Chapter 9
Inclusion as Ethical Work on Ourselves

There’s an optimism that consists in saying that things couldn’t be better. My optimism would consist rather in saying that so many things can be changed, fragile as they are, bound up more with circumstances than necessities, more arbitrary than self evident, more a matter of complex, but temporary, historical circumstances than of inevitable anthropological constraints...You know, to say that we are much more recent than we think, is to place at the disposal of the work that we do on ourselves the greatest possible share of what is presented to us as inaccessible. (Foucault, 1988:156)

This book began by taking to task those researchers whose theories and practices have mythologized a sense of progress in relation to pupils with special needs. It was suggested that researchers’ unwillingness to address the power relationships within which research knowledge is produced has maintained the binary divide between researcher and researched, thereby ensuring that research continues to be seen as a ‘violation’ and ‘irrelevant’ by disabled people (Oliver, 1992a:105). Furthermore, researchers’ failure to theorize was criticized for doing untold damage to the project of inclusion, allowing it to become no more than ‘a new language for functionalism’ (Slee, 1998:130). This bleak picture has provoked Barton to ask whether the notion of inclusive education is ‘romantic, subversive or realistic’ (1997:231).

The accounts provided by the pupils with special needs and their mainstream peers present a much more sanguine view of inclusion which does not hold to a Utopian ‘vision’, yet recognizes the place of ‘struggle’ (Barton 1997:239). The power relationships in which the pupils were enmeshed were much more subtle and were often positive and creative. Raschida, Laura and the others were not the passive objects of special needs knowledge upon whom inclusion was practised, but were actively seeking inclusion, working on themselves and their mainstream peers to make inclusion happen. Their transgressive strategies, practised amid the threat of coercive markers of disability from multiple sources, enabled them to defy the identities and experiences chosen for them and to practise alternative forms of conduct. The mainstream pupils, with their highly nuanced understanding of disability and of matters of justice and equality, played a key role as gatekeepers, within their mini-regime of governmentality. This appeared mostly
to support the inclusion of pupils with special needs through their pastoral care and pedagogic strategies. At the same time, however, the pupils’ ambivalences and uncertainties, where they felt ‘uptight’ or sorry for the pupils with special needs, also provided coercive markers of disability. From the informal discourses, inclusion can be read as a messy and unstable process which the mainstream pupils both sanction and prohibit.

This leaves everyone—pupils with special needs, mainstream pupils, teachers, schools and researchers—with a great deal to do. As Simons points out, the responsibilities are ‘awesome’ (1995:123). It requires the kind of ethical work on our selves and our practices which is guided by an underlying telos, in which everyone should strive towards self-mastery (Blacker, 1998) and a set of principles which ‘tell you in each situation, and in some way spontaneously, how you should behave’ (Foucault, 1987a:117). According to Foucault, this involves challenging ‘the evidence and the postulates, of shaking up habits, ways of acting and thinking, of dispelling commonplace beliefs, of taking a new measure of rules and institutions’ (1991b:11–12). He argues for the development of ‘a critical ontology of ourselves’ (1984b:50), which allows for the analysis of, and experimentation on, limits imposed upon us. Foucault conceives of this as an attitude or way of life, in which individuals recognize the limits imposed upon them but also seek to test these limits. Disabled people, therefore, might recognize their disability as imposing certain intractable limits upon them but might also challenge artificially created barriers such as attitudes.

According to Foucault (1977c), limits are both transgressible and immutable, crossable in the sense that they can be challenged through practices which promote alternative subjectivities, and uncrossable, in that they cannot be removed permanently or transcended. Thus, work on limits cannot be reduced to political success (Bernaur, 1988). The conundrum of the uncrossable limit (Boyne, 1990) has led Foucault to conclude that the efficacy of transgression lies in the confusion of crossing/uncrossing and the knowledge that the limit itself has no limit. Even once we grasp the sense of our imbrication in the power/knowledge networks, however, ‘the thought of further excess remains’ (Boyne, 1990:81). This means that the work on limits never succeeds and always remains to be done. Simons suggests that this work ‘creates political fictions with the self-conscious awareness that it does so, while also being aware that the political facts created by other theories are also fictions’ (1995:123, original emphasis). The work we do on ourselves is always critical of self and others and thereby ‘avoids the pitfalls of narcissistic aestheticism and the alienation of political obsession’ (Blacker, 1998:363). Inclusion, then, is a precarious process, in which ‘risk and promise are necessary conditions for each other’ (Simons, 1995:123). It should be guided by ‘suspicion, always, but never condemnation, the latter being merely the mirror image of utopianism’ (Blacker, 1998:364).

The Foucauldian project of ethical work has some parallels with the critical pedagogy offered by Giroux (1988; 1992), McLaren (1995) and others. Both set out to create ‘responsive landscapes or spaces’ (Shorter, 1997) which privilege the normally subjugated voice of the pupil and introduce ‘failure, loss, confusion, unease [and] limitation’ for dominant groups (Jones, 1998:25). In each case the teacher establishes dialogue which

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seeks to break the ‘culture of silence’ (McLaren, 1995:32) and traverse the boundaries of difference. Spatial metaphors such as margin and centre are deployed with the aim of moving individuals to a more politically effective space.

