TWO APPROACHES TO CURRICULUM CRITICISM

by

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum critics borrow many of their concepts from traditions of criticism and inquiry outside education, and transform these into approaches to curriculum description and evaluation. Though these judge the significance of curriculum, each approach differs from others. The literature on curriculum criticism has not focussed explicitly on these differences or elucidated the similarities. This thesis investigates some commonalities and differences between two approaches, one developed by Elliot Eisner, and one by William Pinar.

Specifically, this study investigates the purpose, form and substance of each approach in terms of their presuppositions, the nature of the data, methodological processes, qualities of the finished critique, and the difficulties with reader acceptance. Two sources for data were used: selected literature and the application of the two approaches to the critiquing of a videotaped learning material.

Some of the conclusions reached were: Although both investigate the qualities of a curriculum exchange, one approach emphasizes the connoisseur's voice, one approach emphasizes the personal voice. Although the process in both necessitates the presence of the critic in the curriculum exchange, the record of the experience follows a different direction in each case. Accordingly, the methodology in each approach differs because the intent of the critic is different. Furthermore, in one approach, because the reader mediates the disclosures, structural corroboration and referential adequacy are stressed;
in the other, because personal discovery validates the disclosures, personal experience and voice are stressed.
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To my children and my friends for being. With love.
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

In curriculum criticism, paradigms of criticism from other areas of human inquiry have been borrowed and transformed into theories and methodologies for disclosing the qualities of curricula. William Pinar and Elliot Eisner are two authors who have developed approaches to curriculum criticism. Both are high profile theoreticians in curriculum literature, throughout the 1970's into the present. Both are prolific writers in explicating the nature of their concepts and cases.

For William Pinar, it is essential to focus on the experience of educational events. Curriculum criticism is for him a method for working through the educational legacy an individual collects, intellectually, psychically, and socially. In that way, curriculum participants can find the personal roots of their own behavior. The reason for this kind of analysis, "coming to consciousness", is the belief that "curriculum research must emancipate the researcher if it is to authentically offer such a possibility to others." 1

For Elliott Eisner, educational phenomena, in that they are wholistic experiences, are like artistic phenomena, and should be critiqued accordingly. Curriculum critics, therefore, in some ways are like art critics. They explore the curriculum as a work of art in order to disclose (encourage) the perception and appreciation of the sensory particulars of it. They examine characteristics like balance, rhythm, development to climax and closure, and render them intelligible to the potential participant. The description of the curriculum as object d'art
is meant to be revelatory. Analysis of the sensory particulars of the aesthetic interaction between critic and object can reveal symbolic meanings being transmitted. The importance of such revelation is to "provide pointers to those aspects of the situation, event, or object that are in some way significant\textsuperscript{2}, and which otherwise might escape notice.

Interest in critical approaches to curriculum inquiry came into focus in 1968 with the publication of John S. Mann's essay "Curriculum Criticism".\textsuperscript{3} He is credited with giving definition to the term. In that essay Mann interprets curriculum as "an environing work of art" the boundary definitions of which create meaning. He discusses how by examining those boundaries (the design of the curriculum), the critic can uncover the choices made by developers and practitioners. Furthermore, he states that the critic has to turn inward to his or her personal knowledge, in a disciplined and imaginative way. In short, Mann implies the two curriculum criticisms that are analyzed in this thesis.

**The Problem**

The purpose of this thesis is to clarify and compare the approaches to curriculum criticism developed by Elliot Eisner and William Pinar. The problem is focussed in the following way:
Question: What are the commonalities and differences between the two approaches to curriculum criticism?

In order to find the commonalities and differences between them, these two modes of curriculum criticism are examined under the following questions:

1. What are the presuppositions?
   1.1 What is curriculum?
   1.2 What is criticism?
   1.3 What are the sources?

2. What is the substance?
   2.1 What is the nature of the datum?
   2.2 What is the methodological process?
   2.3 What are the qualities of the finished critique?

3. What are the difficulties with reader acceptance?

These discriminators were chosen because of what the editors of Curriculum Inquiry saw as an arena for debate and development. They wrote in a 1979 issue: "The threefold problems of the purpose, form, and substance of materials criticism has been of continuing interest to the editors of CI."

The problem of "purpose" is subsumed in the examination of the presuppositions and substance of each approach; the problem of "form", in the examination of the substance and difficulties of each approach; the problem of "substance" is addressed by question two.
Literature by Elliot Eisner, Elizabeth Vallance, Gail McCutcheon and Thomas Barone were specific sources for the study of one approach (Chapter 2); literature by William Pinar and Madeleine Grumet were specific sources for the study of the other (Chapter 3). Also, in order to explore some implications of each approach, both were used to critique a videotape segment from a continuing education package called *Women Moving Up* (Chapter 4). This package is a curriculum designed for a two day seminar for management personnel.

**Definitions**

Throughout the thesis, the word critic, and the phrase curriculum criticism, are in constant use. Each of the authors examined shapes these terms to his own premises. However, it may be helpful to begin here with a general definition of each.

**Curriculum criticism**

Curriculum criticism is a function of the relation between a critic and a curriculum. It starts with the actual experience the critic has with the curriculum. It involves disclosure of that experience. It demands the interpretation of and judgement on the experience, through some conceptual framework.

**Critic**

A curriculum critic is an educator who discloses the qualities of a curriculum, through a selected conceptual framework, aesthetic, personal, social or political. Such
disclosure demands sensitivity, creativity, and literacy from the critic. These skills of disclosure are developed through practice.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapters two and three report the results of the investigation. Specifically, chapter two discusses the presuppositions, substance, and difficulties with the Eisner approach; chapter three discriminates, in the same regard, the Pinar approach. Chapter four critiques a videotape from a business management curriculum. This videotape is critiqued first from the Eisner approach; then from the Pinar approach; allowing the researcher to further clarify the substance of each approach. Chapter five summarizes the findings of the preceding three chapters, discussing some commonalities and differences between the two approaches.

Limitations

There is a substantial body of literature containing these two approaches to curriculum criticism. Because of time limitations, this study does not analyze the whole of it. Specifics, possibly of interest to other readers, are neglected. For example, this study does not consider the changes that have occurred in any of the authors' thinking over time. Rather, it highlights some details, as though the literature were one static presentation.
Also, although each writer following one or the other approach has his or her variations, this study does not explicate them. Rather, it takes a broad view of the literature from which to make generalizations.

Another limitation of this thesis is that there is no attempt to explicate the lines of argument that lead the authors from their primary sources to the development of their approaches to curriculum criticism. Only a brief description of those sources are presented.

A fourth limitation is that precision of definition of terms is difficult, particularly in the Pinar approach because many different conceptual sources are used. No attempt was made in this thesis to examine the consistency of the definitions used by the authors of each approach.

Another limitation is that the purpose of the thesis is not to make recommendations concerning the usefulness of these criticisms, nor to discuss potential abuse of either approach by critics. Only some of the presuppositions, substance, and reaction of readers are discussed.
Footnotes


4 Editors, "Postscript", Curriculum Inquiry, 9:3:229, Fall, 1979, n. In the two approaches under examination criticism is considered relevant to all kinds of curriculum manifestations, not just curriculum materials.

This chapter analyzes the characteristics of an approach to curriculum criticism developed by Elliot Eisner, a professor of Art and Education at Stanford University. Oftentimes this approach is called "Aesthetic Criticism" because a part of its foundation is in the philosophy of art and the practice of critics in the arts.

The main sources of information presented in this chapter are some writings of Elliot Eisner, and the writings of his former students, especially Thomas Barone, Gail McCutcheon, Elizabeth Vallance, and Robert Donmoyer. Their presentation of curriculum criticism will be examined within the framework of the methodological questions enumerated in chapter one. Accordingly, the major divisions of this chapter are (1) presuppositions, (2) substance of criticism, and (3) difficulties with reader acceptance.

**Presuppositions**

Presupposed in this approach are definitions of curriculum, of connoisseurship, and of criticism, and some sources from which these notions have come.

**Curriculum**

There are three kinds of curricula according to Eisner. They are the explicit, the implicit, and the null.

The explicit:
The school offers to the community an educational menu of sorts; it advertises what it is prepared to provide. From this advertised list, students have, at least in principle, an array of options from which to choose.  

The implicit:

Schools socialize children to a set of expectations that some argue are profoundly more powerful and longer-lasting than what is intentionally taught or what the explicit curriculum of the school publicly provides.  

Schools prepare most people for positions and contexts that in many respects are quite similar to what they experienced in school as students: hierarchial organization, one-way communication, routine; in short, compliance to purposes set by another.  

The null:

What schools do not teach. In identifying the null curriculum there are two major dimensions that can be considered. One is the intellectual process that schools emphasize and neglect. The other is the content or subject areas that are present and absent in school curricula.  

The criteria that are employed for assessing intellectual competence must of necessity focus on the forms of thinking and experience that are available and salient. Thus, not only does the neglect or absence from school programs of nondiscursive forms of knowing skew what can be known and expressed in schools, it also biases the criteria through which human competence and intelligence are appraised.  

We teach what we teach largely out of habit, and in the process neglect areas of study that could prove to be exceedingly useful to students. Take as an example economics.  
In criticism, the characteristics of the explicit, implicit, or null curricula are revealed through discovery of the interrelationships and (im)balances among them. All three together form the work, as in work of art.

Interrelationships and balances among the explicit, implicit, and null have three aspects: thematic, contextual, and performance. The thematic aspect of the work (curriculum) manifests as the applied intent of the users and/or the producers of it. The contextual aspects are those subtle and not so subtle particulars of a curriculum that bound movement in a curriculum. It includes the architecture, the furniture, and human characteristics like respect and sarcasm. Thomas Barone writes regarding the contextual aspect:

Landscape is not merely the sum of the features that comprise the social and physical environment, but rather a fictive - i.e., fashioned - picture of the human and material surroundings that help shape and (since experiences contain and active as well as passive element) are shaped by the educational lives of the children.

The movement within a curriculum is the performance aspect. This performance aspect of curriculum is interpretative, continuous, energizing. The performance aspect is always personal. It is character and plot. It is the movement of the players and playthings. It is the activities of teachers and learners and materials.
Connoisseurship

A thesis of this approach is that critical argument requires connoisseurship. Connoisseurship is the art of appreciation. Connoisseurs, therefore, appreciate some particular human endeavour. According to Webster's New World Dictionary, to appreciate means to be fully or sensitively aware of, and to notice with discrimination. To appreciate comes from the Latin verb *appretiare* meaning to appraise. That is, connoisseurs are fully open to an intimate experience with the work so that they may distinguish the particulars in terms of its uniqueness; plus adjudge its significance in relation to other human endeavours in the same area.

Connoisseurship requires attention to the details of the work, like colour, line, voice, and choreography. Since it involves exploration with finely tuned, open sensitivity to the newness of an encounter, connoisseurship requires of its practitioner three attributes, namely an awakened sensibility, a mature background, and a sustained motivation for enlarging his or her experience in appreciation. As these attributes necessarily (for connoisseurship) blend, the connoisseur enjoys perceptions that are satisfying in themselves.

Regarding the attentions of connoisseurship, of importance is appreciation of the quality of relatedness that underlies the particulars of a work. The component quality, the single detail, cannot signify outside the structured field of meanings of the form of the work as experienced. It signifies
only in relation to the other qualities, in terms of the patterns which govern their combination. The meaning of an exchange between details is not fixed, single, or unalterable. It signifies different values of permanence, order, meaning, harmony, depending upon how and with whom or what it is articulated. Developed sensitivities and disciplined insight allow the connoisseur to make such judgements; therefore the richer one's background, the better. Maintaining a selective sense of continuity with one's past experience allows that past experience to illuminate the present experiences. At this point of sophistication, attention is given to the how and why of the work's existence, as the connoisseur seeks to understand the expression of the new encounter. The connoisseur's motivation to attend to the work under study is sustained by his growing appreciation to his field of study and by his desire to make each new encounter intelligible.

Criticism

Criticism is the public disclosing or rendering of what the connoisseur experiences. This rendering is an interpretative act. The critic/connoisseur's experience with the curriculum is interpreted for the reader's benefit. The criticism portrays the interaction between the critic and the curriculum. This portrayal creates a new form of anticipation, or supports a current hypothesis for the reader, regarding the interactions of the curriculum. It aims to enlarge perceptions
of previously unrecognized relationships within the characteristics of the curriculum.

Criticism is empirical. It is based on the actual experience of the critic with the curriculum. Eisner writes,

Criticism is an empirical undertaking. The word empirical comes from the Latin empiricus, meaning "open to experience." Criticism is empirical in the significant sense that the qualities the critic describes or renders must be capable of being located in the subject matter of the criticism. Qualities portrayed are selected according to what the case is. Selected details can be empirically verified, subject to comparison with the curriculum itself. Criticism requires that critics place themselves to actively and sympathetically experience the curriculum, and then recreate what the experience creates for them.

Criticism is disclosure of the experience, through imaginative reconstruction. Language that emphasizes the livingness of, for example, gesture and texture suggests multiple layers and subtle connections among qualities that propositional language may ignore. The interpretative style of writing advised is borrowed from Clifford Geertz's conception of "thick description". "Thick description" implies, by accumulation of impressions that pile up from preferably several different directions, the organic structure of the experience.

Criticism discloses the significant. Significance is determined according to what, in the critic's view, is happening and what is not happening and why. The basis of the critical
argument is the discrimination and illumination of the experienced meaning of the quality of relatedness, through the thematic, contextual, and performance aspects. In this regard, Eisner reminds the reader that there is more than one possible path of meaning through the ways of the curriculum. The judgement the criticism portrays comes through the realization and projection of the critic's perceptions.

Indeed, we should anticipate that critics with different educational orientations and interests will find in situations as phenomenologically dense as classrooms different things to describe, interpret, and evaluate.  

The properties that critics emphasize sustain their judgements of significance. If the evidence they present corroborates, their conclusions are authenticated.

Sources of Criticism

Eisner writes regarding his concept of criticism:

It is instructive to note that the type of connoisseurship and particularly the type of criticism I am describing does not have a firm or well-developed tradition in schools of education. Such traditions do exist in highly sophisticated forms in literature, drama, the visual arts, poetry and music.

Background sources for this notion of criticism were primarily John Dewey, David Ecker, Max Kozloff, Susanne Langer, and Stephen Pepper, writers in the field of aesthetic criticism. Clifford Geertz, an ethnographer, was also influential.

In the aesthetic criticism of the above mentioned, the relationship between the critic and the work is an important one. The experience begins with sensuous discrimination of the
immediate particulars of the encounter between critic and work.

Max Kozloff describes the complexity of this exchange.

The variables in the aesthetic experience, therefore, are the work, the spectator's physiological and emotional response, and whatever appropriate information he can bring to bear---all of which will affect the mutual shaping of object and subject.¹¹

The record of the exchange is a rendering of sensations and images, using the language of "innuendo, nuance, and hypothesis, because what is peripheral to direct statement in language is often central to a pictorial encounter on its meaning".¹² The stress is on the experience, since it is the lived exchange between the critic and the work that provides the coherence of its disclosure. The richer the experience the greater the aesthetic value. The significance of disclosure is towards actualizing the fullest realization of experience.

In the ethnography of Clifford Geertz, the researchers are continually trying to pick their way through "piled-up structures of inference and implication".¹³ They aim "to ferret out the unapparent import of things".¹⁴ Then they disclose what they find by writing "thick description". In writing "thick description" the researcher is, according to Geertz,

Trying to read (in the sense of "construct a reading of") a manuscript---foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behaviour.¹⁵

The only possibility of maintaining attention to totality, of attaining a total idea of the situation, is to view the
situation as a series of views through time. Clifford Geertz explains it this way:

The important thing about the anthropologist's findings is their complex specificness, their circumstantiality. It is with the kind of material produced by long-term, mainly (though not exclusively) qualitative, highly participative, and almost obsessively fine-comb field study in confined context that the mega-concepts... can be given the sort of sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely about them, but, what is more important, creatively and imaginatively with them.16

Substance of Criticism

Substance concerns the premises that advise the nature of the datum, the methodological process, and the qualities of the finished critique.

Nature of the Datum

Eisner would prefer the use of the word danda in this type of study. His source, Stephen Pepper, explains the difference. Danda are observations structurally corroborated. Pepper writes in this regard,

Aesthetic control by the artist of his materials is essentially of the structural type. He makes his poetic word, or his chord, or his linear shape more and more aesthetically precise by his arrangement of other words, chords, and shapes in its context.17

The nature of the danda is that they are signals from the curriculum which impress the critic with their salience or pervasiveness. The inferences the critic makes regarding the
value of the variables are not drawn from noticing simple repetition of those variables. Significance is drawn from the placement of the variables among one another. If the curriculum exhibits a particular impression, it must possess certain properties producing that impression. These properties are the structural organization of the component variables, the underlying quality of relatedness. The organization of them delimits their meanings. The danda then are gathered so that they "establish links that eventually create a whole that is supported by the bits of evidence that constitute it."  

Although the organization can change (classrooms, for example, are dynamic structures), the emphasis is on the particular regularities of the organization. Thus, the structural organization of the curriculum defines the datum.

The intentions of the critic also define the datum. The datum or dandum chosen is evidence of what the critic as connoisseur appreciates. In which case, the evidence is weighted to support the critic's impressions and judgements, although the evidence must always be grounded in the actual experience of the critic with the curriculum.

**Methodological Process**

**Fieldwork.** Criticism begins as a fieldwork assignment, involving what Geertz calls "exceedingly extended acquaintances with extremely small matters". The critic engages the curriculum, spending time becoming acquainted with it in order to
overcome the barriers of first contact and unfamiliarity with its specifics. Fieldwork is done "through the direct observation of classrooms and through the careful viewing of videotapes of classroom life". It does not, Eisner cautions, involve an observation schedule, with pre-defined relationships and ordering,

One of the reasons why it is important for someone functioning as an educational critic to have an extended contact with an education situation is to be able to recognize events or characteristics that are atypical. One needs sufficient time in a situation to know which qualities characterize it and which do not.

It involves attention to the sensuous content of what happens. It involves questions, and it involves the ordering of the answers to those questions. The answers become the argument which support the critic's conclusions.

One has to spend time with a curriculum in order to find one's place there with it. The critic always looks at the relationship between the curriculum and himself. But he may also role play an actual or potential participant. If the critic begins to speak for others, he must learn to think in terms of their premises. However, he must necessarily do this through his own theoretic background and his own emotional and intellectual perspective. As Geertz notes, "that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to. . . ." Nevertheless, these constructs should stay as close to the actual ground of the experience as is possible.
Referential adequacy, empirical proof, is a must in this approach to curriculum criticism.

