# Heidegger's Contribution to the Understanding of Work-Based Studies

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Paul Gibbs

# Heidegger's Contribution to the Understanding of Work-Based Studies

Springer

Dr. Paul Gibbs
Middlesex University
The Institute for Work Based Learning
Epaminonda Street 7
1076 Nicosia
2nd Floor, Corner of Kennedy
Avenue
Cyprus
P.Gibbs@mdx.ac.uk

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*To Ethel, well met and missed. In fulfilment of a promise.*

# Series Editors' Foreword

Many might find the prospect of providing an account that combines a highly abstract philosophical work with a discussion of highly practical endeavours within one single book quite implausible. To exemplify the paradox: it might be anticipated that a book on Heidegger and work-based studies is either theoretically weak, thereby doing an injustice to Heidegger, but adequately considering practical work issues, or too abstract to understand for anybody working in the field, but doing justice to Heidegger's contributions. Nevertheless, Paul Gibbs happily disappoints such preconceptions with this book. Didactically skilful, the author captures the interest of the reader starting from the first page onwards in a style that merges argumentative and practical clarity with adequate analytical depth concerning existential philosophy. From a conceptual perspective, Gibbs attempts to use Heidegger's phenomenological analysis to interpret the notion of 'Arbeit' (labour/work) and to apply his conclusions to the context of work-based studies. He does so by explaining the underlying philosophical implementations of the value and meaning of labour/work and thus redefining labour/work in our contemporary society, which can be characterized as being oriented towards knowledge, higher learning, or human resource development. Gibbs intends to cultivate a kind of philosophical awareness in the educational world for the dichotomy between theory and practice. Referring to Heidegger, a reanalysis of core phenomena is required, for example, time and space. Learning is reconstructed within this volume as a hermeneutical and dialogical process between the world, the teacher and the students.

From a political perspective, Gibbs sheds new light on the reputation of work-based studies within our university culture. He argues that work-based studies do not only include practical, technical and executive skills but may also increase methodological and theoretical awareness and knowledge. Thus, the book encourages readers to reflect on the role and meaning of work/labour within our society and, possibly, to reassess the role of work-based studies for understanding these issues.

The structure of the book assists with its comprehensibility, even for readers not yet familiar with Heideggerian thought. After basic research problems of work-based studies are addressed in the first chapter, the next four chapters give an introduction into the main concepts of Heidegger's philosophy. True philosophers might deplore that the original (German) language was lost, but given that a broad

audience is addressed, the translation into the English language might have helped a lot to circumvent difficulties of comprehension. From the seventh chapter onwards, Gibbs applies the results of the phenomenological analysis to the issues of work-based studies. He skilfully brings both areas together. For the purposes of this book series, it is greatly appreciated that the author was courageous enough to read and discuss Heidegger with a practical perspective and to apply his theory of practice to the concrete political and economical situation as found in the area of work-based studies as currently conducted in the United Kingdom. The clarity and educational impetus of the book contribute to the effect that even those readers who have not been philosophically trained will easily understand Heidegger's basic concepts. Those who want to elaborate in depth the whole subtlety and complexity of Heidegger's work after reading the book can easily continue (and might consider reading Heidegger's work in the original German language).

The book is, in its outline and in its research mission, quite novel. Going beyond conventional analysis is the only way, however, to open new avenues into the analysis of work, practice, and learning. Gibbs' work thus is a worthy contribution to this book series, a courageous and interesting one. It enriches available analyses of work and learning significantly.

June 2010

Stephen Billett
Hans Gruber
Christian Harteis

# Preface

In his recent editorial, 'Heidegger, Phenomenology and Educations' in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Peters concludes that:

> Heidegger and his forms of phenomenology have been a neglected figure in the field of philosophy of education in the English-speaking world. Little has been written on Heidegger or about his work and its significance for educational thought and practice. (2009, p. 1).

With the notable exception of his own edited book, there is an absence of in-depth utilization of Heidegger's works specifically in the vocation and workplace learning literature, and it is towards this that this book attempts to go. That is not to say Heidegger's thoughts have not been used to make contributions to professional education (see Dall'Alba, 2009) for they have, especially in the nursing literature, where the hermeneutic phenomenological approach informs research method and practice. However, here the focus has been on a limited number of his works, mainly *Being and Time*, and this text tries to expand the range of his works available for us to discuss.

The approach is not a critique of Heidegger's work on education or the workplace, but an attempt to reveal the benefits that an understanding of Heidegger can bring to critical appraisal. Nor does the work promote Heidegger above others' philosophical contribution to the understanding of workplace learning. The aim is more modest. It is to interest others in Heidegger's contribution and in so doing offer a stimulus to thinking along with Heidegger about the phenomena of learning, work and being. I hope I might have gone some way toward achieving this.

# Contents


**1 Introduction** . . . 1
Background . . . 1
Heidegger? . . . 2
Chapter 2: Work-Based Learning as a Field of Study . . . 4
Chapter 3: Learning as Knowledge of Being-in-the-World . . . 5
Chapter 4: Dwelling at Work: A Place Where Vocation and Identity Grow? . . . 5
Chapter 5: What Is Work? A Heideggerian Insight into Work as a Site for Learning . . . 5
Chapter 6: Heidegger; Time, Work and the Challenges for University-Led Work-Based Learning . . . 6
Part II—Issues in Work-Based Studies . . . 6
Chapter 7: Assessment and Recognition of Work-Based Learning . . . 6
Chapter 8: Quality in Work-Based Studies: Not Lost, Merely Undiscovered . . . 7
Chapter 9: Adopting Consumer Time: Potential Issues for Higher Level Work-Based Learning . . . 7
Chapter 10: The Concept of Boredom: Its Impact on Work-Based Learning . . . 7
Chapter 11: Practical Wisdom and the Worker Researcher . . . 8
Chapter 12: Carrying Out Phenomenological Research in the Workplace . . . 8
Chapter 13: The Recession and the World of Work-Based Studies . . . 8

**Part I Context**

**2 Work-Based Learning as a Field of Study** . . . 11
WBL: Roots in the Ancients . . . 12
Understanding Work-Based Learning . . . 13
Developing a Notion of Field for Work-Based Learning . . . 14
A Fuller Heideggerian Understanding . . . 20

**3 Learning as Knowledge of Being-in-the-World** . . . 23
Capability, Potential and Actualization . . . 24
The Unconcealment of Being Through Learning . . . 26

The Concealment of Representational Thinking . . . . . . . . . . . . . 27
Existential Reflection . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 29
Pedagogy of *Praxis* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 31
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 32

**4 Dwelling at Work** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 35
Phronesis . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 36
Technical Skill or the Embracing of a Craft—Turning to Heidegger . . 38
The Tension Between Workplace Identity and Dispositions of Democracy . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 41
What Is the Evidence? . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 42

**5 What Is Work? A Heideggerian Insight into the Workplace as a Site for Learning** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 47
Understanding the Meaning of the Workplace . . . . . . . . . . . . 48
Structuring . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 49
The Equipmental Nature of the Workplace . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 51
Defining Work and the Worker . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 53
Marcuse . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 56
Arendt . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 57
Technological Way of Being . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 58
The Worker . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 59
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 62

**6 Heidegger: Time, Work and the Challenges for University-Led Work-Based Learning** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 63
Heidegger and His Phenomena of Time . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 64
Heidegger and His Phenomena of Historicity . . . . . . . . . . . . 68
The Worker and the Labourer in the Age of Technology: Heidegger's Use of Jünger's Works . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 70
Questioning Temporality and Seeking an Originary Future . . . . . 73

**Part II Issues in Work-Based Studies**

**7 Assessment and Recognition of Work-Based Learning** . . . . . . . 79
The Temporality of the Known: A Fore-Structure and Foreclosure of Assessment . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 80
Tacit Knowledge . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 81
Evidence . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 81
Disclosing Educational Possibilities, Not Assessing . . . . . . . . . 84
Explicitness of Learning . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 86
Phenomenological Interpretations . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 89

**8 Quality in Work-Based Studies Is Not Lost, Merely Undiscovered** . 93
Quality and Work-Based Learning . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 94
Quality in Our Everydayness from a Heideggerian Perspective . . . . . 96
Quality Undisclosed . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 97

A Conscience? . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 99
The Desire for Disappearance . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 100

**9 Adopting Consumer Time: Potential Issues for Higher Level Work-Based Learning** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 103
Consumerism and the Changing Notion of Time . . . . . . . . . . . . 104
Higher Level Work-Based Learning . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 106
Heidegger Once Again . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 107
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 109

**10 The Concept of Boredom: Its Impact on Work-Based Learning** . . 111
Moods . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 112
Heidegger and the Experience of Boredom . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 114
Three Explorations: Bored-by, Bored-with and Profound Boredom . . 120
Bored-by . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 120
Bored-with . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 121
Profound Boredom . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 122
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 123

**11 Practical Wisdom and the Workplace Researcher** . . . . . . . . . . 125
The Skills of Workplace Researchers . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 128
Practical Enquiry . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 130
The Purpose of the Action . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 131
The Means to Be Able to Act . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 132
The Feasibility of the Act . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 133
Determinate Timing . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 133
Respect for Others . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 134
Research Ethics: Gratitude . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 135
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 138

**12 Doing Phenemological Research in the Workplace** . . . . . . . . . 139
Setting the Scene for the Vignettes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 141
Vignettes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 142
Vignette 1 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 142
Vignette 2 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 145
Vignette 3 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 146
Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 146

**13 The World of Work-Based Studies and the Recession** . . . . . . . . 149
Learning . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 149
Capability . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 151
The Workplace as a Learning Environment . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 152
A Generalized Anxiety . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 153

**References** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 155

**Author Index** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 169

**Subject Index** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 173

# List of Tables

6.1 Heidegger's notions of time and being . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 68
10.1 Contrasting forms of boredom (after Heidegger, 1995a, pp. 130–131) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 117
10.2 Heidegger's notions of time and being and boredom . . . . . . . . . 120
12.1 A phenomenology of skill acquisition (after Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2004, pp. 251–253) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 140

# Chapter 1
# Introduction

## Background

Higher education has shifted from being a privileged professional education for the rich and extremely bright to a more accessible right for a growing number of people. This massification of higher education, at least in the Anglophone countries, seems as much an economic as an educational policy initiative. However, both the intrinsic and extrinsic values of a homogeneously positioned education are coming under question. This is due to its "averaging" or "totalizing" acculturalizing notion of capitalist self-interest, rather than one of balancing self-interest and civic leadership. The nature of education is certainly being commercialized, both in its provision and in its curriculum content. This is unsurprising, given that the benefits of education are also almost exclusively positioned in terms of their effect on income. However, the loss to civic society from such a nihilistic drift is hardly discussed in terms other than the void between those who attend university and those who don't. This book intends to consider, through the works of Heidegger, how work-based studies, paradoxically, need not follow that route and might invigorate a social as well as a personal being-in-the-world together with others. Work-based studies thus offer a diversified form of higher education where the educational institution and also the commercial organization offer a dwelling place where learning, rather than teaching, might best be encouraged and where discourse and recognition might coalesce.

Regardless of the differences between nations in its implementation, work-based learning (WBL) has grown out of the idea of independent study and as a mode of study still has much in common with WBL as a field of study (Gibbs & Garnett, 2007). They share similar approaches to knowledge and understanding and are generated outside of the university in a practice context. There are similar pedagogical approaches where students are "experts" in the sense that they are or have been in a particular work situation and have an understanding of its nuances, micropolitics, and so on. Students researching their own practice are common in WBL programmes of study.

Practitioner-led research and development has become the principal means of developing organizational learning and enhancing the effectiveness of individuals at work (Barnett & Griffin, 1997; Billett, 2004; Raelin, 2008; Costley & Stephenson, 2008). Change in organizational practice has meant flatter management

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hierarchies and individual practitioners taking greater responsibility. A higher education response is to construct programmes of learning that enable practitioners to take a critical, reflexive and evidenced-based approach to change and development at work. Practitioner-led research and development is now an essential capability for people at work.

The curriculum in WBL is a new and emerging field of study in higher education (Billett, 2009a; Boud & Costley, 2007; Boud & Solomon, 2001). Universities are now beginning to establish a research infrastructure that promotes and develops excellence in practitioner-led research and development and to apply quality assurance to the delivery of research and development at work. To this end there has been a steady growth of undergraduate awards, master's degrees and professional doctorates (Scott, Brown, Lunt, & Thorne, 2004) that focus on professional areas of learning.

The book's purpose is to explore how work-based studies may be investigated through the work of Heidegger and how institutions might embrace WBL. At this time of global recession, debate is, or ought to be, taking place on how best to build out of the recession and what will be the form of the work and what type of person that emerges.

## Heidegger?

I acknowledge the dominance of the economic discourse of higher education, but this book tries to argue that Heidegger offers a phenomenological approach to understanding the diversity to higher education that WBL can bring. I seek to develop Heidegger's notion of the expanding importance of work-based studies, which is becoming of special interest to higher education institutions and commercial organizations. The book offers a structured argument for a phenomenological understanding of both the educational institution and the commercial environment considered as a workplace.

Why Heidegger? The rather obscure writing of Heidegger and his commitment to understanding Being seem a strange place to begin an investigation into workplace learning. Certainly, there isn't an obvious link to the practical philosophies of Aristotle and Kant in the sense of direct discussion of works of politics, ethics or rhetoric, although Heidegger undertook important studies of Aristotle's work in these fields. Thus the traditional understanding of practical philosophy does not apply to Heidegger. However, this does not prevent us from using his analysis of being-in-the-world as a tool for the exploration of our learning within the workplace.

Heidegger's location of the issue of Being, which is our development towards what we might be, is evident in the very early chapters of his *Being and Time* and is especially obvious in Chapters 3 and 4. Here Heidegger lays down what the notion of being-in-the-world might be for a philosophical investigation and proceeds to give examples of working life to explore the phenomena of working life. His references to equipment, work, production skills, learning and teaching, from these early works until his later works, reveal a relevance to workplace learning to which few practical philosophers, with perhaps the exception of Dewey, can lay claim.

Grounded in Heidegger's early works is this ability to illustrate his point through an understanding of work in and amongst things, as well as using them to create and produce other artefacts. There are other reasons why the work of Heidegger can shed light on WBL and the practice of learning in the workplace. One concerns the arguments that Heidegger makes regarding the importance of multidisciplinarity. Indeed he reacts strongly, especially in his earlier works and most notably in his *Rectoral Address*, against the fragmentation of and hyper-specialization of the modern university, which leads ultimately to lack of collegial values, lack of standards and a technological way of being. This analysis, I would argue, works just as well when discussing professional communities of practice as discussing the mechanization of industrial workplaces. He attributes the latter to methodological manifestations of knowledge in the university when he states that our "*Dasein*—in the community of researchers, teachers and students—is determined by science or knowledge," and in the following paragraph states

> today only the technical organisation of universities and facilities consolidates this multiplicity of dispersed disciplines; the practical establishment of goals by each discipline provides the only meaningful sources of unity. Nonetheless, the rootedness of the sciences in their essential ground has atrophied so that our being-in-the-world is shaped by the knowledge we uncover and then most importantly that we embody (Heidegger, 1998c, pp. 82–83).

Thus, as we practice what we know, which has become fragmented, we tend to see the world itself in fragments. From such a position we tend to see the world as our resource and so lack the compassion for others that we might have had previously. In the sense we become instrumental in our learning activities and how we think about ourselves and the world. We use our acquired skills less in caring for others; we focus more on their use. Yet, the practices of workplace learning, and especially workplace research, seem to be less reliant on this fragmentation, dealing with situations, people and learning tasks in a more open way, thus attempting, albeit in a not unproblematic way, to address the issues Heidegger sees for traditional university knowledge creation.

There is a complementary aspect to the reason mentioned previously, and that is the way in which Heidegger can be read. There is compelling reason to believe that, at least in his early work, a Heideggerian viewpoint could be considered a pragmatic point of view. This view, held by Okrent (1988) and Rorty (1982) in particular, reveals the truth as unconcealment of that which is interpreted by the actor and has resonance with the work of Dewey as an inquiry into problem-solving. For instance, Heidegger's notion of truth has a strong pragmatic feel and, given the influence of this idea of *Aletheia*—unconcealing—(see *Early Greek Thinking*, 1984, for a detailed discussion, and to which I turn in Chapter 3) on his later works, is worth a few lines of explanation here. In his essay *On the Essence of Truth*, Heidegger applies his historical understanding of essence to truth, that is, an understanding that necessarily reflects the epoch within which it is used. Thus the essence of truth is not a metaphysical, unchangeable idea. Rather, what is taken as truth has an ontotheological basis. It is in the pragmatic tradition in that truth is what we need to take it to be. The essence of truth thus refers, as Thompson notes, "to the way in which this

'revealedness' takes shape historically, namely as a series of different ontological constellations of intelligibility" (2001, p. 247).

Certainly, Heidegger was not an abstract thinker divorced from action and the world. Indeed, his Nazi membership and his actions at the University of Freiburg while being a Rector show, disappointedly, a man all too prepared to act. Heidegger was a questioning philosopher who was concerned that we did not accept that which seems obvious without first understanding its essence—its existence. In one of his latter works, *Letters on Humanism*, he noted that "the essence of action is accomplishment. To accomplish means to unfold something into the fullness of its essence, to lead it forth into this fullness *producere*" (1977e, p. 217). According to Volpi, for Heidegger the Aristotelian ideas of

> *praxis*, *poiesis* and *theoria* were neither dispositions nor particular kinds of action, but rather modalities of Being inherent in the structure of *Dasein*; they constitute the conditions of the possibility of the practical theoretical, practical and productive comportment... It is no longer that *theoria* which is considered as the supreme determination but instead, *praxis* (2007, p. 37).

Moreover, Heidegger makes a number of direct references to education, workers, labour, training and professional development in his early works such as *Aristotle's Metaphysics Θ 1–3*, *On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, *The Concept of Time* and *Being and Time*, and in his later works such as *Basic Concepts* and *The Question Concerning Technology*. Additionally, his work has been the cornerstone of much professional development activity in nursing and psychotherapy. The book develops the argument of the value of Heidegger works from a pragmatic view by exploring the notion of work-based studies as a field of study in the wider sense and hopes to bring the insights of Heidegger to a wider audience. Once this is established, the remainder of the book discusses its implementation within a multi-modal system of higher education and commerce from a phenomenological perspective. It will be written clearly and wherever possible in non-technical language, although in places this is necessary to capture the meanings of Heidegger. However, I will attempt not to allow this to divert the text from the complex issues that need to be addressed in order to make the arguments compelling.

The book is presented in two parts, the first contain five chapters and is an attempt to help the reader understand Heidegger's phenomenological methods and observations. The second part considers how these might be applied. This is not a hard-and-fast distinction but one intended to guide the reader who wishes to select chapters rather than systematically read the book in its entirety. To further assist I present a brief outline of each chapter to help readers pace their journey through the book.

## Chapter 2: Work-Based Learning as a Field of Study

The challenges that face higher education are illuminated through the lens of Heidegger. In taking up the challenge set by Garnett (2001) for higher education

in the knowledge economy and responding to its powerful and primary artefact—intellectual capital—the chapter reviews and uses the analytical tool of Heidegger's phenomenology in the context of WBL in higher education. It suggests that the rivalry between the fields of higher education and employment weakens both in their attempt to appropriate values in a social field where intellectual capital is the main form of exchangeable capital.

## Chapter 3: Learning as Knowledge of Being-in-the-World

The central concern of the third chapter is how we learn to make our way through and take a stance in the world as we encounter it. The arguments are widened to draw from the existential literature, but the particular contribution is made by Heidegger. The arguments point to a learning community that practices the scholastic processes of conversation, involvement and encountering as modes of revealing knowledge. In the search for authenticity, the practice of learning is as important as the acquisition of the practical skills, contextualized within a form of learning community currently shunned by the demands of an economically effective model of higher education.

## Chapter 4: Dwelling at Work: A Place Where Vocation and Identity Grow?

Being-in-the-world-at-work is a dwelling, being where one's potential and capability are allowed to flourish. In this chapter I explore how vocational, occupational, practical or indeed experiential education both provide skills for dealing with the world and provide opportunities for transformation from holding skills to becoming the end one desires. In seeking such transformation, from medical student to doctor, for instance, I suggest how one can be assisted in the development of *phronesis*, or practical wisdom, as a responsible learner. It proposes that formalized, institutionalized education might inhibit the development of *phronesis* in the quest for knowledge. I begin the argument concluded in the final chapter that, should we desire a society that flourishes as a community based on relatedness and not transaction, and on transcendence and not immanence, then we need to restore the centrality of the workplace as a site for democratic learning rather than instrumentality. This is explored through the lens of Heidegger's development of the notion of *techne* from the being of a craftperson to technical skill.

## Chapter 5: What Is Work? A Heideggerian Insight into Work as a Site for Learning

On reaching Chapter 5 the main arguments are now directed towards the very nature of work that can be explored from a number of perspectives: political, sociological

and, here, philosophical. The intent of this chapter is to introduce Heidegger's phenomenological concepts of the workplace, its content and how, through his notion of circumspection, work can be described and understood. The chapter builds on Heidegger's notion of work, worker and workplace to explore the work world as a site for learning.

## Chapter 6: Heidegger; Time, Work and the Challenges for University-Led Work-Based Learning

The concluding chapter of the first part of the book is intended to show that Heidegger's notions of time and temporality offer a way to craft a purpose for education, as a way of averting what Heidegger refers to as the abandonment of being in the face of machination. I use the word "machination" as the English translation of *Machenschaft*, and as it is used by Heidegger to indicate self-making; the consequences are the mechanical and biological ways of thinking about "beingness". I argue that assigning such a role to education enables us to avoid adopting a technological way of being—calculative, seeing others as a means to an end and as a resource—through questioning and thinking. The adoption of the technological ways of being implicit in machination and its lived experience are questioned when, in the face of the continuum of temporality favoured in world time, an understanding is retained of an originary notion of future.

With the main task laid out, the purpose of the next seven chapters is to use the analysis to seek an understanding of the work world and how it can facilitate change through its engagement with higher education *praxis*.

# Part II—Issues in Work-Based Studies

## *Chapter 7: Assessment and Recognition of Work-Based Learning*

The opening chapter is designed to look at accreditation. It considers the merging of learning at and for work with the accreditations offered through higher education institutes. Following Heidegger's basic premise that we are in a world and that the world is becoming more calculative, accreditation seems unavoidable although still resistible in certain forms. In this chapter I consider the nature of experiential learning and its relationship with other forms of learning, which gain their authority through assessment. It argues that experiential learning is grounded in, and stands upon, the notion of *phronesis* and is the goal of an educated populace. This argument, should it prevail, would see wisdom as the goal of education, which is revealed in becoming wise through being-in-the-world.

## *Chapter 8: Quality in Work-Based Studies: Not Lost, Merely Undiscovered*

In this chapter I will argue that good quality should be subsumed into the practice of skilful participants and perhaps controversially that institutions should act upon their "consciences". This is particularly important in the complex blending of the workplace and the academy, where codified quality may disrupt learning rather than support a flourishing environment for all stakeholders. Following Heidegger's notion of referential totalities, I suggest that what should be sought is concealment of quality, for its discovery only in times of genuine concern. Ultimately, this means trusting the expertise of those involved, not the precepts to control activities.

## *Chapter 9: Adopting Consumer Time: Potential Issues for Higher Level Work-Based Learning*

Working is a temporal way of being, and continuing from the previous chapter I now consider how the temporality of contemporary in higher education affects those working within it. Until recently, time and temporality have received little attention in higher education literature. This chapter compares the notions of timing implicit in education as *paideia* (transitional personal growth) with that implicit in consumerism and the marketing practices that foster it. This investigation uses Heidegger's three notions of being and their corresponding concepts of time to understand the phenomena of education and consumerism. It suggests that the consumerist notion of time can change what higher education might be, through how individuals understand their being. In my conceptual discussion I challenge higher education to resist being temporalized by consumerism.

## *Chapter 10: The Concept of Boredom: Its Impact on Work-Based Learning*

One of the central concerns of educational policy and workplace efficiency is boredom. Boredom is seen as something that needs to be avoided, as negative and debilitating. Yet it is often spoken of as having one form, and other forms of boredom are not investigated. Heidegger offers three views of boredom, two of which might be considered negative and will be familiar to most of us, and adds a third, more profound notion of boredom. This chapter first considers the Heideggerian concept of mood, of which boredom is perhaps a fundamental form of attunement to modern times. I then turn to consider each of Heidegger's forms of boredom and investigate them in terms of learning in the workplace. The third, profound boredom, is seen to offer a positive way to understand how we might take a stance on ourselves and be more creative in the workplace.

### *Chapter 11: Practical Wisdom and the Worker Researcher*

In previous chapters the transformation from unskilled worker into professional holder of practical wisdom has been revealed. I now address the form of enquiry appropriate for the workplace researcher. The discussion centres on applying the phenomenological approach of Heidegger to three vignettes to reveal the potency of his approach.

### *Chapter 12: Carrying Out Phenomenological Research in the Workplace*

Given the discussion on structuring WBL in the previous two chapters I now turn to consider what it might offer for those working in higher education as one professional field. It is in Heidegger's early works that he provides the most important contribution to our understanding of being, while his discussion of the effects of technology on that being, in his later works, is one of his best-known contributions. I use his phenomenological approach to understanding the workplace and then, from a range of potential applications, choose to describe the functioning of higher education as a workplace for academic professionals. Heidegger seemingly fails to offer a subtle approach to what is labouring or to whether there is a substantive difference between labouring and working. To find such approaches I draw upon works of both Marcuse and Arendt, which specifically relate to these distinctions. The first part of the chapter is an outline and discussion of a phenomenological analysis of the workplace and working within it. The second describes their application as investigative tools for professionalism in higher education.

### *Chapter 13: The Recession and the World of Work-Based Studies*

In the final chapter I return to more general being-in-the-world with others as a globalized economic and political space and discuss what can be learnt from a Heideggerian approach to recession and its threat to the worldhood in which we live. I will discuss the notion of violence done to the environment and the form of post-recession work that we might help to develop.

This book has been made possible by many. My thanks go to all those who have commented on the chapters as they appeared as papers in a range of academic journals and to those reviewers whose comments have made the book stronger. I am indebted to a number of specific people. Amongst them is Professor Ron Barnett, whose intellectual and personal generosity has helped me make what small contribution I have to the literature. Also important in the creation of the book has been Alison Williamson, for her work in taking the text and giving it meaning and readability, and to Jane, without whose support this book would never have been possible. Finally I am grateful from permission from Taylor Francis for permission to build many of the chapters on articles business in their journals and listed in the references.

# Part I
# Context

# Chapter 2
# Work-Based Learning as a Field of Study

*The work as work, in its presencing, is a setting forth, a making. But what does the work set forth? We come know about this only when we explore what comes to the fore and is customarily spoken of as the making or production of works.*
(Heidegger, *The Origin of the Work of Art*, 1975a, p. 44)

A growing feature of global higher education policy is the explicit link with economic performance. Indeed there is much that mirrors the development in the major economic regions of the world. From Singapore to Melbourne and from Mumbai to San Francisco, directing public educational institutions to provide public capital for their student bodies and then charge them has become a driving imperative of policy. The example I offer here is how European educational strategy has assertively included the vast and varied field of vocational education and training within the lifelong learning perspective. Its commitment to entwine formal education, workplace learning and governmental policy has a leading part in the economic debate on the role of higher education in Europe's economic development. A desire to develop transparency and comparability in all forms of learning and qualifications, together with the associated required quality of assessment and teaching, has been an underlying and recurring theme in the Bologna Process. The commitment of European educational policy to lifelong learning generates a progressive transnational framework supporting innovative practice by higher education institutions at the local and national levels. Such interaction between decentralized educational initiatives and European policy, together with the engagement of the business field, is crucial, particularly for winning the cultural, pedagogical, organizational and financial challenge represented by the adoption of WBL as a mainstream option in European higher education and training.

In a recent speech Jan Figel, European Commissioner for Education, Training and Youth (Figel, 2008), spoke of "practice-orientated and work-based learning; which have long been among the priorities in our education and training policies", and pointed to WBL's relevance to the emerging European educational architecture. He made specific reference to the Helsinki Communiqué, in which education and training are referred to as having a "central role in responding to the challenges we are facing in Europe: globalization, an ageing population, emerging new

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technologies and skills needs" (2006). This report highlighted a need to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of VET and suggested four processes: political decision-making, common tools, mutual learning and engagement with all stakeholders.

Across Europe there is currently a compatibility that encourages the open trade of qualifications and equivalence of exchange, both in academic and in vocational qualifications. The European Credit Transfer System for VET (ECVET), although not so far compatible with ECTS, is conceived as a tool to further increase this transparency.[1] While such frameworks focus on the form of recognition that academic institutions are able to award to forms of learning, their impact is in the value they represent to their holders, which in many cases means economic reward.

WBL's ambitious approach to teaching and learning represents a complex challenge for the HE systems that plan to implement it. It involves special attention and requires specific organizational measures as well as human and financial resources from HE institutions. Universities will have to establish specific structures responsible for the special needs of WBL pathways—not least, the partnership with the work field—and the groups of learners engaged in this kind of learning experience.

For most of the EU Member States, the WBL approach to learning and its implications for the relationship between academic learning and learning in the workplace present a tremendous challenge to the traditional concept of knowledge acquisition through classroom and textbook learning, which still prevails in higher education institutions. Much of the resistance to the introduction of WBL programmes is, in fact, due to the academia's reluctance to accept knowledge acquired outside the university, a reluctance that may be motivated by its claim for exclusive knowledge transmission. In this context, one of the most delicate battles to be fought inside the universities is cultural, among academic staff, aiming at a paradigm change in the notion of learning and knowledge. Learning in the workplace does not only refer to practical, technical and executive skills, to communicative and organizational competences but, within appropriate environments and frameworks, may also increase methodological and theoretical awareness and knowledge. Indeed, this evolutionary approach is mirrored in Australia where Mitchell (2000) found that the definition of WBL was being reinterpreted by many proponents as they applied a range of learning approaches and strategies to achieve meaningful and relevant learning outcomes.

## WBL: Roots in the Ancients

I have always thought that learning was learning and the divide between academic and vocational to be more social than epistemological (see Raelin, 2007), more to

[1] Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council presented by the Commission, April 2008.

do with the degradation of having to do work than that of offering services and voluntary participation. Indeed, it seems that from as long back as Aristotle's time, knowledge and the practice of skills in production have been separated, making higher education in certain forms and work-based practice incommensurate. It seems that Hammersley (2004) has an argument to support this position, based on the subordination of enquiry to practice, in action research. Likewise, Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) make a distinction between the fields of activity where higher education practice is grounded in theorization of practice and in the *praxis* of practice. However, such dichotomies have evidently occurred in the context of contemporary knowledge economies and the premises of Gibbons et al. (1994) and Nowotny, Scott, and Gibbons (2003).

It will become clear in what follows that Heidegger's interpretation of the divide between forms of knowledge is necessarily blurred by Aristotle's work when the eternal notion embedded in *theoria* is accepted as outside our world, and we are left with the goal of achieving practical wisdom. This blurring has created what Garnett has argued as the positive contribution, impact and value of "university facilitated WBL to organizations working in partnership with the university" (2001, p. 78). His argument is that the university has, in the past, concentrated on human capital, which has been transformed through employment into the structural capital of the organization. However, the changing business models of universities mean that they share a responsibility to enhance the practicality of institutional learning. Eraut calls it "ready-to-use" learning (2004, p. 248), but Garnett points out that applying knowledge through and for work, rather than simply at work, "challenges the position of the university as the sole validator and evaluator of high level knowledge" (2001, p. 79).

## *Understanding Work-Based Learning*

The literature related to WBL has led to an array of conceptualizations of the notion of learning at and through work. There has been little attempt to understand the notion of work (exceptions include Billett, 2004; Boud & Middleton, 2003; Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson, & Unwin, 2005), the theories of pedagogies (Knowles, 1980; Flyvbjerg, 1998, 2001; Hager, 2004b; Barnett, 2007) that underpin the learning processes of work and the codification of this learning in forms of intellectual and cultural capital (Gibbs & Armsby, 2010; Guile, 2003; Fuller, 2001). WBL has yet to stake a compelling claim to a position at the heart of an academic framework of field of study, discipline, discursive space and area of enquiry. I propose this is because the criteria for status in academia are determined by powerful academic content structures and that these are problematic when applied to assessing the contribution to the cultural, social and economic capital of WBL. This is despite the rhetoric of governments around the world on its economic value—less has been declared on its social value—and the encouragement of economic emancipatory agencies such as the World Bank.

### *Developing a Notion of Field for Work-Based Learning*

In what follows, I set myself the task of developing a field of WBL, but this is done in knowledge of Bourdieu's own warning, echoed by Philipse. This concerns the striking difference between national communities with regard to the "interpretation of the same foreign text by reference to the differences between fields of reception and the position of the interpreters within the home field" (Philipse, 2002, p. 280).

In this field or space of education, commerce and learning, agents compete for "control of the interests specific to the field and utilizes their capital (economic, cultural, social and symbolic) in this competition" (Lingard, Rawolle, & Taylor, 2005, p. 760). To embark on this notion I turn first to Grenfell and James (1998). They suggest that an analysis of a field should be on three levels:

> Analysis of the position of the field vis-à-vis the field of power; mapping out the objective structure of the relations between the positions occupied by agents who compete for the legitimate forms of specific authority of which the field is the site; and analysis of the habitus of agents; the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalizing a determinate type of social and economic condition (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 169).

First, it is not difficult to see that the contemporary externalities of the need to compete in a global economy are putting pressure on the autonomous nature of higher education. This is because its means of reproduction are owned not by the force within its own social structure but by others outside (Jarvis, 2001). Although not wishing to establish too strong a link between Bourdieu's notion of capital, Marx and Heidegger, I suggest a field in transition. Marx's notion of alienation, which negatively affects some academics, acts together with the new *habitus* of an entrepreneurial academic fuelled with the social capital of media contracts, applied research projects and senior European Union evaluator positions, to shift the relative power within the field. Or does this change alter the field to the extent that it needs to be reconstituted? If so, how can the notion of intellectual capital help to explain and build such a new social field or reconfigure the barriers of the existing field of higher education?

The rhetoric of government policy is clearly directing a shift in focus in the content of awards, as well as the habitus of the individuals that make up the academic and student population. This is manifested in more educational institutions claiming university status and even commercially missioned organizations being considered viable options for conferring degrees. As Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) suggest, academics are being "portrayed as resisting these pressures and protecting their own professional interests against both the national and commercial". This is echoed by Billett, who has suggested that some educators "view these changes as being problematic and as the antithesis of higher education and... particular instances of practice (e.g. workplaces) will be privileged over other educational purposes, specifically those often associated with university course" (2009b, p. 828). It has extended the communities of practice discussed by Lave and Wenger (1991) in a way that situates the higher education curriculum in the orbit of a professional community, questioning, as does Barnacle (2004), the very nature of knowledge.

Second, the traditional disciplines base their curriculum on known domains of knowledge constituting predetermined courses of study that may be influenced by economic interest and the interests of other stakeholders (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005, p. 267). While this continues to weaken their old boundaries in the field of higher education, it does not destroy the notion of a field; rather, it illustrates the changes in power brought about by the external influences of policy and the market. In the case of WBL, this prescription by higher education is not appropriate (Costley & Portwood, 2000). This does not mean that the issues addressed do not form the basis of a curriculum. This is identified by Barnett and Coate (2005) who suggest that "curriculum as engagement" needs to be built around knowing, acting and being. It is true that they do not see work as a universal category to structure curricula, but that does not prohibit it from being a subject of study in and of itself, as distinct from being an invidious controller of all curriculum content. Certainly, I agree with Barnett and Coate that there is no moral imperative that work should frame all curricula, but add that there is no such imperative to deny work being the subject of a curriculum based on knowing, acting and being, or indeed for a form of learning to be founded upon the relationship of the two. Indeed, the real-world situatedness of such a study makes it well suited to Barnett and Coate's curriculum framework, for its essence is *praxis*, action judgements based on knowledge with a social context. However, currently much accredited higher education is product learning in the sense used by Hager (2000). For instance, within the field of higher education in the United Kingdom, three separate sets of higher education awards, designed to be ready-to-use and necessarily vocational, are as follows:

> Those situated in the workplace and accredited externally such as high-level non-vocational qualifications (NVQs) and professional accredited qualifications (CIPD, CIM), where cross-activities from the place of work engage with higher education to offer services to the workplace and whose status as higher education is conferred externally by institutions normally considered outside of the field of higher education (the awarding bodies). This is a case of erosion of positional autonomy. Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) make a similar point with reference to economic capital eroding academic capital under governments' policy discourse of consumerism in the context of the knowledge economy.
>
> Foundation degrees (or TAFE Diplomas or Associate Degrees) designed for the workplace, but accredited by higher education institutions and with explicit progression routes to keep further accredited learning within the control of higher education institutions, and thus seem destined to support the autonomy of higher education.
>
> Vocational degrees, whose theory of practice is converted into the theorization of practice in order to constitute it as an academic qualification, e.g., accounting, marketing, automotive engineering.

Another form of credential is the higher education WBL award: one that carries the nomenclature of the university, but where the content of the award is determined to a great extent by two of the major beneficiaries of the award: WBL students and their employers (Garnett, Comerford, & Webb, 2001). Barnacle (2004, pp. 355–356) argues that "part-time research candidates in professional work are forging connections between the workplace and the academy" and using research degrees not only to enrich their work lives but also to transcend them. In this sense, the research-work-based studies degree gives some evidence of a new field related

to that of higher education and of work, where it can become part of a "critical ethic" or a way of being. This ontological dimension separates research-based studies from those situated in the workplace such as NVQs, where the emphasis is on competencies and skills, and those undergraduate and postgraduate taught master's degrees designed to confirm access to certain professions and markets. Yet these awards, although devised to develop intellectual capital to be shared by the employer as well as the employee, struggle against the habitus of the field of education to resist the reproduction of the named award. As noted by Guile, when arguing that types of vocational experience required to develop insights for the workplace are gained through the actual experience of undertaking activities such as work placements and by joining and creating personal labour:

> UK policymakers continue, however, to misjudge the challenge presented by these [above] labour market conditions and to unequivocally endorse the notion that qualifications constitutive a proxy measure for vocational practice and, as such, facilitate transition into all sectors of the economy (2009, p. 762).

This leads me to my third point by drawing attention to the epistemological difference identified by Heidegger in most of his earlier works, but especially in his essays, *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking* (1977c), and by Bourdieu (1998), between the fields of science and practice. This difference is based on a dispositional logic of practice that is lost through the theorization effect and which presents intrinsically coherent practices that function only in the sphere of practicality. This approach contributes to a different worldhood for the practitioner from the academic, both epistemologically and ontologically. I see this as potentially critical since, as the practice of logic cannot be totalized by the theorization of practice, it is hard to see how WBL can ever fully be part of a field dominated by theorized discourse based on generalization.

The power to resist inappropriate theorization of the practice of WBL has led to questions being raised regarding the rigour and validity of WBL programmes and their assessment. I see this in part as an attempt to retain the hegemony of the economy of logic of power in the field of education. A similar but opposite argument has been made for the field of the employer, where academically prepared students are perceived as unprepared employees. The resistance of both positions to change, reinforced by their own formulated habitus, illustrates the permanence of the collective consciousness of each and is indicative of a separation of fields that cannot be blended by a rhetoric of equivalencies, for the discourse of equivalencies is an attempt at totalization on behalf of the discourse of logic.

I suggest that perhaps a new construction is needed, based on WBL: the development of a new field where proprietary turf fights are constructive to the field of study—the field of intellectual capital. Barnacle (2004) suggests that it is inquiry that is the new ethic revealed in work-based researcher students, and perhaps the term "intellectual capital" and its distribution posited by Garnett offer guidance on how this new field of inquiry can offer accreditations based on field membership. This will surely create tension, but it disaggregates the historic territory of the degree awarder from the perquisite properties attributed to holders of these awards.

Indeed, level descriptors have all but made this transition possible. I see a number of ways that the use of academic credit in higher education can be used to evidence capital, but suggest that these are more functional than structural. They currently fail to change significantly the powerful influences of the institutions within the field, although they have changed the basis of their power over academics, from being custodians of knowledge for its intrinsic value to managers of resources to facilitate their own survival. This is a change where the newer members of the field have parity of experience. This restructuring of the institutions in the field of higher education offers the opportunity to reconsider where, as Hodkinson (2005, p. 522) suggests, "many of the differences between educational learning and workplace learning which are routinely claimed and/or assumed in the literature are exaggerated, as are the difficulties of relating one to the other." It follows that each can be envisaged as a different site for learning, and Hodkinson goes further, arguing that knowledge in neither site is to be acquired so as to be transferred and that all learning has in common its ongoing relational and reconstructive process.

Further support comes from Hager (2004a) who argues that, if learning is conceived as a product, the tensions that divide the employer and education fields are reinforced. If learning is considered as a process set in different communities, the divide becomes less problematic and this process might best be conceptualized as judgement (Hager, 2000, 2004b). I envisage that WBL in the field of intellectual capital is the process of accumulating intellectual capital, arising in all social settings, and manifest in practitioners' judgement.

For Garnett, if these sites are similar then, as educationalists, we need to explore how we codify the knowledge, both explicitly and implicitly, so that it may be used effectively. He and Nikolou-Walker conclude that "work-based learning appears not only to be an imperative for individuals and their employers, but also for universities as they seek continued relevance and funding in the twenty-first century" (Nikolou-Walker & Garnett, 2004, p. 297). I see this in terms of theory and practice and, like Habermas, see no direct causal link between the two discourses; rather, I envision a mediating discourse: a discourse of *praxis*. This notion gains some support from Hodkinson, Hodkinson, Evans, and Kersh (2004) when they claim it is "possible to theorise and explain individual workers' roles in workplace learning". Such a mediating discourse, with the goal of developing intellectual capital, could perhaps be used to explore an individual's learning in the community of employment practice in the new field I propose: a field of mediating discourses between employment and education.

I tentatively embark on this conceptualization by first defining the field as including all programmes with a focus of higher education-level critical thinking upon work (paid or unpaid) in order to create intellectual, especially structural, capital. In this, I conceptualize WBL both as an umbrella concept and as subfields or discourses of inquiry of the proposed field. The field's character and social contribution relate to learning whose manifestation or intent is to improve and enable learners better to deal with the community of practice in which they are employed or derive a living. In this sense, it excludes education for its own sake or education as preparation for

initial employment. It includes all institutions that deliver such learning and includes training providers, further education colleges, professional bodies, universities and employers, although the relative capital and power of these providers are not necessarily conveyed by their status in other fields. It is also characterized, as indicated by Ashton (2004), by complexity due to the relationship between state, labour and capital.

For instance, although the government in the United Kingdom may be considered external to the field, its agents for skills development (i.e., the Sector Skills Development Agency and Skill Academies) are also institutional forces within the field and themselves create tension between the more pragmatic and the intellectual goals of the employer and the university. Facing this challenge by reconstituting the nature of epistemologies does not resolve the Foucauldian tension between power and knowledge, as one would expect, but represents an attempt to strip it of its constituent disciplinary constraints. To do this requires methodologies to be developed that reveal universal truth; rather than make claims that do not objectivize the subject, they are reflective and reflexive. This creates a clash of power around the issue of quality assurance. As Reeve and Gallacher (2005, p. 230) succinctly put it, referring to the need to satisfy internal university stakeholders: "[A]cademic understanding of quality becomes the driver, other understandings of quality arising from the workplace are not shared via partnership." The consequences are that the employers become less involved, retreat from the process and become peripheral to the discussion. Being flung to the perimeter of the community of work-based practice does little to encourage collaboration, encounters and future synergic development.

Distinctive discursive formations that are neither fields nor disciplines but, as Foucault (1994, p. 126) defines them, "positivities," or "limited spaces for communications", are present within the field and are becoming organized according to a structure homologous to the field itself. If, for instance, we consider the positivity of discourse of academically accredited WBL, we can see joint accreditation of activities designed for employment but which have a recognition shared in work and valued through the symbolism of accumulated credit. This is a new conceptualization of learning recognition, for it is unencumbered by reference to a curriculum notion upon which the traditions and power of the academic institutions have been built; it refers to learning outcomes (Garnett, Portwood, & Costley, 2004). Learning is negotiated with an explicit purpose, not excluding a social and personal development context but with a focus upon the knowledge economy and the utilization of intellectual capital. This sets up further tension regarding the notion of quality assurance, its ownership, control and its purpose.

