Equality Studies, the Academy and the Role of Research in Emancipatory Social Change

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Abstract: If people are structurally excluded from democratic engagement with research practice, they are precluded from assessing its validity in an informed manner. They are effectively disenfranchised from controlling the generation and dissemination of knowledge about themselves and/or the institutions within which they live and work.

This issue is especially acute for marginalised groups and communities who are the subjects of so much social scientific research. Such research is frequently undertaken without the involvement of the groups or communities in question. The ownership of data gives researchers and policy-makers power over the groups which may add to their marginalisation; there are now people who can claim to know you better than you know yourself. Without democratic engagement therefore, there is a real danger that research knowledge can be used for manipulation and control rather than challenging the injustices experienced.

This paper analyses the role of research in relation to social change. It explores, in particular, the implications of utilising an emancipatory research methodology in the study of issues of equality and social justice. While recognising the difficulties involved in developing an emancipatory approach to research, it is argued that such an approach is analytically, politically, and ethically essential if research with marginalised and socially excluded groups is to have a transformative impact.

I INTRODUCTION

Origins of Equality Studies

As both the academic origins and historical development of Equality Studies has been analysed elsewhere (Lynch, 1995; Baker, 1997) these matters will not be discussed here. However, some key factors facilitating the development of Equality Studies will be presented to help contextualise the debates presented in the paper.

Equality Studies began in response to a series of research practices, political changes and institutional initiatives which had developed in Irish intellectual and political life in the late 1980s (Lynch, 1995). It resonated with similar developments in other countries including the development of Women's Studies; Disability Studies; Peace Studies; Racial and Ethnic Studies; and Gay and Lesbian, Studies. In academic terms, it was first an attempt to develop both an inter-disciplinary and a pluri-disciplinary project around the study of equality issues. There was a widely shared view among many of us working within different disciplines in the University, that no single discipline provided a comprehensive view of the complex subject of equality, or indeed an adequate analysis of how to address inequalities and injustices as they arose. A co-operative, interdisciplinary and pluri-disciplinary mode of inquiry was deemed essential. Equality Studies brought together sociologists, political theorists, lawyers, economists, feminists and policy analysts, each with a unique contribution to make to the understanding of equality and social justice.

Another generative force in the development of Equality Studies was the visible failure of liberal public policies to promote radical social change in society in the post-war era. A large body of research on equality issues, both nationally and internationally, particularly on questions such as social-class related inequality, gender inequality, and poverty, indicated that liberal policies were not effective in eliminating major social inequalities within our own society, or indeed internationally (Arnot, 1991; Arnot and Barton, 1992; Baker, 1987; Breen *et al.*, 1990; Callan, Nolan *et al.*, 1989; Clancy, 1988; Cobalti, 1990; Fischer *et al.*, 1996; Nolan, 1991; Shavit and Blossfeld, 1993). In addition, it was increasingly evident with the growing emergence of "the politics of difference" that social justice was not purely about economic justice in a simple distributive sense; it was also about cultural and political justice (Fraser, 1995). While economic equality remained central to any egalitarian project, it was increasingly evident that the boundaries of class had been increasingly altered by gender, race, age, ethnic and dis/ability-related differences (Young, 1990); cultural and political institutions reproduced inequalities outside the economic realm.

There were therefore, a series of generative forces which led to the development of Equality Studies, including intellectual, institutional and political developments. All of these factors presented a challenge to all those interested in egalitarian theory and policy, to develop a deeper understanding of what constituted an egalitarian society, and an improved analysis as to how to develop it.

The Intellectual Focus

Equality Studies is focused on the analysis of significant equalities and inequalities in human life, both as it has been and as it might be (Baker, 1997,

p. 62). It involves the research of at least five key issues, including: (1) the analysis of patterns of equality/inequality and their interrelationships; (2) the development of explanatory frameworks for the understanding of equality/ inequality; (3) the identification of core principles or equality objectives which egalitarians are trying to achieve; (4) the identification of institutional and policy frameworks for achieving equality; and (5) the articulation of political strategies for egalitarian-based change. While the identification of patterns of inequality and the development of explanatory models for understanding them (issues (1) and (2)) is part of the work of several major disciplines within the social sciences, Equality Studies tries to go beyond this. It attempts to anchor explanatory frameworks to normative egalitarian theory, thereby breaking the traditional dichotomy which has developed between normatively and positively-oriented disciplines within the social sciences. It tries to articulate a vision of an egalitarian society and global order which is grounded in the analysis of institutional, policy and political frameworks which facilitate or inhibit egalitarian change (Lynch, 1995, pp. 101-102).

