

# FROM EDUCATION

(As a field of study founded on various academic disciplines)

# TO PEDAGOGICS

(As an ontologically-anthropologically grounded autonomous science of educating, i.e., as a regional ontology<sup>1</sup>)

George D. Yonge

Emeritus Professor of Education

University of California, Davis

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In reading our (U.S.A.) literature on the foundations of education, I find a frustrating void because I only find valuable studies of and reflections on social, political, and other contextual influences on schooling, but virtually nothing regarding what the term “foundations” invites me to gain fundamental insights into, i.e., the nature of educating, as an adult guiding a child to adulthood, and which includes schooling in most but not all contemporary societies. That is, this adult-child educative relationship is a universal human occurrence in human existence, while schooling is not. Most modern societies have become complex and intricate enough to require its members to be taught and learn much more than parents or other “natural” educators can offer in their spontaneous, intuitive, trial-and-error ways, this adult-child educative relationship must be reconstituted in formal, institutionalized ways as a teacher-pupil educative relationship in school to continue and more broadly supplement, but not supplant, the primordial, original educative relationship underway before and continuing after school entry. To compensate for this societal shortcoming of the primordial parent/adult-child relationship of guiding a child to adulthood within a society, considerable focus and resources must be directed to establishing schools and designing practices to formally teach groups of children the supplemental contents they need to complete their journey to full-fledged adulthood. Since schools are created to teach special content to children in very structured, formal situations, adults must be prepared to be teachers through special study and concrete practice. Even though the most salient categories of schooling, and of teacher preparation, are teaching, learning, and content, and even though the technical aspects of formal *educative* teaching in school require intensive and extensive academic and didactic-pedagogical study and concrete practice to become qualified to teach, and even though teaching and learning aids, etc. are more sophisticated and complex than in a parental educative situation and relationship, the relationship, sequence, activity, and aim structures are essentially the same, with variations in nuances and emphases reflective of the informal and formal differences between home and school. It is precisely this adult-child relationship which makes formal teaching and learning educative and complementary. As explicated below, the problems with this literature are long-standing and, for the most part, seem to have been inherited from the thinking of the founding fathers of the foundations of education whose primary concern in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was on teaching and learning, at the expense of

the primordial educative relationship, as the source of the categories and structures of an educative perspective on schooling, as an *educative* teaching situation, and not merely a teaching one. Their understandably reasonable focus, or point of departure, directed them to philosophy, psychology, and other disciplines for relevant categories which could be applied, in the absence of the didactic *pedagogical*, *psyvhopedagogical*, and other categories inherent to the primordial educative relationship, precisely the point of departure taken at the University of Pretoria discussed below.

After considering a few consequences of this void, I turn to the results of some phenomenological studies of educating which seem to fill this void by disclosing the essential categories, structures, and criteria of the activity of educating. These categories make a genuine pedagogical perspective on educating possible. The findings of pedagogical studies by the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria from the late 1960's to the early 1990's show that pedagogics is an autonomous human science, and brings into question Hirst's (1966) classification of educational theorizing as "collections of knowledge used in the formulation of principles for practice" (p. 48), i.e., it is a practical theory which relies on the disciplines (i.e., Hirst's forms) for justifying practical activities. However, from these phenomenological studies, one sees that pedagogics meets Hirst's criteria for being a form (a discipline) of knowledge. Indeed, these studies show that pedagogics, the scientific (phenomenological) study of educating, with its **own** psychological, etc. moments, need not be prescribed to by other disciplines, but is an autonomous science on a level with and not subservient to them. That is, the findings of academic disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, etc. should not merely be applied to the study and practice of educating as foundational but must first be reinterpreted and evaluated in terms of the disclosed pedagogical **categories** and **criteria** which have ontological-anthropological status (see later). Only then will the findings of these disciplines have the possibility of being of auxiliary or supplemental value, but they are *not* foundational to the science and practice of educating.

## 2. THE LITERATURE ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

*... Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclin'd*

Alexander Pope, Moral Essays. (Merriam-Webster, 1992, p. 114).

Why is the study of educating<sup>2</sup> generally not viewed as a legitimate academic discipline, what some would even call a human science? Why is it primarily considered to be a complex activity which can only be understood by applying the findings, categories, and theories of various disciplines and sciences relevant to but external to educating itself, such as philosophy, sociology, political science, history, anthropology, and psychology? Indeed, why do those of us who study "educating" usually situate ourselves in points of view or perspectives on educating which are founded or rooted in something other than educating? A plausible reason is that gifted thinkers, such as John Dewey, in explicitly studying educating as schooling, have shown that we have no choice in studying educating but to borrow our points of view and categories from other disciplines but, in doing so, we are so attuned and directed by our "borrowed" perspectives and their

implicit and explicit assumptions that we easily overlook the essential nature of the special adult-child educative relationship which is required for and foundational of effectively guiding a child to adulthood at home, in school or anywhere.

I suggest that the tendency of Anglo-American educationists such as Dewey, Hirst, and many others to approach the study of educating by almost exclusively limiting themselves to theorizing about and shaping formal schooling, while glossing over the primordial, more spontaneous parent/adult-child educative relationship required for educating, as guiding a child to adulthood, for which a Continental pedagogical perspective is more receptive as a point of departure.

