological Investigation

Through Reading

Before beginning a phenomenological investigation and illustration of experiencing knowledge, a few comments must be made concerning the unique opportunity reading offers to phenomenological investigations.
For Max van Manen (1985), the experiential value of fictional literature is not "fact or incidence, news or controversy, but the reality of possibility: the reality of imaginable human experience" (p. 177). For him, it is the phenomenon of reading fictional literature that allows us to experience à priori "a knowing that is more like living . . . . Fiction is made of our experiences of the lives of imagined characters in action" (p. 178). These experiences come via the narrator's voice through language in the text. In reading a fine novel, however, it is not words that we see or syntax we recognize but experiential being itself that resonates with our own experiences. A fine novel invites us to be vulnerable to the experiences that are portrayed. It beckons us to trustingly open our interpretive stance of the world to the world of the imagined characters in the book; to assume their world into ours and at the moment of reading dwell within the same world. By doing so, reading becomes a passageway to ourselves by way of an encounter with imagined others. By referencing my experiences with those of the imagined characters of the novel, I further interpret and reveal my own stance in the world; extending further the definition of what it means to be-in-the-world.

Reading is a phenomenon that grants us a unique opportunity to intuitively reflect upon our own being. Merleau-Ponty (1968) considers this possible because in reading, "[t]he other's words make me speak and think, because they create within me other than myself . . . The other's words form a grillwork through which I see my thoughts" (p. 224). For van Manen, the true pedagogic value of a novel is that it, provides me in an intimate way with a great human experience and then, as a bonus, offers me the phenomenological experience of interpreting the first one. Herein lies an important distinction.
One cannot be a critic and a reader at the same time. Critics are poor lovers. They cannot let go. Their minds are on the wrong things. It is only after the communal experience that we may meditate its cathartic nature and thus may be transformed further or deeper as we retroactively and self-reflectively once again appropriate the original experience. (1985, p. 186)

Reading, therefore, is useful as a phenomenological investigation because it provides us with the opportunity to instinctively bracket out empirical reality; allowing the existential realm of the self to be manifest. Pedagogically, reading provides a clearing through which the veiled ways of being-in-the-world as teachers and students are phenomenologically disclosed and offered up for reflection. This reflection, in turn, must lead to the creation of meaningful responses to the others we encounter in pedagogic situations. In the following study, the reading of *Flowers For Algernon*, concerning one person's struggle with the acquisition of knowledge, provides a phenomenological moment necessary allowing us to bring closer to the surface the ontological roots of what it is to be-in-the-world in a knowledgeable way.¹ The troubled lifelong quest for knowledge by the novel's protagonist serves as an excellent provocation for the assigned reader of this novel to begin thinking about their own experiential search for the elusive existence of "knowledge." As discussed earlier van Manen argues that fine stories can create a tension within the reader through which greater understanding of what it is to be-in-the-world is revealed. It is hoped, that by a reading of Keyes' story of Charlie

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¹ Originally a novelette, Daniel Keyes won the Hugo Award in 1960 for *Flowers For Algernon*. 

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A Phenomenological Look at Experiencing Knowledge Through the Reading of Flowers for Algernon

The starting point of this investigation is the responses given by thirty-three Developmental Reading students to the novel Flowers For Algernon by Daniel Keyes (1966). Their responses were in the form of two journal entries, each being approximately a page in length, which were class assignments. The first journal entry assignment consisted of their personal description of Charlie Gordon, the main character of the novel. In their description, they were asked to compare the various phases of low to high intelligence Charlie experienced in his life and discuss how these diverse proportions of intelligence impacted Charlie and his relationship with the world. It was my hope that this first writing assignment would lead\(^1\) these students to initial reflections about how knowledge is viewed/valued in American culture and the process needed/constructed to acquire it. Their responses and the ensuing phenomenological description discloses these students' concerns over pursuing and possessing knowledge.

In reference to van Manen's argument that stories provide the means by which to transform readers and measure one's interpretive

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\(^1\) My rationale in this writing assignments stems from van Manen's characterization of the benefits stories offer to phenomenological investigations discussed earlier in this chapter.
sense, a second journal entry was assigned. This writing assignment also was a free and personal response revealing a comparison between how the student felt society views "knowledge" and how they, individually based on their own experiences, view "knowledge." They were additionally asked to share if any change had occurred in their view of knowledge after reading the novel and to discuss the nature of that change. Their written responses to these issues serve as the first level of inquiry examined to help disclose their interpretation of experiencing knowledge.

Before describing these responses, I will review in the novel itself. In the following brief summary, hopefully the reader will be able to sense some of the uniqueness of this book for affording an opportunity to journey into reading and reflect on experiencing "knowledge."

**Review of**

**Flowers for Algernon**

This novel is an engaging story centering around the fictional experiences of a 32 year old retarded man's encounter with the gain and loss of extremely high intelligence. Our first encounter with Charlie Gordon takes place a few days before he is to undergo an experimental brain operation which the medical/psychological research team of Beekman University hopes will significantly increase human learning capacity. After apparent success with the technique on laboratory rats, (in particular one rat named Algernon), Charlie is chosen as the first human subject for this experimental surgery because of his willingness to learn in spite of the mental handicap he has had since birth.

From the first page all information given in the novel is conveyed through Charlie's journal entries. Though before and immediately after
the surgery his writing is difficult to understand, Dr. Strauss, the head of the research team, wants him to write down all that he experiences so that it will serve as an additional written record of the anticipated progress achieved by the surgery.

Charlie came into contact with the research team as a student enrolled in the Beekman University Center For Retarded Adults where he attended classes three times a week under the instruction of Alice Kinnian. Due to her recommendation, Charlie was tested to see if he was suitable for the operation. The following conversation between Charlie and Dr. Strauss, recorded by Charlie in his journal, reveals to the reader part of Charlie's desire to learn.

"He (Dr. Strauss) said Miss Kinnian told him I was her bestist pupil in the Beekman School for retarded adults I tryed the hardist becaus I reely wantd to lern I wantid it more even then pepul who are smarter even then me.

Dr. Strauss askd me how come you went to the Beekman School all by yourself Charlie. How did you find out about it. I said I don't remembr.

Prof. Nemur said but why did you want to lern to reed and spell in the frist place. I tolld him because all my life I wantid to be smart and not dumb and my mom always tolld me to try and lern just like Miss Kinnian tells me but its very hard to be smart and even when I lern something in Miss Kinnians class at the school I ferget alot. (Keyes 1966:3)

After the operation, Charlie exhibits an ever increasing capacity to learn. This learning serves as a window that gives Charlie vistas of the world he never dreamed possible. One view granted by his heightened
intellectual ability is the ability to vividly recall his past. Dreams and flashbacks of a painful past that before the operation were at best vague and inconsequential to the retarded Charlie suddenly become interpreters of his still scarred emotional state which has not advanced equally with his mental ability. Dealing with emotional trauma brought about by clearer understandings of past physical and verbal abuse, as well as with new experiences of love and sexual desire for his friend and now former teacher Alice Kinnian, are some of the conflicts Charlie must grapple with because of his new intellect.

As Charlie grows intellectually, he begins to comment in his journal on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from the shallowness of educational jargon, criticism of structural linguistics, to a view of transcendentalism. The reader too is induced into thought about intelligence and knowledge and how they are experienced and represented in modern western culture. The following quotation is an example of a comment Charlie made concerning education.

"Am I a genius? I don't think so. Not yet anyway. As Burt would put it, mocking the euphemisms of educational jargon, I'm exceptional--a democratic term used to avoid the damning labels of gifted and deprived (which used to mean bright and retarded) and as soon as exceptional begins to mean anything to anyone they'll change it. The idea seems to be: use an expression only as long as it doesn't mean anything to anybody. Exceptional refers to both ends of the spectrum, so all my life I've been exceptional." (Keyes, 1966, p. 106)

Charlie's intelligence surpasses everyone's around him including the research team developed the experiment's theoretical premise and
performed the surgery. Ironically it is Charlie’s towering intellect that discovers the fatal flaw in Dr. Strauss’s theory that will cause him to eventually revert back to his former mental state and even possibly die.

The book ends with the intellectually regressed Charlie leaving for the Warren State Home and Training School for the retarded. The reader is left to ponder Charlie’s encounter with feasting at the “tree of knowledge” as she reads Charlie’s own summation of his predicament in the last entry of his journal:

I dont no why Im dumb agen or what I did rong. Mabye its becaue I dint try hard enuf or just some body put the evel eye on me. But if I try and practis very hard maybye ill get a littel smarter and no what all the words are. I remembr a littel bit how nice I had a feeling with the blue book that I red with the toren cover. And when I close my eyes I think about the man who tored the book and he looks like me only he looks different and he talks different but I dont thing its me because its like I see him from the window.

(Keyes, 1966, p. 216)

Was Charlie’s experience with high intelligence worth the pain and suffering he and others experienced? Was Charlie better off retarded? In what way does this story speak to my experience with learning? These are some of the questions the students in my classes struggled with after reading this novel. It was a struggle that worked its way into written language, taking form in the students’ own journal entries in which they sought to make sense, or better yet “meaning”, of the experience with knowledge they shared vicariously with Charlie Gordon. In the next section, I will take a phenomenological look into that experience in hope of better understanding what it is “to know” for these students.
**Experiencing Knowledge**

There are a variety of methodologies from which to choose in conducting phenomenological research. An essential, initial task in undertaking this study was selecting a phenomenological procedure to follow. Most of the varying methodologies reviewed credibly followed the basic principles of phenomenology as exampled by the various interpretations given to phenomenology by Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and so forth. Each methodology also contained unique steps that were sensitive to the particular field of investigation the researcher was attempting to understand phenomenologically. 1 I found Beekman and Mulderij's (cited in van Manen, 1979a) three stage pedagogical analysis of lifeworld experiences to be the most fitting. I chose them because their three stages encompassed the broad theoretical notions of phenomenology into a pedagogically specific analysis; their methodology seemed to abbreviate into three steps the other multi-step methodologies surveyed; and finally, their analysis serves as the basis for the human science research of van Manen (1979a) and shows similarity to the thematic writings of Aoki (1990a).

According to Beekman and Mulderij, phenomenologically oriented pedagogical analysis of lifeworld experiences is constituted of three primary components (cited in van Manen, 1979a; Barritt, Beekman, Bleeker & Mulderij, 1984). The first stage of investigation involves the accumulation of life experience material. This accumulation process

1. Some of the more notable methodologies examined were Herbert Spiegelberg's seven steps of phenomenological inquiry (1982); Max Van Manen's six stages of Human Science Research (1990); Don Ine's five stages discussed in Experimental Phenomenology (1986b); and Anton Beekman's and Karol Mulderij's 3 stage pedagogical analysis of lifeworld experiences (Cited in van Manen, 1979a).
comprises the gathering of descriptions given by individuals using
everyday language to describe a specific, personal, and simple
experience. The number of descriptions acquired is relative to the
situation that is being phenomenologically investigated. In examining
the experience a particular class of students had in reading a specific
novel, descriptions from all the members of the class would be needed.
Such is the case with this study. However, examining data concerning a
unique individual experience where only one description is analyzed can
be just as valid and revealing. This is because lifeworld situations are
never investigated as causal events but rather as occasions for
particular experience. Since the methodological purpose is not the
establishment of cause and effect relationships, the resulting revelations
do not need to give any sense of final explanation. Therefore, large
population studies would not establish the significance of a
phenomenological study.

For the purpose of this study, students were asked to write their
attitudes, interpretations and reflections concerning Charlie Gordon's
life. Particularly, I asked students to express their views about
knowledge as prompted by the reading of Flowers For Algernon and their
own lived experiences.¹ The student excerpts, listed in Table I (See
pages 113-114), serve as initial, simple descriptions of their experiential
perception of "knowledge." These quotations express the central ideas
that were common to the various essays (See Appendix A).

---

¹. Using Husserl’s notion of "lebenswelt" or lifeworld, van Manen defines "lived
experiences" as "the world of immediate experience, the world as "already there,"
"pregiven," the world as experienced in the "natural, primordial attitude," that of
"original natural life"... the term natural [represents] what is original and naive, prior
to critical or theoretical reflection" (1990, p. 182).
"Charlie's strengths were his naiveness, his loving and caring for people and his real drive to do things" (II J 1)

"He had a great amount of determination that made him appear as a giant" (IA 1)

"Sometimes I feel you learn a lot more through [life experiences] instead of the books you read " (IA 2)

"Charlie is determined to be like everyone else" (IC 1)

"With a great deal of knowledge a person could travel along way in life" (II C 2)

"I don't think it is what you know, but what's inside of you that makes a special person" (IM 1)

"If that's the way I've been born (average) I want to stay that way" (IB 2)

"I admire Charlie for his strength of determination to learn. I wish I had his determination. He is always striving for goals to get smarter." (IH 1)

"We need knowledge to understand everything that goes on around us" (IF 2)

"Knowledge is the understanding gained by actual experience." (IF 2)

"a person having knowledge would have a valuable opinion about everything" (IH 2)

"I think it is important to have knowledge, but not so much that you don't care about anything else." (IF 2)

"although he [Charlie] is dumb, he was happy... the key to life is being happy" (IB 1)

"book proved that education is not everything in the world" (IO 2)

"intelligence does not bring happiness, life only gets confusing and harder to understand" (IA 1)

"He (Charlie) has a lot of determination to prove to his friends and family that he is not stupid and that he can be just like any normal human being" (IH 1)

"without knowledge you can't get any good paying job . . . alternative is to be a person without self-respect . . . homeless and dependent on others for the rest of your life"

(II Q 2)

"Even though Charlie was retarded he was a very determined person." (IG 1)

"[people with a lot of knowledge] will probably have more frustration and anger towards life" (IS 2)

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1. All citations found in Appendix A

(Continued on next page)
TABLE 1
(CONTINUED)

"having knowledge is great . . . you are a step ahead of others who don't" (I H 2)

"I feel that this society is putting too much emphasis on knowledge" (I J 2)

"if God wanted everyone . . . to have knowledge then every person would be born with that gift" (I H 2)

"Intelligence is truly, a gift, a blessing from the Lord . . . I, like Charlie have accepted the way things are: God's will" (I L 1)

"knowledge is a great gift and is great to have" (I D 2)

"He [Charlie] is given his chance to be intelligent and takes advantage of it" (I F 1)

"knowledge is taken for granted. Many people don't realize the gift we have." (I E 2)

"Having knowledge, I feel only lets you know how things should be if everything was perfect, and when everything is not it only supplies you with let downs" (I A 2)

"Happiness is the key to everything . . . In my mind intelligence is not the most important factor of life although it helps." (I B 2)

"you become so smart that you learn things that you really would rather not know" (I N 2)

"Knowledge isn't as good as it seems, sometimes intelligence and knowledge is blind" (I P 2)

"I naturally took knowledge as something that is good, but maybe its questionable" (I C 2)

"If we use our knowledge we will understand all about life" (I K 2)

"All Charlie thought of was going back home to his parents and showing them that he really wasn't [retarded] and that he was smart and now could make them proud" (I A 1)

"I to have the feel toward the concept of knowledge being unimportant" (I A 2)

"I feel in my life I have a full balance with my intellectual and social knowledge." (I A 2)

"I think that in the real world of today knowledge is a necessity. If not at least knowledge of text, then at least some bit of knowledge of the world, "street smarts." (I L 2)
These students made descriptive comments showing a wide range of experiences and attitudes that imply upon the role of education in their lives. These are telling associations reflecting a myriad of sources; childhood experiences, cultural expectations, teacher influence, etc. With the securing of the students reflective essays, we probe into the second stratum of investigation, the discovering of the "lived meanings" that the student's comments pose. "Lived meanings" refer to the way that an individual experiences and interprets her world. Lived meanings describe those aspects of a situation as experienced by the person in it (van Manen, 1990).

