

## **When 'research ethics' become 'everyday ethics': The intersection of inquiry and practice in practitioner research**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The act of engaging in sound and ethical practitioner research, regardless of context, encourages and indeed demands an alignment between the ethical framework employed in the research enterprise and the 'everyday ethics' of practice. This paper explores the ethical dimensions of what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2007a, 2009) have termed 'the dialectic' of practitioner inquiry: "the reciprocal, recursive, and symbiotic relationships of research and practice, analysis and action, inquiry and experience, theorizing and doing, and being researchers and practitioners" (2007a, p. 31). It argues that the reflexive nature of the theory/practice dynamic means that in the context of sustained practitioner inquiry, the ethics of research and the ethics of practice both hold the potential to be shaped by and to shape the other. Elsewhere in discussions of the issue of quality in practitioner and other practice-based research, (2006, 2007, 2009), Groundwater-Smith and Mockler have argued that ethical professionalism can and does work as a platform for quality, pushing practitioner inquiry 'beyond celebration'. This paper builds on these ideas, and in exploring the intersection of inquiry and practice in practitioner research, examines the implications of issues relating to: informed consent; 'voice' and ownership; transparency and negotiation; confidentiality, anonymity and trust; and deliberative action in the context of both practitioner inquiry and classroom practice.

**KEYWORDS:** Practitioner inquiry, ethics, classroom practice

This paper explores the intersection of inquiry and practice in the context of practitioner research, arguing that significant opportunities exist in the enactment of practitioner inquiry for research ethics to infuse the ethics of classroom practice, the 'everyday ethics' that guide teachers' work. The paper is in three parts. The initial introductory section provides an overview of ethics as a framework for quality in practitioner research, building on work developed over a period of some years (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009). The second makes use of Bourdieu's conceptual tools to theorise the intersection of inquiry and practice in practitioner research and to examine some of the opposing tensions therein. The final section draws these two arguments together in exploring the possibilities inherent in this intersection, positing that "inquiry as stance" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) as an orientation to classroom practice, provides opportunities to advance the project of democratic and transformational education.

Given that in this paper I make a number of claims relating to the importance of teacher researchers understanding their position within the field of their research and practice, it seems fitting at the outset that I should be explicit about my own positioning in relation to these arguments. My own work straddles the fields of research and

classroom practice. Having begun my engagement with educational action research as a classroom practitioner, using practitioner inquiry as a scaffold for my own professional development and learning, I have subsequently spent the past 15 years facilitating practitioner research in a wide variety of primary and secondary schools, initially as a school 'insider' and subsequently as an external academic partner. Additionally, as an educational researcher, I am interested in the policy frameworks within which teachers' work is enacted in the contemporary age, and specifically the links between policy and practice in relation to teacher professional identity and professional learning. My interest in the links between inquiry and practice in the enactment of practitioner research therefore emerges from this context, wherein I understand practitioner inquiry to be a valuable approach to building robust and resilient teacher identity at a time when across the developed world, teachers have become vulnerable to the 'cut and thrust' of globalised education policy.

### **Introduction: Practitioner Research, Ethics and Quality**

Almost a decade after David Hargreaves' trenchant critique of the quality and impact of educational research (1996), and in anticipation of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in the United Kingdom and the implementation of the proposed Research Quality Framework (later the Excellence in Research (ERA) initiative) in Australia, John Furlong and Alis Oancea renewed the discussion of 'quality' in practice-based research in education, such as practitioner inquiry and action research (Furlong & Oancea, 2006). As a response to their challenge to practice-based researchers to develop sound and rigorous quality criteria that might provide a rationale for such research to be taken seriously in the brave new world of 'what works' (Atkinson, 2000; Biesta, 2007, 2010; Mockler, 2011), Susan Groundwater-Smith and I posited that ethics, as an orientation, might provide a fresh quality framework for practitioner research, pushing such research 'beyond celebration' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2005).