There are, however, three important distinctions between critical pedagogy and the Foucauldian ethical project of inclusion. First, the ethical project recognizes that the demand for narrative can become part of a renewal of colonizing power (Bhabha, 1994; Jones, 1998) and a ‘strategy of surveillance and exploitation’ (Bhabha, 1994:99). These instances of the ‘ferocious standardising benevolence’ of the ‘relentless recognition of the Other’ (Spivak, 1988:294) become, therefore, little more than acts of voyeurism by dominant groups (Jones, 1998). Those engaged in the ethical project, in contrast, understand that their own ‘cannibal desire to know the other through being taught/fed by her is simultaneously a refusal to know’ (1998:21, original emphasis). Thus, the privileging of speaking within the ethical project gives way to the act of hearing what the speaker says (Jones, 1998).

The ethical project also differs from critical pedagogy in its refusal to offer promises of rescue, ‘escape routes to the grounds of certainty’ (Stronach and Maclure, 1997:9). Within critical pedagogy, these gestures take a variety of forms, including moves to ‘get back finally to reality, history, society, politics’ (Derrida, 1990:79); alternatively, they involve appeals to pluralism using the grammar of spatial rescue and becoming together (McLaren, 1995), appealing to a kind of consensus in which members agree to differ. Finally, they might involve some kind of futuring, such as the one Skrtic offers special education:

And, of course, the aim of deconstructing special education is to clear the way for special educators to reconstruct it in a manner that is more consistent with the ideal of serving the best educational and political interests of their consumers… reconstructing public education as an integrative system is a distributive good that serves the best moral, political, and economic interests of all Americans. (1995: 233–4)

One might be surprised that Skrtic chose to save only American democracy, given his faith in the potential for salvation. Such an agenda, however, is ‘both impossible and pointless’, since it is inevitably ‘half-baked’, concealed by the notion of ‘emergence’ (Stronach and Maclure, 1997:151). The implication of everyone in ethical work—pupils with special needs, mainstream pupils, teachers, schools and researchers—articulates their complicity in exclusion and their responsibility for inclusion. The ethical project seeks to create spaces for dialogue, where individuals can also work across boundaries (McLaren, 1995), but acknowledges that these spaces can be oppressive. Practitioners of the ethical project avoid futuring inclusion, preferring to turn their attention to the past and the way inclusion has been fictionalized. Rescue gestures are avoided, although it is recognized that the appeal to human agency could be read as such and that there is possibly a hint of universalist normativity implicit in the notion of the ethically stylized individual (Smart, 1998).

The final feature which distinguishes the ethical project from critical pedagogy is that there is no emancipatory goal, promising freedom and empowerment to its subjects. It
avoids emancipatory politics, 'created out of empathy for others by means of a passionate connection through difference' (McLaren, 1995:106) and premised on a 'touching faith in the talking cure of story-telling' (Jones, 1998:12) to enable subjects to participate equally. Instead, an ethical project allows individuals to strive for 'the self reflective goal of experiencing the self as agent' (Warren, 1988:138) and knowledge of the self in relation to constraints. Foucault argues that the ethical project offers more than emancipation from external or internal constraint by allowing individuals to fight the battle of 'self over self' (1987b:91). 'Self mastery' (p. 92) produces a particular kind of active freedom, which Pignatelli describes as 'inventive, resourceful, strategical moves along an axis of power, moves which possibly anticipate but cannot terminate the play of power' (1993:127).

Foucault’s framework for ethical work on ourselves focuses on 'the forms of relations with the self, on the methods and techniques by which he works them out, on the exercises by which he makes of himself an object to be known, and on the practices that enable him to transform his own mode of being' (1987b:30). As Smart points out, Foucault gave little advice on how to achieve this. He mentions the role of the counsellor, friend, guide or master 'who will tell you the truth about yourself' (1998:82), but does not discuss the nature of the relationships involved. Ethical work has four dimensions, which Foucault (1987b) elaborates upon in relation to sexuality:

1 Determination of the ethical substance: this involves identifying 'this or that part of oneself as prime material of his moral conduct' (1987b:26) and allowing individuals to decide which aspect of the self is to be worked on. Foucault offers fidelity as an example, with individuals resisting temptation or experiencing the intensity of a binding relationship.

2 The mode of subjection concerns the 'way in which the individual establishes his relationship to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice' (1987b: 27). Foucault argues that this allows the individual to pursue 'brilliance, beauty, nobility or perfection' (1987b:27). Blacker (1998) suggests that an example of this is the Greek aristocrat who fashions his diet according to certain aesthetic criteria.

3 Self-practice or ethical work involves what one does 'not only in order to bring one’s conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behaviour' (1987b:27). Thus, sexual austerity, in Foucault’s example, can be practised silently, through thought or involving a much more explicit and ‘relentless combat’ (1987b:27). It is a form of ‘asceticism’ (Blacker, 1998:362) through which individuals transform themselves.