According to Beekman and Mulderij (cited in van Manen, 1979a), the second stage of phenomenological investigation engages the researcher in the task of examining the lifeworld description of the formal elements contained within the description. It is an attempt to discover the essential meaning associated with and given to a particular experience of being-in-the-world. In explaining the rationale undergirding this step van Manen states that,

The meaning or essence of a phenomenon is never simple or one-dimensional. Meaning is multi-dimensional and multi-layered. That is why [experience] can never be grasped in a single definition. Human science meaning can only be communicated textually--by way of organized narrative or prose. . . . To do human science research is to be involved in the crafting of a text. In order to come to grips with the structure of meaning of the text it is helpful to think of the phenomenon described in the text as approachable in terms of meaning units, structures of meaning, or themes. Reflecting on lived experience becomes reflectively
analyzing the structural or thematic aspects of that experience. 
(1990, p. 78)

Phenomenologically, experiential themes are seen as the existential components of an experience. They are not seen as immutable formulations or categorical statements, but moments of meaning given by the recipient of an experience in an attempt to relate, i.e. interpret one's being in the world. Explained another way, the act of giving meaning to experience is the existential process of referencing the self to that of the other in an experience. In an attempt to accomplish this stage of analysis, the student's descriptions of knowledge, as previously listed in Table 1, are grouped into broader structural themes and listed in Table II (See pages 117-119). These themes emanate from a process of the researcher repeatedly reading and rereading these essays. In the midst of this reading is a search involving 1) the language utilized by the student, 2) the experience of the researcher, and 3) a comparison and contrast of similar experiences described by others, such as in novels.

An initial area of guidance in the identifying and formulation of these themes is the students' positioning of what appears as a central perception in the text of their essays. By this I mean elemental themes found within their descriptions that are signified through the language used by the student giving particular focus to aspects of the experience. For example, within the description is there a pivotal point upon which the rest of the experience is described as centering or hinged upon? Is there an idea expressed repeatedly thereby suggesting its importance to the reader in describing this experience? Is there an idea related in a climatic sense to the experience suggesting that this is the summative
### TABLE II
**Being—With—Knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Themes/ Common Forms</th>
<th>Theme Statements</th>
<th>Variations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Need determination. Knowledge only good when acquired by effort.</td>
<td>&quot;Charlie’s strengths were his naivety, his loving and caring for people and his real drive to achieve good things . . . his determination to do things.&quot; (I J 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;I admire Charlie for his strength of determination to learn. I wish I had his determination. He is always striving for goals to get smarter.&quot; (I H 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;He had a great amount of determination that made him appear as a giant&quot; (I A 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;He (Charlie) has a lot of determination to prove to his friends and family that he is not stupid and that he can be just like any normal human being&quot; (I H 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;Charlie is determined to be like everyone else&quot; (I C 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;Even though Charlie was retarded he was a very determined person.&quot; (I G 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;All Charlie thought of was going back home to his parents and showing them that he really wasn’t [retarded] and that he was smart and now could make them proud&quot; (I A 1)</td>
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<td>2. Knowledge is risky, harmful to well-being or being-whole.</td>
<td>&quot;Intelligence does not bring happiness, life only gets confusing and harder to understand&quot; (II A 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;[people with a lot of knowledge] will probably have more frustration and anger towards life&quot; (I S 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;You become so smart that you learn things that you really would rather not know&quot; (II N 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;Having knowledge, I feel only lets you know how things should be if everything was perfect, and when everything is not it only supplies you with let downs&quot; (II A 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;Happiness is the key to everything . . . . In my mind intelligence is not the most important factor although it helps.&quot; (II B 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;although he [Charlie] is dumb, he was happy . . . the key to life is being happy&quot; (II B 1)</td>
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### TABLE II

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<th>Shared Themes/ Common Forms</th>
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<th>Variations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Knowledge is overrated and secondary to happiness</strong></td>
<td>&quot;although he [Charlie] was dumb, he was happy . . . the key to life is being happy” (I B 1)</td>
<td>&quot;without knowledge you can't get any good paying job . . . alternative is to be a person without self-respect . . . homeless and dependent on others for the rest of your life&quot; (II Q 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;book proved that education is not everything in the world” (I O 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;I feel that this society is putting too much emphasis on knowledge” (I J 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;I think it is important to have knowledge, but not so much that you don't care about anything else.” (II F 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;I don't think it is what you know, but what’s inside of you that makes a special person” (I M 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;I to have the feel toward the concept of knowledge being unimportant” (II A 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Knowledge dubious: Used with caution.</strong></td>
<td>&quot;I naturally took knowledge as something that is good, but maybe it's questionable&quot; (II C 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;Knowledge isn’t as good as it seems . . . sometimes intelligence and knowledge is blind” (II F 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Knowledge as a polygonal experience.</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Sometimes I feel you learn a lot more through life experiences instead of the books you read” (I A 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;Knowledge is the understanding gained by actual experience.” (II F 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;I feel in my life I have a full balance with my intellectual and social knowledge.” (I A 8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;a person having knowledge would have a valuable opinion about everything” (II H 8)</td>
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<td>&quot;I think that in the real world of today knowledge is a necessity. If not at least knowledge of text, then at least some bit of knowledge of the world, &quot;street smarts.&quot; (II L 2)</td>
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<th>Shared Themes/Common Forms</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Knowledge is benevolent.</td>
<td>&quot;With a great deal of knowledge a person could travel along way in life&quot; (II C 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;We need knowledge to understand everything that goes on around us&quot; (I F 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;having knowledge is great . . . you are a step ahead of others who don't&quot; (I H 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;if we use our knowledge we will understand all about life.&quot; (II K 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Something/Someone else determines the amount of knowledge possible in a person.</td>
<td>&quot;if God wanted everyone . . . to have knowledge then every person would be born with that gift&quot; (I H 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;Intelligence is truly, a gift, a blessing from the Lord . . . . I, like Charlie have accepted the way things are; God's will.&quot; (I L 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;knowledge is a great gift and is great to have&quot; (II D 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;He [Charlie] is given his chance to be intelligent and takes advantage of it&quot; (I F 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;knowledge is taken for granted. Many people don't realize the gift we have.&quot; (I E 2)</td>
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<td>&quot;If that's the way I've been born (average) I want to stay that way&quot; (I B 2)</td>
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TABLE II
(Continued)
result of that experience? Is the experience collectively radiating from a particular aspect or moment of the experience or predominantly radiating to it?

The search for and development of phenomenological themes is more however than analysis of grammatical and compositional structure. It involves a process of "insightful invention, discovery, [and] disclosure" that positions the researcher as an artist of experiential meaning (van Manen, 1990, p. 88). This interpretive discovery of the important elements of experience is additionally aided by the experiences of the researcher that might resonate in some way with the written descriptions given by these students. This calls for the ability of the researcher to utilize her or his own interpretations of experience as a guide in illuminating and referencing the various elements of these students' descriptions into their important moments.

A third source of insight into these descriptions are their linking with the described experiences of others. Experiential descriptions narrated in poetry, novels, short stories, philosophical writings, and so forth give inscribed accounts by others of the lifeworld of human beings. The researcher is able to link the students' descriptions of experience with those of others. By doing so, congruent elements of similar descriptions can emerge that illumine the students' interpretation of their experience and provide for the researcher thematic possibilities.

These three sources of phenomenological themes--the student use of language, the personal experiences of the researcher, and the descriptions of lifeworld experiences of others--are not the only sources available for gleaning thematic descriptions. Within film, the theater, everyday conversations, works of art, etc. can be found the interpretive
structures of individuals describing what it is to be in the world. The three sources identified above were utilized to thematize students descriptions of experiencing knowledge. These sources were used because they presented themselves as the most available to the writer in investigating this experience of reading.

The Pedagogical Issue

Why do some students respond well to the world of learning schools present to them during their academic life, while others struggle miserably at best and repeatedly fail and drop out? Why do some students see the encounter with new ideas and foreign concepts exciting, while others feel such intense emotional and mental anxiety?

These are basic educational issues that have been studied historically from numerous perspectives. Critical social theory argues that the answers lie implicitly in the socioeconomic structure of schools and the society expressed through them. Behaviorists might point to an insufficient stimulus and reinforcement schedule provided by the schools. Humanists might argue against the dehumanization of students caused by overzealous technocrats eager to integrate the latest technology into educational practice. Conservatives might contend that the causes of these issues follow from the destruction of family values caused by an educational system that has become value-neutral.

Aoki (1989c) would argue that at issue is the very essence of what it is to be-a-student in late 20th century western culture. Aoki posits that there are possibly three primary views of present day schooling. The first view is that of a school preoccupied with "rational thinking." The quest of the school is "mind-building," i.e., preparing "thinkers" for
effective leadership in society. In such a pedagogical environment "teaching is seen essentially as . . . filling containers with factual knowledge and theoretical knowledge; being a student is like being a blotter, absorbing knowledge, the more the better; the faster, the better as the assessment people get closer" (p. 12).

The second view of schooling, according to Aoki, is that of a "doing" school. It's emphasis is upon applied knowledge, i.e., practical skills that can be utilized in a market-place oriented world. In such a school the curriculum is designed to approach and manipulate students into "marketable products."

If the market needs auto mechanics, an automotive curriculum is built; if the market needs word processors, word-processing courses are built . . . Predominant are the interests of the market. Adult life is the model, and the adolescent is understood as "immature adults" yet unskilled. (Aoki, 1989c, p. 13)

Aoki's third and alternative view to the previous two views of schooling, is a school that is actively engaged in nurturing the process of the "being and becoming of human beings." Such a school does not diminish "practical skills" but merges thought and action into a holistic, reflexive stance toward what it is to interactively be and become a being-in-the-world, as well as a being-in-relation-with-others. In a school given to being and becoming,

Teaching is understood not only as a mode of doing but also as a mode of being-with-others. Teaching is a relating with students in concrete situations guided by the pedagogical good. Teaching is a tactful leading out - leading out into a world of possibilities . . .

Whereas the View 1 school and View 2 school are grounded in a
fragmented view of persons (body and mind), the View 3 school sees its origin in an understanding of teachers and students as embodied beings of wholeness. (Aoki, 1989c, p. 13)

In the third phenomenologically-oriented view of schooling Aoki presents above, questions regarding student failure are not cries for inquisitional interrogations into teaching techniques or teacher education programs as much as they are a call for a disclosing of what learning and knowledge means in the context of a pedagogical encounter with others. The following investigation is an initial attempt to respond to that call by seeking a clearer understanding of what it means for these developmental education students to be-in-the-world as students. Students that have been judged by others-with-knowledge as possibly not having a relationship with knowledge sufficient to allow them to remain in a major university. If successful, the following phenomenological study will yield understandings of these students' being-in-the-world that, as Aoki encourages, would allow for more informed pedagogical responses; responses attuned to the students lived meanings of the world. It is these meanings that must serve as the starting point for "tactfully" guiding students into "a world of possibilities" (p. 13).

The students' descriptions listed in Table 1 and Table 2 are not given as absolute or conclusionary renderings of this experience. All students did not make the same comments or address the same issues concerning knowledge. I do believe that I have been able to ascertain clusters of analogous descriptions which are significant in discussing the nature of what it is and has been for these developmental education

1. The others mentioned here includes the otherness texts present in a reading experience.
students to experience knowledge. Hopefully the following comments illuminate aspects of the questions stated previously as well as raise new questions provoking deeper study.

_Being With Knowledge^_**1**

**To Be With Knowledge Is To Actively Determine**

No other remark was made more often in these essays than the one that reflected the idea that determination was the key to the successful mastery of knowledge. Students responded with admiration of Charlie Gordon for his strong persistence in wanting to be smart. Many students felt that they lacked that type of determination and wondered how they could achieve a college degree without it. In their descriptions determination was consistently referred to as a strength that one did or did not possess.

Charlie’s strengths were his naivety, his loving and caring for people and his real drive to achieve good things . . . his determination to do things. (Appendix A: II J 1, pp. 235-36)

I admire Charlie for his strength of determination to learn. I wish I had his determination. He is always striving for goals to get smarter. (Appendix A: I H 1, pp. 185-86)

Interpreting determination as a strength to be admired and desired

---

1.I have entitled this discussion Being With Knowledge because the students in their essays overwhelmingly viewed knowledge not as a way of being (such as one might refer to a person of knowledge or a knowledgeable person) but rather as an entity you are with or a thing you possess. Examples of this are such comments as “knowledge is blind”; “knowledge is a good and bad thing”; “knowledge seems to be the thing that everyone is looking for”; “knowledge is a gift”; etc. The common descriptive forms these students used to express their experience with knowledge are the center of the following discussion.
implies the presence of the opposite notion of weakness, a state to be disdained and avoided. Having determination suggests possessing the ability to **(de) go away from** and **(term) pass through and go beyond** (Oxford English Dictionary, 1988). But go away from what and pass through to where? Perhaps another way of looking at the idea of "determine" is by seeing it as the act to deter or detour from mine or me. What "being able to determine" or "determination" is seen to afford in these students' descriptions is the ability to go away or change who they are and go to another place of being that is not who or where they are now. One student illustrates this when she writes,

> When reading *Flowers of Algernon* I thought of Charlie as a small individual such as 5' 5" in height, about 130-140 lbs, and small bones. This was only his physical body composition. He had a great amount of determination that made him appear as a giant. . . . All he ever wanted in life was to make people proud of him. All Charlie thought of was going back home to his parents and showing them that he really wasn't [retarded] and that he was smart and now could make them proud. (Appendix A: IA 1, pp. 162-63)

In this students' description determination is perceived as providing Charlie to be other than he was; to "appear as a giant." This description suggests that determination and knowledge, when successfully linked, are able to change the present self (or at least the appearance of the self) to a more socially accepted self. Keyes' Charlie Gordon sensed the need in a "retarded" state to be more or beyond what he presently was. Knowledge served as the compass of Charlie's existential map that made him acutely aware of the socially judged difference between the is and
the should be of who he was. In his post-operative state Charlie would frequently flashback or dream of childhood experiences where his lack of knowledge in academic and social adeptness made him the contempt of his mother and the ridicule of his peers. This sense of needing to go away from or to a more acceptable place of social being is reflected in the student’s writing stating: "All Charlie thought of was going back home [emphasis mine] to his parents and showing them that he really wasn’t [retarded] and that he was smart and now could make them proud" (Appendix A: IA 1, pp. 162-63). Another student wrote that "I think Charlie is a very strong hearted man. He has a lot of determination to prove to his friends and family that he is not stupid and that he can be just like any normal human being" (Appendix A: IH 1, pp. 185-86).