Equality Studies works within an epistemological tradition which supposes that the purpose of academic discourse is not only to describe and explain the world, but also to change it. It shares its intellectual and epistemological origins with critical theory (as developed by Habermas particularly), Marxism, Feminist theory, and other inter-disciplinary fields of investigation focused on trans-formative action including Disability Studies and Women's Studies. The basic questions it asks are not only descriptive or explanatory therefore, they are also visionary and utopian. It tries to focus on potentiality as well as on actuality, on what is possible as much as on what is; it attempts to develop a concept of the alternative rather than simply accepting the given.

Like other cognate disciplines and fields of enquiry, Equality Studies also recognises that research is inevitably politically engaged, be it by default, by design, or by simple recognition. No matter how deep the epistemological commit-ment to value neutrality, decisions regarding choice of subject, paradigmatic frameworks, and even methodological tools, inevitably involve political choices, not only within the terms of the discipline, but even in terms of wider political purposes and goals. The academy itself, and academic knowledge in particular is deeply implicated in the business of power.

One of the purposes of this chapter is to examine the structural conditions under which Equality Studies (and other cognate disciplines focused on the study of inequality or injustice) operates within the academy. These are conditions of work which it shares with many other researchers in the human rights and social scientific fields, conditions which impinge directly on the outcomes of research. For it is the case, that many of those who study issues such as human rights, race, gender, social class, poverty or disability are not

simply detached scholars with no interest in policy or change. Most work on such issues because of the apparently unjust and evil outcomes which blatant racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and/or disablism visit upon society (Siraj-Blatchford, 1995, p. 209). Their work has its origin in the Enlightenment vision of education and research as tools for the development and improvement of society, even though such a vision may not always be explicitly articulated. The question which has to be addressed first however, is whether the academy, which is so deeply implicated in the cultural reproduction of elites, can facilitate emancipatory change *via* research and education.

Given the embeddedness of the academic world in the business of cultural production and reproduction, it is not at all self evident how a given discipline or academic discourse can contribute to radical social change. Universities *qua* institutions are engaged in elite forms of cultural production. Moreover, they are heavily engaged in the practice of cultural monopoly, not only through their selection procedures for students and staff, but also through their rigorous boundary maintenance procedures within and between disciplines, and between what is defined as academic knowledge and what is not (Bourdieu, 1978, 1984). Yet, within all institutions there is scope for resistance; there are contradictions which can be exploited and utilised at all levels of education, including higher education (Giroux, 1983).

II RESEARCH ON EQUALITY AND THE LIMITATIONS OF TRADITIONAL POSITIVIST[1] METHODOLOGIES

There has been very little independent research funding available to the social sciences in Ireland since the foundation of the State. Although State aid for social science research was substantially increased in 1998, the research fund of the Irish Social Science Research Council (SSRC) was only in the region of £100,000 *per annum* as recently as the mid-1990s. While some of the inter-national research foundations did offer grants to Irish researchers, there was no major Foundation within Ireland sponsoring social scientific research. Up to the end of the millennium, therefore, the bulk of the money available for social science research was available for commissioned studies for State-sponsored projects. Such funding provided the core funding for the work of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and the Educational Research Centre (ERC) (Drumcondra). The absence of either a well-funded SSRC, or well established research foundations, has meant that Irish researchers have had two options in

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1. While positivist here refers primarily to quantitative studies, much of qualitative research operates out of similar principles in its research design (Oliver, 1992; Jayaratine and Stewart, 1995).

relation to research funding: either they undertook government-funded research (if and when they were invited to tender for it), or they sought out some of the minor funding offered by a host of voluntary, statutory and other agencies.

The lack of funding for basic research meant that much of the work undertaken was of an applied nature, frequently designed to answer a specific policy query for the funder. Such a system was, and is, heavily biased in favour of empirical (especially quantitative) research in the positivist tradition. The published work of the ESRI and the ERC exemplifies the strong hold which positivism has had in the social sciences in Ireland. Although there have been moves away from this tradition in recent years (as is evident from the nature of the material published increasingly in the *Irish Journal of Sociology or in Irish Educational Studies*), positivism still maintains a strong hold on social scientific practice. In view of its strong position, it is important to identify its strengths and limitations, especially in relation to such a morally loaded subject as equality.