In their subsequent work on quality in practice-based research, Oancea and Furlong (2007) argued for the broadening of the concept of quality, utilising Aristotelian distinctions between forms of rational activity and their expressions of excellence. Working with Aristotle's three domains of *episteme* (demonstrable or 'scientific' knowledge), *techne* (technical skill) and *phronesis* (practical wisdom), they suggested that these three domains of quality hold particular implications for the enactment of practice-based research. Table 1 below provides a representation of their schema.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

Table 1: Three domains of excellence in practice-based research (after Oancea and Furlong, 2007)

In practitioner research conducted in practice-based contexts such as schools, fidelity to excellence or 'quality' across each of these domains is clearly a requisite. This is whether related to the 'cost' of practitioner research (in fiduciary or, more usually,

opportunity terms), the creation of local knowledge which makes a contribution to the community, or the willingness of practitioner researchers and their communities to be receptive to the 'unwelcome truths' (Kemmis, 2006) that they may discover through their research. Critical engagement with practice on the part of practitioners is a key tenet of high quality action or practitioner research, and sound critical engagement with practice relies upon the enactment of ethical practice. Following this argument, we argued (Groundwater-Smith and Mockler, 2007, pp. 205-206) that the most appropriate quality framework for practitioner research is a framework of ethics, one, that involves five overarching ethical guidelines. These guidelines relate as follows to Oancea and Furlong's expressions of research excellence in practice-based research:

- The observation of ethical protocols and processes: cutting across each of Oancea and Furlong's three domains, an adherence to principles of research ethics, including informed consent, a desire to establish trustworthiness in research, and a receptiveness to research findings are all examples of this observation in practice in the context of practitioner research.
- The pursuit of transparency in the processes it employs: Oancea and Furlong invoke transparency and explicitness within the epistemic domain, but this notion also speaks to the 'auditability' of the research and the plausibility it establishes within the community, taking heed of Lawrence Stenhouse's observation that we should seek to publish to the 'village' as well as to the world (Stenhouse, 1981, p. 17).
- A collaborative goal for the researcher-participants: dialogue and scope for transformation of school and classroom practices is enhanced by collaborative opportunities for teacher-participants, as is the capacity for practitioner research to operate as inquiry-based professional learning.
- A transformative intent which leads to action: located primarily within Oancea and Furlong's phronetic domain, a transformative intent for practitioner inquiry additionally relates to the kind and quality of contribution to knowledge made as well as framing aspects of the technical domain: responsible and ethical practitioner research undertaken within a school community is that which is able to be operationalized to the benefit of the whole community rather than to a select group, for example
- The capacity to justify itself to its own community of practice: 'competitiveness' and value efficiency in the context of practitioner inquiry relates not only to the expenditure of any funding that may be forthcoming in ways that are generative for the school community as well as meeting the requirements of the funding body, but also to the way that the 'opportunity cost' of conducting practitioner inquiry is understood as such and employed for the benefit of the community as a whole.

These five overarching ethical guidelines, provide broad direction as to how practitioner inquiry might utilise ethics as a framework for quality. In an age where it could be claimed, however, that the very notion of 'quality' has been hitched to rhetoric regarding efficiency and effectiveness without regard for the actual implications of claims of *quality*, it is necessary to expand on the three key ways in which ethics might work as a

guide for quality in practitioner research.

### ***Quality of Evidence***

The ethical dimension of quality of evidence relates to the processes used to collect evidence and the processes by which the evidence collected is analysed. Collaborative practitioner inquiry provides a context within which participants might make joint decisions about the collection of evidence and engage together in debating its meaning and constructing a response. While quality of evidence is underpinned by ethical principles such as informed consent, it also involves a desire to be authentic in engaging with the research process, such that evidence is collected with the intent not merely of celebrating that which is to be celebrated, but also developing an understanding of that which is more problematic. Whether this takes place on a very small scale, with a small number of teachers investigating their own practice or on a slightly larger basis with evidence being collected on a larger (e.g. year level or whole school) scale, it requires on the part of teacher-researchers a level of trust invested within the group conducting the inquiry. As Marion Dadds reminds us, this kind of work can be risky business:

“...we may be entering into processes by which we deconstruct some basic, historically rooted views of ourselves. In such processes our existing images of the professional self will be challenged, questioned, re-thought and re-shaped in some degree. These processes are necessary if change and development are to occur and self-study is to lead to new learning. We cannot escape them, nor the discomfort they may bring if we value our commitment to professional development.” (Dadds, 1993, p. 288)

### ***Quality of Purpose***

Quality of purpose relates to the ways in which practitioner inquiry endeavours are conceived and enacted within the school. In the Australian context, with a long history of large-scale funded practitioner research projects, we have seen an increasing tendency for this kind of work to be used as an implementation tool (Mockler, 2013, In press), where the research agenda is imposed on teacher researchers by funding bodies, school or system hierarchy, or both. If teacher research is to provide practitioner-researchers with opportunities to both understand and create knowledge about their practice, as Cochran-Smith and Lytle suggest (1993), then ensuring quality of purpose involves ensuring that the questions being asked and the evidence being gathered as part of the research enterprise emanate from the genuine and authentic concerns of the teachers and school communities involved. This is not to say that such questions and focus areas should not also intersect with school goals or directions or the requirements of funding agencies – merely that for practitioner inquiry to maintain quality and integrity of purpose, the boundaries and parameters for research cannot be imposed.