As revealed in the students' writings determination (in the notion of needing to leave who I am now) was usually linked via knowledge to some socially approved goal. Determination was looked upon as the initial and necessary catalyst that could spark a chain reaction of events resulting in achieving something socially positive. It took determination to gain knowledge which in turn was necessary in order to achieve the pride of one's parents, self-confidence, social acceptance, or monetary success. This is illustrated in student comments such as "Charlie is determined to be like everyone else" (Appendix A: IC 1, p. 170) and "Even though Charlie was retarted he was a very determined person. He wanted to be smart and have friends like everyone else" (Appendix A: IG 1, p. 230). Knowledge is viewed instrumentally as the benchmark and mediator between self and imagined social acceptance. Understood phenomenologically, determination becomes the existential awareness and pressure needed to merge the self into the whole by having one's
existence characterized as a being-with-knowledge.

Encountering knowledge in this sense can be metaphorically compared to how one may have encountered engineering a steam locomotive in the nineteenth-century. The primary ingredient for undertaking a journey on such a train was a sufficient supply of combustible material (coal or wood) to feed the fire of what was a massive steam furnace on wheels. With the proper amount of steam churning in the boiler, the resulting combination of interacting pistons, gears, rods, and cranks brought motion to this fusion of purposive flesh and phlegmatic steel.

Similarly, by linking determination with knowledge in their descriptive essays, these students sense themselves in need to travel from their present state of being to another more socially responsive one. Their great fear in embarking on this journey is not the apprehension of being able to operate the locomotive, in that, do the school work required of them to attain the knowledge capital necessary. Their terror is that they may not have the combustible material (or determination) necessary to initiate and maintain the motion required to bring their journey to an end; in other words, graduating and/or finding employment, having monetary funds to purchase socially desired things, and so forth. In associating it with determination, these students describe knowledge, in part, as experiencing the awareness of existential isolation and/or lack; what Heidegger refers to as the existential condition of angst. In understanding one's existential aloneness, usually there is a fleeing to the "at-home[ness] of publicness" (Heidegger, 1962), in that, the acceptance of others--the perceived social whole. These students experience knowledge as a reminder of the distance between them and
society. Their desire for determination signals the fear or anxiety associated with this awareness and the yearning to run or deter from the "mine" to the acceptance of society.

To Be With Knowledge Jeopardizes Well-Being

Although one student described a person with knowledge as a "well-rounded" or whole person (Appendix A: II H 2, p. 234), many students' comments reflected the view that knowledge and well-being or "being-whole" are not synonymous, and in fact the former can negatively affect the latter. One student writes: "When a person knows, or has just found out information by using his knowledge it does not always turn out good. Learning certain things in life can be bad, or depressing. Learning is not always good" (Appendix A: II J 2, p. 237). Another student echoes this caution contending that knowledge (which is formally acquired) is an idealistic interpretation of the "real" world and is therefore a potential source of depression. They write: "Having knowledge, I feel only lets you know how things should be if everything was perfect, and when everything is not it only supplies you with let downs" (Appendix A: II A 2, p. 215).

In the novel, Charlie was portrayed in three different states: preoperative in which he was retarded with an IQ of 70; post-operative in which he reached the level of genius; and finally regressed in which he had reverted back to his previous level of retardation with only a few extremely vague memories of the events that had happened to him. The author rendered Charlie as happy in each stage, though for different reasons and based on different understandings of his environment. Many students wrote that Charlie was truly happier in the preoperative
state. The reasons accompanying these remarks are somewhat varied, however one predominant notion did surface. This was the opinion that too much of anything leads to imbalance and adversity. One student contends that "[people with a lot of knowledge] will probably have more frustration and anger towards life than someone who does not have as much knowledge" (Appendix A: I S 2, pp. 211-12). Another student expressed that intelligence must be effectively counterpoised with ignorance. Make the scale lopsided and "you become so smart that you learn things that you really would rather not know" (Appendix A: II N 2, p. 246). The result is a loss of happiness which to many of these students defeats the primary goal of life\(^1\). In describing knowledge as risky and even harmful to one's overall happiness, knowledge again becomes associated with the search for wholeness . . . for unity. This is illustrated in the following student comments:

Charlie found out that intelligence does not bring happiness, life only gets confusing and harder to understand. . . . I feel no matter what you do if you're not happy with the way you are, life will never loosen up. In fact, I feel Charlie should have never preceded with having the surgery. (Appendix A: II A 1, pp. 213-14)

Before Charlie had his operation, he had more strengths in my opinion than he did when he was smart. Although Charlie was dumb, he was happy. . . . In my opinion his only weakness was that he was dumb, but the key to life is being happy. . . . Sure Charlie was smart now, but he was not happy anymore. . . .

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1. An important question of course is what is meant by "happiness" by these students. I felt that these descriptions did not give sufficient enough attention to this notion to effectively discuss it. It would, however, make an appropriate phenomenological study.
would always say I would rather be happy and poor [i.e. lacking knowledge] than be sad and rich [i.e. possessing a lot of knowledge]. (Appendix A: II B 1, p. 216)

In my mind Charlie was a happy person when he was dumb because the only thing he had to worry about was becoming smart. . . . Happiness is the key to everything. . . . In my mind intelligence is not the most important factor of life although it helps. (Appendix A: II B 2, p. 217)

It seems that these students are issuing a "surgeon general's warning" of their own that "knowledge" can be hazardous to your existential health.

**Being With Knowledge is Overrated and Secondary to Other Ways of Being**

Experiencing knowledge as hazardous is conducive to interpreting it as a subservient experience. One student succinctly states that "I feel that this society is putting to much emphasis on knowledge" (Appendix A: I J 2, p. 190) and another student supports this view declaring, "I [too] have the feel toward the concept of knowledge being unimportant" (Appendix A: II A 2, p. 215). These students' descriptions subordinated knowledge to what they regard as more important facets of existence.

To these students', experiencing knowledge has meant to be aware of self-lack, to fear the failure of striving for knowledge, and to risk well-being after possessing it. Subordinating its importance becomes like a defense mechanism. One such method of defense is illustrated in their writings as a distancing between the "self" and the "other" of knowledge. A student writes, "I think it is important to have knowledge, but not so much that you don't care about anything else. It is the kind of person
you are. A person [that] cares about himself and others also" (Appendix A: II F 2, pp. 228-29). In this view, knowledge is not associated with who one is but as something externally possessed. As such knowledge can be discarded or kept at a safe distance if it becomes too volatile and threatening. This is further emphasized in the following students’ descriptions.

I don’t think it is what you know, but what’s inside of you that makes a special person. (Appendix A: IM 1, p. 196)

This book proved that education isn’t everything in the world. . . . My views of knowledge was an important aspect in my life, but I never knew that without it, life goes on [sic]. This book has slightly changed my views, because I didn’t think that life was worth living without knowledge. (Appendix A: IO 2, p. 202)

These students’ reveal a perception of knowledge that images it as something to be devalued and distanced. Yet, however, the students’ reveal another facet of their experience with knowledge that further heightens the tension.

Contrary to these students’ interpretation, society as a whole does not deem knowledge as minor. It bestows enormous importance upon it. One student’s comment reflects this when he writes, "Without knowledge you can’t get any good paying job . . . alternative is to be a person without self-respect . . . homeless and dependent on others for the rest of your life" (Appendix A: IQ 2, pp. 255-56). As much as the experience of knowledge is interpreted as overrated and not as important as popularly viewed, significant pressure to possess it still exists. The tension results from the awareness that without "cultural capital", that knowledge is seen to afford to its owner, one cannot receive social and thereby self
acceptance. In such a state one faces the paradoxical world of "damned if you do and damned if you don't."

The Duplicity of Knowledge Signals Caution

Knowledge is seen as an unstable matter commuting between the valuation poles of good and bad. Its location on this bipolar plane is manipulated by the amount of knowledge one has and the mixture or synthesis of different types of knowledge one utilizes, in that "common sense," "academic knowledge," "street smart," and so forth.

I never did give much thought to whether or not knowledge is good or bad. Naturally you take knowledge for good, but maybe its questionable. I realize that maybe one should be careful of what he or she knows. Not necessarily don't gain more knowledge, but be careful of how you use [it]. . . . use your knowledge wisely.

(Appendix A: II C 2, pp. 220-21)

Knowledge isn't as good as it seems. . . . Sometimes intelligence and knowledge is blind. . . . Knowledge is beneficial only if people use it in auspicious ways. If not, it could handicap them, by limiting them. I wouldn't want to be a genius nor would I want to be retarded. Being in the middle helps me relate to all kinds of people. (Appendix A: II P 2, p. 252)

Successfully being with knowledge implies the ownership of the formula of information that provides among other things, social improvement and success in everyday practical affairs. It is to have ready-to-hand the culturally dictated right stuff that a society says is necessary to become an astronaut, a school teacher, a lawyer, a person with meaning or a meaningful person.
Knowledge as a Polygonal Experience

These students describe the experience of knowledge from various perspectives that portray knowledge in multiple forms. To them being with knowledge is a multifaceted experience, realized at 1) an experiential level stating that:

Knowledge is the understanding gained by actual experience.  
(Appendix A: II F 2, pp. 228-29)

There is . . . everyday knowledge which you learn through life experiences. Sometimes, I feel you learn a lot more through this instead of the books you read. (Appendix A: I A 2, p. 164)

2) and at a social and practical level (i.e. knowledge being the accumulation of data about life and the world) stating:

I feel in my life I have a full balance with my intellectual and social knowledge. I apply everything I have to my everyday life. (Appendix A: I A 2, p. 164)

I think that in the real world of today knowledge is a necessity. If not at least knowledge of text, then at least some bit of knowledge of the world, "street smarts." (Appendix A: II L 2, pp. 241-42)

Knowledge to me is being a person who has information about all areas. . . . A person having knowledge, would have a valuable opinion about everything. (Appendix A: II H 2, p. 234)

As a result of knowledge being encountered in various intentional settings, each student's confrontation with it, in their own lifeworld, leaves an impression of the primary purposes of knowledge that differ from their peers, parents, teachers and society as a whole. Knowledge as an entity is therefore shaped into the image of the intentional being who pursues it.
**The Benevolence of Knowledge**

In spite of its inherent risks and overrated significance, these students perceive being-with-knowledge as having its benefits also. To have knowledge is to have the key to change in one's life (i.e. leaving the place of the present self to that of an anticipated self). As one student describes it: "With a great deal of knowledge a person could travel along way in life" (Appendix A: II C 2, pp. 220-21). Other students describe being-with-knowledge-in-the-world as existing in part in an interactive way with others. A student writes: "Knowledge helped Charlie a great deal because he found out who his friends were" (Appendix A: II D 2, p. 223). Another wrote: "He [Charlie] wanted to be smart and have friends like everyone else . . . After the operation Charlie realized who his real friends were" (Appendix A: II G 1, p. 230). These as well as the following comments suggest that these student's interpret knowledge as an entity that allows an alteration in one's perspective or relationship to the world. They write:

I felt sorry for [Charlie] . . . and I was glad to see him become intelligent and figure out how people really are in the world sometimes. (Appendix A: I R 1, p. 207)

We need knowledge to understand everything that goes on around us. (Appendix A: I F 2, pp. 180-81)

Knowledge is the understanding gained by actual experience. . . . Knowledge helped Charlie because it made him think, and he understood things better. (Appendix A: II F 2, pp. 228-29)

Knowledge lets others see how intelligent we as human beings are. . . . If we use our knowledge we will understand all about life. (Appendix A: II K 2, p. 238)
Charlie like myself is much more of a person now [that] he is understanding the facts of life and learning to deal with them on his own. (Appendix A: II M 1, p. 243)

The alteration being with knowledge provides is often referred to in the students' descriptions as an understanding one has with the world. In effect this understanding provided by knowledge enables a move to a new position of standing under or an undergirding or strengthening of one's position in the world. As beings of relationship, to change position with the other is to in fact change the self as well as the other (Heidegger, 1962). To exist with knowledge is to exist transformatively. It is a displacing of orientation from one set or multiple sets of multi-relational contacts with the world for another or others.

The alteration of positioning in the world is described by a couple of students as a standing ahead or over others. A student writes: "I think having knowledge is great and if you have knowledge then you are always going to be a step ahead of others that don't" (Appendix A: I H 2, p. 187). Another declares that "I think I can be compared and contrasted with Charlie. I think that without realizing it, I probably take advantage of people I know I can" (Appendix A: II C 1, pp. 218-19). These comments not only reveal knowledge as a shift in orientation, but also as a manipulative change that enables one individual's way of being in the world to upstage or predominate over another's. To be with knowledge in the world is to be so in a strategic way. Knowledge becomes an aggressive tool, an entity of power over the way of others. To learn is to destroy the advantage of the other. It is to see the world existing ego-
Preordained Learning

The final theme to be examined in this discussion is the sense these students have that something or someone else predetermines the degree of achievement one realizes in acquiring a successful relationship with knowledge. Of all the descriptive statements made these intrigued me the most.\(^2\)

It appears by the following student remarks that knowledge is seen by some as a "given" i.e. a gift or a blessing.