**Description.** The write-up of the criticism has three steps which, as Eisner points out, are not at all separate. They work together to reveal what the critic perceived and thought. Description, the first step, is a rendering of the critic's impression of the curriculum. It accesses the reader to the character of the educational experience, to what the critic appreciates (including the inconsistencies) in the curriculum. The critic selects details from the fieldwork experience and shapes them with the imaginative use of language, in order to convey an impression of that experience. Eisner writes in this regard,

> Here the educational critic has a task similar to his counterpart dealing with live theatre. The critic's task in each case is to provide a vivid rendering so that others might learn to see what transpires.\(^2\)

The critic attempts to bring into concrete vividness, in the reader's imagination, the colours, the movements, the sensitivities, the feelings that were exhibited in the curriculum. For this reason, the language of critical description is, in part, ornamental rhetoric. The writer using ornamental rhetoric is essentially detached from any desire to instruct. That is, the critic does not so much define what is happening as he establishes what is happening. The ornamental aspect articulates the felt sense of the curriculum exchange. The criticism communicates not by coding ideas into abstract
propositional language but rather by recreating an emotionally real experience. This aspect of the form says Eisner "generates the excitement" while at the same time preserving the truth that is in some degree verifiable. The curriculum critic describes his perception in order to inform the reader, so that when the reader encounters a similar event, his or her understanding of it will be enhanced.

Interpretation. In this second step, similar to Geertz' description of cultural analysis, the critic sorts out the significance of the curriculum experience.

Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses. The critic orders his discoveries. This ordering is done with a combination of one's best estimate of another's point of view, and from one's own emotional and intellectual perspective. The critic considers how the concrete experience was constituted and then, as interpreter, shapes the particulars into a thematic pattern. The following excerpt from a critique of Vallance's illustrates.

The pattern of grand sweep and detail is reflected in the rhythm and pacing of the materials. An energetic and moving rhythm is established by the study guide, which, we can gather, is the first component the student embarks upon. The energy is conveyed by the strong sense of purpose and commitment of the introductory sections here; the text portions of the study guide provide grand sweep, they define the broad contours, they establish the outlines of a bold and complex pattern and allow us to see where we are going. They establish a sense of anticipation. They invite...
But the energy level even within the study guide drops shortly after that, when we step into the welter of details on the mechanics, components, their purposes and interrelationships, and all the rest. This section is slow, intimidating . . . .  

The rhetoric of interpretation is in part, persuasive, organizing the data through the lens of the critic's own value criteria. The critic comes at the subject matter from a particular direction, presumably wanting the reader to go in that direction, too. The critic does not necessarily exclude other directions of entry into the subject, but one direction predominates. The details are organized to establish corroborating conditions for an appraisal of values to be made. In this regard Eisner advises the critic,  

There are many types of educational excellence and an educational critic should be familiar with them . . . The educational critic needs to be able to recognize what was neglected or rejected as well as what was accepted when a teacher uses a particular approach in a classroom.  

Evaluation. In step three, evaluation, the critics explain relevance in terms of educational criteria. They may analyze the how of the social meanings, determining their ground and their meaning by relating the internal values of the curriculum to the external values of society. The descriptive and interpretive aspects substantiate the evaluative, which are the conclusions. The following excerpts from a Barone critique are illustrative.
Some of the words that describe the homes of the district,

- lush
- well-tended
- haughtily
- maintain a distance
- lavish houses
- thoroughbred stallions

The schoolroom,

- invites me
- engulfs me
- omnipresent words pervade the room

The children,

- lots of Erics and Chrises and Heathers and Lisas
- crawl
- tickles
- amorphous groups
- bask
- clump together
- put our arms around our work

Some sentences that order Barone's impressions,

- What do we do all day? Well, lots of things, but mainly reading and math. They're very important, sitting at the tip-top of our contracts. Why else would the smiles of our teachers become so broad when we have finished them? You can tell it from the omnipresence of the words and numbers that decorate the room, and because when you go to see the teacher, it's almost always to learn reading and math.

- Mr. Sullivan didn't write the books upon the shelf, so they aren't all chopped up. If you know how, and if you let yourself, you can get a very different kind of reward for reading them. A reward from inside the books and inside yourself.

- his answer was so pointed that it stuck me
- digested it with amazing speed and never once paused to savour it
- feeling vaguely like a tool
- even one thing--don't you think?--if it really
  sparkles; can be greater than fourteen that have no
  luster
- We are mainly learning how to read, I tell you . . .
  and learning how to count. Those words are our tools.
  When we use them we learn to think a certain way. We
  line them up, and our world lines up with them. The
  words are tools for straightening out our world so we
  can use our number-tools to measure it . . .
- What about the glory of sounds and shapes and colours?
  Is it not also important for us to learn how they can
  play upon each other? How we can arrange them in our
  dreams?

Some of his conclusions,

- Scott and Lisa and all my friends are sailing to their
  houses now, there to act out their lives as sons and
  daughters, I am sure. And I am thirty-one years old
  again as I instruct my car to take me to my other
  home. But on my way I still hear the words of babes
  as they echo through these hills. I glance again at
  these houses and now I think I understand their
  smugness. For I have befriended their future, and
  know that they can well afford their airs of nonchalance. Their well groomed heirs are returning
  in a little yellow school bus. They carry with them
  their well-honed skills and each a piece of the warmth
  in which they passed the day. (There are much, much
  worse ways to live a life in school!)
  But I sigh softly to myself, for I still don't
  know if anyone within these houses ever sees these
  fluffy hills, with their fur now changing to a tawny
  brown. Who catches the scent of eucalyptus trees as
  it mingles with the sunlight? Or who can understand
  those distant lives - in much, much darker places -
  lives crunched upon each other like jagged, rusty tin
  cans in a garbage heap? Who feels the excitement that
  throbs inside majestic works of art? For whom are
  books the tunnels to imaginary worlds that never were
  before and yet have always been?
  As I whiz on my way, I notice that many of the
  apricot blossoms have fallen now, lying shriveled on
  the road. Just before they are pressed beneath the
  insistent wheels of my automobile machine, in a flash
  I wonder if my good pals Scott and Lisa will forever
  gaze past them - straight ahead. Or will they learn
  to see their colors?
  That would be great.
The critic works on two levels of appreciation, on the interpretive documentation of the experienced curriculum and on the implications of the projected consequences of the curriculum. Criticism must present a verifiable picture of what is the case. Normative social theory will intrude to suggest why that is the case and/or what ought to be the case. Evaluation per se is rhetorical discourse since the reader is asked to serve as mediator of the exchange which the critic is presenting, and of the change which the criticism functions to suggest.

Qualities of the Finished Critique

The finished critique is a communicative event. The form of it expresses the critic's way of seeing. The form is also what is received and considered by the reader. The form affects the reader. It does this in essentially two ways. It is narration and it is argument.

The form is narrative since, as Eisner writes, "for making public the ineffable, nothing is more precise than the artistic use of language." Critical descriptions are in themselves interpretations. They involve recollection and recreation, that become in the making fictions, fictions in the sense that they are "something made", "something fashioned". The critique is fashioned so that it documents with accuracy the thematic, contextual, and performance aspects of the curriculum interaction. The selected movements of the
interaction are presented so that the latitudes and longitudes of the context, as the critic saw it, are presented. The criticism circulates a story about what the critic observed. Indicator incidents are portrayed with colour to substantiate the theme. Eisner writes about the language used, "What the educational critic employs is a form of linguistic artistry replete with metaphor, contrast, redundancy, and emphasis."

Thick description aims at describing the meaning or significance of behaviour as it occurs in a cultural network saturated with meaning. What cannot be grasped literally is suggested and presented analogically. The language is evocative. The form is emotive. Rich detail converges from several directions relaying and substantiating the critic's impressions. Sometimes "thick description" has been adapted to mean redundant so that the repetitions reveal what that single quality is that pervades the whole experience in spite of variations and inconsistencies. Some excerpts from a critique by Donmoyer illustrate.

Donmoyer favours lifeless past participles.

- are valued
- were reconstituted
- is ordered
- are prized
- is barren
- is disconnected
- is victimized
- well prepared
- is controlled

The verbs in the present tense that he uses are not pretty.
He describes the teacher as an automaton.

- mechanized precision
- face remains immobile
- great economy of movement and gesture
- a marionette whose strings are too tight
- shocking beige
- stared emptily... In a voice void of feeling
  ... an inquiry.
- nondescriptly made
- empty

He describes the classroom as a caricature of the larger society.

- disconnected
- unjoined
- labels
- compliantly
- dutifully
- gradual enculturation
- absence of passion and enthusiasm
- well prepared for life
- to efface themselves
- well trained for a society of bureaucratic cubicles, assembly lines, and secretarial pools
- like Big Macs... all precooked, prepackaged, artificially flavoured
- carbon paper
- efficiency
- the dotted line

The form says Eisner "directs our attention so that a certain kind of experience can be had." Also, the form is argument. Important qualities that pervade the curriculum being critiqued pervade the criticism.
Assumptions are embedded in the language. The curriculum is examined from a very personal point of view. But the form of this approach does not exhibit concern with the critic's personal point of view solely. This kind of criticism attempts also to approximate the personal reality of another (others) who are more directly (habitually) grounded in the experience. The critic has been there as a spontaneous participant --- dressed in the guise of student, perhaps. Although it cannot possibly be a relation of identity, especially if the student is a child and the critic is not, the assumption is that there is intersubjective correlation. Eisner writes in this regard, "My point here is simply this: Objectivity is a function of intersubjective agreement among a community of believers." There is a connection between the critic and the natives of the curriculum as the critic strives for empathetic understanding. The criticism looks at what other characters mean by the words they use, the mannerisms they affect, the materials they surround themselves with. There is a separation between the critic and the other participants or potential participants, since the critic consciously includes his educated (in terms of educational criteria) opinion (connoisseurship) to distinguish what is happening and what is not happening. Conclusions are drawn from what the critic sees people and things doing. The form of this approach draws forth with careful detail the performance, contextual, and thematic aspects of the curriculum. These details converge in a rhythm that distills a way of
thinking about the curriculum. The form is argument. The reader may disagree. The criticism welcomes dialogue.

Difficulties with Reader Acceptance

There is a difficulty common to review literature, namely, selective perception. There is difficulty with the transformation of aesthetics criticism to educational criticism, namely epistemic contradiction. There are also difficulties in this regard which prompt distrust of the critic and fear of victimization of teachers. Lastly, there are questions regarding the relevance of criticism in this mode and the aspect of honouring the experience of children.

Selective Perception

Eisner writes in this regard, "Insofar as the products of man are to have educational consequences, the fit between the audience and the message needs to be taken into account." The criticism is a message about a curriculum. With that message Eisner sees three potential problems:

- poor critical talk,
- critical talk that is inappropriate for the competencies of the audience listening to it or reading it, or
- because the audience is so unprepared to perceive that a much more powerful educational program for that audience is needed. (sic)

Sometimes readers distrust an approach simply because it is different than their own. Someone else's approach appears to be selective, privatized, random. For example, Eisner notes that
those researchers who are secure only in multiplicative corroboration will not be able to accept criticism as a valid form of inquiry.

The specter of having to consider for purposes of educational evaluation a variety of educational criticisms is likely to frighten some people. There is often the temptation to seek simple, clear-cut, unambiguous answers to complex problems. Having to consider alternatives, to deal with dilemmas, to resolve contradictions, to think in a complex way about complex issues may seem to be more of a challenge than some are willing to take.38

There are also those, though, who do believe in criticism as a valid form of curriculum inquiry; however, the paradigm through which they wish to do it is different. Michael Apple, for example, would prefer to use the language of social critique. There is between Eisner and Apple a difference in ways of both attending to phenomena and in ordering those phenomena. Apple's difficulty with the Eisner approach is that individual practitioners are not willfully political. Although he appreciates what the approach does offer as case studies, he has difficulty with its lack of relational analysis:

This failure to search for connections between the dynamics within one particular case study and the larger configuration of economic, political, or even cultural institutions is a weakness in nearly all these studies.39

Eisner's approach does not go "far enough in one's political or economic analysis of the setting being examined."40 It is not critical enough, because it is done within the confines of educational theory rather than being related to the forces of
history or economics.

**Epistemic Contradictions**

In a review, Harold Pearse referred to Eisner as "an educational go-between" a phrase which suggests Pearse's ambivalence towards the Eisner approach. He concludes his review:

Ultimately, in aiming at a rational, logical explication of the ineffable through verbal means to an audience presumably consisting largely of those who perpetuate the myths and values he is crusading against, Eisner finds himself in a curious predicament. He is up against a brick wall trying to use those bricks as his only weapons and means of defence. Fortunately, the mortar has begun to crumble, some bricks are loose, and Eisner's aim is true, at least some of the time."

In this "curious predicament", Eisner writes with a curious mixture of passion and appeasement. With passion Eisner talks of the critic establishing the sense of the experienced curriculum, the meanings of which are neither true nor false, they are as perceived. Value in this sense has to do with the rendering of wholeness, order, harmony, meaning, significance.

With appeasement he talks of worthwhileness in terms of educational criteria. Is Eisner's emphasis on the critic having a background in educational history and philosophy because such background is necessary for the critic as connoisseur? Or, is it because it is necessary for the critic as arbiter? Gail McCutcheon suggests that the critics's role is not only to disclose the perceptions of a connoisseur, but also the evaluations of an arbiter, even though the word evaluation "has
such a psychometric connotation these days."* She has said,

I think criticism serves a couple of functions. One is as a vehicle for learning about something through vicarious experiences; but it also makes you consider the merits or lack of merits of those materials. That is evaluation.*

Wells Foshay, in conversation with McCutcheon and others, expresses his confusion in this regard. First, he suggests that he sees evaluation as the "climax" of criticism. Then he goes on to say that others could emphasize a different role* and gives an example of literary criticism as mostly the interpretation of a connoisseur,

Trilling deals almost exclusively with . . . how the work engages Trilling. Trilling was no ordinary man and the way it engages him is instructive in itself, and it's not evaluation. I think in our ordinary discourse we've thought of criticism as evaluation primarily. That's only part of it and maybe not indeed the main part in any given work of criticism.*

Is Eisner's call for evaluation according to educational criticism a main part of this approach to criticism, or is it thrown in as appeasement? Somehow its presentation confuses. It also worries others, for whom structural corroboration is not enough justification.

Distrust of the Critic

There is what Eisner calls "poor critical thought".* Thomas Barone, a practitioner of the Eisner approach, enumerates two examples of poor critical thought:
Poorly documented interpretations, distortion of events to fit a certain writing style or belief system, and rash general statements that attempt to stand without any buttressing by real-world referents—all tend to focus our attention more on the mentality of the author than on the empirical phenomena of the classroom suposedly being revealed.

... The aim is characterization, not caricature. Reducing a complex personality to a stereotype, presenting him or her, for example, only in terms of traits representative of a particular class or group, is indeed a form of reductionism. Reductionism in this kind of qualitative holistic approach is especially dangerous, for there is advertisement of a representation of complex, empirical "reality". The readers may be drawn into such a false or facile characterization, their critical faculties blunted by the highly detailed appearance of reality being shoved forth. It is the responsibility of the author to attempt to avoid such reductionism.\(^8\)

Elizabeth Vallance, another practitioner, worries about her evocative writing not being taken seriously, about the reader "tripping out on really nice writing".\(^9\) This could happen if it appears to the reader that the critic has turned his or her back while communing with oneself. If this apparently happens, then Munby can see "the effort of criticism fostering something like disdain rather than the sort of acknowledgement good criticism deserves."\(^{50}\) Wells Foshay, however, answers Vallance's worry this way,

There is such a thing as critical theory and there is criticism one reads for its own sake. For example, I'm a great admirer of Andrew Porter and Pauline Kael in the New Yorker. Some of the music reviewed I've never heard and am unlikely to hear and I rarely see films anymore, yet I enjoy reading Pauline Kael. So the effect of that kind of good writing is upon my general sensibility. Can't we draw a parallel here?\(^{51}\)

Eisner, too, would probably see that effect upon the reader's
general sensibility as the art of the connoisseur coming through.

There is also some agonizing over the need for justification. Ed Wachtman expresses his discomfort with the Vallance critique "Scanning Horizons and Looking at Weeds",

How do you justify the fact that these materials are as exciting as you portray them? I think the weakness of the paper is in its lack of consideration of this issue; but what's the justification of the art of the literary critic? I don't know if there is any, except the fact they are still in the field while others have been weeded out. How do you justify your sense of the experience, your portrayal of that experience to other people? I think that that is a problem any of us who are interested in this area are going to have to deal with.

... ...

Maybe the question of justification is one we can bypass and say that justification in this sense isn't necessary.52

Stephen Pepper, a professor of philosophy and aesthetics, would probably assuage Wachtman's unease with the following proposition:

It must not be forgotten that the aesthetic work of art is not realized in any casual perception but is a perceptive series and involves a perceptual grasp. Normally constituted men brought up in the same culture may approach a work of art from quite different initial perceptions, but as they enlarge their perceptive series and build up the total perceptive structure of the work of art, this total structure is bound to become more and more nearly identical for the various men.53

Barone quoting from Tom Wakefield would give Watchman this assurance:
Such reporting is 'imaginative' not because the author has distorted the facts, but because he has presented them in a full instead of a naked manner, brought out the sights, sounds, and feeling surrounding these facts, and connected them by comparison with other facts of history, society, and literature in an artistic manner that does not diminish but gives greater depth and dimension to the facts.\footnote{54}

Validity in these cases relies upon the credibility of the witness and/or in the consistency of the evidence presented and the elaboration of meaning rendered.

Even so, distrust of the critic reaches even harsher levels, namely, the potential there is for victimization of teachers.

Victimization of Teachers

Harold Pearse expresses this distrust this way:

'What would happen if educational criticism, if parallel with art criticism, were carried to its logical conclusion? Do we wish to transport into the field of education and perpetuate the kind of monopoly and power some art critics enjoy? Do we want critics to make or break teacher's careers? Is this kind of abuse avoidable?\footnote{55}'

Here, Pearse displays basically a distrust of the paradigm chosen, and sees critics in the arts as essentially cavillers. Michael Apple suggests that, for criticisms "poetically or ethnographically recounted",

'... to assume that even individual teachers exist unrelated to larger structural forces that in part determine their sense of appropriate school experience, teacher role, etc., is merely to continue educations' long history of blaming the victim."\footnote{56}

Apple assumes this potential for victimization of teachers is inherent in the approach for two reasons:
Many people now engaged in qualitative research have had to learn how to do it themselves. There is little cumulative research as yet, so the questions one asks will tend to be descriptive, taxonomic, and internalistic merely to establish a base upon which to stand. Another reason is probably just as important, if not more so. This has to do with the politics of knowledge distribution. The tools and traditions of a critical "externalist" analysis of schools --- that is, the evaluation of school experience that relates the day-to-day life in classrooms to the unequal economic and social relations and unequal control of institutions outside it --- is usually unavailable to educators.⁵⁷

Materials Criticism

There is unease about criticism being used on curriculum materials only, that is, as self-contained artifacts in isolation from their being used. Maxine Greene expresses that worry:

I do not see how one can ever be sure of what experiences are made possible by curricula. I am skeptical of the degree to which the lived world can be controlled. To find a way to describe the qualitative aspects of curriculum materials and packages is to do one kind of thing; to hazard guesses as to the impact they are likely to have on diverse human beings is another, quite another. The "experiential qualities", I am saying, are in the materials; they cannot be presumed to be in the lived worlds of children.⁵⁸

If, however, critics are looking at a curriculum package not as a thing in itself but as a thing in terms of performance (that is, looking at curriculum as a performing art), they could be defended as doing what Joel Weiss calls "envisioning the score". Gail McCutcheon elaborates:
In a way it's a question of whether curriculum is a performing art. Can you look at a curriculum script (material) and say whether or not it has potential for developing into something. It would be equivalent to choosing a play for a specific theater troupe to choosing a play for a specific season of performance, knowledge of the capabilities of the troupe and theater, the audience's taste, and so forth. Surely a curriculum critic (or drama manager) can envision that some programs (or scripts) have more potential than others.\textsuperscript{59}

If it is agreed that the connoisseur/critic can envision the materials in terms of performance, at least for him or herself, it would presumably also be agreed that that is not the same thing as a criticism of the live performance. Materials criticism is criticizing the score, the script. Materials criticism as envisioning is purely speculative. Perhaps, to some readers, it can lead to a serious reappraisal of the taken-for-granted aspect of the package. "criticism is a kind of advance organizer, just as theory in general is an advance organizer."\textsuperscript{60} It can even have value as a base for creative playfulness in regards, for example, the developer's solemn intent. "We use the critic's work as a set of cues that enable us to perceive what has been neglected."\textsuperscript{61} Even though the concept of envisioning can be accepted in materials criticism, there is still something important missing. Hugh Munby elaborates:

Generally, the information gathered in these ways tells more of what we can expect the curriculum to do for its teachers and their teaching and of the beliefs and assumptions that undergird the program's structure than it tells of the children's experience and how they perceive the curriculum to be changing them.\textsuperscript{62}
Performance criticism, on the other hand, is critiquing what Barone calls four-dimensionality, in the sense that the curriculum is "played out". Within the four-dimensionality of the played-out curriculum, there are ellipses, compressions, expansions. Things are played out simultaneously on different parts of the stage by different characters. Indeed, materials can be played out incongruously, in terms of package intent. The critic interacting with the curriculum can, drawing from experience, discover some of these actualities and potentialities of the "played-out" curriculum. However, neither in the envisioned nor in the played-out curriculum can the critic do this from a child's point of view.