### ***Quality of Outcome***

Quality of outcome relates particularly to the balance of critical and celebratory stances

taken in relation to practitioner research (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009). While there is sometimes, particularly in the context of large funded practitioner research projects, an emphasis on celebrating the positive findings and outcomes, if we are to truly accept that that role of practitioner inquiry is to problematise practice, to shed light on the more difficult aspects of schooling and create the metaphorical space for teachers to ponder and understand these, then we need to move well beyond celebration.

Similarly, in discussing the 'quality of outcome' issue in relation to ethical practice, we must also observe that attending to the outcomes of practitioner research requires some measure of action. Taking this responsibility seriously is part of ethical practice: it is through the enactment of change within the community that the research is not only 'made public', but also justified in the context of the community. Implied in this also is that a level of sustainability should be embedded in the work: if the outcome is to be one of continued criticality, it is important that practitioner inquiry is not constrained by the need to fit it into timelines consistent with short-term projects.

Having argued, then, that ethics might function as more than a series of considerations to be taken into account by practitioner researchers in gathering and analysing data and sharing their research, instead functioning as a framework for both quality and process in practitioner research, this paper now turns to consider the relationship between practitioner research conducted by teachers and classroom practice – an exploration of how and when research ethics might become 'everyday ethics' for teacher researchers.

### **Research, Classroom Practice and Cross-field Effects**

Teachers engaged in practitioner research operate, of course, not only as researchers, but also, in the context of their 'day job', as teachers. Their work as teacher researchers brings them into contact with the field of research, and through that contact and depending on their own orientations, practitioner researchers potentially come to 'play' on that field themselves. In developing an understanding of the links between classroom practice and research that might ensue from teachers' engagement in practitioner inquiry, Bourdieu's concept of 'field' is useful, as too is the notion of 'cross field effects'.

Bourdieu, in elaborating on his conceptual tools for the analysis of practice in discussion with Loïc Wacquant, came to offer the following definition of 'field':

I define field as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology etc.) (Wacquant, 1989, p. 39).

Thus, within Bourdieu's conceptualisation, complex societies and segments of society are comprised of a range of "relatively autonomous microcosms", each possessing its own internal logic and culture:

For example, the artistic field, or the religious field, or the economic field all follow specific logics: while the artistic field has constituted itself by refusing or reversing the law of material profit, the economic field has emerged, historically, through the creation of a universe within which, as we commonly say 'business is business', where the enchanted relations of *phylia*, of which Aristotle spoke, of friendship and love, are excluded. (Wacquant, 1989, p. 39)

The boundaries of a field are situated at the point where the effects of the field cease: "only rarely do they take the form of juridical frontiers, even though they are always marked by more or less institutionalised 'barriers to entry'" (Wacquant 1989, p. 39). Importantly, agents within the field are capable of both being shaped by the field and in turn shaping the field themselves, through their actions and interactions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 80).

Bourdieu thus conceptualised fields as sites each containing their own 'logic of practice', and wrote of the impact of hierarchically structured fields on one another (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105ff), for example, the impact of the highly autonomous field of economics on many other fields (germane to many discussions of the field of education and the subfield of schooling in the current age). After Bourdieu's 'nascent' (Lingard & Rawolle, 2004, p. 364) discussion of the intersection of fields and the effects of these interactions in his work *On Television and Journalism* (1998), Lingard and Rawolle (2004; Rawolle, 2005) have contributed to an understanding of what they conceptualise as *cross-field effects*, illustrated through their exploration of the intersection of the journalism and policy fields. Rawolle (2005) describes 'cross-field effects' as particular practices that result from the relationship between two fields, in this case educational research and classroom practice, and the phenomenon whereby the 'logic of practice' of one field impacts upon another.