In the English-speaking world, in general, the point of departure in studying educating, i.e., the so-called “foundations of education”, is schooling, which seemingly lacks sufficient unique categories for sustaining a genuine perspective on educating, educative theorizing and practice rely on other disciplines for insights and fundamental concepts or categories. Thus, there is no genuine pedagogical perspective possible from schooling as a point of departure, even though there are eclectic, haphazard points of view by which theories, ideas, and categories are applied from various academic disciplines. This approach to and assumptions about educating initiated and espoused by the originators of the “foundations of education”, have necessarily led to the view that the study of educating, **as schooling**, is not and cannot be a full-fledged academic discipline because it lacks its own categories, which must be found in and borrowed from other disciplines (e.g., see Hirst’s typology below). Indeed, Noblit (2002) indicates that, in its aim and organization, the American Educational Studies Association “institutionalizes” this view, as does the Standards of the Learned Societies of Education (1986). For example, from the Standards we read:

The Foundations of Education refers to a broadly conceived field of study that derives its character and fundamental theories from several academic disciplines, combination of disciplines, and areas of study: history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, religion, political science, economics, psychology, comparative and international education, educational studies, and educational policy studies (p .3).

Further:

The Council of Learned Societies in Education takes the official position of supporting diversity of Foundations of Education arrangements in relation to academic, teacher-education, and community groups (p. 3).

And finally:

Foundational study of the interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives within education relies heavily on the resources and methodologies of the humanities, particularly history and philosophy, and the social and behavioral sciences. Its primary objective is to sharpen students' abilities to examine and explain educational proposals, arrangements, and practices, and to develop a disciplined sense of policy-oriented educational responsibility. For foundational studies, focus and emphasis fall on education broadly defined and not merely on schools. They encourage knowledge and understanding of education historically and philosophically and in view of its social, economic, and political relations (p. 5).

Missing is the precondition for accomplishing this: a pedagogical perspective rooted in and descriptive of the essences of educating within an adult-child relationship of guiding a child to adulthood. This educative relationship is the point of departure of the phenomenological studies of educating at Pretoria, which disclose genuine pedagogical categories or essence which also are grounded in human existence (i.e., have anthropological status), and reality (i.e., have ontological status--what educating essentially IS<sup>3</sup>). The development of this perspective is a precondition, in the sense that a disclosure and description of these essentials are a necessary source of categories ("concepts") and criteria unique to the activity of educating. These categories and criteria allow one to judge and select or reject the findings of other disciplines for their educative significance and validity from a **strictly pedagogical perspective** (in contrast, say, to a psychological, philosophical or some other one). Without these categories/criteria, a pedagogical perspective is not possible. In fact, largely because of the absence of such categories/criteria, the study of educating is not a full-fledged discipline as it has been and still is generally pursued in the English-speaking world. (See the discussion of Hirst's position below).

This state of affairs is unfortunate because where the practice of "educating" is understood and studied as a discipline, which it has been elsewhere, particularly in South Africa (to be discussed below), it gives practitioners, not to mention theorists, a sense of identity as educationists and, much more importantly, it provides them with their **own perspective** founded on and respectful of the essentials of the reality of educating with which they are concerned. Then, "educating" is studied phenomenologically as a regional ontology (Also see Vandenberg, 1971; 1974).

However, the American educational foundations literature (social and other) provides no compelling evidence that it is being studied as a discipline, as a unitary, comprehensive totality—irrespective of claims to the contrary. For example, Washburn (1993, p. 72) notes "...there is a powerful tradition that characterizes the social foundations of education as an **integrated\*** multidisciplinary approach to the study of education...".

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\* Throughout this paper, **bold** type has been added to quotations by G.D.Y.

Also, in several places in their article on the history of the development of the social foundations, Tozer and McAninch (1986) refer to the necessity for integrating the various disciplinary perspectives within a foundations context. They note that the social foundations “is cross-disciplinary, an **integrated**—rather than a simply eclectic—course of study” (p. 10). Also see their mention of Butts’ insistence of this (p. 25). In the same article, they write:

Like their Teachers College predecessors, the Illinois group advocated helping teachers develop viewpoints toward the aims of education through **integrated**, cross-disciplinary, and critical studies that focus on the social setting of schools (p. 18).

With reference to Stanley, Smith, Benne, and Anderson’s 1956 selection of readings, *Social Foundations of Education*, Tozer and McAninch (1986) add:

... the use of key readings by major scholars in the education, philosophical, and the social science fields represents an effort to offer the best those fields had to offer. The selections are coherently arranged and **integrated** to promote worthwhile understanding (p. 19).

The question of the kind of integration being claimed, not only regarding the readings in this book but in the foundations of education literature generally, is not made explicit. See Tellings (2001) for several forms of integration. At this point, a pressing issue is what are the criteria for integrating the findings of the various disciplines? Tozer and McAninch (1986) provide an “answer”:

What makes the critical approach coherent and integrated, rather than random or eclectic, is the context in which alternative points of view are presented (p. 20).

And what are these contexts? They are:

... the sociological studies ... aimed at developing in the students the best possible understanding of the nature of modern society in terms of its institutional structures and processes, and students are urged to assess educational theory<sup>4</sup> within that social context. This explains the heavy concentration on sociological studies presented in this volume. In addition, the volume introduces students to the intellectual content and meanings of the ideals by which normative judgments about social realities are made (p. 21).

Some of these ideals are “democracy”, “liberty”, “community”, and

“equality”. These ideals are philosophy of life matters and are not essentially related to or descriptive of the phenomenon of educating, as such. Relevant writings by Dewey and others were selected to clarify and shape these concepts for students so they could use their understanding of them “to judge social structures and processes...” (Tozer and McAninch, 1986, 21). In other words, these concepts, external to the phenomenon of educating a child, were used as criteria to judge social structures and processes—presumably including educating a child.