Knowledge is a great gift and is great to have . . . (Appendix A: II D 2, p. 223)

Knowledge [is] taken for granted. Many people don't realize the gift we have. (Appendix A: I E 2, p. 177)

Intelligence is truly, a gift, a blessing from the Lord . . . (Appendix A: I L 1, pp. 193-94)

Knowledge is something you are born with and it just can't be given [i.e. acquired]. (Appendix A: I K 2, p. 192)

He [Charlie] is given his chance to be intelligent and takes advantage of it. (Appendix A: I F 1, pp. 178-79)

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1. A significant contribution to this discussion is Michel Serres' notion that "to know is to kill" as illustrated in his parable of the wolf and the lamb. See Serres, Michel, 1982. Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy. Josue V. Harari and David F. Bell (Eds). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

2. This interest is due in part to my previous religious studies focused on the relationship that exists between various manifestations of 20th century western culture and the influence of the fatalistic theology of the 16th century protestant reformer John Calvin.
These statements reveal the perception that the possession of knowledge is not so much in our ability to achieve, but rather the work of an external force. That force, whether it be the decision of a supreme God or by luck in the genetic lottery, assigns to individuals the level of intelligence they will attain in their life. To alter the predetermined level is to fight the natural or spiritual order of life and such struggle is doomed to end up in frustration if not tragedy. To eleven of these students, this was the primary theme of the novel. Charlie had his chance to be with knowledge but could not hold onto it because that was not "his lot in life." Minority students in my classes expressed this position towards learning in their writings, no doubt reflecting generations of having much of their existence predetermined by others.

The students' comments associate successful learning with the realization of one's place in the structure of society. School is merely a place you go to discover and assure for yourself and others what that place is. The rationalization follows that if one is not successful in school work it is not the school's fault, not the student's, not anyone's fault; the individual was not meant to have that type of knowledge. As disingenuous as this attitude might seem to others, the association of what it is to be-with-knowledge and the notion of predetermination was strong in many of these students. This association signals a disposition to learning that suggests that the final outcome of academic effort is not really in the individual's power to control. This fatalism could and probably does precipitate a lack of resistance to do anything that might seem to directly challenge what is being taught or to question why they have difficulty learning. One student writes, "Intelligence is truly, a gift, a blessing from the Lord . . . I, like Charlie have accepted the way things
are; God's will" (Appendix A: I L 1, pp. 193-94). Other students write, "If that's the way I've been born (average) I want to stay that way" (Appendix A: I B 2, pp. 168-69) and "If God wanted everyone in the whole wide world to have knowledge then every person would be born with that gift" (Appendix A: I H 2, p. 187). In such a view teachers and administrators come to be seen as the agents of either God or chance in assigning grades to students' work. Grading ceases to be a statement of evaluation about the work done, and instead is received as an official pronouncement of the student's place in society. Therefore for these students, knowledge means a predetermined placing of the "one" into the context of the "social whole."

**Consequences**

The third and final stage in pedagogically oriented phenomenological research is identifying the significance to pedagogic action, analysis of lifeworld experiences afford (cited in van Manen, 1979a; Barritt et al, 1984). My discussion this far of these students descriptions of their encounter with the novel *Flowers For Algernon* has been guided by the question of what is the nature of the relationship between being-in-the-world and being-with-knowledge. More specifically searching for what is that relationship like to these developmental reading students?

If to be an educator is to be concerned with the being of others as students (Aoki, 1989c), then our probing into experience must offer more than just the awareness and understanding of the meanings given by others to their experiences. Our efforts must persevere to birth meaningful action that enhances the agency of those involved in
pedagogic encounters. It is to press our investigations into the realm of praxical concern. To do less would relegate our investigations to mere voyeurism. The following discussion addresses the consequences to pedagogy revealed by my analysis. Rather than tendering a plethora of instructional techniques, the following discussion primarily raises more questions in the hopes of clarifying the real issues at stake every time a person enters into a pedagogic encounter with these developmental reading students.

The student's descriptions (see Appendix A), as examined in this study, reveal an interaction with a novel. Not only do readers experience change within this interaction, but also the text experiences change because of the reader's encounter (Hunsberger, 1983). Based on my analysis of these students' comments in their writings, I contend that for these students' *Flowers For Algernon* no longer became a "reading" assignment but an opportunity to reference themselves to the "other," i.e. being-with-knowledge. The reading assignment was an experience these students encountered rather than an experience they controlled. It became a dialectic between word and world.

Margaret Hunsberger refers to this interaction between reader and text as "dialogue." She states:

*Just as in conversation you and I become we, so when text and I come together we dialogue. The nature of dialogue implies mutual participation and active listening. The text is a voice "that asks to be heard and that requests a response."* (Hunsberger, 1983, p. 2)

Hunsberger criticizes views of the student/text relationship that encourage "dissection" instead of dialogue. Such views see texts more as immutable sources of objective knowledge that can be explored
and understood best by looking at the isolated parts. On the other hand
dialogue acknowledges the changes that occur between reader and text.
She writes,

And so in re-reading a text I am a slightly different person that I
was in the first reading. This is so even if the second reading
occurs directly after the first, since the first has already altered
me. . . in considering this constant change. . . how (can) we achieve
object constancy of texts. In a sense, we don't. Rather the text is
different with each reading because we are different. (Hunsberger,
1985:162)

The significance of such a view to curriculum development and
instructional practice is striking. To view texts, i.e., bodies of knowledge
as something to be encountered ready-to-hand; and students as
interactive constellations of experiences that produce creative change
and newness in both, is a provoking way of viewing learning in general
and reading particularly. When I begin sharing with my students
notions such as having conversations with texts and allowing yourself
the freedom to interpretively change texts, I receive queer looks indeed.
To them the idea of talking with texts instead of about texts seems
laughable and to conceive of changing texts is almost sacrilegious. Due
to these and other similar convictions that many students despise not
only reading but learning in general and see it as duteous drudgery.
The thought of having to spend extended lengths of time in a one sided
encounter with a book, a teacher or another "unalterable" body of
knowledge, does not provide the passion necessary to engage
consistently and effectively in such an encounter. In many schools to
learn is to learn to be other than the self-creative, ever-changing event
that you are.

The students' conversations with the text, via their writings, disclose a variety of issues concerning knowledge: 1) an occasion of fleeing to the perceived socially acceptable; 2) hazardous to "being-whole" resulting from being-with-knowledge too much; 3) overrated, secondary and creating a paradoxical dilemma; 4) an unstable, volatile entity requiring the "right mix" to be successful; 5) polygonal, i.e., multifaceted, individualistic; 6) benevolent, providing strategic advantages to the one who is with knowledge; and 7) preordained, out of the control of those who seek it. These themes, revealed in the students' writings, serve as illustrative moments of these students interpretively interacting with their world.

For Aoki (1987a) and van Manen (1988b), understanding the connections these students have constructed with knowledge from within their lifeworld is vital to pedagogically leading them into new possibilities of being. These phenomenologically disclosed understandings of their relationship with "knowledge" raises important questions to be considered in developing a curriculum and pedagogical approach that is "good" for these students. Such questions might be:

1) How can curriculum and instruction for developmental education students be constructed so as to shift the emphasis from knowledge as an occasion to flee "self" to that of a "creative becoming of the self?"

2) How is curriculum and instruction presently utilizing the notion of "motivation" in the classroom? Are we reinforcing the students flight to "publicness?"

3) How can curriculum and instruction for developmental
education students address the culturally induced fear of eating of the forbidden fruit of knowledge that these students associate with learning?

4) How can a pedagogy be constructed that is sensitive to the "risk" this students sense in "knowing?"

5) In what ways should American pedagogical concern over *A Nation At Risk* be refocused on the risk factor these students sense in schooling?

6) How can curriculum and instruction be developed to create an understanding of knowledge that is not dualistic in its representation of experience but holistic, i.e. "knowing as a way of being-in-the-world?"

7) How can curriculum and instruction be constructed to present the process of "knowing" as possibilities for creativity, i.e., the creation of one's own place?

**Conclusion**

In the initial discussions of this chapter, I presented the current major theoretical approaches to reading. In light of these approaches, I attempted to show the significance phenomenology could have in the way reading is understood. Following these discussions an employment of a phenomenological methodology to a specific Developmental Reading classroom encounter with the novel *Flowers For Algernon* (1966) was explained and illustrated. A consistent concern of the writer while conducting this analysis, has been the question of whether or not this phenomenological investigation has sufficiently grasped the essence of this experience for these students. The purposes of this investigation
never included an exhaustive disclosing of the phenomenon but only a touching of the essence of what it is for these developmental education students to be-with-knowledge. The foregoing has been an attempt at being phenomenologically "sensitive" to these students' interpretation of their world via their descriptive use of written language. My interpretive analysis of those writings revealed student constructed connections between being-in-the-world and "knowledge". Resulting from these connections, several issues were discussed raising significant questions regarding the construction of an effective curriculum plan and instructional approach for these students.

The next and final chapter summarizes the findings of this dissertation study. In that chapter the writer also discusses the implications to curriculum inherent in a phenomenologically oriented approach to curriculum. These implications are revealed as meaningful "possibilities" to curriculum construction that exist because of a phenomenologically informed view of pedagogy. The discussion of these possibilities are followed by recommendations for further study.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION, POSSIBILITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this study I have summarized the phenomenologically oriented work of the noted North American curriculum theorists T. Tetsuo Aoki and Max van Manen. Such summarization did not exist as of this writing. Using their work as a guide, a classroom situation involving Developmental Reading students and the novel Flowers For Algernon was explored to illustrate the suggestiveness of this perspective for understanding a specific pedagogical occasion. The primary question this study has been concerned with is, does phenomenology, as exampled in the work of Aoki and van Manen significantly contribute to our understanding of curriculum specifically and pedagogy in general?

I conclude that phenomenology offers a powerful methodology from which to approach curriculum development, evaluation and instructional practice in such a way as to create a praxical pedagogy. I recognize that educators steeped in traditional empirical research question the "soft" and seemingly enigmatic results of phenomenological research. For many it does not supply the "hard" data felt necessary to undertake serious curriculum tasks and is therefore only useful as a philosophical issue to be debated among "ivory tower scholars." A phenomenological approach to curriculum as evidenced in Aoki's and van Manen's efforts, does not deny a place for "hard," i.e., positivistically-based, empirical science in pedagogical research, but echoes Merleau-Ponty's declaration that

if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin

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by re-awakening the basic experience of the world of which science is a second-order expression. Science has not and never will have, by its nature, the same significance quasi form of being as the world we perceive, for the simple reason that it is a rationale or explanation of that world. (Merleau-Ponty, 1983, p. viii)

What might be surprising to some is that phenomenology has come late to education, in reference to other disciplines that historically and presently are benefiting from its use. Aside from its initial appearing in philosophy, psychology, and linguistics, various other trans-disciplinary uses of phenomenology can be seen in the social sciences,¹ architecture,² geography,³ and the fine arts.⁴ While phenomenology attempts a pretheoretical stance in its analysis of lifeworld experiences it


4. The following are given as illustrations of intriguing uses of phenomenology in areas of the fine arts such as dance and music.


This is an interesting phenomenological look at one individual's experience learning to play jazz.

is not antitheoretical.¹ However, a phenomenology of curriculum is not based on what is written or said about curriculum but on the lived world of pedagogical encounters with others. Traditionally, pedagogues have been instructed just the opposite. They are taught that effective curriculum development and instruction begins with a good theory that provides a priori assumptions about what happens when students and teachers meet in a classroom. A teacher is critiqued by her peers according to how well she can manipulate her classes to mirror the theoretical assumptions she has learned. The phenomenology of curriculum practiced by Aoki and van Manen draws its meaning from descriptions of the lived world of the individual, the other, and the use of language through which education receives its meaning. It is a methodology well suited to contribute to not only a variety of disciplines but also to varied theoretical interests. Examples of its diverse theoretical use are revealed in the work of Paulo Freire, a critical theorist, the existentialism of Merleau-Ponty, and the post-modern work of Gary Madison.

Aoki and van Manen's work have exemplified a methodology for curriculum inquiry that successfully analyzes first-order pedagogical experiences. As a result of their analyses, significant contributions to pedagogy are evidenced and can be utilized. However, the goal of this study has not been to present a phenomenological orientation to

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1. I use the word *attempts* because much of the current debate and criticism of phenomenology is that it does not recognize its own inherent assumptions as a methodological system of research. If the term theory or theoretical can be synonymous with the notions of context, interpretation and belief then I would agree. At this point I do not understand how an individual can be decontextualized from her own context. However, the individual's context can be deconstructed to varying degrees of disclosure of one's own interpretive formulations. Total objectification of the self however is not possible. While a pure pretheoretical stance was posited by Husserl and his followers as possible and necessary, other phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty disagree and argue for embodied perception of existence.
curriculum as the means by which to understand all aspects of educational activities. Pedagogy as a way of being is analogous to the human existential condition of multiple levels of reality. Traditionally, varying disciplines and philosophies have argued for the dominance of one perceived structure of reality over other views. Since Plato, the endeavor of philosophy has been a metaphysical search for what is in the attempt to subordinate all experience to a singular existential discourse. In its earliest applications, phenomenology too had been utilized first as the ultimate metaphysic by Husserl, and later as the methodology the early Heidegger felt would expose being and time, the basic structure of Dasein, i.e., existence. Phenomenology, however, need not be connected to a grand metaphysical pursuit of what is to be valuable as a means of disclosing pedagogical experiences. Richard Bernstein, in his book The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory (1976), agrees to this by suggesting that phenomenology serves as an important moment in the triadic nature of comprehensive research consisting of empiricism, phenomenology, and critical theory. Aoki concurs and insists that "No [curriculum] program can be evaluated in its entirety. But we can increase our vision of whatever we are viewing through the employment of as many perspectives as we can find appropriate and utilize for our purposes" (Aoki, 1978, p. 9). This study has documented some of the valuable moments phenomenological research offers to education, specifically curriculum theory.

In this study I examined van Manen's use of phenomenology in providing a theory of curriculum that is "edifying." As such curriculum theory does not inform us as educators as much as it positions us pedagogically toward our students in a way that affords them clearer
understandings of their lifeworld. A phenomenologically oriented curriculum theory discloses the lifeworld of students and teachers. This disclosure, guided by what Aoki refers to as "the authority of the good in pedagogical situations" (see page 65) provides a place or "edifice" for students to understand more clearly what it is for them to be-in-the-world. In Chapter IV I employed this methodology in Developmental Reading classes that resulted in the positing of several specific questions to be considered for further research in preparing a curriculum for Developmental Education students that is "edifying."