Lingard and Rawolle (2004, p. 386ff) identify five classifications to distinguish different types of cross-field effects, namely:

- Structural effects: related to the links between structures of fields and concerned with the extent to which the logic of practice of one field is imposed on or impacts another;
- Event effects: related to specific events whose consequences impact more than one field;
- Systemic effects: related to "broad changes in the values underpinning social fields" (p.369);
- Temporal effects: those which occur as a consequence of a particular catalyst and are limited in their duration; and
- Hierarchical and vertical effects: occurring between fields that hold differing levels of autonomy.

While they indicate that most cross-field effects do not fall squarely into only one category, these classifications are useful in delineating and understanding the shape and extent of cross-field effects.

Both Bourdieu's concept of field and Lingard and Rawolle's expanded discussion of cross-field effects are useful tools in thinking about the intersection of inquiry and practice in the context of practitioner research. When teachers engage in authentic

practitioner research, and by this I mean that which meets the guidelines for ethics and quality outlined in the earlier section of this paper, the field upon which they 'play' is that of educational research. This is particularly the case in circumstances where teachers work within a 'transformative partnership' (Groundwater-Smith, Mitchell, Mockler, Ponte, & Ronnerman, 2013), with access to a facilitator or 'academic partner' who initiates them into the rules of the research 'game'. While teachers continue to inhabit the field of classroom practice, the opportunity exists for a range of structural (to use Lingard and Rawolle's classification) cross-field effects to take place which in turn might shape the practice of practitioner researchers in the context of the classroom.

Accepting ethics as one of the dominant logics of practice of the field of educational research, and considering the enactment of ethics in the context of practitioner research as outlined above, raises the question of what this particular logic of practice might bring to bear on the field of classroom practice, upon which practitioner researchers also and more consistently 'play'. How far does the logic of practice of the research field challenge or raise questions for the agents about the logic of practice of the field of classroom practice? In the context of sustained and authentic practitioner research (by which I mean that which adheres to the quality framework elaborated in the first section of this paper), my contention is that the opportunity exists for cross-field effects to take place such that the logic of practice of the research field holds potential to transform the ways in which teacher researchers engage in the field of classroom practice.

It should be noted that while the potential for such cross-field effects to take place, there are other cross-field effects impacting on the field of classroom practice simultaneously, some of which have worked to shape this field of practice in contradictory and damaging ways over the past decade. Cultures of instrumentalism in education, where the end is prized over the means, the standardised is privileged over the differentiated, and a desire for quantifiable 'proof' is privileged over good teacher professional judgement, demonstrate the effects of the interaction of the education field with those of economics and politics (often mediated by journalism). The imposition of the logics of practice of these fields on that of education and classroom practice specifically run in contradiction to those cross field effects that engagement in practitioner research might facilitate. It is against this backdrop that I suggest that 'working' the structural cross-field effects between educational research and classroom practice might provide something of a foil (or at least call into question) the instrumentalist push that is in some part the result of the hierarchical cross-field effects between economics and education. It is to some of the 'radical possibilities' of these generative cross-field effects that I now turn.

### **When 'Research Ethics' Become 'Everyday Ethics': Radical Possibilities**

Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle have written extensively over the past decade about what they have termed 'inquiry as stance' (2001, 2004, 2007b, 2008, 2009). By way of explaining the concept, they write:

Fundamental to the notion of inquiry as stance is the idea that educational practice is not simply instrumental in the sense of figuring out how to get things done, but also and more importantly, it is social and political in the sense of deliberating about what to get done, why to get it done, and whose interests are served. Working from

and with an inquiry stance, then, involves a continual process of making current arrangements problematic; questioning the ways knowledge and practice are constructed, evaluated and used; and assuming that part of the work of practitioners individually and collectively is to participate in educational and social change. (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 121)

Inquiry as stance, then, is about an orientation to practice, where some of the logics of practice of the research field might be seen to infuse the many dimensions of teachers' work inside the classroom. If taking an inquiring stance sees teachers adopt a certain criticality, systematically make their current practices problematic and work through inquiry to come to a point where they might claim to "know their own knowledge" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 45ff), we see the link between some of the processes of practitioner research and the enactment of classroom practice. The adoption of inquiry as stance requires of teachers a shift of the ethics of research into the ethics of practice, and this has consequences for the enactment of their practice.