Institutions are in place where a new worldhood can be developed. These institutions that may struggle for a voice nevertheless have an impact both on the field of higher education and outside. Cultural capital is also being built through academic publications (e.g., *Journal of Work-Based Learning*; *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*; and *Vocations and Learning*). Articles are published in many of the main business and educational journals, there is networking (e.g., the Work-Based Learning Network of the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning, the

Universities Vocational Awards Council and various special interest groups linked to national educational research associations), institutionalization through entire degrees in WBL (e.g., Middlesex University; see Costley & Portwood, 2000) and the potential social field also has a nexus of international authority and coherences (Lindell & Stenström, 2005; Wiesenberg & Peterson, 2004).

Having sketched the structure, I must voice my own word of warning. Specifically, we need to consider how the struggles for power affect the function within the field. Within the field there are clear tensions and competition for the value of capital. One such dialectic is that of award titles given to WBL (e.g., is it a traditional subject discipline obtained by a WBL mode of study or a qualification actually in work-based learning studies). Bourdieu (1996) offers a distinction between academic and technical titles, and in the field I envision it is between traditional subject titles, high-level NVQs and work-based or work-related titles in their own right, or as descriptors of the mode of study. These forms tend to develop strategies and practices for their own reproduction. The practices may well be diverse and, although not organized by design, by being based in the same habitus do contribute to the reproduction of distinctive forms of capital. This has up to now allowed for the allocation of unequal notions of cultural, social and economic capital to vocational learning and the more favoured professional and academic learning.

The field of social action that I envision ought not to develop its own simulacra forms of recognition for, if it does, then the notion itself will disintegrate while attempts by other fields to recapture subfields act to discredit the forms generated by this field. I believe it to be a danger that the field of power might encourage such integration under threat to the influence of the elite universities and professional bodies who play the rhetoric game but resist change. For them, the development of this new field only helps to identify the distinctiveness of the field of higher education, which would be heightened by the increased diversity my proposal implies. As such, it is a call to policy makers to understand the narrowness of their previous attempts to engage institutions that derive their power from other fields in and with the workplace. White papers, grants and short-term symbolic gestures will not be enough to divert the reproductive power of *habitus*; what might do so is a reversal of the positive discrimination in the value of academic capital.

I echo Wiesenberg and Peterson (2004, p. 234) when they conclude that there is a need for "academic and practitioners in this *emerging* field of study and practice to build alliances on several levels in order to enrich both theory and practice." The emphasis in this quotation is mine, for I believe WBL has yet fully to establish itself as a field of study. However, it shows signs of doing so, and in the midst of the calculative thinking that dominates us today. In this context, I acknowledge the diversity of the higher education work-based curriculum and that currently student participation is comparatively limited. This highlights the extent of the cultural transformation that would make a reality of WBL partnerships between employers and university. Indeed, Billett argues that there "is an urgent need for workplace curriculum practices and principles to be identified, elaborated and evaluated" (2006, p. 31). The goal is full participation in the social practice of workplace, implying

change in the individual and in the workplace itself. Its full emergence, however, will be concerned as much with the academic endeavour and the development of its practices as it will be to do with the political and power struggles evident internally and externally in any field of study. As Reeve and Gallacher (2005, p. 231) conclude, advocating employer–university relationships, "there remains a need to investigate whether productive links can be established more widely in other sectors and the different forms that these links might take."

This appreciation of WBL is of a learning process that focuses higher level critical thinking upon work, paid or unpaid, in order to facilitate the recognition, acquisition and application of individual and collective knowledge, skills and abilities, to achieve specific outcomes of significance to the learner, their work and, where appropriate, the higher education institution. As such, WBL has been described by Boud and Solomon (2001, p. 1) as "one of the very few innovations related to the teaching and learning aspects of post-secondary education that is attempting to engage seriously with the economic, social and educational demands of our era." At the heart of the distinctive nature of higher education WBL programmes is the role of the external organization as a partner with higher education institutions and the individual in the planning of learning activities responsive to the needs of a specific workplace curriculum (Gibbs, 2010; Billett, 2002; Osborne, Davis, & Garnett, 1998; Boud, 1990). This relationship contests the supremacy of the role of the higher education institution in curriculum design, delivery and validation of knowledge, suggesting that higher education work-based learning might helpfully be considered in the light of thinking and practice relating to knowledge creation and use in the workplace.

This invitation, seen through Heidegger's philosophy of practice, can be seen as an act of symbolic violence to be done to the notion of liberal education by inviting the value of the workplace into the academy. What I am advocating is not the wholesale extended use of raw instrumentalism, but the recognition that the relationship of being in a world-at-large can be informed by critical appraisal from within a field. I believe this offers a positive, but by no means uncritical or uncontested, way forward for the development of work as a learning place.

## *A Fuller Heideggerian Understanding*

From a Heideggerian prospect, "to understand" is linked to the colloquial use of the term when we speak of understanding cars or people. We know how they work, how to deal with them and have knowledge of experience that may be evident in practice. For Heidegger, what is primarily understood is always *Dasein* in its being as self-intending that is in its understanding of itself. Hence, WBL must have an existential meaning in this context. For instance, Heidegger notes that when we are

> talking ontologically we sometimes use the expression I understand something with the signification of "being able to manage something"; "being a match for it"; "being competent to do something". In understanding, as an existentiale, that which we have such competence over is not a "what", but being as existing (1962, p. 183).

An understanding of WBL will help us explore the notion of work and being a worker working in workplaces, and learning as practical coping with being in those worlds that show up as referential totalities as workplaces. Moreover, learning will be taken as intending to accomplish some end or, as Okrent suggests, "to realize some possibility of *Dasein* and he (Heidegger) considers practical understanding to be the primary form of our understanding of entities other than ourselves" (1988, p. 31[2]). In this sense, WBL is about engaging in the workplace and understanding how to move around and use the tools of that workplace. When we are new starters, both are conspicuous as we don't understand them, but as we increase our competency they cease to be so and are understood in their use; a hammer for hammering, a pen for writing or a car for travelling. That is, WBL enables one to act to reach an end by being able to do a range of things. In doing so, one acts to reach some future possibility of one's mastery, expertise or, indeed, *phronesis* (practical wisdom, which is discussed more fully in Chapter 4). This understanding, this practical knowledge, is situated knowledge, which is generalizable to the extent that the environment might have some familiarity about it in terms of the mastery, expertise claimed (a plumber being a plumber, not a brain surgeon, and vice versa) and is able to communicate, or to assert, the practical understanding it has as truth: *aletheia*. We thus display our understanding of its significance whenever we display our practical understanding of things, that is, whenever we use them appropriately.

Heidegger addresses the definition of learning when, in the same lecture, he discusses the virtues of a good teacher. For him the answer to the question of what is learning is that "Man learns when he disposes everything he does so that it answers to whatever essentials are addressed to him at any given moment" (*What is Called Thinking*, p. 4). That is, we learn to drive, to play chess, to think or to mend a machine, and we know that it has been learnt by the evidence of the product of our practice used to achieve our goal. In this sense, Heidegger's view and his phenomenological methods have been characterized as pragmatic by, for example, Rorty (1982) and Okrent (1988). Rorty wrote a number of essays on this subject and often coupled Heidegger with Dewey. For instance, in his essay, *Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey*, he wrote that Heidegger and Dewey were "philosophers that aim to clarify—to help their readers, or society as a whole break free from outworn vocabularies and attitudes, rather than to provide 'grounding' for the intuitions and customs of the present" (1979, pp. 11–12).

This brings us to what Heidegger might have to say about the nature of the space metaphor employed above and how that might link with the reality of a location, a place that defines a space to work, to dwell and to think. Heidegger's discussion of space has two dimensions. The first is that of geographical space. The notion of the bounded space of Bourdieu's sociological interpretation and his metaphorical usage of "field" gives an understanding of categories and is, for Heidegger, in a more basic sense, a clearing away (Malpas, 2006). This is evident in his essay, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* (1975c), where the relationship between thing, place (location)

[2]Parentheses mine.

and space is defined and developed. For Heidegger, space is opened up and revealed through the location of a thing so that space is defined by the "in which" the thing is located. The extension of that space in structures from the nature of the world is defined by what he calls the fourfold of earth, sky, of divinities and mortals, which "enters into a site by arranging the site into spaces" (Heidegger, 1975c, p. 360). Furthermore, for Heidegger the boundary is not that at which something stops, but from which "something begins its essential unfolding from which is essential identity is unconcealed." Finally, Heidegger links space, location and dwelling as the relationship between man and space, which is "none other than dwelling, thought essential" (1975c, p. 335).

The second use of space is developed in our social practice and is manifest in a "clearing" in which things and people show up for us. This more profound use of the special metaphor is used to describe that which produces the kind of human beings that we are. This rather mystical location of our being is described by Heidegger as that which is

> beyond what is, not away from it but before it, there is still something happens. In the midst of beings as a whole an open place occurs. There is a clearing, a lighting... Only this clearing grants and guarantees to us humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access tot the being that we ourselves are (1975a, p. 51).

Regarding this project we are looking at an understanding of being that is technological understanding of being. That is, as Dreyfus put it, "the technical clearing" (1995, pp. 97–107). Heidegger offers us hope for a flourishing society that utilizes technology, but that does not let it level us down through calculative thinking of ourselves as things to be used efficiently.

Heidegger's investigation may lack the everyday clarity of the sociologist Bourdieu, but is part of a more developed argument of what it is to dwell and to live among the entities that we construct to formulate our world and our spaces, some in which we dwell and others in which we live.

# Chapter 3
# Learning as Knowledge of Being-in-the-World

*By virtue of this process of learning I am preparing the way for what can genuinely be known.*

(Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, 2009, p. 27)

As the title anticipates, this chapter considers the Heideggerian nature of knowledge from the renewal of the Aristotelian notion of practice of being and acting in the world of things with others. Thus, acting is the process through which knowing has meaning and self has both a transitory, that is changing in fulfilling our becoming of our being, and a sustainable identity; the being that we are. This, I will conclude, is best achieved through a pedagogy of *praxis*, achieved by letting students learn: first to think and then to let learn. I recognize the departure in perspective of the nature of knowledge this supposes—it questions representational knowledge and desires to replace it with a deeper, more primordial way of knowing. In this it transcends the problematic notion of knowing attributed to *techne* and *episteme*, which are, it will be argued, at the core of learning hegemonies. This unjustified division of knowing (attributed to Aristotle's notion of the superiority of a *praxis* of *episteme*) has, as I have suggested, contributed to the failure to develop a notion of education that democratizes society. I argue that the division upon which we still separate learning and attribute value misses the critical notion of a *telos*: a *telos* of wisdom that embraces many different, compatible and often necessarily coexistent forms of knowing, in education and at work.

In my argument I will seek to develop a way of looking at knowing that considers our being as encountering the world neither as subject nor as object. This will be achieved through taking a stand governed by prudential, practical judgement. This is not identical to calculative, discursive rationality but is "an autonomous capacity to know how to act in a particular (variable) situation" (Zimmerman, 1986, p. 175). This capacity is existential and is revealed in actions. It is not the domain of abstractly assessed *theoria*, but the domain of experience and is thus best revealed through the explicitness of reflective practices. This approach liberates learners to experience the possibilities of what they might be and not the enframement of the world proposed by the assessor. Such learning is not constrained

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by the enframement of learning by the notions of either work or education, but is characterized as being.

## Capability, Potential and Actualization

Heidegger's direct dealings with the notion of learning and training are restricted throughout his work, although the focus of the being of a craft worker is evident through both his early and later works. Confrontation with the technological violence done to the identification of being, through an appreciation of what is being produced through the skills of the worker, is developed in my discussion on the notion of "machination". Heidegger does, however, provide an interesting discussion based on Aristotle's discussion in *Metaphysics*, especially in Chapter 4. It is here that Aristotle discusses the notion of possessing a skill in the form of capability to do, for instance the potential to be a doctor, carpenter or potter, and the actuality of being one.

Aristotle discusses this in book 3 of that chapter as a response to an argument he proffers as held by the Megaric school of philosophy. To paraphrase the argument, he claims that the Megaric argue that potential is only present when it is actualized. His example is of builders whose potential to be builders is evident only when they are building; when they cease to be building, they cease to be builders. Aristotle makes fun of this by presenting an a priori, one with which Heidegger attends to in his discussion of Aristotle's discussion (Heidegger, 1995a). His comment pertains to how can one simply lose the skills on stopping work and then miraculously have them return on starting work again. Heidegger takes up this challenge and what follows is his account revealing the role of training.

This philosophical question raised by Heidegger in his lecture series *Aristotle's Metaphysics,Θ Vols. 1–3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force* (1995b) explores the nature of *dunamis*: the potential or capacity that comes to be actualized in being, through a manner of being-at-work (Heidegger, 1995b , p. 143), and discussed in detail by Brogan (2005) and, poignantly, by Mei (2009). According to Brogan, the relationship

> between *dunamis* and *techne* is in having the capacity for producing. The central question of Heidegger's analysis is, can one have a capability which is present, that is I have it but is not enacted? The Megaric School say no. Aristotle, and Heidegger through his interpretation, clearly argue that you can. For him, to have, process skills and be able to practice effectively these skills in making something that is to have *techne* implies having acquired it, having become practiced in it in such as way that it allows me to comport myself knowingly in relationship to what is and to stand ready to deal with things on this basis (Brogan, 2005, p. 143).

So how do we acquire it and can I acquire it without enacting it? For instance, according to Heidegger the actualization of a capability itself has three meanings: the capability is present but held back, not being used; it is enacted; and its causes create an outcome, a piece of work. Furthermore, the relationship between these three forms of actualization is, for Heidegger,

> capability can be actual in the second sense, that is, in an enactment, without it being actualized in the third sense, thus without having actualized itself or as we also say, without its having left its mark in a work. The actualization of capability in the third sense however, presupposes the actuality capability in the first and as well necessarily having gone through the second sense. In contrast, the actuality in the first sense, being trained, is not dependent upon the second and the third sense (1995b, p. 163).

By way of example, Heidegger chooses to discuss that with respect to a potter:

> The potter, for example, is the one sitting in the tavern. He is the one who can make mugs; he is the one capable of producing them. With him a capability is actually there. Good, but how then? Where and how then is capability. . . does he leave this capability at home when he goes to have a beer? (1995b, pp. 145–146)

It seems incontestable that he does not, but Heidegger continues his discussion to show that the mistake is in thinking that he does is concerned with the potential to act and the actuality of enactment. Indeed, this has clear implications for the notion of assessment of the durability of capability, and our notion of being a worker offers a number of issues related to durability. How long are we a builder, a computer scientist or a professor? If we are once, do we remain or are we only a computer scientist whilst we are acting as one?

Heidegger argues that the actuality of a capability does not consist exclusively in its actualization, but is reliant on its being present and being also possessed by the potter before he needs to use it. That is, the capability is present but is held back, awaiting circumstances for it to be appropriately disclosed. Moreover, this capability remains with the potter unless he is physically incapable of doing the potting (a stroke, say) or he forgets his skills with the passage of time (that is, his capability has been surpassed by the enactment required—the need to retain every *n*th year and thus the importance of continued professional training). The acquisition of these skills is through training and their continued utility is maintained through practice. It is because I am already practised in something that I can practise it. Whilst practising, the capacity informs itself in the practice and therefore transforms itself. Moreover, it is only if I stop practising that I can claim I am proficient. As we have seen, it is not possible for this being to continue to seek to be; becoming proficient is the essential temporal requirement of being.

Thus, for Heidegger "(E)nactment is indeed presence and non-enactment absence, but these statements do not hold simply in a straightforward way. Enactment is rather a practicing and as such, if it is at all, the presence of *training*" (1995b, p. 164[1]). The training is thus pre-practising and comes to be transferred into practice. This training harnesses the *dunamis*, the potential, and changes it dynamically into the capability required for the work to be undertaken. As Mei notes, this "ontological rendered, this means that *dunamis* is a mode of practice in which the mutual poles of action and holding back are together a mode of disclosing and affirming within oneself what is understood to be practiced". Indeed, Heidegger considers the need for practice of skills learned by asking how can one be skilled

[1] Italics mine.

without exercising these skills. He argues that training develops through practice, "and practicing is actual and itself, when it follows through on what belongs to it to the end, when it has actually brought about a work and this work" (1995b, pp. 163–164).

The issue and advocacy of Heidegger are thus two-fold: the first concerns practices that become outdated, that is, we become an outdated builder, doctor or teacher as the worldhood of our workplaces passes us by, and in so doing changes us from what we would have identified ourselves to a being of less consequence—a redundant builder, doctor or teacher—and how we deal with the static-ness of our being the role of lifelong learning.[2] The second is the constantly increasing adoption of our skills within the workplace we inhabit, to ensure the becoming of whatever we seek to be (see Chapter 6). This reading of *dunamis* allows us to understand that work provides a recognizable enactment of the "capacity of *techne* to complete a task and a reflective comportment which views such tasks in relation to the possibility of being" (Mei, 2009, p. 99). Indeed, I would suggest that such an interpretation is at the core of the nature of WBL. This is certainly supported by the work of Dall'Alba (2009) on professional education. She identifies at least four features of professional learning link to Heidegger and discusses in this book. The first is a continuity of being a professional over time with changes in the ways of being professional; the second, the grasping of possibilities but with the constraints of our historicity; the third, an openness to these possibilities but a resistance to change the familiarity in which we dwell; and the fourth is our taking a stance on our being as individuals with others within the profession, whilst adopting the ways of our communities of practice.

## The Unconcealment of Being Through Learning

Heidegger is clearest on learning when he talks about thinking. In the early pages of *What Is Called Thinking* (1968) Heidegger identifies "learning" with presencing and with our capability to learn thinking. He says that in order to be capable of thinking, we need to learn it first. What is learning? Man learns when he disposes of everything he does; hence, learning answers to whatever essentials are addressed to him at any given moment [presencing]. We learn to think by giving our minds to what there is to think about (Heidegger, 1968, p. 4). He goes on to tell us: "Most thought-provoking in our thought-provoking time is that we are still not thinking" (1968, p. 6). Before saying so, he clarifies the meaning of thought-provoking as "everything that gives us to think. And the most thought-provoking gift is that of thought for we incline toward it" (1968, p. 4). In other words, we are still not thinking, because we have not learned to turn our thoughts to what there is to think about.

[2]There is a clear resonance here with Heidegger and more contemporary writing on conceptualizing learning experience. I am thinking specifically of Billett (2009a).

Essentially, we have not learned to turn our thoughts to the matter of thinking. For Heidegger, the matter of thinking is to enquire into the essential nature of thinking. What is called thinking? But it is not only we that have not asked this essential question; the matter of thinking has eluded the whole history of metaphysics. Consequently, we are still thinking traditionally and our thinking about thinking is within the representational matrix, with the difference that thinking in the modern age is overwhelmingly dominated by science, which has become subservient to technology, and has been reduced to the representational-calculative and manipulative. Science has taken over the task of philosophy, but it proceeds with its explorations in a less adequate way; it does not even investigate the ontologies of various regions of beings such as nature, art, history and law. Rather, science has reduced its investigation to theories whose structural concepts are denied ontological meaning; the scientific method does not question the supposition of the categories it employs to explore coordinated areas of investigation (Heidegger, 1962, p. 377). The peril of technical thinking, being within the domination of *Gestell* (enframing), in the name of production, profit, efficiency, serviceability, orderability, the desire for the new, and so on, seeks to establish and secure the power of humans over nature and presencing itself (1962, pp. 287ff). Of course, as previously indicated, the representational character of thinking dominating the scientific-technological world has its roots in the metaphysical tradition.

## The Concealment of Representational Thinking

Heidegger's understanding of the historical development of the representational character of metaphysical thinking is at the core of learning and thinking. Through his exploration of pre-Socratic thinking Heidegger came to the understanding, which is also his major insight, that truth, *aletheia*, has to do with the lighting up of beings, their unconcealment and the way they become manifestly present in their being to man. Yet for Heidegger there is no absolute trust, for what is revealed is located within its historicity—its epoch. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why Heidegger's views are taken by some, at least in his early works, as being a pragmatic stance to what is possible. I discuss Heidegger's writing in his lecture series *Plato's Sophist*, which is discussed in the "Practical Enquiry" section in Chapter 11.

Representational thinking in the history of metaphysics can be identified as the process whereby the formation of an idea grasps and holds an aspect of reality, and fixes and retains it in an objectified manner. This way it can be recalled in memory and can be thought about (Heidegger, 1968, p. 39). This retaining of an object of thought within us is holding onto the objects of thought despite the flow of time. Thinking, as first influenced by Plato, has therefore traditionally been understood as the correctness of the correspondence of ideas arising subjectively, conforming to either an exterior or interior object of thought. Working within the subject–object polarity, the source or foundation of representational thinking remains obscure; through representational thinking the answer to "What is called thinking?" cannot

be achieved. It is not given to representational thinking to think into the grounds and origins of thinking, because it will turn it into yet another content of thought. For Heidegger, to learn means to let learn to think in another, more original way, one that is closer to the origins of thinking itself. But "we can learn thinking only if we radically unlearn what thinking has been traditionally" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 8). It is beyond the present scope to elucidate all the intricacies of the nature of traditional or representational thinking. In our everydayness we accept, often without thinking (in the Heideggerian sense), what our everydayness is. We accept at face value what others create for us as reality. This unquestioned reality conceals our openness by prematurely closing down our options to be. It offers us gratification and security through manipulation of people and things. To confront this dominating static notion of self would strip away the comfort of a deterministic model of knowing what one *will* become, as projected through the expectations of others. To face the uncertainty of our identity is both courageous and unsettling, for it challenges us in what we are and what we intend ourselves to be, rather than accepting a spectatorial account of ourselves as reflected in being for others. This "challenging self" is authentic, a dynamic, reconstituting self, which gives meaning to itself by forging its own future, not in isolation but as part of the changing temporality of humanity.

Heidegger is insightful and helpful in exploring the communal constituent of this challenging self, which is revealed in action in-the-world. He uses the term *Dasein* for this complex notion of the being of ourselves yet to become with others. *Dasein* is the unfolding of the becoming of what we may become and the recognition of what is authentically ourselves in our actions, which leads to self-realization. Bonnett has interpreted this point as "[M]an is self-aware, meaning by this not merely that man differentiates self from other—becomes an object for himself—but that he is self-knowing, self-caring and thus has a sense of personal space" (1978, p. 55). Our understanding of ourselves through "care" which "unifies the various structural aspects of *Dasein*'*s* way of being" (Dreyfus, 1992, p. 238) can be manifest, as Heidegger proposes, in making ourselves at home in the world with others through our solidarity with humanity (Heidegger does use the term "*fursorge*," or caring for others, within his writing but does not explain it as a theme, rather choosing to do so through solicitude). If care is inauthentic it leads to the manipulation of others for selfish reasons, so for Heidegger it is only through authentic care that we let others manifest themselves in their own way.

Heidegger's vision is thus not of separate individuals standing side by side to each other, unconnected, as objects isolated by their history and their present condition. For him, what we are is necessarily primordial, revealed through the dialectic of being-in-the-world with, and for, our and others' sakes. To quote Heidegger, "Being-in is *Being-with* Others. Their Being-in-themselves within-the-world is *Dasein-with*" (1962, p. 155). This world view places our personal realization as a collaborative endeavour in that it requires the recognition of others to establish a truth upon which we can base a *praxis* of being, which exceeds our solo efforts. In this sense we share and trust with others a common disclosure. For Heidegger, this is embodied in the notion of "*Mitsein*", which allows us to explore this connectedness of a many-faceted world. Olafson (1998), in developing Heidegger's

position, proposes that "each one of us would constitute a resource for our fellow human beings through the disclosure of the world that we affect and that we make available to them on countless informal occasions of social life as well as in the context of organised inquiries" (1998, p. 45). In this sense, *Dasein* is not indicative of the disclosure of the structures of reason and rationality; rather it is the "openness" or "world" in and through which an intricate nexus of meanings is disclosed in its truth (*aletheia*), only to hide again into concealment (*lethe*). In this light, the presencing of things as they disclose themselves, or open their meaning to us, is the shining forth of *aletheia* at the origin of things in and as the disclosure of "world". In this sense, *aletheia*, as the ground of "world", is also the being-there of the "world"—unconcealed. *Aletheia* is the being-in-the-world that is *Dasein*; it is the unconcealment (and concealment) of the existent itself as well as the emerging of what has been gathered and preserved by man. And man is the kind of being that finds himself *in between* what is unconcealed and what is concealed. Heidegger tells us that "Man in his essence is *ek-sistent* (standing out) into the openness of Being, into the open region that lights the "between" within which a "relation" of subject to object can be" (1977d, p. 229). But man remains suspended within the dichotomy of the subject and object, living in and through this polarity yet unaware of its existence—thus he is not grounded. Man thinks that he opens reality for himself. He sees himself as an isolated subject, an independent "I", apart from his existential-ontological dimension of being-in-the world, interdependent and interwoven with Being. Of course, man only reflects the oblivion of Being in the history of metaphysics.

If we are to learn thinking, we have to unlearn what metaphysical thinking has been. We must understand how the tradition of thinking failed to ask the most fundamental question of Being. Metaphysical thinking has forgotten the question of Being in favour of beings. It has forgotten the essential belonging together of the two-fold of Being and beings. Even the critical philosophy of Descartes and Kant "thinks from beings back to beings, with a glance in passing toward Being" (Heidegger, 1977d, p. 211). According to Heidegger, thinking only the essence of beings and never questioning the essence of their essence, the Being of their being (and the Being of Being), has left thinking about Beings divorced from its ground and thus the history of thinking ungrounded and polarized into the subject–object dichotomy.

## Existential Reflection

Existential reflection is not contemplatively resting on what might have been in a futile attempt to match what I am with the totality of what others might expect me to be. It is a learning exploration and is a process of evaluating one's future possibilities for Being, given the reality of one's current existence. It is the realization of what one is and the diagnostic consideration of the activities necessary to secure what one might be. Without it, our actions risk unquestioned inauthenticity

brought about by ritual and tradition. The world, as Rosenthal interprets Heidegger, "is not a collection of intra-worldly things, but rather the context of meaning within which worldly things can reveal themselves in their significance" (Rosenthal, 2000, p. 52).

Reflection on one's own behaviour as a scholar is different from reflection on oneself as a scholar skilled in a range of competencies appropriate for a defined role in society. The second is mere observation and is not being, existentially, a scholar. Reflection in *praxis* is not remedial in the sense of achieving some "given" ideal; rather, it is iterative, an engagement with oneself with others as a scholar (see Barnett, 1997, for his critique of Schön's concept lack of theoretical underpinning, and for a discussion of professionalism in academia). In this, it is a condition of self-knowledge and conscious self-trust of a future identity. Without it, our actions risk unquestioned inauthenticity brought about by ritual and tradition. We go through the motions of being a teacher or a student without exploring what the functionalities of such roles have for us personally. In Heidegger (1962), we can find a useful view of what autonomous reflection within the *praxis* of becoming might be. For Heidegger, the future positioning of our being is constrained by the parameters of our social system within which we can express ourselves. Our understanding of our identity will evidentially change as we interpret the accumulated experience of the choices we have made from the range of preferences available to us. This understanding of ourselves in our everydayness, Heidegger proposes, is making ourselves at home in the world so that we might act as part of humanity more thoughtfully.

Thus, we seek our authenticity through a hermeneutic self-understanding, which is achieved essentially through self-interpreting our potential. It is this dialectic process that enables us to function autonomously in a world where being with others is the natural state of affairs and where reflection within our own tradition is how we reveal our identity to ourselves. Without such reflection we can be tempted to fling ourselves into whatever possibilities present themselves, for we have no sense of our limitations. Reflection that leads to the recognition of our authentic identity is a resolution of what our own possibilities are and the acceptance of these as a different identity from that of our mutuality as part of humanity. There is no particular way of giving shape and meaning to a life, but one can grasp the responsibility for one's own future or rely on others to do that for one.

This form of understanding requires us to consider the risk to the inauthentic self in the revelation of aspects of its potential identity in its common in-the-world-ness. This presents us with having to face the authenticity of *Dasein* and the anxiety this creates. To do this requires a trust in one's essential being and in those with whom the process of revelation is undertaken. This trusting of others cannot be based on their potential for self-interest, as this is an inauthentic interpretation of the plurality of self and other. Clearly, there is a potential tension between the revelation of authentic identity to the self and the social meaning attributed to this in the presence of others. However, by accepting that authenticity can be revealed in a range of different modes of being, existential trust can provide the fore-structure for its revelation.

This reflection, if it is to be genuine, requires a sense of self-assuredness of an authentic facing up to the anxieties predicated on the fear of one's own finitude. This facing up can threaten to reject the objectification of the social world. It is the management of this process, without inappropriate loss of both self-concern and being with others, that is, I propose, a challenge that can be met by existential education, which can claim common assent from those involved in education. Reflection and deliberation by authenticating members of the community assist them in finding meaning in their existence but, for this to succeed, they need to feel sufficiently at home to be prepared to risk themselves to become what they, as yet undisclosed, might be. The context best suited to that is one in which the trustworthiness of self and others can be expected. This trustworthiness is more than the mere reliance on rules of engagement and exchange; it is deeper and reflects the root of commonality of being-in-the-world.

## Pedagogy of *Praxis*

At its core is a *praxis* based on the revelation of the active relationship between subject, teacher/trainer/master craft worker and student/practitioner. This is what Gadotti (1996) calls a "pedagogy of *praxis*", albeit revealed in conflict, and which Freire has championed in his influential writing on education in general (Freire, 1996, 2000) and higher education in particular (Escobar, Fernandez, Guevara-Niebla, & Freire, 1994). The existential *praxis* is the way we deconstruct normative modes of thought with regard to the process of teaching. In this sense, we abandon the traditional understanding of teaching where the teacher has the knowledge of the subject. In addition, the existential *praxis* positions education as addressing the dialectic tensions between teaching and being taught in an integrative manner that reunites the individual with others.

One of the most liberating freedoms of this *praxis* is the engagement and collaboration *with* others, rather than *for* others. This is manifested in education not through structured instruction controlled by the academic, but through a joint exploration of truth by engaging in the search for knowledge and understanding. This *praxis* of higher education conceives students as partners in the exploration of knowledge, pushing at the boundaries of what is knowable. It is not prescriptive over the form the search takes and accepts many interpretations of the meaning of scholarly experience but, above all, it is involving and committed. *Praxis* thus offers choice and the associated responsibility that goes with making these personal judgements for action. It is worthy educational practice in that it encourages practical judgements on the form and content of the curriculum, which, Smith has argued, have a "significant and irreducibly ethical dimension" (1999, p. 423).

Drawing from the existential literature and the contribution made by Heidegger in particular, I point to a learning community where the community practices the processes of conversation, involvement and engagement as modes of revealing knowledge. These allow teachers and scholars to encounter each other as interactive partners, collaborating in an educational project as critical thinkers and as mutual

learners. For the authentic student, I argue, the practice of learning is as important as the acquisition of the practical skills of scholarship. For this to happen requires a dialectical reflection on behalf of the universities, as well as action. It requires teachers to provide guidance to new scholars as they create their own learning experiences and it requires a form of trust where "dialogue is grounded in the respect of persons" (Willets, Boyce, & Franklin, 1995, p. 10). By no means does this necessarily require an existential interpretation, but an existentialist discourse has benefits for formulating a way of understanding the process of the fusion of subject and object essential to this approach.

Heidegger's earlier writing describes the being of one who teaches is to communicate in order to bring out the potential of the student. He says the "genuine being of one who teaches is to stand before another, and to speak to him in such a way that the other, in hearing, goes along with him. It is a unitary being-context that is determined by κίνησιζ [movement]" (Heidegger, 1977e, p. 221). This positions the teacher as an illuminator of the world whose approach to the learner is one of assisting the learner to find, understand and undertake the good or correct way of doing things. Thus there is not an intention of self or social constructionivism of knowledge of *aletheia* assumed on behalf of the student from a nothingness. The teacher introduces the student to the world in which they find themselves purposively. Yet this is not a contradiction of what Heidegger asserts when he famously discusses the role of the teacher as "letting learn". For Heidegger, a teacher is the master who teaches an apprentice, one who is developing the skills and techniques to become and to be transformed from the apprentice, through induction, into the craft or profession. In this the teacher facilitates change. The teacher does not instruct in the formal sense, but guides the movement of the potential of *dunamis* held within the apprentice setting it free as a capability to act as a craft worker or professional. It is in the second aspect that Heidegger says of one who teaches that:

> Teaching is even more difficult than learning. We know that; but we rarely think about it. . . Teaching is more difficult than learning, because what teaching calls for is this: to let learn. The real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than—learning (Heidegger, 1968, p. 15).

## Summary

I have attempted to show how Heidegger's works could be used to develop a framework for the development of a form of WBL. Issues of truth, reflection and capability have been discussed in detail. However, Heidegger did not explicitly undertake an application of his practical philosophy; this is left to others. One such approach that tends to have salience with the features explored above is provided by Billett (2009a). This chapter has the pragmatism of Dewey when faced with the issue of vocation, contextualized in contemporary literature and empirical investigation on WBL. The resultant is a proposal for the development of capacities through effective practice. A contemporary expression of Heidegger's analysis can be found in the four identified strengths of workplaces in fostering workplace learning:

Access to authentic work activities (i.e., authentic activities, novel and routine).
Observation and listening (cues and clues—indirect guidance).
Access to more experiences (co-workers—direct guidance—development of heuristics), and
Practice (opportunities to reinforce, refine and hone) (Billett, 2009a, p. 837).

# Chapter 4
# Dwelling at Work

*The truck driver is at home on the highway, but he does not have his lodgings there; the working woman is at home in the spinning mill but does not have her dwelling place there; the chief engineer has a home in the power station, but he does not dwell there. These buildings house man.*
(Heidegger, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking,* 1975c, p. 143)

The above words are in the opening page of Heidegger's *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, from which Heidegger provides a philological analysis of dwelling, which leads to a place where one is safeguarded. Should we desire a flourishing society, that is, a democratic community based on relatedness not transaction and on transcendence not immanence, which embraces both tacit and propositional knowledge, then workplace learning is necessary, although not sufficient, for a democratic society. I argue for the restoration of the centrality of workplace learning through active, experiential learning. Indeed, it is through experiential, vocational learning—central in the advocacy of Freire (1998)—that democracy and civic responsibility can flourish.[1] Moreover, vocational education can assist, as alluded to in the Chapter 3, in the development of *phronesis*, practical wisdom, within the responsible learner. It proposes that the technology of education that enables efficiency might inhibit the development of situated *phronesis*.

I suggest that a distinction be drawn between vocational and occupational learning, and will argue that the root for this distinction can be found in Heidegger's treatment of *techne*. Furthermore, the centrality of workplace learning in vocational education has shifted to formalized occupational educational institutions throughout the industrial and knowledge revolutions, and this has led to a separation and loss of a vocation's meaningful rites of passage, and to a foreshortening of experience totalized by qualifications. This allows more reliable accounting, and thus control, of learning through the accreditation of discreet, small, achievable and often worthless packages. The resulting theoretically based, observational and shallow

[1] Arnal and Burwood (2004) point to the potentially undemocratic notion of tacit knowledge due to its exclusiveness to communities of practice. Whilst recognizing this, I am in agreement that explicitness of standards and rules that are not negotiable themselves fails to guarantee inclusiveness and democracy and, having acknowledged this point, take it no further in this book.

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learning, designed to satisfy institutional funding and timetables, is undemocratic and disrespectful of the individual; indeed, it is a commodification of the individual reminiscent of totalitarian ideologies. Although it may offer students visits to the reality of their potential community of labour, these visits do little to switch a student's reference point to membership of a privileged community of "schooled adults" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 100), for these do not engage them in the transformative process of becoming a practitioner and participant in the economic reality of being-in-the-world.[2]

The proposal is that, regardless of the discipline, mode, form or level of study, connectedness with a community of practice legitimized by society is critical for the development of educated and competent practitioners. Such practitioners will have the disposition and virtues to transform themselves, with the assistance of formal integrated education, to become a *phromosis*: a practitioner of practical wisdom (a more complete description is given in Chapter 11 where I talk of the researchers as *phromosis*). Furthermore I assert that, as a goal for lifelong education, *phronesis* is a positive public good whereas the disconnected years of hedonistic education—designed to shelter students from the demands of their future communities—alienates them from their present and future civic duties. This has a negative impact on their acceptance of their responsibilities towards a democratic society, for they develop an identity as an autonomous recipient of other people's knowledge, not as critical users and transformers of that knowledge. This is not to argue against sound preparatory general education to enable students to make decisions about their life course or to argue for early specialization; rather, it is recognition of the difference between public and private good, and the allocation of responsibility between two communities of practice, educational and work, in a way that lets students learn and transform. In this context I will argue that *phronesis* should be the primary goal for all education (Gibbs & Angelides, 2004).

## Phronesis

In trying to define *phronesis* I turn not just to Heidegger but also to one of his students, Gadamer. Heidegger sees *phronesis* as a mode of comportment in and towards something a way of understanding it. Similarly Gadamer considers it a form of moral knowledge that offers an intentionality to act. It is ontological knowledge that complements our skills, but is not at our disposal in the same way (1975, p. 316). The development of *phronesis* as practical understanding in situ (situated understanding) and as such cannot be realized in advance or outside of the experiences that require it. Garrison has developed a theme in the teaching of students, that "teaching students to distinguish what they immediately and unreflectively desire from what they

[2] I agree with Gamble that theories of "transmission have a far stronger impact than has been acknowledged in debates around skill formation and lifelong learning in recent years. We ignore them at our peril" (2001, pp. 198–199).

ought to desire after reflection is the ultimate goal of education . . . It is an education that lies beyond knowledge alone" (1997, p. 126).

Put differently, the kinds of experiences in which *phronesis* comes into play are understood only insofar as we actually live through them. For Bernstein (1996) as for Gadamer, technical competence, whether in skills or ideas, falls short of the wisdom I mentioned, for it is with wisdom that actions can gain their moral direction and practical wisdom supports occupational education. As Gadamer points out, a *phronimos*, one who has practical wisdom, is "always in the situation of having to act in exigent circumstances. The image people have of what they ought to be, their conceptions of right and wrong, of decency, courage, dignity are always presupposed in decisions they are called upon to make" (1975, p. 283). Moreover, Caputo states that "Gadamer's development of phronesis as knowing how to apply. . . Phronesis is knowledge which is impoverished in the abstract—if you try to formulate it in a rule, it sounds anemic—and acquires texture only in its application" (Caputo, 1987, p. 210).

Thus we have, we are our *phronesis*, as Halverson (2004) claims, in that we cannot separate ourselves from our knowledge and how we use it, and such a definition requires no mention of the form or level of knowledge held. In an educational policy sense, this relegates the divide between occupational and academic education to that of genuine pathways to *phronesis*, which are achieved by blending knowledge action and understanding, and is irreducible to either form of knowledge for, as Lum (2003) points out, the distinction is one of evidence of knowledge, not the manifestation of knowledge itself. To borrow from Barnett's (1988) analogy, occupational and academic characterizations of learning act as fixed points in flux of an educational system, which creates eddies in the flow of education, rather than compass points by which to steer towards the aims of education: *phronesis*.

Yet, occupational education is increasingly subjected to what Colley, James, Tedder and Diment observe in official accounts of learning in occupational education and training, which "emphasise the acquisition of technical skills . . . (H)owever, such accounts fail to acknowledge the relationship between learning and identity" (2003, p. 471). To try to understand why occupational education has become synonymous with a rather narrow definition of technical skills, I begin my argument with Heidegger's understanding of *techne* and claim, like him and in line with Dewey's assertion, that vocational education without a wider context can lead to an "emphasis on skill or technical method at the expense of meaning" (Dewey, 1966, p. 305). Moreover

> . . .vocation means nothing but such a direction in life activities as renders them perceptibly significant to a person, because of the consequences they accomplish, and are also useful to his associates. The opposite of a career is neither leisure nor culture, but aimlessness, capriciousness, the absence of cumulative achievement in experience, on the personal side, and idle display, parasitic dependence upon others, on the social side. Occupation is a concretes term of continuity. It includes the development of artistic capacity of any kind, of special scientific ability, of effective citizenship, as well as professional and business occupations, to say nothing of mechanical labor or engagement in gainful pursuits (1966, p. 307).

Certainly, the rhetoric of present governments on the economic value of education tries to blur this by talk, in the United Kingdom, of providing for individuals "opportunities they need to make the most of themselves or to pursue their talents" (DfES, 2005, p. 66), or to help them gain the "skills we want them to acquire, but above all the values we want them to have" (DfES, 2004, p. 3). However, a complete reading of the documents from which the quotes are taken reveals that qualifications, in the narrow sense of occupation, are the drive. Certainly the autocratic voice of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in the second quote can be heard as chilling in its desire to shape individuals in the shape "we" desire, and thus defines "making the most of themselves" in terms of permissible citizens, rather than autonomous democrats.[3]

## Technical Skill or the Embracing of a Craft—Turning to Heidegger

In *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger makes it clear that technology, the way, is a mode of doing things and a mode of being-in-the-world and, as Dreyfus points out, its danger is not in its functionality, not in the potential "destruction of nature or culture but a restriction in our way of thinking—a levelling of our understanding of being" (1995, p. 99). In his characterization of technology, Heidegger contrasts ancient Greek and modern views of technology to emphasize their differences in relation to Being. For him, technology is a way of human existence and in this regard is an essential way of Being; thus he is concerned about the distress caused by technological understanding of being rather than the destruction caused by specific technologies. Beginning with the Greek meaning of *techne*, Heidegger (1977d) claims three phases in the evolution of technological being in Western history (see also Lambeir, 2002; Standish, 1997).

The first phase is linked with the Greek cosmos; hence *techne* does not only mean the ". . .activities and skills of the craftsman" (Heidegger, 1977d, p. 13). Moreover, Heidegger claims that from olden times until Plato's day the words *techne* and *episteme* were linked, denoting knowledge, knowing something exceptionally well and being an expert in it. Heidegger illustrates this when he discusses the relationship of cabinetmakers to their creative medium: wood. He argues that a cabinetmaker worthy of the name transcends the use of wood as a mere component in the production process and relates to it as part of their identity as cabinetmaker, and distinguishes mere *techne* from the being of a craftsman by stating, "the craft will never be anything but empty busywork" (1968, p. 15). This ontological perspective sees the craftsman and the professional developing ways of being as is illustrated in the transformation from medical student to doctor. It is in this ancient sense that I should

[3] It is interesting for instance to note that in the White Paper the word "value" is more often than not linked with the word "added", rather than in the sense of personal worthiness and that the words "democratic" (and its derivatives), "ethics" and "morality" appear neither in this nor in Part Three of *Skills: Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work* (DfES, 2005).

consider *techne* as the goal of occupational education, for this can readily lead to *phronesis* if it is accompanied by the continued development of Being. This form of *techne* is never finished; it is always in flux, always engaging in new problems, always learning. It is the modern craft worker identifying with their production, quite distinct from a modern, academically grounded worker, disinterested in their work. Importantly, it also needs teachers, mentors and masters to transcend their own goals to free the student to "let learn" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 15) and it is, in this sense, experiential vocational learning. In encouraging experiential learning, I encourage social engagement that offers practical examples of working with others in defining democratic contexts.

Against the background of the Greek pre-technological wholeness, where *techne* is the focus and origin of the world's meaning, stands the second phase of *techne*, where the forces of consumerism, industrialized machine production and mercantilism have led to the exploitation of resources and people (Heidegger, 1977d). For instance, through mechanized modes of production and the division of labour, as Marxist theory has adequately determined, workers at the service of capital are isolated from the final product and its general design, and thus alienated from their own and from social, political and economical realities, as well as from nature as a whole. As Standish puts it, this phase is characterized "... by factory production geared toward the satisfaction of needs and the reduction of the human beings to the labouring animal" (1997, p. 444). The indentured apprentice of the 1950s illustrates this, when skills and ways of being were laid down not just to establish competencies but to shape the identities of the skilled person. A mass-market, time-controlled response to the apprenticeships of the ancient guilds in the face of the influence of technology, these apprenticeships offered ontological security at the cost of identity stagnation (see Wolek, 1999).