A phenomenologically oriented curriculum also provides a gestaltic shift in viewing what it is to be educated. For the instructor this shift results in the realization of the multiplicity of unique connections to their world students bring with them into the classroom. An effective pedagogue in Aoki's view is one that is aware of these connections and "guards against disembodied forms of knowing, thinking, and doing." The students' world becomes the center of further pedagogical experiences that reveal the contextual nexus between the student, the learning material at hand, and the socio/historical culture the learning situation appears within. Learning by the student and the instructor becomes characterized by reflective action or praxis. Aoki (1972) modeled this in his Hobbema curriculum project where social studies texts and other learning materials were constructed and analyzed considering the Hobbema's lifeworld experiences. I attempted to achieve this perceptual shift by phenomenologically investigating the interpretations given to being-with-knowledge developmental reading students provided in their essays. As such, knowledge was disclosed not as a body of information but as concerns over alienation, well-being.
fatalism, etc.

Van Manen argues that the gestaltic shift phenomenologically oriented curriculum research affords is not only a change in perception of the learning situation but also one involving a change in pedagogic touch or "tactfulness." Phenomenological research provides unique insights into how we as educators touch our way through and allow ourselves to be touched within the learning situation. This alteration in sensitivity is caused by the learning situation becoming redefined. The landscape has changed because the lifeworld of the student has now come into the foreground of the pedagogical moment. In light of this, the world of the instructor is changed and requires a reexploration of the boundaries the pedagogical occasion or encounter has now afforded both student and instructor.

Possibilities

But what do the phenomenologically disclosed notions discussed in this study meaningfully give to curriculum and pedagogy? Every experience, especially the "learning" experience, can be considered a nexus of interpretive events. What we bring to these moments of creative/recreative interactions is a "unity" of experiences that have made us distinctive. It is not just physical and/or cognitive skills that are present in learning, but all that has been a part of the process of constituting us at that moment including affectivity and intentionality, i.e, our futural aspirations. Through a series of reflexive reading exercises I have my students participate in at the beginning of a semester, they find amazement at how much of their body, mind and emotions; their past, present and future are involved in the
reading/learning experience. The problem is that most of it is ineffective involvement. A phenomenological orientation to curriculum and the teaching of reading allows the appearance of the multiple variations and possibilities that arise from understanding the polygonal interpretations/experiences that are involved in learning.

If the notions discussed in this essay are consistent and conducive to a shift to a phenomenologically oriented view of existence, and deemed more descriptive of the human condition, then certain suggestive comments regarding curriculum can be made. First, a change in our view of knowledge would be expressed. Instead of metaphorizing knowledge as specific points on a line (or the "correct" answer on a multiple choice exam), knowledge would be seen in more vague corpora as volumes of air teachers and students walk through together; cumulus spheres without constant boundaries that are continually being reshaped by immediate umveltic conditions as well as by turbulent currents that move behind and ahead, caused in part by our presence. In such a perspective knowledge becomes gifts of experience rather than immutable facts.

Such a view of knowledge births inevitable issues for the student of how right is "right enough" and for the teacher of how clear is "clear enough?" It is this tenuousness of clarity that Victor Lowe addresses when he writes, "This relativity of clarity, springing from the fact that we are . . . finite creatures living in an incompletely analyzed environment, should be the first principle of all philosophic thought" (Lowe 1950, p. 24). I would stress that not only should this principle of relative clarity be the "first principle" of philosophic thought but also that which dominates curriculum thought.
A second comment that can be made concerns the manifestation of the teacher in the shift to a phenomenological view of one's pedagogic world. With knowledge becoming so airy, teaching becomes an excursion into the bearable lightness of being. Freed from the burden of the "knowledge expert," the teacher assumes the relationship with the student of experiential guide. In such a relationship the teacher is not the dispenser of all that is "right and good to know" but the nurturer of self-creative interaction with the world, via science, math, language, etc. Paulo Freire is a good example of how one phenomenologically oriented pedagogue allowed the labor for literacy to become an encounter for students to create and re-create the world. In describing his curriculum he writes, "Instead of a teacher, we had a coordinator; instead of lectures, dialogue; instead of pupils, group participants; instead of alienating syllabi, compact programs that were "broken down" and "codified" into learning units" (Freire 1973, p. 42). Freire defends his curricular methodology by stating that,

men relate to the world by responding to the challenges of the environment, they begin to dynamize, to master, and to humanize reality. They add to it something of their own making, by giving temporal meaning to geographic space, by creating culture . . . As men create, re-create, and decide, historical epochs begin to take shape. And it is by creating, re-creating and deciding that men should participate in these epochs (1973, p. 5).

Phenomenologically oriented curriculum-making, as well as instructional practice, should include the diverse voices of the learning community. Each voice represents ripples of existential occasions that sing our fluid world. Each voice not only draws from but also adds to the
composition known as being-in-the-world and thus is a vital source of curriculum planning as well as curriculum living.

**Recommendations**

Despite its subordination to the ascendancy of the new sociology of education movement, there is still a vital place for phenomenological theorizing and practice in education. This is in part because it makes primary the everydayness of individual lived experience and exposes the way we constitute our social existence. This study has revealed, in part, how significant understanding how individuals construct their existential reality is for meaningful pedagogical praxis.

Considering the observations made in this study, several recommendations follow:

1. It is recommended that the extensive curriculum activities of T. Tetsuo Aoki be further researched and compiled so that the significance of his work may be provided to other pedagogues involved in curriculum development and evaluation. Aoki's abundant writings are eloquent illustrations of a phenomenological orientation strikingly employed in research relating to curriculum, teaching and evaluation as well as the orientations of theory and practice in Teacher Education programs.

2. It is recommended that the growing human science research of Max van Manen be further explored for its significance in understanding more fully the dynamics of the lifeworld of student/teacher relationships. Van Manen's analysis of these relationships can serve as important illustrative contributions.
phenomenologically oriented research offers to pedagogy, ranging in scope from instructional approaches in early childhood encounters to "methods" courses in Teacher Education programs. (3) It is recommended that more phenomenologically oriented research be published and made available to pedagogical laymen, including explorations and effective explanations of the processes involved in such research. Of primary concern should be the development of courses, texts and programs that aid teachers in effectively employing a phenomenological orientation to pedagogical activities in the classroom.

(4) It is recommended that phenomenologically oriented research be undertaken that responds to the criticisms within the new sociology of education concerning the inappropriateness of a phenomenological orientation to pedagogical issues. This could possibly involve collaborative studies involving phenomenologically oriented researchers and critical theorists that cooperatively seek to address macro and micro level issues of schooling.
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APPENDIX A:

UNABRIDGED STUDENT COMMENTS CONCERNING KNOWLEDGE AND THE NOVEL FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON

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When reading "Drowning of Algonquin," I thought of Charlie as a small individual such as 5'5' in height, about 130-140 lbs, and small bones. This was only his physical body composition. He had a great amount of determination that made him appear as a giant. Inside, he was the most dedicated person and trust worthy than anyone else I've ever seen at work about before. For example, when Charlie was growing up (especially during the time he was working in the bakery) he always wanted to learn. He never did want to be retained. All he ever wanted in life was to make people proud of him. All Charlie thought of was going back home to his parents and showing them that he really wasn't retained and that he was smart now and could make them proud.

Now, when I reflect and think about Charlie, I see some things that remind me of myself. Such as his strong determination he has. He thinks of people. It feels good when I make people happy. I always try my best to help satisfy others that is within my own reach. I also can relate to him.
determination because I am always striving to do my best and make my patients proud of me. This really quenches you a great feeling inside to know that you are satisfying yourself and the world, too. It makes you feel that you are sharing your unique qualities with others who find need it and some may not. The effort is what counts!
In the novel, the author put a lot of emphasis on knowledge. I feel the author might have went through some problems when it came to knowledge because he put great emphasis. I feel knowledge is great only unless you have the common sense that is needed to go along with it.

In my life, knowledge is important but I try to use it to the best of my ability. There are so many people who actually studied themselves to death to acquire knowledge. All we do to acquire the knowledge is the best of my ability, I feel in my life I have a fine balance with my intellectual and social knowledge. I apply everything I have to my everyday life. Together, these two work together to help you successfully go through life. There is more to knowledge than just a classroom. There is also everyday knowledge which you learn through life experiences. Sometimes, you feel you learn a lot more through your instead of the books you read. Knowledge is up to the individual in how they want to learn it and how much they want to learn.
"Charlie"

Charlie can be characterized as a very loving and caring person. A person with determination to acquire knowledge. Charlie reminds me a lot of myself. I am a caring and loving person also. I'm always putting other people's feelings above my own. I can understand Charlie wanting to acquire knowledge because it's real embarrassing to hold a conversation with others and don't understand.
the meaning of the terms they are using. Charlie, like myself, can also be characterized as curious. I always want to know what certain things mean, just as Charlie wanted to know why they were treating him the way they did. I really like the character "Charlie" but, the one thing I disagree with was the operation. I really agree that a person should be left as they were are.
when put on this earth.
If God wanted Charlie to be smart, he would have been.
He created everyone with a distinct personality. If everyone
was the same person, the earth would be a very boring
place.
I think the author in this book thinks that knowledge is a good and a bad thing. It's really good when you have enough knowledge to hold a conversation with someone intelligent. This is what Charlie wanted him to do. When he finally reached that stage, he lost a lot of friends. They reacted different toward him because he was more intelligent than they were. They wanted him to be the old Charlie Gordon. This really changed my view of knowledge. Sometimes I wanted to be extremely smart but, if that's the way I'll born (average).
want to stay that way. Also, it make your friends like or dislike you. I want them to love me because of me and not because of my abilities or disabilities.
9-27-89

Charlie Gordon is a very inspiring person to me. Charlie is a retarded man who has an operation to make him smarter. Charlie is determined to be like everyone else. He wants to be smart really bad. When he does become more intelligent he remembers more about his past. He realizes things that happened to him and the reasons behind it. He starts to progress gradually, but he soon becomes a genius. Charlie doesn't realize that he is on a different level than the normal human being. Before, he was a moron and below everyone else. Now, he's a genius and above everyone else. He sometimes gets annoyed by that. Charlie also gets very frustrated with his doctors when they explain the experiment of Charlie. He feels like they think he was not a human being until the operation.

Charlie is a very sensitive person. He is learning more about life and the people of the past. He plays a significant person in Flowers for Algernon.
Journal

The author of the book, Flowers for Algernon is demonstrating an unusual example of a different type of knowledge. The writer feels knowledge is important and better if it can be improved. I agree with that. The book changes when Charlie's knowledge changes. That is, being a Moron with a Bow I.Q. to improving his knowledge by an operation and becoming a Genius. The book shifts again in the end because Charlie loses much of the knowledge that had accumulated over several weeks and was slowly losing his knowledge. I support the book because I think it was a good example of how people change and how someone's life can change drastically just by the amount of knowledge the has. Charlie the writer goes through this process in the book and shows the reader how things change. My idea of knowledge compared to the writer's idea of knowledge is basically the same in that things change by the amount someone has. I agree that the book changed at the end, but only to prove knowledge, and the outcome Charlie had from this change.
"Charlie"

I feel sorry for Charlie but also feel he has to try and understand other people's actions along with his own. I hate to think of people treating Charlie so cruel but I feel sorry for them. If they have no more feelings for people & Charlie's condition I think there is something mentally wrong with them.

I have been able to relate with this book real well, as I have a cousin who is retarded and I've had to shield and protect her in many instances from my own friends. The main reason I feel sorry for him, is that his mother didn't care more for him than what she did. Though she didn't understand she knew at the time.
What she was doing, and I can't understand that.

Comparing myself to Charlie, there are a few similarities. I am a very trusting person, I guess you could say naive, to a point, and I have been burned many times by people that I thought were my friends. I have had the same reactions of suspicion towards my true friends. Though it took me a while, I am beginning to see people for who they really are. I also feel that if I have the same outlook at times and feel they always look down on me. One of his strengths that I should say I have as his caring for people. I don't judge people by what they look like, or where they club. I judge them for who they are.
Journal: Idea of Knowledge (Charlie)

I don't really agree with them trying to change anyone's intelligence level, but I also think that it allowed Charlie to fulfill one of his dreams. He had always "agreed" with his mom that one day he would be smart and through this experience, he was.

Before the operation, I did think we agreed with the research, but after seeing what damage it did to Charlie socially and mentally, I no longer do. Charlie felt as though he'd lost friends from the beginning. He also had to go through some mental strains I don't think I could have dealt with. Knowing how he was in the beginning and how much he had learned in such little time, he had
to deal with losing it. That is really what made me change my mind about the research. I also believe the writer is against it also because of the dramatic changes and adjusting that Charlie had to go through.
"Charlie"

Charlie, just like everyone else
is a human being. Before the
operation people didn't see in
him, like one. They treated
him like a moron, like he was
some sort of animal. One thing
that reminds me of myself about Charlie
is that both of us never gave up.
Charlie, like myself, is always
straining for the best, when it gets
too hard or I get frustrated I give
up unlike Charlie. Throughout the
book I never did dislike Charlie;
He went through a lot of changes
but nothing to make me hate him.
After the operation when everyone
expected him to be perfect he wasn't.
He had all of emotional problems
he had to overcome. In the end
everything probably worked out better
for Charlie.
"Howlers for Algernon"

The theme of the book was the idea of knowledge. Personally, I feel the writer felt that knowledge was taken for granted. Many people don't realize the gift we have. Charlie had to work and gain his knowledge. It just wasn't given to him. The writer is trying to tell us to be thankful with what we have and try to develop it more.

I agree with what he is saying. Before I read this book, I never thought about how lucky I was. This book changed my view of knowledge. I am not going to take it for granted. I am going to use it to the best of my ability.
Flowers for Algernon

Charlie Gordon is a man who was not blessed with the mind of most normal people. It is given his chance to be intelligent and takes advantage of it. I see Charlie as a very willing man. He puts everything he has into everything he does. In my opinion, Charlie is a very friendly person. He wouldn't do anything to harm someone. I think that even after his operation he doesn't really change; even though his so-called friends say that he did change after the operation. Charlie is a person who is always looking for a friend or anyone he can talk to.