4 The Tēlos is the ultimate goal which an individual is trying to achieve and in Foucault’s example, fidelity is associated with an aspiration towards complete self mastery. Blacker describes this as a kind of 'controlled and self-regulated dissemination of the subject into the world, a positive dissolution…not self-absorption, but being absorbed into the world: a losing-finding of the self' (1998:362–3, original emphasis).
Foucault argues that one should become so accomplished in this ethical work that it is done unconsciously: ‘You must have learned principles so firmly that when your desires, your appetites or your fears awaken like barking dogs, the logos will speak with the voice of a master who silences the dogs by a single command (1987a:117, original emphasis).

Although Foucault’s ethical work is directed towards a kind of sexual austerity, it can be applied to inclusion in a much more positive way, privileging, rather than suppressing, desires. To take Raschida as an example, it is possible to specify elements of the ethical project in the work she was already doing on herself and to envisage ways of extending it. The determination of her ethical substance could identify disability as the part of herself to be worked on. It is just as important to indicate which aspect is not to be addressed and Raschida might omit her ethnicity as requiring less work of this kind. Her mode of subjectivation could involve analysing the disabling barriers she faces and the discourses through which she is forced to be disabled. She might also specify the extent to which the mainstream pupils and teachers enable and constrain her, giving her material from which to determine the kind of self-practice or ethical work she wishes to do. In contrast with the Foucauldian asceticism, Raschida’s self-work might focus on strategies for easy movement around school, practising a kind of nonchalence in her relations with her peers. Her ethical work is also likely to focus on her peers’ governmental regime, as her accounts suggested she had already done, but might also tackle some of the teachers’ practices and attitudes. Finally, the act of spelling out a goal or telos is useful in itself as a means of helping others to understand Raschida’s desires and her notion of self-mastery might include efficiency in her movement and acceptance by her friends. Work of this kind could produce lives which are ‘larger, more active, more affirmative and richer in possibilities’ (Deleuze, 1988:92).

This work on the promotion of new subjectivities (Foucault, 1982) is not just ethical, but is also political, social and philosophical and is put into practice through a kind of ‘curiosity’, which evokes the care of what exists and might exist; a sharpened sense of reality, but one that is never immobilized before it; a readiness to find what surrounds us strange and odd; a certain determination to throw off familiar ways of thought and to look at the same things in a different way... a lack of respect for the traditional hierarchies of what is important and fundamental. (Foucault, 1984c:321)

It requires to be done by everyone, but since government of self and others is linked (Foucault, 1984e), it will be necessary to establish conduct which ‘seeks the rules of acceptable behaviour in relations with others’ Foucault (1988a:22). According to Levinas, ‘I have to respond to and for the Other without occupying myself with the Other’s responsibility in my regard’ (1987:137). Foucault regrets that the self can no longer be allowed to predominate as it did in the ancient Greek sense in which ‘the principal work of art which one has to take care of, the main area to which one must apply aesthetic values, is oneself, one’s life, one’s existence’ (1984a:362). Smart (1998) suggests that the contemporary version of caring for oneself, characterized by self-determination, self-expression and hedonism, has led to indifference towards the other, but this was not
apparent in the relationships described by the pupils. The work which each of the individuals already involved in the processes of inclusion and exclusion may do on themselves is discussed in the context of their responsibilities both to themselves and others.

The Ethical Project of Inclusion

Pupils with Special Needs

If mainstream pupils, teachers, schools and researchers are all engaged in ethical work on themselves, they will remove much of the oppression normally experienced by disabled people. As Foucault points out, these actions are linked to the techniques for the directions of others (1984a: 370), suggesting that within educational establishments 'one is managing others and teaching them to manage themselves' (ibid.). Consequently, there may be less need for the kind of defensive strategies which the pupils reported in this research, where 'the constant fear of discovery makes normative social interaction difficult and adds to the barriers faced by disabled people' (Barnes, 1996a: 3, original emphasis). As French points out, however, social remedies can never 'truly eliminate disability' (1993a: 19) and others (see Oliver, 1987; Finkelstein, 1990) have commented on the unsuccessful efforts to remove barriers created by public attitudes. That is not to say that these should not continue to be tackled; it is also clear, however, that pupils need to be helped to cope with the real situations in which they find themselves and to seek ways of overcoming the disabling barriers which remain. They may need some encouragement to explore the possibilities of being active subjects, with options to transgress. In this research, Brian, Sarah, Graham and Scott, each of whom had cognitive difficulties, seemed to have fewer opportunities to transgress than the other pupils, but this need not necessarily be the case if teachers support them and if mainstream pupils loosen the grip of their governmental regime. Booth and Ainscow have suggested that singling out pupils using professionally derived labels of special needs or SEN could 'further contribute to their marginalisation' (1998a: 67). This is a naïve view, which ignores the political context of disability and the need to help individuals to negotiate the double bind of challenging subjectification as constructed subjects (Ligget, 1988), acknowledging the binarisms of special/normal or disabled/able-bodied in order to speak against them.