In the third phase there is an intensification of production that is now increasingly controlled by cybernetics, algorithmic processes, calculative thinking and logistics within overall system theories. In this phase of *techne*, desire is exploited to its outer limits towards finite social and human ends, because production is now geared towards the achievement of maximal availability, feeding upon the creation of new desires, through an ongoing creation of needs for the satisfaction of endless desire (Heidegger, 1977b; Lambeir, 2002; Standish, 1997). This form of apprenticeship sees the emphasis shift away from modelling and observation of skilled workers to the reification of skills in the workshops and classrooms of colleges and universities. The journey away from the holistic encounter with raw material, the creative endeavour, the responsibility to society, is demoted to the needs of competencies relevant to one mode of practice and transferable to others in the search for efficiency, profit and materialism. Such learning becomes, I suggest, narrowly occupational.[4]

Thus the mechanism of technology can be conceived as the dominant force for our socialization and essentially gives us our anonymous public identities as

[4]The absence of this important point from government discussion on skills plans to increase apprenticeship (DfES, 2005, p. 8) is telling, I feel, and I envisage commercial accreditation.

technicians. “The individual in society who feels dependent and helpless in the face of its technically mediated life forms becomes incapable of establishing an identity. This has a profound social effect” (Gadamer, 1996, p. 73). In these circumstances human well-being is realistically restricted to an expression of humanity through personal identification with the production of worthy social institutions and artefacts. This may be a legitimate constraint on our authenticity but, if accepted unquestioningly, the anonymity that this brings can go too far, leading to alienation, bad faith and political exploitation.

Furthermore, this leads to the dispossession of the dispositions of the worthiness of the labour and its artefacts, critical to the development to citizens engaging with their labour within the societal context. The loss of this connectedness of being and creation leads to a loss of identity with the community for which the artefact has a purpose. This loss of relatedness to others, away from the consequences of creation, is a disconnectedness with production. The disconnection strips the act of creation of its moral responsibility to others. As White (1996) proposes, the dispositions (although not exclusive) of hope, social confidence, courage, self-esteem, self-respect, friendship, trust, honesty and decency are significant attributes required of a democrat.[5] To these I would add criticality and fairness, and cocoon them in a concept of care. I use “care” in the manner of Noddings (1984), in that the basis of caring is an engrossment with others, the process of setting aside one’s own self-concern in order to be free to empathize with the Other. It is in this sense that the workplace’s reality is its ethos of caring for the development of competences of work and democracy—or to deny them—in ways more real than the reified environment of the classroom.

The issue of capability and competence, and whether one can be known whilst not shown in action—in actuality—is discussed by Heidegger when he discusses *dumanis*. I explored this in the previous chapter, but it also has resonance here. Certainly, to be a builder, doctor or teacher requires learning a skill. If I quote directly from Heidegger, the point is well made:

> The ἕχειν[6] of a τέχνη[7] is bound to a previous learning and acquisition; no longer possessing μή ἕχειν,[8], is bound to a giving up. If this is so, then it is also clear that merely ceasing to enact τέχνη in no way needs to signify no longer having it. And vice versa, the immediate commencement of an enactment cannot signify an utterly novel appropriation but rather, to the contrary, already presupposes an acquisition (Heidegger, 1995b, p. 151).

Heidegger goes on to discuss how to verify that the capability exists. For Heidegger, the capability is present in the actuality of the work so produced, for “only the producing that is enacted makes evident that someone can do something and what that something is” (1995b, p. 154) in the enactment the capability attest to its presence. The issue of being builders is demonstrated in the building produced.

[5]She is clear to point out that her notion of democracy is not a singularity.

[6]Having.

[7]Techne, skills.

[8]Not having.

It is from the presence of that which is produced that the capability is verified. This capability is enduring and is a characteristic of the identity of person having such a capability, that is, the potter in the pub. It is the identity; it is not the individual, but an aspect of the individual's *Dasein*.

To summarize, I propose that occupational education has become dislodged from the vocation that enabled our identity to have its grounding in work. This is due to the reification of skills, not the wisdom of their use. To restore the value of vocation to occupations, I suggest that vocational education ought to take place in the workplace, but a workplace designed to offer a community at peace with itself. Such a combination, I believe, will enable students to transform into practitioners within the context of being engaged in the actual issues of society and learn the conditions that will support or disrupt the dwelling place they find. I recognize that this is only plausible to the degree that the workplace matches the notion of democracy advocated here. However, I pragmatically assume that a society that fails to embrace notions of democracy, dignity and care is itself shallow in these dispositions, and thus argue for the development of such workplaces, given the significant role they play in the identity formation of those within them and engaged in action.

## The Tension Between Workplace Identity and Dispositions of Democracy

In *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger claims that "to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free sphere that cares-for each thing in its own nature. The fundamental character of dwelling is this caring-for" (1975c, p. 149). "To dwell" is to be at peace within one's abode and to care for all things within it; it is being-at-home within one's dwelling place, abiding as the ground of all that we care for, all that is important to us, manifesting in and as the *ēthos* of the total human being fulfilled in being-itself (Heidegger, 1977d). Furthermore, Heidegger claims "the fundamental character of dwelling is this caring-for" (1975c, p. 149). This dwelling, I would suggest, involves the acculturation of rituals and practices that are central to learning in practice, but is a reflective, questioning where identity is not confined to re-enactments of the past, as the present in representation, but the reconstitution of self throughout a lifetime.

For instance it follows, I believe, that a discourse of skills in the original sense of *techne* is much less problematic in terms of the development of the person and their flourishing than the current use of the term in the sense of prescribed learning outcomes and competency-based communities (Smith, 2005). Indeed, the prescription of outcomes of teaching in terms of student learning seems to be counter-intuitive if the aim of education is personal autonomy and practical wisdom. Surely, education is the blending in the educated person of learned being and creative becoming. It can be discussed in terms of skills acquisition, provided these skills are rich in their relationship to the development of the identity of the person as a social actor in ways that foster the disposition outlined by White (1996) and Gibbs (2004).

These dispositions are not exclusive of any form of structured education; they draw no real or virtual line in cyberspace or elsewhere in separating vocational and academic. Dewey's insight is that vocational education is about becoming a contributor to society and warns of the perils to society of an overtly instrumental vocational educational system, which can become an "instrument in accomplishing the feudal dogma of social predestination" (1966, p. 318). There is a difference between finding a home in society through an occupation in which one can be contented[9] and an occupation forced upon one as a predetermined function of social standing. In other words, the acquisition of skills should be considered both a political and a moral endeavour as well as a process of achieving competence. It is encouraged through opportunities to learn which are existentially enriched and students make decisions not just on the tools of their endeavour, but on how they want to use them to influence their societal role. Indeed, using these tools in their capacity to produce practical ends and, as we understand ourselves, as ends insofar as we are competent to achieve them, practical understanding and self-understanding occur together.

To some extent this discourse of skills missed the subtlety offered by Mei (2009) when interpreting Heidegger's notion of *techne*. Mei draws attention to the Aristotelian notion of *phusis*, which Heidegger defines as "an emerging and rising in itself and in all things. It clears and illuminates also, that on which and in which man bases his dwelling" (1975c, p. 41). For Mei, *phusis* is that which is essential to an entity, say a flower, to bloom and allow the flower to reveal its own manner of being without any engagement; that is, it does not alter itself or become other than itself. This he contrasts with working on (*techne*) a tree to extract its used value as construction timber. Vocation, in the sense of a vocation for, seems to be an equally important aspect of *phusis* as *techne*, and a discussion of this flourishing of humanity through *techne* is missing from many accounts of Heidegger's engagement with technology. The freedom offered by technology and its use allow *Dasein*'s *phusis* to be unconcealed and to flourish.

## What Is the Evidence?

There is evidence in the UK system that vocational education does indeed try to do this. For instance, in a recent study by Colley et al. (2003) concerning vocational education in further education colleges, they illustrate the social constructivism of vocational education through the lens of "vocational habitus". Although the focus of their article is not the notion of morality, the case studies they offer clearly indicate that the learning opportunities within the communities of practice in which the students were engaged when working outside college did contribute to their becoming members of these communities, in ways beyond skills. The concept of *habitus*

[9] See Bonnett (2003, §11).

borrowed from Bourdieu (1998) works equally well in an academic setting, as he illustrates in his discussion of the nobility created by higher education.

Both Bourdieu and Dewey refer to the tension and subsequent need to confront the potentially impermeable *habitus* of occupations and the need to encourage students to confront and resist their identity being passively absorbed, as by osmosis, into the membership of particular communities of practice by birth, rather than by choice. Quite clearly it is a political activity that requires mass participation if it is to succeed, and to do so it needs free-thinking democrats. In this sense vocational education, as distinct from occupational training, is radical and is engaged in constant re-negotiation of its purpose and the value to society of its actions in shaping societal, as well as financial, well-being in the workplace.

With its structure, culture, atmosphere or climate and prescribed way of conducting business, the workplace is a dwelling place in the Heideggerian sense. Indeed, it is evident from the literature that "workplace culture is multifaceted and asserts a major influence on individuals' and groups' behaviour" (Wilson, McCormack, & Ives, 2005, p. 928). It is a world where any artificial divide between ethics and the being of an ethical agent is removed and where learning takes place in both explicit and tacit skills and in the transcendence and immanence of Being. In this sense the workplace can be where one can authentically reveal oneself through one's work in ways that encourage caring and participation through responsibility and the realization of potential. Such a workplace, I suggest, is conducive to an *ēthos* that defines what the community of practice means within the world at large. It is developed through the engagement of workers with workers who are often subjected to, rather than liberated from, the management that directs their endeavour. I am talking of the *ēthos* of actual practice of novice and connoisseur, those that work, encounter and reveal themselves to workmates who care about each other. This is most obviously seen in dangerous occupations, but is also in the potentially less physical dangerous but psychologically threatening service and caring industries. For Heidegger, this is revealed in the functional wholeness of the world in which one finds oneself:

> The functionality contexture is not a relational whole in the sense of a product that emerges only from the conjoint occurrence of a number of things. The functionality whole, narrower or broader—room, house, neighborhood, town city—is the *pruis*, with which specific beings, as beings of this or that character, are as they are and exhibit themselves correspondingly... a specific functionality whole is pre-understood (Heidegger, 1982, p. 233).

Moreover, we understand ourselves as ends to be accomplished, because "as existent we already understand world before we are able to understand and encounter ourselves constantly in a specific way of the beings which we encounter as intrawordly" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 243). From Okrent's reading, this means that Heidegger considers practical activity simultaneously as

1 the demonstration and realisation of our practical understanding for tools
2 the exercise of our understanding of how to do things with tools
3 the field in which we understand ourselves as ends, and
4 the demonstration of our understanding of the context of functional relations in terms of which tools operate—to be a unitary phenomenon (Okrent, 1988, p. 43).

The point of issue for us is not the way in which the students within communities of practice learn their work-related skills, whether this in the form of peripheral participation theorized by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998), by those who have voiced concerns on the applicability of such conceptualizations in the workplace (Boud & Middleton, 2003; Fuller et al., 2005) or by theorists of tacit learning (Eraut, 2004; Polanyi, 1974). Rather, it concerns how the transformative nature of the engagement in the workplace creates a democratic identity. Moreover, where are these dispositions best developed: the classroom or the workplace? For example, how an "apprentice" gains practitioner status affects the construction of the ongoing identity of the learning in the sense of the democratic disposition mentioned earlier. From a Heideggerian perspective, a community of practice is a dwelling, an abode for the development of an identity. It can be a compelling setting to develop the identity grounded in the tacit dispositions of democracy, provided the community is "co-constitutive" (Billett & Somerville, 2004) and that its practices are open to be reconstructed. Dwelling here adds value to learning, particularly when compared to the disjointed preparation for students in theorized environments such as the classroom, laboratory or college workshop, where the actuality of the experience of doing and the responsibility thus rendered are less conducive to the development of the whole person. It might also simply be boring or incomprehensible, stripped of its situatedness.

Of course, educational institutions themselves can be considered as workplaces, for the purposes of discussion, but in this context their value to the development of students is their engagement in the creation of meaning for themselves as an existential social entity with responsibilities, accountabilities and duties. This is difficult if they follow a teacher's curriculum that is not informed by the students' needs, but designed to appease government policy by being seen to comply with various instrumental measurements. If educational institutions make it their mission, they can combat their manipulation by powerful Others to structure the students into a dependency culture of consumerism and unthinking acceptance of allocated roles: if they fail to do so, they become a sorry excuse for a real workplace in which to contribute to a vocational disposition.

Other workplaces can help achieve the democratic dispositions to flourish, provided they foster a caring relevance so that the co-building of their reality with that of the student can take place. In this co-construction the essence of democracy is revealed and allows the disposition of caring for self and others proposed by White (1996) to flourish. Cold, instrumental, learning environments, whether work or classroom, fail to create this connectedness with one's identity and being with others, by failing to encourage the continuing revealing of a reconstructive self. The notion of care with its conflated disposition is easily sidetracked into the rituals of the workplace as indicated by Bourdieu (1998), and unless the student has the criticality to question and a disposition towards action, the workplace can thwart their development.

It is here that formal education can contribute to the process of the educated and wise person who is grounded in the reality in the world's workplaces. As Taylor argues, rather than diverting liberal education too early in a student's career to

vocational skills, perhaps it should "look towards innovative and effective ways of assisting youth develop these (skills) in a manner that will be socially, rather than narrowly vocationally, capacity building" (2005, p. 215). However, this will require change. Currently the educational community places demands on the individual to achieve in terms of accredited qualifications, whilst the workplace is concerned with other forms of production. Le Maistre and Paré talk about the difference in the two systems, work and educational institutions, as being "radically different activity systems, with quite distinct objectives, mediation means, rules, divisions of labour" (2004, p. 45). Both risk alienating and exploiting students unless they can create an abode where students can dwell in the security of community, to grow personally and critically for themselves rather than co-produce with others, for others. Lave and Wenger identify two, often incompatible, perspectives, the "learning curriculum" and the "teaching curriculum" (1991, pp. 97–98), to explain this phenomena and the alienation of some students from the teaching curriculum.

The return to the workplace as a social driver of a purposeful and worthy society can be negotiated in the post-modern notion of work. I do not claim this is happening, but argue that Government initiatives (see, for instance, the Learning Through Work website) that centralize the triple helix of workplace, education and training could not have been developed without considering the social impact, for it would be folly to give so much power to the owners of production without weighing the impact on social capital. So, should the workplace become democratic rather than dogmatic, enlightened rather than self-interested, socially conscious rather than instrumental, then[10] it would be an ideal place for the development of skills of being and becoming of oneself within a community sanctioned by society, that is, in and of itself, worthwhile (Winch, 2002). Paradoxically, it would provide a meaningful alternative to the current totalizing influence of academic environment unframed with the goals of achievement and productivity for the "we" in the Secretary of State's foreword to the 14–19 White Paper. Yet I recognize that such theorizing is predicated on many assumptions, not least of which is the empirical establishment of a link between workplace learning and the flourishing of democratic dispositions. This is a difficult task, for it requires a change in the many learning communities experienced by students prior to their active dealings in the workplace, and to identify how these can contribute to the flourishing of democratic values is a different task from understanding how a work ethic can be engendered in youth, which seems to be the consistent theme of the economic discourse on the skills agenda. It is, however, worthy of the research for, if the case is proven, greater emphasis needs to be placed on workplace learning and its active contribution to democratic criticality within a democracy that is respectful and caring of others. If workplace learning fails to make such a contribution, it needs to be stopped and I need to address the big question about what we are allowing to happen to our humanity.

[10] I recognize, as reported in the 14–19 White Paper, that concerns have been raised about the teaching of such skills in schools, colleges and work-based providers at all ages by OfSTED and QCA.

# Chapter 5
# What Is Work? A Heideggerian Insight into the Workplace as a Site for Learning

*What about the lever? What about the button which the worker manipulates? Levers and buttons have long existed even on the workbenches of the old-fashioned craftsman's shop. But the lever and the buttons in the manipulations of the industrial worker belong to a machine. And where does the machine, such as a power generator, belong?*

(Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking,* 1968, pp. 23–24)

We have seen that Heidegger is concerned that our being is revealed through our being in the world as a unity. Moreover, we encounter and deal with a range of worlds into which we are thrown, one of which—the world of work—is the one central to our being. To understand these worlds, I suggest, is a precondition to understanding learning in becoming familiar with and comprehending what happens in this world and how we deal with it. In this chapter I shall develop of an analysis of the phenomena of work, using Heidegger's phenomenological methods and insights.

Heidegger's early works provide his most important contribution to our understanding of being, while his discussions of the effects of technology on that being are more evident in his later works, specifically in his *Questions Concerning Technology*. I will use his phenomenological approach to understanding the workplace and then try to reveal his notion of the worker. Although Heidegger gives a rich picture of the workplace he seemingly fails to offer a subtle approach to what is labouring or to whether there is a substantive difference between labouring, working and crafting. To augment Heidegger in that discussion I draw upon the work of his students, Marcuse and Arendt, which specifically relates to these distinctions

Heidegger discusses the nature of both being phenomenology and hermeneutic investigations juxtaposing them with "scientific" method for the first time and in detail in *Ontology—The Hermentutics of Facticity* (2008). Here he argues that phenomenological investigation grounded in being goes against the predetermined approach to understanding the world implicit in academic disciplines. Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology emphasizes a historicity of being rather than a philosophical approach and arrives at the conclusion through a detailed analysis, in part one of this book, into the sources of our understanding of being. Within this context Heidegger suggests that work is the universal condition of humans as producers and is a way in which we experience life through varied engagements with beings. This

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idea is perhaps best encapsulated by the Greek origin of the word *poiesis*, meaning "bringing forth". *Poiesis* relates to all ways in which humans produce things but, unlike Plato's totalizing utopia of *poiesis*, Heidegger tends to favour Aristotle's distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*. *Praxis* retains its sense of action without a defined end, as distinct from *poiesis*' blueprinted intention (Taminiaux, 1987).

In my approach I will introduce Heidegger's concepts of the work world, its contents and how, through circumspection, it is apprehended. From this description an understanding of the workplace can be achieved and interpretive insights may be gained into the learning that occurs there. We know of the world as that which "is already previously unveiled and from which we return to the beings with which we have to do and among which we dwell ... we always already understand world in the holding ourselves in a contexture of functionality [Bewandtniszusammenhang]" (Heidegger, 1982, p. 235). This chapter is structured in two parts. The first is an outline and discussion for a phenomenological analysis of the workplace and the second is the application of these as tools to investigate the worker.

## Understanding the Meaning of the Workplace

Heidegger's most comprehensive summary of the nature of the workplace appears in the *History of the Concept of Time* (1992a). In that book, Chapter 23 provides a section entitled "The work-world: more detailed phenomenological interpretation of the environing world of concern." In this passage Heidegger describes the work world as defined in the work. However, in accord with the kind of being it has, the work is itself in the character of "conducive to" (1992a, p. 192). For instance, the shoe is for wearing; that is the what-for of the entity and forms part of it in its present state. Moreover, the product references the public world in which the product is to be used and, even more primarily, the natural world from whence the natural products emerged and upon which it is dependent.

Heidegger calls the kind of understanding by which we can make sense of our world and its entities "circumspection". Through circumspection we see our circumstances—our situatedness—not in a theoretical way, but in the sense of *praxis*: an environment that enables us to act. This encountering within a world of equipment, as opposed to theoretical behaviour which is "just looking, without circumspection" (1962, p. 99), is how we encounter our everyday world. This "familiarity" and circumspection operate in the work world, where circumspection is the "skilled possibility of concerned discovering, of concerned seeing" (1992a, p. 274). That is, "circumspection is the way in which we look around when using equipment and understand the use of a particular piece of equipment from how it relates to the totality of equipment" (Nielsen, 2007, p. 459). Our skill in this aspect is based on our familiarity of being-in that world. That is, certain environments have ready-at-hand what is needed to achieve what is sought and others do not. It is not just a matter of what others might consider appropriate or what had previously been available. It is a matter of to what workers care to direct their attention during the course of a certain practice.

## Structuring

Heidegger's analysis through the Greek cosmos (*κοσμος*) of the condition of differing worlds of action (*The Metaphysical Foundation of Logic*, 1992d, p. 171) is phenomenological in the following sense. It attempts to allow the world, which normally hides itself in its very obviousness, to show itself. It shows itself in ways that "put us in the picture" (*The Age of the World Picture*, 2002, p. 69), that is, the representativeness of being.

Heidegger begins to put us in the picture through his analysis of our closest, everyday world and the entities we encounter in it—equipment, or ready-to-hand entities—warranted by the attention we pay to a specific context, as opposed to present-at-hand entities whose purpose is unclear. Heidegger describes our life in this world as our "dealings" with the ready-to-hand. Thus, in our dealings "we come across equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement" (1962, p. 97) and each "piece of equipment is, by is own nature, equipment-for—travelling, for writing, for flying" (1982, p. 163). Further, he reminds us that there is no such thing as "an equipment". Rather, the being of any equipment always belongs a totality, through which essential being—as equipment—is able to be phenomenologically known. The entity as equipment is, moreover, not merely "extant but, in conformity with its equipmental character, belongs to an equipment contexture within which it is has its specific equipmental function, which primarily constitutes its function" (1982, p. 292).

For instance, we know of workshops or offices as places to work, where the computers are regarded and revealed through their functionality to be ready-at-hand to service and enhance work. They are not to play games upon, as in an amusement arcade, although clearly they could be used for that. Another example might be the fuss made about a prison that appears to be something else that is unsuitable for criminals, such as a hotel. A totality of equipment is constituted to achieve something; it is its "in-order-to". Heidegger suggests that serviceability, conduciveness, usability and manipulability, rather than sustainability or materiality, determine the nature of equipment.

Heidegger calls the kind of understanding by which we can make sense of our world and the entities in it circumspection. Through circumspection we see our circumstances—our situatedness—not in a theoretical way, but in the sense of *praxis*: an environment that enables us to act. This attending within a world of equipment, as opposed to theoretical behaviour, which is "just looking, without circumspection" (1962, p. 99), is how we encounter our everyday world. It is not the way in which we deconstruct a work for scientific analysis but the way we get on and do. That is, certain environments have ready-at-hand what is needed to achieve what is sought and others do not. It is not just a matter of what others might consider appropriate or what has previously been available. It is a matter of to what workers care to direct their attention during the course of a certain practice.

In this sense, when we are working it is the work that is our concern, not the tools with which the work is produced—unless they break down—although the work bears the "referential totality within which the equipment is encountered"

(1962, p. 99) and the essence of for whom the work is produced. The work that we chiefly encounter in our dealings—the work that is to be found when one is at work on something—has a usability which belongs to it essentially. This usability lets us encounter the "towards-which" for which it is usable (1962, p. 99): the shoe that is produced is for wearing.

Thus, for Heidegger the world—and, in our case, the world of work—is not an aggregate of "present-at-hand" objects that just occur, but is a holistic context of relations. The "ready-to-hand", what something *is*—its "ontological definition"—is determined by its role in the project under way in the workshop. The totality of these functional relations is laid out in our culture's practices, which Heidegger calls the worldhood of the world. Human work is engaged in a web of meaning and basic human values. It is not a distinctive entity. It is not grasped in isolation from goals and ends. We see our work through focused circumspection, which shows us the routes by which to proceed; we are concerned with what has to be done. That is, work is produced and is a reference "not only for the-towards-which (as a means to an end) under simple craft conditions. It also has an assignment to the person who is to use it or wear it" (1962, p. 100). When we rest from the work activity, concern remains. But for circumspection, if freed from work's focus we might turn to the sports page in the newspaper or talk about last night's news programme.

As Heidegger has revealed, we come into contact with the equipment of the work world and use and interpret it in terms of the ready-to-hand—the mode of apprehension found in everyday circumspection. Life is experienced in the context of a totality of involvements, where significance, reference and meaning are historic human constructions. The ready-to-hand involves "equipment constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability" (1962, p. 97). It emerges from the context of the purposes "towards-which" we assign entities we may come across.

Heidegger's clarity on this issue is problematic, with "conduciveness" receiving no further mention in *Being and Time*, but featuring more fully *in Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* where Heidegger seems to settle upon it as meaning as "its usability constitutes its existence" (2009, p. 63), its *telos*, its end. "Serviceability" of equipment—"that for which it serves to" (1982, p. 68), as the window serves to illuminate the room—might be defined as being in the service of work to be done, rather than being a sign indicating the way of the "towards-which" of equipment and whose specific character comprises "showing and indicating" (1962, p. 108). "Usability" has the characteristic of the towards-which of its purpose. That is, the work to be found when one is at work "on something—has a usability which belongs to it essentially; in this usability it lets us encounter the 'towards-which' for which *it* is usable" (1962, p. 99, italics in the original). Thus we discover its unusability, "not by looking at it and establishing its properties, but rather by the circumspection of the dealings in which we use it. When its unusability is thus discovered, equipment becomes conspicuous" (1962, p. 102). "Manipulability" seems to refer to the actual use of the equipment. We come to know a tool better with use, through the revealing of its thing-ness in action; as Heidegger puts it, "hammering itself uncovers the specific 'manipulability' of the hammer" (1962, p. 98).

## The Equipmental Nature of the Workplace

What is in the world we encounter? For Heidegger, this is the central question to ask to understand what being-in-the-world is about. He begins his analysis with our everyday world and the entities we encounter within it. For Heidegger there are three forms of being in any world that we may encounter. The first is our being; the being of being human, or *Dasein*. Of the other two, equipment is the most relevant to the work. These ready-to-hand entities are disclosed through the meaning we give to entities in specific contexts. In his later works, equipment is seen as having "a peculiar position intermediate between thing and work, assuming that such a calculated ordering of them is possible" (1975b, p. 28). These things are present-at-hand entities whose purpose is unclear, perceived as collections of determinate properties unrelated to the work to be undertaken. Indeed, Heidegger goes so far as to attribute specific forms of temporality to each of these forms of being, but these are not discussed here (Gibbs, 2009).

Heidegger describes our life in this world as our "dealings" with the ready-to-hand. Thus, in our dealings, "we come across equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement" (1962, p. 97) and each "piece of equipment is, by is own nature, equipment-for—for travelling, for writing, for flying" (1982, p. 163). Furthermore, he reminds us that there is no such thing as "an equipment". Rather, the being of any equipment always belongs to a totality, through which essential being—as equipment—is able to be phenomenologically known. The entity as equipment is, moreover, not merely "extant but, in conformity with its equipmental character, belongs to an equipment contexture within which it is has its specific equipmental function, which primarily constitutes its function" (1992b, p. 292).

When absorbed in our skilful circumspection we are unaware of the equipment and how we are using it. Heidegger states:

> That with which our every-day dealings proximally dwell is not the tools themselves. On the contrary, that which we concern ourselves primarily is the work—that which is to be produced at the time; and this is accordingly ready-to-hand too. The work bears with it the referential totality within which the equipment is encountered (1962, p. 99).

But the work to be produced is not merely usable for something. The production itself is a using of something, for something. In the work there is also a reference or assignment to materials: "the work is dependent on leather, thread, needles and the like" (1962, pp. 99–100). It follows, then, that what is "given" in average everyday dealings with the world is a holistic "equipmental totality", a web of functional relationships in which things are encountered in their interdependent functions and in terms of their relevance to what we are doing. The hammer is what it is by virtue of its reference to these nails and boards, in hammering on this workbench, under this lighting, for this purpose. In the work world of the craft worker, for example, along with the equipment to be found when one is at work, one outcome was that those Others for whom the "work" is destined were "encountered too" (1962, p. 153). In

equipment's existence there is an implicit assignment or reference to possible use and the kind of person for whom it is meant.

Our work can be disrupted when the equipment become conspicuous by not functioning. When we discover the unusability of equipment it becomes conspicuous:

> This *conspicuousness* presents the ready-to-hand equipment as a certain un-readiness-to-hand. But this implies that what cannot be used just lies there; it shows itself as an equipmental Thing which looks so and so, and which, in its readiness-to-hand as looking that way has constantly been present-at-hand to (Heidegger, 1962, p. 103).

Critically, he then says this:

> presence at hand of something that cannot be used but is still not devoid of all ready-to-hand whatsoever; equipment which is present-at-hand *in this way* is still not just a Thing which occurs somewhere. The damage to the equipment is still not a mere alteration of a Thing—not a change of property which is just occurs in something present-at-hand (1962, p. 103).

For Heidegger, conspicuousness is the central attribute of unready-at-hand. There are more instances of ready-at-hand taking on such a mode of being, for instance when something is missing or not handy. Heidegger says that:

> to miss something in this way amounts to coming across something un-ready to hand. Moreover, that which is ready-to-hand but not what is required becomes all the more obstructive [*um so aufdringlicher*] ... so much so that it loses its character of ready-to-hand. It reveals itself as just present-at-hand and no more, which cannot be budged without the thing that is missing from where we expect to find it obtrudes itself on our attention as something not been at hand (1962, p. 105).

Finally, if we encounter obstacles to our work in the form of something that might have helped but instead doesn't, Heidegger refers to these as "obstinately unready-at-hand." Moreover, due to equipmental totality, when a disruption occurs it highlights the whole world for which equipment was the referential totality.

A totality of equipment is constituted to achieve something; it is its "in-order-to". Heidegger suggests that serviceability, conduciveness, usability and manipulability determine the nature of equipment. Serviceability is the basic trait out of which these things of beings look at us—that is, flash at us and thereby presence and so be the beings they are. Both their design and the choice of material determined by that design—and, therefore, the dominance of the matter-form structure—are grounded in such serviceability: "A being that falls under serviceability is always a product of a process of making. It is a piece of equipment for something" (Heidegger, 1977e, p. 100).[1] Manipulability of equipment is our ability and competence to use it and its usability lets us encounter the "towards-which" for which it is usable (1962, p. 99): the shoe that is produced is for wearing.

For example, we know of lecture theatres or offices as places to work, where the computers are regarded and revealed through their functionality, their usefulness, to be ready-at-hand to service and enhance work. Here, they are not to play games

[1] Hofstadter translates "serviceability" as "usefulness", which I think is less helpful than the Young and Haynes translation, in this instance.

upon, as in an amusement arcade, although clearly they could be used like that, and should they be prominently used in this way our familiarity with what is a workplace is disturbed. The absence or malfunction of this equipment may also cause us concern as to our location or to our competences and skills.

Taken in its commonsense meaning, the concept of familiarity may appear trivial, yet it subsumes many ideas. Here it includes the idea of involvement, being-in-the-world, dwelling, understanding and unity of self and world. Its central role in the work world is best framed in this extended quotation from Heidegger:

> The Dasein itself is being-toward—itself, being with others, and being-among entities handy and extant. In the structure moments *of toward-itself, with-others* and *among-the-extent* there is implicit throughout the *character of overstepping,* of transcendence. We call the unit of these relations the "Dasein" being-in, with the sense that the Dasein possesses an original familiarity with itself, with others, and with the entities handy and extant. This familiarity is as such *familiarity in a world* (1982, p. 301).

Hence, familiarity and circumspection form a dialectic for *Dasein* to operate in the work world, where circumspection is the "skilled possibility of concerned discovering, of concerned seeing" (1992a, p. 274). That is, circumspection is the way in which we look around "when using equipment and understand the use of a particular piece of equipment from how it relates to the totality of equipment" (Nielsen, 2007, p. 459). Our skill at this task is based on our familiarity of being-in that world.

It is in the ontological meaning of work—the being of work—that a Heideggerian perspective offers real insights. Through technology, the meaningfulness of work—its transcendental potential—is ruled out by its immanence. It is evident in Arendt's distinction between labour and work, with the worker creating enduring production (fabrication) of an independent entity, while the labourer repetitively creates consumption.

## Defining Work and the Worker

The essence of work is the essence of being, for it provides the point of departure in our understanding of the being of our being. As Kovacs comments, "work is an essential part of human life as recognized by all serious reflection on the value of human activity" (1986, p. 195). Shershow pointedly reflects that we see ourselves as "*working to live* and as *living to work*: understanding labour at once as inescapable obligation. . . and as the definitive essence of our humanity" (2005, p. 13; italics in original). This phrase complements Arendt's more dramatic distinction, that we "eat in order to labor and must labor in order to eat" (1958, p. 143).

Of course, work is not the only starting point—contact with the natural world, family engagement and contact with our own background are others. It is an important one, however, for it features many of the practices by which we strive to achieve and many means by which we realize our lives. Yet, paradoxically, the artefacts that provide the context tend only to confirm our alienation from our being, for they are desired in order to achieve tranquillity and security in our inauthentically chosen

dwelling of spaces, yet fail to do so. This inauthenticity is nurtured by consumerism that challenges our essential understanding of being and replaces our encountering ourselves and others with the products of our labour. In doing so it alienates us from these labours, not in a Marxist but in a Heideggerian sense—from our own being. Work tends towards a form of being that is not being; it is a semblance of being that finds its realization in consumerism: an inauthentic meaning, but one that provides tranquillity in times of anxiety. Indeed, limiting the horizon removes uncertainty and furthers the "falleness" of self into tranquillity and alienation.

The work that we chiefly encounter in our dealings—the work that is to be found when one is at work on something—has a usability that belongs to it essentially. In this sense, when we are working it is the work that is our concern, not the tools with which the work is produced—unless they break down—although the work bears the "referential totality within which the equipment is encountered" (1962, p. 99) and the essence of for whom the work is produced.

Human work is dealing with, attending to within a web of meaning and basic human values. It is not a distinctive entity. It is not grasped in isolation from goals and ends. We see our work through focused circumspection, which shows us the routes by which to proceed; we are concerned with what has to be done. I quote at length Heidegger here, as he is very clear:

> The work produced refers not only to the "towards-which" of its usability and the "whereof" of which it consists; under simple craft conditions it also has an assignment to the person who is to use it or wear it. The work is cut to his figure; he "is" there along with it as the work emerges. Even when goods are produced by the dozen, this constitutive assignment is by no means lacking; it is merely indefinite, and points to the random, the average. Thus along with the work, we encounter not only entities ready-to-hand but also entities with *Dasein*'s kind of Being—entities for which, in their concern, the product becomes ready-to-hand; and together with these we encounter the world in which wearers and users live, which is at the same time ours. Any work with which one concerns oneself is ready-to-hand not only in the domestic world of the workshop but also in the *public world* (1962, p. 100).

Thus, for Heidegger the world is not an aggregate of "present-at-hand" objects that just occur, but is a holistic context of relations; the students appear as students, not as delinquents to be controlled. The "ready-to-hand", what something *is*—its "ontological definition"—is determined by its role in the project under way in the workplace. The totality of these functional relations is laid out in our culture's practices, and Heidegger calls this the worldhood of the world.

My brief discussion of Heidegger's notion of equipment shows how it is comprehended through circumspection, yet Heidegger also talks about how human beings are encountered within a world; in our case, it is the world of work. Being-with-others (*Mitsein*) is not an attribute added to self. Rather, it is ontologically essential to its very identification. For Heidegger, our basic orientation towards equipment is concern and our orientation towards others is solicitude.

Being-with-others as solicitude is, according to Mulhall, "an ontological claim: it does not deny that *Dasein* can be, and often is, indifferent or hostile to the well-being of others" (Mulhall, 1996, p. 66). At one end of the scale of solicitude one can "leap-in" for others, taking care away from them and putting oneself in a position

of concern. Leaping-in takes over the other's project and, in extremes, negates their own relation to the work by acting on one's own behalf through them—perhaps the over-instrumentality of a caring teacher, who gives out answers too quickly? At the other end of the scale, Heidegger discusses "leaping-ahead". This is authentic and is directed "not towards the things with which another is concerned, but towards the other's way of existing" (Polt, 2003, p. 61). This leaping-ahead recognizes workers as humans with their own world and pertains essentially to authentic care. That is, it is to do with the existence of others, not to a "what" or as a means, but as an end with which they are concerned, and Freeman (2008) makes an interesting case for a Heideggerian ethics based on this distinction.

The culture for such solicitude emerges through what Heidegger calls "idle-talk" and "busyness". The creation of an environmental familiarity that is left unquestioned and reinforced by frenetic activity creates a discourse of "idle talk". This is groundless opinion carrying the authority of only average understanding, of unthought-of commonality, where things are accepted as they are on the basis of "because one says so" (1962, p. 212). Such talk "closes-off, since to go back to the ground of what is talked about is something which it *leaves undone*" (1962, p. 213, italics in original).

Heidegger suggests that work is our universal human condition ("man experiences real beings as a worker and soldier does, and makes available what alone is to count as a being", Heidegger, 1998a, p. 33), for we are producers of our own being as well as the artefacts that define our world, as a way in which we experience life through varied encounters with beings. This idea is perhaps best encapsulated by the Greek origin of the word *poiesis*, meaning bringing forth. *Poiesis* relates to all ways that humans produce things. Heidegger tends to favour Aristotle's distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*, retaining *praxis* in its sense of action without a defined end, as distinct from the blueprinted intention of *poiesis* (Taminiaux, 1987). It is in the ontological meaning of work, the being of work, that a Heideggerian perspective offers real insights.

Heidegger is very clear on the role of the craft worker and his direct link to ownership of his production and extends this, in a somewhat diluted form, to mass manufacturing (1962, p. 100). This is illustrated in *What is Called Thinking*, where he uses the example of the cabinetmaker's apprentice. His apprenticeship is not exclusively in the instrumental skills of the trade, but in the being of the craft through an understanding of the nature of wood and its usability; not as the mere manipulator of tools, but in a deeper, ontological relation to wood. Heidegger then contrasts this with modernity by asking "where in the manipulations of the industrial worker is there any relatedness to such things as the shapes slumbering within the wood?" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 23). He dramatically illustrates his point by asking questions concerning the relationship of man to machinery. While accepting that machines work within the scope of trade, as quoted at the beginning of this chapter, "But the lever and button belong to the machine and where does the machine belong? This leads us to an unknown or unrecognized concern for the consequences of handiwork being linked to a machine in the technological age" (1968, p. 24).

(In the context of academia, this might be the apprenticeship that doctorate and postdoctorate study seeks to achieve: a deep involvement with the subject and the ways of a professional academic, as distinct from utilizing part-time staff, albeit professionals, from other worlds such as law, accountancy and medicine.)

Moreover, as Malpas (2006) comments on Heidegger's discussion in *Basic Concepts*, his use of the worker is indicative of the way in which human beings are almost entirely taken up in terms of the capacity for production. Young claims that Heidegger states that "man is essentially the being that works, the being that 'produces' things" (Young, 2002, p. 47). Work is a central feature of human existence. Save when we sleep, we are almost always producing (see Heidegger, *What are Poets for?*, 1975b, pp. 107–111): almost always, in one way or another, at work. Young argues that humans are "uniquely, and almost always a worker. A technological being engaged in technological activities" (2002, p. 48). The identity of the work is what the work provides. Mulhall's 1996 commentary on Heidegger equates the everyday with the work world of occupations—social roles, tasks and functions—reducing it to the ready-to-hand. He writes that: "since the environment closest to them is the work world, the identity closest to them is their identities as workers, as people performing socially defined and culturally inherited tasks whose nature is given prior to and independently of their own individuality" (1996, p. 72).

At least in his early writings, however, Heidegger seems to be able to see a subtle way in which human activity in the workplace might be substantially different under different forms of employment. He recognizes a problem of alienation that cannot be solved by the notion of craftspeople's linkage to the end product of labour when he considers the role of the machine operator, but does not formulate a phenomenology of labour. Because of this lack of clarity, I briefly examine the phenomenology of two of his students, Marcuse and Arendt, for a finer description before turning the descriptions of all three to higher education work to see whether this offers a way of understanding it.

## *Marcuse*

Marcuse differentiates labour from work in terms of necessity and freedom. He refers to labour as material production and reproduction, establishing "itself as a mode of being (servitude) that dominates *Dasein* as a whole" and work as "free *praxis*" (2005, p. 148), achievable once the necessities of life are secured.

For Marcuse, man constantly finds himself and his world in a situation that is not immediately his own, so he cannot simply let his *Dasein* immediately happen: instead, he must first make every situation his own through mediation. "This process of mediation is designated by the concepts of *production and reproduction*" (2005, p. 131, italics in the original). The modes of production and reproduction are applied as much to the development of *Dasein* as the economic sense. Thus the mode of labour is making human *Dasein* happen. In this sense Marcuse is echoing Heidegger, whose *Dasein* has to take a stand on itself to reveal its existence. For Marcuse, our labouring in the world happens because "the world, as it is, can never satisfy [our]

'needs.' Thus he must occupy himself constantly in order to live in the world of all procuring (clothing, nourishment, housing, tools, etc.)" (Marcuse, 2005, p. 132). It is in this context, where labour is construed only as the satisfaction of needs, that it gains its economic entrapment.

Marcuse, more than Heidegger, offers us an explicit and socially complex vision of the nature of labour, which reflects the public world and its construction. Where "*Dasein* happens in a space shaped by others and in a time brought forth [*gezeitigt*] by others" (2005, p. 146). Where in the "cause and principles that determine them, the natural and social divisions of labor coincide in the division of labor manifest itself based on the opposition between *dominating and dominated* labor ('directing' and 'directed' labor)" (2005, pp. 146–147). Thus Marcuse offers a more distinct Hegelian alternative to Heidegger by not defining human *Dasein* as a self-questioning and self-making being "thrown" into a world without rhyme or reason, destined to discover its own meanings there, but one whose labouring maintains "and conducts oneself with a view to one's own possibilities and one's objectivity. It also demands a certain circumspection and foresight regarding what is supposed to happen in and through labor, as well as self-assurance about what labor 'is to be done' with objects and *Dasein*" (2005, p. 147).

## *Arendt*

Arendt tackles the nature of work or labour itself as part of the human condition. She claims that the human condition of labour is life itself, and of work is worldliness, and reveals a distinction between the labour of the body and the labour of the hands evoking labour's essential purpose of sustainability and its circular temporality. In terms more familiar to Heidegger, Arendt argues for a distinction between the utility of labour and work as "in order to" and in terms of "for the sake of" (1958, p. 153).

Our role as labourer is to work repetitively on things that are means to ends, the ends being life-supporting consumption. The repetitiveness of labour is entrapped by the rhythm of machines and is destined to produce for consumption, unlike the enduring, planned, creative fabrication of the worker. We act as workers, as *homo faber*, when we create enduring things. Moreover, it is the efforts of the worker that structure a world other than of nature—indeed, against nature, for it is created from violence done to nature, the sum total of which constitutes the human artifice as the world we live in. However, in work, "the impulse towards repetition comes from the craftsman's need to earn his means of substance, that is, from the element of labor inherent in work" (Arendt, 2002, p. 368). Here then, even in the more creative and engaging aspects of work, we may still need to earn a living. However, these aspects themselves might constitute labour if they become repetitive or if we are required to create multiples to earn a living. In this case the things that were created as ends in themselves become user objects and as such become means to alternative sources of consumption.

Unlike work, whose end comes when the object is finished, ready to be added to the common world of things and objects, labour always moves in the same circle

prescribed by the living organism, and the end of its toil and trouble comes only with the end, that is, the death of the individual organism. Labourers are not only caught up in the familiar consumption of beings—shopping, dining, movies, travel—they are also viewed instrumentally as a means to an end, to the extent that they rest and refresh us for the sake of becoming more efficient and productive workers.

The third aspect of *vita activa* is action: the plurality or our relationship to others. It is this activity, which occurs with others, that defines our being. While a person can labour or work alone as well as with others, action always requires the presence of others who, like the actor, are unique human beings. Action is our capacity, which derives from our uniqueness, to do something new, something that could not have been expected from what has happened before, that reveals who we are and that, once done, cannot be undone. Others may then act in response to our action, creating a process that is boundless and unpredictable: unlike work, action has no predictable end; it is simply a beginning. Thus for Arendt, according to Coulter:

> Labour involves routine ephemeral behaviour to meet basic humans needs; work includes activity by artists or others fabricators to make lasting objects that comprise the artificial world. *Praxis* becomes "action" and involves collective public dialogue to determine identity and purpose and exercise human freedom and responsibility (2002, pp. 194–195).

Given the reproductive aspects of the functions of modern-day workers—their activities follow the rhythm of machines, rather than their own—their participation in the progress of production loses them their status as workers and they now engage in activity that "consists primarily in preparation for consumption" and "the very distinction between means and ends, so highly characteristic of the activities of *homo faber*, simply does not make sense" (1958, p. 145).

Arendt's work does have issues for clarity and "categorical applicability" (Mei, 2009, p. 460) and White (1997) is concerned that the definitions are problematic in that they cannot be well distinguished in certain professions. However, I would argue that there is a subtlety that emerges from Arendt's work, which, if applied in the sense of endeavour, has a useful resonance.