In developing some criteria for evaluating current textbooks, Tozer and McAninch indicate:

... such instruction should be rigorous, not superficial, and that it should be coherently **integrated**, not fragmented. As we pointed out earlier, the **integration** and coherence of foundations instruction depends importantly upon the point of view informing and shaping it (p. 24).

Whence this integrative point of view? Would it be some ideological perspective or possibly an eclectic compilation of such views? But then there would be as many variations of integration as there are points of view, indeed, some even contradictory, and the foundations of each would reside in a point of view external to, not essential to the reality of educating, as such. This would amount to imposing points of view on the activity of educating, and how valid is this approach for disclosing and describing the essential, the ontological foundation of educating?

It seems that there is a straightforward solution to this problem/dilemma. Educating is a complex, unitary, integrated event with many inherent moments<sup>5</sup> (and not merely contextual aspects) such as a psychological, philosophical, sociological, teaching one and more. In the lived event of educating, these moments are intertwined and integrated, not intellectually (theoretically) so much as in the very activities of the concrete practice of educating. Indeed, in his book on John Dewey, Boisvert (1998) says of Dewey’s model of education:

The greatest appeal of the home is the integrative nature of the formation that children there receive. Intellect, emotion, affection, manual skills, and moral development are woven together in the child’s upbringing. Such an integrative approach runs counter, Dewey realizes, to the philosophical assumptions prominent in the West since the seventeenth century (p. 96).

The so-called foundations of education, as defined and demarcated currently and since the “founding fathers” at Columbia University, is a major barrier to establishing **the study of the activity of educating** as a unified science/discipline, that is, as a perspective that is derived from and is descriptive of the essential structures (categories) of the educative event and that also grounds this phenomenon ontologically. Consequently,

with such an ontological study, the resulting perspective is autonomous of other perspectives (e.g., a philosophical or psychological one) in that it is derived directly from and rooted in the reality of educating itself; of course, autonomous, in this sense, does not mean that it can ignore related perspectives and disciplines. Rather, it means that the findings of these related perspectives must be evaluated for their educative significance and relevance before they are accepted as contributing to this perspective; that is, they must be evaluated not in terms of whether they are “good psychology”, “best professional practice” and the like but in terms of whether they are valid in terms of strictly educative categories and criteria disclosed from a pedagogical perspective.

I interpret the frequent reference to “integration” in the above quotations as a denial of the fragmented nature of this literature. It is evident that “integration” is absent, and one cannot merely declare that it is there.

From a slightly different view, the foundations of education literature is characterized by a “centrifugal” style of thinking about educating, where the focus is away from the reality/phenomenon of educating and is directed to and located in a variety of other, disparate disciplines/perspectives that then are applied to the political, social, philosophical and other contexts and dimensions that are correlated with or influence the reality of *schooling* a child, more than of *educating* him/her. That is, this thinking too quickly reduces educating to schooling. This style of thinking is divisive and fragmenting because it has no center of gravity, no core focus on educating a child, as such. In my view, it has given rise to several symptoms expressed in students’ and others’ complaints about education courses (e.g., their content) which simply cannot be argued away. Tom (1991) addresses four of these complaints in the context of teacher education: the vapid; the impractical; the segmented; and the directionless nature of education courses. I claim that the segmented nature of the content of these courses is a direct consequence of this style of thinking and that, at least, this contributes to their perceived directionless and impractical nature.

This centrifugal style of thinking blinds one of the essential structures of educating because the act of educating is not viewed for what it is in its own terms (concepts and categories) but through borrowed or imported concepts and categories (i.e., lenses). This blindness has been long-standing. For example, Dewey (1929) states:

... material drawn from *other* sciences furnishes the content of educational science when it is focused on the problems that arise in education (p. 36).

This reduces our understanding of educating to other perspectives. At the same time, this reduction blinds us to the nature, structures, and essences of educating as it is itself. Years later, Hirst (1966), in agreement with Dewey, but with no explicit reference to him, says:

It is but a confusion to regard the formation of practical principles as parallel to an autonomous form of knowledge or thought when those principles stand or fall on nothing but

knowledge contributed by other forms (p. 51). [“Other forms” means disciplines such as psychology—G.D.Y.].

And fifty years after Dewey, Broudy (1979) carries this pronouncement forward by saying:

As John Dewey [1929, 32-33] noted more than half a century ago, the findings of psychology, sociology, and other empirical sciences, as well as statistics, in order to become educational science have to be transmuted into ‘attitudes and habits of observation, judgment, and planning of those engaged in the educative act’ to render these more intelligent. In short, **there is no intrinsic educational science content**” (p. 6).

When thinkers as prominent as these are in such agreement, it is easy to assume that they are correct and to conclude that, indeed, if there is a science of education, its contents are to be found in other Disciplines, such as psychology, but which then must be validated by educational practitioners (Hirst, 1966).

I suggest that this agreement among such diverse thinkers is an artifact arising from each of them too quickly and too uncritically focusing their thinking on *schooling* and not on the lifeworld phenomenon of *educating*, as an adult guiding a child to adulthood. Hence, these authors do not confront the reality of educating but they only see it as schooling—formally teaching to guide a child’s (and even an adult’s) learning. Also, these thinkers uncritically, and without justification, assume that the so-called human sciences, such as psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, and the normative sciences such as philosophy, ethics, axiology can provide a scientific justification for educative practices. They cannot, partly because each of these disciplines is not homogeneous (for example, there are many psychologies, some of which mutually contradict each other) because they are rooted in different conceptions of what a human being is (different philosophical anthropologies), some of which are not grounded in an accountable view of being human (See Van Zyl 1967/2006).