Much of the policy debate about poverty and inequality in society generally (especially in terms of social class/socio-economic groups) has been framed within the language-of-analysis of positivism. In the education area in particular, work within the positivist tradition has played an important role in the policy arena. The work of what are sometimes called the "equality empiricists" has been especially effective in holding the State to public account regarding the implementation of its stated policies on equality. In Ireland, for example, the work of Breen *et al.* (1990); Clancy (1988; 1995); Callan, Nolan *et al.*, (1996); Cormack and Osborne (1995); Dowling (1991); and Hannan, Smyth *et al.*, (1996) has played an important role in challenging the State on the effectiveness of various policies for the promotion of social justice in education and society generally. In certain respects, this type of "political arithmetic" is crucially important for holding the State publicly accountable. It is a vital tool of democracy in a world where inegalitarian ideologies are gaining hold:

> At a time of increasing social inequalities and injustice, when the "self-regulating" market threatens to undermine the foundations of social solidarity; ....and when the dominant ideology of meritocracy in liberal democratic societies has been seriously weakened at the same time that right wing politicians proclaim the "classless society", a new political arithmetic must be asserted as a vital tool of democracy as well as of sociology (Brown *et al.*, 1997, p. 37).

When positivist research is sufficiently critical and independent, it also has the potential to facilitate social and individual reflexivity; it informs the general body politic, giving them access to knowledge which is detached from the powerful interests of government and media (Halsey, 1994).

In the international arena the merits of traditional positivist methodologies

for the understanding of social phenomena generally, and inequality in particular, have been debated intensely in recent years. Positivism has not been without its defendants; Hammersley (1992, 1995) although not subscribing to a crudely positivist view, has been among the more vocal of these. Postmodernists, critical theorists and feminist scholars have been, however, among the most ardent critics of positivist epistemologies and methodologies (Bernstein, 1976, 1983; Harding, 1987, 1991; Harre, 1981; Humphries, 1997; Lentin, 1993; Reay, 1996; Smith, 1987; Stanley and Wise, 1983). Their work demonstrates how, despite its visible benefit as a tool of political arithmetic, mainstream positivism has severe limitations from both a philosophical and a moral standpoint (Reason and Rowan, 1981; Reason, 1988).

The model of the person employed is one which regards people as "units of analysis", it treats them as "variables" whose attributes can be neatly reified into dependent and independent types. People are not defined therefore in a holistic way; understanding of their subjectivity and their relational conditions of structured inequality often become invisible. What Bourdieu (1973) once referred to as "the substantialist atomism" of the social sciences, conceals the structural and relational conditions which generate inequality, injustice and marginalisation. The person is treated as a detached atom (undoubtedly with attributes of gender, class, race, ethnicity, etc.); the language-of-analysis does not identify the sets of relations through which particular attributes are translated into particular inequalities. The research focuses on how particular characteristics, such as colour, class or religion, are associated or correlated with particular outcomes, such as occupational status, education or legal provision. There is a tendency to locate the causative factors contributing to particular inequalities, therefore, in the attributes of those experiencing inequality, in their gender, poverty, or race, rather than in the structured relations, the planned and unplanned exclusionary systems, which transform individual attributes into generative forces for inequality.

Moreover, once the research has identified correlations and associations between individual attributes and inequality outcomes, this is generally regarded as sufficient for promoting an understanding of the underlying causes of inequality. This methodological individualism creates a silence around the social, economic, political, legal and cultural relations of inequality. There is no space in which to debate or frame radical structural critiques or alternative visions based on relational understanding.

While it could be argued that the failure to examine the relational character of inequality is a universal problem within the social sciences, rather than one which is tied to positivist methods, the fact that the issue has received so little attention is undoubtedly related to the culture of assumed objectivity which dominates positivist discourse. The role of the researcher is defined as that of

"disinterested" observer and analyst; one is expected to discover "truth" via the use of reliable research instruments and rational discussion; the goal is to represent reality accurately, no matter how limited that particular reality may be. The researcher is defined as beyond politics, their knowledge is "innocent" untainted by political agendas. Thus, a culture of objectivism prevails which precludes a debate about the politics of research production. It allows methodological individualism to persist as long as it operates according to the scientific canon of objectivity. There is no framework for analysing the epistemological and ethical limitations of one's own position; questions regarding the purposes and outcomes of research are defined as being the work of policy-makers rather than researchers.