The ethical work by pupils with special needs might concern how their disabilities are perceived by others, narrating their identity in order to make it live (Brannigan, 1996). Individuals may choose to work away from disability, as Raschida, Laura and Barry did in their transgressive practices, work towards it, like Susan and Peter, or do both, as Phillip seemed to prefer (Chapter 4). Teachers might help pupils to explore their sense of self—expressed as desires rather than needs—and to analyse the constraining and enabling factors, but should avoid passing judgments on them. This could then lead to the removal of some constraints or the enunciation of strategies to circumvent others. Teachers could also specify the kind of support they perceive to be necessary, with both parties exploring the consequences of receiving this kind of support or doing without it. It may be possible to negotiate strategies which recognize both needs and desires, for example, by providing
support within classrooms which does not disturb peer interaction. Dialogue of this kind may encourage pupils to ‘escape the grasp of categories’ (Foucault, 1977d:190) and practise alternative forms of conduct. At the same time, however, they can be helped to understand the consequences of certain actions, such as doing without specialist help or becoming dependent on one’s peers. The point is ‘not to abolish identity (or subjectivity) but to transform the way in which we experience identity’ (Simons, 1995:121).

Ethical work for pupils with special needs privileges their desires over professionally constructed needs, but ‘this means not what we most powerfully desire, but which desires we most identify with or most value’ (Magill, 1997:71). This work also recognizes that knowledge about their needs is also an instrument of power which is constraining and disabling. Although there is much work which individuals might do to tackle these constraints, such as helping mainstream peers to be less ‘uptight’, other limits may be more intractable. Greater knowledge of the way these limits are constructed, that is by a disabling society, may move individuals towards collective, rather than individual, transgressions, but it is important that they are given the scope to make these kinds of decisions. There is a danger that helping pupils with special needs to develop transgressive practices which relate specifically to them merely recreates the binarism of the included child, who is always identifiable. This need not be the case if everyone is recognized as doing ethical work on themselves, on their ‘fragile shaggy hybride identities’ (McRobbie, 1994:192, original emphasis); this work will vary for everyone, according to their priorities and goals. Thus, everyone has to learn to ‘live in and with selves divided in and through incommensurable difference’ (Kelly, 1997:122), learning to ‘consolidate oneself as a subject of lack’ (Silverman, 1996:37).

Mainstream Pupils

The mainstream pupils’ accounts suggested a commitment to the welfare of pupils with special needs and an engagement with inclusion. Their ethical work, therefore, might work towards greater self consciousness of their governmental regime, focusing on its positive aspects and on the avoidance of activities which promote exclusion. Connelly suggests that the antagonism which may emerge through resentment of the other can be converted to ‘agonistic respect’, in which ‘each party comes to appreciate the extent to which its self-definition is bound up with the other and…opponents can become bonded together, partially and contingently, through an enhanced experience of the contestability of the problematic each pursues most fervently’ (1998:122). Respect is, thus, more far-reaching than mere liberal tolerance—‘a passive letting the other be’ (ibid.) and opens up the space for negotiating difference ‘by identifying traces in the other of the sensibility one identifies in oneself and locating in the self elements of the sensibility attributed to the other’ (1998:123). This could, of course, be read as another brand of Utopian rhetoric. On the other hand, it could be seen as reconfiguring the already there governmental regime, in which the mainstream pupils had determined their own responsibilities with regard to inclusion.

The very positive aspects of the mainstream pupils’ regime, such as their pedagogic involvement with pupils with special needs, could be reinforced, encouraging them to
examine their responsibilities towards pupils with special needs and to push the limits of these responsibilities still further. They might also scrutinize the ambivalences and contradictions within their understanding of disability and identity, not with a view to eradicating these, but in order to reach decisions about their conduct and its consequences. For example, they might consider how charity discourses, expressed as feeling sorry for individuals, disable them by making them passive, and contribute to the oppression of disabled people generally. Respect, in this context, arises from ‘an indebtedness to those who prevent limits from concealing by sustaining the contest between different ideas and policies’ (Connelly, cited in Simons, 1995:121). Brian’s mainstream peers signalled their need for help in coping with behaviour which breached their usual rules about physical contact and sexuality. This could be done in the context of general discussions about sexuality.

The significance of mainstream pupils as inclusion gatekeepers should not be underestimated. This research highlighted the positive and supportive aspect of their involvement, and their assumption that inclusion is an inalienable right, but also suggested that they could be highly negative and punitive, finding ways of legitimizing the exclusion of individuals. Mainstream pupils could be encouraged to work on their governmental regime, emphasizing the positive, rather than negative, aspects. Ethical work of this kind could also help to give pupils a greater sense of their active engagement with school processes, rather than as passive recipients.

**Teachers**

Foucault argues that in order to do ethical work on the self ‘one must listen to the teachings of a master’ (1987a:118). The findings from this research, however, suggest that these teachings are flawed and that teachers have extensive ethical work to do, in scrutinizing how their own practices disable individuals, albeit unintentionally. Pignatelli urges teachers, above all, to ‘avoid discourse-practices that essentialize categories of deviancy in the minds of pupils and themselves; discourse-practices that cause pupils to internalize and monitor their deviant status—in effect blaming themselves for their own marginality’ (1993:420).