If one is not aware that there are alternatives, these ideas espoused by Dewey, Broudy, and Hirst seem to be compelling. But they are fruitless for disclosing a valid foundation of “educating” and do not lead to real insights into its nature.

In this light, it is instructive to carefully consider the reasons that Hirst’s (1966) characterization of the nature of educational theorizing is untenable because, as one steeped in the style of centrifugal thinking that permeates the educational foundations literature, and explicated above, his effort is a *clear example* of the essence-blindness inherent to this style of thinking. Thus, explicating his assumptions or model should highlight what precisely it is that prevents this approach from leading to a tenable and valid theoretical AND practical understanding and description of the reality of an adult educating a child to adulthood.

Key to understanding Hirst's (1966) position regarding educational theory is explicated in his three-fold typology of the structure or organization of knowledge.

In the first place, all knowledge can be seen as necessarily structured into ... distinct 'forms'. Secondly, knowledge can be organized into ... different 'fields'. And thirdly, it can be organized into a variety of 'practical theories' (p. 42).

*A form of knowledge* is an autonomous discipline or science such as psychology, physics, mathematics, history, religion, sociology, and philosophy. These forms can be

distinguished from each other in three interrelated ways. First, within the domain there are distinct types of concepts that characterize different types of knowledge. ... Secondly, these concepts occur within different networks, whose relationships determine what meaningful propositions can be made. ... Thirdly, the domains can be distinguished by the different types of tests they involve for the truth or validity of propositions (p. 43).

Thus, each form or discipline provides "unique understanding because of the uniqueness of its concepts, its conceptual structure and its criteria for validity" (Hirst, 1966, p. 44).

*Fields of knowledge* are

simply a collection of knowledge from various forms which has unity solely because this knowledge all relates to some object or interest. ... There are no concepts of a kind peculiar to the field. And the field is not concerned with the validation of distinctive statements according to unique criteria. It follows from this that, whereas the advancement of a form of knowledge depends on the development of the relevant conceptual scheme and its wider application according to its own canons, the advancement of a field ... consists in the development and application of whatever forms of knowledge are considered valuable and relevant in coming to understand the selected topic (p. 47).

*Practical theories* are organizations of knowledge<sup>6</sup>

whose whole *raison d'être* is their practical function. In these it is not the patterning of understanding that is of first importance but the determination of what ought to be done in some range of practical activities. This distinction between practical theories and forms and fields of knowledge is exactly ... a distinction between the theories of practical knowledge

and those of theoretical knowledge.

In practical theories knowledge is collected from several different forms because of a particular interest, just as in the various fields mentioned above. The interest now, however, is a particular range of practical activities as, for example, in engineering, medicine or education. But, whereas fields of knowledge are simply collections of knowledge from the forms, practical theories are collections of knowledge used in the formulation of principles for practice (p. 48).

I suspect that, at first glance, most students of the educational foundations might find Hirst's typology to be a clearly stated and obvious expression of what they are confident is the case. But let us consider how his very narrow view of educational theory (and of educating) fits into his typology, and what its implications are for the foundations.

For Hirst, *educational theory* qualifies as a practical theory that uses knowledge

to determine what should be done in educational practice. In the process, the theory draws on all the knowledge within the various forms that is relevant to grappling with practical problems. ... [It] is concerned with using these kinds of knowledge to form rationally defensible principles ... (p. 48).

Hirst believes that this practical focus lends more unity to the collection of knowledge from the forms than is true of a field. Unfortunately, a common focus does not necessarily unify or integrate disparate pieces of knowledge that generally do not have a common grounding. That the "knowledge from the forms provides the basis of justification for a series of educational principles" (p. 49) entails a unification is doubtful.

What Hirst refers to as "educational" theory is an extremely narrow focus on school practice—mostly on teaching and curriculum organization. This focus blinds him to the phenomenon of educating, as an adult guiding a child to adulthood *within an educative relationship*; not surprisingly, educating, in this sense, or any sense except schooling, is missing from his thinking. The activities that constitute school practice, and the principles guiding them may or may not be educative. What is more, for Hirst, "principles" are mere hunches, opinions, hypotheses, convictions, etc. based on experience—indeed, they are anything an educator allows to inform his/her practice, but that need to be justified. And this justification is precisely the task of his educational theory (really principles for practicing schooling because there is no theory/theorizing but only justifying). Since Hirst classifies his educational theory as a practical theory and not a form of knowledge, to him, it has no inherent concepts of its own and, thus, no "educational" criteria by means of which principles or activities can be justified. Hence, he turns to the concepts and principles of the forms of knowledge such as psychology and philosophy to find justification for his "educative" principles via "borrowed" criteria. As he says (Hirst, 1966):

Educational principles are ... justified simply by producing reasons for them of an empirical, philosophical, moral or other logical kind. Once it is understood that the validity of the principles turn on nothing 'educational' beyond these, it is clear that the only way to attack or defend them is by a critical examination of these reasons. The psychological reasons must be shown to stand according to the strictest canons of that science (p. 51).

And:

... educational principles stand or fall entirely on the validity of the relevant knowledge contributed from the various forms (p. 54).