Honouring Children

Hugh Munby and Maxine Greene have expressed this concern. Others have, too, for example:

Roger Simon: Does that mean if we as adult critics respond critically to a set of materials, its application is limited to the adult world, or does the adult's sense of aesthetic and meaning cross over?

Gail McCutcheon: It really doesn't. Some of my students worked on that problem last semester. They asked children which reading series they preferred by having the kids rank them after examining various series. They found that the children agreed with each other quite a bit, even though they were doing the ranking independently. They didn't agree, however, with the adults who also ranked the books.

What does prevent understanding of what is happening for children is that there is what Geertz would call "a lack of familiarity with the imaginative universe" of children. In materials criticism this contact with the imaginative universe
of children may be impossible, unless one is recording their impressions and interpretations, as Munby notes:

... The puzzle becomes one of finding adequate ways to represent a curriculum when the best way, that of describing the child's experience in it, is lost to us.  

However, even in criticizing the performed curriculum, the critic is neither a genuine participant (native) nor an unbiased observer. Even if, as connoisseur, one can identify the motivations of the other adults in the curriculum setting, can one appreciate the theories that children use to re-invent, or cope with what is happening? Critics can observe their social practices, but can they appreciate the fine distinctions? Some critics and educators do not care about these fine distinctions (e.g. Len Berk); others do (e.g. Joel Weiss). Witness the following recorded conversation:

Len Berk: It seems to me the essence of the thing is that one is drawing the kids in a certain direction. There is something peculiar about the children's literature and what's peculiar about it is that it's not meant merely to appeal to children, but to appeal to children in such a way so as to draw them toward an appreciation of what will be the best in adult literature. It is all very well that kids get into Superman. It does not, however, thrill me that they become attached to it. I would far rather find something that might appeal to them equally and draw them more clearly in the direction of something I want them to be attached to.

Joel Weiss: I think there is a question here, Len, that some books, for example, that you might enjoy and get something out of, happen to coincide with the enjoyment of your kids. But, are there books which children get something out of that you wouldn't?
Footnotes


5 Eisner, *Imagination*, p. 84.


15 Geertz, *Cultures*, p. 10.

16 Geertz, *Cultures*, p. 23.


19 Geertz, *Cultures*, p. 21.


22 Geertz, *Cultures*, p. 9.


25 Geertz, *Cultures*, p. 20.


32 Eisner, "Connoisseurship and Criticism", *TCR*, 78:3:353

33 Robert Donmoyer, "School and Society Revisited: An Educational Criticism of Miss Hill's Fourth Grade Classroom", cited in Elliot Eisner, *The Educational

34 Eisner, Imagination, p. 201.

35 Eisner, Imagination, p. 214.


38 Eisner, Imagination, p. 218.


40 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 504.


45 n. "I do think critical theory can help us here! I'll use the example of Purves's analysis of literary criticism to which there are four general parts" ("Aesthetic Criticism and Curriculum Description", CI, 7:2:114).


54 Thomas E. Barone, "Effectively Critiquing the Experienced Curriculum: Clues for the 'New Journalism'", Curriculum Inquiry, 10:1:51.


57 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 504.


59 Joel Weiss and Gail McCutcheon, cited in "Aesthetic Criticism", CI, 7:2:120.


61 Eisner, Imagination, p. 216.

63 Barone, "Effectively Critiquing", CI, 10:1:36.
This chapter analyzes some characteristics of an approach to curriculum criticism developed by William Pinar, of the University of Rochester, Faculty of Education. He calls his curriculum criticism *currere*, which is the Latin infinitive from which the word curriculum is derived. He explains his choice of term in the following paragraph:

Instead of examining only the course of study, or one's intentions in designing the course to be run, in *currere* we focus on the running of the course. The course becomes subsumed in, though not reduced to, the experience of the runner. This runner is the teacher or the student (or whoever comes in contact with curricula), although in this present study he is a student (that is to say, he has adopted the attitude of a student)....

Sources for the information presented in this chapter are some writings of William Pinar, and of his colleague, Madeleine Grumet. These writings on *currere* are examined under the scrutiny of the methodological questions enumerated in chapter one. The major subdivisions of the chapter are (1) presuppositions, (2) substance of criticism, and (3) difficulties with reader acceptance.

**Presuppositions of Currere**

Presupposed in this critical approach are definitions of curriculum, criticism, and autobiography and some particular sources from which these notions have been taken and developed.
Curriculum as Currere

Pinar and Grumet look at curriculum in two ways, as an abstraction and as a lived experience.

Curriculum as an abstraction is "the grand order of events that school boards finance, school buildings contain, theorists analyze and teachers organize". ² This definition focuses attention on educational structures that are external to the learner's experience in the classroom, that is, external to the lived process of transforming the abstraction into teaching/learning actions. Curriculum as abstraction, therefore, is recognized as the convention that brings learners together, but it is the emerging qualities of that encounter, the potentialities of the experience that are valued and emphasized in the Pinar-Grumet approach. In terms of the potentialities, Grumet writes, "Curriculum is artifice. We must shape it, use it." ³ The emphasis is on the remaking of the cultural product as presented.

Curriculum as lived experience is a virtual universe of possibilities; this definition focuses attention on the learner, and his or her experience, on the ways in which the learner uses the symbols of the abstract curriculum and moves through them. Pinar writes that "the individual becomes the nuclear curriculum component, and the disciplines and the teachers the cortical" ⁴ , implying that the student's experience is the germ that comes to form, as it struggles through and is nourished by the surrounding medium. More
specifically, a curriculum as experience is a "running of a course" (currere) In Pinar's language, this has to do with the relation between the self (the runner) and the external structure (the course being run). The external structure is the educational context in which the runner proceeds. The runner runs that context in two senses: in the sense of running-governing it, and in the sense of running through it. The runner wields the presentation of the environment, becoming the agent for its imprint, as well as the object. Curriculum as experience does not establish itself "out there". The course being run is what the "I" makes of it.

Curriculum is established through experience, and criticism through the examination of that experience, that is through currere. In this definition, curriculum and criticism are reciprocal. Curriculum is currere; curriculum criticism is currere.

Criticism as Currere

Criticism focusses primarily on curriculum as experienced (the governing of) and on curriculum as experiencing (the running through). Grumet writes in this regard:

Curriculum criticism requires, then, not only criticism of the curriculum that is spread out before us, but also criticism of the curriculum that dwells in our own habits and anticipations.  

In other words, the critic aims to understand the experience of curriculum. To do so, the critic describes his or her own experience; and in that description uncovers the nature of, and
perhaps the reasons for, that experience.

The process of currere demands a shift from external forms (the abstracted curriculum) to internal rootedness (experience reviewed through autobiography), and towards a reconceptualized notion of curriculum. The purpose of curriculum criticism is to take the curriculum as given and to change it to a lived experience, so that, in Grumet's words, "the situation becomes my situation." In which case one creates deepened agency for one's self on and within the curriculum. As the search for new forms of consciousness about curriculum, it is a journey of discovery, assertion, and creation. It has to do with struggles and capacities to break old patterns. Grumet illustrates with the following analogy:

What we seek when we examine our experience of curriculum is discrepancy, a lid that won't quite fit the pot and lets a little steam escape to tell us what's cooking inside.

Curriculum criticism as currere is dialectical pedagogy. Grumet explains:

It proposes to provide a place and a method for students to attend to those meanings that they draw from their educational experience and to find them confirmed without having to assume a static and brittle self-concept, such as those that may be drawn from the grab-bag of familial, professional and class roles.

Very importantly, currere is from the point of view of the learner, by the learner. The critic is student. Currere unravels the critic's prescribed identity. It tends to take away the theatrical props behind which he or she hides. The
critic's point of view moves from documentation of the given situation to estrangement, from familiar interpretation or unexamined acceptance to reclaimation of the situation as his or her own.

Curriculum reconceptualized through currere is what Pinar and Grumet call "poor" curriculum. They borrow the metaphor from Jerzy Grotowski's celebration of "poor" theatre, where it is felt regarding:

Use of Furniture Scenery
They obstruct.
One lies on them, hides behind them, blends in front of them . . . The actor finds himself camouflaged like a modern cannon on the edge of a forest.

Use of Costume
Costume is portable scenery, like the shell of a turtle. The animal may be feline. Who will ever know? His action is all within.

Use of Props
The more props the actor handles, the less he is likely to be particular about his acting. He is innocent because his hands are full.

Use of Lighting
The purpose of lighting is to obscure. To follow the analogy through, criticism as currere similarly strips the curriculum as encountered of the distractions and camouflages of doing what one is told to do, of acting in a certain manner because one is expected to. In criticism one examines these instructions and expectations so that one may reclaim possibilities of experience and action. Critics become
particular about their curriculum, and cannot claim innocence because their hands are full.

**Autobiography as Currere**

Autobiography is an art form. In *currere* it is used as the vehicle for examining the interaction of the self and the curriculum as they meet in educational settings. Using recall, autobiography directs one's attention to one's self, and one's life, through the medium of writing.

However, autobiography is more than recall, and as such it is more than the vehicle for *currere*, it is also the "source of energy and direction for the journey." In autobiography, the self creates and is created. It is the life story and the life process that created the story. It is a telling of what happened and a telling of what the writer does with those happenings at the moment he or she recreates them.

Thus autobiography becomes the main method and source of data for the critic who wants to understand the nature of, and reasons for, his or her particular experience with a curriculum. Writing allows reflection upon the interface between the "I" in present situation and the "I" in past and future situations as they meet in curriculum. This interface emerges as consciousness of one's self in situation. Grumet explicates:

Thus, we are proposing that the autobiographical process be moved to the very center of humanities education because it is within that relationship of the knower to the known that education is humanizing. It is not merely coincidental that significant autobiographies are written by significant men, for that self-awareness that withdraws from the immediacy of experience, from
the opaque deposits of past events and achievements may be the very source of those achievements and experience, as well as the source of their history. Self-report provides an attitude, as well as a process, that may protect us from becoming thinglike, obsessed with being, mistaking it for an object.¹¹

Sources of Criticism

Grumet writes of the sources of currere:

The theory base of currere's exploration of educational experience is drawn from humanistic philosophy, phenomenology's emphasis on the reciprocity of subjectivity and objectivity in the dynamic constitution on the dialectical relationship of man to his situation.¹²

Pinar writes:

Searching for conceptual tools to excavate existential experience, I returned to Sartre, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, read seriously for the first time Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, returned to Jung and Freud again.¹³

These sources for many of Pinar's and Grumet's ideas are difficult to understand because the literature of each is diverse, representing many authors and traditions. It is not always clear how Pinar and Grumet use this literature, how they choose to interpret the borrowed concepts. A source that Pinar claims for his notions of experience and meaning are authors in the phenomenological tradition, and for his notions of responsibility and freedom, existentialism. Grumet emphasizes how the work of currere proceeds through the double metaphors of psychoanalysis and autobiography.
From the point of view of phenomenology, reality (that is, experience) is multiple, and hence "knowledge of the world requires knowledge of self-as-knower-of-the-world". Central to this tradition is the importance of reflection upon one's experience. Grumet cites the words of Alfred Schutz in this regard:

Meaning does not lie in experience. Rather, those experiences are meaningful which are grasped reflectively. The meaning is the way in which the Ego regards its experience. The meaning lies in the attitudes of the Ego toward that part of its stream of consciousness which has already flowed by.

What is grasped reflectively is that all objects are objects of consciousness; that is, they have been constituted by the subject's intentionality. Consciousness is not the passive recipient of sense impressions, but is the reciprocal exchange between the "I" and the Object. Consciousness is not dumb, not inert, not reactive, it is an act of intention. If it is passive, it is passive or receptive genesis. Phenomenology, therefore, attempts to describe the immediacy of intention and the freshness of reception of the encounter of the "I" and the object. To produce phenomenological descriptions, one has to look at things differently than one is wont to do; phenomenologists call this estrangement from everyday vision "bracketing." This bracketing of the taken-for-granted world of perceptions "extends to the researcher the artist's awareness that his subjectivity transforms any objectivity it seeks to describe." Bracketing allows one "to see the familiar with the
freshness and immediacy of the vision that is seeing for the first time" so that one may reveal to oneself the foundations of taken-for-granted forms.

In existential philosophy, the world exists before our conception of it, but "man is conceived of as the radiating source of meaning." Existence is being in the world where the emphasis is on the dialectical relationship of man to situation. In this dialectic, there is an uneasy paradox. The world is determined by the "I" in-the-world: the "I" is the conscious creator of self and of self-in-the-world. However, the world is a source of knowledge, a mirror reflection that one both extends for and wrestles with. Grumet elucidates:

Existentialism recognizes culture as the given situation, with all its facticity, through which the individual expresses his subjectivity, embodied in acts in the world. Awareness of self develops not in hermitic introspection but in the response of subjectivity to objectivity.

History, whether personal or public, is an objectivity to be surpassed. The emphasis is on situation and action in the world.

The practice of psychoanalysis is concerned with dialogue between the present of one's situation and the past. The dialogue is precipitated by questions and is allowed to flow associatively. Associations that have been neglected in the conscious mind now claim one's conscious attention. Psychoanalysis seeks the connections between the manifest and the latent content of human experience. The assumption is that
manifest actions are exteriorized forms of lived experience latent in the unconscious. Making latent belief visible allows the analysand to take responsibility for completed situations and for present situations in his or her life. With that responsibility comes a new sense of freedom where the person becomes the self-conscious agent in situations.

**Substance of Criticism**

Substance concerns the premises that advise the how of currere, including the nature of the datum, the methodological process, and the qualities of the finished critique.

**Nature of Datum**

What is the datum that the critic generates and examines? In general, in currere "the subject and object of the inquiry are identical". The critic's personal experience is the datum, as Pinar scales inquiry down to the experiential field of the individual researcher in situation. Critics do not research the course, they research the runner-of-the-course, that is, self running the curriculum. In this definition of experience, self is object, place, and agent, as Grumet explains:

> Self-as-object emerges in the study of subjectivity; self-as-place emerges in the study of objectivity; self-as-agent emerges in the study of the discipline, for it is within its particular forms and signs that . . . one acts.

Generation of the datum is conducted self-rememberedly. The narrative is self-reflexive and self-critical. Currere uses
self report and self-examination, that is, an autobiography$^{22}$ of one's educational life to generate the datum. Why?

The biographic past? It is usually ignored. Ignored but not absent. The biographic past exists presently, complexly contributive to the biographic present. While we say it cannot be held accountable for the present, the extent to which it is ignored is probably the extent it does account for what is present.

Autobiography provides the documentary evidence; and it fixes the encounter as remembered. James Olney, a theorist in autobiography, describes the aspect of self-examination.

The "I" . . . coming awake to its own being shapes and determines the nature of the autobiography and in so doing half discovers, half creates itself. . . .$^{24}$

The datum of the critic's experience is of two kinds. The initial datum is that which presents itself to the inquirer's consciousness in terms of the encounter with the curriculum text or project and in terms of his or her own biographic present. Pinar has discovered from generating this initial datum that:

Thought and feeling, often staccato in surfacing to awareness, are regularly not initially intelligible, but almost always sensically related to and usually contributive toward an understanding of biographic past, present, and future.$^{25}$

Although the initial datum is always the critic's remembered and interpreted experience of the curriculum event or object, plus the stream-of-consciousness recording of the critic's own biographic present, later datum is reflection upon
the interpretations of the initial self-report. This second datum is not so much a gathering of information as it is a second look at what has been gathered in the initial datum. The second datum arises from the juxtaposition of the textual themes and the free associations of one's present experience. Reflection upon this juxtaposition reveals connections between them, meaningful to the critic. These connections are used for self-examination and, eventually, self-discovery.

A premise of currere is that schooled persons have been taught to suppress their intentions, or to channel them unreflectedly, into socially preferred behaviours, that persons are taught to decide problematic issues by adherence to rules. Therefore, Pinar believes that anything other than datum from the critic's own experience is not very useful in the practice of currere. A hope of currere is that critical understanding of self leads to critical action of self with others. Pinar has discovered for himself in the narration and exposition of currere that curriculum action moves from a position of naivite to a critical attitude, and then?

I am asked how is it that one travels from knowledge of the individual apparently idiosyncratic self to knowledge of the general? The relation between the individual and the universal exists although I cannot claim to understand it satisfactorily. I do know that as I travel inward, I tend to be freed from it, and hence more sensitive and receptive to what is external. It is as if because I can see more of myself in its multidimensional manifestations, I am also able to see more of others. It is as if after one travels for a certain distance in the realm of the idiosyncratic, one gets to the roots of that realm, and these roots become what is collective. That is, while these roots are
apparently common to us all, they are manifested idiosyncratically.26

Methodological Process

There are variations in the method of currere. Though Pinar and Grumet find that each situation demands its own methodological modifications, the essential method is described in the following paragraphs.

Text. Text is a specific curriculum material or event which is used to discipline the researcher's attention. It may be other-produced or self-produced. If it is other-produced, the critic "underlines or stars . . . passages which in some way 'stand out' from the remainder of the text"27 and thereby identifies what is significant to him or her. If the text is self-produced, it is autobiographical. Pinar has suggested a two part design, for a self-produced text, which he calls "regressive-progressive".