If, as I have argued in the first section of this paper, good practitioner research adheres to a framework of quality guided by ethics and, as I have argued in the second section of this paper, significant opportunities exist under these conditions for structural cross-field effects to take place between the field of research and the field of classroom practice, what then might these effects look like and what questions might they give rise to for practitioner researchers? In this final section of the paper, I point to some of the ways in which these effects might play out in relation to what I see as five critical ethical dimensions of practitioner research conducted within classroom contexts, namely informed consent, avoiding harm, student voice, power dynamics within the classroom and teacher judgement. While each is treated separately here, clearly there exists a great deal of overlap in the realm of classroom practice, where a reflexive relationship might be seen to exist between these elements.

### *Informed consent*

An undisputed cornerstone of ethical research practices in practitioner research and social research more broadly, Onora O'Neill suggests that informed consent is also a cornerstone of the building of social trust across a vast array of different contexts:

Informed consent procedures have a place all the way from choosing socks to choosing university courses, from getting an inoculation to getting married, from choosing a video to choosing a career....But informed consent can provide a basis for trust provided that those who are to consent are not offered a flood of uncheckable information, but rather information whose accuracy they can check and assess for themselves. This is demanding. (O'Neill, 2002, p. 72)

In the context of practitioner inquiry, the enactment of informed consent means that participants in research are fully apprised of the purpose and processes of the research in which they are to participate, that no participant is coerced or unduly pressured to participate, that information is provided to participants to indicate to them how they were chosen to be invited to participate in the project, what the intention and process of the

project will be and so on.

In the context of the classroom, informed consent might relate to students having access to the 'grand plan' of their learning: the rationale for what and how they are to learn and some capacity to choose how they will engage, to be agents of their own learning and to work in partnership with their teachers to meet the outcomes or goals established. Informed consent in a classroom context raises questions for practitioners in relation to the way that curricular experiences are organised, the level to which learning is differentiated and tailored to the needs and desires of individual learners, and also around the ways in which teachers do or do not make transparent the processes of learning to their students.

### *Striving to 'do no harm'*

In the case of practitioner research, where teachers and other practitioners conduct research in their local contexts and communities, this matter of striving to 'do no harm' most readily applies to the possible harm that might be caused to the relationships within the community as a by-product of the research undertaken than to any ill-effects of the research directly. A lack of observed protocols with regard to anonymity or confidentiality, for example, can lead to compromised relationships within the school community.

In the context of classroom practice, this might translate into fairness and consistency in our dealings with students, understanding the fragility of human relationships within the microcosm of the classroom and school and working to establish agreed practices for all members of the community to adhere to and benefit from. Striving to do no harm in the context of classroom practice raises questions for practitioners around their knowledge of the learners under their care and a commitment to model behaviour and interactions that embody democratic and socially just values.

### *Privileging Student Voice*

Part of the intent of practitioner research, connected to its critical and emancipatory roots in action research, lies in privileging the voices of those with less power. In the context of school-based practitioner research this often translates into active intent to elicit student voice, and to engage students in the conduct of research within the school community. Fielding (2011) describes such involvement as engaging students as co-enquirers, knowledge creators and joint authors in practitioner inquiry ventures, although it is worthwhile noting that this goal is increasingly trammelled in schools by the need to conform to cross field impositions where, for example, decisions about teaching, learning and curriculum are governed by the consequences of standardised testing regimes (Taubman, 2009).

In the context of classroom practice, this might involve an emphasis on student agency in learning, through support of student decision-making in terms of the content, processes and products of learning. Furthermore, it requires teachers to foster authentic dialogue with students regarding their learning experiences and a willingness to adapt and tailor learning experiences according to the experience, needs and preferences of students. The notion of privileging student voice in the context of classroom practice

raises questions for practitioners regarding supporting students to 'find' and express their voice in relation to their learning, not necessarily a simple task, and also developing strategies for themselves that lead to good listening, an equally complex endeavour.

### *Understanding power dynamics*

Linked to each of the issues expanded above, much has been written about developing an understanding of the power dynamics inherent in conducting research and being explicit about one's own position within the research field. For practitioner researchers, these issues can be amplified, as conducting research within one's own community means that the researcher comes to the task recognised by the participants according to their history and role within the community (as opposed to an 'external' person who comes into the community as 'researcher'). Many years ago Patti Lather suggested that as researchers, we need to "learn to attend to the politics of what we do and do not do at a practical level" (Lather, 1991, p. 13), and my claim here is that this is doubly true for practitioner researchers who inhabit both the research space and the classroom practice space.