In comparing myself with Charlie, I think we have some things in common. We are both very friendly people. We don't do things on purpose just to get someone mad at us. I feel that we are both understanding. People that both of us had at times but we just
laugh with them, and go on about
our business. One other thing that Charlie
and I have in common is that we both
are scared of some tests. Charlie is
scared many times when he has to go
to the lab to take different kinds of test.
I also get scared sometimes when I
go into a classroom to take a big test.
Charlie and I are different in many ways
also. He is unaware of the people who are
around him. He doesn't realize the people
who he thinks are his friends really
don't like him. They just like to
make fun of him. On the other hand,
I know that most of my friends are
true friends. They would never do anything
to hurt me. Charlie is also at times
ill-tempered with himself. I never really
get very upset with myself when I
do things wrong. Charlie also gets real
nervous when he gets around women.
I used to be much like Charlie
in that respect, but I have almost
overcome this now.
Flowers for Algernon

In Flowers for Algernon, it seems as if the writer refers to knowledge as being harmful. He doesn't come right out and say this but it is evident in the story. In the story, Charlie is fine as long as he is stupid. While he is stupid, people pick on him and he thinks it's funny. He thinks that his fellow workers are his friends. He never realizes that they are making fun of him. This makes the author of this book seem as if he is saying that we are better off without knowledge.

I feel differently about this issue. I think that knowledge is very important. Without knowledge, our world would not be what it is today, although sometimes that would be so bad. We need knowledge to understand everything that goes on around us. I feel that if no one had any knowledge, our world would be very boring. It doesn't hurt to be picked on even now, and then just because you aren't as smart as everyone.
I see where the author gets his point of view. I disagree with his point of view though. His views didn't reinforce my views of knowledge. But, they didn't change my point of view.
Journal

Charlie Garden is a very curious person. I never thought of him as a genius, I think the press has made him a genius. I think the press has made him too caught up in his self that he forgot about others around him.

I don't find many qualities of Charlie in myself. Before he had the operation, he was loving and caring. I find them ideal that he is. I like Charlie's method in life was to trust friends. I think most anyone on earth would that.

I think the "true" Charlie is different. He will go back to the way she was before he can solve his major problem. I feel sorry for him because I know how much he is struggling with it.
In the text, I think the author wanted to put an idea in our heads. It doesn't matter how intelligent a person is, but how the person acts that is important.

If a person is dishonest and a genius than he is no better than a retarded, insane person. I agree with the author.

After reading the text, I have a new outlook on retarded people. It seems that even though they seem really stupid there still is a heart in them. Most of them have a heart of gold and only want to be treated like men equals, not as a dunce.
society. They should be kept as they are!
I think Charlie is a very strong hearted man. He has a lot of determination to prove to his friends and family that he is not stupid and that he can be just like any normal human being. I think that any retarded person who knows he is retarded and is determined to become smart and able to carry on with a normal life is able to do so because they are willing to work hard at learning. People usually do not realize how much they have to be thankful for. We should take advantage of our learning ability because some people are born without a learning ability. One of Charlie's weaknesses is not being able to understand who his true friends are. He thinks that his friends are good to him. He does not realize that they only liked him because he made them look cool. His insecurities are he cares about what people think about him. I think that one should not live their life according to how other people live theirs or live their life trying to please others. He should worry about his own self. I see myself similar to Charlie in this way because I am all the time worrying about what people think of me. I am always trying to impress others. My work...
I admire Charlie for his strength of determination to learn. I wish I had his determination. He is always striving for goals to get smarter. If I could take time out of my social life and put it into wanting to learn more and more or at much as there is to know about certain things, I could be dangerous. I do not put my mind into wanting to learn. I only learn what I have to or what I am told to learn. If I could have high standards like Charlie I would not know what to do with myself.
I think that the writer views knowledge as a major factor in one's life because why else would he want to write about a retarded man gaining knowledge? I do not think knowledge was something every person needs. I think having knowledge is great and if you have knowledge then you are always going to be a step ahead of others that don't. But I think that I would have to disagree with the writer if he thinks that knowledge is a major factor. If God wanted everyone in the whole wide world to have knowledge then every person would be born with that gift but he must not because there are lots of people in this world that were born with birth defects, and often things that keep them from developing or having knowledge. I think that this book helped me with my view of knowledge because it shows both good and bad points of how people are who have knowledge and how people are who don't. Charlie apparently thought that being smart and having lots of knowledge is what makes people special but it is not. Someone that is special to a person who is themself, the person God made them is what makes them special not because one knows more than another. Several characters in the book got concerned for Charlie because of his change. They wanted him to be himself and not try to impress people with
I view Charlie as a human being who is really concerned with everyone. He wants to do whatever he can to help society. Before he had the operation, he believed that everyone was good, but now he is learning that it is not true. He is learning that there are only a few real friends and that you cannot trust everyone.

I feel that I am like Charlie was before he got "smart" because I trust everyone and usually follow my emotions. This is not good because people can just step all over you.

I think Charlie's mother had a big influence on him wanting to become smart because she was always embarrassed of him and saying things that made him feel that he was nonhuman. I believe Charlie is
Adjusting to be smart and finally finding out who she really is.
The author of "Flowers for Algernon" feels that knowledge is important, but he also feels that you can be a good and decent human being without it. I also feel this way. I feel that this book really made me have a different view of knowledge. Because I never did really think about knowledge, this book was a good example of how people should and should not treat knowledge. It really helped me change my views on knowledge.
I see Charlie Jordan as a man who is confused about life in general. Before the operation Charlie thought his life was perfect because he had friends. After the operation he was confused about everything because all of a sudden he didn't. I don't understand why people would refriend Charlie because of his intelligence or for anything for that manner. People like that don't belong in this world in my opinion. I think everyone should like the people around them no matter their race, sex, creed. Charlie was just caught up between people who wanted to be ever him.

In a way I can relate with Charlie on this whole friend thing. I moved around a lot and I have met many different people. Sure, they learn to like because I was a caring and friendly like Charlie. But, something happen in my last year of school that made me feel upset. I moved to the city of Lafayette and there my life just went nuts. I moved from a place where everyone knew me and I knew them and I had lots of friends. So when I moved down to Lafayette I expected to get a lot of friends also, but I was wrong. I rarely had any. Because of this I felt like Charlie did when he got intelligent and lost his friends.
In my opinion knowledge is something that everyone wants to have. Unfortunately not everyone is born with a lot of knowledge. This is where Charlie comes in. Charlie wasn't born with the knowledge that everyone wants. I think the writer was trying to make the point of someone cannot gain knowledge through an operation. Knowledge is something you are born with and it just can't be given. The writer was showing us how knowledge to a person who never had that much could change a person and the people around them. He showed this when his friends at the bakery befriended him. I think the whole point, the writer was trying to make was how knowledge can change a person both mentally, socially and physically.

I agree with the point made by the author. Certain things can happen to a person and he will change in the way he feels about himself and so will his/her friends. For example, if a kid was given a chance to walk again he will take it because then he can go out and play with his friends and do the things he couldn't do when he couldn't walk. If he does better things than his friends he friends wouldn't like that and probably wouldn't like them anymore.
Intelligence is truly a gift, a blessing from the Lord Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many of us take it for granted, and let all of that knowledge go to waste. There are many different levels of intelligence. For instance, there are those who are geniuses like the new Charlie Gordon, those like myself who are average or a little above average and those who are slow, handicapped mentally, in one way or another like the old Charlie Gordon.

Although Charlie Gordon is labeled as retarded and I as normal, we have a few things in common. I, like Charlie want people to like me. Sometimes I have even gone somewhere or taken part in a particular activity for that purpose only. Finally, I too had to learn
that you can't buy friends nor can you win over a "true" friend. Charlie
knows that he's different. I know
that I am different too. I am not
retarded but I am drastically
shorter than all of my peers
and in many instances shorter
than those who are years younger
than I am.

In conclusion, all of us, I think
had or have had some sort of an inferiority
complex. Due to this state of mind, we
have all felt the need to prove yourself
to someone. Most importantly, I,
like Charlie have accepted the
way things are; God's will. I'm
short and I can't do anything about
it. Charlie knows he is regressing
and he can't do anything about
that either. I don't know what Charlie
went through. I can only try to
imagine it. Just the same, unless
someone has been or is a black female,
who is 4 feet 11 inches tall, he or she
cannot say "all it's not that bad being short."
Knowledge may be and can be acquired by everyone. Unfortunately, some are only capable of learning very little or elementary information, as compared to that learned by those who are referred to as very intelligent or very smart. I, like Keon, think that knowledge is just a matter of little effort one may be blessed with.

For instance, inCheers for Fellowship, Keon illustrated this feeling toward knowledge through all of Charlie's experiences. His regressions and his improvements. More specifically, when Charlie was on a lower level than everyone else, he was mocked and made fun of. When he faced an abundance of knowledge and was considered as someone that had a good mind that was knowledgeable and quite much at our glimpse.
In my opinion Charlie
was a very special person. One
reason why I think Charlie
is a special person, because he was
very motivated to learn. He always
wanted to learn even though his
ability to learn was very low.
Even after the operation he
still wanted to learn more.

Even though his ability to learn was
as high as a normal person, he
could learn to forgive people
who made fun of him when he
was retarded. I don’t think
it is what you know, but
in being inside of you that
makes a special person.
I think Daniel Keys didn't really think too much about knowledge. He made Charlie Gordon a genius, but then changed him back. That shows me that he didn't think knowledge was everything. In his book people liked Charlie when he didn't know nothing. When Charlie started learning, it was a genius nobody liked him at his job. Knowledge is not everything. If you don't have a personality and you are not very smart you might not have too many friends. To become very smart all you have to do is learn. To have a good personality, it must be there. You can't just throw a new personality. This is why there's not knowledge didn't really mean much to Daniel Keys.

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Charlie Golden, in Flowers for Algernon, was considered a moron at the beginning of the book. He didn’t realize that his friends, just like him, laughed at him because he was funny. Charlie never did realize that they laughed at him because of his clumsiness and because he was a moron. When Charlie began to learn more about his environment after the operation, he finally realized that these people were not his friends. They began to feel like they were being made fun of by Charlie because he knew more than they did.

In a way, I think that everyone has some of Charlie in them. From personal experiences, I was like Charlie. When I was in middle school, I didn’t fit in very well. Even though I was younger than Charlie, and the situations were somewhat different, I was put aside and made fun of. I was a little country girl entering a city school. I didn’t know any type of etiquette as these girls did. Yes, I did know some, but I was a “Tomboy” not a young lady. I was made fun of because I didn’t do things the way that they did. I eventually grew out of that “Tomboy” stage and everyone matured to their own capacity, just like Charlie did.
The impression that was left with me on Flowers for Algernon was how having knowledge, either not enough or too much of it, could change your life. In my opinion, the author felt like it didn't matter if you were a moron or a genius, it was the way your attitude was towards people. If you were nice then people would like you. Just like when Charlie was retarded he had his friends and when he was with knowledge and talent, he couldn't control his emotions or attitude. In the beginning of this book I felt sorry for Charlie. The way everyone made fun of him wasn't right. Then doing it kinda felt bad for him throughout the book. When he was smart, he didn't realize what was happening to him. He could learn a great deal of information, but his emotions changed and his attitude towards his fellow workers was paradised.
Journal Entry #4

Charley, the main character in Flowers for Algernon, is a very caring and nice person in the beginning of the book. After his operation he begins to realize his sensitivities. He started becoming paranoid towards his friends and doctors. He was beginning to become conceited with toward his friends and doctors. He didn't put other people's feelings before his feelings. He was totally opposite from the old Charley who did care and consider people's feelings.

In contrast to myself, I'm caring toward other people, only if they're caring toward me. Charley was caring to all people without they treated him unjustly. When the door was closed he also
I had lots of determination. I have some determination but not as much as Charly. He was determined to become smart. Sometimes I wish I could hope for the best of things even though it may not occur. It'll probably help more people accomplish their goals. It would also make the world a better place to live if everyone cared the way he did.
Journal

The writer of "Flowers for Algernon" main concern in the book was knowledge. I felt the author had some personal experience which included some education. The book proved that education isn't everything in the world. It also showed me not to judge a person by their educational background. My views of education — knowledge was an important aspect in my life, but I never knew that without it life goes on. This book has slightly changed my views, because I didn't think that life was worth living without knowledge.
Choice vs. Myself

Keeps developed Charlie very well in showing that Charlie was in a way forgiving, and didn't understand hate. When he was left stranded at the bar to check something he didn't get mad but mad excuses for then leaving him I would feel very angry if something like that happened to me, but unlike Charlie I would understand what was going on. Although curiosity would have got to me, I felt the same as Charlie when he didn't acknowledge that he was his father's son in the barbershop. After the barbershop incident I wouldn't have even tried to locate my mother and sister in fear of what I might find, and how they would act to me.
Journal

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Keys felt knowledge and showed it as a skill that is not a necessity for relationships, or can even harm a relationship in severe cases. Some people don't realize how they act when they have a lot of knowledge. It's hard to judge yourself. I am not intelligent, and I don't offend anyone by speaking of it, subject that's above their head. As Charlie gets more and more intelligent, the more his relationship between others begins to fail. We like to see that people hate to be inferior when Charlie moves her ahead at work. Not many women have resistance to jealousy when others are above them. And once one likes to be told what to do. I think people shouldn't be concerned about how much knowledge, but on how the knowledge goes to their head.
"Knowledge"

Lately we have just covered a chapter pertaining to knowledge and we could improve our knowledge.

The book had many ways to which we could use to help us master material. Ever since school started, I have done more studying than I ever had before. At first I didn't like this class, and it still isn't very fun but it is helping me learn to my advantage how to comprehend material and keep it.

Before I began this class I didn't really study that much or that hard because I really didn't know how. I had no idea how to use the material to my advantage like I mean have a good idea of my grades would be so much better than they are now. I definitely wouldn't be in some of the classes I am now.
My study habits have changed drastically and must in order to get out of this class and others. I am excited to see how these new skills will help me in a real class. I have learned a great deal and I will continue to use these skills through-out my college years. I think it will pay off.
Journal

I see Charly Gordon as a hard worker who is doing nothing but trying to make people happy around him so that they will like him. When he was still drunk, he didn't understand that people were just picking on him so that they could get a laugh. I did not think this was fair. They should have realized that all he wanted was to be friends with them. I felt sorry for him in that aspect, and I was glad to see him become intelligent and figure out how people really are in the world sometimes.

I don't understand his plan for women, but I feel if he could overcome that fear, that would help him greatly. He has many problems that are hard for him to deal with, like getting fired from his job, people not calling him a human being, and people blowing him off as if he wasn't there. That kind of self is hard on a person that is so smart, but cannot figure out why these things are being done to him. He has such a high IQ, but he has no common sense to go along with it.

I feel sorry for Charly at first, but then I become proud of him when he gets smarter and starts to take up for himself a little bit. I start to show people that he can do just about anything they can do. He needs his friends at the factory by showing them up, but I was proud of him because he does not need people that to be putting him down all of the time.