With the "regressive", "one returns to the past, to capture it as it was . . . as it hovers over the present."28 One captures the past in the written remembrance of it. The critic reconstructs the schooled past. Pinar elucidates:

It is suggested that one return to the schooled beginning, to the elementary years, to whenever one is able to reach. Enter again the classroom, watch the teachers, yourself and your classmates, what you did. More importantly, how you did it. From the start did you absent yourself in fantasy? Did these absences coincide with particular lessons (like geography) and with particular teachers?
On through the primary grades into junior and senior high school, keeping the observer's focus on the self. The self, in this classroom, with that teacher, these subjects, this response to that teacher, the intervention of parents regarding that situation, and one's response. One's attachment to these subjects, to those teachers; one's disinterest in that field, one's dislike of this teacher.

Athletic interests if any and their effects upon one's studies. Erotic interests as they impinged upon one's studies. The importance of public conceptions of status. This college or that? The self amidst it all, evolving this way, leaving those friends, taking on these, having these academic interests, then those.

... Summer jobs. Building houses in the suburbs, reading Bertrand Russell during lunch breaks. What was on the subject's mind those months? What mood, not visible then, kept him encapsulated, blurring his view?

In the recollection, the critic experiences his or her own biography as the present reconceptualizes it. The choice of words and the sequence of the narrative identify what is significant to him or her and thus become the text.

With the "progressive", one records anticipations. Pinar describes the task thusly:

Sit alone, perhaps in a slightly darkened room, in a comfortable chair with a writing table and a pen. Close the eyes, place the attention on the breathing. Take a few slow deep breaths as these are comfortable. The point of these minutes is relaxation. After one is relaxed (if the subject has employed any of currently available meditative techniques, s/he knows the desirable state), one thinks of the future, or tomorrow, of next week, of the next few months, of the next academic year, of the next three years and so on. Since our interest is what we are calling educational experience, gently bring the attention back to matters associated with your intellectual interest, your career,
and allow your mind to work free associatively. Record what comes . . . (It is important to free associate, and avoid use of the rational critical aspect . . . )

. . . .

Return to the chair and the dwelling in future states several times on different days over a period of several days or weeks or months.\(^3\)0

The images that are sounded become the text to which the critic will respond.

**Discernment of themes.** In this part of the procedure the critics examine what has been recorded as text, and hence what is significant, in order to discern among the particulars. To do this, critics will impose a conceptual frame of their own choosing upon the text, abstracting themes in terms of the language of any discipline of interest to them, for example Jungian psychology, literary criticism, or semiotics. But critics are advised to be conscious of attachments to their chosen frame, to soften the possibility of the "tunnel vision that constricts the cognitive lens".\(^3\)1 Aware of attachments, the critic approaches the text, whether entirely self-created or not, as something brand-new, and with some aloofness.

**Biographic Present.** This part of the procedure is an account of the critic's current life situation. It describes the emotional and sensual aspects of one's life. Pinar describes the reporting of the biographic present thusly:

The third step has been to write a more or less novelistic account of my current biographic situation. Where I am living, with whom, what emotional and intellectual issues I am apparently facing. In this
section I will try to give this data artful form, both to cultivate an attitude of giving pleasing and instructive form to the formless, one prerequisite of making sense of one's situation, and, by using a stream-of-consciousness technique, to try to get underneath the forms super-imposed by the natural attitude.\textsuperscript{32}

Grumet describes the methodology as "a permissive kind of minding".\textsuperscript{33} It is a narrative method wherein all scenes and events that impinge on consciousness are represented. It is a device for describing the process of consciousness. Its intent is to capture the flow and spectrum of sense impression, conscious and half-conscious impressions, memories, feelings, and random thought associations. It refers critics to self, to what Pinar calls one's "life-world" which is the ground for making sense of curriculum. He writes:

In a sense this process can be likened to studying the sun by examining its light on the ground. The ground is the life-world, and as I attempt to glimpse this world, the place of the intellect, and its academic expression, become visible.\textsuperscript{34}

Analysis. This part of the procedure involves study of the correspondences between the themes of the text and the associations of the biographic present. The critic is advised to use distancing, abstention from habitual attitudes and generalizations, in order to notice and appreciate details in the new context. The images that reflect back and forth among the text themes and the biographic present reveal postures of tension. What was strange to one's understanding now becomes familiar, when the biographic present and the text themes are juxtaposed. In the analytic step, the task is to create and
work with estrangement from the familiar, to become alert to unrealized assumptions and possibilities of curriculum. Grumet illustrates from her work with student teachers:

An essential focus of the practice of currere for these students was distancing, drawing back from the accounts of experience presented in the journals and essays in order to prevent hasty and premature crystallizations of self from forming around rigid attitudinal poles.\textsuperscript{35}

If a student asserted that theatrical experience was the acting out of fantasies of mastery, I indicated the possibility that this rather private conception be measured against the idea of theatre as communication between players and audience. If the concept offered was the drama of car accidents and hijackings, I asked the writer to consider the role of artifice, of action relegated to the realm of the unreal rather than the world of daily experience. If theatrical experience was identified as expression of emotion, I suggested reception of emotion. If the writer associated it with losing himself in a group project, I asked him how it differed from team sports.\textsuperscript{36}

In the analytic step, the critic encounter discrepancies, omissions, or ritualistic patterns in which oneself has become immersed, and has, therefore, not been able to see. Through currere one faces one's history as though one does not belong to it. It demands withdrawal from complete identification with oneself.

Synthesis. Synthetical activity is not necessarily evident in the write-up of currere. It is the part of the process that has still to be experienced, before the critic can become witness to it and write about it. In order to synthesize, critics have to consider those contingencies that hindered their finding out "why what might have happened never
happened". At this step comes the recognition that one owns the forms and habits of curriculum. In recognizing this ownership the critic can then work to turn away from those not wanted, and to take responsibility for those maintained. It involves altering one's life script in order "to present another fact of its content for our experience". In the act of synthesis, the critic prepares for new action and for new texts to be written.

Qualities of the Finished Critique

As a preliminary to this section, it should be noted that the writer of currere is also, and always, the reader of the currere. However, the reader may also be anyone else, other than the writer.

The form of the finished critique is a life-style revealed. It is autobiographical. Through the portrayal of currere the reader receives a sense of what the critic considers consequential information. Pinar writes in this regard:

The meaning of our study must be a "differential", as Merleau-Ponty would call it. It is in fact the difference between the "Common Beliefs" and the concrete idea or attitude of the person studied, the way in which the beliefs are enriched, made concrete, deviated, etc., which, more than anything else, is going to enlighten us with respect to our object.

Grumet elucidates further on the consequences of criticism:

The story then is the thesis; its reading, a dialectic that provides an antithesis and permits the narrator to imagine a new chapter that will fall somewhere between those two poles.

The criticism reveals the critic producing autobiographical
information and reflecting upon the import of that information. In the production of datum, the opposition of textual themes and biographic associations reveals consequential information not previously recognized by the writer as simultaneous or integral to his or her educational life. In the reflection upon that initial datum, possibly generative tensions in the critic's remembered life, in curriculum and curriculum-related situations, are revealed. These tensions surround the critic's attachments. Regarding attachments, Pinar writes that "We do not live without attachment. We are attached negatively or positively, to that which enters our "perceptual field"." It becomes apparent to the reader that it is the tensions surrounding a recorded incident that are generative rather than the incident explicitly. From the presentation of and reflection upon these incidents, the reader is able to see some of the subtle connections of the critic's attachments. This is especially important to the critic as reader. Understanding may then dawn for the critic regarding his or her own conceptual limitations, in terms of those attachments which have been hidden from conscious realization by one's intellectual and emotional habits. Pinar, as critic, sums up one of his realizations:

The integrative task was the cohering of the self-experienced-at-the university and the self-experienced-at-home. The former was primarily an intellectual, cerebral self, the latter a physical-spiritual and primarily nonconceptual self. (This dissociation of intellect from body and spirit is, interestingly, what I still am quick to discern in
others and in their work.) In the last two and one-half years there has been considerable movement on these issues, or through these issues. At the university, I experience still, though decidedly less intensely, a self more cerebral, more rushed, than I do at home. Yet the body is more present at the office, and my intellect more fluidly operative at home. The continuum, with intellect at one end and body-spirit at the other, is a shorter one. I experience myself as less vulnerable to my generational contemporaries and to my academic colleagues. The fundamental issue (another form of which is: what is the spiritual status of my academic work, and what is the political status of my spiritual work) remains, but is much diminished in intensity, and other issues comprise my present.*

The continuing work, as manifested in the form of currere, is to overcome the tendency to stop at one's first realization of one's attachments. The implication is that the critic is to use the new information accessed for further growth and for further effect on curriculum situations. The John S. Mann of 1968 would call currere a disclosure model of curriculum criticism, in that it does not merely picture with static accuracy a situation, but discloses stasis as a springboard for new action and for reconceptualizing the curriculum.* Grumet works with her students of currere in this way:

In Deborah's first essay, connections to personal history were abundant:

Leaping into that great bed (which I now just sit on) was a tremendous physical accomplishment which gave me great pride and joy. I can identify with that feeling now in my riding of horses or running for long distances. I love to know that I've met myself, pushed myself to a beatiful state of perfection. By perfection I mean that which is my utmost, beyond best, in
terms of timing and control and concentration. From the pleasure derived from such performances I obtained a secret knowledge that I know how to have my body work itself, that it always has more energy to burn for me, a belief (though it has often been threatened or beaten) that my body can do anything that I ask of it.

Rather than requesting more connections to personal experience, my response pursued the assumptions already residing in the details of her prose:

There are many ideas hovering around this description of perfection that you might want to examine. Stress, pain, testing --- also something private, secret, as if the public world demands some kind of compromise. Are you drawing a general assumption from this that only through stress that tests capacity, can its dimensions be revealed? What are the pedagogical implications here?"

The following excerpt by Stephen Somers, a graduate student with Pinar and Grumet, discloses a sense of awakening personal power, where through the process of currere he discovers alternatives, new potentialities for action within the situation:

The students strayed on a continuum between the hostile rejection I felt in 1972 and my current equanimity. I was especially concerned about those whose skepticism was palpable. Bewildered by the exacting theories and threatened by the humiliating postures, one student seemed to be on the verge of premature retirement. In responding to Brian's potential crisis, I solidified my commitment to Madeleine, Bill and Education 231. I empathized extravagantly on his behalf, offering him a galley seat on our little ship of fools. I made his doubts credible by connecting them to my own, while assuring him that he would arrive at his destination simply because I had three years earlier. I told him that our captain, Bill, felt as awkward as he did, but that currere gave him a
distance in which he could bask in his own personal sunlight. Yes, running with currere was exhausting, but it paid its dividends. I told him anything just to get him back on board. But, damn, did I feel vulnerable as he trampled over the bridge my cajoling and posturing provided for him. The investment proved to be the Waterloo of my arrogance; I could no longer pretend to be above it all. The conversion made a believer out of the converter.

A subsequent confrontation with another student dealt my ambivalence its final blow. Jack objected strenuously to my criticism of his first paper. (I had commented that his self-report evoked a smooth, rehearsed quality. It was like trying to hold on to an icicle.)

"I mean, I don't like the implication you are making," Jack challenged.

"And what was that?" I queried hesitantly.

"That it was a dishonest statement."

"Now wait a minute; that's your story. I didn't mean to impugn your honesty. I just didn't say that."

"Well, shit, what did you say then?" Gathering steam, confidence and the sympathy of his peers.

"Well, I only meant that it seemed overly smooth ... Everything seemed resolved."

"Crap, is there anything wrong with that, with feeling that education is a result of the resolution of problems?"

By then, I was enjoying the exchange, (Sarte's need to be needed?). "That's an interesting pedagogical possibility, but it seems from your paper that you have resolved all your problems. ... While I don't mean to get personal, that's pretty god damn incredible! ... That aside, I simply wanted to emphasize the process, not the finished product."

"Yeah, well, I am aware of that."

Others began to enter the conversation, but before the interaction became diluted, it gave Jack a chance to examine his assumptions. More significantly, he expressed his hostility rather than turning away with
the estranged arrogance I had fallen prey to in my senior year.

I emerged from the class in a state of suspended excitement. I had gained insight into my role and my pedagogy. As an instructor, I could no longer be satisfied as a passive or private footbridge. As an educator, I realized that I must shake up assumptions and disallow facile compliance.4,5

The reader of *currere* observes the critic working through resistance to what is contained in the autobiographic form, which is tied to concrete action in concrete situations. While working through resistances, the critic is using what is written and what is being written as resonance. The reader of *currere* can see the critic gaining self-knowledge. The reader's interest is captured by these emerging qualities, whose effect will probably transcend the moment of awareness revealed in the critique.

**Difficulties With Reader Acceptance**

This approach has occasioned dialogue in the literature of *currere*. It has been labelled atheoretical, ahistorical, apolitical, and has been accused of making the reader and critic feel vulnerable.

**Critic Vulnerability**

An encounter with oneself may be complex and uncomfortable. It can be agonizing. It is always disconcerting. The following excerpt written by Pinar is his recollection of his participation in a group led by Madeleine Grumet. He relates his feelings of discomfort and dismay in
situation. Through currere he recognizes the paradox and the ambiguity of his feelings.

Again, back in this place: I can't shake you. I can't. I have to treat where you are with respect. I know that's pedagogical principle. I know that's the psychosocial law. You won't move unless I endorse where you are. Then you feel safe enough to probe. Damn the fear. There's no time to probe. You seem lost to me, and only a shock has a chance.

I make myself shocking, mildly shocking. In return you give me anger and distrust.

The last seminar, just before Christmas, you tell me. You didn't trust me. You didn't trust me.

I didn't trust you either. But I refuse to let it silence me. I know I'm older, I know my role; you're right. Is there no way out of here?

It's March sixth and cold and gray, and I can't imagine I can say this to you.\(^6\)\(^6\)

In the next excerpt, Grumet writes of her student's expressed sense of vulnerability.

One student spoke of the vulnerability she experienced when she reread the thoughts she had committed to paper. What she saw there never quite measured up to her imagined self-concept. The critical mirror sent back a harsh light. For others there was too great a discrepancy between their experience and their ability to articulate it.\(^4\)\(^7\)

**Respondent Vulnerability**

The Tanners, for example, reveal their sense of vulnerability in the opening of their five-page response to what they call Pinar's "reconceptualist prescription". "For most of us, the era of New Left ideology, and campus confrontation is like a foreign contry, and for many the distance is agreeable."
They accuse Pinar of "rhetoric rather than rigorous analysis". Following, is a string of their accusations. There is irony in their vituperations, in that, out of the context of their paper, some of these phrases may be considered complimentary.

- radical countercultural rhetoric of the late 1960's
- leftist anti-technology theme . . . a backlash against scientific scholarship in policy-relevant fields
- radical critics
- paranoid phraseology suffuses
- rhetoric . . . is reflective of . . . psychopathology
- is a radical, not a reformer
- diffuse intellectualism
- mystical illumination
- promiscuous enthusiasm
- reductionist scheme
- radical criticism in the guise of "critical theory"
- transcendental-existential levitation
- mystical alchemy
- an invention to suit his own purposes
- fact and fantasy are deliberately blurred and interchanged to fit convenient categories
- new alchemists
- concierges of countercultural

An epithet the Tanners favour as being indicative of Pinar's sloppy research is "radical". The definition they apparently use is:

A correlate of the radical left's disavowal of the political system was the belief that American history was composed of legends that justified the status quo. Thus one could understand events only by looking beneath the surface for purposely obscure patterns, and both Freudian and Marxist analyses provided the intellectual tools for doing so. Whether the "real" reason for some event was psychological or economic, it seemed that things were never what they
appeared ... (they are quoting here from D. Ravitch's *The Revisionist Revised*)

According to this definition, they are quite right. The Pinar approach is radical. It is "a procedure of demystification". In response to the wounded and wounding language of the Tanner article, Finkelstein and Williams point out that Pinar "is engaged in the development of ideas which compete with those in the mainstream". The Tanners are mainstream, and as such, Pinar's approach is unsettling, especially the language of it. Pinar's language in his theoretical and procedural writings possesses a certain showiness that may, and does, befuddle his readers. Although it may be allowed that the process of a currere does demystify, the language used to describe the concepts and procedures often does the opposite.

Following is another example of respondent vulnerability to the Pinar approach to curriculum inquiry. The response is similar but the interpretation is different.

While the papers were uniformly good and four were superb, they also became a source of profound disquietude. Higher consciousness does not make a comfortable home for most Americans, even those at a conference where higher consciousness represents the main theme. Each paper confronted the members of this small group with songs of mystery and revolution, songs that, however winsome or compelling, led down paths uncharted to worlds largely unknown. For safety's sake, men in such situations often return home, and so it seemed, did the members of this group.

This opening was written four years earlier than that of the Tanners, but the same analogy is used about the Pinar approach being alien, and making people uncomfortable.
The fear, however, only partially grew out of fear of the unknown. It was also nurtured by a suspicion that the pursuit of higher consciousness meant the end of teachers, schools, and curriculums as now constituted, and maybe even the end of curriculum theory.

In contrast to the general sessions, where the theorists set forth their ideas, the small group became a home to its members. In that setting, names were attached to faces, and faces gained personalities and points of view.

After learning each other's names, and after the leader of the group had proposed that its purpose was to discover a way of contributing more substantially to the proceedings of the conference, someone asked what the conference was all about. A touch of sharpness in the questioner's voice conveyed somewhat more meaning than the words spoken. During the course of the conference this question returned in a number of different guises, though not always from the same source. Regardless of the source, however, the question seemed implicitly to suggest that his curriculum theory conference had been taken over by heretics. Certainly it was not like curriculum theory conferences back home. In the first place it was too philosophical, and, if not that, certainly the poets and philosophers of higher consciousness sang very different songs from those the group was used to. Higher consciousness fare seemed to make strange philosophical grounding for curriculum theory.

By implication, moreover, they had challenged conventional beliefs about control. The small group remained committed to control, and, while this commitment surfaced in relation to practical problems, the difference ran deeper than this. What seemed to be at stake were basic beliefs about the nature of man and the conditions required for civilized living; but concern for the practical captured the attention of the group. Admittedly, the advertised subject of the conference was curriculum theory, and, while that has a place, those back home claim to prefer the practical to the theoretical.
Osborne (writer of the above) saw the ideas of Pinar and others at the 1974 Rochester Conference as being too philosophical and theoretical for the mainstream, even though participants were described by another group leader as "mostly 'college types' form education faculties". Van Manen has echoed the concerns of Osborne, and Finklestein and Williams about how Pinar's theorizing challenges conventional beliefs.