## Technological Way of Being

Heidegger begins to articulate his critique of the modern world's technological character in his *Contributions to Philosophy*. He develops his ideas on the dominance of technology and a technological way of thinking and relating to things, which he calls "machination." This thread, and his suggestion that lived experience (Livingston, 2003) is a way to deal with technology, is developed to its fullest extent in his essay, *The Question of Concerning Technology*. Heidegger quotes Plato's reading of *poiesis*: "Every occasion for whatever passes beyond the non-present and goes forward into presencing is *poiesis*, bringing forth" (Plato, *Symposium*, p. 205b, cited in Heidegger, 1977b, p. 317). The revealing, bringing forth, brought about by modern technology, is not a revealing but a challenging-forth in which energy is extracted and stored. Heidegger writes that "... everywhere, everything is ordered to stand

by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve" (1977b, p. 322).

Heidegger's interpretation of the "essencing" of technology has not gone uncontested (Thompson, 2005, Chapter 3), yet his statement transforms all entities, including humans, into a calculative resource.

Heidegger warns us away from assuming that technology benignly reveals the essence of things, arguing that nature is challenged by being enframed and that technology orders nature in order to exploit it. However, "machines and the apparatus are no more cases and kinds of enframing than are the man at the switchboard and the engineer in the drafting room" (1977b, p. 335). This enframing goes beyond the machines and "in a way characteristic of a destining, blocks *poiesis*" (1977b, p. 335). There is hope, however, in a passage towards the end of the *Question Concerning Technology* in what Heidegger calls the "saving power" (1977, p. 33). Dreyfus explores what is meant by this in the following:

> Heidegger holds that we must learn to appreciate marginal practices—what Heidegger calls the saving power of insignificant things—practices such as friendship, backpacking into the wilderness, and drinking the local wine with friends. All these practices remain marginal precisely because they are not efficient. They can, of course, be engaged in for the sake of health and greater efficiency. This expanding of technological efficiency is the greatest danger. But these saving practice could come together in a new cultural paradigm that held up to us a new way of doing thing, thereby focusing a world in which formerly marginal practices were central and efficiency marginal (1995, p. 105).

These practices are often neglected through their lack of conspicuousness in their role in the development of ready-to-hand equipment. Lack of attention within the workplace can lead to alienation and boredom. When nurtured, however, it can reveal a truth of being that enriches the work environment and enables more authenticity and creativity in the workplace.

Heidegger returns to this theme in *Being and Time*, where he points out that we are conscious of the environment that supports our activities, even if we are not concerned about it. This support is needed, but it is not support of which we are mindful. We come to be mindful when equipment is used. However, Heidegger states:

> That with which our every-day dealings proximally dwell is not the tools themselves. On the contrary, that which we concern ourselves primarily is the work—that which is to be produced at the time; and this is accordingly ready-to-hand too. The work bears with it the referential totality within which the equipment is encountered (1962, p. 99).

## The Worker

Heidegger's extended concept of "work" is outlined in the essay *What are Poets For?* (Heidegger, 1975b). "Work"—the German word *Arbeit*, meaning labour—is in this sense "intentional production" (Young, 2002, p. 47), which is more than mere paid employment. Heidegger says: "We must think of this placing-here, this

producing, in its broad and multifarious manner" (Heidegger, 1975b, p. 107). Young explains further:

> not only are human beings (of every epoch and culture) *essentially* and uniquely workers, they are almost *always* workers. Work, in Heidegger's broad sense, is not just a, but rather *the*, central feature of human existence, its "everydayness" (Young, 2002, p. 47, italics in original).

Sheehan quotes Heidegger as saying that the form of the worker "is not any one man—not even a type of man. Rather, as a type, it is only a form of subjectivity, whose essence consists of certitude of calculation... Being happens as power-to-make" (1993, pp. 88–89).

In *Basic Concepts* Heidegger writes that:

> the names "worker" and "soldier" are thus metaphysical titles and name the form of human fulfilment of the being of beings, now become manifest, which Nietzsche presciently grasped as the will to power ... these or the leading representatives of the main forms in which the will to power will be enacted! (Heidegger, 1998a, pp. 32–33).

This chimes with Nietzsche's linkage in *The Gay Science* that "soldiers and leaders still have a far higher relation to one another than workers and employees" (Nietzsche, 2001, p. 56) and, as Malpas comments, the use of term "worker" in this context is indicative of the way in which human beings are almost entirely taken up in terms of their capacity for production. This sense of materialism can be understood as metaphysical determination "according to which every being appears as the material of labor" and, as Heidegger says, "the essence of materialism is concerned in the essence of technology" (Malpas, 2006, p. 286, citing Heidegger's *Letter on Humanity*).

Young claims that Heidegger states "man is essentially the being that works, the being that 'produces' things" (2002, p. 47). Work is the central feature of human existence. Apart from when we sleep, we are almost always producing (see Heidegger, *What are Poets for?*, 1975b, pp. 107–111): almost always at work in one way or another. Young argues that a human is "essentially, uniquely, and almost always a worker, a technological being engaged in technological activity" (2002, p. 48). The identity of the work is that which it provides. Mulhall's commentary on Heidegger equates the everyday with the work world of occupations, social roles, tasks and functions, reducing it to the ready-to-hand. He writes that, "since the environment closest to them is the work world, the identity closest to them is their identities as workers, as people performing socially defined and culturally inherited tasks whose nature is given prior to and independently of their own individuality" (1996, p. 72). The tasks of workers both hide and foreground them and their creations and also, therefore, work's transcendent mode.

The link with nature is developed in Arendt's 1958 discussion of labour and work in *The Human Condition*. It reveals a distinction between the labour of the body and that of the hands, evoking labour's essential sustaining purpose and its circular temporality. Her phenomenological and ontological distinction is between *animal laborans* (labourer) and *homo faber* (craft worker). The temporal nature of their efforts offers a way of approaching the issue raised by Heidegger, distanced from

the consumption of the modern-day labourer. In a situation where factory workers, whose activities follow the rhythm of machines rather than their own, participate in production which "consists primarily in preparation for consumption, the very distinction between means and ends, so highly characteristic of the activities of *homo faber* simply does not make sense" (1958, p. 145).

In essence, Arendt argues that Heidegger, using the German language, does not distinguish between labour and work and fails to recognize these two forms of activity. The first is designed to satisfy immanent consumption, while the second is free to transcend the immanent and create works that are independent entities and have durability. Indeed, Heidegger does talk of the work-being as "setting up of a world" (1975a, p. 44) and this is similar to the planned notion of a future of a work, by which Arendt distinguishes worker from labourer. Labourers are not only caught up in the familiar consumption of beings—shopping, dining, movies, travel—they are also viewed instrumentally as a means to an end, to the extent that they rest and refresh us for the sake of becoming more efficient and productive workers.

The "machination" of work has tended to require the operator to adapt to the needs of the machine in ways significantly different from craft tools. The nature of the endeavour becomes one of labour, not work. This change, Arendt challenges, means that we all become consumers and, through this, all become labourers. Indeed, this is how I see the warning offered by Heidegger in the *Contribution*, and more directly in the *Questions*, especially when he talks of the risk of workers becoming no more than standing-reserve, a stock or reservoir, and a means to an end.

Yet this is not inevitable as, for Heidegger, *Dasein* is not the "worker". That is, as Marx would assert, *Dasein*'s ontological being is not that of a worker. To "be" a worker is only a mode of the everyday existence of *Dasein*. Likewise, a typist, football player and singer are all modes of existence separate from the primordial being of *Dasein*. These are only ways that *Dasein* "is", proximally and for the most part. Yet *Dasein* comports itself towards actualization of possible equipment in the work world: the encounter "in the field of what is ready-to-hand and present-at-hand—what is attainable, controllable, practicable, and the like" (1992a, p. 305). It risks losing self in the situatedness of the world of serviceability. Hence, we might feel at home in a factory or office, or on the road if a truck driver, but we do not dwell there; our dwelling today is "harassed by work, made insecure by the hunt for gain and success, bewitched by the entertainment and recreation industry" (1975d, p. 212). Consequently it becomes dispersed in the various activities of caring for equipment in the everyday world. We risk Heideggerian alienation, whose character:

> …does not, however, surrender *Dasein* to an entity which *Dasein* itself is not, but forces it into its inauthenticity—into a possible kind of Being *of itself*. The alienation of falling—at once tempting and tranquillizing—leads by its own movement, to *Dasein*'s getting *entangled* in itself (Heidegger, 1962, p. 223).

For Heidegger, alienation does not result only from external causes, as in Marx's notion of loss of worker dignity when the profound meaning of work as a human activity is lost. He comments that neither "Hegel or Marx could know it yet, nor

could they ask why their thinking, too, still had to move in the shadow of the essential nature of technology" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 24). It also results from the nature of Being itself. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger mentions glimpses of awareness of finitude—moments when *Dasein* becomes aware of the horizon of its mortality—an awareness from which *Dasein* is generally in flight. These glimpses enable *Dasein* to heed what he describes as the "call of conscience" and to become resolute. At these times *Dasein* becomes aware of its alienation from itself and becomes capable of transcending it. As Kovacs suggests, it is not "the meaning of work due to the values and meanings that are created by means of the human activity of work but, much rather, the meaningfulness of work itself as a human activity" (1986, p. 201).

Kovacs adds that phenomenological analysis of work reveals both self-transcendence, in the sense of overcoming the given horizons of ways to reveal technology, and self-alienation, and that, at work, the worker is both revealed and hidden. He suggests that work is a "way of self-expression; it is also a phenomenon of self-dissimulation and that of alienation as part of objectification" (1986, p. 199).

## Summary

I have proposed that the revealing of understanding work benefits from a Heideggerian approach to the work world. By centralizing the worker as the disclosing element of the entities and others in the workplace, Heidegger offers a usable and robust approach to the study of work. Moreover, learning through the practice of gaining familiarity links to two ideas. It links to learning as an alienation from self in seeking the comfort of an unquestioning tranquillity in the workplace, fostered by technology. Additionally, it links to an authentic, questioning approach to the workplace that may differentiate workers in how they reference both the totality of the workplace and the practices it encourages.

The approach developed here can be applied in two ways to the issue of understanding of workplace learning. The first is where the whole workplace is considered to be ready-at-hand for the researcher. In this approach, the equipment of the workplace and the participants are individually and functionally present-at-hand, for they are not encountered as anything other than a unity of form. This approach might be conceptualized as a non-participatory, ethnographic approach, where the phenomenon under study is revealed in the form of a case study. The second is for participatory research where circumspection makes sense of the equipment that creates the workplace in question. In this sense, it is the ready-to-hand equipment and its particular functionality revealed through its serviceability, which will dominate the analysis. The methodology of this investigation will follow the hermeneutic phenomenology developed by Heidegger (*The Basic Problem of Phenomenology* §5, 1982; *Being and Time* §7, 1962).

# Chapter 6
# Heidegger: Time, Work and the Challenges for University-Led Work-Based Learning

> *Everydayness takes* Dasein *as something ready-to-hand to be concerned with that is, something that gets managed and reckoned up. "Life" is a "business", whether or not it covers its costs.*
>
> (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 336)

I have said a little about Heidegger's central notion of being, i.e. time and temporality, and have referred, rather randomly, to Heidegger's assertions of the technological way of being called forth in our current epoch. Now I try to do these things. I do so by crafting a purpose for learning, as a way of averting what Heidegger refers to as the abandonment of being in the face of machination. As before, I use the word "machination" as the English translation of *Machenschaft*, as it is used by Heidegger; to indicate self-making—the consequences are the mechanical and biological ways of thinking about being-ness. I argue that assigning such a role to learning as a foregrounding of being enables us to avoid adopting a technological way of being—encouraged through, formal, calculative education and commercial methodologies that inform it that sees others as a means to an end and as a resource. It enables us to avoid this through questioning and thinking. The adoption of the technological ways of being implicit in machination and its lived experience is questioned when, in the face of the continuum of temporality favoured in world time, an understanding is retained of an originary notion of future, and this is discussed later in this chapter.

Heidegger's early works provide his most important contribution to our understanding of being and time, while his later works manifest the effects of technology on that being. Heidegger's notion of the worker is drawn as much from his embrace of the noble role of the worker in Jünger's *Der Arbeiter* as his resistance to the claims made by Jünger for a worker-inspired future (Hemming, 2008; Zimmerman, 1990). Indeed, in both Heidegger's *Rectoral Address* and his explanation of it we see how he envisions the role of work and labour in the education of the German elite through the university. In my view, he seemingly fails to offer a subtle approach to the question of what is labouring or to whether there is a substantive difference between crafting, labouring or working. Such approaches can be found in works by two of Heidegger's students: Arendt (1958, 2002) and Marcuse (2002, 2005).

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I structure this chapter in three sections. The first section is separated into two parts and acts as an outline and discussion of a set of tools for the phenomenological analysis of time and the historicality of *Dasein*. The second develops an understanding of the meaning of activities in the workplace, with special attention to how Heidegger envisioned work as part of the tripartite mission of the German university at the time of the National Socialists. The final part discusses the relationship of temporality and being in the activities of the university and asks whether the university has become party to a productionist ideology in aid of technology and one which holds becoming as the mere occurrence of being.

## Heidegger and His Phenomena of Time

Heidegger's approach to time is complex: *Dasein*, the being of Being, the "essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence" (1962, p. 67). This being, or *Dasein*, is manifest in terms of manifold integrated states he calls Care. The temporal structure of Care is primordial and this temporality is "levelled down" by our being with others and our comportment to our being in the world.

For Heidegger, this means that we are temporality. We locate ourselves in time and we use time, each form of which is differently constituted: structured existential (disclosed in how we understand *Dasein*); facticity (disclosed in our affectivity; our interpretation of our being. See Heidegger, 2008); and falling (disclosed in discourse). Heidegger addresses Care in Chapter 6 of *Being and Time*. There, in his analysis in response to his own question, "*how can the totality of that structural whole we have pointed out be defined in an existential-ontological manner*" (italics in the original, 1962, p. 225), he reveals the unity of Care as being. He states that the fundamentals of this entity "are existentiality, facticity, and Being fallen" (1962, p. 235). Moreover, this structure has a temporal correspondence: existentiality as ahead-of-itself is futural (as for-the-sake-of-which we act); facticity as being already is the past (as having been in order to now be, i.e. if I am now a teacher I must have once not been); and falling as being alongside in the present (acting with what is occurrent, in-order-to). The fourth aspect of disclosure is discourse (for the most part language), and he seems to imply that discourse is not a separate temporal constitution of disclosure. Rather, it is the form of articulation of disclosedness. Indeed, Heidegger states that "discourse does not temporalize itself in any definite ecstasies" (1962, p. 400). Thus central to Heidegger's understanding of being is the rejection of a single idea of being and the suggestion that it can take one of three forms. Each has associated with it a specific notion of time.

The first and most primordial form of being is "*Dasein*", the being of being. For Heidegger, the "essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence" (1962, p. 67). We understand ourselves by taking a stance on who we are and who we can be. The mode of time of "*Dasein*" is originary[1] temporality. Originary temporality is not the sequentialism

[1] According to Kisiel, in his 1992a translation of Heidegger's *History of the Concept of Time*, the translation of "*ursprüngliche*" can equally be "primordial" or "originary." I will use these as substitutes, making the choice on the basis of what seemingly suits best.

that we commonly associate with temporality, where the future succeeds the present, which in turn succeeds the past. Heidegger explains this as "*temporality temporalizes itself as a whole; and this means that in the ecstatical unity which temporality has fully temporalized itself currently, is grounded the totality of the structural whole of existence, facticity, and falling—that is, the unity of care-structure*" (italics in original, 1962, p. 401). The concept of sequential temporality—past, present and future—is derived from the manifold in originary time: the time of reckoning and of the universe.

Originary temporality contains notions of the past and future integrated within the present. They are made known through horizons and are never brought actually into the present. This is because the future is not a latter-day now and the past is not an "earlier than" now; they are not of our common understanding where the future is attained and recedes into the past. Moreover, the originary past is that which is already there. It is what we are attuned to, not a personal past that has been but a past, already gone when one encounters it. Heidegger proposes that every temporal state temporalizes itself as a whole and argues that, "(T)emporalizing does not signify that ecstasies came in succession, the future is not later than having been, and having been is not earlier than the present. Temporality temporalizes itself as a future which makes present in the process of having been" (1962, p. 401).

Thus, originary temporality is existence in the meaning of "*Dasein*" making sense of itself. For instance, I can take on the role of a professor but the existential becoming of a professor is always futural, something to become. I can act in ways that are "for-the sake-of" becoming a professor and be called a professor, but I can never reach what it is like to become a professor. This is a strange notion, but one we recognize in our everyday dealings with people. For example, people sometimes obviously overstate what they are, in place of what they want to be. They may disguise their true identity, but are often "outted" as frauds when their actions show them not to have the skills required of such a position. This is the existential notion of being that I propose ought to be fostered by higher educational institutions. It will not require the denial of other forms of being and times, but will seek to use them purposefully as *Dasein* takes a stand on what it might be.

The second form of being is that of equipment, which gains its meaning from its cultural significance. The basis of its being is in its "in-order-to" use in our practices; it is a means to an end. It forms referential totalities such as an office, bedroom, lecture theatre or sports stadium, which help us define ourselves within those worlds. The absence or malfunction of this equipment may cause us anxiety about our location or skills. For instance, with no whiteboard, chairs, PowerPoint or students, the room barely signifies to us that we are lecturers, in a lecture theatre, ready to start lecturing. Equipment is "ready-to-hand" and its mode of time is world time: a world that is signified by equipment. It is the equipmental structure of our environment that bestows its familiarity and allows us to understand what practices are appropriate and acceptable in this world.

Our everyday practices are performed and are deemed appropriate in worlds, for example the world of work or the world of the family. This is because it is here we tend not to take a stand on what we might be (that is Heidegger's notion of authenticity), but allow ourselves to be carried along with what others may want us to be; we fit in, we are accepted and find comfort in being just one of the crowd.

Heidegger calls these worlds “worldhoods” to distinguish them from the universe and through them we begin to realize what we might be. These worlds’ significance and meaning are derived from our practices and the use of equipment. This is not the phenomena of *Machenshaft*, for pre-modern cultures are also fallen, although not to the same extent as those in modernity. The enframing of *Machenshaft* endangers man in two ways. The first is where what is unconcealed in our engagement with the world:

> no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he come to the brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve (Heidegger, 1977d, pp. 26–27).

The second is where man “exalts himself to the posture of lord of the earth. In this way the impression comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct” (ibid).

The time that structures these worlds is a time that enables us to understand ourselves within that world and go about our social lives. Heidegger refers to these times as “datable time” and world time and they are discussed next. In these times the shining-forth and holding sway of the unconcealment of our world, its authenticity, are blocked.

The first, datable time, in where entities have duration—a time span—and their temporal relationship defines the temporal structure of world time.

> The “now,” the “then,” and the “on that former occasion” thus have a seemingly obvious relational structure which we call “datability” [Dateierbarkeit]. Whether this dating is factically done with respect to a “date” on the calendar must still be completely disregarded. Even without “dates” of this sort, the “now,” the “then” and the “on the former occasion” have been dated more or less definitively (1962, p. 459).

The infrastructure of datable time is populated by the times to do something; to work, to play, to lecture and to have lunch. It is experienced differently depending on the circumstances of their occurrence, they are experienced and remembered. We temporalize ourselves by giving time for what the situation demands, whereas in datable time everything has a time when it happens.

The significances of these times are understood through their publicness. This aspect of our being is manifest in social acts of being with others, through which others can understand the same significances as ourself. The temporal present—the now—provides the context in which this time is located and allows a succession of presents, which is our common understanding of temporality: a past, a future and a present. For Heidegger, it is the time that turns out to be the kind of time in which the ready-at-hand (equipment identified as ready to use in order to do something) and the present-to-hand (objects whose function is not relevant to the way in which-the-world is encountered) are revealed. This “requires that these entities which are not of the character of *Dasein* shall be called entities *within-time*” (1962, p. 465). Blattner summarizes well this everyday experience of time as, “the Now that spans from the formerly (the Earlier) to the then (Later on), which is dated by some event

or activity in the world, which is significant in that it is appropriate or inappropriate for action, and which is public, accessible to all" (1999, p. 134).

The third form of being is that of independent objects with characteristics that distinguish them and remain with them such as stones, trees or stars. They are present-at-hand and understood through inspection, for instance scientific inquiry. They have a mode of time that is called "ordinary time". The time of the universe is appropriated by Heidegger to give a social dimension to the durability and datability of world time, described above. As previously suggested, this ordinary, datable time is derived from ordinary temporality. It is manifest within "the horizon of concern with time which we know as astronomical and calendrical *time-reckoning*" (1962, p. 455).

We use it to reckon how we can describe the world of entities; it is abstract and successive; it is clock and calendar time. It is time in which the equipment and entities are encountered within time. Yet, as Heidegger describes, this temporal notion of time is not our ordinary understanding of time. This time levels off and covers up the temporality and shows itself as a sequences of "nows", which are constantly "present-at-hand",[2] simultaneously passing away and coming along. Time is understood as a succession, as a "flowing stream" of "nows", as the course of time (1962, p. 474).

In this sense, our everyday existence as "*Dasein*" is determined by our realization of our originary temporality, as presented in our everyday practice. If we hide our own temporality and live in the present, we become averaged. That is, we accept the tranquillity of others as our norm. Such tranquillity is encouraged in a world where everything and everybody exist to become the equipment of others, and to become consumers for the sake of consumption rather than to take a stand on their own temporality and to understand their possibilities for themselves.

This third mode of time, world time or clock time, is the world of consumerism, where we unquestioningly use up time to secure the benefits we desire at home, as any others within our consumer society. In educational terms, time is an obstacle to be overcome so more consumption can take place. This requires shorter courses, the rejection of un-assessed work (for time is wasted in lingering), immediate feedback and precisely defined clusters of knowledge to be identified and consumed. There is no time to become, only time to be what we have consumed.

The difference between ordinary, the abstract measurement of the flow of time, and world time, which is relational to the events themselves, is based on their temporal significances whereas datable time is an external linear time along which events can be externally measured. For instance, the great lecture is remembered as preceding the disappointment of the final examination results, not that it occurred at a specific clock time. We coordinate in abstract clock time.

Indeed, all three modes of time are bound together degeneratively and dependently; ordinary time is a degenerative form of world time and world time a

[2] Heidegger contrasts the readiness-to-hand of equipment with the present-at-hand of mere things.

degenerative form of originary temporality. Thus, the distinctive existential meaning of our being that is our originary temporality is levelled off. We have the option to resolutely challenge this or to allow it and remain inauthentic. We risk losing our essential being and become no more than resources to be packaged and consumed; that is, our being ceases to be *Dasein* and we adopt the being of ready-to or present-at-hand entities. Table 6.1 summarizes these concepts.

**Table 6.1** Heidegger's notions of time and being

| Time | Related form of being |
|---|---|
| Originary or primordial time—Mode 1 time | *Dasein*; structure through care as:<br>– existentiality (future)<br>– facticity (past) and<br>– falling (present) |
| Datable time, that is events located in relation to others. It is the shaping of separated notions of past, present and future—Mode 2 time | Ready-to-hand and unready-to hand (the state where equipment, including language, does not function as expected. Such occurrences may lead to a present-at-hand mode of being to investigate the problem) |
| Time reckoning or clock measured linear time—Mode 3 time | Present-at-hand, calculative time |

In summary, for Heidegger, there are three modes of being, each associated with a distinct notion of time. By temporalizing being, Heidegger offers a basis for understanding how practices engage us with our worlds. Moreover, should we fail to recognize these differences and confuse their temporal forms, we run the risk of saying that temporality is something which is " 'earlier' and 'later', 'not yet' and 'no longer' ". Care[3] would then be conceived as an entity that occurs and runs its course "in time". The Being of an entity having the character of *Dasein* would become something *present-at-hand*" (1962, p. 375). Thus, Heidegger allows us to conclude that, should the temporality of being become that of the present-at-hand, our being as *Dasein* is violated.

## *Heidegger and His Phenomena of Historicity*

I am reminded of the distinction Heidegger makes in *The Concept of Time* where Heidegger speaks of:

> I am with Others, and Others are likewise with the Others. No one is himself in everydayness. What someone is, and how he is, is nobody: no one and yet everyone with one another. Everyone is not himself. This nobody by whom we ourselves are lived in everydayness is the *"One"*. . .and out of this leveling-down the "I am" is possible (1992b, pp. 8E–9E).

[3]The structure of *Dasein* (added to quote).

This section offers the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic, which I briefly discuss in terms of the heritage, fate and destiny, in the envelope of historicity.

The notion of personal temporality discussed above is, as the lecture *The Concept of Time* indicated, a phenomenological response to the notion of time as eternality proposed by the Ancients and notably Aristotle. Yet, by replacing the eternal with the notion of death—a death that may be considered psychological as well as mortality itself—Heidegger has paved a new way for us to understand our being in Chapter 5 in Part 2 of *Being and Time.* Heidegger goes further, not to reject his notions of temporality but to characterize them not as a linearity directed towards the future of death, but also to grasp the importance of our birth and to stretch to connect both. This connectedness of life is what Heidegger suggests has, up until this point, been overlooked. In this way and through a search for one lifelong being, Heidegger offers the idea of that our possibilities are not futural in themselves but based on our own history, our historicity. This historicity is disclosed in our heritage and, although thrown into our everyday world, we can choose to act authentically towards it through resoluteness. Our heritage:

> merely reveals that which already lies enveloped in the temporalizing of temporality. *Dasein* resolves—and this means that in anticipating death it understands itself unambiguously in terms of its own distinctive possibility—the more unequivocally does it choose and find the possibility of its existence, and the less does it do so by accident (1962, p. 435).

Moreover, he contrasts this thrown authenticity with the inauthenticity where "for the most part the Self is lost in the 'they'. It understands itself in terms of those possibilities of existence which 'circulate' in the 'average' public way" (ibid). Indeed, once one "grasped the finitude of one's existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one—those of comfortableness, shirking, and taking things lightly—and brings *Dasein* into the simplicity of its *fate* [*Schicksals*]" (ibid).

Defining one's authenticity by the appropriations of one's throwness opens a number of possibilities for the discussion of education. This leads directly from Heidegger's assertion that:

> in accordance with the way in which historicality is rooted in care, *Dasein* exists, in each case as authenticity or inauthenticity history. It become plain that *Dasein*'s inauthentic historically lies in that which—under the title "everydayness"—we have looked upon, in the existential analytic of *Dasein*, as the horizon closest to us (1962, p. 428).

This contrasts the lost-ness of inauthenticity in the collective of the Other, with its averaging and levelling down, and the purposeful pursuit of one fate and the destiny of one community.

Heidegger rather eloquently ties the notion of temporality with authentic historicality, or fate, in the following quote:

> Only an entity which in its Being, is essentially ***futural*** as that it is free for its death and can let itself be thrown back upon its factical "there" by shattering itself against death—that is to say, only an entity which, as futural, is equiprimodially in the process of **having-been**, can, by handing down to itself the possibility it has inherited, take over its own throwness

> and be **in the moment of vision** for "its time." Only authentic temporality which is at the same time finite, makes possible something like fate—that is to say, authentic historicality (1962, p. 437, italics and bold in original).

The notion of fate used by Heidegger is not that of inevitability but of choice, and is bound to the notion of destiny of being with others.

The world of the inauthentic *Dasein* is a world where everything is present at hand, and then not. Things appear and then disappear and one understands one's own existence as a sequence of events that also appears and disappears. It is a world where the consistency of self disappears among the others and where no consistency can occur. We cease to seek unconcealment and rather support flocking with others. In such states we are unable or unwilling to take responsibility for the possibilities that our heritage offers us. As Heidegger puts it, in inauthentic historicality "the way in which fate has been primordially stretched along has been hidden. With the inconsistency of the they-self *Dasein* makes present its 'today'". In awaiting the next new thing it has already forgotten the old one. The "they" evades choice" (1962, p. 443).

On the face of this, educational institutions are presented with a gigantic challenge to understand themselves and then foster the integrated notion of originary temporality, if they see as their mission the development of humanistic values in addition to more practical ways of earning a living. This requires them to encourage all their stakeholders—students, faculty, donors of funds—to be open to their world and not to encourage thoughtless response to the needs of others, in turn treating others and themselves as a reservoir of resources. Our individual historicality and our future possibilities need to be disclosed so that *Dasein* might truthfully take a stand on itself and our formal education ought, among its other functions, to facilitate this. It will demand encouraging stringency and resolution in educational institutions' activities, by which they will reveal the importance to our being of the originary future. In so doing they need to disclose a way of being in the present which is not the generalized way being of others and which, I perceive, they currently do by their notions such as performativity. I am looking toward the university to revitalize primordial temporality. If education institutions do not take up the challenge, but dwell in the tranquillity of external directives, always ready-to-hand to shape a future, they will fail their communities and embrace the type of instrumentalism advocated by those who would wish to control and manipulate. Such education is designed to make scholars workers, whose choice of possibilities is crafted by others in the spirit of machination. This enframing environment is discussed next.

## The Worker and the Labourer in the Age of Technology: Heidegger's Use of Jünger's Works

In this second part of the chapter I wish to contextualize the where of the falleness of our being in the world of others. How we respond to being thrown into these worldhoods directly influences the way in which the temporality of our being is

revealed. Specifically, given the overriding trend in higher education to prepare students for the world of work, I am concerned to understand what Heidegger has to say about the worker. This is especially the case in view of his frequent references to the worker in Chapter 5 of *Being and Time*. I find that he has surprisingly little to say about what this entity is and unclear about any distinction between labour, worker and craftsperson. Indeed, Heidegger's limited discussions can mostly be found in *Being and Time*, *Basic Concepts* and *The Question Concerning Technology*, and his use of the worker is indicative of the way in which a human being is almost entirely taken up in terms of capacity for production. Young goes as far as to claim that Heidegger states "man is essentially the being that works, the being that 'produces things'" (Young, 2002, p. 47). Even so, work is a central feature of human existence. Save when we sleep, we are almost always producing (see Heidegger, 1975b, pp. 107–111), in one way or another, at work. Young argues that humans are "uniquely, and almost always a worker. A technological being, engaged in technological activities" (2002, p. 48).

Perhaps the most significant influence on Heidegger in forming a political, social notion of the worker in modernity is the writing of Jünger. Heidegger went so far as to acknowledge this in his own support for the themes of his 1933 Rectoral Address (1985) and, when writing to Jünger in *On the Question of Being*, he states that the "question concerning technology owes a lasting debt to your description in *The Worker*" (1998b, p. 295).

Turning to the actual Address, Heidegger argues for three "bonds" the student has to the university, offered by Heidegger in some way to replace the notion of academic freedom with a sense of responsibility to the State, for these more specifically relate to the context of this essay. The three bonds are linked through the notion of service: labour service, armed service (which Heidegger later claims is not a reference to military engagement) and knowledge service. These "three bonds—by the people, to the destiny of the state, in a spiritual mission—are equally primordial to the German essence. The three services that stem from them—Labour Service, Armed Service and Knowledge Service—are equally necessary and of equal rank" (Heidegger, 1985, p. 47).

Heidegger also uses the notion of the soldier and worker as a metaphor in *Basic Concepts*, where he discusses their evident will to power, for they can "signify": "these names are not meant as names for social classes or professions. They indicate, in a unique fusion, the type of humanity taken as a measure by the present world-convulsion for its fulfillment that gives direction and foundations to one's relation to beings" (Heidegger, 1998a, p. 32). By the will to power humanity, "man experiences real beings as a worker and soldier does, and makes available what alone is to count as a being" (ibid, p. 33).

What Heidegger might mean by the "will to power" can be found in his interpretation and discussion of how Nietzsche (2001) uses the term. For Heidegger, the will to power is central to the becoming of Being. In a complex argument, Heidegger disregards any simple meaning based on violence towards others, settling on an interpretation where the will commands *Dasein* to become the best it might. Heidegger writes that being "as a whole is will to power. Will to power is the principle of a new valuation" (1991, p. 19). Moreover, if will to power is "a

fundamental characteristic of all beings, it must, so to speak be 'encountered' by the thinking of this thought in every region of being in nature, art, history, politics, in science and in knowledge in general" (ibid, p. 19). Finally, contemplation of these things will "make visible what will to power is" (ibid, p. 19).

Unlike Jünger, Heidegger sees the potential for another beginning for being. The preparative thinking for this new understanding of the truth of being is developed in *Contribution to Philosophy*. Here, Heidegger develops his own thinking of the technological will to power envisioned by Jünger, evident in his notion of "machination" and its everyday manifestation in lived experience. Crudely, this is the manufacture of reality through which we accept the ungrounded way of our being. These ideas appear in Heidegger's *Contribution to Philosophy* (1999) and then in *Mindfulness* (2006), prior to making their way into the questioning concerning technology. "Machination" refers to a technological and calculating way of making and doing which is inevitable in the modern epoch. It is created, and this is essential because of the ever-increasing withdrawal of being. It culminates in the dominance of technology and calculative ways of thinking and handling subjects. For Heidegger, in machination the integrity of being and time that is implicit in the originary temporality of *Dasein* is abandoned into being and time, which "have *nothing in common* with that which is inceptually inquired under the title of 'being and time'" (2006, p. 17, italics in original).

Central to machination, then, is a changing of the essential nature of Care, where others are encountered as means, and are resources to an end that is defined in time, where being and time are reckoned with. In so doing, the existential nature of Care changes from the futural of *Dasein* to the presencing of the permanence of entities and our being-in-the-world is that of lived experience from for-the-sake-of, to an in-order-to, from *Dasein* to present-at-hand. Heidegger poetically describes both as "(K)nowing no limits, above all no embarrassment, and finally no deep awe—all this lies within is own most to both [machination and lived-experience]" (ibid, p. 91).

Through the levelling of machination, Heidegger indicates that the originary future plays little or no part in what dislocates us from the authenticity of *Dasein*. In doing so, the unattainable of the existential future is levelled down and captured by world time, a time of goals, which can be instrumentally grasped and lived in as lived experience; a living that is totally related to the present, where values and desires are unrelated to a future failing to thrive. *Dasein*'s integration is ruptured and we do not take a stand on our being; rather, we allow others to define us as part of a resource pool and there we became susceptible to the will of machination and to nihilism.

Yet, we can resist this inevitability by deliberating and thus realize that we can use technological devices as they should be used, and also learn to let them alone, as things that do not affect our inner and real core. "We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices and, deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature" (Heidegger, 1966, p. 54). Here, Heidegger is

drawing a distinction between technology and the technological understanding of being in our practices, of course, not just in our thinking—that we *receive* our technological understanding of being when we see or question and think about what is most important in our lives. He also warns us that failure to do so presents us with a huge problem regarding our essence. This is hidden from those who do not think or question. If calculative thinking dominates us to the extent that we become indifferent towards deliberation, according to Heidegger we fall into thoughtlessness, and then "man would have denied and thrown away his own special nature" (1966, p. 56). But this is not inevitable. Indeed, even through machination itself, Heidegger sees a glimmer of ambiguity, according to Livingston, on the basis that "machination comes to the fore as an aspect of being itself, and therefore harbors within itself the possibility of giving us a new understanding of [being]" (2003, p. 328). It will be a challenge for education to follow through on this, against rapid enframing by technology and a calculative way of thinking and acting.

## *Questioning Temporality and Seeking an Originary Future*

What might the temporality of learning do to enable us to enjoy the fruits of technology, but not fall into training for a technological way of being? Can this be anything other than equipment and thus a temporality of time and discontinuous temporality? Can our originary temporality be developed with others, that is, can one's fate really coalesce with the destiny of others, and how does education help us take a stance on becoming through revealing our possibilities?

Heidegger, in *Questioning Concerning Technology*, has indicated that the technological understanding of being need not be the same as technology. We need not inauthentically adopt the comfort of what is easiest, but seek proactively to follow our fate, as our self-consistency in a world of others. However, in the education world where that might once have been possible, even advocated, the university is rapidly changing its purpose. It seeks to serve the many under a moral imperative of equality, but only seems to achieve a levelling down of the notion of higher education, where indicators of mediocrity have become blurred with requirements to enter the world of commerce and industry. The distinctiveness of the environment where moments of vision might be secured is made bland by homogenized course outcomes and employment skills based on knowing what is likely to be required to fit in with others. Such preparation is of and for machination and its control of inauthenticity. Its purpose is to support the will to power of the industrialist and the banker and is hidden in the notion of good jobs, income differentials and an identity for others rather than facing up to historic possibilities for oneself.

Our higher education systems for the most part have embraced massification and allowed our educational institutions to participate in the concealment of our being in the epoch of global machination. The danger is that they historically encourage

the inauthentic dispersement of self and a retraction from letting beings become. In this it threatens totalization of not-being-in the-world-of-work and offers an inexact replication of what might be required in work. The university's purpose, I want to argue, is to enable the student to return from this inauthenticity through nurturing a notion of care and authentic resoluteness, but this might be just as well done in the workplace where what matters, matters! This is not to deny the value of present-at-hand scientific investigation of the world provided in universities but to allow for an awakening to a more primordial way of understanding. This understanding is not just about the continuity of content that is present-at-hand, but about recognizing the temporal structure of care alongside it. This requires individual thinking that releases us from the "bondage" (Heidegger, 1966) in a technological way of being so we can develop a:

> *releasement towards things*. Having this comportment we no longer view things only in a technical way. It gives us a clear vision and we notice that while the production and use of machines demands of us another relation to things, it is not a meaningless relation (1966, p. 54).

To comport towards "enables us to keep open to the meaning hidden in technology, openness to the mystery" (ibid, p. 55). Together, they enable us to "endure in the world of technology without being imperilled by it" (ibid, p. 55). As Livingston aptly describes, "all objects become raw material for quantitative measurement, calculation, and manipulation according to a natural-scientific understanding of matter" (2003, p. 324).

The goals of learning should be found in realizing our fates by grasping resolutely the possibilities we have and by recognizing our heritage and what it might involve. This suggests that people take a stand on the practitioners they want to be, attending to the actual issues of the destiny of society and learn the conditions that will support or disrupt the dwelling place they find. It could be attained in higher educational institutions designed for this purpose, but not in those where machination dominates.

More positively, where institutions adopt an intertwining of worlds, not simply standing alongside each other, they will become communities of professionals and craftspersons where resoluteness "brings the Self right into its current, concernful Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being with Others" (1962, p. 344). Such concern requires resoluteness that deals with the situation as it presents itself, not as the inauthentic being who:

> knows only the general situation, loses itself in those opportunities which are closest to it and pays *Dasein*'s way by a reckoning up of accidents which it fails to recognize, deems it own achievement, and passes off as such. Resoluteness brings the being of the "there" into the existence of its Situation. Indeed it delimits the existential structure of the authentic potentiality-for-Being (1962, pp. 346–347).

Such resolution enables situations to be dealt with intelligently, skilfully and with finesse; indeed, roughly as one might expect of a *phronimos*. But how?

A distinction made by Heidegger and critical to this discussion is between being Being-in-the-world and everydayness. The former is an authentic projection of our possibilities, "that is to say, it signifies existing as this possibility" (1962, p. 439)

and is reflected in *Dasein*'s historicality, which is connected, as self-consistency is "essentially the historicality of the world, which, on the basis of the ecstatico-horizontal temporality, belongs to the temporalizing of that temporality" (1962, p. 440). This is in contrast to the everyday dispersion of inauthentic *Dasein* and, as Heidegger advocates:

> if it wants to come to itself, it must first pull itself together from the dispersion and the disconnectedness of the very things that have "come to pass"; and because of this, it is only here at last arises from the horizon of the understanding which belongs to inauthentic historicality, the question of how on is to establish a "connectedness" of *Dasein* (1962, pp. 441–442).

Thus the task for formal education is the development of a connectedness of *Dasein*, and this requires steadfast resoluteness to create ""loyalty" of existence to its own self" (1962, p. 443). This resolution is not an act-dependent attribute of an activity. Rather, it is a disposition that is already in our way of responding to the connectedness of our being, enabling the acceptance or rejection of possibilities in terms of being steadfast in our authentic historicality, that is, in revealing or accepting our fate. This dispositional acceptance is hidden in inauthentic historicality and is especially relevant to the education of adults in the workplace, as well as institutions of education. The recovery of this unity, as Mulhall suggests, must be based "on an understanding of that unity as the articulated unity of the care-stucture, which must itself be grasped in terms of inherently ecstatic temporializing" (1996, p. 109).

In a formal sense, this education may take place in universities but it need not. Here, education ought to blend modes of being in order to recognize and respond sensitively to issues where empathy is needed to analyse situations with resolution to find their potential to enhance the community. Instead of seeking to manipulate others, they should lead their own community's destiny. Like Aristotalian *phronesis*, Heidegger's resolution may be learnt. It requires a reflective and thinking environment where independence and risk are developed in response to problems of the real world. This would argue for workplace learning yet it also requires an understanding of the history of ideas and of worldly issues. It needs an education that is contextualized in its time, but which can learn from past worlds. It needs existential experience with academics and students engaging in communities, seeking a more primordial understanding and a recovery of the historical basis of our current understanding of being. It differs from current practice in that it does not seek to present segmented knowledges in separate, sanitized disciplines, which are digestible and manageable from an instrument distance. The transdisciplinary approach sees scientific disciplines merge and focus on specific problems in holist ways, that is, seeing the ethical as well as the financial, the practical as well as the theoretical and the humane as well as the instrumental. This will require new pedagogies and a rediscovery of the vocation of educator, student, worker and citizen. It needs the notion of learning as familiarity of being-in-the-world.

This is not a nostalgic cry for yesterday's values and practice, real or imagined, but a desire that those valuable practices from the past are saved, then radically transformed and integrated into a new understanding of reality. Moreover, we need to appreciate marginal activities unrelated to the technological understanding of being.

The degree to which the university embraces and focuses notions of democracy, dignity and Care determines how feasible is such an appreciation and it is this which helps us understand what it is to live an authentic life. Higher education's challenge is to think rather than be swayed by the technological way of being and, through its teaching, encourage its community to think about the hidden nature of will to power of machination, and then respond. This is expressed by Englund (2002) as a constant concern for the whole person, the integrated personality at home in the world and with self.

# Part II
# Issues in Work-Based Studies

# Chapter 7
# Assessment and Recognition of Work-Based Learning

*The way in which Being and its structure are encountered in the mode of phenomenon is one which must first of all be* wrested *from the objects of phenomenology. Thus the very* point of our departure (Ausgang) *for our analysis requires that it be secured by the proper method*
(Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 1962, p. 61, italics in the original).

The need to disclose an understanding of how to assess learning is central to education and training. The how and what of these assessments are what I concern myself with here, considering mainly what assessments and their various forms tell us about work-related learning. For example, should there be external examination with set outcomes, often unrevealed to students, or practical achievement made clear to students and their achievement confirmed through choice by the students themselves? This process of unconcealment, of finding the truth with differing levels of certainty, is what this chapter basically addresses. Heidegger's specific phenomenological method to achieve this is through hermeneutic interpretation. He claims that the "phenomenology of *Dasein* is a hermeneutic in the primordial signification of this word, where it designates this business of interpreting" (1962, p. 62) and offers two approaches to uncover the covered nature of the phenomena we seek to understand. The first, and the one that will concern us here, is the discovery of practices that have not been investigated prior to this interpretation. In Heidegger's terms, they have been "neither known or unknown" (1962, p. 60). This is the kind of covered-upness we find when we consider everyday practices. The second and more problematic is where, after being discovered, for some unknown reason what has been discovered is covered over again.

So, turning to the first, I will argue that learning in its everydayness is best discovered in order to be accredited through the application of the process of accreditation of prior experiential learning. I will not discuss in detail processes of assessment such as portfolios of experiential learning, for these have been well covered elsewhere (Silberman, 2009). Heidegger associates his version of the hermeneutic circle with a fore-structure (that which is given, that which makes something intelligible). For him, the circle is the result of the structure of meaning and arises out of the nature of all interpretive understanding, but I rest here only to suggest that a hermeneutic approach that involves the subject, as well as the object of assessment,

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best offers the opportunity to reveal the truth of what is known and to comment that forms of assessment sampling outside the context of their application run the risk of falsehood in interpretation. This approach does not comply with what Peim and Flint (2009) identify as the "principle of reason has come to dominate Western metaphysics and has infiltrated the everyday discourses and practices of education institutions". Indeed for Heidegger the dominance can be seen in the discern a movement away from "being itself, which in its favoring presides over thinking" (1977e, p. 220) to a procuring of technique over thinking and eventually to "its subservience to the public realm" (ibid, p. 221).