In comparison I can do little of myself in Charly in the way that he is always trying to make people happy. I always want people to be happy, but I don't do it just so that they will like me. Charly is a good person inside, but the people in his life treat the wrong way, so I disagree with that.
He wrote of the knowledge of something that is good to have, but it was not everything. Charly had little knowledge at first, but he was happy. As he gained more and more knowledge he figured out things about people that hurt his feelings. Because of this knowledge Charly was not as happy as he was before.

The knowledge Charly gained helped him in many ways. He got to learn things that he always wanted to learn and understand things he always gazed at. It helped Charly to see that it would not be perfect and the people around him were not as great as he thought.

The knowledge hurt Charly in a way that he became smart and rose over everyone else level. Often he did this many people would not have anything to do with him. Charly would be safe in his own little world, knowing that he was going to probably die very hard for him to swallow. Once Charly gained the knowledge he had feeling and people hurt them often.

I felt that after reading this book that knowledge is not everything. Just because you are smart does not mean that you are a happy person inside. Charly was not happy with himself because he became an outcast to most people. If Charly would have remained the same he probably would have been a lot better off.
I believe Charley has a lot of good qualities, which include having a strong determination, good morals, and caring a lot about people. I believe those qualities are also a strong part in my life.

Charley's strong determination leads him to accomplishing his goals in life. If it was not for his strong determination, I feel he wouldn't have even achieved his goal. I relate this to myself because I was always taught to never give up, even if it got tough.

Another good quality that Charley and I have got in common is our strong morals. The Charley I do not believe in lying or stealing from other people. I believe in someone's good strong moral in life will help others in the long run.
Probably one of the most important qualities of all is the ability to care about people. Caring about people has allowed Charly and myself to have some really good friends in life. Not only will caring allow someone to have good friends but people will look up to you for it, because caring for people is not something that comes easy to everyone.

I believe these are the three main qualities that Charly and I have got in common.
Knowledge

I believe that the author feels that knowledge is something that everyone wishes they had lots of, and this wish for knowledge is sometimes nothing but trouble. The author says that knowledge means trouble because people do not know how to deal with the responsibility that comes with it. These responsibilities sometimes just destroy people. I agree with the author about his beliefs on knowledge. We seem to agree that just because someone has got a lot of knowledge they
are not going to be perfect or superior to other people. In fact they will probably have some frustration and anger, which helps them to do more, to do more. My feelings did not really change through knowledge, because I was not agreed with the others. My feelings about knowledge.
Before Charlie died his surgery, he had no idea how things happened. Charlie had little memory of events that happened earlier in his life, he could find his way around and he really didn’t know much about life in general.

After the surgery, Charlie became a totally different person. He slowly progressed, became intelligent, he understood what was going on in everyday life. He found out what it was like to have a relationship with someone. Charlie found out that intelligence does not bring happiness, life only gets confusing and harder to understand.

Myself, I feel I have a good understanding of life. Life doesn’t always end up how you picture it, it only gets harder. Yet, I do think I get to a point in my life where I think it can take it easy! Life gets hard, I feel no matter what you do, if you’re not lying with yourself.
the way you are, life will never loosen up. In fact, I feel Charlie should have never preceded with the surgery.
I feel that the author of "Flowers for Algernon" felt that knowledge... was not necessarily important. I say this because he shows that Charlie is not always happy once he... knowledge. Life is not made easier dealing... people like Alice, the guys at "the" bakery, or in my class... The author tries to show that you need to be happy with the way you are and do it change the way you are for anybody or anything. I feel the feel turned the concept of knowledge being important... I feel that there's many people today that are attired on... that are happier than most of us that were just... having knowledge... I feel only... let you know... how things should be... if everything were perfect, and when everything is not it only supplies you with... downs. I feel you should be happy with yourself no matter how you are.
Before Charlie had his operation, he had more strengths in my opinion than he did when he was smart. Although Charlie was dumb, he was happy. Having people around to laugh and talk about him made Charlie happy. Although he was stupid, he was happy. In my opinion his only weakness was that he was dumb, but the key to life is being happy.

After the operation Charlie's only weakness became his strength. Charlie became to be a genius. He was the smartest man around, but he began to lose his friends. Charlie began to think he was to good for some people. People soon began to hate Charlie because of the way he acted. Sure Charlie was smart now, but he was not happy anymore.

I put myself in the same situation, but with a different decision. I would always say I would rather be happy and poor than be sad and rich. As long as I am happy, married with a great family and a job, I am satisfied. To me happiness is the key to leading a good life.
In the book, Charlie, the author thinks knowledge is important but he thinks that happiness is more important. When the author discusses how Charlie feels, he usually talks about how sad Charlie is or how happy he was when he was dumb. Although he explains how Charlie likes being smart and how he would do anything to be smart again, the author goes in great detail about Charlie's emotions. In my mind Charlie was a happy person when he was dumb because the only thing he had to worry about was becoming smart. The author strengthens this feeling I have, when Charlie begins to go through problems as soon as he becomes intelligent.

I feel that whatever makes me happy is what I want to be like. Happiness is the key to everything. A marriage would not last if the couple were not happy. The author reveals that Charlie loves his relationship with Alice because he becomes too smart. Alice brings happiness to Charlie but not after he becomes a genius. In my mind intelligence is not the most important factor of life although it helps.
Journal 7-25-89

Before the surgery Charlie is liked by many of the people in the group. Many of these people admire and Charlie because he is retarded. They know that Charlie and can get over him. After the surgery, Charlie becomes highly intelligent and this bothers many of his friends. Charlie is now able to do much more than his friends and they are jealous. They are jealous of Charlie because they know that he is smarter than them. Before the surgery Charlie's ability to do much of anything, but the many feelings and came for people. I think this is Charlie's strong point. After the surgery when he find out that his friends were making fun of him, he becomes agitated with them. His feelings become less for them because he knows they abused him.

I think we can be compared and contracted with Charlie. I think that without realizing it, we probably take advantage of people as much as we can. The same way that Charlie was abused, we probably would do the same sometimes without realizing it. We admit that we do get jealous of people when they can do certain things.
he can't. Not many times this happens, but only when it wish I could do something and I can't. Then something comes along and can do it. It makes me jealous because it want to be able to do it so bad. I think I would've acted the same way Charlie did if I would've under his experience. It was great to be able to learn and everything else I was able to do. I don't think it meant to hunt anyone. When he began to lose his intelligence, he could relate to his friends or we could understand him. When I lose something that means and great deal to me, or can't have something I really want I also get aggrieved easily. So I feel that I sometimes can be compared to Charlie in like ways, and sometimes contrast to Charlie by being like his friends. By being human we are only normal to want to be liked and do things to impress my friends. I only think it's wrong when we sometimes go too far. It's totally acceptable for Charlie to want to be normal and like everyone else. We all want to be this way.
Knowledge can be very helpful throughout one's life. Also it may cause problems for someone. With a great deal of knowledge a person could travel a long way in life. This person may have to trust a lot of people to get to the top. We guess this is a good example of how knowledge can be bad.

We think that the author of the book *Flowers For Algernon* feels that knowledge can be good and bad. We believe this is so because of the way he wrote the book. He shows us good things and bad things happening to Charlie. Sometimes Charlie was happy with knowledge, sometimes he wasn't. The same when he was ignorant. He took a great deal for someone to always be happy, which is not expected. The author expresses himself well by showing these qualities of Charlie. He clearly shows us that having a great deal of knowledge is not always good to have.

I think after reading this book my opinion of knowledge did change. I never did give much thought to whether or not knowledge is good or bad. Naturally, you take knowledge for good, but maybe it...
questionable to realize that maybe one should be careful of what he or she knows. Not necessarily don't gain more knowledge, but be careful of how you use it. Be aware of your friends and who loves you and who you love. Be careful not to hurt others, use your knowledge wisely.
Charlie showed great courage before the operation. Charlie was kind of in a no-win situation—he had nothing to lose but go ahead and try the operation. Charlie was a retarded person therefore had nothing to look forward to until Dr. Strauss said he could perform an operation to make him smart. Charlie was quite excited because Algernon, the mouse, even beat Charlie in something like a race. So Charlie was very excited and had lots of strength going into the operation. After the operation Charlie was a whole new person in attitude. He changed. Charlie thought that the operation was going to take effect the next day so he was getting discouraged as time went by. Before the operation Charlie's attitude reminded me of myself. Charlie had the attitude not to give up and keep going on with the operation, with a second thought, I admire a person with the attitude of Charlie.
Knowledge played a very important role in Flower's life. Knowledge was something that Charlie didn't have at all. Knowledge helped Charlie a great deal because he found out who his friends were. Knowledge also helped Charlie to realize it was better to be himself than have the operation and be different. Knowledge is a great gift and is great to have, knowledge can help you in all areas no matter what you want to do. Here are a lot of examples of knowledge: for instance, Knowledge of a football game, Knowledge in books.

Knowledge to me is very important because knowledge plays an important role in my life every day without knowledge life would be kind of hard. Both of my parents have college education which is knowledge and that has helped our family to be what it is today. Knowledge is something you must have in this world or it will be hard to make it. If Charlie had more knowledge, the knowledge he would have in reading or knowing some of the things he experienced in the story.
Charlie Gordon has changed for the worst. After his surgery he has begun thinking he is so much better than everyone else, no matter if they are retarded or normal. This is the biggest weakness Charlie has. The strength he has is only that he is intelligent. I like the "old" Charlie better, because he wasn't looking down on everyone.

I don't think Charlie and myself have anything in common. He is very intelligent and I'm just regular smart. Since he has become intelligent he has begun to look down on other retarded people. I make a big point of not making fun of, or look down on other's not as privileged as myself.
I think the author in *Flowers for Algernon* sees knowledge as something good, but can be bad if you use it the wrong way. The reason I say this is because the way in the book he lets Charlie have the surgery to get smart. Towards the end of the book he shows the readers how it is if you use your knowledge negatively. Charlie began to be mean to all people. This made Charlie's knowledge bad.

I think knowledge is something you have to learn from the time you are born. If there really was a surgery that made retarded people smart I don't think that would be good, because if grown-up retarded people are suddenly smart in a world they are not familiar with it will be bad in the long run. I think knowledge is good, as long as you do not use it in a bad way.
Charlie was like a child. He depended on a lot of people. He had a lot of weaknesses, but one of his great strong points was the way he thought about people. He loved almost everyone, and would do just about anything for them.

After the operation, Charlie became a lot smarter. He began to write and spell better. He begins to understand things, but most of all he realizes how his friends took him for granted. They thought that they were better than him, so they made fun of him and teased him. He realized that they weren't really his friends and he didn't need them, because all they would do was laugh at him. They noticed that he was much more intelligent than them, and this made them jealous. All the workers at the bakery began to hate him.

His views about everything changed. He soon became so wrapped up about himself that he didn't have any friends at all. At this point, Alice didn't even like him. He was incapable of making friends or thinking about other people and their
problems; all he was interested in was himself.

I can compare myself to Charlie because I also, at times just think about myself. I know it wrong, but sometimes I just get in those certain moods and don't care about anyone else but myself.
Knowledge is the understanding gained by actual experience. Charlie gained knowledge by doing the experiences with the doctors. In a way this knowledge benefitted Charlie and in a way it harmed Charlie.

Knowledge helped Charlie because it made him think and he understood things better. It also made him feel important. He felt special because he was now smart.

Knowledge on the other hand hurt Charlie. He felt that if he was smart, that people would like him more. He realized that this was not the case. The so-called friends at the bakery did not like him anymore. He realized that they only liked him because they felt they were better than him. He was easy to put down. Now that he was smart they didn’t want to be around him because they realized he was better than them.

Knowledge also hurt him.
Because he used to be a caring person, now he only cared about himself, and getting smarter. I think the author thought that knowledge in a way was important, but it is really the kind of person you are. I feel the same way. I think it is important to have knowledge, but not so much that you don't care about anything else. It is the kind of person you are. A person who cares about himself and others also.
In order to describe Charlie, you have to understand that his intelligence quota is lower than reality. This means that Charlie is mentally, socially, and emotionally retarated. Even though Charlie was retarated, he was a very determined person. He wanted to be smart, to have friends like everyone else. Charlie had friends at work, he thought. But these people were not like his friends, all they did was make fun of him. After the operation, Charlie then killed both his kids' parents were. But then, he also killed down on other people because he was incorrect. I do think Charlie and I are alike in some ways. Just like he wanted to be someone and succeed in life, so do I. Even though Charlie became retarated again, I still think he should be treated like a human being, not just someone to laugh at.
The author discusses knowledge in "Flowers for Algernon" when he writes about Charlie. Charlie's goal in life was to gain knowledge. He would get this knowledge by experiencing life like everyone else. The author had Charlie gain more knowledge as the days went by. So the author knew knowledge was very important to him. Knowledge is very important to him in our lives. It is very beneficial to us to have knowledge. It will help us throughout our lives. Each person has their own individual knowledge. This knowledge is the ability to learn and understand something in everyday life. Knowledge is important that is learned and kept in our memories. Everyone should be thankful for the knowledge they have, even if it is not very much.
"Charlie"

Charlie before the operation was a mentally retarded man, he was capable of only the basic of skills necessary to survive. Although he had only basic skills, he had the desire to become a smart man. This desire is what has lead Charlie through this operation. He is now an extremely smart man who still has the desire to learn more.

Although Charlie strives ahead of all when concerned with intelligence, he is lacking many qualities socially. He has problems with adjusting his adult physical needs and his emotions toward the opposite sex; he is like an adolescent boy when it comes to sex. These qualities of inadequacy is what are keeping Charlie from achieving and maintaining a mature adult relationship.

I, like Charlie have inadequacies also. My inadequacies stem from my belief in myself. I feel as though I am smart and have the capabilities of being smarter, but, when it comes to the actual learning of difficult subjects, I often try to take an easy route. I always take the easier side out and go around the tough subject. A perfect example of this is applied when I study. I will memorize easy material and skip the harder material. By doing this, my grade is lowered because
a full understanding of the material is not achieved.

Charlie also takes the easy way out when it comes to his difficulty with expressing his physical needs. Instead of opening up to Alice and developing a mature relationship, he runs to Jaye, whom doesn't expect him to open up. Jaye is his easy route out of an unpleasant situation.
"Knowledge"

To define knowledge in Keys' opinion would be quite difficult. At first, Keys thinks knowledge is the key to life. Knowledge is knowing who you are, who your friends are, and who your family is. This was what Charlie was acquiring knowledge of.

Charlie's knowledge of these things made it easy for him to understand life. He realized that there are many ups and downs in life. Instead of seeing only the good in everything, Charlie was faced with seeing truth and deception.