Huebner, Macdonald, Pinar, and other reconceptualist authors invite us to venture into traditions of thinking that only recently have begun to open up in North American social science. Whereas Huebner, Macdonald, Pinar, Greene, and Apple appear well versed in these traditions, I think the idea of tradition and paradigm shift in curriculum theorizing can easily be oversimplified. I am not suggesting that the authors just cited are guilty of such oversimplifications. But the issue of paradigm shift should be raised since most of the reconceptualist authors make frequent and substantive use of phenomenological, hermeneutic, and critical theory sources. Using a different inquiry paradigm, such as phenomenology, is not as unproblematic as the metaphorical analogue of changing glasses. Sometimes different paradigms are simply seen as different "perspectives" or "models" (like "models of teaching") that make you see things either this way or that way. For example, a direct consequence of exploring alternative paradigms (the positivistic against the phenomenological) is the perceived contrast between inner and outer aspects of curriculum data. Whereas the outer aspects are associated with the measurables, the behavior, the causal, and the objectifiable; the inner components refer to the experiential, the "lived", or the existential meaning structures of the teaching-learning process. Yet, in order to shift paradigms - from the behavioral toward the phenomenological, for instance - one does not auspiciously straddle a fence, now using this paradigm and then that paradigm. Rather, the difference between using the behavioural and the phenomenological paradigm involves indeed a difficult step, requiring serious intellectual investments and moral commitments. I do not wish to overdramatize this
point, but I think the metaphor for shifting paradigms more closely resembles the process of gaining membership in a different society, which has its own history, laws, rules, etc. The user of a phenomenological or critical theory paradigm becomes an initiate, a member of a community of scholars, which is steeped in knowledge, traditions, which has its own language, and its own view of the world, of education, and of the priorities of the field of curriculum studies.²⁷

Atheoretical Thinking

This charge is hurled by the Tanners, and perhaps only by them, "A new curriculum theory must have applications to educational phenomena. It is clear that reconceptualism does not meet this criterion..."⁵⁸ Currere does have application, most definitely, to educational phenomena, so what do they mean? Curriculum theory should aim to reform, they say.

As Ravitch has pointed out, "the reformer is one who grapples and seeks solutions," while the radical remains "aloof from the system and from any ultimate responsibility for its success or failure".⁵⁹

Pinar's intention is to grapple with personal political and social problems, leading to reform of the individual's notion of freedom and responsibility. His approach does, however, remain aloof from "the system" in terms of changing it on a global (larger than self) scale. In response to the Tanner adjective atheoretical, Finklestein and Williams have this rebuttal:

If these critics were to bracket their presuppositions, they would discover that their central concern is with how a theory can be empirically validated. They would see that they have made empirical validation the sole basis for determining a theory's worthiness as valid knowledge. But, most importantly, they would be forced to recognize their disregard for the act of theorizing --- the act of linking...
observations to generalization.60

By borrowing from various epistemological traditions, the Pinar-Grumet language in theorizing is eclectic. This eclecticism must necessarily indicate a lack of regard for the totality of those traditions borrowed. This certainly confuses readers, and offends some.

Ahistorical Thinking

Michael Apple views currere as ahistorical, believing that Pinar does not seem to recognize the historical encrustations of capitalism and individualism in the form of currere. "Being ahistorical implies a total conditioning and dependence on things that are presumed to be".61 However, the avowed intention and apparent outcome in currere is to break conditioning and dependence upon presumed historical conventions. Pinar writes in this regard:

Part of what is uncovered during this work is the individual's participation in mainstream culture, his participation in the maintenance of present economic and political structures. Release from biographic situation permits release from his historical situation. 62

Apolitical Thinking

Apple is supportive of the affiliative quality of currere and appreciates the political seeds it may sow. He writes:
I can appreciate part of the program behind the work of those who want to focus on individual experience. They seek to recapture the biographical roots of knowledge, to make disparate disciplines whole again, by enabling people to integrate their experiences into their selves. This marks, in fact, the beginnings of political awareness.\(^6\)

They give writer and reader a feeling of connection. The words call forth "emotive" responses, perhaps a feeling of oneness with each other and the early existential tradition. This feeling can be, oddly, the first step toward ending the isolation of individual experience that I mentioned as a serious problem in the phenomenological approach. I do not think it is enough to overcome the political logic of the form itself, however.\(^6\)

However, the political logic is not agreeable to Apple. He expresses this concern in the following ways:

The focus on the unconnected individual, with his or her personal experience as the metaphor for educational inquiry, is not an accurate assessment of one's real position in a society.\(^5\)

It embodies the self as something like the classical novelistic hero, without inquiring deeply enough into the economic functions of such a conception of self.\(^6\)

One of the major categories of thought that economic control requires in our society is that of the private individual... it may also represent an ideological configuration through which people are separated and controlled.\(^7\)

The individualistic position in curriculum evaluation, with its focus on the "growth" of each specific person, fails to appreciate the ways in which a model of thoroughgoing individualism is itself symptomatic of the problem.\(^8\)

Although currere may indeed be symptomatic of the problem of which Apple speaks, it may also be a seminal ground for political analysis. The datum source is idiosyncratic. The
process is a personal action of autonomy. It is certainly a solitary search, particularly for Pinar. And this indeed may be a weakness, which he admits to, through the practice of currere. The following excerpt illustrates:

I know my mistake.
Expectation.
Imposing my standards.
You moved; you exerted. Your papers indicate it. Madeleine observed it. Stephen said less, and I sensed skepticism. To let go of you. To let go of currere.
To offer it to you, and not predetermine what you should make of it. To abandon my point of view and enter yours. Now I can see, on your scale not mine, what work you do, what movement you make.
Then I discover you don't interest me. Very few of you interest me, and then only a little. Is it because you're so young, just twenty-one?
Is it because I can't be fatherly? Instead I am your older brother, seven years older, and I feel impatience. I take you seriously, utterly; you are my contemporary. I can't bear to watch you play undergraduate, not earnest, not wholehearted, not believing your time, my time, matters absolutely. I want to tell Mom and Dad on you. I want to shake you in their absence.

I can work with graduate students. We meet on different ground. I don't fall into cajoling you. Somehow I can offer simply, without the emotion of bondage, what I have. You take, you don't; it is okay with me. It's altogether different, and all I can think of is age. "I don't like to work with undergraduates" I end up saying and I know it's not true.

Most easily I can work with me . . . So I offer you what I can through print, through theory that is also practice. This brings me satisfaction. Your response, through letters, at meetings, is instructive. Grumet, on the other hand, has taken a somewhat different journey with currere. She works with others on it, using their theatre and student teaching as text. Apple notes the
Grumet comes a bit closer, I think, to a realization of the problems. She obviously sees personal understanding as an intersubjective process that is often dependent, in the microcosm she reports, on group interaction, past histories, and the structure of power within a situation.76

On this private ground of organizing currere, each writer chooses his or her own path, or the path has been chosen, in that, currere is the travelling of the lebenswelt. In this regard, one could respond here to Greene's chiding of some of Pinar's early analogies of schooling with madness and murder. She says, "I tend to believe that schools have a comparatively marginal effect."71 That has been her lived experience of schools. Pinar's was otherwise. He did not idly choose R. D. Laing and David Cooper for reading material. Currere is explicit for Pinar. It is based upon an assumption that in one's educational life one submits to external and internal goals and standards. Currere allows one to examine one's obedience, to become alert to the external and internal reference, "to retrieve free-floating abstractions from reified oppressive 'existence'" 72 He does not forget, as Apple suggests, that society lives within. Presumably the second stage of Pinar's approach to curriculum criticism will arise out of currere's critical reading of the society within. He seemingly intends so. "The two orders of liberative work --- collective and individual, matter and consciousness --- are correlative."73
Footnotes


7 Grumet, "Songs and Situations", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 287.


10 Pinar, "Self and Others", Toward a Poor Curriculum, p. 11.

Madeleine R. Grumet, "Existential and Phenomenological Foundations", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 35.

William F. Pinar, "Political-Spiritual Dimensions", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 106.

Madeleine R. Grumet, "Existential and Phenomenological Foundations", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 35.


Pinar, "Preface", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 45.


Grumet, "Toward A Poor Curriculum", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 74.

Grumet, "Psychoanalytic Foundations", *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, p. 112.

n. This is what Grumet calls the double metaphor of autobiography, that is, the combination of self-report and examination of that self-report.


31 Grumet, "Psychoanalytic Foundations", Toward a Poor Curriculum, p. 121.

32 Pinar, "Self and Others", Toward a Poor Curriculum, p. 20.


38 Grumet, "Curriculum as Theater", CI, 8:11:61.


42 Pinar, "Case Study", Qualitative Evaluation, pp. 338-339.


50 Tanner and Tanner, "Emancipation", ER, 8:6:8-12.

52 Grumet, "Psychoanalytic Foundations", Toward a Poor Curriculum, p. 141.


58 Tanner and Tanner, "Emancipation", ER, 8:6:10. n. In response to the word reconceptualism, Pinar wrote, "I have never used this term... There is no reconceptualism." ("Reply to My Critics", Curriculum Inquiry, 10:2:200, Summer, 1980)


60 Finkelstein and Williams, "To the Editor", ER, 8:9:24.

61 Finkelstein and Williams, "To the Editor", ER, 8:9:25.


64 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 514.

65 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 510.

66 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 511.

67 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 508.

68 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 509.

69 Pinar, "March Sixth", Poor Curriculum, pp. 176-177.

70 Apple, "Ideology and Form", Qualitative Evaluation, p. 513.


72 Pinar,"The Abstract and the Concrete", p. 29.

73 Pinar,"The Abstract and the Concrete", p. 13.
In this chapter, the methods described by Eisner and Pinar, and their colleagues, are applied to a segment of a videotape called "Women Moving Up." The critiques contained in this chapter are two examples of how this researcher would apply (1) criticism as the disclosures of a connoisseur, and (2) criticism as personal disclosure. Application gave the researcher a better sense of the substance of each approach. The critiques are included here to exemplify the researcher's interpretation of Eisner and Pinar.

The videotape being critiqued is from a business management curriculum, also entitled Women Moving Up. The total package (including leader's manual, worksheets, pre- and post-tests, and videotapes) was designed for a two-day seminar for management men and women. The two objectives of the curriculum were to make management more aware of (day one) and more skilled in (day two) handling relationship tension encountered between men and women working together in management positions.

The segment being critiqued is used on day one of the seminar. This part of the videotaped material has a running time of 25.56 minutes, excluding the stop-start interval which is time-out, about midway in the running of the tape, for purposes of discussion and interpretation by the persons who would be viewing the tape.

The segment being discussed in this chapter begins with on-tape discussion leader, Peter Walker, advising the viewer to "observe, analyze, and see what we can learn from Joanne's
experience." Joanne Walker is the other on-tape discussion leader. She and Peter are presented as a husband-wife team. In this segment, Joanne also plays the heroine in a dramatization of problematic situations in an office setting. Within the dramatization the characters are: Joanne Walker, a woman recently promoted from the clerical staff to management; two women secretaries, one named simply Margo, and one simply not named; Ken Benson, a salesman and manager; Louise, an older woman, established in management; Chuck Dailey, another man in management from a branch office; John Blackwell, the boss. With Peter's introduction, the dramatization begins, moving through five skits in the space of one business day. After the skits are run, Joanne Walker advises the viewers to turn off the set, with: "Folks, it's time now for you to discuss what we saw, the broad, the subtle, the explicit, the implicit, as we continue to become more and more aware".

When the tape is turned back on, Joanne and Peter are discussing the ramifications of women in management, according to what they saw on the videotape. Visual flashbacks to the dramatization are constantly used.

The following criticisms are examples of how this writer would use the video segment to apply criticism as the disclosures of a connoisseurship and criticism as personal disclosure. Although these critiques are short they do present a flavour of this writer's interpretation of the methods.
This critique views the videotape material as a handicraft of human talent. It has thematic, contextual, and performance aspects in its make-up as a whole object, which the following critique aims to reveal in the description and interpretation. In the evaluation, the videotape is considered as one would a script or a score. The critic tries to envision its performance within a larger context and theme.

This writer viewed the tape several times and read through the leader's guide to the workshop. No attempt was made to critique its place in the workshop for which this tape is a teaching material or learning assist. Since it is a self-contained artifact having minimal instruction for use, it could be used in a separate situation from the rest of the workshop package.

Description

After the introduction and instruction to viewers, the tape moves into the dramatization. The blousy tones of organ music, gaily anticipatory then mournfully expectant, set the mood for the stages of vaudeville or the television soaps. The music fades into the clatter of typewriters. Joanne, our heroine, enters stage right. Joanne wears the executive look: matter-of-fact shoes, no-nonsense hoisery, grey A-line skirt, navy-blue blazer, a primly knotted, perky scarf covering the
open neck of her tailored shirt, hair and face flawlessly groomed. She stops to look at her mail. The camera moves to stage left where the secretaries have stopped typing, to converse. They are leaning into each other conspiratorially. One, Margo, says, "Here comes How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying". The other, who remains nameless throughout (perhaps because at this point she appears to have no aspiration beyond the typing pool) counters with "Check the outfit. Today we're Mary Tyler Moore". Aha, other women in the office are snipers. The subsequent dialogue between Joanne, the executive and former-office-mate, and the two secretaries, indicates that Joanne is uncomfortably caught between her old role and her new. "Look", she says exasperatedly at one point, "I haven't changed. My job has changed." Confusion. What does that statement mean? The secretaries obviously believe she's fudging. So does the viewer. The scene ends with Joanne stomping stiff-leggedly out of the reception area, angrily promising to "talk to you later". She behaves as the aggrieved parent caught in a power-play with her children, with nothing left to fight with but violence, and larger size, a greater capacity for verbal abuse, and threats of loss of privilege. She's management, now, after all. Management is parental.

Scene change. More organ music promising first fun, then suspense. The music fades this time into the peevish voice of Louise. The camera comes in on an older woman with painted-on lips, no neck, and a crepey, sour face. Her manner with
Joanne is querulous, "You told them to have the Weasoner account ready and they didn't seem to have it ready. Why?" ... and insinuating, "Don't you know how to handle the employees? ... and churlish, "That's what you're getting paid for. Never mind about the easy how-to-do ..." Joanne prepares to stomp out of this situation, too, but then she turns to confront the old warrior with an insinuation of her own, "Do you view my promotion as some kind of threat to you? Louise, do you want me to fail?" Bully for you, Joanne.

The organ music again. Back to the secretaries' room, where Joanne is embarrassed to find, from the secretaries, that her work is being double-checked upstairs. Enter Ken Benson singing cheerily "Having my baby is such a nice way of saying you love me". He, it becomes apparent, is the office Lothario. Joanne brushes him off as she would a gnat bussing around her ear. Margo, the secretary, however, is in a one-down position. She is unable to say "no". She ruefully apologizes to the other secretary, "Unfortunately, my career path leads right to his door." As the scene ends, the camera holds on her evident distress and confusion on the turn of events in her exchange with Ken Benson. She's been bullied with boyish charm.

The organ music introduces the next skit entitled "Joanne and Chuck". It is the first non-threatening exchange between our heroine and another, even though Chuck has to hand her bad news. He ends the interview by complimenting Joanne on the fine job she's doing. She first rejects his compliment by
shrugging off a "thanks", toying with her pencil, and worrying. Chuck, however, insists on being recognized. They have met as equals.

That music again, over the title for the next section "the meeting", which could more graphically be entitled "The Crap Game at Dead-Pan Casino". The old boys stand or sit around affecting casualness, but importance. Joanne is introduced to someone from branch office. There is some confusion over whether he and she shake hands. The group sits, but Joanne doesn't immediately, so Ken Benson doesn't, so the other two rise again, at a signal from Benson.

Blackwell, the boss, enters, slightly jovial, certainly paternal. He is well-meaning, or perhaps, well-trained. He errs, in camera, at the beginning in suggesting that he and Joanne get together to review a firing she has completed. She, shoulders tensing then rolling back, hand moving to hip, replies, "John, do I indeed have this new job or am I still auditioning?" He harrumphs and moves away and back to his safe chair at the head of the table. Later, ex camera, he assures her that she has the part. Bid. Counter-bid. Fold.

From then on Blackwell handles the meeting, innocently engineering several situations that prompt cliched responses from the other characters. He has the bland demeanour of a croupier dealing the cards with apparently x-ray eyes. There is the shuffle over who gets up for the coffee, Joanne or one of the men, who is "after all, closer". There is the fan over who
helps Margo hand out the papers, Joanne or one of the men, who is "after all, closer". There is Ken Benson brashly bidding high at the approach of Margo, the secretary, with "Here's the brightest day in any man's life. Hello, Gorgeous!!" And, Blackwell's disgruntled "Oh, for heaven's sake, Ken". Ken is obviously not taking the game seriously enough or he would not have made such an outrageous move. For Ken Benson, women are definitely an interruption. Joanne throws in what she considers a winning hand, her new assistant. Benson chokes and tries to deal from the bottom of the deck with, "What?! She's married and has three kids." Joanne calls him on it, and everyone breathes freely again. Also, at this table, Joanne finds out that the secretaries have been sabotaging her, putting her work as lowest priority. Women against women again. This obviously dishonourable activity revealed, although embarrassing for everyone, draws the executive group around Joanne. She has been hustled by an outsider.

The music of vaudeville and the soaps again. Return to studio and Joanne and Peter. They decide to stop tape so that viewers may discuss and analyze what they have seen. The organ music takes us away.

When the tape is started again Joanne and Peter are in the studio discussing, organizing their impression of the dramatization in which Joanne was the heroine. They employ replays as they recall various themes relevant to them. The emphasis of their organization is on the problems from Joanne's
point of view. Any side issues to that are discarded. Sometimes Joanne and Peter are solemn, sometimes cute in their analysis, thus mirroring the self-consciousness of the characters in the dramatization. Such consummate self-consciousness, of the characters in the skits, of the on-tape discussion leaders, of the music, suggests that the topic was one with which no one was comfortable.

Interpretation

The tape is divided into two sections. The first is a dramatization of problem situations. The second is an interpretation of the portrayal. Neither is problem-solving. The tape serves only to specify problems by enactment and by organization of them into a schemata. The issue that prompted this tape being produced, or at least chosen for use in the workshop in which it is contained, is raised through the actuality of many more women moving into management in the salaried work world. It is used specifically in this workshop as a learning assist for identifying specific problems for both men and women in management positions. Each skit portrays a limiting situation, transformed so that only the distractions of the phenomenon of women moving up are present. These distractions stand out in relief. Every incident portrayed is incidental to the work place as a task-oriented situation. However, the placement of every incidental incident is intentional for the producers of this videotape. The tape focusses on incidents that make the protagonists nervous,
nervous because they do not know what they are supposed to do. The incidents portrayed are limiting situations to the characters because they are limiting people to assigned role behaviours which somehow don't fit anymore. The tape presents a sense of social dis-ease in the work place because men and women do not know how to act with a woman in management. It appears that the producers believe that it is the lack of intentionality in situ of these incidents that confuses persons. That is, people are used to operating in an assigned way rather than a thoughtful way. No one in these scenarios is quite comfortable within the contextual misunderstandings that result from non-intentionality. For example, it is unlikely that the other women intend consciously to sabotage Joanne. Aberration and error succeed each other unendingly in a series of momentary experiences. There is Joanne's dis-ease, manifested in affectations. There is Chuck and Bob Frazier's dis-ease, manifested in slightly gun-shy behaviour. There is Margo's dis-ease in dealing with the office lech. There is the snide snickering of the secretaries behind Joanne's back, and their sly sabotaging of her work assignments. There is the cavilling meanness of Louise, the old-line lady boss. There is the bland power demeanour of the avuncular Mr. Blackwell. There is Ken Benson who always has to make an issue of someone being a woman.