Teachers and other professionals have ethical work to do on themselves, in order to avoid using experience as ‘terrorism’ on those without it (Spivak, 1994: 129), while also facilitating their pupils’ ethical work. Felman suggests that the biggest challenge for professionals comes from their own ‘passion for ignorance’:

Teaching...has to deal not so much with lack of knowledge as with resistances to knowledge. Ignorance...is a passion inasmuch as traditional pedagogy postulated a desire for knowledge—an analytically informed pedagogy has to reckon with the passion for ignorance. Ignorance, in other words, is nothing other than a desire to ignore...It is not a simple lack of information but the incapacity—or the refusal—to acknowledge one’s own implication in the information. (1982:30, original emphasis)
The teachers in this research seemed to demonstrate regularly such a passion for ignorance with regard to the pupils with special needs. This was not because they lacked compassion or were unprofessional; rather, their discourse of needs encouraged them to blank out some of the pupils’ desires, such as Raschida’s reluctance to use a long cane, Fiona’s dislike of her hearing aid or Susan’s enjoyment of her peers’ attention. There have been many calls for a scrutiny of professional knowledge (see Skrtic, 1995; Tomlinson, 1996) and of teachers’ ‘interests and investments in the knowledge being forged’ (Orner, 1998:279). Skrtic (1995) argues that the process of professionalization creates individuals who share the belief that they are acting in the best interests of clients, based on knowledge which they assume to be objective. Ethical work by teachers, therefore, involves subverting their own ‘ideology of expertise’ (Troyca and Vincent, 1996:142).

Lowson (1994) offers a useful deconstructive strategy in this respect, by inviting professionals to pathologize themselves as suffering from Professional Thought Disorder (PTD). This condition has a number of features, including a compulsion to analyse and categorize the experience of others; disordered cognition, which manifests itself in rigidly held beliefs; delusions of grandeur; and negative transference and projection, in which the sufferers cannot ‘distinguish their own wishes and impulses from those of the people they wish to be helping’ (cited in Corbett, 1996:40). When professional language is turned back towards the professionals themselves, the effect is ‘distinctly sinister’ (ibid.). Yet, scrutiny of their own clinical symptoms, for example, as a staff development activity, could encourage teachers and other professionals to recognize and remove the ‘rigidity, imperviousness and defensiveness’ (ibid.) in their language and practices. Pupils with special needs and others who have to endure such behaviour from professionals may be helped by understanding the etymology of PTD and the symptoms which force professionals to act in certain ways.

Kelly suggests that teachers might ‘grasp difference as a pedagogical project’ (1997:113), aspiring to a missing, rather than a meeting, of minds (Johnston, 1977). Greene argues that students must experience opportunities to ‘articulate the themes of their own existence’, experiencing ‘curriculum as possibility’ (1978:18). Schafisma (1998) proposes the use of fictional strategies in which pupils produce narratives which enable them to explore identity, difference and the power relations within the classroom. At the same time, however, teachers should not subject pupils to a will to confess, as this is a disciplinary technique in itself (Foucault, 1976; Orner, 1998). Critical fictions are ‘both a struggle against the privileges of knowledge and opposition against mystifying representations imposed on people, and also still constructed to some extent in and through the technologies of power’ (Schafisma, 1998:267). Through these processes, teachers can help pupils to recognize ‘the constitutive force of discourse’ (p. 237), recognizing the multiplicity and ambiguity of these discourses but also realizing that these are not ‘totally determining’. Personal and Social Development is an obvious part of the curriculum for these activities, but there are other areas such as English where identity and difference could easily be a focus. Teachers can offer pupils feedback on their personal fictions which raises their consciousness of possibilities of further work on their limits, whatever these may be. This allows teachers to fulfil their obligations to pupils, which
Fendler suggests ‘consists of teaching the soul—including fears, attitudes, will and desire’ (1998:55).

It might have seemed that teachers have been portrayed as the villains of this research story. They did at times appear insensitive to the desires of pupils with special needs and unaware of the gatekeeping potential of the mainstream pupils. Yet they were merely operating within a professional discourse which had its own integrity and rules of conduct and which had the capacity to silence the pupils’ discourses. This is not intended as yet another opportunity to berate teachers, but merely to invite them to examine how their practices might disable pupils and to make space within their professional discourse of needs for their pupils’ desires.

**Schools**

Schools also have a great deal to do and their ethical project will necessarily be farreaching, if they are to become less oppressive spaces for pupils with special needs. A major task, therefore, has to be effecting ‘deep changes in the way schools work’ (Pignatelli, 1993: 411). Skee (1996) suggests that schools should pathologize themselves in order to acknowledge their own failures. This would expose the ways in which special needs has been used as a ‘bureaucratic device for dealing with the complications arising from clashes between narrow, waspish curricula and disabled students’ (Skee, 1998:131–2). Disability has to be seen in terms of uneven power relations and privilege and speaks to ‘political, rather than individual pathologies’ (1998:134).

School policies on discipline and bullying could accentuate the positive role of pupils in caring for themselves and others, at the same time indicating that negative behaviour will not be tolerated. Sharp and Thomson (1997) argue that all staff and students should be involved in the formulation of anti-bullying policies to ensure that all have an investment in its success. Anti-bullying strategies, aimed at sparing all pupils the ‘oppression and repeated intentional humiliation implied in bullying’ (Olweus, 1994:1183), should avoid entrenching further the pupils’ disabled identities. Greater alertness by teachers, to situations such as the victimization which left Sarah in tears, the names which Scott had to endure and the vulnerability of Peter at his new school might have enabled them to intervene constructively.