I consider knowledge in the intellectual sense. Knowledge to me is being a person who has information about all areas. A knowledgable person would be a well-rounded person. A person having knowledge would have a valuable opinion about everything.

Keys view of knowledge and my view of knowledge are not totally different. They are the same in that when someone strives for knowledge, they are acquiring new information. In essence, this was Charlie's main objective.
Charlie's strengths were his naivety, honesty, and caring for people and his real drive to do good things. These were his strengths before the operation. After the operation he was quite intelligent, he learned whatever he wanted to. Another strength of his was his determination to do things. Charlie's weakness before the operation was his unawareness of things. For example, he didn't realize people were laughing at him. Another weakness was that he was retarded, and could not learn like normal people do. His weakness after the operation was that he no longer could talk to people because he was too extroverted to everyone else.

I feel like I am nothing like Charlie. I have never felt superior to anyone in my ability to know things that they don't. I also don't know what it's like to be retarded. I feel I have a lot of common sense, which he did not when he was retarded. I do somewhat have a drive to learn, but it has
never come one tenth as fast as it did for Charlie. That is the only slight similarity that I have with Charlie.
Knowledge always seems to be the thing everyone is looking for. It seems to be the answer to all the problems. It is very important for people to be knowledgeable when they are in their profession, but knowledge is just as important in everyday life. When a person knows, or has just found out, information by using his knowledge it does not always work. Learning certain things in life can be both an depressing. Learning is not always good, but for the most part it is a good thing. Learning that your friend has lied or anyone close to you has been lying to you doesn't feel good. That is an example of how learning, or gaining knowledge is not beneficial, or not good. I think the author also feels the way I do. Maybe he was depressed, as I am, when he wrote the book, that might be why we feel the same way. I think he feels that most knowledge is good, but there does exist a knowledge that is not necessarily good. I feel that some people are better off being dumb, or not so intelligent. He doesn't feel that intelligence is the most important thing in the world.
The author explains knowledge in a way that we can understand. He puts a phrase in sentence form and we can understand it in our own mind. The author wants Charlie to gain knowledge day by day. I guess I can say the author has a highly percent of knowledge because of the way he wants a retard to have knowledge. I feel that knowledge is very important to have every day. We need knowledge daily in school, in a car, etc. Knowledge helps us learn new things each and every day. Knowledge lets others see how intelligent we as human beings are. We need knowledge to remember the material we learn. If we use our knowledge we will understand all about life. I feel that we all should appreciate what knowledge we have whether it is a lot or a little. I'm glad I have knowledge and I could never make fun of anyone who has less knowledge I think I do.
Journal Writing

In the reading of *Flowers for Algernon*, we have come across a great deal of thought-stimulating situations. The reading of such an unfortunate event tends to make one appreciative of what they have, while at the same time allow what the reader realizes to certain circumstances. Charlie is a very fit upon character, she has strength, but he was yet to be able to use them in his favor. I am presently experiencing such an at times inner, often being a freshman and at college is quite the understudy, and though I have a great deal to offer, I shall yet to get much of a chance to display it. That in itself is a weakness, which is one of the flaws in Charlie's character. Charlie in the end, they are quite in general and the second aspect of life not being emotionally alive, the ends.
with this relationship, as apparent to Charlie, and thus she felt insecure of herself. Eugie, including myself, was insecure, and the fact that Charlie's operation has made his intelligence act with his emotional aspect makes him a disadvantage. Overall, though, Charlie strikes me as a fairly competent person, who, frankly, has the weight ideals in mind, perhaps society who has told us you must be corrupted to get on. Everyone else thinks everyone wishes they could be strong enough to stand up and fight at times the way Charles does, and pesky stick to more of their own ideals, rather than conforming to what is "socially correct."
Journal
Dec. 5

The topic of knowledge comes up a great deal in the book *Algebra.* The issue is truly controversial. The author illustrates a thought of how much knowledge gained by the operation hurt Charlie. He also expresses a part of how Charlie realizes that he can't hold on to his knowledge, yet he knows exactly what she will return to. This is thus an example of Charlie's regression, and how in the long run the author seems to state that "Knowledge" is as all important in some people's happiness. I personally feel that perhaps Charlie might have been better off if she had the operation, yet everyone wants
what she can't have. This is why no one is ever really satisfied. I think that in the real world of today knowledge is a necessity, at least knowledge of itself, or at least some sort of knowledge of the world, "street smart.

Charlie had neither, but she did have the inclination to attain it. If she had not gotten the chance to be smart for awhile she would have been unhappy. Yet she was unhappy anyway. In one sense, "it is better to have loved and lost." But quite frankly there are pros and cons of everythings, for one at the other extreme, "You can't miss what you never had."
A senseless, disembodied man inside of me, little bys mind stables love and friends. Charlie is not aware of his whereabouts or his environment. He wants to see everyone smile he knows that it smile is good. He's unable to control his bodily functions. I like others grew out of this helpless stage and turn into Someone. Charlie can't but help him being the way he is.

An operation brings Charlie out of this stage into a new world almost. Something his moistd addressed before. His surroundings mean something to him, people's feelings along with his own mean something. Charlie is new growing and broadening his outlook on life. I am doing the same now. I came from a small private school into a whole new world at his. I see people different just as Charlie started seeing people differently. I went through the same experience with girls and not dreams. Charlie's life is being lived now, as before it was useless. All he was do to most to people was someone to pick on and not know he was being picked on. Charlie like myself is much more of a person now he is understanding the facts of life and learning to deal with them on his own.
Knowledge

The author of "Flowers for Algernon," Daniel Keyes, makes me feel like knowledge isn't all that important in a sense. Daniel takes a drug that makes him an operation which allows him to gain knowledge. This knowledge activates Charlie's social life and popularity a great deal.

Before the operation, Charlie had no knowledge and was laughed at by people who he thought were his friends. He wanted to gain knowledge so he could be like other people, be normal. By gaining this knowledge, Charlie was not liked as much and became totally different in his attitude toward other people. He found out the truth about how he was treated before the operation and wanted to take advantage of the knowledge he had gained, to get back at everyone. People started to dislike Charlie more the smarter he got. He was kind like he couldn't do anything right. Charlie began to lose his genius knowledge and returned to his old self. People liked him better this way.

I think Keyes is saying that a person with no knowledge can and should be treated like a person with knowledge. By Charlie trying so hard to get everyone to like him because he had some knowledge, he was rejected by everyone and himself.
Journal entry

Before the operation, Charlie was a man with a heart: he cared about what other people thought about him. As long as other people were happy with him, he was happy with himself. Before the operation, Charlie was determined to become smarter, and he would try relentlessly to learn.

After the operation, Charlie rose to a level beyond that of the normal human being. He became so smart that he soon found his friends to be dull and meaningless. His friends saw this and soon turned against him. He became a loner, but eventually found himself.

The operation did allow him to learn of his past, but his past was not good. I am like Charlie after he had his operation, in that I try to degrade others to make myself look good. I differ from Charlie in that I don't have his ability to learn. I wish I could learn as quickly as he did after the operation.
Knowledge

Before reading *Flowers for Algernon*, I felt that the more you knew, the better off you were. I felt that you should try to gain as much knowledge as possible. This would give you the edge over the next guy.

After reading *Flowers for Algernon*, I realized that knowledge is important to a certain extent. I found that it's good to increase your knowledge, but to become a genius has its setbacks. For one, you may rise above the intellectual level of others and completely shut them out of your life, as Charlie did in *Flowers*. Also, you may become so smart that you learn things that you really would rather not know. For example, Charlie's becoming a genius gave him insight on how others weren't as bright as they were cracked up to be. He found that doctors, lawyers, and other high class people were no more intelligent than anyone else.

I think that the author of *Flowers for Algernon* agrees with my new ideas about knowledge. I also think that our views are accurate with proof to back them up.
The Charlie In Me

Charlie was a man who had many strikes against him. His retardation was taken advantage of by many. Charlie always allowed everyone to be his friend, and no matter what they said or what they did to him, he loved them and continued to believe they were his friends. He was made a fool of and always being made fun of, but then once Charlie's I.Q. began to rise and he became more intelligent, people became afraid of Charlie. Only then thought Charlie thought he was better than they were. No matter how Charlie was society considered him an outcast. In many ways I find myself to resemble Charlie. In one respect I find myself allowing my friends to take advantage of me. I don't realize it, but sometimes almost to the point of being made a fool of. It's not really that I allowed them to take advantage of me it's that sometimes I'm a little gullible or maybe I'm nice. I find that it's hard for me to tell my friends no. Sometimes even though I know they're going to take me for a ride, I go along. Hopefully Charlie will be excepted what he is and his
friends will not take advantage of him. In the same sense I hope my friends realize that I would do anything for them, but that I don’t want them to take advantage of me either.
Knowledge

I feel Daniel Keys has mixed opinions about knowledge. In one sense he feels it is one of the most important virtues of life. As Charlie's intelligence grew, his knowledge of the things happening around him expanded. He was able to realize what the people, who he thought were his friends, weren't his friends. Charlie also realized that maybe his being the way he was before he became smart wasn't so bad. When Charlie's intelligence was greater, his knowledge of other people and his surroundings weren't so satisfying.

I think that knowledge has two concepts. It can be split into what knowledge is called common sense, and book knowledge. Common sense can't be considered any less important than book knowledge. In certain cases, more book knowledge is called for, where as in the same sense, it isn't knowledge as sometimes more helpful. I feel that we should try to keep an equilibrium between them, allowing ourselves the opportunity to expand in both aspects.
In Flowers for Algernon, Charlie is a retarded person who is used by society. Because he couldn't understand what was going on, people were able to take advantage of him. They used him for an experiment like he was an animal. This shows how cruel and apathetic people can be. I can relate to Charlie in that sometimes people try and take advantage of me. The difference is that most of the time I am aware of it. Charlie couldn't tell from right and wrong. When people would laugh at him, he would laugh too, not knowing what was really going on. As he became more and more intelligent, he began to understand things. He was so smart that he still couldn't relate to people on a normal level. His intelligence was too high. All throughout Algernon, Charlie struggles to adapt with society. Many people go through this and find it sometimes impossible. I feel aggravated and worn out at times, just from trying to fit in with...
the "normal" crowd and trying to express my ideas and feelings.
The author of "Flowers for Algernon" didn't think knowledge was necessary for Charlie to be happy. Charlie became angry and upset when he started to get smart. Sometimes knowledge isn't as good as it seems. People who aren't smart can offer other things to this world. Each person is special and doesn't have to be intelligent to be important. Sometimes intelligence and knowledge is blind. People will look down on others that aren't smart. They will shut them cut when they could be learning from them. Smart people can always learn from retarded people. Together they could experience things that otherwise they couldn't. Knowledge is beneficial if people use it in auspicious ways. If not, it could handicap them, by limiting them. I wouldn't want to be a genius nor would I want to be retarded. Being in the middle helps me relate to all kinds of people. I can learn & from everyone, smart and dumb, which really gives me more knowledge than someone who shoots all their darts out.
Journal Entry:

Charlie is a man facing a lot of changes. When he was a child, he was naive and scared of his surroundings. As an adult, I see him as a boy trapped in a man's body, unknowing of who he is. After the operation, he finally was given the opportunity to prove himself and become a remarkable, intelligent person.

Charlie is now faced with problems within himself. He is desperately trying to find out who he is and who he was.

The way Charlie sees himself in windows and flashbacks kind of reminds me of myself. Sometimes...
I feel that people see me for only what I am on the outside and not for who I really am the person on the inside. If I look at myself in the mirror sometimes I feel as though I'm looking at a different person. I sometimes act in a way to some people that I normally wouldn't in front of people I know well. This reminds me of how I used to see myself as a different person.
In the book *Flowers For Algernon*, I feel the author is presenting his views on knowledge in two separate ways. He doesn't necessarily let the reader know which way he feels about knowledge. He talks about knowledge being something desired or wanted being needed to make someone feel equal to others. The author also describes knowledge as being and inconvenience by it causing people to worry a lot which could have a bad effect on a person.

I feel knowledge is necessary for life in today's society. Without knowledge you can't get any good paying job. Since everything costs money it is mandatory to have a job to live freely.
Unless you are a person with no self-respect and want to become homeless and dependent on others for the rest of your life.
VITA
OF
ROBERT KENT BROWN
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

My initial interest during my undergraduate years was in Communication Arts/Telecommunications; specifically audio-visual production. Early experiences in this field included Chairman of the Communications Committee of the Student Government Association; Technical Director for Stone Productions, a theatrical/musical touring company; Producer/Director/Writer/Host for Grapevine Radio, a 30 minute weekly news and information radio program broadcasted on the campus sponsored radio station; Sound Director for the World Action Singers, a university sponsored, student concert group; and, in the capacity of production manager for Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association's prime-time, NBC network television specials. During the senior year of my undergraduate studies I became increasingly interested in the field of education. I was particularly drawn to issues relating to the epistemological implications inherent in learning.

Upon graduation in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Arts, I pursued my education interests and accepted a position as registrar at Faith Bible College, a newly formed independent, ecumenical Christian college in Shreveport, Louisiana.

In 1981, after being appointed the previous year to the position of Executive Vice-President of FBC, I decided to further my interests in education and enrolled in a Masters of Education program at Louisiana State University in Shreveport. At this time my concerns in education were expanding from religious to public education. My major emphasis
was in the philosophical and historical foundations of education, with a minor concentration in educational psychology. It was during these studies that my interest in reading became crystallized through an introduction to the literacy work of Paulo Freire. My developing interest in the interactive relationships between the experiential world of students, teachers and texts (ignited by Freire's research and literacy practices) later guided my doctoral studies in a phenomenological direction.

In 1986 I received my M.Ed. degree and also the appointment to President of FBC. It was at this time the region's oil-based economy was beginning its swift progression toward eventual collapse. A partial outcome of this economic struggle was a significant paring of the academic programs and personnel of FBC. This substantial reduction of the general operations of the college, in 1989, afforded me the opportunity to leave FBC and work towards the completion of my Ph.D. studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La. My research there has been in the philosophical and historical foundations of curriculum theory, development and evaluation with applied emphasis given to reading. While at LSU, I have presented at two national education conferences and wrote and had accepted for publication a chapter in the text *Understanding Curriculum As Phenomenological and Deconstructed Text* (Pinar and Reynolds, in press).
Candidate: ROBERT KENT BROWN

Major Field: EDUCATION

Title of Dissertation: TOWARD A PHENOMENOLOGY OF CURRICULUM: THE WORK OF MAX VAN MANEN AND T. TETSUO AOKI

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

JUNE 21, 1991