There are juxtapositions that keep one aware of the absurdity of the situations. There is, for example, the wickedness of Ken Benson, Louise, and the secretaries, which
serves, for one thing, to put a white horse under Joanne as she rides into town. There are other examples of the good guys set beside the bad guys. The women, with the exception of Joanne, the heroine, are all bad, whereas the men, with the exception of Ken Benson, the "Oil Can Harry", are all good in their fumbling efforts at rapprochement. Another example is the skit entitled "Joanne and Chuck" which contrasts with the rest of the piece, in appearing to be a model for people to address relationship tensions. Joanne uses this excerpt later as an explicit teaching device, when she and Peter instruct in the meaning of it all. Another example is in the conspiratorial slurs that the secretaries attach to Joanne. In one case there is the suggestion she is really prepared for the machinations of management, and in the other is the implication that she is a wide-eyed innocent. The epithet "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" implies that Joanne has ruthlessly followed the rule book, has learned how to walk, talk, dress, and smell like management, and is now on her way. The appellation "We're Mary Tyler Moore today" suggest Joanne's vulnerability, that she is well-intentioned from habit, perhaps, rather than from any real conviction, or from any real design either.

The music at the intervals is a cultural sign to stay tuned, there's more to come, what will happen next? What happens next is more of the same. What the tape presents (in both sections) is so true and yet so false. The viewer wants to
groan, boo, and hiss at the villainy of it all. Although it is heavy-handed, it is also warm and sticky so that the viewer squirms in discomfort. The over-all sense that one is left with is one of social discomfort, social dis-ease, as one watches Joanne moving from a lonely almost untenable position to becoming an accepted member of the executive team. But what about her connections with the other women in the office? The section of the tape that interprets the dramatizations reiterates this untenableness. In the discussion, there is no affirmation that her becoming one of us (management) against them (workers) is a successful solution. Thank goodness.

Evaluation

The evaluation has been subdivided in order to consider the intentionality, the artfulness, and the usefulness of this videotape.

The videotape as intentional. According to the leaders' guide, this videotape is to be used as a learning assist in identifying specific problems associated with women in management. The objective of the workshop on the first day, when this videotape is used, is awareness. Awareness seems to be synonymous with identification and definition of problems. The dramatization of Joanne in the business situation identifies the problems by replication. The replication is didactic. The discussion between Joanne and Peter presents a definition of the problems, by prioritizing them in a particular way. Viewers are made aware of stereotypes. The representations on this video
tape belong to the conventions of melodrama. The characters are objectified in the facticities of gesture, gait, dress, and language. For example, the viewer knows who the people who don't count are --- they do not have last names, one has no name at all --- the secretaries and Louise. Also, the characters are polarized as good or bad, men or women, management or subordinate.

In dramatizing types and cliches the producers are sending messages about those types and cliches. The movements are highly stylized. The viewer's role in this form of presentation appears to be to recognize the genre conventions, and to read them as such. However, that can't be all this tape is about. If the dramatization is only a "Mary Tyler Moore How to Succeed in a Salon or Saloon Without Any Panache" situation, then the case presented is unproblematic. If there is more, it appears to be that conditioned circumstances conflict with unmapped circumstances. If it is indeed true that "I haven't changed. My job has changed", then Joanne and the other characters have to make sense of the old taken-for-granted role of the job as separate from the person in the role. That is, the problem is not to take for granted the person, and confuse him or her with the role. The tape defines this conflict by abstracting the awkward and the static responses associated with it. It is the story of a woman isolated in her confrontations with limiting situations. It is the story of how the other people she works with are also limited by those same conditions.
The characters are one-dimensional. As a 'stranger in town', the heroine is a breach of everyday expectancies. She is 'new', problematic, troubling. The old 'boys' are wary of the new 'gun' in town. The 'girls' are sassy, even nasty. Louise, the 'madam' is tough like old meat is tough. John Blackwell is the head honcho a la Lorne Greene. The plot is a piling up of incidents that eventually topple over.

The videotape as artful. The viewers have been instructed to watch and to listen. These are the simple introductory instructions on the videotape. The workshop leader could give others, to more specifically direct the viewers' attention. On the tape, intentionality is open-ended. After the stop-start live discussion interlude, the on-tape discussion leaders present one way of organizing the theme(s) of the drama. The suggestion is that that is their way not the way, which is a good suggestion.

What the tape does best is portray the discomfort, the confusion, and the concomitant distaste everyone concerned feels with the confusion surrounding the issue of men and women being co-partners in the world of salaried work. The surfeit of the mediocre and the mean in the dramatization and of the cuteness and solemnity of the interpretation does disquiet the viewer. It could also discourage. If it disquiets, this would be a good place for discussion to begin. In that way, this tape could be an effective teaching material.
The skits abstract self-consciously the impediments of social conditioning and the depersonalizing of people. Ken Benson voices a taken-for-granted attitude towards women as things. Joanne represents a new thing in management ideas. The collective thinking that Ken Benson represents assumes that Joanne as the new model has the same built-in obsolescence as anything out of Detroit. This appears to be an important issue for the producers of the tape, that women presuming new roles is a permanent innovation.

The positive aspect of this production of vaudeville kitsch is that the producers evidently saw this as their opportunity to carve in stone the graffiti of office life, to set it in relief so that no one could miss seeing it. This straining-for-effect is essentially the one-liner stuff of the stand-up comic. Even so, or maybe because of, one does receive a sense of the instability in the environment portrayed. It is that sense of ill-at-ease irresolution that allows the possibility that the phenomenon of woman in management may be grasped and appropriated by the workshop participants.

It appears that the purpose of this video tape is to challenge the viewer to accept and to appreciate the discomfort and confusion arising from women becoming management, and in so doing to challenge them to take some responsibility for its existence as a limiting situation. No solutions are presented. It is left to the group using the tape to decide the ways and means and the reasons for taking responsibility for the given
situation and overcoming passive acceptance of it.

The videotape as useful. The worthwhileness of the video tape depends on how thoroughly familiar the workshop leader is with the interests and concerns of the viewers. What themes will the viewer-participants pull out to examine? It is possible that the viewer will organize the problems that he or she identifies by first identifying with one or more of the characters, with one or more of the situations in the dramatization. From there viewer-participants will draw out their own theme to work on. What the viewers decide as significant could be slightly similar to what Joanne and Peter Walker come up with; it could even be entirely symmetrical; or it could be quite obviously different. The producers of the tape have allowed for various interpretations by instructing the viewer-participant to do their interpretations before the on-tape interpretation is done. This is a positive feature of the videotape format. It allows for participation.

In the case of an a-symmetry of interpretation, the producers of the video tape have developed and presented to the viewing audience what Paulo Freire would call a hinged theme. In this event it would be important that the workshop leader assure participants that the hinged theme is no more significant than their own discovered themes, or more likely not as significant. Otherwise, (1) the participants may be intimidated by what they consider expert opinion, and will not take responsibility for their own problem awareness; and (2) the
workshop leader as educator will be guilty of collusion with the given.

The worthwhileness of this videotape depends largely on the skills of the workshop leader. The tape in and of itself presents firstly, problem posing situations; secondly, a schematic of the signifiers of the problems posed. The workshop leader must necessarily ensure that the group does not only recognize the situations codified in the dramatization, but that they also examine the organization of those signifiers as done by the on-tape discussion leaders, and latterly the organization of their own themes. The educator, as workshop leader, must not only assure the group of the significance of their own discoveries, he/she must also prompt them to examine the discrepancies between the material on the tape and their own experiences and discoveries. In which case this videotape could turn out to be a very exciting teaching tool. In and of itself, it is nothing, a reflector, perhaps. The educational import of the tape depends on what the seminar participants do with it, which is true of any teaching material. The value depends upon the intentionality of the user more than upon the intentionality of the producer. I, for example, would use it to examine taken-for-granted postures like the assumption that the sibling rivalry of women is more destructive then the parental neglect of the helpless boss or male co-worker.
Criticism as Personal Disclosure: Finding Courage

This critique views the videotape as catalyst for personal growth. The visual and verbal messages that are significant to the critic become the "text" for the critique. The catalytic lines are then thematically linked. The "text" and "themes" are set aside, while the critic writes, free associatively, her "biographic present". Next, the "biographic present" is juxtaposed with the "themes that link the text", so that the critic may write an "analysis" of the connections that surface between them. After writing the "analysis", the critic rests, reflects, considering new avenues for personal growth as an educator, and finally writes a "synthesis".

The reader is reminded that in currere, there are two co-existant sources for the initial datum. First, the lines from the videotape that struck this viewer as significant are listed and thematically apperceived. Next, this critic's biographic present is recounted from impression to association to things half-remembered. Reflection upon the juxtaposition of these two sources of the initial datum become basic in the analytic and synthetic sections of this critique.

The reader is also reminded that currere is a gift to oneself. Like any other gift it may touch the lives of others than the recipient.
Themes That Link the Chosen Passages

The lines of dialogue from the tape that affected me most, I divided into three groups, which, I think, cannot rightly be called themes. They are, rather, categorization labels. Within these three categories are five sub-themes that sometimes cross each other in the larger categories. The three large 'themes' or categories are (1) polarization and isolation revealed, (2) words and gestures not examined, and (3) puzzles. The five sub-themes that weave through these categories are (i) the implication of the verb "handle", (ii) those player actions that strain for effect, appear false, or are unconvincing, (iii) the hidden slurs against women, (iv) the absorption within the language and the setting of competition, power, and sex, (v) the suggested disappointment with men.

Polarization and isolation revealed. Immediately following are examples of dialogue from the videotape to which I particularly responded.

LOUISE. "That's what you're getting paid for. Never mind about the easy how to do it. Do it. Make a decision and don't look back. This is no place for the weak-kneed and wishy-washy. This job gives power, and you've got to learn how to use that power".

... ...

PETER. "And if they just show a little confidence, real confidence, well maybe that's why Betsy went back to her old job".

JOANNE. "Of course it is. No one ever showed an ounce of confidence in her. Plus, she never had
any training. She wasn't promoted. She was seduced and abandoned".
PETER. "Training? What sort of training"?
JOANNE. "The sort of training that every man gets".
PETER. "Oh, that sort".
JOANNE. "Yes, that sort".
PETER. "She really didn't have an equal chance to succeed".
JOANNE. "Or fail".
PETER. "Wuh"?


JOANNE. "Peter, do you know what I like about you?"
PETER. "What?"
JOANNE. "Sometimes you think just like a woman."
PETER. (looking startled and then pleased) "Thanks."


The polarization, and subsequent isolation, revealed in this video tape concern particularly the opposing potentials, rather than the synthesizing potentials, of the feminine and masculine principles of the human psyche. For purposes of simplicity in this discussion, the masculine principle shall be imaged as the power acquirer; the feminine principle, as the giver-receiver. Conflict, insecurity, and isolation result from the separation and over-elaboration of these two principles in our society, since without the integration of the two, one's humanity cannot be realized. In the business world, generally, the feminine principle is/has been suppressed. Suppression causes distortion of form in its eventual expression. For example, Ken Benson and Louise represent persons exteriorizing a suppressed feminine principle. Benson's separation from it is
manifested in his preoccupation with and treatment of women as another sex, as alien. The suppression of the feminine in Louise is revealed in her near horror of the weak-kneed and wishy-washy. For her there is no room for diffuse, scary or scared, personal feelings. In her world, this is war, and there are only winners and losers.

Another example is found in the exchange between Ken Benson and Chuck Frazier where they are discussing Betsy's withdrawal from management. Benson's supposition is, apparently, that Betsy finally discovered she wasn't a man. Frazier, on the other hand, recognizes this as a misinterpretation, as an injustice even (Chuck Frazier, by the way, is black). Later on in the tape, Joanne, as co-discussion leader, explains Betsy's withdrawal in terms of her isolation: that because she was obviously a woman no one else in management would come near her. She was a pariah because she marched to the tune of a different drummer. 2 Ironically, although she was considered beneath contempt, she was expected to be perfect, more perfect in performance than any man in management. Because of the over-elaboration of the male principle and its separation from the female principle, Betsy was, to use Joanne's words, seduced and abandoned.

That phrase, "seduced and abandoned", suggests the theme of polarization and isolation, too. That she was abandoned suggests isolation. She was banned. The word seduced in its usual connotation suggests the objectifying of one person in a
sexual exchange. It also suggests the unhappy unmix that happens when power-aquisition-over-other is poured into the same pitcher as sex-giving-receiving.

Another example is found in Joanne's repeated complaint that there is no management training for women, when there is such training for "peach-faced young executives" (her words). A possible implication of that situation is that her corporation vaguely recognizes that what women have to offer is different, but that they don't know how, or what to do with it. Therefore, they ignore this offering, hoping by some magic it will assert itself.

In the discussion part of the tape, there is some interplay between the opposing potentials of the masculine and feminine principles. Joanne represents the positive aspect of the masculine in that she is working to come to terms with, to narrow down, to focus on her problems in the business situation. Peter represents the positive aspect of the feminine principle by being accommodating, concerned, understanding, perceptive, and supportive. Each also represents a negative aspect of the two principles. Peter could be accused of sentimentality, manifested in corniness. Joanne could be accused of rigid adherence to attitudes, manifested in her uptightness, especially in response to Peter's corniness.

The tape ends with Joanne telling Peter, "Peter, do you know what I like about you? . . . Sometimes you think just like a woman." Peter is at first startled, and then genuinely
moved. He knows he's been complimented.

Words and gestures not examined. Immediately following are examples of dialogue from the videotape to which I particularly responded.

OTHER SECRETARY. "You know it's really hard getting used to having Joanne as a boss".
MARGO. "Yeh, and by the time we get use to it, she'll probably leave... pregnant".
OTHER SECRETARY. "Ha, ha".

. . . .

LOUISE. "Don't you know how to handle the employees"?

. . . .

MARGO. "Dinner? Listen, why can't we just talk about it at lunch"?
KEN BENSON. "Why don't we make a night of it? I mean I can give you your first lesson in how a salesman, how a salesperson, entertains a customer. I mean, there's no reason it has to be all business is there"?
MARGO. "Huh, no, no I guess not".

. . . .

KEN BENSON (SINGING). "Havin' my baby, what a lovely way to tell me that you love me. Hi, Chuck".
CHUCK DAILY. "Hi".
KEN BENSON. "That's a great song isn't it"?
MARGO. "Yeh, and after she has his baby, maybe she can go out and rent one for herself".

. . . .

JOANNE. "Oh many are. As for the others, I don't excuse it, but I do understand it, and there are many reasons. Women are used to competing with
each other for men and beauty and youth, but not jobs."

... ... ... ...

The following are some dialogical incidents that were left in context, that is, not played out in the dramatization to bring notice to them, and/or not examined in the discussion part of the tape. Since they were hidden in context perhaps they should have been examined before they went into the script.

One is Louise's whining challenge to Joanne, "Don't you know how to handle the employees?" It is the word 'handle' in this context that jars. One can handle pebbles, one may handle porcupines, but one does not handle people. If one does, one is not being respectful. One can and may, however, handle or not handle well situations involving people.

Another issue that is obscured by the presenting intentions of the scriptwriter is the unwitting slurs against women (or the feminine principle). For example, where Margo with more than a hint of bitterness says, "Yeh, and by the time we get used to it [Having Margo as a boss], she'll probably leave ... pregnant", and the other secretary colludes with a harsh laugh. Or for example, where Joanne aggrievedly retorts to Benson's singing (albeit constantly), "Having my baby is such a nice way to say you love me," ... "After she has his baby maybe she can go out and rent one for herself." It is the tone of voice, of the presentation and of the comment each receives, that indicates these are slurs, that having babies, at least
some contexts, is a discreditable thing to do.

Another unexamined message is in the mix of the concept of power-over-others and sex, and concept of competition. For example, where Joanne, gesturing in excitation to express herself says, "Women are used to competing for men, beauty, and youth, but not for jobs", the implication is that it is only a matter of time, or more exactly, training, before women can compete in this new arena of jobs. The competition idea itself is not questioned.

Another is found in Benson's sexual innuendos. For Joanne, Benson's come-ons are minor irritations. She dismisses his behaviour as being too blatant to be taken seriously. She does admit though that for Margo, Benson is a problem, but she does not elaborate since in this videotape the organization of the problems is according to what is problematic for Joanne, as a woman, in her new role in management. It would, I suspect, be a problem for her if Benson were someone higher up than her in the hierarchy. One big reason why Benson's approach to women is harrassment for Margo is, as she ruefully comments to the other secretary, after an unsuccessful encounter with Benson, where she ended up in a one-down position, that "Unfortunately, my career path leads right to his door".

Puzzles. Immediately following are examples of dialogue from the videotape to which I particularly responded. These are all from the part of the tape where Joanne and Peter discussed the dramatizations.
JOANNE WALKER. "Oh, but it's not that easy, Peter. I want to establish my own management style. I don't want to be like a man, and I certainly don't want to be like Louise".

PETER WALKER. "Who is a bad impersonation of a man".

. . . .

JOANNE. "But it's very hard to believe in yourself when, I don't know if I'm going to say this right, but when a lot of men really don't think that women are going to make it".

PETER. "Oh, Joanne".

JOANNE. "Peter, I'm serious. Oh sure, women are promoted, and 'listened to', but what a lot of men are thinking is, 'Well this, too, shall pass.'" Deep down within them, that's what they're thinking. Look, management needs what women have to offer, but I don't think they know it yet, so they don't take it very seriously. Oh sure, they go through the motions, expensive motions, elaborate motions, but I really don't think they believe it, which doesn't make a whole hell of a lot of sense. Does it?"

. . . .

JOANNE. "Oh, but there are differences. Try this one for resentment. A lot of women feel threatened if another women succeeds, because she is getting closer to the inner circle of man's world. And those are just some of the reasons".

. . . .

JOANNE. "Well, there's nothing subtle about old Ken is there, actually he was going to say,'She thinks like a man'."

PETER. "Oh that's minor. Something of a compliment really".

JOANNE. "Oh Peter, sit down, you're having a relapse, honestly, men don't know how to compliment a women on performance. Oh, they're
terrific when it comes to your hair, or your clothes or your legs, but not on your performance. What I want to know is what anyone wants to know. How am I doing? Do you know, that since my promotion Chuck Daily is the only one that's levelled with me. He told me some problems I had that I didn't know about and he talked to me directly about my work".

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JOANNE. "That doesn't mean I accept only compliments, of course not. But somebody please evaluate my performance. Talk to me as a person. Am I good, bad or indifferent? I want to know. Tell me".

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At one point Joanne is giving reasons for the non-support of the female support staff, that is, the secretaries. She says that one reason for their non-support (or even hostility) is that some women fear other women, "A lot of women feel threatened if another woman succeeds because she is getting closer to the inner circle of man's world." Where does that fear come from? Is it that Joanne, for example, will go over to the other side, will become another "bad imitation of a man" as did Louise? Is it that they cannot set her free, because she may never come back to them. Like parents they have raised her, but not to go in a direction uncharted by them. Is it the fear that turns co-workers away from one in their ranks who moves from union into management? The fear that somehow the defector will use her inside knowledge against them?
At another point in the discussion, Joanne is expressing her bewilderment that although corporations (male) spend time and money to promote women that, "What a lot of men are thinking is 'Well this, too, shall pass.' Deep down within them, that's what they're thinking." Allowing for her sensitivity and intuitiveness, that is, that she is picking up a basic non-commitment on the part of her male co-workers, why does she feel that "deep down" that non-commitment is disinterest? Perhaps, their disinterest is studied. Perhaps, their disinterest is at surface level. Perhaps the surface is quite thick. But, even if they are not in touch with their own feminine principle, "deep down", they must be interested.