One consequence of this is that the forms of knowledge serve as the foundations for any field of knowledge or practical theory. This is because, according to Hirst's typology, forms of knowing are more grounded than fields or practical theories, in that each form has its unique concepts, conceptual structure, and criteria of validity, while fields and practical theories do not. Another consequence is that educational theory cannot be an autonomous discipline because the principles it formulates and justifies are completely dependent on the knowledge contributed by the relevant forms rather than being grounded in the reality of educating itself.

As Vandenberg (1974) points out, Hirst's educational theory is too amorphous because it lacks any criteria of coherence and relevance<sup>7</sup>

for selecting resources from psychology, philosophy, sociology, etc. Without explicit intersubjectively valid criteria of coherence and relevance, any educational principle can be 'justified' by any knowledge or theory whatsoever (p. 186).

When the practitioner's pre-theoretical understanding is rigorously explicated by an immanent reflection, i.e., by an interpretive hermeneutic, it becomes fundamental educational theory. ... It also retains the bond to practice that can furnish the criteria of coherence and relevance so obviously lacking in Hirst's view" (p. 190).

Although Vandenberg sees the phenomenon of educating as an adult accompanying a child to adulthood and recognizes that there are criteria of coherence and relevance within this activity itself, he seems not to notice that the activities of educating cannot be justified by any of the special disciplines (forms) external to them.

If educating occurs within a relationship between an adult and a child in need of help that is constituted as a distinctly

pedagogic relation by the presence of nonauthoritarian authority, a number of things can occur to prevent the relation from being pedagogic and thus to end educating.

... When the child does not enter into the pedagogic relation freely and freely acknowledge the authoritativeness of the teacher, there is no educating. There may be schooling, training, and even learning, but not educating (p. 204).

Even so, Vandenberg focuses on Hirst's notion of educational theory as justifying "educational" principles via the forms and, consequently, he does not address an urgently needed phenomenological study of educating as a regional ontology.

### **3. AN ONTOLOGICALLY-ANTHROPOLOGICALLY GROUNDED STUDY OF EDUCATING<sup>8</sup>**

In fact, educating has been studied as a regional ontology at the University of Pretoria in South Africa, and it is very enlightening to see what has emerged—especially with respect to Hirst's typology of ways of knowing and the implications of this for the relationship between the science (phenomenology) of educating and the so-called special disciplines (e.g., psychology).

Pedagogics is the scientific (phenomenological) study of the pre-scientific activity of an adult accompanying/guiding a child to adulthood with the aim of informing and improving the post-scientific practice of educating. In the words of Landman (1967/2001):

The area studied by Pedagogics ... is the phenomenon of educating itself as it arises in educative situations. ... The nature and structure of this phenomenon ... are systematically analyzed and thoroughly-reflectively described by Theoretical Pedagogics (i.e., Fundamental Pedagogics). Fathoming and understanding the phenomenon of educating, which leads to theory forming, requires taking the phenomenon itself as the point of departure as it takes form in situations of educating (p. 1).

Fundamental Pedagogics, as the nucleus of Pedagogics as a scientific structure, is a theory built on the act of educating .... It is a theory resulting from a systematic reflection on the phenomenon of educating (bringing up, rearing). Pedagogics ... is both a theoretical and a practical science. Every act of educating includes reflection, but it also is the educator's (pedagogue's) task to devise pedagogically acceptable procedures that will serve the purpose of educating a child (p. 10).

To say that fundamental pedagogics is the nucleus of pedagogics implies that **pedagogics involves more perspectives than a fundamental pedagogical one**. The reason pedagogics necessarily embraces several perspectives on educating is because educating itself encompasses many moments that also must be disclosed, described, and understood from the different pedagogical part-perspectives (e.g., psychopedagogical, didactic pedagogical). At this point, it is very important to understand the pedagogical part-perspectives and their coherence. In this regard, Landman (1968/2004) asks and answers two questions:

1. What is the task of the pedagogical part-discipline usually called Theoretical Pedagogics, Fundamental Pedagogics, or Philosophy of Education?
2. How must the coherence and interactions among the pedagogical part-disciplines be viewed?

As an answer to the first question ... [the task of] Theoretical Pedagogics is the search for, grounding, or founding, and describing fundamental structures. It is for this reason, among others, that ... this pedagogical part-discipline must be called Fundamental Pedagogics. Fundamental Pedagogics is a founding/grounding pedagogics because it has as a particular task the grounding of the Pedagogical in reality.

With this, one arrives at the second question regarding their pedagogical interactions. ... Each pedagogical perspective on life reality must proceed from its unique questions and must itself acquire clarity regarding what these questions are, but it is very clear that these questions are embedded in the pedagogical question, such as constructed, asked, reflected on, and expressed by fundamental pedagogics. This fundamental pedagogical question can provisionally be formulated as follows: How must the knowing educator, as authoritative, trusting person and representative of the norm-image of adulthood, support a child through his/her association and encounter with an authority-seeking child who is possibility-in-becoming, who wants to be someone him/herself, and who is entrusted to him/her so that the child can progressively be considered as an adult?

From this general question, Fundamental Pedagogics calls into existence pedagogical categories. **The various pedagogical part-disciplines, with their own questions thus allow their own categories to be disclosed.** More precisely ... each pedagogical part-discipline, with its own perspective on life reality, grounds itself and arrives at its own categories. ...

Fundamental Pedagogics accompanies the other pedagogical part-disciplines in the design and grounding of their own categories in terms of their own questions as embedded in the pedagogical question, thus, the pedagogical situation (pp. 7-9).