## The Temporality of the Known: A Fore-Structure and Foreclosure of Assessment

The *fore-structure* is not orthogonal to logical empiricism but focuses on the understanding, not the explanation of everyday life. Dreyfus (1992, p. 203) argues this as, "the difference between fore-structure of interpretation (understanding) and the fore-structure of scientific theory (explanation)." He further develops this argument:

> in human science an interpreter, if he is to understand what is going on, he must share the general human background understanding of the person or group being studied. Everyday objectivity disappears as soon as the meaning of the situation is bracketed out in a mistaken attempt to obtain the sort of objectivity appropriate to natural sciences ( Dreyfus, 1992, p. 204).

A temporality of knowledge, articulated as the flow of meaning, is the conception of knowledge as having meaning which is in flux and realizable through a context and location in time and space. Knowing cannot be disassociated from meaning (or, better, "interpretation"). Given that meaning is always contextual (see Wittgenstein, 1999, and social constructivists), then knowing is temporal because the context always changes.

The notion that knowledge is fixed separately from the encounter of the subject and object of the knowledge in some Cartesian subject sense is difficult to maintain, given the temporality of the creator and user of that knowledge. However, a more accurate epistemological foundation can be built on the realization that all knowledge is, in its lived, existential sense, subjective. That is, it exists in the lived experience of individual human beings. This position can be traced at least from Plato through Vico, Kant, Heidegger and the social constructionism of Habermas. If I "know" something, it means that I made a meaning out of an event. It is thus past knowing embedded into the schemata of what I know. However, this notion of the a priori is prior; it is the reality before its arrival on the horizon of purposeful activity and thus assumes a linearity of time that Heidegger and others do not accept. The future viewed as "Kairos is incalculable—in the sense unforeseeable—and that we must always be prepared to deal with the new. This incalculable time is the time of *praxis*" (O'Murchadha, 1998, p. 263). Thus the contextualization of my

past knowing is reflected upon in the present and we might make a statement that is called “knowing” as a present meaning for the past that is known. There is not an absolutely “objective” knowing; knowing means essentially “personal knowing,” and personal knowing is the meaning of my interpretation of what I know.

## Tacit Knowledge

For instance, consider tacit knowing. The distinction between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge has sometimes been expressed in terms of knowing-how and knowing-that, respectively (Ryle, 1984),[1] or in terms of a corresponding distinction between embodied knowledge and theoretical knowledge. On this account knowing-how or embodied knowledge is characteristic of the expert, who acts, makes judgements, and so forth without explicitly reflecting on the principles or rules involved. Experts work without having a theory of their work; they just perform skilfully, without deliberation or focused attention. Knowing-that, by contrast, involves consciously accessible knowledge that can be articulated and is characteristic of the person learning a skill through explicit instruction, recitation of rules, attention to their movements, etc. While such declarative knowledge may be needed for the acquisition of skills, the argument goes, it no longer becomes necessary for the practice of those skills once the novice becomes an expert in exercising them and, indeed, it does seem to be the case that, as Polanyi (1974) argued, when we acquire a skill, we acquire a corresponding understanding that defies articulation. The closest to such a process is the recognition or accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL), which can be defined as the process by which appropriate uncertificated learning is given academic value and recognition. Experiential learning can be described as the knowledge, skills and personal qualities acquired through life, work experience and study, which are not formally attested (Wailey, 2002). APEL is seen as distinct from APL, which is the assessment of prior (certificated) learning. The generic acronym that covers both uncertificated and certificated learning is AP(E)L, although APL is sometimes used as the generic term for both.

## Evidence

There are a number of ways of understanding the phenomena of this relationship. Evidence’s role in a referential totality of assessment is to give assessors confidence and degrees of certainty that the purpose of the assessment has been met. For an academic award, one assumes this means that sufficient has been learnt by the student from a curriculum to warrant certification of all its content. This is given with varying levels of confidence, identified through the use of metrics such as marks or grades, transforming the doubt of evidence into the certainty of evaluation,

[1] However, see Winch (2009).

and it is an accepted process. This is done without knowledge of the teaching or learning of those involved. This evidence is circumstantial and carries less authority than direct evidence.

This is a notion of evidence X, which is not directly related to the substantiation of the Y (knowledge of the curriculum), in that X is now related indirectly and circumstantially to Y, because of the creation of a third party, the assessment instrument Z. The evidential relation is now expressly contained in the probability intervention of Z. It now seems that we have to have confidence in Z to make any decisions on the X→Y relationship. At best, this can produce potential veridical evidence, but only of the instrument Z. In most cases it produces circumstantial evidence, which needs to be judged as such. If Z is an external awarding body for academic or professional qualifications, it is reasonable to assume that attempts would be made to strengthen the form of the evidence revealed by the examinations and formally tested and validated before use.

It seems that accreditation by experiential or prior learning may offer a more convincing valedictory evidence of knowledge retained and available to the student. This is because, when practical workplace skills are evidenced within an ERT portfolio designed to feature demonstrable competencies, for instance Qualified Teacher Status, they provide a richer, more comprehensive picture of the candidate's agency. We now turn to APEL. This is distinguished from other mono-assessments in that it seeks to develop a portfolio rhetorical in its acceptance of fallibility and giving alternatives evidence of acquired knowledge, rather than "second guessing" an examiner's sampling. It is a mode of assessment that is dialectic and holistic, provides a fuller representation of student knowledge and performance and allows proficiencies to be shown in formats chosen by the student; it is fairer. Through the reflection of practice, learners review critical instances within their learning experience and, from these, disrupt their world at hand by revealing moments where their skills and the background of their actions create a discontinuity. As Gibbs and Angelides suggest, if "APEL is to avoid this hegemony it must not alienate learners from their learning" (2004, p. 343).

This is because the X→Y relation is held fast and the evidence, X, is the production of the student against the requirement of Y, with the instrument, Z, being a categorizing process rather than an attestation of knowledge. In this sense, the student is validating[2] their learning against a set of learning outcomes and so the process is ontologically and epistemologically a different form of evidence from a written examination. For sure, the nature of Y has to be made more explicit than in an examination, but this again adds confidence to the claim that X reveals Y. The way in which this revelation mediates, through tightly defined standards or more generic outcome descriptors (Z), helps to give creditability. Lueddeke (1997) sees this as a way of resolving conflict between the accreditation of learning and the accreditation of formal education.

[2]The French description of this activity is *Validation des acquis professionnels*, where emphasis is placed on validation, rather than accreditation, and this seems more appropriate for our discussion—and indeed more successful; see Pouget and Osborne (2004) and Haeringer (2006).

I propose the inferences at the core of APEL are based on more secure, more assured, fundamental notions of certainty. Each element of the portfolio is verifiable with respect to the agency of the candidate being able to do something or act in a certain way, and is less fallible,[3] not in evidence but in interpretation, due to its demonstrable form of practice. Each element of the portfolio acts as its own appropriate intentional reference to form a totality, and this is as true of complex as simple situations. In this sense the data collection is not only epistemologically more defensible (it is of the form of veridical evidence, but of the weaker, potential type), it is ontologically more certain. I suggest that the focus of the forms of evidence might be more likely to be veridical, but will inevitably include other forms, all of which need to be recognized for their evidential contribution. Indeed, the QAA's criteria for assessing APEL—acceptability, sufficiency, authenticity and currency (QAA, 2004, p. 12)—seem strange, not in themselves, but in making them specific to APEL when they ought to apply equally to any assessment of knowledge and for omitting the other criteria of evidence mentioned previously.

In a recent paper concerning single or multiple source of evidence of student learning in USA schools, Guskey (2007) found overwhelming agreement that multi-sources give a fairer picture of the student, although there was disagreement in his sample between teachers (more diverse forms of evidence) and administrators (more of the same form). It is a consideration that this form of assessment might be more expensive and time consuming but, since what we are considering when we make educational awards is both serious and life-changing, we should take the time to care. In taking care we should fully consider the portfolio of evidence: first, as a manifestation of the evidential totality; second, as it provides a characteristic of the student and not the examiner; third, that as it does not rely on sampling of criteria but only of evidence it is more likely to reap the benefits of familiarity between the world views of stakeholders; and finally, because it is more fair.

It seems that when the objective of the assessment is to understand what is known, it is best for the holder of knowledge to provide evidence of what they claim and understand to be their knowledge, selected and presented as self-validated evidence. If the outcomes they are required to match are construed in a reasonable manner, the portfolio might be reasonably considered as veridical evidence even if it contains other forms of evidence. The role of the examiner is to assess, validate and confirm that the outcomes are evidence of the student's ability to provide evidence, which can be considered evidence of pre-defined outcome criteria, and from that point to recommend accreditation towards an award. What should be assessed is grounded from within the student, not in an assessment that might be construed as more of a reflection on the formal education system than the student's learning. This is best achieved by portfolios of forms of evidence: the evidential totality of a claimant.

Knowledge grounded in practice may not be recoverable in the form that it was learnt. It may be forgotten, but the impact of the knowledge can be traced through the

[3] Candidate veracity is assumed.

evidence of the practice. For a retake of an examination this represents a problem, as it simply repeats the concern of how it reveals knowledge. It also denies application of knowledge that is not remembered, but can be revealed through one's practice and in different elements of an evidential referential totality, which applies the notion of a referential totality of a workplace to the notion of evidence. Furthermore, in the validation of learning, the responsibility to reveal this connection falls upon the learner, not the examiner. The claim being made is that to engage in knowing is to recognize the temporality of what is known. In this sense, formalized external assessment forecloses the horizons of the future by making the personal horizon of the learner that of the assessment cycle. Thus we inhibit the development of the possibilities revealed through learning by enframing them in the expected nature of assessment. This is entrapment of the temporalities of learners to the assessments, and often to the linearity, of the assessment regime.

It follows that the epistemology of conscious knowledge is defined temporally and, therefore, as soon as we think we know who we are or what is knowable to us, we cease to know who we are, because what we know is past knowledge of who we were. This sceptical argument is driven, according to Heidegger's reasoning in his critique in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1990), by the priority given to epistemology over ontology. The claim that I am making is that to engage in knowing is to recognize the temporality of what is known. Its importance to the main thrust of higher education is in the temporality of a university if it engages creatively in the revelation of our world's future, as revealed momentarily in the present of our temporal world. If this argument is compelling, it warns us that allowing our institutions to develop a prescient of information transmission risks our becoming alienated from what our future might unexpectedly be, in some deterministic causal and potentially nihilistic way. This calls into question the ethics and temporality of externally defined assessments. In this sense, external assessment forecloses the horizons of the future by making the personal horizon of the learner that of the assessment cycle.

## Disclosing Educational Possibilities, Not Assessing

The arguments of Heidegger presented here form a way of looking at the status of our knowledge and reveal it, I believe, to be constrained in its truth by the meaning gained from the form of its revelation. This inauthentic knowing, represented by a meaning reified by efficiency, anchors our being in the presence of the known. The flux of temporality essential to our understanding of *Dasein* is the claim of knowing, in our search for understanding. In its place we need to find a way of understanding the world that remains uncertain in the uncertainty of that understanding. Forms of understanding that reveal anything other than that are closing off the potentials of being, and we must be able to understand the disclosure as a futural throw of our potential to learn. Heidegger reveals this temporalization through his position on disclosure, which is itself temporal. The argument is developed in Chapter 68 of *Being*

*and Time* where Heidegger (1962) discusses the temporality of disclosure in general. The constituent parts of disclosure are temporalized as understanding "made possible primarily by the future, and moods are made possible by having been, the third constitutive item of the structure of care—namely, falling—has existential meaning of the *Present*" (1962, Section 68, The Temporality of Falling, pp. 396–370). Understanding involves "projecting a potentiality-for-being for the sake of which *Dasein* exists" (1962, p. 385). This reveals understanding as the way in which we come, authentically or inauthentically, to think of what we might be.

I have resonance with the notion of self-trust, trusting in our potentials to be, as Heidegger says, "coming-towards oneself". This is a temporal realization of trust, for what one might be grasping are the opportunities that are revealed through self-trust and the practices of trust within the background, the context, of activities such as entitlement based on evidence merit. It is within our care for what we might be; it is our concern for what we might be, in the context of what others will be as a consequence of our realization. In this sense it acts as a "protocol" for practice within the specific background in question. This leads, I would argue, that disclosing consists of the temporalizing in our readiness to act for the being we might want to be. Here, Wrathall gives a useful example, which I express here: by drawing a chart on the chalkboard this morning had conditions of satisfaction determined by my intention of, for instance, communicating a point to the people sitting in the room. But the action was not just a communicative action; it was part of my being a teacher and affected by the students being students. Thus the action looked beyond the communicative intention towards a future, realization of an identity that is not itself the object of the intention I hold (2000, p. 112). Donnelly (1999), although not resting on the notion of critical instances, also develops the Heideggerian notion of being a teacher.

I see that disclosure is a readiness to anticipate and act in an unknowable future in a way that reveals what are our intentions to be. Thus the decision to trust is grounded in our experience and evidence of being in the world as we want to be known. If we reveal it, this places us in a vulnerable state and requires us to trust that background practice does not exploit us. Furthermore, this intentional comportment is made possible through the practices that make up our world, practices that extend our temporal horizons or that constrain them. Trust is thus revealed through disclosure, is temporal and is context specific.

In the Heideggerian notion of the world, it is our ability to disclose that reveals our understanding, that is, our attributed meaning to our actions, our surrounding. The more creatively we see the world and the more completely we deal with the practices of this disclosure, the more at home we will be. This, then, is the basic claim of Heidegger. Disclosure "is meant to point to some abilities to activities coping skills—abilities pointed to by explaining our understanding in terms of a disclosure ability-to-be, or noting the way mood 'attunes' or 'disposes' us towards certain possibilities with the world" (Wrathall, 2000, p. 109). We thus have the criteria for trust, as a practice that owes its existence to that of appropriate behaviour for coping with our background. But this is surely not enough for, as Luhmann (1990) and others have pointed out, trusting is temporalized at the edge of certainty.

For both Heidegger and after him, Sartre, this jolt to our being changes the way in which we perceive ourselves in the world and the way we understand our learning. In Heideggerian terms, that which is taken-for-granted becomes ready-at-hand and reveals its standing reserve through its more explicitly considered use. Indeed, at this stage we might even theorize what the entity is and how it might be used, whereas in the taken-for-granted state our encounter is not questioned. As Segal states, “A rupture in our attunement, involvement, awareness and relationship is required before these latter become themes of attention and concern in their own right” (Segal, 1999, p. 79). From this Heideggerian perspective, “rupture of common sense or routine existentially distracts and distances the human being from its concern with things in such a way that its attention is explicitly focused on the form of concern that it has towards things” (Segal, 1999, p. 79). In this way Heidegger is offering a perspective on the transition between the taken-for-granted of the familiar and the making familiar explicit, and so our everyday practices and experiences are concerned with “object or subjects and not with the context in which objects or subjects are situated” (Segal, 1999, p. 85). Heidegger expresses it thus: “in interpreting, we do not, so to speak, throw “signification” over some naked thing which is present-at-hand; we do not stick a value on it. But, when something within-in-the-world is encountered as such, the thing in question already has an involvement which is disclosed in our understanding of the world, and this involvement is one which gets laid out by the interpretation” (1962, pp. 190–191).

## Explicitness of Learning

Turning to educational endeavour, education traditionally requires a way of measuring *praxis* in order to evaluate and, following Foucault, turns education into money. Those who own the means for financial reward achieve this through specific measurements in terms of their selective assessments. In this context, assessment is both the accreditation evaluation mechanism of an educated population and the criterion upon which resources are allocated. In principle I have no argument with assessment as a mechanism for allocating resource, in that it assesses value in the sense of financial return. Foucault’s analysis first links knowledge with power and then power with money. As money is commoditized through instruments of monetary value, so education has to be commoditized in order that it can be converted into a mode that has monetary value. The evidence is plausible. Educational inputs are termed as customers and resources (see Standish, 1997, for a discussion of Heidegger and further education), its outputs measured in starting salaries and in academic impact (roughly converted into the number of citations of your work—quantitatively, of course, not qualitatively).

Gibbs’ (1999) use of the narrative of business is indicative of the enframing of education referred to by Fitzsimons (2002). He describes assessments in terms of strategies and tactics that are used upon the students to reveal their standing reserve. In this way the methods of assessment are used to engage the student, generate appropriate leaning activities, provide feedback, help in internalizing the

discipline's standards, generate marks and provide evidence to others of quality assurance. Clearly this technology of assessment has less to do with letting the student learn and more to do with the efficiencies of mass higher education. It has to do with moulding the student into the likeness of a student, albeit one demanded by the owners of this production process, but it is education in the sense used neither by Aristotle nor by me.

I do not agree that education's purpose can sufficiently be claimed by the economy, because of its inherent unfairness to those who do not have the means to enter the market upon which it depends (see Sen, 1999). Assessment designed to be efficient, to exclude, to reflect the hegemony of one form of knowledge over others is, I believe, unfair, lacks merit and does not allocate resources in a way that reflects the achievement of all, with the academic individuals simply getting more than they deserve and many others getting less. The mechanism for this unfair distribution is in, and of, the form of assessment that reveals knowledge. A mechanism built out of Cartesian dualism, sustained by a desire from others (those who own either the capital or means of production and reap the surplus value), and who in bad faith separate *techne* from *theori*, is exploitative. Certainly, prudence is evident, yet it is rendered exploitative self-interest when it is not tempered by *arête*. As Gadamer explains:

> practice is not a matter of the "lower servile" arts, but of the kind in which a free man can engage without disqualification, such as knowing and know-how certain to his practice without being practical knowledge in the practical-political sense. So practical philosophy is determined by the line drawn between the practical knowledge of the person who chooses freely, and the acquired skill of the expert that Aristotle names *techne*. It has to do with each individual's due as a citizen and what constitutes his *arête* or excellence . . . (Gadamer, 1996, p. 90).

I thus advocate an assessment system somewhat like that envisioned by Hussey and Smith (2002) and Curzon-Hobson (2002), one where outcomes have a role but where the unpredictability of the engagement precludes a pre-defined form and content of assessment and where the shared responsibility of teacher and student towards their learning community are the overall criteria for judgements. Hussey and Smith's (2002) critique and review of outcome-based learning upon which entitlements are judged are well made. They clearly point to the potential of explicit criteria as hampering good teaching in the sense I use it is an attending to, replacing the academic community experience with its necessary risks with a way of teaching that "can be tied to the assessment with unprecedented precision" (2002, p. 223). This, as they point out, is a false precision and one I would see directly linked to the notion of quality as conceived in the "educational product" model. Indeed, on the central tenet of my proposal—judgement—they say, "judgement may either be impossible to capture in proportional form [the form of criteria and standards] or may require such lengthy and convoluted language to be pointless" (Hussey & Smith, 2002, p. 231[4]). Curzon-Hobson (2002) goes further, under a rubric of trust I

[4]Parentheses mine.

believe the community could create. He sees assessment as a collaborative process, set as part of the learning process by students, for students, removing the hegemony of the academic disciplines and of the academic.

I hope the direction of my argument is becoming clearer. The separation of knowing is an artificial one, to suit the needs of others who wish to commoditize by a form of learning that enhances their hegemony. This gives priority to a complex and symbolic form of learning that separates and reifies its value against the other form of *techne* competence. The former is more elitist for it is in itself a separation of *techne* from *episteme*, destroying the footing of *praxis* and, in this deconstruction, offers the opportunity for power-induced discrimination based on financial imperatives. But why is this? It is to ensure that certain reified clusters of individuals are plucked selectively out of the world by way of abstract criteria enforced by assessment instruments. It is also the very technology of these assessments, leading to the nihilism of the actuality of power, whether political or economic, attributed to these select individuals through the individualism of their accreditation, which distances them from the world (see Dreyfus, 1992; Zimmerman, 1986).

If APEL is to avoid this hegemony it must not alienate learners from their learning. APEL offers a mode of assessment that is dialectic and holistic. Through the reflection of practice learners review critical instances within their learning experience and from them disrupt their world at hand by revealing moments where their skills and the background of their actions create a discontinuity. This is where the temporality of being in one's world is revealed and practices take on an intentionality or comportment previously absorbed in being. For Heidegger, at these moments we create a "clearing" through which we can envision a different future from the embedded temporality of our being. The revelation of this "clearing" and its understanding ought not, of course, to be suffocated by the mode of revelation demanded by the assessor. Trowler (1996) raises some interesting issues about the notion of transfer of practical to proposition, in order that it might be accredited in this mode of recognition and attributed a different and more significant worth. His insights reveal the potential for alienation and the violation of an individual's liberty through a culture of surveillance (Foucault, 1980). The individual's vulnerability is made explicit, as what is known and experienced by them is transferred, or translated into what is accreditable, propositional knowledge. However, as Trowler warns, "(t)he very act of attempting to give shape to and free the angel from the marble in the development approach can destroy it because of the alienation of the learner from his or her experience through its objectification" (1996, p. 24). Bjørnavold (1997) makes a similar point when he asks if the methodologies that are used to make this transformation have been sufficiently developed. I would argue that we are caught in the bind created by the hegemony of the political powers of knowledge if we accept this approach at all, and in so doing reinforce it. We should ask why we need a translation from the practical, rather than an assimilation of propositional knowledge into our being-in-the-world. After all, Aristotle's *phronimos* derives from *phronesis*, which in turn is evidenced through from *praxis*.

## Phenomenological Interpretations

Heidegger's method of interpretation consists of an investigation of the "fore-structure" of reality. He presents this method in detail in *Being and Time* (1962). The important elements are summarized below as a three-level procedure:

1. All interpretation must start with a fore-having—a taken-for-granted background. "In every case… interpretation is grounded in something we have in advance—in a fore-having. As the appropriation of understanding, the interpretation operates in… an involvement whole which is already understood" (1962, p. 191). The background already circumscribes the domain in question and thus already determines possible ways of questioning.
2. There needs to be some sense on how to approach the problem, some perspective from which to undertake the interpretation. "A point of view, which fixes that with regard to which what is understood is to be interpreted. In every case interpretation is grounded in something we see in advance—in a fore-sight" (1962, p. 191).
3. The investigator already has expectations as to what he will find out. "The interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving (the entity to be interpreted)… either with finality or with reservations; it is grounded in something we grasp in advance—in a fore-conception" (1962, p. 191).

The application of such a method will reveal the taken-for-granted-ness of the world in which the learning will be practiced. Such an interpretation of the work presented lack certainty but, as Wittgenstein has shown, such certainty is best considered as a word game. By applying an interpretation of the learning offered by the student, a more rounded appreciation of what is being presented can be gained. As such, it avoids the potential instrumentality of other forms of assessment and respects the holder of the knowledge in a distinct way compared to other forms of assessment. It engages the assessor with the assessee in a transparent way, making clear the relation that Heidegger would claim is implicit in all forms of assessment, but often covered up for purposes of power, surveillance or exclusion.

My analysis, however, still falls some way short of a clearly defined pedagogy where assessment does not decontextualize the learning from the experience of being. Collier (1988) has suggested that higher education generally has failed to grasp its responsibility. It has failed to provide the opportunities for students to confront their inner motives and real values in a manner in which their personal integrity is safeguarded. Collier suggests that this can be achieved only through deep, authentic understanding developed through "existential" responses to issues (1993, p. 290). The implication of this for higher level education is the establishment in students of the following: a depth of honesty or integrity in searching their motives; a depth of respect for other persons in everyday reality; and a scrupulous concern for matching

their understanding to the evidence, which can transcend the pressures of group loyalties, academic fashions, local cultures, self-justification, and so on:

> And if he accepts the emerging consensus of views and assumes that such qualities cannot be acquired through explicit instruction or overt training, but only delicately elicited by like-minded people in a climate of mutual respect and trust, he will find himself committed to certain educational procedures… (Collier, 1988, p. 25).

Collier's prerequisite of an atmosphere of trusting and mutual respect is predicated on the moral commitment of academic staff. Harris (2000) suggests that a constructivist approach might achieve this. Such an approach would stress "the agency of the learner; movements towards autonomy and competence; development and growth; the active search for meaning; intrinsic motivation" (2000, p. 4).

If we can move to a pedagogy that is of-this-world and where learning can be revealed without the alienation of the subject, then the mode to assess what might be known as the educated person would be in the locus of control of the learners themselves. Should this be the purpose of education—to enable educated people to flourish, regardless of the mode of their flourishing—we need to revise our structures and notion of provision of formal education so that its revelation is of the educated person who is at home-in-the-world. This puts a higher priority on the recognition or accreditation of learning than has generally been given, and less on forms of knowing with which it might best be considered to harmonize.

To close, I return to Heidegger. He argued in 1945 (see Allen & Axiotis, 2002) that in a system of higher education in the thrall of theory, we find pedagogy confined. It is constrained within the coordinates set by certain fundamental distinctions, among them the distinction between teacher and student, head and hand, knowledge and opinion, disinterest and interest, earnest and game, and the liberal and the vocational:

> Through these and other derivative distinctions, the set of priorities definitive of the life of the mind are affirmed, while the values associated with the more concrete and integral modes of human expression are denied …I have endeavoured to develop concepts and distinctions more nuanced than any such stark dichotomies… in order to express the essence of *paideia* (Heidegger, in Allen & Axiotis, 2002, pp. 40–41).

Heidegger sees the role of education as the "very foundation of our being as human" (1998d, p. 167). This education is Plato's *paideia*, and Heidegger states that "real education lays hold of the soul itself and transforms it in its entity by first of all leading us to the place of our essential being and accustoming us to it" (1998d, p. 167). For Heidegger, our existential being is found in our originary temporality through which we face the truth of our existence. In this sense, education is ontological and requires us to examine what we have come to know as true in the shaping of our being. We do this by ridding ourselves of old views, seen with a habitual eye, and "look at things most sharply, just as it now does the things it is presently turned toward" (*Republic*, 1997b, p. 519). This turning is central to an understanding of education as truth-revealing and as the coupling that Heidegger makes in his analysis of Plato's cave.

Unlike Plato, however, for Heidegger the proper dimension of the allegory is that it:

> recounts a series of movement rather than just reporting dwelling place and conditions of people inside and outside the cave. In fact, the movements that it recounts are movements of passage out of the cave into daylight and then back out of daylight into the cave (1998d, p. 165).

The notion of the interpreted temporality of being is exposed in this quotation. The movement that Heidegger describes as the move to understanding and changing the way one comports to the concealed, in a progressive unconcealing in search of truth and understanding of being, may also be interpreted as the realization of the temporality of *Dasein*. The movement is from one's past—chained and restricted, unchangeable—to the realization of a confused present of the man-made form of illumination on the world, the fire. The temporality of consumerism is the temporality of the revealed present, where the dark shadows of the cave are illuminated by flickering light from a fire, which offers an increased awareness, but only by permitting a specific temporal notion, the present.

Here I think Heidegger has a point that does not compromise the nature of higher education by artificially separating out particular ways of knowing, but integrating them as the becoming of being. I support his vision and have tried to argue that the managerialism implicit in the external assessment evident in the unitized modular system and adopted by much of higher education "militates against organic growth, spontaneity imagination, and the encounters with the unknown are suppressed for both teacher and learner" (Standish, 1997, p. 452). This leads to teaching and learning as a form of *techne*, supported and realized through assessment technologies of competencies and standards. These, I argue, are insufficient goals for an educated person and argue for a *telos* of *phronesis* based on *praxis* of existential education.

However, should this *teleos* be manifest? In the recent development of pedagogies initiated by Knowles (1986) and developed by Stephenson and Laycock (1993), Billett, Boud and others, the learning agreement has taken centre stage.

# Chapter 8
# Quality in Work-Based Studies Is Not Lost, Merely Undiscovered

> *Everydayness take* Dasein *as something ready-to-hand to be concerned with—that is, something that gets managed and reckoned with. "Life" is a "business," whether or not it covers its costs.*
>
> (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 336)

My starting point is a wish to provide a quality experience that facilitates students' mastery of the skills they, employers and educationalists desire. An essential part of confirming the quality potentially afforded by the world of learning is clarity of definition. I argue that central measurement and control of quality is neither effective nor necessary. As Harvey (2005) reveals in his history and critique of quality evaluation in higher education, the moves towards standards, benchmarking, codes of practices and qualification frameworks may have distanced us from, rather than returned us to, "an integrated process of mutual trust that prioritizes improvement in learning" (2005, p. 274). According to Harvey, current quality assurance processes point to a future for learning, which is "not a real engagement with learning, but the advent of more complex evaluation procedures: in that setting it is unlikely that the quality in student experience will improve" (2005, p. 274). This rush for transparency has meant that the prize, the "what-for" of quality, has been lost to its own image. By becoming all too visible, English quality assurance has not promoted quality so much as promoted itself, under the rubric of accountability. Moreover, such a self-satisfying, controlling and totalizing approach has proven problematic for innovations marking the emergence of higher education in the workplace. Unlike Harvey, I am not suggesting that bureaucratic quality systems of the United Kingdom and Europe hide a worsening academic base, but rather that we ought to absorb quality assurance into the background of our higher education practices and let quality learning shine forth.

In this chapter I will argue that good quality should be subsumed into the practices of skilful participants and that institutions act upon their conscience. This is particularly important in the complex blending of the workplace and the academy, where codified quality may disrupt learning rather than support a flourishing environment for all stakeholders. I suggest that what should be sought is concealment of quality, for its discovery only in times of genuine concern. Ultimately, this means

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trusting the expertise of those involved, not the precepts to control activities. This approach has something in common with what Massy and Wilger, based on international research, have defined as "education quality work" (EQW). This is, as they explain, "the activities of faculty, academic leaders, and oversight bodies that are aimed at *improving* and *assuring quality*" (2000, p. 48). This approach requires, according to its authors, a "high degree of collegiality and professionalism, and also the balancing of priorities for teaching and research. Such excellence requires that professors work together rather than as individuals and that they devote substantial time to, for example, explicating educational goals, enhancing teaching and learning processes" (2000, p. 50). Although this approach puts the control of what are the quality issues, and how they are to be addressed, in the hands of the academics, it is set within the oversight, control and surveillance regime based on procedure, which, although better than the precepts and hegemony of some quality systems, still falls short of the trust based on mastery and accountability advocated in this section.

## Quality and Work-Based Learning

The development of WBL programmes requires close cooperation between the parties who agree to the learning outcomes, leading to the academic award. In a recent survey of 70 institutional audits by the QAA it was found that more than two-thirds mention programmes with placement elements (QAA, 2007). Clearly a stakeholder relationship exists, meaning relations have both moral and procedural bases upon which a system of controls can be placed to give assurance of the awards' quality. This is obviously an educational institution responsibility (QAA, 2007, p. 7), but the very idea of combining learning derived from formal education with that from the workplace is problematic. Tasker and Peckham (1994), Barnett (2000) and West (2006) claim that academic and industrial values are incommensurate and that it is only with mutual respect that collaboration can be fruitful. According to Evans et al., "the workplace is a site in which antagonistic relationships are expressed" (2006, p. 6) and, despite Government encouragement, Reeve and Gallacher find if we "view partnership as central to the successful development of WBL in universities, much of the literature also reflects significant problems in trying to implement this approach" (2005, p. 223). Moreover, Kinman and Kinman found that:

> Busy managers are adept at filtering out what they see as unnecessary information to get at the "bones" of a message. Unfortunately this trained focus on the essential tends to prevent participants from taking notice of the peripheral details that often lead to new connections and the stimulation of abstract thought and critical thinking. (2000, p. 15)

This is a view that many may emphasize as the fundamental purpose of university education.

However, the point is not the tension, but its effect. I argue that it prevents the notion of quality being absorbed into the practices of work-based higher education and may create a rupture that makes it perceptible, when it should be part of our

everydayness. Indeed, the insistence on the term "precept"[1] in the QAA's workplace code acts to ensure that quality is rule-bound: the sort of behaviour that, according to Dreyfus (2001), is naive.[2] I am not arguing that quality should be without any guiding documentation, but that it is used for the purposes of developing quality educational work evidence, which is evidenced and agreed-for learning that occurs in the workplace.

It is against this background that responsibility for quality management in higher education has historically fallen on a decentralized system of accrediting agencies, which monitor quality largely through external quality approaches (Welsh & Dey, 2002). Governments tend to address quality management issues through monitoring activities (Green, 1994) such as accreditation, audits, assessment and external examination (Harvey, 2002). The objectives are institutional and programme compliance, with a series of regulations and standards, the achievement of stated institutional goals and conformity to given specifications. Yet, these external quality approaches are not uncontested. Gibbs and Iacovidou (2004), for example, refer to this approach as the "pedagogy of the confined", where quality is an externally measurable form of control, not good education. Harvey (2002) also critiques external quality monitoring as "bureaucratic . . . incapable of asking the right questions . . . leads to directing scarce resources from the improvement of learning, the experience for students and the development of research and scholarship" (2002, p. 5).

Williams (then the head of the UK QAA) showed awareness of the issues, if not the solutions, when he proposed at a recent UVAC conference that "WBL frees higher education from the concept of physical borders. Methods of delivery are without limit and the landscape is rich in opportunity" (2006, p. 191). However, he continued, "these factors pose various challenges for effective quality assurance" (2006, p. 191). He echoes the issues made more forcefully in the QAA Code of Practice relating to work-based and placement learning (2007), which highlights concern over the responsibilities of partners, the communication roles and the management of students, employers and universities. Specifically, the aspect of awarding credit for WBL is noted by Nixon, Smith, Stafford, and Camm (2006). They claim that practitioners delivering WBL find "anomalies exist in the functioning of institutionally or regionally driven credit-based systems. For instance, the maximum amount of credit a student can achieve through APEL varies by institution and as such a rather arbitrary system seems to have emerged" (2006, p. 51). This challenge is particularly well covered by Brennan (2005) and Connor (2005). Contrary to transparency, the chosen discourse of each institution, both academic and commercial, on rules and precepts is hidden. I want to hide quality assurance in learning. This is not to deny the need for investigation and enquiry into practice in order to know and understand, but to resist using instruments designed out of context to measure against predetermined, standing evaluation criteria (van Rensburg, 2008).

[1] "Taken as defined as a commandment, instruction, or order intended as an authoritative rule of action; a command respecting moral conduct; an injunction; a rule."

[2] As a development of this chapter, I would explore Dreyfus' six modes of action, from novice to *phronimos*—wise practitioner. In this model, codes are required at the early stages of learning, but are disregarded as the user first masters, then transcends these rules.

## Quality in Our Everydayness from a Heideggerian Perspective

For Heidegger the notion of quality production, whether of silver chalices, cabinets or works of art, is in the relation of the creator to the work.[3] It is not about external standards, which, while relevant, may tend to impose rather than liberate quality. It is in this sense that we should consider *work-based learning.* Such learning is always in flux, always engaging in new problems, always learning; a modern craft worker, identifying with their production, is quite distinct from a modern, academically grounded worker disinterested in their work. Importantly, it also needs teachers, mentors and masters to transcend their own goals to free the student to "let learn" (Heidegger, 1977d, p. 15) and it is in this sense experiential, vocational learning.

Moreover, when working at the level of mastery of our practice we are usually unaware of the activities and the environment in which we undertake them; we just get on and do it. For Heidegger, this is a "referential totality" within which we move and make sense of ourselves and others. In it we become aware when things do not work or happen as we expect, or we are not able to do what is required; we do not have the competency or have the capability to act. At that point, what becomes conspicuous is that which failed. Quality is thus hidden in what we do; we do not notice what is being used by something for the sake of doing something else. We use things—entities or procedures—in this sense as equipment and this equipment is what helps us make sense of our world of action; it forms a referential totality. For example, the keyboard for writing this book is often conspicuous, even obstructive, when I am trying to use it, for I am a novice, but in the hands of my wife the keys are incidental to the words appearing for the sake of this chapter.

Quality in things acting in-order-to achieve what is intended is un-noticed, for neither are the tools used in-order-to achieve the goal noticed. Heidegger calls such tools and processes "ready-to-hand" in that we can use them, or learn to use them, in a referential whole though which we can reveal ourselves. As skilful practitioners we become absorbed in the purpose for which we use this equipment; not in the item of equipment. If the equipment breaks or is not available, we look upon it in a different way, a way that acknowledges its thing-ness rather than its usefulness; this is called "present-at-hand" and, should the tool be available for use but is inappropriate, for example too heavy for the task, then the equipment is "unready-to-hand".

My point is that quality ought to be treated as a referential totality within which processes and procedures act so they can be readily absorbed in the practices performed for the sake of the organization's ultimate goals. Such a referential totality does not have quality as an entity present-at-hand, measurable but not involved. In building a learning environment spanning work and the academy, quality needs to disappear—to be hidden until something goes wrong. That is not to say that the procedures and process ought not, from time to time, be made visible. They can be

[3]For the purpose of this chapter it is not necessary, I believe, to detail the appearance of these concepts in Heidegger's work, although they can all be found in his book, *Being and Time* (1962).

inspected, investigated and evaluated, not as precepts but as examples of practice. Improvements will be made to them to enable their disappearance again back into our everyday practice as workers, researchers or students. Of course, I must emphasize that this concerns the quality of the learning environment, not the often separate quality assurance function of the workplace and the academy and identified through ISO 9000 or Sigma 6. Moreover, Heidegger also recognizes that some encounters are of the type, unready-to-hand; that is, we don't know what to do with them or they cause us to question what we would ordinarily just get on with. This may be applicable to new academics joining a community of scholars or to the introduction of new modes of teaching or of educational distribution. For instance, consider the question of how distance education enhances student learning. There are many issues that may be new to the institutions and their partnerships, which need to be understood, and expert practices developed. In the early stages of competence written documentation may enhance quality, but when the project is mastered, as evidence in quality practices, they can be absorbed in the joint activities of the partnership.

This Heideggerian approach will strike a chord with the pragmatists. It argues for a form of inconspicuous quality assurance revealed in the final outcome of the production process. For business, this is the organization's sustainability, and for the university it might be the students' flourishing and then securing employment. Whatever it is, given the clarity required earlier, its success is in its inconspicuousness.

This goal is hindered, I suggest, by the somewhat prescriptive direction about responsibility for quality in WBL. The QAA's Code of Conduct seems to envision this being the role of the academic institution. It is my reading, however, that the admirable precepts in Section 9 of the Code are more readily applied to work placements than WBL on a workplace "site" (2007, p. 13). Indeed, the evidence shows little regard for precepts that render the university responsible for aspects of workplace provision. The Code manages, I think, to make quality all too visible and thus reduce its contribution to the practices it purports to foster. Disclosed through practice, quality is a communal idea that draws its definition and its support from stakeholders transacting in the world where the deeds are practiced. In this sense, the responsibility for the quality of the practices cannot be the sole responsibility of one party; one cannot control or monitor practice by rendering quality visible. It is surely a stakeholder responsibility.

## Quality Undisclosed

In *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger claims that "to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free sphere that cares-for each thing in its own nature. The fundamental character of dwelling is this caring-for" (1975c, p. 149). This dwelling, I would suggest, involves the acculturation of rituals and practices that are central to learning in practice.

These dispositions are not exclusive of any form of structured education; they draw no real or virtual line in cyberspace or elsewhere in separating vocational and academic. Dewey's insight is that vocational education is about becoming a

contributor to society and warns of the perils for society if an overtly instrumental vocational educational system becomes an "instrument in accomplishing the feudal dogma of social predestination" (1966, p. 318). The tension is between a student's finding a home in society in an occupation in which one can be contented[4] and an occupation forced onto the student as a predetermined function of their social standing. In other words, the acquisition of skills should be considered both a political and a moral endeavour as well as a process of achieving competence. It is encouraged through opportunities to learn which are existentially enriched and where students make decisions not just on the tools of their endeavour but how they want to use them to influence their role in society.

There is evidence in the UK system that vocational education does indeed try to do that. For instance, in a recent study by Colley et al. (2003) concerning vocational education in further education colleges, they illustrate the social constructivism of vocational education through the lens of "vocational habitus". Although the focus was not the notion of morality, the case studies they offered clearly indicated that the learning opportunities within the communities of practice that the students encounter when working outside college did contribute to their becoming members in ways beyond skills.

The workplace, with its structure, culture, atmosphere or climate and prescribed way of conducting business, is a dwelling place in the Heideggerian sense. Indeed, it is evident from the literature that "workplace culture is multifaceted and asserts a major influence on individuals and groups behaviour" (Wilson et al., 2005, p. 928). In this world, any artificial divide between ethics and the being of an ethical agent is removed, and learning takes place in both explicit and tacit skills and in the transcendence and immanence of Being. In this sense the workplace can be where one can authentically reveal oneself through work in ways that encourage caring and participation, through responsibility and the realization of potential. Such a workplace, I suggest, is conducive to a culture that defines what the community of practice means within the world at large. It is developed through the engagement of workers, with workers, who are often subjected to rather than liberated from the management that directs their endeavour. We are talking of the manner of actual practice of novice and connoisseur, those that work, encounter and reveal themselves to workmates who care about each other. This is most obviously seen in dangerous occupations, but also in the less physical but more psychologically threatening service and caring industries.

This is due to the reification of skill, not the wisdom of its use. To restore the value of vocation to occupations, I suggest that vocational education ought to take place in the workplace, but a workplace designed to offer a community at peace with itself. Such a combination, I believe, will enable students to transform into practitioners within the context of engagement with the actual issues of society, and learning the conditions that will support or disrupt the dwelling place they find. I recognize that this is only plausible to the degree that the workplace matches the

[4] See Bonnett (2003, §11).

notion of democracy advocated here. However, I pragmatically assume that the failure of society to embrace notions of democracy, dignity and care reflects a society that is itself shallow in these dispositions, and argue for the development of such workplaces, given the significant role they play in forming the identity of those engaged in action there.

In our everyday working environment what I do has a quality. It is judged by others and ourselves by our practices. I become expert at certain ways of doing things and this, I propose, is a notion of quality that has real purchase in the "work" of work-related studies. In this sense, those who can are hired, promoted or, at the very least, not fired—although perhaps exploited! Their quality is seen in their fitness for purpose, their skills in coping and their expertise. It is not weighed by how many quality guidelines they follow; it is not expressly contractual or authoritarian, but judged by practices of the everyday world.

This point is crucial because, without a broad rather than simply instrumental approach to quality assurance, the development of the trans-disciplinary and practical knowledge at the core of WBL will be constrained by an academically subject-based and rigidly self-interested view of knowledge creation. Even Boud and Symes (2000) warn that universities need to be cautious with their WBL provision, for such arrangements may debase the educational process. Such a conservative approach may impede further democratization of education through the embrace of learning in the workplace. The quality assurance policymakers ought not to seek comparisons with what holds for propositional knowledge, but to give parity of esteem to practical knowledge. They need to recognize that learning realized through the workplace can lead to greater openness and fairness, but needs trust and promises, not inspection and contracts.

## A Conscience?

This may be facilitated by the learning outcomes and assessment regimes adopted by higher education as a way of revealing achievement beyond contexts defined by discipline. WBL requires an appreciation of "forms of understanding that are sensitive to context, time, change, events, beliefs and desires and power" (Tsoukas, 2005, p. 4). Thus, while subject benchmarks are inevitably concerned with generalization from constituted bodies of subject knowledge, "canon" and learning, much of WBL is concerned with the complexity and depth of understanding of specific contexts (Garrick & Rhodes, 2000). Furthermore, the implementation of learning outcomes enables the widening and deepening of knowledge to be assessed critically and in its full complexity, rather than in the often artificial structures of disciplines. As Garnett states,

> The high level of customisation, not only to meet the needs of individual students but also their organizations, is prized within the discourse of modernism which pervades quality assurance in higher education... In this respect work-based learning and quality assurance in higher education can be seen as part of the same modernising discourse (Garnett, 2000, p. 64).