The last puzzle is surrounding Joanne's reaction to Ken Benson's near slip of saying that Joanne thinks like a man, and Peter's saying, "Oh, that's minor. Something of a compliment really." I understand her being perturbed. What I find puzzling is her explanation of her perturbation: "Honestly, men don't know how to compliment a woman on performance . . . How am I doing? Do you know that since my promotion Chuck Dailey is the only one that's levelled with me . . . he talked to me directly about the job . . . somebody please evaluate my performance. Talk to me as a person." She objects that it is not a compliment on performance. I would presume that she means that it does not recognize the uniqueness of what she contributes through her woman-self. But, if that is her intended meaning, her subsequent amplification obscures more
than clarifies. She uses her exchange with Chuck as an example of what she wants, and calls it "performance evaluation." But performance evaluation is a technical phrase suggesting prescription and measurement, thus indicating she is indeed, in this moment thinking like the men. But, she also calls that exchange "levelling", which more likely describes better what she wants, that is, they discussed the job as two people at eye level, with eye-level concern for each other, and for the other people involved.

**Critic's Own Biographic Present**

Before beginning a perusal of this step, the reader is advised of the sequence. The text and its themes have been delineated. Now the reader will be plunged into a free associative description of the critic's biographic present. Because it is free associative, thought associations dip freely into the past, the future, and everywhere. Because associations are allowed to roam so freely, the reader may feel that those thoughts have gone off to graze in the wrong pasture. The reader is reminded, then, that, however unrecognizable at this point, some of the fodder for these ruminations was "The Themes That Link The Chosen Passages". (The rest came from stuff she ate long ago). If the reader will be patient, in the step immediately following this biographic present, the analysis will provide a description of the source of the connections between "The Themes That Link The Chosen Passages" and the "Critic's Own Biographic Present". In the final step of the process, the
synthesis, what has begun to emerge from the discovery of those connections, is presented.

This is the second time I write this section of the critique. The first time, although readers felt its import in isolation from the rest of the critique, they were upset, bewildered by its juxtaposition to the thematic apperception of the videotape. It had significance only for me.

Joanne, the heroine of the melodrama on the videotape, what connection does my life have with hers, as depicted? She is a woman in a management position. I am a woman in a management position, have been, will be again. Her portrayal offended me. Her isolation bothered me. Why were the other women portrayed as mean? Why were the men portrayed as beneficent but helpless? Why, even though Joanne rails against it, is it somehow implied that she has two options, to be a token woman, pretty but given to foot-stomping and sarcasm, or a non-woman like Louise, petulant with her co-workers? Joanne dresses in a neat and tidy business way. She walks and talks and laughs in a controlled way. These are the exteriorized mannerisms of the repressed power acquirer. They are not attractive.

The opening paragraph will serve as an introduction to what follows. I hope it has mellowed my readers for what is to follow, because what follows is my biographic present and it does connect for me with the thematic apperception. I tried to write a biographic present that the reader would grasp
immediately. It was not about me. It was about Joanne. It was not a juxtaposition. It was an expansion. It did not feel alive. It felt like I was drowning in mud from digging a hole that someone else asked me to dig for the sake of digging, and in the rain to make the work extra hard. It made no sense to me. What follows makes sense to me.

I am writing this thesis --- the loneliness of the mountain top. The forest ranger occasionally visits, or an RCMP helicopter. Elsewise I talk to myself, or the stars or the wind. I am the "I" of the wind dropping to absolute stillness, then whirling out from centre again. I weep, and my tears melt down my cheeks, and drop cold on my collar bone and wrist.

My children have gone off to camp this morning. Quinn was silent, worried-looking. He's seven and a half, in grade one, and this is his first time at camp. The excitement and bravado of last night and early morning dampened by uncertainty of the unknown. Courtenay is assured (She's in grade three, so this is her third trip) and quietly tense, layering maturity over her excitement. She 'can hardly believe she's going, and knows she'll miss me', phoned her dad and Linn this morning to say good-bye. This is a one-night stay away, in the woods. This is an adventure. She was awake at two a.m. And then again at 6:30 a.m. Heard her giving Quinn instructions about 'if he hurt himself, to come to her, she has band-aids packed.' "So have I," said Quinn. I didn't know that either one had band-aids packed.
Jack came last night, and today I feel open, like a rose
garden in glorious full bloom, before death, vulnerable.

I have a luncheon date today. It is a business luncheon
with someone in the field development office. I'm to tell him
what it is that I want to do work-wise after the thesis is done.
And from him I want guidance, suggestions, advice about
possibilities that will help me clarify my own job description.
It is important that I do work that is ethically and
aesthetically pleasing to me. It is important that I do not
become locked in a situation that is crazy-making, where I feel
the resistance to my style, my beliefs, is so strong that in
order to survive, I must retreat into silence, fat, and acne.
Joanne, in the videotape, retreats into faultless grooming and
tight gestures.

My car, a 1969 Volvo, is bit by bit falling apart.
Little things are falling off, the tie-rod is bent, one rear
light socket is rusted. I wonder where the line is between
eccentricity and carelessness, between relying on Velma's
(Velma, the Volvo) proven reliability, and being irresponsibly
dependent on a car's good sense. My excuse is that I don't want
to spend the money, but I don't like that excuse. It offends
me, whenever I hear anyone say it. Tightness, again.
Uptightness. Miserliness, stinginess, control. Repressed
power-acquirer gone amok.
Why did I come back to university? Why did I quit teaching? I came back to university because for me that was and even still is (though I have no desire to come back again) a place of security. Maybe I'm growing out. I have received recognition as a student — that is what I'm good at, was what I said when someone asked. However, I recently realized that my marks are not as high as most peoples'. All my friends do better academically than I, and many of them, especially the women, have strong insecurities about their academic abilities. I don't. Nor do I love going to class, nor love writing papers. Exams were a game. I hate the library. I have been rather disdainful of some of my teachers, and they of me. Oral presentations make me want to puke. I told one teacher in these grad years, on the day my presentation was due, "I may start to hyper-ventilate." He said, "That's alright. If you do, we'll stop and give you a hug." That was the right thing to say.

Yet, I can still say that I am secure in this setting, assured even. Why is that? Why is that? Partly because there are no bosses. Regularly, something I read or something a teacher says captures my attention and imagination and I am involved. It's never anything I talk to anyone else about, but it always effects any talking I do with anybody on any topic. The horror of oral presentations for me is that I know that as a listener, besides being made thoughtful, I like to be moved to laughter, and moved to tears. But I don't have the courage to do that for my audience, because I fear my own vulnerability.
As a teacher of English literature, sometimes I had the courage, would risk, for example, tears cracking my voice. Furthermore, being a teacher was the only time, 'til I became a mother, that I risked rage. I was amazed. The students were amazed. My children are amazed. My first husband was frightened. My current man is stunned and stammers a lot, and escapes. My women friends are relieved. My students did, and my children do, trust me. My men were/are not so sure. My students were, and my children are, alternately protective of and dependent upon me. My men, too, but the tension is more uneasy. They don't know whether I am a crazy, possibly destructive force, or a strongly rooted tree in whose shade they can rest. I am both and neither. Rage, and laughter, and tears are potent, especially if they are clean, or cleansing.

I left teaching because it somehow dissipated my energies. It drained away in jockeying for power situations. It was hard. It was lonely. I was always one of the youngest and least assured persons on staff. Even the others around my age appeared to have a mission as teachers, appeared to know what they were there for. The co-student-teachers in my practicum class were the same. They all wanted to be English teachers, and were all eager to get out there, and take over a classroom. Not me. I was in education because, although I wanted to go down East to study journalism, my father wasn't too interested in springing for it. And I'd never heard of student loans. And I was scared besides. Wasn't it bad enough that I'd
studied English literature for three years? My brother was in pre-dentistry. My sister was in first year physiotherapy. Practical stuff. Where had they gone wrong with this first child? And besides, Don had graduated, too, and had a job, and wanted a wife, namely, me. And besides, teachers were in demand. The government even paid one's tuition. And lastly, no one else wanted me, I was "over-qualified". And I felt helpless.

Shaving cream! I didn't want to be a classroom teacher. Teachers weren't people. In my twelve years of public school, through some thirty teachers, I encountered perhaps four who genuinely loved their work, which means they loved their subject, did not care about exams, that is, their self-esteem was not tied up in their students' doing well, emanated a certain respect and warmth for their students. Most I saw as cold, or cruel, and/or stupid. Mostly the latter. By the end of grade twelve, I was convinced that only dullards and cowards became teachers, ergo, god help me, I was never going to be a teacher. However, I was a coward, ergo, I became a teacher. Power subverted into control. Although I did manage some success. The compliments that students on several occasions gave were, you really know your subject and you're sincere. The common complaint was, you're not controlling enough.

Finished my luncheon. What I want to be is a free-lance program developer, with skills in instructional design, learning strategies, and communication media and technology. The latter
are mostly tripe, balderdash. I have a nodding acquaintanceship with those things. I have studied all, but since I consider them incidental to some grander design, they have not been at the centre of my learning. Curriculum criticism has been, that is, asking oneself and the subject specialist not only, "What is it you want to do?" But also "Why?" Finding the centre of the problem and the problem-solving process and working from there is what I want to do. Implementation is a living, breathing entity and grows according to its environment. It has to. The developer has to allow that. There is giving and receiving.

The cowardice (and the bravery) comes into it, in wanting to freelance. I fear becoming locked into and, therefore, alienated within a system. I'd feel powerless. I enjoy working with small groups of decisionmakers, say twenty-five to thirty people. Within a group that size I can feel powerful. It depends on the dynamics of the group. The bravery comes into it, I suppose, in daring to stand alone, but really that is easier when one is alone, or in a very small group where one has a unique face. Facelessness frightens me. Teaching staffs were, for me, both as a student, and as a teacher, faceless entities, or the enemy. Them against us. Struggle for control. Coerciveness. Abusiveness. Isolation.

For example, life has been easier for me to face as a single person than it ever was for me as a married person. Now I don't feel that I have to be that which I am not. I feel that I can be that who I am --- both bad and good, both wildly crazy
(inside) and eminently sane, both incredibly naive and firmly practical, both an eccentric and an upstanding, contributing member of the community, having both a garden of crabgrass and ugly lawn furniture and a stained glass window in the bathroom. 

Analysis

I can see from writing this critique that what I've been fighting much of my adult life is the vision of myself as both helpless and helpful --- when, I've discovered and have begun to own, I'm neither, or both, but certainly more than the sum of the two things. Women, generally, I believe, are struggling with this same vision of self. Joanne, the heroine of the videotape, in her cliched responses to coffee serving and paper-handing-out is responding in the merely helpful image role. In her stiff-mannered exchange with the secretaries, and in her sometimes coy manner with, for example, Chuck when he tells her that she's doing a fine job, she is responding with a merely helpless image. In her encounters with Louise and Blackwell, however, she fights being either. It is easier for her to resist with those characters because they are so obviously malignant (or authoritarian), although Blackwell is benignly so. I, too, have found that it is easier to fight insecurities aroused in situation, if the other person in that situation looks like he/she can take care of him/herself, which I also know is not necessarily, perhaps never, true. Because a person does not have sensitivity to others does not mean that he or she can take care of him/herself. In fact, as I reminisce it is
possible that they are the ones least able to take care of
themselves. Certainly, they are least able to take care of
anyone else. With persons I consider weak and helpless,
whatever the presenting behaviours, whether authoritarian or
complaining, I back down, back away. That is, if it is an
authoritarian person, I become helpless; if it is a complaining
person, I become helpful. And I don't like it either way.
Joanne, in the videotape, reacts similarly, becoming either
brassy or timid.

Helpful, Helpless. Double Jeopardy. Words from another
paper I wrote came to mind and I searched them out.

Woman becomes conscious of herself as she is an
object for the outside spectator. Suddenly her sense of
self is outside herself. She is for herself only as she
is pure reference for the other.

I, too, lose myself when I become pure reference for the other.
In so doing, I transform the other person into an object as
well. The other becomes an object of fear (my helplessness) or
an object of pity (my helpfulness). That facelessness that I
fear will engulf me is is that objectivity that I project on to
others as well as that which they present to me. This
especially happens in work situations, in school situations.

Joanne, the heroine of the videotape, protests to the
secretaries, her former mates, "I haven't changed. My job has
changed." Later, she vehemently professes to Peter that she
wants to develop a management style of her own. The latter
statement implies that the "I" and the job role are to become
one. The former statement (to the secretaries), however, defends them as separate, and obviously they presently are. She thinks that a management training program is what she needs, and maybe it is. It will indicate that the corporation is behind her, insofar as it wants her to develop certain skills. And it will provide for her a resistance (formulated) that she can work against and around. That is, she will know what it is management, as a separate entity, wants so that she can protect herself in her development of a personal style. On the other hand, regarding her expressed desire (recurring) for management training, she must already have some sense of how to handle situations where one person is giving directions to others. After all she worked her way up through the ranks. Surely she thought about what which management behaviour helped her work more happily and supportively. If she hasn't, she cannot protect herself from invasion by the corporation's mores. Furthermore, she is in danger of becoming another Louise, who resembles nothing so much as a man in 'drag'. The masculine principle of the power-aquirer when it has been distorted by suppression is controlling, bullying even.

Growing up a girl-child in this society demanded I suppress aspects of the power-aquirer. I could satisfy that principle as a child openly and honestly only with my peers. But when adults got in the act it was frightening and confusing. Be smart but not too smart. Be gay but not too gay. Be kind but not too kind. Above all, be adult. Yuck. But I did it. I
was twenty-eight at eighteen.

I remember as a child in junior highschool the teacher always appointing boys as team captains for baseball games. I was always the first player picked by whichever captain got first choice. It was not because I was the best player. It was because I was the neighbourhood leader. I took my responsibilities seriously, but just as often, not. What bothered me was parents getting in on the act. "Well, if Sandra Stiles is going I guess you can go." I hated that. I became the adult, controlling. Or teachers. I've never much liked teachers. They, as a group, were controllers supreme. They were coercive. They were abusive. Although I was seldom the overt victim, I watched those who did not have the protective colouring that I had, including academic abilities, and parents who were well-known in the community, being victimized. Even now I choke up inside with that same sense of helplessness. Joanne, in the videotape being buffeted from pillar to post by thoughtlessness and facelessness in the business situation awakened that feeling too.

I also realize, as I write this, that the seed of my being a teacher was sown way back then, in grade school. I used to help other students. Initially, it was my way of protecting them, or helping them protect themselves, from the anger of the teacher, but I found I actually enjoyed the process. I enjoyed the exchange, the giving and receiving.
I was at some point talking about management, the fears I have of being management. I have had experiences managing, any teacher has had. I have also been supervisor of the activities of other adults. What happens is that one starts taking more than one's share of the responsibility and then one starts to look down on those not pulling their weight. One becomes controlling. One takes away responsibility and then denigrates those one has taken it away from. Notice I am using the third person pronoun. When I am talking about myself. It is hard to own the ugliness in oneself.

My efforts to change began with a refusal to put myself in that situation. Get out of the classroom. Study journalism, or library science, or architecture. Withdraw from community work. It worked for a while. Got out of the classroom as a teacher. Went back as a student — but still in education. Curious, isn't it? Those other options were open to me. Got back into community work. I like having a say in how an organization is run. I cannot bear to sit back and let others run what is of vital concern to me. I became vice-president, treasurer, decisionmakers, yes, but not the manager. However, being there, being involved, it began to happen again. Would you be president? Boss-lady. I shrank in horror, I was afraid that if I became head honcho, like Blackwell, on the video tape, no one else would do anything. As part of the group, I can solicit and encourage membership participation. If I were head honcho, I couldn't. I have great difficulty in asking people to
help me. There is apparently quite a bit of the *prima donna* in my soul. I start thinking if I'm the leader, I'm the group. Joanne in the video tape was enjoying her promotion. If I were in her position, I would feel sick to my stomach with fear. I don't want my urge to power subverted into control over other persons.

Growing up in this society is not easy. Children are disrespected. Moreover, the feminine principle in boys is denigrated. The masculine principle in girls is, too. What do little boys think when they're told to shunt their giving-receiving qualities off to the side? The little girls are watching and listening to this socialization of boys. What do the little girls think when they're told to shunt off to the side their desires for power-aquisition? They are bewildered. They suppress. But those suppressed desires emerge, in sly, underhanded ways. Joanne was bewildered by the empty showiness of her male co-horts. Well, Joanne, we've been suprised all our life, haven't we? Helpless in our bewilderment. Time to step out of the persona of surprise and bewilderment and help ourselves.

Joanne moves through, rails against, and flounders in what she intuitively recognizes as a ceremony of bad faith. For her, the management training program represents an offer of good faith. Even so, she must keep her wits about her. A training program is only a life-raft, one must not build one's house on it, or one will be constantly buffeted by the prevailing winds.
The role and the self will become one, that is, the self will disappear. I know. It happened to me, almost. I recognized the ceremony of bad faith, that I couldn't build my house on those rafts thrown out to me. But for many years I decided, therefore, that I couldn't ever build a house. I'd have to live in the outhouses of other peoples estates and hope they would tolerate my shantytown.

Synthesis

Helplessness. Helpfulness. Shantytown. What is the educational significance of these images? Pinar has written,

"Its educational significance has to do with the following: (a) it gives me words for what has hitherto been vague and nameless, (b) it illumines an area of my social relations - that I was not examining; (c) it therefore widens (the image I have is of a window) my intellectual 'gestalt', allowing me to see more of what is at stake in the world, in my life."

The qualities of (a) and (b) have been touched on already in this critique, but what to do with (c)? This is the hardest part, looking at what is at stake in my life. I don't know, nor even care to know what my intellectual gestalt is. It sounds like a parlour game.

But what is the educational significance of helplessness and helpfulness and shantytown, with a stained glass window in the bathroom? What parlour game am I playing with my life, educational and otherwise? Facelessness, another key word. No house, another, because even I know you shouldn't build your house on a river-raft. Aha, it's coming. It's coming. I don't believe that. I want to build my house on a river-raft, plus I
want to build the raft. Now there's a sticky wicket. I'll have to take full responsibility for the whole wild ride. I am near tears at this point.

Educationally and otherwise I'll have to come out from under the bushel. If I feel helpless, I am helpless. If I feel helpful, I am helpful. If shantytown burns down and the stained glass window melts, I'll plow the rubble into the ground and start again. Courage is all it takes, raw, blatant courage. I want to teach myself that and eventually, others. I want to be courageous, not controlling.

As a postscript, regarding the word shantytown, it may seem that I have left the word unexamined, since it does have tones of opprobrium. Maybe I have; but right now I like the word. It suggests a freedom to me that other abodes do not. It also has to do with the fear of assuming responsibility for more than what is rightly mine. When I assume more than my share of the responsibility, I get scared, then I become controlling.

Courage.