The following pedagogical part-disciplines are distinguished: Psychological Pedagogy, Sociological Pedagogy (Socio-pedagogy), Didactic Pedagogy, Vocational Pedagogy, Historical Pedagogy, Orthopedagogy, and Fundamental Pedagogy ... (p. 13).

Elsewhere Landman (1979/2005) writes:

Stated differently, because the **Psychopedagogical**, the Didactic **Pedagogical**, the Fundamental **Pedagogical**, etc. are all **Pedagogical** (perspectives), their area of study is the reality of educating, **but** each has a different aim. This means that each pedagogical perspective has a different function as far as its area of study of the Pedagogical is concerned. Each perspective has its own way of contributing to disclosing the **sense** of the *total* reality of educating .... The psychopedagogical perspective discloses those meaningful ways of living in the reality of educating that are or can be relevant to the **psychic life** of a child-in-education, and that are or can be actualized in practice. By using the pedagogical perspective in its own ways, the Didactic Pedagogical discloses the **ways of living with significance for teaching**. The function of the Fundamental Pedagogical perspective is to disclose **fundamental** ways of educative living that are preconditions for actualizing all other ways of educative living. With this, a **first function** of the Fundamental Pedagogical (perspective) is revealed: disclose the **preconditions** of all meaningful ways of educative living in the form of psychic, didactic, vocational orientation, physical ways of living and living-with-deficiencies of a child-in-educative distress (p. 4).

Gerber (1972/2009) adds the following comments:

Pedagogics, as a reflection on and fathoming of the educative event, interrogates this ontological-anthropological reality **from** an autonomous pedagogical perspective that is a phenomenological perspective. In doing so, pedagogical being-structures (relationship-, sequence-, aim-, categorical-, and criterial-structures) are illuminated. As a result of this illumination, pedagogics becomes ontologically-anthropologically grounded (p. 46).

And further:

Pedagogical essences are the **verbalized essences** of the pedagogical itself. .... This means that pedagogical categories

are not only real essences of anthropological categories but, indeed, are real essences, thus, essential structures of life reality as it shows itself in the form of the reality of educating. .... **Thus, pedagogical categories have ontological-anthropological status because they are rooted in the life reality as it is verbalized by the [ontological] category “being-in-the-world” and the anthropological categories that have ontological status** (p. 47).

My English translations of the following pedagogical studies of educating from different part-perspectives, and some of their findings are accessible at: [georgeyonge.net](http://georgeyonge.net). An example of a fundamental pedagogical study is Landman, Roos and Liebenberg (1975/2011); a tabulation of fundamental pedagogical categories, structures, relationships, and criteria appears as Appendix A in Gerber (1972/2009); a study of the psychic life of a child-in-education (psychopedagogical perspective) and the resulting categories are those discussed by Crous (1984/1997); the categories disclosed by a didactic pedagogical (i.e., an *educative* teaching) perspective on educating appear specifically in chapter 3 of Van der Stoep and Louw (1979/2005). Examples of how the different part-perspectives function as an integrated unity, and where theory and practice merge, is in designing and presenting a lesson (Van der Stoep, et al., 1973/2018; Basson, et al., 1985/2018), and in the practice of orthopedagogics, including pedotherapy (i.e., educational therapy in contrast to psychotherapy), are Crous (1979/2002) and Van Niekerk (1980/2001).

As indicated by Roos (1973/2010, pp. 51-63), the various pedagogical categories (psycho-, fundamental-, didactic-categories, etc.) are ontologically-anthropologically grounded and, thus, each of the part-perspectives of pedagogics, and pedagogics itself, meet all three of Hirst’s requirements for being a *form* of knowledge; that is, pedagogics as a whole and its distinguishable but inseparable part-perspectives have their own categories (concepts that express the essences of educating), their own structures of interconnected categories and their own criteria for determining the degree of *educative* adequacy of actualizing the various essences and their relationships. In this latter respect, see Van Niekerk, (1984/2002) as well as Symposium, (1979/2006).

Viewed from Hirst’s typology, the fact that pedagogics is a *form* of knowledge rather than a *practical theory* has profound implications for our (U.S.A.) foundations of education thinking/theorizing. As an autonomous human (anthropological) science whose categories are ontologically-anthropologically grounded, pedagogics cannot and need not have a fundamental dependance on psychology, sociology, philosophy, theology, anthropology, or any other human science, even though it shows inherently psychological and other moments. Pedagogics is another human science perspective on being human and, as such, psychology or any of the other human sciences cannot be a foundation of it—any more than psychology can be a foundation of philosophy, etc. However, a problem is that not all philosophies, psychologies, etc. are ontologically-anthropologically grounded in human being-in-the-world, and the various ways of being

human (In this respect see Gerber, 1972/2009, section 1.5. Being unscientific and categories). Thus, for their findings to be pedagogically relevant, **they must be reinterpreted or evaluated in the light of the ontologically-anthropologically grounded pedagogical categories and criteria**, to the extent that this is possible (See Yonge, 2023; Yonge, 2024). And even then, these findings/pronouncements are not foundational but, at best, provide supplemental or auxiliary insights into being in an educative relationship or situation. This is possible because a human being always exists as a totality, even though some moments of being human are more prominent and explicit, while others are implicit and tacit in any given activity. That is, all perspectives on being human must be allowed to complement, nuance, and expand any purely pedagogical findings—to the extent that they are shown to be relevant by means of pedagogical criteria derived from pedagogical categories.

In viewing educating phenomenologically, none of Hirst's characterizations of educational theory are supported. For example, it is not a *practical theory*, but a theory of a practice, it does have its *own* categories (concepts), and it is an *autonomous* discipline or science. Consequently, the function or purpose of Hirst's "educational" theory is superfluous.