These shifts are more than changes in discourse and include the way I perceive the workplace as a learning environment and act within it. Williams does not want corners cut, but for us to produce something worthwhile, and claims that the QAA acts as "an academic conscience (hence the use of the word precept?) for the higher education community in system-wide quality and standards matters" (2006, p. 194). There is much here to interpret, but I will consider only the notion of conscience. Williams, I assume, is using the term in the sense that a call of conscience is a response to some particular violation of what is right. Conscience tells us that we are guilty on a specific occasion such as the "cutting of corners" (of the QAA precepts, I suspect) referred to above. Although guilt is a strong word to use, it does awaken us to the strength of the claim. Heidegger has a temporal way to deal with this issue, which I[5] might borrow. He structures guilt on the basis of indebtedness; our past, which cannot be changed; and our responsibility to the future. As people or as institutions, we are guilty if we assume that neither exists and act only in the present. In essence, my responsibility is to make choices that preclude other possibilities. As Polt suggests, it would be "inauthentic to pretend either that he has no other options, or that he can afford the luxury of not choosing at all" (2003, p. 89). Facing up authentically to the needs of WBL requires actions that are owned and will create anxieties for institutions determined to hide their past under the cloak of WBL. What is needed is a fresh look at WBL and its relationships, not an approach in which one party, either the university or the industry, suggests merging its values into its own. While both parties try to do this, and the QAA's precepts, I believe, make this manifest, we as a sector will continue to feel guilty for not making the right choices. Whether this is meant as the "conscience" of higher education, I am not sure. However, if it were, the QAA needs to do more to encourage institutions to recognize their past relationship with WBL and resolutely to assume their responsibilities for WBL by either engaging or retreating. Moreover, as Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) suggest, rather than using valuable resources in attempting to move up the ranking tables based on QAA indicators, universities might be better off investing in their missions.

## The Desire for Disappearance

There are continuing debates in both the worlds of work and education on *what* higher education is and *how* it should be evaluated. Nixon, Smith, Stafford and Camm claim that quality assurance procedures and codes of practice "will need to better reflect the breadth of approaches to flexible learning being adopted by HEIs so as not to stifle innovation in the future" (2006, p. 51). What I am trying to create is an understanding of the quality of practice; that is, quality has to become absorbed within those practices. Quality in the learning-place allows novices to become experts and experts to aspire to be practically wise. It is unsustainable to

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[5] In what follows, the pronouns "we" and "I" refer equally to both individuals and institutions.

create such a space by setting out precepts designed to protect the self-interested goals of awarding credentials or harnessing cheaply trained labour. A learning environment needs all stakeholders to identify the new situation and either embrace it or reject it, not to accept then graft on quality assurance processes in an attempt to hide the unacceptable. Honesty must precede trust, and only when we have a genuine desire for an enriched learning environment, demonstrated by requiring essential change in both academy and workplace, will we no longer have to "care" about quality assurance for the learning experience.

# Chapter 9
# Adopting Consumer Time: Potential Issues for Higher Level Work-Based Learning

> Dasein, *conceived in its most extreme possibility of Being, is time itself, not in time.*
>
> (Heidegger, *The Concept of Time, 1992b, pp. 13E–14E*)

My discussion of the temporality of higher education is one in which it is captured by increasing corporate, consumerist and government inroads into the realm of education, demanding that "education serve the dictates of the marketplace and its demand for economic growth, [and] through the inroads of advertising and marketing" (Norris, 2006, pp. 459–460). This creates what Young (2002) considers to be the bureaucratic and machine-like modern university in which it is no longer customary to find teachers and students, but "suppliers" and "consumers", with all that this entails. More specifically it nurtures an ideology of consumerism where the meaning of life is to be found in the buying of things and pre-packaged experiences. Furthermore, it allows people to create a personal identity and value system through what they consume. For academics and for students this may create experience anxiety and alienation over what they take students to be and what they take themselves to be. In this unthinking packing of activities into time, what is lost is the time to think.

These changes are having an impact on the very nature of educational learning through changes in students' and academics' pace of work and their time perspectives of the form of learning opportunities that institutions deliver. For example, Guthrie and Neumann (2007) suggest that traditional collegiate, academic decision-making methods are being threatened as the university becomes more responsive to the needs of the consumer. Barnett (2007) has suggested that for students and academics alike there has been a transition from a period when both past and future were experiences within the being of the present to one where temporality has become disintegrated and a linear sense of time predominates.

From a Heideggerian perspective, the issues faced by higher education institutions are problematic if they question the seemingly irresolute adoption of the tempo and rhythm of the world of the consumer deemed appropriate by the commercialist context of work-based studies. However, I suggest that in adopting it they implicitly change their mission to one where their community is expected to press ahead with the possibilities of what they might themselves determine to become, not detached

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but as one being-in-the-world of work. In doing so, I assume that a central tool for the perpetuation of consumerism is marketing. Such an assertion is supported by, for example, Bourdieu (1984), Featherstone (1991) and, most recently, from marketing scholars such as Abela and Murphy (2008), who claim that the rise of consumerism parallels the rise of modern marketing.

In the face of massification, the economic, social and political imperatives challenges educational institutions to offer a place for self-flourishing are gigantic, especially if they are to understand themselves hermeneutically and then foster the integrated notion of originary temporality, if they see as their mission the development of humanistic values in addition to more practical ways of earning a living.[1] This requires them to encourage all their stakeholders—students, faculty, donors of funds—to be open to their world and not to encourage thoughtless response to the needs of others, in turn treating others and themselves as reservoirs of resource. Our individual historicality and our future possibilities need to be disclosed so that *Dasein* might truthfully take a stand on itself. Our formal education ought to facilitate this, among its other functions. It will require encouraging stringency and resolution in educational institutions' activities by which they may reveal the importance to our being of the originary future. In so doing they need to disclose a way of being in the present which is not the generalized way being of others, which, I perceive, is currently the case with notions such as performativity. I am looking towards the university to revitalize primordial temporality. If education institutions do not take up the challenge, but dwell on the tranquillity of external directives, always ready-to-hand to shape that which I have called later in this chapter a Mode 2 or 3 future, they contribute to the nihilism currently manifest in consumerism and it becomes ever more inevitable.

## Consumerism and the Changing Notion of Time

We understand at a primordial level that our being has a context, or background—like the ether of physics—which contextualizes our actions. Its presence allows things to show up with contextual significance in how they present themselves and in how we react to them. As we have seen we understand this background through "circumspection", and through this circumspection we are oriented to the presence of what is of concern. The shaping of this circumspective orientation is socially derived and forms the environment of our everyday experience. Ideology, faith and other causes try to shape our way of seeing things.

Heidegger does talk about how the "circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption is the sole procedure which distinctively characterizes the history of a

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[1] I am reminded here of Buber's characterization of educative relationships as "in order to help the realization of the best potentialities in the pupil's life, the teacher must really mean him as the definite person he is in his potentialities and his actuality; more precisely, he must not know him as the sum of qualities, strivings and inhibitions, he must be aware of him as a whole being and affirm him in his wholeness" (Buber, 1959, p. 131).

world which has become an unworld" (1973, p. 107). However, the worldhood of consumerism is subsumed in his later works where he sees technology as totalizing our practices and potentially our being. His solution is to understand how this occurs and to find ways of living with technology without taking on a technological way of being (Dreyfus & Spinosa, 2003). For instance, he says that technology is no mere means but that it "is a way of revealing; a way of seeing the true meaning of an entity. If we give heed to this, then another whole realm of the essence of technology will open itself to us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e. of truth" (1977d, p. 12). Moreover, Heidegger argues that we need to be struck by the strangeness of this statement and be drawn to understand what technology means. I will borrow his way of thinking, but revert to Heidegger's initial concern with consumerism. How can we live within a consumerist society without being restricted in our openness to people and things? It is in this sense of its education's revealing purpose that I intend for us likewise to be struck by the consumerism now implicit in our higher educational system.

The difficulty is where the background against which the meaning of a thing is demonstrated becomes uniform, averaged to use Heidegger term, and diversity of personal histories are lost. If the background is one of consumerism, then things will emerge and gain their meaning in this context. To reinforce and sustain the background of consumerism, marketing management shapes the significance of our world.

Marketing is a grasping at the needs of consumers. It provides the structure for the development and promotion to consumers of products and services to perpetuate consumerism. Thus marketing provides both a hermeneutic to understand consumerism and a way of shaping it. Moreover, implicit in marketing is exchange, a process that Araujo (1999) points out requires a notion of past, present and future, which is both relational and measurable. Referring back to our modes of time, this is an example of Mode 2 and 3 times, which leaves little room for Mode 1 time—the time of *Dasein*. Indeed, when shortly I discuss boredom and how it affects learning in the workplace I will return to notion of Mode 1 time and the development of insight through profound boredom, of which this is a form.

This gives a common, circumspective meaning to equipment's function of encouraging the practices of consumerism and identification of entities as commodities and consumers. As I have already indicated, if our world view becomes one of things whose purpose is to be consumed, the very nature of their being and time is challenged and levelled down as Heidegger has suggested to a single dominant form of time, Mode 3 time.

In providing the context for the everyday datability of events to change their relative pace, rhythm and expected duration, it allows a measure by which to judge the accelerated rate at which these events are sequentially located, bringing the future to us faster, allowing us to linger less in the present and requiring us rapidly to forget entities in the past. The increased density of our present takes away our time to act from our originary temporality of our authentic being (Mode 1 time) and replaces it with the reckoning of ordinary time (Mode 3 time), of a successive future, present and past.

In our everyday mode of being we get swept up, irresolutely, in this flow and understand ourselves in terms of these encounters that are thrust upon us. We busily lose ourselves in dealing with the rapidly changing events that concern us. This leads us in a certain way of talking: "I have no time" (1962, p. 463). The time Heidegger means here is the notion of primordial temporality, lost to Mode 3, ordinary time. This may be willingly accepted in order to make sense of a world in our everydayness, but such an acceptance must be informed by its alternatives. This is a role education can play, awakening us to the possibility that we can take a stand against accepting the role "for-the-sake-of" acquisition of commodities that can often, when unquestioned, define our everyday practices.

## Higher Level Work-Based Learning

Of course, this ought to be impossible as it would mean that the being of "*Dasein*" would change and no longer be "*Dasein*", at least authentically, and we would be no more than equipment or things ready-to-hand for others to use, as suggested by Heidegger. Is this what consumerism is doing, pressing us to turn away from knowing ourselves by taking a stance on ourselves and accepting the being of another consumer entity? Furthermore, if education embraces consumerism, whose "for-the-sake of which" is immediate consumption, will it level down the potential for *us to* develop our own authentic *Dasein* with the help of higher education institutions? If it does not resist consumerism by developing our authentic being through its ordinary temporality, we need to question whether institutions are offering a distinctive mission of challenging society, or whether they are just delivering consumer ideology and practice. This interpretation is very important, for our being is constituted as primordial temporality and is evident by our practices. If we act as consumers in the world of consumer time, what does it make of our being? Does it lead to the commodification of being, in such a way that it risks ceasing to be "*Dasein*"?

Heidegger sheds some light on the effects of choosing to live through world time (Mode 3) rather than originary temporality (Mode 1):

> The Being of *Dasein* is care.... *Dasein* awaits its potentially-for Being-in-the-world; it awaits it in such a manner that it "reckons" on and the "reckons" *with* whatever has an *involvement* with for the sake of this potentiality-for-Being—an involvement which, in the end, is a distinctive one (1962, p. 465).

Thus, Heidegger warns us that in everydayness we need to be circumspect in how we are to concern ourselves with our activities.[2] We might take this warning to be aware of the dangers of being too concerned with entities and identifying too closely with them.

[2]In the 1962 translation of *Being and Time* by Macquirrie and Robinson, "*Besorgen*" is translated as "concern", but in the sense that we concern ourselves with "activities we perform or things which we procure" (1962, p. 83).

The practices of consumerist time are already evident in a higher education context. For example, Ylijoki and Mäntylä (2003) propose that there is a reduction of "timeless time" (time not controlled by external constraints; time for reflective thought) and an increase in "scheduled time" with its external imposition and accelerating pace. Clegg (2003), Ylijoki and Mäntylä (2003) and Ylijoki (2004) claim it affects research by accelerating the pace of work, decreasing autonomy over time management, causing a higher proportion of work on short-term projects and increasing time pressures.

In short, the complex originary temporality of our authentic being flourishes in an educational system that resists and questions the temporality of consumerism. It confronts the comfortable and secure world created for us through consumerism's letting us forget our responsibility to ourselves to accept the choices we make and letting us forget the past we have been given. In this consumerist world, the responsibility for our own future possibilities and attunement to our past is covered over in our present desire to own and to have. We forgo our responsibility and control by allowing ourselves to be forced to "fit in". We forget, or are persuaded by advertising to ignore, what Heidegger takes as our existence: "(as) an entity which has to be as it is and as it can be" (1962, p. 276).

## Heidegger Once Again

How might Heidegger enable us to understand the originary temporality of education that I am attempting to preserve? Education may be understood as the way in which we learn to take a stand on our being and the way we act in terms of and in relation to other entities. Heidegger explicitly states that:

> To learn means to make everything we do answer to whatever essentials address themselves to us at the given time. Depending on the kind of essentials, depending on the realm from which they address us, the answer and with it the kind of learning differs (1968, p. 14).

This is achieved by our dealings with what we are engaged and is lost when we are distanced. Again, Heidegger claims that without this relatedness we become "determined exclusively by business concerns" (1968, p. 15). His example is that of a cabinetmaker's apprentice, but he extends his point to include poetry and thinking. Moreover, he claims that the prevention of such an orientation depends on the presence of a teacher whose primary role is to let the student learn, specifically about learning. This requires flexibility in approach to things whether encountered as entities or as equipment within a referential whole. Moreover, equipment encountered outside such a frame of reference can become entities stripped of purpose. We deliberately do this when we are doing in scientific enquiry, when the equipment that is used for the sake of achieving a goal malfunctions or when we are not skilful at using it. Heidegger returns to this theme in *Being and Time*, where he points out that we are conscious of the environment that supports our activities, even if we are

not concerned about it. This support is needed, but it is not support of which we are mindful. We come to be mindful when equipment is used. However, Heidegger states:

> That with which our every-day dealings proximally dwell is not the tools themselves. On the contrary, that which we concern ourselves primarily is the work—that which is to be produced at the time; and this is accordingly ready-to-hand too. The work bears with it the referential totality within which the equipment is encountered (1962, p. 99).

This last situation brings forth what some, Dreyfus for instance, refer to as another mode of being. Others see it as a mid-state between present-at-hand and ready-to-hand, the "unready-to-hand" of equipment. This mode is when what we are doing "in-order-to" achieve ceases to be in the background, but becomes conspicuous rather than being absorbed in the practical activity. It happens when we have to think how to do something, such as remembering a long-lost formula, take up the piano again or perhaps learning a new language. We do this "in-order-to" make us more familiar with the experience of a new world, so as to understand the significant events and their world relational timings. For example, when we approach a person in another country and ask them a question, we expect them to understand and respond accordingly. When what we expect to happen does not as our language is found wanting, we try something else. We might explore what else we know to do in similar circumstance aboard: seek a common language, make signs or shout. We may deliberate about how best to resolve the problem and develop a schema for resolving it—finding an interpreter—or perhaps just stand there helplessly before eventually retreating to somewhere more familiar and prepare ourselves better for the future.

How we respond depends on how we encountered the problem, authentically or inauthentically. Heidegger suggests that our understanding of such events is

> grounded primarily in the future (whether in anticipation or in awaiting). States-of-mind temporalize themselves primarily in having been (whether in repetition or in having forgotten). Falling [our everyday-ness] has its temporal roots primarily in the Present (whether in making–present or in the moment of vision)[3] (1962, p. 401).

If we approach the language problem inauthentically, we use only the language skills we have at the time to shout and so on, getting louder as our time is spent, as we have other things to do. We wait impatiently to see what will come of our efforts. It matters little if we get what we desire, as we leave the situation blaming the other for not speaking our language and soon forget what contributed to the lack of understanding—our own lack of competence. However, if we approach the situation authentically, we experience what Heidegger calls a "moment of vision"—that is, when we experience the event through the present of our originary temporality (Mode 1 time) and not that of world time (Mode 3). Then we may come to understand that our lack of language skills, or the pressure we were putting on the other person, may have contributed to the lack of communication. We may recall when

[3] Parentheses mine.

this has happened before and then feel guilty about it recurring. We may then anticipate it not happening again by resolving to do something about it, by taking those previously neglected language lessons.

In the above example, I am not expressing the view where taking for granted those we meet will speak our language is necessarily blameworthy on all occasions, for we need to take much for granted in our everyday lives if they are to run smoothly. I simply want to suggest that education can make us aware of different ways of responding to a problem and its solution, rather than seeing it as a present-at-hand issue able to be resolved in Mode 3 time. Heidegger grasps these types of problem as ones where we do not have sufficient mastery of skills in order to act appropriately in certain circumstances. Having more than the instrumental skills in order to speak a language is ontological, in the sense of seeking to become a good communicator, "for the sake-of" which we gain our position in civil society.

## Summary

I have tried to suggest that consumption and transformative education within higher education institutions have, and ought to have, different temporal realities. Moreover, if consumption's time, the time of reckoning, becomes the process that shapes the temporality of our educational goals rather than the originary temporality of taking a stand on what we want to be, educational institutions will cease to add significance to our world. The danger is that this temporality replaces our notions of education as a means to think of a future of imagination, hope and opportunities not yet known, with sequential and knowable "nows"—a view of education based on our being in the world of consumption.

Furthermore, I have suggested that a university's embracing of consumerism ought to present a dilemma for its leadership: what is it seeking to achieve and why? The purpose of marketing is to achieve predetermined ends through the application of marketing skills and technologies. It has explicit goals—market share, sales volumes or profit and an implicit desire to trap the consumer in their present "in-order-to" buy—but at what cost? Naidoo and Jamieson have indicated that, under a consumer notion of entitlement, a student disposition "may have negative ramifications for the development of higher order skills and more importantly, the dispositions and attitudes required for autonomous, lifelong learning" (2005, p. 273).

For Heidegger, in such a world "the human is challenged forth to comport himself in correspondence with the exploitation and consumption: the relation to exploitation and consumption requires the human to be in this relationship" (2003b, p. 63). Is this what education ought to be about? Or is it inevitable in these times of consumerism? Not according to Barnett (2007), who offers a distinctive notion of education, which needs its own time and is identified by him as "pedagogical time" (2007, p. 53), a time for ontological change. It is defined by a time during which the institution can foster the willingness of students to "venture forth" into the unknowable future beyond their studies with the confidence and trust nurtured in

the academy to face the uncertainty of the future. It creates the time for the student to become, through the experience of higher education. In doing so, the student is able to confront the anxiety of the future with confidence, creativity and criticality, but this is not achieved by describing the unknowable as some form of predictable, yet inauthentic, anxiety-free extension of the present. Moreover, Barnett (2007) recognizes the tension between this pedagogical time and the market's notion of consumable linear time, arguing that the market "jostles with and even threatens to crowd out the pedagogical relationship" (2007, p. 9).

Many of the issues raised in this chapter are contextualized in the workplace of the university, where one ought to be able to engage and reveal the nature of the temporal entrapment of consumerism on our being. Once the institutions themselves adopt this temporality, all might be lost. Taken to a logic conclusion this would lead to a radical review of our ways of being in our world of action. It would lead to working environments in which we dwell.

The contribution of Heidegger is to offer us the potential manifestations of this temporal consumerism. Through his analytical approaches we can glimpse the insidious change in our world, which already is accepted through the hegemony of being a consumer for someone else. This harnessing of our potential to that demanded by others is our giving up of our freedom to act. Should the university resist these changes, for instance in academic freedom, it can offer a place where new ideas can grow and interact with the workplaces of others. Become familiar is not a passive settling into an active encounter. This encounter can change how entities are revealed. Moreover, such revealing is not built as a distinctive subject–object peculiarity, but where one ought to take a stand, however the encounter goes. Such as stance is grounded in our mood and it is to mood, especially boredom, that I next turn.

# Chapter 10
# The Concept of Boredom: Its Impact on Work-Based Learning

*This profound boredom is the* fundamental attunement. *We pass the* time, *in order to master it, because time becomes long in boredom. Time becomes long for us. Is it supposed to be short, then?*

(Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, 1995a, p. 80*)

Heidegger's analysis of work and especially his observations that the technological way of being leads to an instrumental approach to work encounters (through the enframing of the notion of work) lead not unnaturally to the potential for boredom. Indeed, boredom might be considered a significant consequence of modernity and this seems to be the point made by Simmel in his discussion on the rationalization of society and the instrumental money economy that strips modern society of its cohesion and purpose, replacing it with an emptiness. In view of the importance given by Simmel (1990), Heidegger (1995a) and Weber (1958) to linkages of boredom with production and consumption point, it is surprising that boredom engenders little interest in the WBL literature, yet is a major "fundamental attunement of our *Dasein*" (1995a, p. 166). I am reminded that the notion of boredom, as a concept, has a history that has been beset with negative connotations. The modern conception of boredom has an antecedent in the medieval concept of *acedia*, as one of the "seven deadly sins" in the Christian tradition. The modern concept of boredom has also been defined in relation to the thinking of romanticism (Svendsen, 2003). Our current concept of boredom is primarily a moral concept, not even an existential response, as in romantic thinking but in the first place a psychological or physiological condition. From a philosophical point of view, it is, however, questionable whether we can define boredom as either an internal mood or a response to external stimuli. Indeed, it is difficult to consider boredom as a uni-dimensional response at all. Somehow it seems that boredom has to do with our ability to experience meaningfulness, either in relation to a particular situation or to our life as a whole. It is a question of meaning, or more precisely, a lack of meaning. What I now want to do is show how boredom is part of the temporality framework set out in this chapter and investigate what implication it has for WBL. Put simply, can boredom inhibit learning or can it, in some profound way, facilitate an authenticity that work not so

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construed cannot provide. Boredom at work then becomes not a suppressive phenomenon, but one that liberates one to think beyond the confines of the everyday, to be creative and to be reflective. Should it achieve these things, then perhaps boredom might be encouraged both in the workplace and as a way to improve that which we chose to learn and to assist education.

I will be looking to Heidegger for insights into the boredom of the workplace and the learning that takes place there. According to a multi-disciplinary review of the literature by Loukidou, Loan-Clarke and Daniels (2009), the available evidence dictates that boredom is associated with negative individual and organizational outcomes. Moreover, it can be as a dispositional trait or as situational, as a property of the jobs people do or the social context. This structure is also supportive of the analytical approach of Billet (2006) discussed previously. The first aspect concerns dispositions and the literature features discussions on personalities and proneness to boredom. This second aspect has a meaning that is conveyed in the repetitiveness, monotonous jobs made routine, which leads to dissatisfaction with specific factor of workers' jobs such as seating, supervision and co-workers and alienation from the workplace and what it stands for and provides. The third concerns rules and the role of the expectations of communities of practice, meaningfulness and time.

In much of the literature there is a discussion of the coping strategies for boredom or, as I will want to discuss it, as learning within boredom—or even further, of a pedagogy of boredom. This practical approach allows manifestations of learning in how to pull back time as it ordinarily drags along for us, towards our desired objective. Events seem distant in time from us between now and achieving them, finishing the shift or reading the book. This is achieved through refocusing the activities to gain control over the flow or to create more stimulus. This concerns making the job more interesting through fantasizing, daydreaming, telling jokes or even singing. This allows the worker to disengage from the task. However, learning to respond in these ways may increase the danger, as familiarity does breed contempt for the referential totality and can alienate the worker even further from the workplace as a place of work. However, it can provide the worker with a moment of vision of a way in which they see clearly how they might contribute more fully to the process or see their opportunities more delineated. Boredom then may be an existential positive and provide the temporal unity to reflect on what might be, to offer time out to be utilized for one's well-being. Moreover, as Barbalet notes, the "emotional support of meaning provided by boredom is too easily overlooked in consideration of social meaning, its purpose and forms" (1999, p. 633). Such an opportunity I will discuss under Heidegger's notion of profound boredom.

## Moods

Before turning to a discussion of boredom as a fundamental attunement of mood, I want to linger for a while on the importance of moods to Heidegger's philosophy of being-in-the-world. Moods are ways in which we encounter the work. They are ontological and create the way in which we can understand the world and our place

in it. They are neither from ourselves nor from the environment: they are a combination. "Having a mood is not related to the psychical in the first instance, and is not itself an inner condition which reaches forth in an enigmatical way and puts it mark on Things and people." (1962, p. 171). Moreover, mood "assails us. It comes neither from 'outside' nor from the 'inside', but arises our of being-in-the-world, as a way of such being" (1962, p. 176). That is not to say events, entities or activities don't change moods but rather that these changes change the way we are in taking a stance on ourselves and others. Moods set the tone. Through moods, things appear different. When we are happy, things present themselves in a more joyous way; when we are depressed, we struggle to see the good in anything. When we are bored we are disengaged. This is not that we see the same configuration in different ways through moods; it is that they are epistemologically different. In this sense, moods are different from emotions in that the latter usually last for short periods and are directed at specific events of entities.

It is attunement for Heidegger that designates our moods as ways of finding ourselves in the world.[1] Our attunement, our disposition, is a way in which we find ourselves thrust into the world in a certain way—for we do always find ourselves attuned to the world in a particular way. For Heidegger, then, moods are a form of disclosure. Blattner (2006) provides a good summary of Heidegger's notion of mood. Moods are "(1) disclosive imports, (2) function as atmospheres, (3) reveal how we are faring, (4) are passive (5) have objectives and (6) co-constitute the content of experience" (2006, p. 82). For instance, consider how different moods might affect your taking a practical examination. In the "right mood" we are confident, behave in the way we usually do take the task in our stride and enjoy the opportunity to show others what we can do. Moreover, we celebrate when the examiner passes us but also comments on what we could have done better. Or, we wake up the morning of the examination and fear the consequences of failure to ourselves, our peers and our tutors. We will let everyone down. We over-practice, become ritualistic, lose our spontaneity, but still pass the examination with the same conditional remarks. Rather than celebrate we are mortified. How could we not have done better! We are stupid to make these errors; the examiner much have been friends with the tutor to pass me. In this mood we reject the opportunity to celebrate but maintain our mood of fear of success. Just as in examinations it can pervade how we deal with workplace learning: afraid of success and afraid of failing. Heidegger focuses his discussion in *Being and Time* on the moods of fear and anxiety. For our purposes we will turn to boredom.

Although both moods described previously are pervasive and constitutive of our fundamental attainment of our being, they can be overcome or altered. However, this is only possible if the mood allows it and by our establishing ourselves in a new mood. This may be influenced not by our own history but by "the mood of the

[1] Polt (2003, p. 65) draws our attention to another translation of the German *Befindichkeit*, the term used by Heidegger, as "disposition". This gives the idea of us positioning ourselves in the world, giving an orientation.

moment". Heidegger offers, when discussing Aristotelian rhetorical techniques, the comment that "Dasein constantly surrenders itself to the 'world' and lets the 'world' 'matter' to it in such a way that somehow Dasein evades its very self" (1962, p. 178). It might do this in response to a prevailing mood, such as the mass hysteria displayed on the death of a celebrity.

Not surprisingly, the Heideggerian phenomenological analysis of boredom is complex, insightful and challenging, especially his concept of profound boredom. He identifies three forms of boredom, all linked to our understanding of our temporality, to our being. I will briefly discuss these in the next section before offering some thoughts on boredom relevant to WBL. Others have also attempted to reveal the meaning of Heidegger's prime text on this subject, *The Fundamentals Concepts of Metaphysics*, and I acknowledge that my understanding owes much to Stafford and Gregory (2006) and Mansikka (2009), especially when dealing with Heidegger's notion of profound boredom.

## Heidegger and the Experience of Boredom

Heidegger's analysis of boredom starts from the position of our attunement: "our mood, in our engagement with the word. Our understanding of such attunement is not through asserting but through awaking, through us coming to know which is neither a conscious or an unconscious act. . . it is comportment, as disposition not an intension." It is, as Heidegger puts it, when one is grieving. Although on the surface affairs are normal, "the way in which we are together is different" (1995a, p. 66). That is, there is nothing perceptible, only a knowing, a presencing that is palpable, conspicuous and which indicates a change in relationship. This shared attunement enables us to be empathetic rather than sympathetic and to be able to share the world of the other together, yet leave it when we desire. For Heidegger there are a number of fundamental attunements and potentially the most significant for our being is boredom, for boredom is intrinsically linked to our being through temporality. For Heidegger states:

> *(B)ecoming bored* and boredom in general are then evidently entirely *rooted in this enigmatic essence of time*. What is more—if boredom is an attunement, then time and the way in which it is as time, i.e., the way in which it *temporalizes itself,* plays a peculiar part in Da-sein's being attuned in general (1995a, p. 98, italics in the original).

Heidegger conducts his phenomenological investigation of boredom by using the notions of being *left in limbo* by time as it drags along (derived from his first form of boredom), and then coming to *be left empty by things* and in general by the individual beings surrounding us in a specific boring situation (his second form of boredom). Heidegger gives meaningful examples of both. In the first, waiting around at a railway station for a train has resonance with most of us, when time becomes stretched and lengthened by expectation of the train and our efforts to count down the time. The station is uninspiring. We have a book, but it too fails to inspire us. We could think through a problem but are unable to. We read the timetables, the banal

advertisements, then look at our watch. Only 15 min have passed. We walk out onto the local road and count the trees as we walk back and forth. We glance again at our watch; exactly 5 min have passed since we last looked. Fed up, we sit down and draw figures in the dirt. We look at the watch again . . . and so on. This everyday situation in which we become bored by the train station illustrates a specific form of passing the time. When we become bored by something, we try to shake off time. The passing of time is "a driving away of boredom that drives time on" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 93).

More controversially, his second example is the filling in of time by extending the present of going to an event, which will pass the time but which has little intrinsic value to us. In this second form of boredom, Heidegger uses the example of attending a dinner party. We are engaged in the event as it is pleasant enough, even enjoyable, but then it turns out to be one in which we play a role determined by the situation; a role that was un-deliberated and which, on reflection, was unproductive.

The first type of boredom is a boredom caused "by" something, reading a book (this book?), which becomes wearisome, as the book is tedious. We become bored with a specific thing and usually disengage from our practice that includes it. This weariness and tedium provide the source for the means of investigating boredom through two structural moments at the three levels of boredoms Heidegger proposes (the third is profound boredom). For wearisome:

> means: it does not rivet us; we are given over to it, yet not taken by it, but merely held in limbo [*hingehalten*] by it. Tedious means: it does not engross us, we are left empty [*leer gelassen*]. . . . [That] which bores us, which is boring, is *that which holds us in limbo and yet leaves us empty* (Heidegger, 1995a, pp. 86–87).

That is, we are affected by it and "what we address as boring we draw *from the thing itself*, and also mean it as belonging to the thing" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 86). In this phenomenological effort to disclose boredom we "follow what *everyday* speaking, comportment and judgment expresses," we see "that things themselves, people themselves, events and places themselves are *boring*" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 83). "Boredom—and thus ultimately every attunement—is a hybrid, partly objective, partly subjective" (1995a, p. 88).

Passing the time is itself initially disclosed by looking at what happens when we are bored, that is, by considering "the way that we move within it" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 91). Boredom is "uncomfortable for us; we immediately try to drive it away" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 30). Passing the time is "the way that we seek to drive it away" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 30). By focusing on this *reaction* against boredom, we thus gain further insight into the essence of boredom itself:

> [If] boredom is something that we are fundamentally *opposed to* from the beginning, then it will originally manifest itself as that to which we are opposed *wherever* we are opposed to it, *wherever* we drive it away—whether we do so consciously or unconsciously. This occurs wherever we create a diversion from boredom for ourselves, where we in each case *pass the time* in such and such a way and with this intent. Precisely wherever we are opposed to *it*, boredom *itself* must want to assert itself, and wherever it presses to the fore in such a way, it must impress *itself upon us* in its essence (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 90).

We seek to shorten time, to make it pass more quickly. In this passing the time, we are thus in "a *confrontation with time*" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 96), "we fight *against* the progress of time which is slowing down and is *too* slow for us" (1995a, p. 97). Time drags and thus affects us in a paralyzing way (1995a, pp. 97–98). Thus, "becoming bored is a *being held in limbo by time as it drags over an interval of time*" (1995a, p. 100). When we become bored, we are left empty by the refusal of things to fulfil our particular expectations; the train station refuses us the possibility of departing immediately (1995a, pp. 101–104).

In the first form of boredom, we become bored by specifics within a particular situation, and what bores us is something quite determinate, specific and familiar. Heidegger suggests that this is not the only way we might be bored. This leads us to Heidegger's second scenario where we attend an event or are in a situation that, well, simply bores us. In the case of the evening mentioned above, there is no single activity. Rather, it is "our *entire comportment and behavior* that is our *passing the time*" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 112). In this sense, "[the] evening is that with which we are bored, and *simultaneously*, *what* we are bored *with* is *passing the time*" (1995a, p. 113). Heidegger also draws our attention to the fact that what bores us is not a determinate boring thing, but an "I know not what" (1995a, p. 114). Moreover, we are not ill at ease by a time that passes too slowly, but instead have given ourselves time for the evening. So, we are not being held in limbo by a dragging of time. Nor are we left empty by the refusal of the beings surrounding us, for we are "quite taken by everything" and "the evening satisfies us" (1995a, p. 115).

The second form of boredom, then, manifests itself quite differently from the first form; rather than being bored at, we are bored with. This change prompts Heidegger to inquire further into its structural moments. Heidegger's insight is that we are "*leaving ourselves behind in abandoning ourselves* to whatever there is going on, *an emptiness can form*" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 119). Rather than an already present emptiness that remains unfulfilled by the refusal of beings to satisfy us, as with the first form of boredom, the emptiness first comes *from us.* This is why we speak of *ourselves* as being bored. In an effort to disclose how we are held in limbo in the second form of boredom, but in a different way from the first, Heidegger considers us to have taken the flow of time and replaces it with a standing of time and prolonged now. This "*standing of time* is a *more* originary *holding in limbo*, which is to say *oppressing*" (1995a, p. 122). This standing time is "transformed from our whole time is compressed into the standing 'now' of the duration of the evening" (1995a, p. 125) and it is this standing now "*which sets us in place (summons us) is what bores us*" (1995a, p. 126). Heidegger sees this boredom, an indeterminate boredom, as more profound than the first and might relate it to our everyday notion of a boring life, going nowhere and without an understanding of how to temporalize ourselves from this standing of time. We can't plan or reflect, for we have nothing upon which to focus our attention.

Heidegger contrasts these two forms of boredom in his conclusion to Chapter 3 of Part I of *The Fundamental of the Concepts of Metaphysics* in seven points. The following Table 10.1 is based on these, albeit in a different order than they appear in Heidegger (1995a, pp. 130–131).

**Table 10.1** Contrasting forms of boredom (after Heidegger, 1995a, pp. 130–131)

| | Bored-by | Bored-with |
|---|---|---|
| General distinction | Conspicuous attempt by self to pass the time, to be occupied | Inconspicuous occurrence of passing time, hidden from oneself that is bored |
| | An unease in passing time, making the boredom more pressing | An evasion in the face of boredom; boredom is letting oneself be bored |
| The range of resonance | Being forced between particularly boring things | Dissipation of boredom throughout the whole situation |
| Structural moment—being left empty | Absence of fullness of the emptiness at hand | Emptiness first forming itself |
| Structural moment—being held in limbo | Detention by whatever is dragging in a time we need | Not being released, being set in place by standing time |
| Boredom in relation to a situation | Bounded and stuck fast in a situation, limited by extrinsic circumstances | Not bounded to a particular situation |
| Summary | An extrinsic arrival and advent of boredom from out of a particular environment. A fidgeting, directed outward in accordance with the contingency of boredom | Boredom arises from within and from out of *Dasein* on the occasion of a specific situation. Being drawn into the specific gravity of boredom |

The third form of boredom Heidegger proposes is a profound boredom that discloses itself "whenever we say or... silently know that *it is boring for one*" (1995a, p. 134). The expression "It is boring for one" is revealing in itself. The indeterminate "it" and the impersonal "for one" point to the fact "that we here become an undifferentiated no one" where "[name]. standing, vocation, role, age and fate as mine and yours disappear" (1995a, p. 135). This profound boredom is not relative to any particular situation or circumstance; it "can occur out of the blue" (1995a, p. 135). Thus, the occasion of this third form of boredom could be anything, such as "it is boring for one to walk through the streets of a large city on a Sunday afternoon" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 135).

Heidegger emphasizes that profound boredom is not about finding everything boring "for me" as a particular person, but "for one" as a particular human existence. When it is boring for one, then everything faces one as indifferent, including oneself as a "me", with all of my personal features. Nothing appeals to one, and one feels that there is nothing one can do to get oneself interested or involved. Everything appears in such a way that it denies one those possibilities and thus leaves one empty. As Heidegger puts it:

> [The] beings that surround us offer no further possibility of acting and no further possibility of doing anything. There is a telling refusal on the part of beings as a whole with respect to these possibilities... *Being left empty* in this *third form* of boredom is *Dasein's being delivered over to beings' telling refusal as a whole* (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 139).

With respect to the structural moments of being left empty, the emptiness that we feel when we are profoundly bored lies in our being indifferent to everything at once—to whatever situation we may be in, to the specific beings surrounding us and to ourselves as particular persons. In Heidegger's terms, the emptiness "consists in the indifference enveloping beings as a whole" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 138). Heidegger works out the structural moment of being held in limbo by focusing more closely on what is involved in being left empty. The refusal is a *telling* refusal of beings as a whole, in the sense that it points to or announces the unexploited possibilities of our existence (1995a, pp. 140–141).

As everything recedes into indifference and leaves us in the lurch, as it were, we become aware that we are able to, but do not, exist in other possible ways. This is not an awareness of what I am as a particular individual, for it is for the indeterminate one where "Name, standing, vocation, role age and fate as mine and yours disappear" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 135). I am able to do, but do not do, for example, change careers, for such personal details are irrelevant when it is boring for one. Profound boredom "*brings* the *self* in all its nakedness *to itself* as the self that *is there*" (1995a, p. 143). In this sense, Heidegger proposes that we are held in limbo by "*being impelled toward the originary*. . . *making-possible of Dasein as such*" (1995a, p. 144).

Heidegger claims that "the more profound it becomes, the more completely boredom is rooted in time" (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 133). It is important to note that he does "not regard time as something we find within our consciousness or as a subjective form," for such is the view of ascertaining (1995a, p. 133). Rather, it is "the time that we ourselves are" (1995a, p. 133); our existence *itself* unfolds in terms of time. Every moment of our existence is oriented simultaneously to who we will be, who we have been and who we are. Future, past and present are the unified directions in which we exist. Heidegger refers to this threefold unity as the "horizon" of time (1995a, p. 145). Time is not "some neutral container" of beings, but "participates" in making them manifest (1995a, pp. 145, 150). Thus, all beings, including ourselves, are manifest to us in the threefold temporality of being.

In profound boredom, then, we are entranced by time as an undifferentiated whole, as originary time. That is an awakening to, an attunement to the temporal horizons associated with authenticity. If grasped for what is possible, not with *Dasein* ready-to-hand, but if "*Dasein* resolutely discloses [*sich entschließt*] itself to itself" (1995a, p. 149), this self-disclosure is the *moment of vision* [*augenblick*] (1995a, p. 149). This moment of vision is one in which the full situation of an action opens itself and keeps itself open, "toward the moment of vision as the fundamental possibility of *Dasein*'s existence proper" (1995a, p. 149). Moreover, as time is what leaves us empty and what holds us in limbo in profound boredom, the moment of vision "that is also announced in this telling refusal, precisely unity of being left empty and being in limbo in the third form of boredom is determined through and through by the essence of time" (1995a, pp. 149–150).

Such a claim for the moment of vision, unconcealed through a moment of vision, thrusts boredom into a new and important light. Yet, as Mansikka points out, in:

> profound boredom there is a possibility to a more radical turn because we have to confront ourselves in a more radical way. Profound boredom is bound up by being captivated by time but according to Heidegger, this temporal captivation can, at the same time only be ruptures by time itself (Mansikka, 2009, p. 261).

The link to thinking is opened by Dahlin (2009), who conceives that for Heidegger Being and thinking attend to each other and tend towards each other. He concludes that, if thinking and Being belong together, then Heidegger "ontologizes" thinking. By relating thinking to unconcealment, as the element in which thinking exists, Heidegger seems to imply that thinking takes part in the allowing-to-be, which is unconcealment. Thinking becomes an intrinsic part of that openness which necessarily precedes the appearance of any being or (thought) thing. As a precondition of every being, thinking therefore also must precede both "subject" and "object". Hence, thinking precedes all epistemological and ontological distinctions.

In contrast to the calculative thinking of instrumental reason, it is a meditative thinking that, according to Heidegger, was there in the beginning of philosophy but very soon forgotten.

Heidegger comments:

> The meditative man is to experience the untrembling heart of unconcealment. What does the phrase of the untrembling heart of unconcealment mean? It means unconcealment itself in what is most its own, it means the place of stillness which gathers in itself what grants unconcealment to begin with (Heidegger, 1977b, pp. 444–445).

It is the stillness of the clearing where the belonging of thinking and being can arise. This seems very like what Heidegger means by those special moments of vision evoked in profound boredom and which have obvious links to notions of detachment or enlightenment in Buddhism (Zimmerman, 1993), a wholeness that he calls bringing together of the three forms of temporal being.

There is a temptation to conclude that profound boredom is nothing more than anxiety. Heidegger clearly does not see this as the case. Anxiety discloses itself as

> an insignificance of the world; and this insignificance reveals the nullity of that with which one can concern oneself—or, in other words, the impossibility of projecting oneself upon a potentiality-for Being which belongs to existence and which is founded primarily upon one's objects of concern (Heidegger, 1962, p. 34).

By contrast, according to Heidegger, "boredom and its being left empty here consist in being delivered over to beings telling refusal of themselves as a whole" (1995a, p. 140), where the telling refusal is the "very *possibilities* of its doing and acting" (ibid).

The temporality of the notion of boredom revealed by Heidegger matches those revealed in Chapter 6. These I developed into Table 10.1 of Heidegger's notions of time and being. With respect to boredom, this table can be expanded, as shown in Table 10.2.

The objective has been to see what is boredom. I now turn to the task to considering the three forms of boredom manifest in the workplace and how they

**Table 10.2** Heidegger's notions of time and being and boredom

| Time | Related form of being | Forms of boredom |
|---|---|---|
| Originary or primordial time—Mode 1 time | *Dasein*, structure through care as: existentiality (future), facticity (past) and falling (present) | Profound boredom, moments of vision, disassociated boredom; "it is boring for one". "We have thereby determined the specific being held in limbo of the third form: being impelled toward originary making-possible of *Dasein* as such" (Heidegger, 1975a, p. 144) |
| Datable time, that is events located in relation to others. It is the shaping of separated notions of past, present and future—Mode 2 time | Ready-to-hand and unready-to hand (the state where equipment, including language, does not function as expected. Such occurrences may lead to a present-at-hand mode of being, to investigate the problem) | Bored-with, situational boredom, related to *Dasein*. Attunement to a general environment rather than specific entities within the environment. Boredom is indeterminate |
| Time-reckoning or clock measured linear time—Mode 3 time | Present-at-hand, calculative time | Boredom by the specifics of an entity, a lecture as manual on quality control or safety time is reckoned with and time becomes long (*Langeweile*). Boredom is determinate |

affect our being as learners dwelling in the workplace, actualizing our capacities as competences through our uses of equipment. I will do this through three explorations.

## Three Explorations: Bored-by, Bored-with and Profound Boredom

### *Bored-by*

You will remember Heidegger's example of waiting in the station. He is bored with the train not being ready-at-hand and such waiting makes time seem to drag. This may be caused by us having to reckon with time in a way in which we do not when we are absorbed by what we are doing. Again, Heidegger offers us the example, in *What is Called Thinking*, of the apprentice cabinetmaker who, in actualizing has *dunamis* for being a carpenter, "makes himself respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering within wood—to wood as it enters into man's dwelling with all the hidden reaches of it nature" (1968, p. 15). This

is contrasted with the externality of the object where the "lever and buttons in the manipulations of the industrial worker belong to the machine… we shall not be able [as in the case of the carpenter] what it is to which the industrial workers hand is related" (1968, p. 24[2]). In this, I see the essence of boredom of the first type in the workplace.

The relatedness of the object to the subject, the lever to the worker and, through this unrelatedness, the lack of engagement make the task not one of becoming, but remaining a static being; it leaves us empty, offering us nothing. This leaves the workers bored with the task before them for it requires little. Moreover, the only expression of their identity is when the inconspicuous of the use of equipment become conspicuous; when things go wrong. Indeed, to break the boredom of the repetitiveness, it can be deliberately disrupted and through such a rupture the revelation of the boredom is made clear and transparent. Such boredom might be unavoidable; the process might require constant attentiveness in watching, waiting and doing. Once the learning from such operation is absorbed, the worker will become bored with the task. For sure, job transfer can help, as can more stimulating explanations, but the tasking is as boring as the wait in the station.