The application of school effectiveness research to special education has already proved seductive for some (Ainscow, 1991; Ramasut and Reynolds, 1993), even though, according to Reynolds, the findings ‘may cast doubt on the validity and practical value of the [inclusionist] enterprise’ (1995:121). Gerber explores the possibility that the efforts of a school to raise the achievement of disabled students may have little or no impact on a schools’ mean performance outcomes and concludes that there are ‘serious implications for the concept of school effectiveness’ (1996:170). Booth is right to dismiss such an approach as ‘expensively misconceived’ (1998:87), on the grounds that what it has to say about effective schools ‘could be agreed in an afternoon by experienced teachers pooling their ideas’ (ibid.). Skee’s suspicion of attempts to ‘deploy effective schooling research as a way of collapsing the special needs conundrum into the general mission of school improvement’ (1998:130) is also well placed. Pupils with special needs stand to lose most
from the school effectiveness mentality because it forces teachers to demonstrate that their disproportionate expenditure on them, in terms of money and effort, has been productive (Bataille, 1985) and creates a normalizing and differentiating imperative. There is a need to exercise deep scepticism in the direction of these particular fictions, which Hamilton (1996) has labelled as ‘an ethnocentric pseudo-science that serves merely to mystify anxious administrators and marginalise classroom practitioners’, and which will inevitably be detrimental to inclusion.

Ethical work for schools focuses, of course, on everyone in it—teachers, senior management, ancillary staff and pupils—but also addresses the schools’ institutionalized practices. A responsiveness to diversity and avoidance of disabling practices could help pupils with special needs to feel valued. These measures could help to develop schools as communities in which there is ‘openness to unassimilated otherness’ (Young 1990b, 1990: 319). The notion of community is itself problematic, because it is prefaced on notions of unity and consensus (Bauman, 1996; Young, 1990b) and falls to ‘square the circle’ (Bauman, 1996:79) between community membership and self determination. That is, it fails to recognize how individuals can be active agents responsible for themselves and others within a community. The ethical project for schools incorporates both personal and collective responsibility, with individuals establishing the rules of conduct for themselves and in relation to others.

**Researchers**

Researchers’ ethical work might be devoted to scrutiny of the ways in which closure in their own thinking is disabling and how truths about progress in integration and inclusion have been ‘arbitrarily mass manufactured and disseminated’ (Blacker, 1998:357). Smart suggests that what is needed is a ‘critical examination of the various ways in which we have come to govern ourselves and others through the articulation of a distinction between truth and falsity’ (1986:171). This requires researchers to turn their attention to knowledge production. The ethical project also demands that researchers look at their own complicity in this process. Blacker (1998) suggests that ethical work has two guiding principles of ‘efficacy’ and ‘honesty’ (1998:359). Individuals achieve efficacy by narrowing the scope of their activity and thereby widening and deepening its potential consequences. Specialization should, therefore, be privileged over generalization. Honesty requires individuals to be attentive to the consequences of their theorizing and maintain the effort required to be vigilant. Blacker insists this does not entail searching for the truth about oneself, but ‘attentiveness to how one’s actions get absorbed by the power/knowledge regime’ (1998:360).

The ethical project for researchers takes as its starting point the right of all individuals to be included in mainstream education and focuses on the mechanisms which exclude individuals. There is, however, the risk of piety among researchers who stand on the sidelines and wax critical at teachers and others. The most important feature of the ethical project for researchers is that they acknowledge the way their own involvement in truth production excludes and disables individuals. This requires them to produce accounts of their research which have to be ‘responded to rather than just read’ (Stronach and Maclure,
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1997:158, original emphasis). Booth (1998) argues plaintively that academics are too preoccupied to read each others’ work, exchange ideas and reflect on their own research practice. Yet, his appearance in volumes on theorizing special education (Clark et al., 1998; Haug, 1998) and membership of an international research colloquium (Ballard, 1999; Booth and Ainscow, 1998b; Clark, Dyson and Millward, 1995) signals a move towards more self-conscious research practices and greater accountability among researchers. It is vital that researchers, regardless of the constraints under which they operate, subject themselves to their colleagues’ critique. Booth dismisses Oliver’s (1992b) contention that an earlier debate he had with Söder (1989; Booth, 1991) amounted to intellectual masturbation, claiming it ‘had more to do with the macho politics of the locker room, professional self-interest and the termination of critique, than with the politics of disability’ (1998:85). This is to miss Oliver’s point that such debate, without the involvement of disabled people, contributes little to understanding their experiences or changing their material circumstances and merely adds to their oppression. So, far from trying to engage in closure, Oliver was calling for a more meaningful debate about ‘the terrain over which ideological struggles are being fought by disabled people in order to free themselves from the chains of oppression’ (1992b:26). Brantlinger has observed how several empiricist researchers have used ideology against inclusionists as a mechanism of closure, arguing that they would be on safer grounds if they branded them for ‘idealism or demagoguery’ (1997:437). Yet, the notion of ideology is often misused or used vaguely to ‘convey a sort of discredit. To describe a statement as ideological is very often an insult, so that this ascription itself becomes an instrument of symbolic domination’ (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1994:266).