The phenomenon whereby "power is invisible downwards"<sup>1</sup> can make it difficult for teachers to recognise their own positioning within the power dynamic of the classroom, but doing so is important in the creation of a democratic classroom environment which builds on the principles of ethical practitioner inquiry. A commitment to understanding the power dynamic at work within the classroom raises questions for practitioners around the responsibility for learning and with whom it rests: how far do students have the capacity to make real decisions about their learning and when and for what reason is the decision-making power extended to or withheld from students, for example. It is important to note here that such considerations are not focused on a desire to 'flatten' or eradicate the power dynamic at work within the classroom – such an aim would be naïve in the extreme – but rather on the desire to identify and understand the power dynamic at work, such that any obstacles to student learning that it might render can be addressed.

### *Exercising sound judgement*

Just as the ethical researcher, in the process of analysing collected data, judges the evidence on its merits and works as far as possible to limit the way in which their own preconceptions are brought to bear on the phenomena being studied, so too does classroom practice that builds out of research ethics require an authentic, de-personalised response to those things that may be unpleasant or difficult to hear.

Likewise, the exercise of sound professional judgement in a classroom context requires teachers to be systematic in their collection of evidence of learning, but this is not to say that such collection cannot be an organic, reflexive process. The establishment of protocols and 'touchstones' for the collection and 'making sense' of evidence of student learning is a key way in which the development and sound exercise of

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<sup>1</sup> A metaphor introduced to me many years ago by Deirdre Rofe IBVM, who used it often in her mentoring of school leaders but did not, to my knowledge, write about it.

professional judgement might be established. In this age of 'teaching by numbers' (Taubman, 2009, 2011) teacher professional judgement is often condemned as highly 'subjective' by those who would privilege knowledge about student learning emanating from standardised testing over such flimsy assessments as those relying on teachers' judgement. It is precisely because of this, along with the associated de-skilling of teachers in this regard that such attitudes have heralded, that teachers need to develop and use robust professional judgement as part of the routine of their classroom practice. A commitment to the development and exercise of sound professional judgement raises questions about what evidence is used as the basis for judgement and how it is used, about how judgement might be shared and critiqued within the teaching community, and also about the countercultural nature of the very exercise of teacher professional judgement in these neo-liberal times.

## **Conclusion**

The opportunities presented by these 'cross field effects' hold significant potential for practitioner researchers, as well as for those who support and facilitate their work. Conceiving of practitioner inquiry as somehow separate from the 'main game' of teachers' work, an 'add on' or additional and different task to be undertaken alongside the 'regular' work undertaken within the classroom represents a missed opportunity for classroom practice to be enriched by research processes and an 'inquiring stance' to be developed on classroom practice. Where practitioner inquiry is underwritten by a 'project' approach with a finite timeline, often with funding contingent upon the reaching of a pre-defined end point, this missed opportunity is more likely to occur. Furthermore, its potential is amplified where practitioner inquiry is co-opted for the purposes of implementation and 'domestication' (Kemmis, 2006, p.459) of teachers and students to the conventions of contemporary schooling, for the reason that teachers are more likely to see the research endeavour as a bounded transaction rather than as a 'way of being' that transcends the immediate context.

Conceived in this way, practitioner research becomes not only a 'professional development tool' or a process that teachers engage in from time to time, but a way of understanding and enacting ethical practice, wherein professional formation is shaped reflexively through the learning that takes place across the realms of research and practice. For facilitators of practitioner research, this points to the need to encourage teacher researchers to explicitly think about, and indeed debate, their classroom practice through the lens of inquiry. This may not be the best 'jumping off' point for neophyte practitioner researchers, but for those with some experience of gathering and making sense of data within their school and classroom practice, it can provide a new means by which the work effectively and robustly troubles and problematises practice.

The act of engaging in sound and ethical practitioner research, regardless of context, encourages and indeed demands an alignment between the ethical framework employed in the research enterprise and the 'everyday ethics' of practice. This paper has argued for the role of ethics as a framework for quality in practitioner research, and then explored the implications of this in terms of the opportunities that might exist for cross-field effects to challenge some of the dominant logics of practice at work in the field of

classroom practice in the current age. When, through engagement with practitioner inquiry, research ethics become 'everyday ethics' for classroom practitioners, these cross field effects hold the potential to support teachers in thinking anew about their classroom practice, and ultimately, the potential to provide a framework and catalyst for more just, ethical and democratic approaches to schooling.

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