In pedagogics, theory means scientifically (phenomenologically) disclosing and describing the essences and structures of an adult-child educative relationship (its **universal** FORM). As a science, pedagogics is essence disclosing and describing. Practice, as a post-scientific matter, requires the implementation of these essences after they have been enlivened and enriched by **specific** ideological or philosophy of life CONTENTS. It is here that Hirst's educational theory, as justifying principles of practice is located. His is a post-scientific, ideological activity and not a scientific one. What is more, when Hirst refers to "philosophy of education" he means one or another philosophy FOR educating, in the sense of Landman (Landman, Swanepoel and Bodenstein, 1982; Yonge, 1991) such as idealism, pragmatism, a view of life, etc. that are *required* to enliven or give specific contents and nuances to these latently viable essences and structures. An additional point about the disclosed categories (i.e., the pedagogical findings of the part-perspectives) is that they are disclosed while the investigators are temporarily bracketing/holding in abeyance (not eliminating) any ideologies or philosophies of life (especially their own); thus, it is not surprising that the disclosed categories do not imply or prescribe any specific philosophy of life, to the extent that the bracketing has been successful.

Notably, at the University of Pretoria, educating was studied as an autonomous, integrated discipline or science, in that all departments of the Faculty of Education took the situation of upbringing/educating as their point of departure and all were grounded in the same existential phenomenological philosophical anthropology. Thus, the entire faculty took a truly *pedagogical perspective* on the various moments of the phenomenon, such as the fundamental-, psycho- and didactic-pedagogical moments because none of these part-perspectives, **including fundamental pedagogics**, can stand alone, but implicate and imply each other within the whole of pedagogics. Thus, in their thinking and observing, they used their disclosed categories of educating for illuminating,

disclosing, and describing additional essences of the essences (structures), their meanings, how they are actualized, their coherence, etc. (See Landman et al., 1975/2010). Categories of educating are a precondition for the possibility of a pedagogical perspective, as such. A genuine pedagogical perspective is virtually absent from our (U.S.A.) literature because these categories occur only implicitly, haphazardly, or not at all.

It is not surprising, then, why there is a void at the very core of the literature of the foundations of education. This is largely because the question of what education/educating IS seldom is asked. Instead, typically, “educating” is taken for granted or summarily equated with schooling. To be sure, occasionally this question is asked, but usually rhetorically to provide a definition of education. However, the issue is not a definition of educating but rather an ontological (essential) *description* of it; the quest is for the essences, the structures of educating, as guiding a child to adulthood; a search for the necessary preconditions—possibilities (and limitations)—that must be operative for educating to be. As noted, this ontological focus requires nothing short of a phenomenological study of educating (See Heidegger, 1953/1996, 31; Roos, 1973/2010, pp. 34-35). At the same time, the danger of falling into a methodological monism must be avoided (Landman, no date/2004b).

But indeed, so-called “phenomenological” studies are not absent from our foundations literature, and yet they have done little to fill the noted voids. Why? Almost all studies claiming to be phenomenological studies of educating more accurately are studies that **apply** phenomenological philosophical results to educating or use existential phenomenological categories in place of pedagogical ones; that is, they do not turn to “the thing itself”. **They are not radical (fundamental) enough to qualify as essence analyses or regional ontological studies of “educating”** (See Landman, 1975/2010). For example, Chamberlin (1981), after explicating the serious confusions about what the phenomenon of educating is, opts for the phenomenon of “helping-learning” that includes educating but also much else that muddles his descriptions. In his chapter “What is the Educating Act?” Wilshire (1990, p. 22) begins with a questionable dictionary entry: “*educare*-- to lead out or draw out”. Strictly speaking, this is the meaning of *educere*; *educare* means to bring up, rear<sup>9</sup>. Thus, Wilshire’s fine phenomenological analysis is of leading out or drawing out students in a university teaching-learning context. Yet another study (Scudder and Mickunas, 1985) claiming to be a “phenomenological philosophy of education” also fails to return to the phenomenon of educating, itself. Rather, they view educating in terms of their excellent phenomenology of dialogue, as well as in terms of categories such as enculturation, justice, and language. A fourth study is that of Vandenberg (1971) that, although subtitled “an essay in existential phenomenology”, strictly, speaking, is not a sustained phenomenological study of the phenomenon of educating so much as it is an extremely valuable presentation of some of the ideas of major Continental phenomenological thinkers of educating, such as Mohr, Guardini, Langeveld, and Bollnow. Thus, in these works, Chamberlin, Wilshire, Scudder and Mickunas, as well as Vandenberg, do not engage in a phenomenological study of educating **as a regional ontology**. In saying this, in no way do I intend to minimize their excellent efforts and valuable contributions to our literature in the foundations of

education; and after all, a regional ontology was not their aim. My immediate point is that these authors have not faced the phenomenon of educating, as an adult guiding a child to adulthood, as squarely and directly as is required to provide us with a study of educating that can fill the void resulting from a lack of categories grounded in educating.

In the Anglo-American literature on the foundations of education, there is rarely even a hint of the possibility of a science of the phenomenon “educating” as a phenomenological disclosure and description of the essential structures or preconditions necessary for educating to be. Consequently, it is not unexpected that the important distinction (but not separation) between the **form** and **content** of educating is not in the foreground, and that they are often conflated.