The under-theorized state of special educational practice (Slec, 1998) is being taken seriously by researchers and there have been many moves to remedy this. Recent theoretical developments include critiques of knowledge traditions within special education (Booth, 1998; Stangvik, 1998); engaging teachers in the theorizing process (Ainscow, 1998); and efforts to reconnect special education with educational theorizing more generally (Dyson, 1997; Slec, 1996). There have also been attempts to make greater use of imported theories (Skrtic, 1995; Slec, 1998) and this book has, of course, appropriated aspects of Foucault’s methodology and analyses. The aim has not been to remain pure to Foucault, the very idea of which would have been abhorrent to someone who defied attempts to name his political perspective:

I think I have in fact been situated in most of the squares on the political checkerboard, one after another and sometimes simultaneously: as anarchist, leftist, ostentatious or disguised Marxist, nihilist, explicit or secret anti-Marxist, technocrat in the service of Gaullism, new liberal, etc. ... None of these descriptions is important by itself; taken together, on the other hand, they mean something. And I must admit that I rather like what they mean. (1984c:383–4)

Instead, the intention has been to explore the relevance of his work to special education, discarding what is of no use. At a seminar on theorizing special education in Norway (Haug, 1998), some themes from this research were presented, following which the
appointed critic suggested that Foucault would have ‘celebrated’ the arguments for a potential transgression of disabled identity, but would be ‘a little shaken’ by the analysis of the governmentality of mainstream peers. It was satisfying to have both pleased and disturbed Foucault. No doubt other Foucauldian scholars will find aspects of the application of his methodology and constructs to special needs troublesome, but the point has been to try to use Foucault’s ‘box of tools’ (1977a:208) critically, self-consciously and creatively, rather than faithfully, and to generate a response, whether negative or otherwise.

Theorizing, as Slee (1998) reminds us, is a political activity and Barnes (1996b) emphasizes the major role played by disabled people in politicizing disability:

Since the politicisation of disability by the international disabled people’s movement…a growing number of academics, many of whom are disabled people themselves, have reconceptualised disability as a complex and sophisticated form of social oppression (Oliver, 1986) or institutional discrimination on a par with sexism, heterosexism and racism…theoretical analysis has shifted from individuals and their impairments to disabling environments and hostile social attitudes. (Barnes, 1996b:43)

Despite being the source of this ‘gift’, disabled people have been marginalized from research and knowledge production, through the unwillingness of researchers to alter research relations. Furthermore, they have been treated as objects of research, with researchers firmly in control.

The social relations of research production provide the structure within which research is undertaken. These social relations are built upon a firm distinction between the researcher and the researched; upon a belief that it is the researchers who have specialist knowledge and skills; and that it is they who should decide what topics should be researched and be in control of the whole process of research production. (Oliver, 1992a:102)

Ballard suggests that researchers’ ignorance about disabled people leads them to ‘establish a distance between themselves and those they study’ (1997:245) and construct them as ‘other’ (1997:246). He calls for more explicit attempts to involve disabled people in research and analysing policy and practice as well as helping them to access resources and engage in political action in community groups. Armstrong, Armstrong and Barton (1998), argue for a greater attentiveness to the voice of those who have experienced discrimination, whereas Oliver (1992a) advocates privileging the voice of disabled people. Booth argues against this on the grounds that ‘if special education or integration or inclusive education is concerned with all students rather than only disabled students, then disabled people cannot claim privileged status in understanding it’ (1998:85). Yet, if account is not taken of the subjugated position from which disabled adults, children and parents speak there is a danger that their voices will be silenced by more voluble speakers. Incitement to discourse, therefore, necessarily involves subversive research practices.
Research involving disabled people can encounter problems, but these usually arise from structural, environmental or attitudinal barriers rather than from any limitations of the individuals concerned (Zarb, 1997).

Researchers’ ethical work involves examining their own role in research and the effects of the kinds of knowledge about special education which they have produced. They might make themselves more available for criticism by colleagues and engage in ‘experiment, creativity and risk’ (Stronach and Macle, 1997:152). An example of this is a recent paper (Stronach and Allan, forthcoming) entitled ‘Joking with disability: What’s the difference between the comic and the tragic in disability discourses?’ which risked accusations of pretentiousness, attempts to colonize disabled people’s experiences and the charge of ‘who do they think they are?’ These criticisms were indeed made, but alongside a more positive engagement with the text by journal referees, one of whom described him/herself as a ‘disabled person—an academic, but also sometimes a comedian’. The performance of the paper at a conference, aimed at disrupting the unitary and unified narrative that these events usually require was also deeply disturbing for all concerned but was a useful experiment in risk-taking. Researchers might also explore different forms of knowledge production as part of their theoretical work, involving, for example, the arts (Ballard, 1998; Heshuisiu, 1988), and work at changing research relations in order to involve disabled people more fully and effectively. These are demanding tasks for the researchers, given the pressures of performativity (Lyotard, 1984) in which research knowledge must have political acceptability. Researchers’ ethical work requires them to transgress against these imperatives, whatever the risks involved.

actively seeking inclusion: An aesthetic discourse of the self

By bringing city centres to a standstill and by blockading telethons, disabled people have served notice that they will not tolerate exclusion and patronage. (Shakespeare et al., 1996:186)

There is much to learn from the efforts of pupils with special needs to actively seek inclusion, by challenging the mechanisms which aimed to label and exclude them. There is also a great deal to learn from disabled adults’ actions in tackling oppression and dismantling the barriers created by a disabling society. The emergence of a new aesthetic discourse of pride, beauty and the celebration of difference gives disabled people a political voice while at the same time avoids valorizing their voice at the margins (Ram, 1993; Singh, 1995). The aesthetic discourse necessarily deconstructs its own ‘celebratory rhetoric of difference, diversity, heterogeneity and localisms’ (Ram, 1993:11), which risks becoming a tool of an ‘assimilationist and universalist drive’ (ibid.) and seeks to ‘strategically deploy “difference” in order to make a political difference’ (Singh, 1995: 197).