Conclusion

Although both critiques were written by one critic, the form and substance of each differ. The critic's purpose was different in each case. Using the Eisner approach, the critic viewed the videotape as artifact, responding knowledgeably to it. Acting as a participant with the curriculum, the critic, in
terms of her connoisseurship, envisioned its potential for being "played-out" in a seminar. In disclosing the significance of the curriculum, the critic arranged her interpretations so that they were corroborative. Using the Pinar approach, the critic viewed the videotape as a personal object, and thematically organized its significance. Then she wrote of her own life, the account of which became an object upon which to reflect. Placing herself between these two objects, the critic disclosed some of her own educational attachments, and then considered what she might do with those discoveries.
Footnotes

1 "Joanne in Business Situation", Women Moving up (Eden Prarie, Minn: Wilson Learning Corp., 1976). N. The title of the videotape is also the title of the two-day workshop in which it is used.

2 n. Pariah was an Indian word meaning drummer. Drummers were members of one of the lowest social classes.

3 Sandra Menzies, "Curriculum and Instruction: My Orientation Towards It" (unpublished paper, UBC, 1979).

This chapter discusses some commonalities and differences in purpose, form, and substance between the Eisner and Pinar approaches to curriculum criticism, and makes reference to what each approach may offer a person doing or reading these approaches. The chapter concludes with some final comparative considerations for potential users.

The chapter is focussed under the following headings: (1) critic as writer and critic as reader: purpose, (2) experience of design and experience of journey: form, (3) comparison of process: substance, (4) subjectivity and objectivity: implications for the potential user, and (5) some final considerations.

Critic as Writer and Critic as Reader: Purpose

Pinar writes regarding currere, "This epistemological view . . . makes me an artist. I experience, and I attempt to express in publicly communicable language, what it is I experience." He also wrote that: "The experimental attitude we associate with the basic idea of science is imperative." Currere is experiential, artistic, experimental. Eisner introduces curriculum criticism, "There is no area of human inquiry that epitomizes the qualitative more than what artists do when they work." Perhaps he finds this paradigm too open for educational criticisms, for he goes on to choose a more restricted inquiry: "Another from of qualitative inquiry is found in the work of those who inquire into the work of artists,
namely the art critics." Furthermore, he goes on to say that:

**Criticism is an empirical undertaking.** The word *empirical* comes from the Latin *empiricus*, meaning "open to experience". Criticism is empirical in the significant sense that the qualities the critic describes or renders must be capable of being located in the subject matter of the criticism.

The Eisner approach is aesthetic, experiential, empirical.

The qualifiers empirical (Eisner) and experimental (Pinar) are references to the validity of the method of each approach. The Eisner emphasis on empiricism refers to the critical description being referentially grounded. Descriptive, corroborative evidence of the curriculum under study must be given so that the reader will recognize what is described. This is its validation. The Pinar emphasis on experiment refers to the critical portrayal being unique according to a particular practitioner at a particular time, because the portrayal is the object of study. It is the remembrances and reflections that are open to critical inquiry. Autobiography validates.

In form, purpose, and substance, both approaches claim to be artistic and experiential. But there is a fine distinction between the two in the sense of those descriptions. This chapter clarifies, or at the very least, makes the distinction larger.

Both approaches require of the critic, imagination, and some artistic sense. Both highlight the importance of detail. Both applaud a speculative mind. Both assume that the critic works from some conceptual frame.
Both approaches are concerned with the sensory moment and with the reconstruction of the sensory moment. In the Eisner approach, critics participate with the full-out antennae of educated perceptions so that they can disclose the appreciations of a connoisseur. The curriculum will be those aspects of the materials or performance that they appreciate. Its significance is what the connoisseur perceives in terms of interactions and configurations. For instance, the critic appears to concentrate on the curriculum experience as empathized in order to discover what participants do/will do with what they are given. The critic here accompanies participants through the curriculum situation; or, in the case of materials criticism, the critic role-plays a participant. In the Pinar approach, on the other hand, critics are participants and identify the lived intention of the curriculum upon participants. The critic surrenders to the recollections and reflections of "I". In this surrender, the view of the critic is inward to the self. The outward curriculum is possessed through the inward journey. The criticism discloses possibilities for new interpretations of the critic's lived experience of curriculum situations.

Both approaches are concerned with the moment the reader receives the message of the reconstruction. The difference between the two is in the emphasis on reception by whom.
In the Eisner approach, the emphasis is on the reception of the message by others. That is why structural corroboration and referential adequacy are stressed. Also, evaluation is a firm step in the Eisner approach. Evaluation deals with the curriculum in terms of a specific conceptual framework, usually some normative theory in education. The critic maintains a selective continuity with past curriculum experiences so that those past experiences may illuminate the present curriculum experience for others, especially those immersed in it. The critic has intervened, as specialist, in order to relay a message about a curriculum. The reader, as other, mediates this intervention. As other, the reader has a responsibility to decode the signification the critic has portrayed.

In the Pinar approach, reception of the message by one's self is more important. Synthesis is an immanent, but not necessarily actual step in the Pinar approach. That is, it is central to the fundaments of currere, but it is not necessarily written into the critique as a final step, since it has to do with taking the understanding one has gained in process, of the forces in one's educational life, and directing them toward transformation of consciousness and hence the actions of one's life. In this case the self as reader mediates. The step of synthesis is an intentional, lived process towards integration of self and is integral to the process of currere. Critics take responsibility for the inner and outer texture of their own educational situation. The message may afford opportunity for
dialogue with others in the same situation.

In either approach, the reader may, especially if familiar with a situation or materials being critiqued, see and consider things that one has neglected to see or to think about before; he/she can respond to the critic's perceptions and apperceptions, becoming a critic him/herself. The reader's inner dialogue that ensues may be exploratory, insightful, or reactive. If this contemplation is extended and written, it may become a criticism itself.

Experience of the Design and Experience of the Journey: Form

Eisner examines the Latin root of curriculum, currere, and sees in it a metaphor for a racetrack, which is "a course filled with increasingly difficult obstacles". These obstacles may be explicit, implicit, or null. In whichever case, the emphasis is on curriculum as live performance or emotive object. The critic dramatizes the interactions of the particulars of persons, activities, and artifacts. Critics first observe the curriculum as immediate and obvious (including the implicit and the null), then they describe, interpret, and evaluate, disciplining the analysis with empirical references. The coherence of the critical writing is in the structural corroboration of what is appreciated as significant.

Regarding significance, the assumption is that the critic is detached from the habitual modes of perception. Eisner, therefore, asks critics to wonder at trifles, and to
work towards expanded awareness, so that they may perceive underlying qualities that are not necessarily evident to someone immersed in the curriculum. Critics are also asked to observe detachedly their own perceptions, especially considering those details that are apparently dissimilar but which are really connected, and vice versa. Critics thus illuminate idiosyncrasies that are significant. In the Eisner approach it appears that critical writings on curriculum are valued as revelatory. That is, their intent is "to draw back the veil" from the participant's or potential participant's eyes. Critics look at the interactions among the structures and personnel of pedagogic situations. They look at and appreciate the interactions in terms of how they got to be that way, what the present effect is, and what the possible consequence will be. In a way the writings in this approach reveal the transitory as absolute. Eisner writes:

The artist, like the educational critic, does not write about everything that exists in a situation but rather about what he or she brackets, what he or she chooses to attend to. This bracketing of perception and its incisive rendering in an expressive medium allow the percipient of the artist's or critic's work to see, in part, through the bracket what the artist has created.

Pinar examines the Latin root of curriculum and sees a metaphor for the running of a course. He describes it this way:

It is active. And it is not. The track around which I run may be inalterably forced, but the rate at which I run, the quality of my running, my sensual-intellectual-emotional experience of moving bodily through space and time: all these are my creations; they are my responsibilities.
For him, it appears that the curriculum as given is present insofar as it is a referent for the learner (critic). The coherence of the critical writing comes from associative remembrances of the curriculum as lived. In currere, one studies these remembrances, through a glass darkly, as it were, identifying themes, capturing the biographic essences, analyzing. The emphasis is on curriculum as a virtual universe of possibilities. Through the study of the experience, through the "thoughts, images, feelings, reveries" of the experience, potentialities and responsibilities of the self in a curriculum situation are realized.

Regarding the opening of such realizations, it happens that the critic's associations and reflections-upon-the-associations encourage a shift, from static (and perhaps stagnant) attachments to the common-sense reality of the curriculum situation. Pinar and Grumet ask the critic to listen to asides of the spirit, and to work towards expanded consciousness: towards realization of his or her place in the curriculum and realization of other possibilities for being there. This realization or consciousness comes through recognition of the discrepancies that connect the familiar and the strange in one's recollections. When, through currere, one takes another look, it can happen that what one accepted as being familiarly true is not so anymore; it is an anachronism, it does not fit. And, what one saw as strange, not accepted as
true, one may now claim as one's own. The writings that emerge from the autobiographical process of currere are valued as "precipitates of a development process in which the telling and reading and revisiting of one's own stories is of most consequence."¹⁰ The critic in the Pinar approach looks at the life-world of the student who is self within the structures of the pedagogic situation. The critic, then, is within, rather than alongside, the curriculum. Currere is a personal story, the collective value of which is defended upon the assumption of there being a communal experience, which lies below, nourishing and cohering the details of personal experience.

Therefore, in the Pinar approach, the critic concentrates on the circle of the tracks one has run, educationally or otherwise, so that details as remembered or anticipated fuse with one's felt sense of how it is. To do this, one first distances oneself in order to see the larger configuration, and then one focusses so that one may see not larger but more. As one focusses, a mandala pattern emerges, coloured in hues and intensities which indicate the significance of relations between the objective conditions of the course and the subjective conditions of the runner. A danger is that in focussing on the interesting details, one can lose the parameters of the context. That is why the critic is advised that the context, as what is actually there in the curriculum, is to be considered as it influences the journey, and the journey considered as it influences the educational context.
In the Eisner approach, on the other hand, the critic concentrates on details that configure in a revelatory pattern, especially the subtle particulars that characterize the situation. The intent of this is that the critic see and appreciate the characteristic configuration of the whole context. One defect of this intent is that, if one does not have a focus, one may see very little. That is why the critic in this approach is cautioned to use theory as the framework for focussing one's interactions with the curriculum under study. Eisner sees this theory as a design or blueprint to which the critic responds as an architect rather than as a structural engineer. Otherwise, these frames could regiment and standardize perception in the same way that observation and other such instruments do.

**Comparison of Process: Substance**

Both approaches observe interaction. In both, the critic alternates between the role of an audience and the role of a participant. The difference is in the emphasis on role. Eisner emphasizes the role of the critic as witness. Pinar emphasizes the role of critic as participant. In both approaches the critic asks two questions:

1. What values does this curriculum event or object portray?
2. What values am I responding with?

In the Eisner approach the emphasis is on, What values does this
curriculum event or object portray? In the Pinar approach, the emphasis is on, What values am I responding with? Regarding critical description, in the Pinar approach, the critic describes the curriculum situation both in terms of the text or project and in terms of the critic's own biography. The task is to surrender to text or project as it envelops one, and to self-reflection. Grumet expresses it this way, "He (the critic) must digest its (the project or text) inorganic nature and take possession of it for himself." The written presentation records the associative response of the participant, both outward to the appearance of things, and inward to the sense of things. Thematic apperception has a framework, perhaps the language of another discipline, for example literary criticism or depth psychology. In the Eisner approach, the critic describes the curriculum situation in terms of the salient aspects of the curriculum that are presented. The critic examines the structures and their relationships, the people and the place, in order to see the curriculum and to make it visible for participants. The task is to bring out the sights, sounds, and feelings evoked by the curriculum, by reconstructing the experience in an artistic manner that will give depth and dimension to the portrayal. The critic then connects these with theories that will translate the impressions.

Regarding interpretation, both approaches interpret subtly as they describe, and analytically within some chosen conceptual framework. They differ greatly in their final steps.
The end step of the Eisner approach is evaluative. It is almost entirely separate from the other steps in the process, although they are used as evidence of referential adequacy and for structural corroboration. In the evaluative step the language changes from metaphoric to discursive. The mood changes from a critical attitude in an aesthetic mode to one using evaluative principles in an educational mode. The end step of the Pinar approach, on the other hand, is synthetical. It cannot be done immediately in the aftermath of the steps. One has to let the descriptive (thematic and biographical) and analytical writings sit there fallow for some time, and then one may come back and attempt synthesis. One has to live with one's insights for a while, and let them touch one's life. Moreover, "a while" is not temporally definable. It could be a few days. It could be a few years.

Subjectivity and Objectivity: Implications for Potential Users

Using the Eisner approach, the critic gains an awareness of what the producers (developers and/or implementors) of the curriculum consider of value, including the inconsistencies. In the Eisner approach, critics indwell the curriculum as a sort of animating spirit, fashioning it, constructing it. They use the curriculum situation as one would use clay, if one were a potter or sculptor, since in order to get the feel of something, one has to handle it. The critic has to choose, participate, be involved and connected in the situation. In this approach, the
reference of the portrayal is the actual lived experience, which
the critic re-invents for presentation to a shared community of
believers. When critics enter a curriculum situation, they
relate to it as it is presented to them. In this relation, the
sensory memory of a curriculum connoisseur is used as a rear-
view mirror, since it is more sophisticated, and safer, than
looking over one's shoulder. Also, it enlarges one's field of
vision. Through the mirror of the critic's previous
experiences, expectations, existing beliefs and conceptual
frameworks, the critic may see aspects of the curriculum ignored
by those immersed in it. The focus is on the exposure of
satisfying and problematic issues.

The Eisner approach in process is a more formal exercise
than the Pinar approach. It is like a game, where the critic
performs an exercise by certain rules, where the critic tries to
outguess the other player, where the critic tries to predict
events within a certain framework. There is potential danger in
this exercise, if critics get caught in the bracket of their
expertise. If critics do not take care to emphasize the
appreciation aspect of connoisseurship, they become engrossed
with the rules. In which case, they do not listen to the
nuances (which may be the newness of the experience), and simply
reject what does not fit. Thus Eisner cautions the critic "to
appreciate what he or she rejects as well as what he or she
accepts within educational practice."12
Besides being constrained by the need to consider what is consequential in terms of educational theories, the critic in the Eisner approach is also more constrained by technique, to write within the mode of a critic of an art form. This constraint can also be a support. It provides a model for guidance. This approach was developed as an alternative to artless inquiry, and it may happen that the critique, especially in materials criticism, is of more intrinsic (autonomous) value to the reader, and to the critic, than the thing being critiqued. Like representative art, the portrayal retains semblance of the object. It must, in order to have referential adequacy. However, like abstract art, the portrayal is consciously conceived as an independent entity. It becomes the object _per se_. It has its own autonomy. In this respect, critics should be cognizant of the danger of their autonomous work of art becoming too abstracted from the cultural ambience in which the original curriculum existed. That is, they should be wary of the critique becoming a sign pointing to itself. Because the critic is an artful researcher, this is a hazard of this approach, a snare that possibly some of its practitioners have fallen into.

In the Pinar approach, the critics do not feel representative of a group or theory _per se_. They are, to use Pinar's word, naked, except for their own experience. Their values are autobiographical. Critics take the curriculum material or project as catalyst, choosing those abstractions
contained therein as they are puzzling to them, and wrestling with those puzzles. The critic relates to the curriculum situation in terms of self. After awareness surfaces, the critic has to come to grips with the contradictions in it. It is a labour, rather than an exercise. The Pinar approach in process is more experimental. The critic responds unrestrictedly (relatively speaking) to the objective limitations of the curriculum situation. The curriculum object provides the impetus to discover something yet unknown, or to demonstrate possibly something known but unintegrated, about self in situation. The portrayal presents certain associations in the consciousness of the critic about a curriculum situation previously unrecognized and neglected by the critic.

The portrayal in this approach is imagistic, in broken images, of the inherent order or disorder of the critic's experience. The writing of the critique feels creative, as one moves slowly and alertly through the broken images, questioning their relevance and questioning the relevance of the curriculum situation. In the work of this approach, the critic feels his or her own potential in the curriculum situation more than he or she thinks about the potential of the curriculum situation for others. There are several potential dangers in this process. The critic is in danger of mimicking self, or of romanticizing self in situation, or of becoming engrossed in the inner journey to the exclusion of the outward journey. In which case, the critic gets caught in the bracket of individualism, although
that is not the expressed intent of Pinar and Grumet. Rather, currere, as the running of a course, is towards a race of perfected human beings, where being human implies being more, rather than being less.

Readers have a problem with the language of the Pinar thesis, since it is not the common language of curriculum studies. It may be more common to religious studies. The reason for the language may be to ensure that there is no confusion with the study of educational psychology and its emphasis on individualism. The emphasis in the Pinar approach is on the discovery of subjectivity, through encounter with the world: (subjectivity is) "the judgement drawn from that encounter". In using this approach, the critic dwells in the curriculum situation and sees it as factitious. But the facticity becomes the coating on the back of the mirror without which the glass would only be a window. The facticity then is, in part, the critic's own lebenswelt. As the lebenswelt is common sense, it is examined in currere in the light of what Vladimir Nabokov once wrote about commonsense. "Commonsense at its worst is sense made common." In drawing judgements, critics use their recollections and reflections as a window, until that window becomes a mirror in which they can see themselves. Seeing themselves provides them with an opportunity to extricate themselves from situation if they want to. Currere is concerned with the liberation of the individual.
Some Final Considerations

Why would one choose to read curriculum criticism in either of these modes? Because both demand some sensitivity and some creativity in the presentation of the critique, both may appeal to those personal qualities in the reader. Moreover, such stimulation may provoke the reader to consider a curriculum issue from a new perspective. However, with an Eisner style critique, the reader most likely to benefit is someone immersed in the curriculum being critiqued. It provides a distance from situation that he or she does not have. With a Pinar style critique, the reader most likely to benefit, other than the critic, is someone with similar experiences with curriculum. It may, then, serve to enlarge the scope and importance of his or her place in the curriculum, since the critic is asking questions similar to the ones he or she has asked. Both approaches, then, can be illuminative, enriching the reader's perceptions.

Why would one choose to write curriculum criticism in either of these modes? Both offer a critic the chance to articulate (to open for discussion) experience in a curriculum situation. Both allow that interpretation to be artful. Both are concerned with the personal responsibility of their readers. The benefit with the Eisner approach is that critics are offered a chance to disclose their connoisseurship. The benefit with the Pinar approach is that critics may take the opportunity to
discover what it is they really do know about their curriculum.

Why would one choose to contract a curriculum criticism in either mode? Either could be chosen if one wanted a critique that is highly readable, since both approaches have that potentiality. One would specifically contract the Eisner approach if one wanted an outsider's perspective on what is happening or could be happening with a curriculum, especially if one liked the idea of the curriculum being treated as a work of art, whether a live performance or an evocative object. One would specifically choose the Pinar approach if one wanted an insider's point of view on the curriculum, especially if one wanted a truly personal point of view.

Finally, it is the consideration of this writer that both approaches are useable and useful for curriculum inquiry. A further study could investigate the commonalities and difficulties of other approaches in order to discover benefits that neither Pinar nor Eisner offers.
Footnotes


4 Eisner, Imagination, p. 191.

5 Eisner, Imagination, p. 191.

6 Eisner, Imagination, p. 34.

7 Eisner, Imagination, p. 204.


Vladimir Nabokov, "How to Read, How to Write", Esquire, September, 1980, p. 64.


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