What might be possible is to change the time-reckoning this boredom involves. Workplace learning can offer such diversity, but it is effective only when what is being learnt is of use. Of course the determination of use is for the learners and their activities outside the workplace. This might reduce the dragging of time, but it needs to be done during the time whilst the boring task is also being undertaken. Not to do so only makes time drag slower, as we await the opportunity to do something else. To elevate such boredom, working practices need to be re-engineered. Workers need to be developed for the benefit of the organization in order to secure a better future for both the workplace owners and the worker. Yet this is unlikely to be achieved by abstract, bare facts. The learning opportunities need to reflect that reality of the worker inhibiting his life world. Failing this, boredom can be managed through timing schedules that reduce the waiting, during which time that which is not boring can be practiced. As Mansikka suggests, "(T)he boredom that arises from dull and meaningless educational situations is a painful as being caught in a railway station waiting for the next train. In both cases 'passing time' is the only way out from the situation" (2008, p. 263).

This form of boredom is perhaps the most common and is within the grasp of the organization and the worker to resolve. Work-based learning, if it is not to be destructive, needs to change the relationship between the worker and the boring task.

## *Bored-with*

Bored-with is a more complex and more profound from of boredom than the previous and creates significant problems for WBL. In Heidegger's example, he characterizes it as a slipping away from ourselves towards anything amusing going

[2] Parentheses mine.

on. Its importance is in that it may affect the capacity of individuals to be effective in their working lives. Here the worker is bored with being where they are, yet this boredom may manifest itself in apathy, a lack of genuine interest in engaging in ways with the workplace that are other than ritualistic. Learning here has rested or been diverted into making the workplace a new worldhood, one where the goals and aims of the worker dominate. This does not mean that they are necessarily disruptive, only that we feel unfulfilled, as in the emptiness proposed by Heidegger. For here, in this casualness of being with others, when "leaving ourselves behind in abandoning ourselves to whatever there is going on, an emptiness can form. Becoming bored or being bored is determined by this emptiness forming itself in our apparently satisfied going along with whatever there is going on" (1995a, p. 19). This emptiness consists merely of absence. Nothing is learnt other than to enrich the individual within the workplace. Here the worker is attending and doing, but not actualizing, and the environment is acceptable but not authentically challenging. Moreover, any need to make it so is lost.

In these circumstances, encouraging organizational change, job rotation or further responsibilities threatens the often "happy boredom" of the worker and will be resisted. It is also possible that workers in such context will practice emotional labour to hide their boredom, giving the impression of participating in the habitus whilst not recognizing themselves as part of it. To break this form of boredom with WBL requires a deeper appreciation of the fixation of the workers in their present. This dislocation between what is and what might be requires empathy, for clearly an agent of change might see the future possibilities rather more clearly than someone bored-with. Billett has noted the interrelationship of work and place when he comments that we need "to understand what motivates and directs individuals' learning through work and throughout working life requires careful consideration of the relations among work, subjectivity and learning" (2006, p. 8). His analytic of considering work, subjectivity and learning has Heideggerian resonance and offers a practical way forward, once we can recognize the nature of boredom revealed by Heidegger. I suggest this is often not the case.

The resolution of this boredom might not be in the workplace at all, for the worker might be in the wrong place. Leaving the comfort of a place where oneself is revealed for the benefit of other, one where we don't have to take a stand on our own being, is difficult and requires the strength and power referred to above. The need to find oneself authentically seems to be one route to the resolution of such boredom, but for many this is apparently impossible.

## *Profound Boredom*

Heidegger has something to say about learning and profound boredom, on that fundamental emptiness that bores us, and leaves us feeling smug and contented in not being endangered. It makes us weaken our resoluteness in taking a stand on our essence. He thus notes that:

> (W)e concern ourselves only with learned competencies that can be instilled. The present is full of pedagogical problems and questions. Strength and power, however, can never be replaced by the accumulation of learned competencies, rather if anything is achieved by the latter it is the suffocation of all such things (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 164).

This situation is brought to the fore in profound boredom. Here we are confronted by what our authenticity might be. More importantly, we cannot turn away from this. It is the moment of boredom where one is left to review oneself within the context of being, but without being a specific *Dasein*. It comes upon us and compels us to consider our own authenticity and to respond in a way that reflects upon that which is potentiality within our way of being, but which we have overlooked or abandoned. In these moments of vision we see our potential and are forced to make decisions about the nature of our future. In this sense, profound boredom is distinct from the other forms, in that it offers possibilities. It is positive and gives us the chance to consider the creativity of the future stance we will take on our being.

With respect to learning opportunities, it needs workers to find a course for their working lives that is for themselves, not following what is accepted. Learning needs to be grasped in order to take the direction the worker wants. Through profound boredom, a glimpse can be seen of what might be in store for them should they pursue a course of action, and a way forward mapped and planned. For those workplaces able to harness these insights and interact with the worker, fresh innovative ideas can be harnessed, which are effective and involving. Such liberating insights encourage our capability, *dunamis*, to be enacted. It is when being in the world is unsettled by the indifference of profound boredom that something else might show itself, if we open ourselves to the experience, rather than shut it off. This is not to encourage profound boredom as a way of working; far from it. However, it does recognize that certain instances of profound boredom can be used to increase the effectiveness of work to unconceal the stance they want to take on their life. This way it can reveal the WBL that is involved in achieving such a goal, when it is mutually explored within the requirements of the workplace.

## Summary

This chapter has recognized that workers become bored, but rather than assume a uniform notion of boredom, Heidegger provides a way of structuring our understanding of boredom to offer us ways of acknowledging its cause and then in managing, or allowing, it to liberate our subjective appreciation of our work, our workplace and what can be learnt through it. Moreover, the approach taken here shows how boredom is compatible with the temporality of *Dasein* that Heidegger had developed elsewhere.

# Chapter 11
# Practical Wisdom and the Workplace Researcher

> *A second concerns a prejudice which merely constitutes the counterpart to the uncritical approach of generating constructions and theorizing. This is the* demand for observation which is free of standpoints. *The second prejudice is even more disastrous for research because with its express watchword for the seemingly highest idea of science and the objectivity, it in fact elevates taking an uncritical approach into a first principle and promulgates a fundamental blindness.*
>
> (Heidegger, *Ontology–The Hermeneutic of Facticity,* 2008, p. 63)

This question above is at the core of much of what I believe Heidegger wanted us to understand about worker and workplace. To find answers we need phenomenological research and investigation into the workplace. Researchers of their own communities of practice—workplace researchers—are researchers who, while retaining their established role in a community, add to it the role of insider-researcher for a specific purpose and duration. Moreover, this new role is negotiated within the context of their ongoing work with the intention of maintaining their community membership, once the research has been completed. In this sense, the workplace researchers' activities potentially change their community, their perception of the community and the community's longer term view of them. Researching while dwelling within a community distinguishes this form of research from the outsider- or insider-researcher who leaves the site of the research on completion of the project (see Merriam et al., 2001).

The literature relating to workplace researchers is most commonly found within the educational (schools and colleges, e.g., Dadds, 2002), nursing (wards and theatres, e.g., Pope, 2005), WBL (e.g., Garth & Shiel, 2007) and anthropological literature. For example, Smith (1999), when talking about insider-researchers who reside within their community, distinguishes them from outsider-researchers in that the former "have to live with the consequences of their processes on a day-to-day basis forever more, and so do their families and communities" (1999, p. 137). Furthermore, such an approach is not without personal risk for, if the role of the workplace researcher extends beyond that which group membership allows, then membership may be lost and the researcher's status becomes that of outsider and the

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project itself becomes reframed; the researcher may then be seen to have betrayed their community.

The notion of workplace researcher used here is developed from the "work" in Heidegger (1962), which does not just feature as part of his philosophy, but rather is "the central feature of human existence" (Young, 2002, p. 57). First, the workplace is a key environment within which we develop our understanding of ourselves and of others in it. It is the place where our professional practices grow and where we come to understand the nature of the impact of what we do on others. In Heidegger's terms, it is a dwelling place and, for Heidegger, "to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its essence" (Heidegger, 1977f, p. 343).

Second, Heidegger also has a deeper meaning for the procedure of research than is adequately captured by the concept of methodology. Heidegger argues that what is revealed through research is a revealing of what must be already knowable: that is, we must be able to recognize that which is revealed through the ground plan of our forms of knowledge. Thus the natural sciences are epitomized by exactness, whereas in the human sciences such exactitude would turn humans into objects, so research here is inexactitude, yet the more challenging for this. The result of this is that the scholar disappears and is replaced by a researcher engaged in research programmes (Heidegger, 2002). Following this line makes the researcher essentially a technologist who recognizes truth "when and only when truth has been transformed into the certainty of representation" (1977a, p. 127). Thus the researcher becomes a specialist and views the world from a distinctive platform. Contrasting this view with that held by Heidegger (and adopted here), Cooper interprets Heidegger's approach as one in which we account for ourselves in what we judge as truth: that is, "to be *in the truth* is for us to be party to the uncovering of things, to their emergence into the open" (2002, p. 53[1]).

The workplace researcher acts within a real workplace in which, as Farrell and Holkner (2006) claim, "contests exist over what counts as knowledge, who can know, and how knowledge and skill shape, and are shaped by, hierarchies of power and esteem" (2006, p. 312). In this contested space, the role of the workplace researchers of their own communities is complex. It requires judgement, reflexivity and criticality about their relationships with others as well as concern about the quality and richness of data collection, analysis and the use to which this analysis is put. Workplace researchers aim to understand in order to change their practice, the practice of others and the context for action.

I will argue that to be able to act within this complexity, the researcher ought to practise practically wise judgements, not only in the form of enquiry undertaken but also in the claims and uses made of that research in situ. This requires personal characteristics that go beyond cleverness in making the right assessment of data to include the right time for acting well for one's community and anticipating the effect of the research on those within one's community. As Aristotle points out, judgement

[1] Italics mine.

and practical wisdom are not the same thing: "practical wisdom gives commands, since its end is what should or should not be done, while judgement only judges" (1984, p. 1143a: 8–9).

For Heidegger (1977b), the defining characteristic of our epoch, of western modernity, is to frame up everything, raw materials, resources, machines and technologies themselves, information and bureaucratic processes, human thinking and ultimately people, so as to have them set, available and ready-to-hand, the same way the switch for an electrical appliance is ready-to-hand when the appliance is needed. In researching *as* the work-at-hand within the workplace, methodology is used to hold apart the relative positions of subject and object through a modern notion of epistemology. This specific notion of rigour of research is directly contrasted with the humanistic sciences: "indeed all the sciences concerned with life, must necessarily be inexact in order to remain rigorous" (1977a, p. 120).

The enframing of research through the technology of method is a result, Heidegger (1977b) claims, of three phases in the evolution of technological being in Western history (Lambeir, 2002; Standish, 1997). The first phase is linked with the Greek cosmos whereby *techne* means not only the "... activities and skills of the craftsman ..." but stands "... for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. *Techne* belongs to bringing forth, to *poiesis;* it is something poetic" (Heidegger, 1977b, p. 318). Moreover, Heidegger claims that from olden times until Plato the words *techne* and *episteme* were linked and denoted knowledge, a knowing of something exceptionally well, being an expert in it. Such knowing allows for an opening up, which is a revealing.

For instance, a silversmith is not only a skilled craft worker who knows how to use his tools to shape raw material; primarily, a silversmith knows how to open up the silver, to bring forth what is already within it: let us say, to reveal the harmony and beauty of a chalice. The chalice's creation is the co-responsibility of the modes of causality: the matter from which it is formed, its purpose and its circumscription, all of which depend on the skill of the silversmith who considers carefully and "gathers together the three aforementioned ways of being responsible" (1977b, p. 315). Using this as analogy for the workplace researcher who is co-responsible for the research (the aspect of the community, the research process and its use being the other co-responsibilities), the resultant meaning of the enquiry is known thanks to the "pondering" of the research coming into being. In this respect the researcher, through pondering and producing, utilizes practical judgement to reveal a truth in context, which "bringing-forth propriates only insofar as something concealed comes into unconcealment" (1977b, pp. 317–318).

There is a background of Greek pre-technological wholeness, where the work of the artesan is the focus and origin of the world's meaning, aiding nature's unfolding and revealing reality *as it is*. Against this stands the second phase of *techne*, where the forces of consumerism, industrialized machine production and mercantilism have led to the exploitation of resources and people (Heidegger, 1977b). For instance, through mechanized modes of production and the division of labour, as Marxist theory has adequately determined, the worker at the service of capital is isolated from the final product and its general design, and thus is alienated from

himself and from social, political and economical realities, as well as from nature as a whole. As Standish puts it, this phase is characterized "...by factory production geared toward the satisfaction of needs and the reduction of the human being to the labouring animal" (1997, p. 444).

In the third phase, there is an intensification of production increasingly controlled by cybernetics, algorithmic processes, calculative thinking and logistics within overall system theories. In this phase of *techne*, desire is exploited to its outer limits towards finite social and human ends, because production is now geared towards the achievement of maximal availability, feeding upon the creation of new desires, through an ongoing creation of needs for the satisfaction of endless desire (Heidegger, 1977b; Lambeir, 2002; Standish, 1997).

This is not an argument against enquiry, but a compelling argument against the separation of method from being. To counter modernity's third form of *techne* with its tendency to enframe the workplace in materialism and to instrumentalize those within it as the means to these goals, enquiry—re-searching—requires circumspection and judgement from the researcher as co-responsible for what the phenomena might be. Unlike the correct representation of scientific method, the reality of truth within a Heideggerian perspective is the pondering of its revealing; it is in the judgement made of what is revealed and what it might count for. As Heidegger argues (2003a), it is in action that the correctness of the deliberation is evident. Moreover, the skilfulness of the deliberation, the ability to make the appropriate action and an anticipation of the likely end of the action are gained through the experience and discernment that distinguishes *phronesis*.

## The Skills of Workplace Researchers

Although a precise definition of practical wisdom is problematic (Noel, 1999), for the purposes of this chapter it is assumed that it is not just rationality but also moral intent in action. This distinguishes it from cleverness and the wisdom of *sophia,* which is concerned with principles rather than the practicalities of living within the mortal world. Using practical wisdom, according to Heidegger (2003), is the best humans can do within their existence and potentiality. Essential to this process of co-responsibility for the revelation of truth is the skill to deliberate well about what might be possible and to act with the best interest of self and of humanity. Its virtuous footing characteristically ensures a proactive moral, although not infallible, approach to problem resolution based on integrated practical and situated judgements. Such judgements can be revealed through the reasonable action that distinguishes them from mere dogma (Heidegger, 2003; Barnett, 2003).

Aristotle himself links deliberation and rhetoric within the essential characteristic of the *phronimos* (the person who is practically wise) when he talks about the good and the expedient. Aristotle states the "the deliberative orator's aim is utility: deliberation seeks to determine not ends but the means to ends i.e. what is more useful to do. Further, utility is a good thing" (1984, p. 1362a: 17–18). Having previously established the sources of deliberative persuasiveness, the orator is instructed

in those which are likely to bring human action into line with happiness, for it is the ethics of happiness realized through forms of logical justification that links the rhetoric with that which motivates the *phronimos*.

The relevance for worker researchers is clear: their integrity within their community of practice and organizational structure must not be damaged by their enquiry; the results need to be validated, meaningful and worthwhile; they also need to be presented in a correct manner for their impact to be realized without damaging others who are more vulnerable. The importance is that both rhetoric with its persuasive end and the logic of practical reasoning have the same means to reveal the possibility of truth as it relates to a particular proposed action: deliberation followed by practical reasoning to achieve one goal, where alternatives exist. This does not contradict the notion of acting in a recognized situation without deliberation, as experts are able to do; rather it is complementary and offers justification where others need to be convinced.

Deliberation is not measured by time but by the correctness of what is beneficial, about the right thing, the right way and at the right time. As Heidegger (2003) reasons, the *phronimos* does not consider if he ought to be wise; rather, he deliberates on how and in which ways to be wise in a concrete and specific situation through "situational appreciation" (Wiggins, 1980, p. 237). As for Aristotle, is normative:

> (T)he person unqualifiedly good at deliberation is the one who tends to aim, in accordance with his calculation, at the best of the goods for a human being that are achievable in action. Nor is practical wisdom concerned only with universals. Understanding of particulars is also required, since it is practical, and action is concerned with particulars. (Aristotle, 1995, p. 1141b: 12–16)

The building of the practical arguments for action is, for Aristotle, a production involving skills of reasoning and rhetoric. The basis upon which these pre- and post-arguments are made is realized through deliberation in the form of "for the sake of relationships" (McIntyre, 2003, p. 131), which link the ultimate good of the action with the situated activities judged to be appropriate. Where action is required of others, or justifications made to them, Aristotle advocates a notion of rhetoric whose arguments are in a contextualized form of the practical syllogism—a three-part deductive argument leading to action. This extends the deliberation of the wise and is concerned with creating judgements in others consistent with those desired by the orator. This, according to Aristotle, is achieved by combining three elements of a communication: the character of the speaker (their credibility), the disposition of the audience and the content of the message. The argument should be structured to facilitate action and this call to action advocated either by an illustrative example or by the rationality of the practical syllogism. In this way, the link between the activity of deliberation, utilizing the syllogism method, enables the actions of the *phronimos* in the political activity of persuading others (community of practice) of the correctness of the proposed actions. It is evident that the *phronimos* must also grasp the correct or good moment (*Kairos*) and place for the most appropriate action. Indeed, Heidegger states that "concrete interpretation shows how the being which is *Kairos* constitutes itself in *phronesis*" (1992c, p. 381).

## Practical Enquiry

The form of practical enquiry proposed is investigative, intuitive judgement, which, when coupled with communication skills based on rhetoric, becomes a forceful method for understanding and change. For Heidegger, "knowledge is judging" (1962, p. 259), and the characteristic of knowledge is truth which can be phenomenologically demonstrated. Its credibility in practical judgement is in the situational discernment mediated by a moral disposition (Noel, 1999). This seeks the wellbeing of the system within its use. It effects change by wise intervention taking place in the complex contexts of a social setting such as the workplace. The link with action, logic and intellect augurs for a model of expertise that is both embodied and deliberate. McIntyre's interpretation of the role of the syllogism is important, here, for he claims that what matters about rational action is:

> . . . not that we have deliberated immediately before embarking upon any particular action through the enouncing of some practical syllogism, but that we should act as someone would have done who had so deliberated *and* that we should be able to answer truly the question "Why did you so act?" by citing the relevant practical syllogism and the relevant piece of deliberation, even if these had not actually been rehearsed by us on a particular occasion (McIntyre, 2003, p. 131, italics in the original).

This is not to claim that practical enquiry within the workplace requires reasoning, but only to suggest that many learning actions situated in the workplace often require judgement in the form of practical reasoning. For example, Stevenson (2005) gives an example where the precept of caring directs us to comfort a patient, to empathize and, through the experience of both, come to understand better the phenomenon.

Practical enquiry within the workplace thus takes a more political and critical view of workplace researchers whose agency is recognized within the social, economic and political power of their workplace. This context foregrounds the researchers' dwelling within the workplace as part of the process of change while creating research activities. Workplace researchers are subjects in their own research and their positionality is critical to their intended change. Their relation with knowledge is one that requires re-negotiation away from a methodology of technical rationality to one of practical judgement, since the results involve them and their communities. Work has a conjoint interdependence, and judgements that respect this hermeneutic do not require a research method intent on holding apart subject and object. Methodology stripped of a contextual validity, regardless of its rigour, acts to cut off from the phenomenon the actuality of the being-researcher in one's own life. Validity involves determining the degree to which researchers' claims about knowledge correspond to the reality (or research participants' perception of reality) being studied. They may be apprehensive, not of the resultant outcome of action, but of the way in which different discourses attribute these virtues to claims of truthfulness and relevance.

The *phronimos* seeks plausible and credible explanations for action. This is not against some essential Platonic principle of excellence, but in the specifics, which are different for every situation. The circumstances, the givens, the times and the

people vary. Moreover, as Heidegger indicates, the “meaning of the action itself i.e. precisely what I want to do varies as well” (2003a, p. 101). Thus the researchers’ actions owe as much to their ontological growth and their maturity as *phronimoi*, as to their epistemology, forged in the dialectic co-participation of practice (Billett, 2004).

In an important attempt to understand how the wise judge comes to act, Heidegger offers some concrete advice on the notion of the action of the *phronesis*. He argues that every action is in relation to a determinate purpose and, since practical life “moves in each case within a definite surrounding world, this action is carried out under determined circumstances. These circumstances characterize the *situation* . . . [and the] action itself is characterized by various moments” (2003a, p. 100, italics in the original).

The five characterizations of deliberated practical enquiry derived from Heidegger (2003a, pp. 100–101) are as follows:

1. The purpose of the action.
2. The means to be able to act.
3. The feasibility of the action being undertaken.
4. Every action is carried out at a determinate time.
5. Every action is carried out with respect to others.

For Heidegger, the “question of the structure of *phronesis* is hence concentrated on the question of what good judgment is, i.e. the correct deliberation on action, from its start to its end, its last reach” (2003a, p. 102). In the location of the trans-disciplinary workplace, it is the language of prudent common sense and transparency mediated through the power of others that counts as the revealing of truth in worthiness.

The difficulty of disaggregating the enquiry skills from the dispositions of the workplace researcher and their learning process of dwelling successfully in the politic of the work situation is recognized in this approach.

## The Purpose of the Action

Beckett and Hager (2002) describe the workplace as a space where there is “pervasive change and crisis, reorganization of difference and diversity, a focus on the particular and the local, and recognition of the political and social dimension of knowledge” (Beckett & Hager, 2002, p. 176). In such an environment, the nature of practical judgement is not something that is revealed through a heuristic of decision making: it is not simply a logical analysis or a synthesis, but a response to being engaged, purposively, within a specific context. It requires an ability to act appropriately, often in ways that help define the future, which may be incomprehensible, incommensurate with or just dogmatically blocked by others’ ways of being. Such ability sets the practically wide apart from those able just to make judgements without the virtuous comportment towards action. For workplace researchers, this

requires an understanding of their own positionality in the blurring of context and subject. The workplace researcher may be empowered by the research commission or by the participants' deference to academic methodology, but should be aware that this very positioning may alienate the workplace researcher from his or her community. The wise researcher is able to further knowledge and effect change with the best interests of all those involved in the workplace as central to their outcomes (Gibbs & Costley, 2006).

For example, the wise workplace researcher needs to be conscious of the real intent of the research. If in the commercial workplace an enquiry is commissioned to understand better the levels of service provided by staff, and presented to them as such, but its intent is to penalize those with lower than expected service levels, the researcher ought not to accept the commission. To do so would be unwise, for it is undertaken in deceit. If, however, the research is about effectiveness for the benefit of all, with the intent of helping to sustain the business, then it is wise to undertake it.

Another example might be where a professional—say, a teacher—acts as a "critical friend" to a colleague in order to help that colleague improve his or her professional practice. In this case, the wise "friend" must be unencumbered by interests other than that of the colleague. The "friend" should not reveal the colleague's weaknesses for the benefit of others or to demonstrate his or her own superiority.

## The Means to Be Able to Act

For Heidegger, the future positioning of our being is constrained by the parameters of our social system within which we can express ourselves. Our understanding of our identity as workplace researchers will change as we interpret the accumulated experience of the choices we have made from the range of preferences available to us. This understanding of ourselves in our everyday-ness is, as Heidegger proposes, a making ourselves at home in the world. The context best suited to that is one in which the trustworthiness of self as researcher and others can be expected to be present, that is where the researcher is recognized as a person of virtue. This trustworthiness is more than mere reliance on rules of engagement and exchange; it is deeper and reflects the root of commonality of being-in-the-world, together, at work. For the workplace researcher, virtuous comportment towards others leads to a gratuitous and caring interpretation of what is revealed through enquiry in order to satisfy the wellbeing of those involved.

There is an obligation for the researcher to be competent in terms of the skills themselves and the potential consequences of such skills. This is not always easy to achieve. The researcher could, for example, cause distress to those being researched although this was not envisaged. Davison states that in the social work context, the methodological literature on qualitative research "consistently endorses the advantages of close relationships with respondents which will enhance rapport and enrich research findings" (2004, p. 381). However, the selection of

particular research methods—whether deliberately or through carelessness or ignorance—can affect the likelihood of the researched revealing more than intended and the researcher being inadequately competent to care for participants. Such deep emotional revelations could occur, for example, when discussing the nature of failure with school pupils.

Heightened empathy and emotional resonance with research participants is considered to be a process that is likely to increase the richness of the research data, but also may accentuate researcher vulnerability or distress. This may also be true of methods that emphasize emancipatory collaboration and empowerment but are more invasive, such as phenomenological ground interviews, covert ethnography and aspects of action research.

## *The Feasibility of the Act*

The four dimensions of workplace contextuality that Beckett and Hager (2002, p. 177) emphasize are the specific time the context is revealed, its changeability over time, its social and cultural features and the integration of personal characteristics of the researchers to the workplace. Roberts (2001) argues that such situations position subjects within the ideological limits of the specific power relationships and thus influence the dialogic relationship between the researcher and others. Bakhtin suggests that an "interpretation of contextual meanings cannot be scientific (but are profoundly cognitive). It can directly serve practice, practice that deals with things" (1986, p. 160, author's brackets).

Researchers need to be able to identify the socially constructed nature of the power of authority and surveillance, the positionality of the researcher within the research experience and how this effects the production of meaning. Davison (2004) points to the danger this presents for the researcher. This is particularly important, for what is advocated here and in Flyvbjerg (1998) is the "thick" analysis of the details of a phenomenon from which more general insights can be gained.

In the workplace context, the researcher needs to be satisfied as to their ability to understand all this and to persuade the recipient of the research of its truth. This means more than presenting findings and allowing others to interpret them in ways they see fit, an act that may innocently or deliberately be used to abdicate personal responsibility. It requires researchers to be able to argue the truth of the finding in modes of discourse appropriate for their audience. For Aristotle, this was the skill of Rhetoric; for us, it is the skills of rationality, form and content.

## *Determinate Timing*

"Doing things right and doing the right things" is the title of a paper by Rämö (2002), which bears directly on the practical enquiry. Acts in such circumstances are acts of those of the *phronimoi*, who recognize the right moment or create the right situation for action. Moreover, the sense of timing and the positionality of the research directly affect the degree of access to information, leading to sensitivities

in the political–temporal contingencies of the research process (see Bourdieu, 2006; Flyvbjerg, 2001; and especially Trotter, 2003, for examples and detailed discussions).

As Roberts (2001) points out, Bakhtin alerts us to the idea that each utterance seeks to influence the dialogic position occupied by each. For example, an utterance by a respondent addressed to a researcher might endeavour to position the researcher in a certain manner. The unconcealing of the positionality and identity of the researcher in the context of the authorship of the enquiry is important for the credibility of the researcher, both in understanding the enquiry in its widest context and in communicating issues of change.

In the context of action research within a classroom, where the researcher is enquiring into classroom control and how to change the current state (undisciplined) to the required state (attentive), an understanding of the temporal location of the event as well as the spatial is required to reveal the real truth of what is happening. When to intervene in an action research cycle has a direct impact on the result of the intervention. Too soon, and the intervention can be ignored; too late, and the moment is lost. Timing can liberate the research, giving back the tempo of the research to the participants rather than those responsible for, say, school improvement, in some disembodied, managerial way. To both intervene and to report at the right moment (*Kairos*) is a judgement central to practical wisdom, as has previously been discussed.

## *Respect for Others*

For Heidegger (1962), our being in the world is co-determined by others in the action and in deliberation based on practical experience and discussion with others: action is determined with regard to others. He gives the example of the workplace when he states, "along with the equipment to be found when one is at work, those Others for whom the work is destined are encountered too" (1962, p. 153). In this sense of "encountered", he means involved in the end of the work, either as those for whom what is being worked is intended (in our case the research project) or as those engaged in its production. This could be contrasted with an attitude to others who are merely treated as providers of information, as a resource and otherwise uninvolved in the process. To follow this line makes the researcher essentially a technician who somehow is insulated from the phenomena of enquiry, insulated by the situated-ness of its power through methodology.

Workplace researchers ought to be concerned for the communities that host them, in which they re-search and dwell. Such awareness leads to care, which will manifest itself in the good actions to which the research is put, not purely the cleverest or the most satisfying use for the university or the employer.

Heidegger claims that *phronesis* has no effect on action unless it is carried out by someone who is good. The "mere having an orientation and guidance does not place us on the level of Being which genuinely corresponds to the meaning of truth" (2003a, p. 115). In this regard, Heidegger requires of us an understanding of others not in terms of beings as resource to be used as and when required. Indeed, having

warned us of the risk that technology and scientific methods pose in turning our perceptions of others that way, we must be circumspect in our views of the whole situation of the research to make judgements that are beneficial to the degree that they represent sound deliberation for the benefit of others.

In the workplace, this may be problematic given the dominance of the ethos of modernity, its manifestation in efficiency and its desire for end results. Clearly, the workplace researchers' perceptions of reality, if abstracted rather than grounded for the sake of others, may leave the researchers alienated from the workplace community, albeit satisfying the research commission. The judgements as to the nature of the truth revealed in the presentation of the research ought to consider others as co-producers of the project for whom the researchers bear a responsibility. The presentation of research in ways that potentially harm those who have given freely to it treats them—the co-producers—as entities to be used.

Deplorable actions of researchers, workplace or otherwise, deliberately deceiving participants in social science research, are less evident today than in the history of medical and psychological experimentation that Oakley (2000) points to in the post-war years, especially in the United States. Yet the temptation to treat participants as objects, as means to research outcomes, remains. The use of children in classroom research predicated on a model of causality, which leads to usable results, has a tendency to be structured in this way. The Tuskegee study that took place in Alabama into the natural course of syphilis (Pence, 1999) is one well-known example of racism in research. Respect for others is not simply to receive their consent to participate, but to care for them in the truth that the researcher seeks. Although this practice is valid in all forms of research, in workplace research not to care is a betrayal of the trust that the community has invested in the researcher. This is a trust that only a wise practitioner can respect while both seeking truth and fulfilling the self-interest of their professional development.

## Research Ethics: Gratitude

Research encounters represent a form of cooperation between participant and researcher, which, as Standish has described, has a "taken for granted idea of data" (2001, p. 498). Givens can be solicited: "Can you give me a moment of your time?" "Please give me an interview". However, they must not be obtained through theft, deception or for purposes of exploitation. This is not always easy to avoid for, as Davison (2004) suggests, researchers might not commence a research encounter expecting to distress the participant in the research process but end up doing just that. She states that the methodological literature on qualitative research "consistently endorses the advantages of close relationships with respondents which will enhance rapport and enrich research findings" (2004, p. 381), but careless or deliberate selection of research methods can affect the likelihood of revelations that cost both the researcher and the participant.

For the workplace researcher, the period of encounter extends from before the data-gathering period until after the project is completed. Located as they are on the

spot, workplace researchers experience the change they are themselves researching. In collaborating with their working community they need to consider fully the ambiguities that their roles may represent to other members and the potential this creates for harm. In this context, the role of the practitioner as an insider-researcher occupies a unique place in the continuum of personal relationships between researchers and participants. It poses a series of novel ethical and practical considerations, possibly different from those of the outsider researcher (Burgress, 1985; Hammersley, 2004; Ling, 2006; Pring, 1984). Bridges recognizes that most of the time researchers are "inviting the generosity of their participants and perhaps there is something more ethically elevated in responding to such generosity with a true spirit of gratitude" (2001, p. 379), a gratitude which Berger suggests "reveals important aspects of our moral life" (1975, p. 298). Of course, issues of gratitude do arise throughout the research process, including during reporting, and thus I acknowledge that in research there is a tendency for the data collection phase to flow into and merge with that of data analysis.

There is a hidden addition to the explicitness, which moves closer, I think, to a pure gift in the Derridaian sense that it expects no return and is given without a gift intention. If we assume that participants give their time and personal data and so deserve recompense, what is "gifted" may be something subsequently recognized as useful by the researcher, although not valued by themselves. That "something" may be revealed in the research findings and appear to the researcher to be their own creation. In this way an act of generosity may take place unrecognized. The gift is not in what is given, but in how it is received and integrated into the researcher's thinking. This is the implicit aspect of the gift and it contributes to the personal development of the academic as a researcher. It is how reflection on the assembled information and subsequent action leads to an understanding and thence to insights which influence our being.

In Heidegger's philological text, *What is Called Thinking*, he considers the links between thinking, thanking and memory. Heidegger draws the circular relationship between thinking and gratitude when he asks the question:

> (T)he supreme thanks then would be thinking? And the profoundest thanklessness, thoughtlessness. Real thanks, then, never consists in that we ourselves come bearing gifts, and merely repay gift with gift. Pure thanks are rather what we simply think—think what is really and solely given, what is there to be thought (Heidegger, 1968, p. 143).

In this pure sense, the gift of thinking is self-generative for the researcher, and gratitude is owed to one's own being as well as to others. In thinking about something—reflecting, recalling and communicating—we should be grateful for thought, as it realizes what our being is or might become. According to Heidegger, the real gift is the gift of the unthought-of, the stimulus for the research practice of creative questioning of what is as yet concealed. Such gratitude is the essence of the search for truth in social science, a re-search to re-unite what we have become with our essential being. Any "method" that engages others and reveals aspects of this reunification is worthy of our gratitude, for it securely grounds us in being.

Heidegger continues, "(T)hus we recall in thought that to which we owe thanks for the endowment of our nature. As we give thought to what is most thought-provoking, we give thanks" (1968, p. 146). This is central to our notion of research, for it is the completed research that offers us the substance for creative thought: data. In his analysis of the givenness of data, Standish (2001) asks us to question what the data might "give"; what use is made of the claims of truth based on it; and how they re-unite us with our being. Boelen (1968) sees research as a search again and again for the disclosure of the being in beings. To research means to encounter and interpret the ever-emerging manifestation for co-being and co-creating: it is a collaboration interwoven with being and the being of the phenomena of study. Research is a process of re-petition. It is a "going back into" the enduring ground of being to search with care for man's abode, the renewal of ethos within being itself.

This ontological development transcends the ontic to lead researchers in their development as beings; that is, the being of a researcher. The role of researcher shifts from using methodology to hold apart the subject and object of the research programme to merging the processes of understanding in the political and social context of the workplace. Central to this unlearning process is an ability, cultivated by reflection on the data, to overcome the power of method for the realization of being. Such reflection can lead to a deeper understanding of our own being, as we reveal what might be in both our being and that of others. This is the role of the *phronimos*: the wise, practical judgement maker, the participant researcher who accepts the phenomenological "givenness" of the gift of being by thinking within the relevant social and political context. It goes beyond an instrumental application of method that reveals only the ready-at-hand functionality ascribed to us by society and the will of abstracted epistemologies.

A researcher's practical consideration must be relevant to their community, yet they themselves must remain distanced. Judgements have to be made in a complex array of interwoven micro-political, social and economic issues, which include the recognition by the researcher that they are distancing themselves, while retaining privileges not afforded to outsiders. Furthermore, as a group member they may experience concern over their future, for success in the research project might enhance their social, cultural and economic capital, leading to promotion beyond the research group.

Having separating the explicit from the implicit nature of the gift, I now consider how gratitude may be expressed. The explicit aspects of the gift are manifest, given to the researcher and possess a recognized value. By contrast, the implicit aspect of the gift is given "for-the-sake-of" the other. The gift's very essence is unrecognized and unidentified because it becomes part of the temporal experience of the being of the researcher. No causal relation can be drawn between the actions and events of others and so gratitude can only be expressed to one's own being. Indeed, it is an awesome responsibility to use research authentically to think as a researcher and become one, rather than merely to seek to benefit from its outcome. In my view, the gift of research is not the intentional offering in response to the research protocol, although the potential for the gift might here be identified, but that which is revealed through the researchers' interpretation of what is given and for which a

researcher bears responsibility for gratitude, if not a duty. Moreover, if this was not the case, the researcher would be keeping participants in ignorance, exploiting them as a means to what is already understood. This is an issue addressed later in this chapter concerning the level of gratitude due not only for the immediate, explicit cost to the participant but also for the future utility of the researcher's interpretation and actions.

To summarize, I suggest that gratitude for the given and the gift in workplace studies is appropriate for the following four reasons:

1. Gratitude is something given and received outside a contract relationship.
2. It assumes possession of the "given" is in the hands of the giver, indicating something in the workplace not owned by an employer who can demand its delivery.
3. It recognizes the autonomous agency of the giver, independent of their role and status in an organization.
4. It places an obligation, a contra-organizational power, on the researcher towards the participant.

## Summary

The relationship between knowledge and action is one of judgement. Judgement is the ability to recognize situations, cases or problems and then to deal adequately with them without necessarily imposing the application of a general rule. As Dunne states, judgement "does not reside in formulaic knowledge precisely because it is the ability to actuate knowledge with relevance, appositeness or sensibility to context" (Dunne, 1999, p. 710). Yet *phronesis* reveals a different engagement with the situations of research in the workplace, which influences both the context of the enquiry and the workplace researcher. Aristotle alludes to this when he states that the "(P)ractical wisdom also is identified especially with the form of it which is concerned with a man himself—with the individual; and this is known by the general name 'practical wisdom'" (Aristotle, 1995, p. 1141b: 30–32), although Aristotle is quick to temper this view by arguing that such self-interest is contingent in the wellbeing of others.

Practical enquiry is a holistic and integrative approach to an interpretation of work-based issues that seeks to understand and demonstratively effect change through *phronesis.* What the practical enquiry offers is a different epistemological belief, a belief in the plausibility of practical wisdom rather than the certainty of divine wisdom and the certainty of representative knowledge. It offers a form of enquiry, the judgement of specifics and a mode for its dissemination enshrined in rhetorical discourse. It recognizes the political and its persuasive use of argument, timing and place. It is temporal in looking at possibility, but not divine in seeking universal principles and will produce good research in the workplace. Finally, it is hard to be a workplace researcher, and harder still to get it right.

# Chapter 12
# Doing Phenemological Research in the Workplace

> *The work as works sets up a world. . . . But what does the work set forth? We come to know about this only when we explore what comes to the fore and it customarily spoken of as the making of production of works.*
>
> (Heidegger, *The Origin of the Work of Art,* 1975a, p. 44)

Having discussed the workplace researcher I now want to linger a while on the workplace learning offering two short and one long vignettes to illustrate Heidegger's approach before closing. To recap the premise of this analysis is that we do not first encounter something in terms of its attributes, for example, a set of buttons with letters on them and a screen. Instead, we directly encounter computers in the same way as we encounter as meaningful entities such as desks or lathes, rather than as objects deconstructed to their individual attributes. This is not a phenomenological but a physical deconstruction. That is, to investigate human activity we encounter meaningful things in the first instance. This meaningfulness fits in with our practices for using them. Simply put, without practices in which items of equipment, gaining their meaning from our familiarity with the totality of equipmental references, were incorporated, we would encounter them as mere artefacts. Things and people demonstrate the familiar practices we have for dealing with them. We recognize people by the context in which we first encounter them and have to re-recognize them in different worlds such as work and leisure. Moreover, we learn essential configurations and reference elements for certain worlds and can transfer our familiarity to different environments, provided the signs and references are sufficiently similar that their relationships reveal familiar meanings.

The learning of situated practices is vital to understanding the way in which workers relate to their work world (Pigrum, 2007). Through an understanding of how the phenomena of the work world appear to workers and are disclosed by them, it is possible to grasp the everyday meaning of the workplace. It is possible to understand how workers reveal their identities through the development of practices grounded in equipmental references and functionality. These are manifested in their disclosure in the workplace. Indeed, Billett holds that "more than an end in itself, participation in activities, such as those in workplaces, incites

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change in individuals' understanding and capacities—that is it constitutes learning" (2004, p. 315). The "what" of learning in the workplace has been mapped by Eraut (2004) as a heuristic device to assist research and understanding. This learning of practices and the mastery of acquired experience is the essence of workplace learning—and Dreyfus and Dreyfus offer a five-stage model of this learning process, which, although not uncontested (see Eraut, 2004), has alignment with this argument (Table 12.1).

**Table 12.1** A phenomenology of skill acquisition (after Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2004, pp. 251–253)

| | |
|---|---|
| Stage 1: Novice | Normally, the instruction process begins with the instructor breaking down the task environment into context-free features that the beginner can recognize without the benefit of experience. The beginner is then given rules for determining actions on the basis of these features, much like a computer following a programme |
| Stage 2: Advanced beginner | As novices gain experience in actually coping with real situations, they begin to note, or an instructor points out, perspicuous examples of meaningful additional components of the situation. After seeing a sufficient number of examples, the student learns to recognize them. Instructional maxims now can refer to these new situational aspects. We use the terms *maxims* and *aspects* here to differentiate this form of instruction from the first, where strict rules were given as to how to respond to context-free features. Because maxims are phrased in terms of aspects, they already presuppose experience in the skill domain |
| Stage 3: Competence | With increasing experience, the number of features and aspects to be taken into account becomes overwhelming<br>To cope with this information explosion, the performer learns to adopt a hierarchical view of decision-making. By first choosing a plan, goal or perspective that organizes the situation and by then examining only the small set of features and aspects that he or she has learned are relevant given that plan, performers can simplify and improve their performance |
| Stage 4: Proficiency | As soon as the competent performer stops reflecting on problematic situations as a detached observer and stops looking for principles to guide their actions, the gripping, holistic experiences from the competent stage become the basis of the next advance in skill. Having experienced many emotion-laden situations, chosen plans in each, and having obtained vivid, emotional demonstrations of the adequacy or inadequacy of the plan, the performer involved in the world of the skill notices, or is struck by, a certain plan, goal or perspective. No longer is the spell of involvement broken by detached, conscious planning. Because there are generally far fewer ways of seeing than ways of acting, after understanding without conscious effort what is going on, the proficient performer will still have to think about what to do. During this thinking, elements that present themselves as salient are assessed and combined by rule and maxim to produce decisions |
| Stage 5: Expertise | The proficient performer, immersed in the world of skilful activity, sees what needs to be done but must decide how to do it. With enough experience with a variety of situations, all seen from the same perspective but requiring different tactical decisions, the proficient performer seems gradually to break down this class of situations into sub-classes, each of which shares the same decision, single action or tactic. This allows an immediate intuitive response to each situation |

The Dreyfus and Dreyfus model emphasizes the need for initial training in the skills that set out the capacity to build to higher levels of performance and, in so doing, to be able to transfer and enhance these skills in practice in a range of situations. The structuring vocational education has many forms and Winch and Clarke (2003) argue that what they call "front-loading" model of education is a requirement to develop "a variety of practices, some of which provide more opportunities for board-based skill formation than others" (2003, p. 242) and contrast it with training, which is job-specific.

Heidegger (1962) calls our transparent dealing with ready-to-hand equipment "circumspection" and considers it our basic way of being in the world. The importance of this learning framework is that it makes manifest what Heidegger holds, that a huge amount of our lives—working, getting around, talking and responding to the needs of others—is know-how and just a small part is spent in the deliberate, effortful, subject–object mode of activity that requires knowing that. Yet deliberate action and its extreme form, deliberation, are the ways of acting and structured as learning that we tend to notice and structure our learning around.

## Setting the Scene for the Vignettes

Before offering the three vignettes using Heidegger's phenomenological approach, I restate the three key aspects of notions of equipment: its readiness-at-hand and totality of reference; its serviceability, usability, conduciveness and manipulation; and its relationship with workers' identity and alienation in an age of technology and "machination", as they seek tranquillity and familiarity through idle-talk. In taking a clearly Heideggerian approach, I acknowledge Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus' 1997 discussion and adaptation of Heidegger's concepts and contribution but remain, I believe, closer to Heidegger's phenomenology than these authors felt necessary.

These entities create a framework for the analysis of the workplace and learning in terms of circumspection. Viewed from such a perspective, workers learn how entities such as equipment refer to one another. They also learn how these references constitute certain meaningful activities that can become familiar by learning through repetition how to use and understand the "basically similar process" (Nielsen, 2007, p. 461). The worker's circumspection, which sees the environment as a totality of equipment, takes on the guise of familiarity when we all too readily adopt a form of tranquillity that is reinforced by the idle-talk of the others. This may take a cultural form similar to that referred to by Wenger (1998) as "communities of practice", although the explanation of learning and meaning differs from Wenger's social cognitive and constructivist account.