For example, it is beyond question that every concrete act of educating explicitly or tacitly implicates some ideology and/or philosophy of life. Indeed, an ideology or a philosophy of life is required to enliven and particularize the content of any educative act. After all, should not a foundational study of educating focus on one or a combination of the various ideologies (such as idealism, pragmatism, existentialism<sup>10</sup>) that shape the possibilities, limitations, and directions of the activity of “educating” so that a prospective or even a practicing educator can formulate his/her own ideological (eclectic or not) justifications for his/her acts of guiding a child to adulthood? Yes, ideologies should be focused on, but also in terms of the categories/criteria reflective of the essences of educating.

Indeed, in a typical “foundations” course [especially one in educational philosophy], it is not uncommon to ask students to study one or several ideologies and then formulate and justify their own philosophy **for** educating [mistakenly viewed as a philosophy **of** educating]. Presumably, the purpose of such an exercise is to encourage students to think critically and eclectically about these ideologies, one or more of which can become “foundational” to their own educative practice.

Unfortunately, without the mentioned categories/criteria, this strategy avoids thinking about the nature or structure of educating and amounts to little more than an exercise in ideological thinking. The reason is that educating is viewed through the lens of one or another ideology and not in terms of its own essential structures. Consequently, the ideological lens or lenses chosen obscure or distort the essential structures of educating. This approach undermines or prevents a pedagogical perspective on educating from emerging; it prevents the study of educating as a discipline from arising that is rooted in educating itself. Furthermore, if one founds one’s philosophy for educating on one ideology or another, the basis for justifying one’s educative actions can be none other than the ideology itself. In other words, an ideology blinds one of the essences of educating and, within this blindness, one is led to view educating through the ideology (e.g., pragmatism or existentialism) and not in its own terms, and in this light, form and content easily become conflated. Indeed, without a science of educating, as essence revealing and describing, this “problem” very likely will not even be noticed.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have argued that the inadequate state of the foundations of education, to a considerable degree, is attributable to the direction taken by our founding fathers. Does all of this negate their contributions or our long tradition of foundational thinking about educating? It does not, but it does suggest that this long tradition and its valuable findings be viewed and reinterpreted in terms of pedagogical categories and criteria (i.e., essences and structures of educating). These essences and structures are only accessible if one's primary focus is on the phenomenon of educating as upbringing and not on schooling, teaching, learning, or any other point of departure. Only then can the study of educating qualify as an autonomous science or discipline as this has been explicated in the present study.

To my knowledge, the only place where educating has been studied as a multifaceted but unitary science/discipline is in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria during the 1960's through the early 1990's. At Pretoria, the study of educating began by following the Anglo-American approach still evident in our foundation literature. Thus, it might be instructive to see how that Faculty struggled to and succeeded in breaking away from the approach to the foundations of educating that we are still embedded in, and how they arrived at studying educating as a regional ontology.

## NOTES

1. To study "educating" as a regional ontology is to disclose and describe the essences, the categories, that make it possible for this region of reality called "educating" to be what it **is** and that distinguish it from other regions such as the psychological (See Stewart and Mickunas, 1990, pp. 42-43); at Pretoria a regional ontology also tries to verify via the phenomenological, dialectic and hermeneutic **methods** the essence-status (ontological-status) of these categories (See Landman (no date/2004a,b). It is concerned with the **FORM** of the activities of educating in contrast to its **CONTENTS**; even so, it must be kept in mind that form and contents not only imply but require each other. Also, please note: the terms "anthropology" and "anthropological" are used copiously throughout this paper and they refer to philosophical anthropology and not to the social science of that name.
2. I use the gerundive form of "to educate" [i.e., educating] to emphasize that essentially it is an activity and not a substantive, fixed thing. Even so, this activity has an essential structure that is accessible to phenomenological disclosure and description.
3. IS = *esse* (Latin) = essence = to be.
4. In this context, what is the source of an "educational theory"; indeed, what is meant here by "educational theory"?
5. As developed in phenomenological thought, a "moment" is a distinguishable but inseparable part of a whole (See Sokolowski, 2000, p. 23).
6. In Hirst's typology, in fact, fields of knowledge and practical theories show the same organization of knowledge with the former approaching knowledge theoretically and the latter practically.
7. I take Vandenberg's "criteria of coherence and relevance" to be synonymous with the categories (essences/preconditions) and criteria of fundamental pedagogics. That is, as

an activity, educating cannot come into being unless an educator and child successfully engage in particular activities together. And knowing what these mutual activities are (the essences) allows one to transform them into criteria by asking whether they are being actualized and to what extent (Landman, no date/2004(a)).

8. The interested reader is invited to visit the web site honoring the achievements and life of W. A. Landman at <http://www.Landmanwa.co.za>

9. As I have indicated elsewhere (Yonge, 1991(b)), the word “education” is derived from the Latin **educare** that refers to the phenomenon or event of bringing up or rearing a child to adulthood. It is not derived from the Latin **educere** meaning to draw or lead out (as in educate) even though many authors effortlessly play on this meaning as a metaphor for educating; however, in doing so, often unknowingly, they mistake this meaning for the phenomenon of educating and this tends to obscure and distort that phenomenon.

10. There is a fundamental difference between “existentialism” and a “philosophy of existence”. Existentialism, as an ideology, when applied to the educative event, is a philosophy **for** educating: a philosophy of existence, as an existential phenomenological [philosophical] anthropology and ontology, when focused on guiding a child to adulthood, provides the foundation for a philosophy **of** educating in contrast to a philosophy **for** educating. For an explication of the distinction between a philosophy **of** and a philosophy **for** educating, see Yonge (1991b).

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