Corbett (1994) suggests that there are parallels between disability politics and gay pride, but as Zola points out, there are some difficulties associated with claiming pride in one’s disability:
With the rise of black power, a derogatory label became a rallying cry, ‘Black is beautiful’. And when women saw their strength in numbers, they shouted ‘Sisterhood is powerful’. But what about those with a chronic illness or disability? Could they yell, ‘Long live cancer’ ‘Up with multiple sclerosis’ ‘I’m glad I had polio!’ ‘Don’t you wish you were blind?’ Thus the traditional reversing of the stigma will not so easily provide a basis for a common positive identity. (1993:168)

This has not proved problematic for prize-winning essayist Mairs, whose description of herself as a ‘cripple’ is meant to provoke and discomfit non-disabled people:

People—crippled or not—wince at the word cripple, as they do not at handicapped and disabled. Perhaps I want them to wince. I want them to see me as a tough customer, one to whom the fates/gods/viruses have not been kind, but who can face the brutal truth of her existence squarely. As a cripple I swagger. (1986:9)

Writers such as Oliver (1992b) have advocated a reversal of the damaging antilabelling philosophy, as a means of reclaiming the disability that has been denied (or stolen from) disabled people, whereas others have sought to repair their spoilt identities, through activities such as art, photography and dance (Hevey, 1993; Morrison and Finkelstein, 1992). As well as providing more positive representations of disabled people which ‘speak against the slug-like portrayal they normally endure’ (Hevey, 1992:84), the arts can educate non-disabled people, by challenging notions of ‘assumed dependency’ (Morrison and Finkelstein, 1992:127). Gabel argues that interpreting disability as having aesthetic meaning enables non-disabled people to appreciate experiences of disability, by facing the ‘forceful gaze of the other with opposition, even defiance’ (1998:17). Steady Eddie, a comedian with cerebral palsy has attempted to confront non-disabled people with their own disablist in a performance, for example with an observation that when he saw a sign for a disabled toilet, he went off to find one that worked. His Quantum Limp show earned the wrath of both critics and disability groups for telling ‘cripple gags’ and being insufficiently political (O’Kelly, 1994) and proved too much for the dour folk of Tunbridge Wells, who voiced their disgust and cancelled the show. Bataille suggests that each of the arts comprise different kinds of ‘unproductive expenditures’ (1985:118) which ‘have no ends beyond themselves’ (ibid.), with poetry the purest form, since it signifies ‘creation by means of loss’ (1985:120). He argues that unproductive expenditures such as the arts have an important role in a society where most things are judged in terms of their utility and ‘violent pleasure is seen as pathological’ (1985:116, original emphasis).

The Ethical Project of Inclusion: Actively Shaping Ourselves?

The final thoughts in this book attempt to undo the inevitable closure they represent, but seek to involve everyone in the ethical project of inclusion, stressing that we each have
different kinds of work to do on ourselves. Pupils with special needs might analyse their own and others’ knowledge about their disability and develop strategies with which they are comfortable. Mainstream pupils could work on their governmental regime, emphasizing its positive, rather than negative, aspects. Teachers and other professionals might become more alert to the desires of pupils with special needs, while schools could become more responsive to diversity and avoid disabling practices. Researchers might scrutinize their own involvement in knowledge production and make themselves more willing to be criticized. They might also work on theorizing and changing research relations in order to involve disabled people more fully and effectively. The ethical work for parents has not been specified here because of the importance of focusing on schools and research, but they too are included in the project. They might, for example, help their children to articulate their desires and ambitions beyond school and examine the impact of subjecting their children to the surveillance involved in formal assessment or fund-raising activities. The kind of ethical work which each of us might practise has been specified only as a starting point; clearly individuals need to determine their own self-knowledge and conduct if it is to have its own efficacy.

The ethical work we all have to do on ourselves is necessarily never complete, always in process, creating ourselves as ‘relational, conjunctive and dynamic’ subjects (Braidotti, 1997:68). It involves learning to respect difference in others and ‘knowing how to respond to others...how to “go on” with them in practice’ (Shorter, 1997:353). The ethical project of inclusion could be thought of as a Deleuzian project of becoming or of ‘immanence’ (Deleuze, 1997:4), which Braidotti observes is also a politics of desire: ‘the only possible way to undertake this process is to actually be attracted to change, to want it, the way one wants a lover—in the flesh’ (1997:70). Inclusion, then, is an ethical project of responsibility to ourselves and others, which is driven by an insatiable desire for more.