With regard to the work done for the vignettes, I want to summarize the insight and tools with which the four scholars in Chapters 5 and 6, namely Heidegger, Marcuse, Ardent and Jünger, have provided us towards understanding work. From Heidegger we have a description of what constitutes the work world, the different things that distinguish it and a way of understanding its entities, which function for us to do our "work". Marcuse places the act of labouring more centrally to our

way of being and describes a tripartite construction of what work and its purposes are, thus complementing Heidegger's contextualization. Finally, Arendt argues that working activities are of two distinctive forms—labouring and working—and that these, together with action for our *vita activa*, are not one-dimensional activities. So how does this discussion reveal the nature of the world of education? I suspect there are wide-ranging applications, but want to initiate discussion in terms of the professional academic in higher education.

A Heideggerian phenomenological investigation requires more than the formal indication of the situation presented above and needs to take a historical perspective of the phenomena under consideration. This is not intended to be a history of the phenomena, but recognition that the phenomena are historical. Heidegger agues the importance that this:

> historical plays a role in present-day life experience in two major directions. 1. *Positively* speaking, the diversity of historical forms provides life with *a fulfilment* and allows it to rest in the diversity of historical formations. 2. *Negatively* speaking, the historical is for us a *burden*, a hindrance (2004, pp. 25–26, italics in original).

This leads Heidegger, in *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, to propose that phenomenological analysis requires us first to determine the complex phenomena historically and then understand it as enacted in the situation to be studied. This involves understanding the situational diversity, the primary accentuating aspects of the situation, the arrival of the phenomenological complex and, out of this, the origin of the phenomena.

## Vignettes

The three vignettes look at different forms of work. The first examines academic professionalism, but could be used to illustrate all forms of professionalism. The second looks at a workshop location and the third a manual worker.

### *Vignette 1*

In my approach to the professional academic, I seek to use Heideggerian phenomenology to describe this difficult entity, trying to justify neither what it is nor what it practices. The choice of subject reflects the difficulties of definition evident in the literature on academic professionals. Indeed, Kolsaker states that academic professionalism is "a challenging concept to research since the field is relatively under-researched, and such research as exists is criticized as ambiguous and lacking a solid theoretical foundation" (2008, p. 516). He continues by listing characteristics of the academic profession taken from the existing literature, including "shared altruistic concern for students, educational expertise, high level of autonomy, generation of new knowledge, application of logic, use of evidence, conceptual and theoretical rigour and disinterested pursuit of truth" (ibid). To these we might add

reflection, mastery of subject, upholding professional values, professing a scholarly disciplinary identity and community service. But how are we to understand phenomenologically academic professionalism?

I am not attempting to provide an extensive survey of the literature in this indicative application of the method. However, as Bryson does, I would point out that there is support for historical changes to the means of production by academic labour, albeit not as significant as wholesale de-skilling, more a process of adoption of the new managerial context. A common theme in the literature (Bryson, 2004; Halsey, 1992; Nixon, 2001) concerns higher education's academic professionalism decline in the face of massification, the abolition in the United Kingdom of tenure in 1988, a growing focus on accountability through standards and procedures and the changing emphasis of teaching from guardian and disseminator of knowledge to student-centred learning. Moreover, Willmott (1995) contends that institutions have created a temporary and part-time labour force in the labour market to fragment and commoditize the profession. Furthermore, Dearlove (1997) has suggested that there has been a shift in academic work from craftwork to mere labour. Others (Nixon, 2001; Piper, 1994) have argued that any decline might be measured against criteria no longer appropriate. More relevant may be a new professionalism based around teaching, not one grounded in complex decision-making.

I will look briefly at the literature on service, teaching and research to set the historical situation of the phenomena. The professional identities of academics may be fragmented throughout academia (Bryson, 2004), as their identities may belong to outside professions with different understandings of their academic role. New academics may be unfamiliar with situations where managerialism does not permeate the essence of the institution. Academics may be categorized in differently focused university groups and may see their professionalism located more in a service, consumerist ideology than that of their colleagues in the same institution. The diversity is huge (Enders & Teichler, 1997), but I suggest that today the following three issues of what an academic professional does are accentuated.

In the past, academics had a large degree of autonomous behaviour, working with an enviable latitude and protected by a notion of academic freedom that tended to privilege them beyond others (Nixon, 2001). Kolsaker (2008) argues that the managerialism so often positioned as historically antagonistic to professionalism is actually embraced by academics as they negotiate their role in the changing nature of higher education provision. The course of this change is not for speculation in this chapter, but it might be argued phenomenologically that academic professionalism includes the notion of managerialism; breaking down the distinction many may falsely see as dividing the academic and the administrator. However, its loss has tended, at least according to Macfarlane (2005), to lead to a retreat from citizenship and professing (Barnett, 1997). Moreover, the two types of activities upon which academics once concentrated, teaching and research, have changed as the workplace in which they are conducted has changed. With change in the educational workplace as a teaching environment, new skills of manipulation of technology (the ubiquitous PowerPoint) now seem to be as, or even more, important than the intellectual and rhetorical skills of an academic professional. The former are needed

to raise the "entertainment value" of their lectures to satisfy their students' needs, which are made evident and recorded in satisfaction surveys. Indeed, the technology of the lecture theatre has become, especially for newer academics, equipment ready-to-hand. Its presence is not conspicuous until it breaks down.

This might lead to dramatic changes in the needs of lecturer and students should the accepted forms of technologically inspired learning be replaced by traditional, unsupported discourses and learning. This is so much so that unreadiness-to-hand can cause disappointment, abandonment and feeling of guilt and failure: consider the impact of a crashed computer on the creativity of a student essay. The obstructiveness of the unreadiness-to-hand of a piece of equipment can change not only the delivery of a lecture or an online tutorial, but the total workplace environment of a site of learning, turning it into a site for incompetent failure. The degree of disruption depends on the professional's level of mastery (novice through to *phronimos*; see McPherson, 2005) of the pedagogical technology now considered appropriate for academics following professional standards. Should technology assume a certain place in the totality of teaching, it might be that if academics experience difficulty with equipment, their whole academic professionalism would be brought into question. This is perhaps even truer of the adoption of virtual learning environments for student-centred learning, both at the institution and at a distance. The academic's outcomes are often replicated many times through the adoption of certain devices—iPods.

The notion of serviceability, conduciveness, usability and manipulability also tends to determine the nature of research, which is encouraged, funded and disseminated. Indeed, the rather repetitive nature of a natural science deductive approach to knowledge is becoming more accepted in social sciences. Here, evidence of the impact on practice or policy is becoming more significant in determining the worth of academic endeavour, taking the decision on what is to be researched away from academics and placing it in the hands of external agencies. The familiarity of the current educational situation is indeed more conducive to those who have come to understand education for its serviceability, or its producing employment opportunities, more than in the sense of seeking knowledge.

Much of this may be best described as shifting from the creative production to the repetition of labour in terms of formulaic research applications: writing, teaching multiple cohorts of the same course and following outcomes to limited levels of tolerance. Indeed, this has resonance with Marcuse's consumer notion of labour and Arendt's analysis of activities. Coulter (2002) claims that academic labour arises where procedures are followed instrumentally and "more of" or "better than" is the basic requirement—for example, improving student grades, following work-based quality precepts or attending routine meetings. Work is evident in autonomous action where there is scope to create new things and learning contexts, not simply perform reproduction. Innovative assignment strategies, decisions on what is to count as achievement and the inclusion of desert in otherwise constrained notions of merit are all ways in which the academic could work with students. The restriction

in our consumer society identified by Marcuse is that students will not be satisfied if their initial expectations are not matched. Students may complain that they were not warned of the changes, they were not in the course outline or they do not attract credit. Implementing suggested changes in a public world dominated by consumerist expectations might reveal higher levels of labour in higher education than had previously been thought and are not compatible with the notion of professionalism.

Workplace practices take their meaning from engagement with equipment with the intention of producing something. That something may have little or no meaning for the producer, in the sense that it will be consumed by others in some form. Indeed, the totality of equipment has no connection with specific production. It becomes generic; its function is to make a thing, not to produce an entity. The knowing or meaning of the practice is unrelated to the end user and the natural resource that began production. These remain concealed from the worker, now a labourer. This erosion of the *telos* of practice can be seen in the personal consultation professions. The attack on their members' professionalism is not only in the de-skilling of their activities through technology, but in the changing of their understanding of the impact their work has on their identity. This in turn leads to alienation and inauthentic security in unquestioning idle-talk, which develops an assumptive reality that will remain unchallenged.

Although this idle-talk may not be totally unfounded, it is the appearance of the phenomena that is the topic, not the phenomena itself and, as such, the chance to challenge the totalization of technology passes without resistance. In its place is the idle-talk of times gone by, where respect abounded, individuals' expertise predominated and when everything was more at home in its environment, more able to dwell there. An analysis of discourse, equipment totalities, their use and the manipulation (of equipment and persons) as standing-reserves will reveal themes potentially worthy of investigation.

## *Vignette 2*

Carpenters once possessed skills, developed while becoming craft workers, to reveal the naturalness of the raw material by engaging with the equipment they carried around. The weight, complexity and inter-relatedness of the equipment identified its owners as craftspeople. Their identity with their tools and what they did allowed the uninitiated to be teased by requests for left-handed screwdrivers. Such things are now alienated by machine-driven outcomes and the acceptance of mass production. Skills that were developed to realize the nature of the raw material are replaced by speeded-up processes, leaving mere fabrication to once creative craft workers. I recognize that there is a demand for skilled cabinetmakers, but not from the masses, whose appetite for consumption is fed by machine-made artefacts.

The familiarity of the workshop and its equipment ceases. Equipment's serviceability no longer has any conductivity; it is redundant. It retains its function, but the functionality is unused and the totality of reference becomes alien. Tools, whose purpose and readiness-to-hand are lost, remain present-to-hand. The embodied knowledge or being that is the mastery of the craft worker is violently wrested from the identity of workers, which leads to disillusionment, reinforced by unsubstantiated opinion and the knowledge that the world that it represents is lost. Workers lose their resistance to the meaninglessness of their labours by continuingly falling, in the way of technology, into inauthenticity instead of transcending to an authentic life.

## *Vignette 3*

The labourer whose physical endeavours save time spent in drudgery may have his activities "busyed" up by "machination". This replaces the dignity of manual labour with the slavishness of the machine. In the past, such drudgery might have been due to lack of opportunity. Now it has become familiar to many whose lack of connection with the purpose of their activity reduces them to a stock of energy required to "make things work". The potential for putting the human into these things remains hidden and is felt and accepted by the labourer as an unproblematic "premise of redemption, security, truth, justice, pleasure or success" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2007, p. 143).

In contrast, the worker produces goods that are not readily or immediately convertible back to nature, from whence they came. The products are permanent entities not necessarily at home in a world overcrowded with objects for only momentary satisfaction (works of art that demand attention). These works are non-degradable and cause changes to the environment. They are the workers' work and as such they stand out, challenge and cause us anxiety as they confront our fallenness. Such creative activities may be seen as negatively disruptive rather than offering new insights and innovation.

## Summary

The complex phenomenon that these vignettes illustrative reveals a state of employment that sees the academic professional as an educational apprentice, labourer and, on occasion, worker. It sees for instance that there may by a reduction of core identities of professions (Kogan, 2000), who are becoming more like trans-disciplinary skilled technical competent workers and labourers using their skills not to be creative but to satisfy consumer imperatives or the managerial edicts of satisfaction, institution mission, business engagement and consistency of brand values.

My analysis is not a nostalgic cry for values and practice, real or imagined, from the past, but a desire to see the truth guided by what is a professional. It presents a cluster of both low- and high-level skills, of an intensive, repetitive labour and work, which is able to flourish only under certain procedural conditions. This is not a complaint, just an observation and, as the first vignette details, one that might just

as easily apply to other professions. However, should my analysis ring true, it may be that notions of rights and obligations that surround the profession may be inapplicable, or should at least be re-addressed. I do not want to hang on to these issues or make a huge claim for the analysis above, only assert that the phenomenological method of Heidegger deserves a wider audience and application. Perhaps this begs the question: is this reality what academics want and society needs?

# Chapter 13
# The World of Work-Based Studies and the Recession

> *Genuine knowledge is something that both the farmer and the manual labourer have, each in his own way and each in his field of work, just as the scholar has it in his field.*
>
> (Heidegger, 1993, p. 58)

This book has sought to take a wide angle on the contribution of an understanding and application of Heideggerian philosophy and the practicalities of doing and being a workplace learner and researcher. It has covered a number of the better-known and introduced some of the less well-known texts by Heidegger and shown a consistence of focus in his work to discuss the being of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world. I hope that I have achieved a comprehensive introduction to the contribution of Heidegger to place him alongside Dewey, Ryle and Polanyi as a philosopher whose involvement in practice, knowledge and learning as contributing to Being has begun the interpretation of his views of human activity, action, work and capacity. To do this I want to conclude with just three directions for the application of Heidegger. These grow from the notion of learning to training and being; the structure of the workplace as a learning environment and then to the contemporary malaise of anxiety for us in a world that seems out of our control, to apply this view to the recent global financial crisis and natural disasters.

## Learning

My analysis of learning throughout the text has concerned the circumspective engagement in the world of equipment in which we find ourselves. Our skills are reflected in our familiarity with our environment and the way we move around, our skilful use and the equipment we find in this space: a space not ascertained by measuring distances, but by circumspection and direction. This circumspective concern takes account of equipment, tools, materials and Other. This familiarity is learnt. Our relationship with the workplace is determined by our activities within that world, and it is through our dealings with the world through the use of equipment that we come to know it (Heidegger, *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, 2008, p. 76). Our activities are always embedded in the use of equipment, which,

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by its very nature, is directed at specific purposes, that is used "in-order-to" such and such. These activities are not random, but are purposefully directed to the making of something. This referential whole leads us not to learn things in isolation, but to understand objects in relation to each other, prior to understanding what the objects are in themselves. We have a specific way of orientating ourselves by which our manipulation is guided, and this is termed circumspection. According to Heidegger, circumspection is what distinguishes practical activity from theoretical, in the sense that practical activities have a particular orientation mode: circumspection (Heidegger, 1998a, p. 99). Against this background Heidegger need not develop a complex notion of learning, which is separate from being in the world; learning is ontological, and his explaining of Being is an explanation of learning, as we have seen in my discussion of vocation.

Indeed, as I have already quoted, Heidegger defines learning as "To learn means to make everything we do answer to whatever essentials address themselves to us at a given time. Depending on the kind of essentials, depending on the realm from which they address us, the answer and with it the kind of learning differs" (1968, p. 14). Heidegger's emphasis here is on situated learning and learning, located before to his discussion of apprenticeship and the role of training in the development of the apprentice's vocation, not just his skills of manipulation. Heidegger continues that the role of the teacher is to help the apprentice comprehend his calling. Yet, or perhaps because of this, teaching is more difficult because of this need not to impress upon the apprentice his needs, but to nurture the growing awareness (the apprentice's *phusis*) of their being as, in this case a carpenter. In terms of style Heidegger, argues that if "the relations between the teacher and the taught is genuine, therefore, there is never a place in it for the authority of the know-it-all or the authoritative sway of the official" (1968, p. 15).[1] Clearly, Heidegger is not directly concerned with psychological explanation or pedagogical theories other than those expressed above: the mutuality of wonder, openness and humility in learning.

Within this application of what I have said, I appropriate much of what Nielsen (2007, especially pp. 461–467) has discussed and evidenced in his discussion of Heidegger and apprentices' learning. He identified a number of aspects of Heidegger in an understanding of how apprentices learn. I summarize those that I feel have most relevance to this book:

> *Use of tools and equipment.* Heidegger stresses that it is by using equipment and getting to know its referential character that we learn to understand the world. Bringing this kind of thinking into learning in practice means that the "know-how" of the trade is to a large degree embedded in the social practice of the workplace, and more precisely in the use of tools and equipment.
>
> *Learning as a matter of constructing knowledge.* Equipment acquires its meaning from being used in relation to other pieces of equipment. This referential structure is fundamental to our understanding of the subject matter at hand (e.g., the use of utilities, economical

[1] Heidegger goes on to say that "nobody wants any longer to become a teacher today, when all are downgraded and graded from below" (for instance, from business) (1968, p. 15), but to pursue this would be a digression here.

limitations, and legal matters are also part of the situation at hand and must be integrated in the process of understanding). Basically, it cannot be seen as a process originating in a human being's mental capacities.

*Learning happens in a context.* The basic way for practitioners to orientate themselves is by looking around. By means of circumspection, or "looking around," the practitioner learns how pieces of equipment are related to each other. To understand practice, the learner needs to participate and see how things are done in their context as a presupposition for learning in practice.

*Learning and mistakes.* According to Heidegger, relational misfits and breakdowns play a significant role in our being-in-the-world precisely because our understanding is limited in relation to the surrounding world. Disruptions happen constantly in the referential and we come to a renewal our understanding of the equipment in its or our failure.

*Not learning one thing at a time.* From Heidegger's perspective, a practical understanding can never be constructed from a variety of encounters with isolated problems that the practitioner tries to solve. The problems that stand out, the ones we have to reflect our way out of, are simply of another type than the kinds of activities we are surrounded by in our everyday life. As Nielsen noted, "(W)ith Heidegger, one could argue that we need to focus more on the processes, which constitute our familiarity and are the background of certain subject matters that manifest themselves as problems" (2007, p. 467).

The building blocks of this analysis have been revealed throughout the previous text. However, this simplified version of Heidegger's process of learning in the workplace neatly summarizes this argument. The increasing level of skill and mastery, which reaches its highest level in *phronesis*, is a question of absorption through familiarity and circumspection and the progress of that absorption was shown earlier in the work of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2004).

## Capability

The second major thematic to which I want to draw attention is the development of capability through learning in the workplace. In this respect I would like to signal a number of issues that show this point. First I turn to Chapter 19 of Heidegger's *Aristotle's Metaphysics* entitled "Being in Practice as the Actuality of Capability". In his interpretation of Aristotle's Chapter 3 of Θ in *Metaphysics*, he emphasizes the notion of having the capability to act, as distinct from its enactment. This distinction, I would argue, similar to competence and capability, adheres to the notion that both capability and enactment of the capability can be present at any point in time, and that when enactment is not happening, it is withheld by those who have the capability; it is not lost. Indeed, Aristotle lists the circumstances under which capability is lost. Moreover, if we accept this interpretation it requires that this having, this possession, has to be possessed. Heidegger develops this idea through his discussion of training, for it is through training that the essence of enactment can be properly grasped. "(T)his phenomenon is that of *learning* and *unlearning* in the broadest sense" (1995b, p. 58, italics in original). Heidegger links capability and actualization in the following:

(1) That which beforehand was not there, came to be; for example, one becomes trained in pottery, something which one was previously not. The capability is in this sense—which

> means (2) if the training is employed and enacted. (3) A capability is actualised if that which is capable becomes itself finished and is produced; the mug as something available and present (Heidegger, 1995a, p. 162).

The link with this acquisition of skills of *dumanis* and its enactment is cultivated through practice; that is, competence and mastery come after the capability is acquired, but it is through practice that skills are honed, improved and manifested in the presence in the final work. Training develops through practice and the connection between the two has, according to Heidegger, "a peculiar character" (1999b, p. 164) and by that he means "while practising it informs itself in the practice and thereby alters itself" (1995b, p. 164). Moreover, enactment is a practising and, as such, evidence of training but not the requirement that training has taken place. Also, the practice is due only to the training if it is used in such practice. Heidegger calls this "passing over into" and "transferred to". This passing of the capability into practice makes the notion of capability more ontological than the competence of production.

Moreover, to be a potter, by this reasoning, one must have previously been proficient even when one is not practising. In this way one must train, possess, practice and, once one is proficient, then one may cease practising and still be considered as a holder of these skills. However, this occurs only after proficiency has been obtained. This approach clearly resonates with the notion of apprentices and other in-service training and workplace learning. It also suggests that prolonged cessation will lead to loss. This loss of capability is different from withholding; it is no longer being able to enact. It also offers an argument for continued professional development. There is a word of warning that needs to be applied here. The link between *phusis*, the nature nation of our flourishing being, and *dumanis*, in how we take a stance on oneself, in the sense of hearing the call to being. Heidegger warns that there is a reduction of *phusis* into *techne*; that is, *phusis* becomes enframed by human beings. I suppose we know this when we express, in the idiom, "a round peg in a square hole", but we need to respond not by throwing the round peg away, but by wondering why the aperture has to be square.

## The Workplace as a Learning Environment

I have discussed in some detail the phenomenological structure of the workplace as a place to understand our being and our encounters with others. Although Heidegger's focus on temporality is the focus of his earlier work and certainly the position taken here, his concern for space, especially place, is evident throughout his work. Heidegger opens Chapter 3 of *Being and Time* with the statement that "Being-in-the-world shall first be made visible with regards to that item of its structure which is the 'world it self' " (1962, p. 91). That is there is a world in which, as we have seen, circumspective concern takes account of what is happening and this, together with a directionality, locates equipment somewhere in particular. This is being in the world, at least in early Heidegger. In *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1992d), he changes his mind and talks of dispersed beings, but this will not be progressed

here. Being in the world is being-in as dwelling, the care structure and, above all, temporality. He goes further by suggesting that

> the totality of involvement which makes up the Being of the ready-to-hand within-the world, there belongs a spatial involvement which has the character of a region. By reason of such an involvement, the ready-to-hand becomes something which we can come across and ascertain as having form and direction (Heidegger, 1962, p. 145).

This statement emphasizes involvement in an already constituted public region in which we come across items ready-to-hand. Thus place, according to Casey, is "not something we come across as something we are *simply in*, it is what we precipitate by the conjoint action of directing and dissevering—thus something in which our direct intervention gives rise" (1998, p. 251). This place of our work and of our dwelling can only be so by such an intervention for, without it, it remains a public region that is an aggregate of other people's activities. Thus the workplace is regional, in that it is recognized as a place where work is done and it is my workplace by the directional circumspection that makes it understandable to me through its familiarity.

Thus Heidegger presents a way of understanding the nature of changing the spatial region of the workplaces into my workplace through my involvement in it. This distinction goes some way in offering the ground for a hermeneutical interpretation of the workplace as that which is special to me and which forms a spatial complement to the temporality of being with others. It is a community of practice within which lies the potential for the essential co-disclosure of that space. Indeed, a lack of directional spatiality is a contributing factor: witness the looseness of communities of practice whose spatial representation is through the virtual space of the Internet. Moreover, the self-volition in defining one's space contributes to the chosen location where one might practice one's potential skills.

## A Generalized Anxiety

Finally I want to consider the nature of attunement, which is the basis of Chapter 10's discussion on boredom. Heidegger's relevance to our being-in-the-world clearly goes beyond the lens it offers to work-based learning. Indeed, it helps to explain the more extensive political and socio-political habitus in which we find ourselves following the disaster of machination evident in the lending, consumerism and the internationalization of capital through the securitization of unreasonably lent loans. Moreover, such anxiety is the product of the disassociation of ourself from the Other, whose control over our lives is in this epoch of control by technology. In his *Contribution*, Heidegger foreshadows the coming discussion in the *Questions Concerning Technology* by commenting that "the bewitchment by technicity and its constantly self-surpassing progress are only one sign of this enchantment, by virtue of which everything presses forth into calculation, usage, breeding, manageability, and regulation" (1977b, p. 87) in which the machine in "its ownmost, the service that it demands, the uprooting that it brings, 'Industry' (operations); industrial workers, torn from their homeland and history, exploited for profit" (1977b, p. 274).

The public experience of this impact is what Heidegger explores in *What is Metaphysics?* where he talks about the realms of sentiment, emotion, fellow feeling and thought. It is a public experience that was changed by this recession. It is not just a fear of what might happen, which is not fear in face of something but a general feeling of anxiety, a helplessness to do anything about the general malaise. Heidegger describes this mood as one of unspecified anxiety for, in anxiety:

> "one feels uncanny." What is "it" that makes "one" feel uncanny? We cannot say what it is before which one feels uncanny. As a whole, it is so for one. All things, and we ourselves, sink into indifference. Rather, in this recession, things turn toward us. The receding of beings as a whole, closing in on us in anxiety, oppresses us. Closing in on us in anxiety, oppresses us. We can get no hold on things. In the slipping away of beings only this "no hold on things" comes over us and remains (Heidegger, 1998c, p. 88).

This slipping away affects our familiarity in our dwelling. At the macro-level it leads to a general state of helplessness in the face of a crisis, helplessness over what can be done; the problem is too big, too all-embracing for us to get a hold on it. We are subject to whatever will come, with no way of determining how we are affected by it. The financial crisis of 2007–2010 was like this for most of us in the general public.

Heidegger is a controversial philosopher. Some, like Rorty, may consider him as one of the greater philosophers of the twentieth century; others, like Marcuse, find it hard to read his work without seeing his membership of the German National Socialist Party writ large. My approach has been more pragmatic. I have dealt with Heidegger where his ideas make sense when taken into my hermeneutical interpretation of learning in the workplace. Indeed, this may leave hidden meanings that praise the virtue of intolerance and bigotry, although I hope I have been sufficiently aware to see these and avoid drawing inappropriate conclusions. Heidegger's work, I trust I have shown, is rich in tools that can be used to understand and inform our understanding of the workplace and the learning that goes on in it as it reacts to the development of the being of the worker. I do not claim that Heidegger is alone in providing such insight, but I do wish that this book has introduced the potential of Heidegger to a wider audience.

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Throughout this book I refer to the early and later works of Heidegger. The following Heidegger references are in chronological order of the work, and the [] brackets show the date of the original publication or lecture series.

# Author Index


**A**
Abela, A. V., 104
Allen, V., 90
Angelides, P., 36, 82
Araujo, L., 105
Arendt, H., 8, 47, 56–58, 61, 63, 142
Armsby, P., 13
Ashton, D. N., 18
Axiotis, A. D., 90

**B**
Bakhtin, M. M., 133–134
Barbalet, J.M., 112
Barnacle, R., 14–16
Barnett, R., 1, 8, 13, 15, 30, 94, 103, 109–110, 128, 143
Beckett, B., 131, 133
Berger, F. R., 136
Bernstein, R. J., 37
Billett, S., 1–2, 13–14, 19–20, 26, 32–33, 44, 91, 122, 131, 139
Bjørnavold, J., 88
Blattner, W., 66–67, 113
Boelen, B. J., 137
Bonnett, M., 28, 42, 98
Boud, D., 2, 13, 20, 44, 91, 99
Bourdieu, P., 13–14, 16, 19, 21–22, 43–44, 104, 134
Boyce, M. E., 32
Brennan, J., 95
Bridges, D., 136
Brogan, W. A., 24
Brown, A., 2
Bryson, C., 143
Buber, M., 104
Burgress, H., 136
Burwood, S., 35

**C**
Camm, R., 95, 100
Caputo, J. D., 37
Casey, E. S., 153
Clarke, L., 141
Clegg, S., 107
Coate, K., 15
Colley, H., 37, 42, 98
Collier, K. G., 89–90
Comerford, A., 15
Connor, H., 95
Cooper, D. E., 126
Costley, C., 1–2, 15, 18–19, 132
Coulter, D., 58, 144
Curzon-Hobson, A., 87–88

**D**
Dadds, M., 125
Dahlin, B., 119
Dall'Alba, G., 26
Daniels, K., 112
Davis, J., 20
Davison, J., 132–133, 135
Dearlove, J., 143
Dewey, J., 2–3, 21, 32, 37, 43, 149
Dey, S., 95
Diment, K., 37
Donnelly, J. F., 85
Dreyfus, H. L., 22, 28, 38, 59, 80, 88, 95, 95, 105, 108, 140–141, 151
Dreyfus, S. E., 140–141, 151
Dunne, J., 138

**E**
Enders, J., 143
Englund, T., 76
Eraut, M., 13, 44, 140
Escobar, M., 31
Evans, K., 17, 94

**F**
Farrell, L., 126
Featherstone, M., 104
Fernandez, A. L., 31
Figel, J., 11
Flores, F., 141
Flyvbjerg, B., 13, 133–134
Foucault, M., 18, 86, 88
Franklin, C. A., 32
Freeman, L., 55
Freire, P., 31, 35
Fuller, A., 13, 20–22

**G**
Gadamer, H.-G., 36–37, 40, 87
Gadotti, M., 31
Gallacher, J., 18, 20, 94
Gamble, J., 36
Garnett, J., 1, 4, 13, 15–18, 20, 99
Garrick, J., 99
Garrison, J., 36
Garth, R., 125
Gibbons, M., 13
Gibbs, G., 86
Gibbs, P., 1, 13, 20, 36, 41, 51, 82, 95, 132
Green, D., 95
Gregory, W. T., 114
Grenfell, M., 14
Griffin, A., 1
Guevara-Niebla, G., 31
Guile, D., 13, 16
Gur-Ze'ev, I., 146
Guskey, T. R., 83
Guthrie, J., 103

**H**
Haeringer, A., 82
Hager, P., 13, 15, 17, 131, 133
Halsey, A. H., 143
Halverson, R., 37
Hammersley, M., 13, 136
Harris, I., 90
Harvey, L., 93, 95
Haynes, K., 52
Heidegger, M., 2–4, 20–22, 26, 38–41, 47–62, 63–76, 84–86, 96–97, 107–109, 113, 114–124, 149–154
Hemming, L. P., 63
Hodkinson, H., 13
Hodkinson, P. 13, 17
Holkner, B., 126
Hussey, T., 87

**I**
Iacovidou, M., 95
Ives, G., 43

**J**
James, D., 14, 37
Jamieson, I., 14–15, 100, 109
Jarvis, P., 14

**K**
Kersh, N., 17
Kinman, G., 94
Kinman, R., 94
Knowles, M. S., 13, 91
Kogan, M., 146
Kolsaker, A., 142–143
Kovacs, G., 53, 62

**L**
Lambeir, B., 38–39, 127–128
Lave, J., 14, 36, 44–45
Laycock, M., 91
Le Maistre, C., 45
Lindell, M., 19
Ling, S., 136
Lingard, B., 14
Livingston, P., 58, 73–74
Loan-Clarke, J., 112
Loukidou, L., 112
Lueddeke, G., 82
Luhmann, N., 85
Lum, G., 37
Lunt, I., 2

**M**
Macfarlane, B., 143
Malpas, J., 21, 56, 60
Mansikka, J.-E., 114, 118–119, 121
Mäntylä. H., 107
Marcuse, H., 8, 47, 56–57, 63, 141–142, 145, 154
Marx, K., 14, 39, 54, 61–62, 127
Massy, W. F., 94
McCormack, B. G., 43
McIntyre, A., 129–130
MCPherson, I., 144
Mei, T. S., 24–26, 42, 58
Merriam, S. B., 125
Middleton, H., 13, 44
Mitchell, J., 12
Mulhall, S., 54–56, 60, 75
Murphy, P. E., 104

**N**
Naidoo, R., 14–15, 100, 109
Neumann, R., 103
Nielsen, K., 48, 53, 141, 150–151
Nietzsche, F., 60, 71
Nikolou-Walker, E., 17
Nixon, I., 95, 100
Nixon, J., 143
Noddings, N., 40
Noel, J., 128, 130
Nowotny, H., 13

**O**
Oakley, A., 135
Okrent, M., 3, 21, 43
Olafson, F. A., 28–29
O'Murchadha, F., 80
Osborne, C., 20
Osborne, M., 82

**P**
Paré, A., 45
Passeron, J. C., 13
Peckham, D., 94
Peim, N., 80
Pence, G. E., 135
Peterson, S. L., 19
Philipse, H., 14
Pigrum, D., 139
Piper, D. W., 143
Polanyi, M., 44, 81, 149
Polt, R., 55, 100
Pope, C., 125
Portwood, D., 15, 18–19
Pouget, M., 82
Pring, R., 136

**R**
Raelin, J. A., 1, 12–13
Rämö, H., 133
Rawolle, S., 14
Reeve, F., 18, 20, 94
Rhodes, C., 99
Roberts, J., 133–134
Rorty, R., 3, 21, 154
Rosenthal, S. B., 30
Ryle, G., 81, 149

**S**
Scott, D., 2
Scott, P., 13
Segal, S., 86
Sen, A., 87
Sheehan, T., 60
Shershow, S. C., 53
Shiel, G., 125
Silberman, M. I., 79
Simmel, G., 111
Smith, E. A., 41
Smith, K., 95, 100
Smith, L. T., 31, 125
Smith, P., 87
Solomon, N., 2, 20
Somerville, B., 44
Spinosa, C., 105, 141
Stafford, R., 95, 100
Stafford, S. P., 114
Standish, P., 38–39, 86, 91, 127–128, 135, 137
Stenström, M. L., 19
Stephenson, J., 1–2, 91
Stevenson, C., 130
Svendsen, L., 111
Symes, C., 99

**T**
Taminiaux, J., 48, 55
Tasker, M., 94
Taylor, S., 14
Tedder, M., 37
Teichler, U., 143
Thompson, I. D., 59
Thompson, I., 3–4
Thorne, L., 2
Trotter, J., 134
Trowler, P., 88
Tsoukas, H., 99

**U**
Unwin, L., 13

**V**
Van Rensburg, E., 95
Volpi, F., 4

**W**
Wailey, T., 81
Webb, N., 15
Weber, M., 111
Welsh, J., 95
Wenger, E., 14, 36, 44–45, 141
West, P.W. A., 94
White, J., 58
White, P., 40–41, 44
Wiesenberg, F. P., 19
Wiggins, D., 129
Wilger, A. K., 94
Willets, J. W., 32
Williams, P., 95, 100

Willmott, H., 143
Wilson, V. J., 43, 98
Winch, C., 45, 81, 141
Wittgenstein, L., 80, 89
Wolek, F. W., 39
Wrathall, M. A., 85

**Y**

Ylijoki, O.-H., 107
Young, J., 52, 56, 59–60, 71, 103, 126

**Z**

Zimmerman, M. E., 23, 63, 88, 119

# Subject Index

Note: The locators followed by ‘n’ and ‘t’ refers to note numbers and tables cited in the text.


**A**

Activity, 4, 13, 43–45, 50, 53, 55–56, 58, 60–62, 67, 75, 80, 82 n2, 108, 116, 129, 139–141, 146, 149–150
Actualization, 24–26, 61, 151–152
Aletheia (unconcealment), 3, 21, 27, 29, 32
Alienation, 14, 40, 45, 53–54, 56, 59, 61–62, 88, 90, 103, 112, 141, 145
Ancients, 12–21
Aristotle, 2, 4, 13, 23–24, 48, 55, 69, 87–88, 126, 128–129, 133, 138, 151
Assessment, 6, 11, 16, 25, 79–91, 126
Authenticity, 5, 29–30, 40, 54, 59, 61, 65–66, 69, 72–74, 83, 111–112, 118, 123, 146

**B**

Being, 6, 23–32, 38–45, 47–62, 63–76, 103–110, 142, 146
Being-in-the-world, 1–3, 5–6, 8, 23–32, 36, 38, 51, 72, 74–75, 88, 104, 106, 112–113, 132, 149, 151, 153
Bored-by, 117t, 120–121
Boredom, 7, 51, 105, 111–124, 153
*See also* Profound boredom
Bored with, 115–116, 117t, 121–122
Busyness, 55

**C**

Calculative, 6, 19, 22–23, 27, 39, 59, 63, 68, 72–73, 119, 120t, 128
Capability, 2, 5, 24–26, 32, 40–41, 96, 123, 151–152
Care, 28, 40–41, 43–44, 48–49, 54–55, 64–65, 68t, 69, 72, 74–76, 83, 85, 99, 101, 106, 120t, 133–135, 137, 153
Circumspection, 6, 48–51, 53–54, 57, 62, 104, 128, 141, 149–151, 153
Clearing, 21–22, 88, 119
Clock time, 67
Commodification, 36, 106
Community, 3, 5, 14, 17–18, 31–32, 35–36, 40–41, 43–45, 69, 75–76, 87–88, 97–98, 100, 103, 125–127, 129, 132, 135–137, 143, 153
Conscience, 7, 62, 93, 99–100
Consumer time, 7, 103–110
Consumerism, 7, 15, 39, 44, 54, 67, 91, 103–110, 127, 153
Craft, 6, 24, 31–32, 38–41, 50–51, 54–55, 60–61, 96, 127, 145–146
Credentials, 15, 101

**D**

Dasein, 3–4, 20–21, 28–30, 41–42, 51, 53–54, 56–57, 61–72, 74–75, 79, 84–85, 91, 93, 103–106, 111, 114, 117–118, 120, 123–124, 149
Datable time, 66–68, 120
Deliberation, 31, 73, 81, 128–131, 134–135, 141
Desert, 144
Dewey, 2–3, 21, 32, 37, 42–43, 97, 149
Discourse, 1–2, 15–18, 32, 41–42, 45, 55, 64, 80, 95, 99–100, 130, 133, 138, 144–145
Disposition, 4, 14, 16, 36, 40–42, 44–45, 75, 98–99, 109, 112–114, 129–131
Dunamis, 24–26, 32, 121, 123
Dwelling, 1, 5, 21–22, 35–45, 53–54, 61, 74, 91, 97, 99, 120–121, 125–126, 130–131, 153–154

**E**
Education
existential, 31, 91
experiential, 5
formal, 11, 44, 70, 75, 82–83, 90, 94, 104
higher, 1–2, 4–8, 11–20, 31, 43, 56, 71, 73, 84, 87, 89–91, 93–95, 99–100, 103, 106–107, 109–110, 142–143, 145
integrated, 36
professional, 1, 26
vocational, 11, 35, 37, 41–43, 97–98, 141
Empty, 38, 114–119, 121
Enframement, 23–24
Entitlement, 85, 87, 109
Episteme, 23, 38, 88, 127
Equipment, 2, 48–54, 59, 61–62, 65–68, 73, 96, 105–108, 120–121, 134, 139, 141, 144–146, 149–152
Equipmental totality, 51–52
Essence, 3–4, 15, 24, 29, 44, 50, 53–54, 59–61, 64, 71, 73, 90, 100, 105, 114–115, 118, 121–122, 126, 136–137, 140, 143, 151
European educational policy, 11
Evidence, 15–17, 21, 37, 42–45, 81–87, 90, 95, 97–98, 112, 142, 144, 152
Existential, 5, 20, 23, 29–32, 44, 64–65, 68–69, 72, 74–75, 80, 85, 89–91, 111–112
Exploitation, 39–40, 109, 127, 135

**F**
Fore-structure, 30, 79–81
For-the-sake-of, 64, 72, 106, 137

**G**
Gift, 26, 136–138
Globalization, 11

**H**
Higher education, 1–2, 4–8, 11–20, 31, 43, 56, 71, 73, 84, 87, 89–91, 93–95, 99–100, 103, 106–107, 109–110, 142–143, 145
Historicity, 26–27, 47, 68–70

**I**
Idle talk, 55, 141, 145
"In-order-to", 49–50, 52, 64–65, 72, 96, 108–109, 150
Interpretation, 13–14, 21, 24, 26, 30–32, 48, 59, 64, 71, 79–81, 83, 86, 89, 91, 106, 129–130, 132–133, 137–138, 149, 151, 153–154

**J**
Judgement, 15, 17, 23, 31, 81, 87, 126–131, 134–135, 137–138
Jünger, 63, 70–76, 141

**K**
Knowledge, 1, 3, 5, 12–15, 17–18, 20–21, 23–32, 35–38, 67, 71–72, 80–84, 86–90, 99, 126–127, 130–132, 138, 142–144, 146, 149–150

**L**
Labour, 4, 16, 18, 36, 39–40, 45, 53–54, 56–61, 63, 71, 101, 122, 127, 143–146
Learning, 23–32
agreement, 91
educational, 17, 103
environments, 44, 96–97, 100–101, 144, 149, 152–153
processes, 13, 20, 88, 94, 131, 137, 140
work-based, 1, 4–7, 11–22, 63–76, 79–91, 94–96, 100, 103–110, 111–124, 153
workplace, 2–3, 11, 17, 32, 35, 45, 62, 75, 113, 121, 139–140, 152
Liberating, 31, 123
Limbo, 114–118, 117t, 120t

**M**
Machination, 6, 24, 58, 61, 63, 70, 72–74, 76, 141, 146, 153
Managerialism, 91, 143
Marx, 14, 39, 54, 61–62, 127
Merit, 85, 87, 144
Moment of Vision, 70, 108, 112, 118

**O**
Ontological, 4, 16, 20, 25, 27, 29, 36, 38–39, 50, 53–55, 60–61, 64, 82–83, 90, 109, 112, 119, 131, 137, 150, 152
Originary temporality, 64–65, 67–68, 70, 72–73, 90, 104–109
Other(s), 44, 68–69, 120t, 134–135

**P**
Pedagogy, 23, 31–32, 89–90, 95, 112
Phenomenological method, 4, 21, 47, 79, 147
Phronesis (practical wisdom), 5–6, 21, 35–37, 39, 75, 88, 91, 128–129, 131, 134, 138, 151
Plato, 27, 58, 80, 91, 127
Potential, 5, 7–8, 19, 24–25, 30, 32, 36, 38, 43, 53, 72, 75, 82–84, 87–89, 98, 103–110, 111, 123, 132, 136–137, 146, 153–154

Power, 14–20, 27, 35, 45, 47, 59–60, 71–73, 76, 86, 88–89, 99, 122–123, 126, 130–131, 133–134, 137–138
Practical enquiry, 27, 130–131, 133, 138
Practical judgement, 23, 127, 130–131, 137
Practice, 23–26, 31–32, 95–98, 100
  educational, 31
  of learning, 3, 5, 32
  organizational, 1–2
  research, 136
  social, 19–20, 22, 150
Pragmaticism, 3–4, 18, 21, 27, 32, 41, 97, 99, 154
Praxis, 4, 6, 13, 15, 17, 23, 28, 30–31, 48–49, 55–56, 58, 80, 86, 88, 91
Present-at-hand, 49–50, 52, 54, 62, 67, 68t, 72, 74, 86, 96, 108, 120t
Professionalism, 8, 30, 94, 142–145
Profound boredom, 7, 105, 111–112, 114–115, 117–119, 120t, 122–123

**Q**
Questioning, 4, 6, 14, 29, 41, 62–63, 72–73, 89, 136
Quality, 93–101

**R**
Ready-to-hand, 49–52, 54, 56, 59–62, 63, 65, 68, 74, 93, 96, 104, 106, 108, 118, 120t, 127, 141, 144, 153
Recession, 2, 8, 149–154
Recognition, 1, 6, 12, 18–20, 28, 30, 36, 79–91, 131, 137, 142
Referential totality, 49–50, 51–52, 54, 59, 81, 84, 96, 108, 112
Reflection, 29–32, 37, 53, 82–83, 88, 115, 136–137, 143
Research, 8, 139–147

**S**
Serviceability, 27, 49–50, 52, 61–62, 141, 144, 146
Significance, 20–21, 30, 50, 65–66, 104–105, 109
Skills, 2–3, 5, 12–13, 16, 18, 20, 24–26, 32, 36–45, 45 n10, 53, 55, 65, 73, 81–82, 85, 88, 93, 98–99, 108–109, 127–133, 141, 143, 145–146, 149–150, 152–153
Solicitude, 28, 54–55

**T**
Tacit knowledge, 35, 81
Taking a stance, 26, 64, 106, 113
Teaching, 1–2, 11–12, 20, 31–32, 36, 41, 45, 76, 82, 87, 91, 94, 96–97, 143–144, 150
Techne, 5, 23–24, 26, 35, 37–39, 41–42, 87–88, 91, 127–128, 152
Technology, 8, 22, 27, 35, 38–39, 42, 47, 53, 58–60, 62–64, 70–75, 87–88, 105, 127, 135, 141, 143–146, 153
Telos, 23, 50, 91, 145
Temporality, 6–7, 28, 51, 57, 60, 63–70, 72–73, 75, 80, 84–85, 88, 90–91, 103–110, 111, 114, 118–119, 124, 152–153
Temporalization, 84
Thinking, 63, 72–75, 119, 128, 136–137, 140t
Time, 63–76
Trans-disciplinary, 99, 131, 146
Trust, 27–28, 30, 32, 40, 85, 87, 90, 93–94, 99, 101, 109, 135, 154

**U**
Understanding, 13, 20–22, 43, 48, 140t, 149–154
University, 63–76

**V**
Vocational, 11, 35, 37, 41–43, 97–98, 141

**W**
Work, 47–62, 63–76, 93–101, 111–124, 125–138
  challenges of, 63–76
  dwelling at, 35–45
Work based learning, 11–22, 93–101, 103–110, 111–124
Workplace, 47–62, 93–101, 111–124, 125–138
Workplace researcher, 8, 125–138
  *See also* Research