The methodological individualism underpinning positivism also focuses attention on the powerless rather than the powerful, while failing to explore relations between the two. While there are studies of inequality which focus on the impact and influence of the powerful and wealthy in society (studies on white collar crime by McCullagh (1995) and Tomlinson *et al.*, (1988) being cases in point), there are proportionately many more studies on the vulnerable and subordinate (Chambers, 1983). The lack of a substantial body of empirical data in Ireland on the egalitarian/social justice implications of the operation of the money markets or the ownership structures of equities and other forms of corporate and productive wealth;[2] indicates how biased the focus of analysis has been. We are often presented with a detailed analysis of the life style of those who are subordinate or poor, while little attention is devoted to the analysis of the generative forces and processes which maintain others in positions of dominance and/or affluence.

The relative social scientific silence which exists around the relational systems governing the interface between the powerful and powerless, is no doubt related to the ability (including legal protections) of particular groups to hide from the research gaze, and to refuse access to sensitive information; the poor are studied as they are on open access; the rich are not. Whatever the reason, the focus of research attention on the attributes of those experiencing inequality means that the causes of injustice are often sought in the lifestyle of the marginalised themselves, the most visible and measurable group. Poor people or ethnic minorities thus become associated with, or even "blamed" for crime, not the poverty-inducing and degrading structures which induced and facilitated crime in the first place.

The dichotomy which is drawn between fact and value in the positivist tradition also discourages analysis of the impact of funding bodies on the nature

2. In his analysis of *The Wealth of Irish Households,* Nolan (1991) noted that one of the biggest problems in examining wealth distribution was the lack of accurate and comprehensive data.

of the questions asked. When research on equality is funded by the state, for example, it is frequently undertaken for the purposes of controlling or containing the "problem of inequality". Big research studies based on national data sets are big business. The research is designed to answer the questions of those who pay for it: it is undertaken in a managerial context.

Furthermore, large-scale studies of poverty, such as those currently being undertaken across several countries in the EU, are prime examples of state-funded, top-down surveys.[3] They are designed and planned by "experts" generally without systematic dialogue and collaboration with the subjects of the research. Such research often "studies those at the bottom while holding up its hands for money to those at the top" (Reason and Rowan, 1981, p. xv). The methodologies and interpretations employed are based on models and paradigms which have been derived from a conception of poverty developed by academics, and approved by senior policy analysts and policy-makers, without the consent of those who are the subject of the research.

Without intent, this type of research can and does operate as a form of colonisation. It creates public images about groups and contexts of inequality (in both the academic and the policy world) over which most people participating in the pain and marginalisation of injustice and inequality have little or no control. Poor people, Travellers, asylum seekers, disabled people, and increasingly, women, become the subjects of books and papers in which their lives are recorded by professional middle class experts who are frequently removed from their culture and lifestyle. This creates a context in which professional researchers know and own (as do the policy institutions and state departments which pay them) part of people's world about which people themselves know very little. By owning data about oppressed peoples, the "experts" own part of them. The very owning and controlling of the stories of oppression adds further to the oppression as it means that there are now people who can claim to know and understand you better than you understand yourself; there are experts there to interpret your world and to speak on your behalf. They take away your voice by speaking about you and for you. This is sometimes referred to as the "hit and run model of research" wherein the career advancement of the researchers is built on their use of alienating and exploitative methods of inquiry.

Colonisation by experts is especially acute for low income working class communities and for ethnic minorities and other groups, such as Travellers, whose

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3. The European Community *Household Panel Survey* and the *Irish Houshold Budget Survey* are examples of this type of research. National data bases on poverty and related issues are collected through these.

cultural traditions are strongly oral, (Lynch and O'Neill, 1994).[4] For "Classes exist twice over, once objectively, and a second time in the more or less explicit social representation that agents form of them" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 37). While there are women, albeit upper middle class women, who can challenge, mediate and redefine the images of women in the policy and academic arena, and while the same holds true for many other groups such as disabled persons, religious or ethnic minorities, this cannot happen for working class people; by designation, working class people are not part of the defining classes in society.

Within traditional positivist research, reflexivity is not a requirement of the research task. The fact that the perspective of the expert is only one viewpoint, and one which is generally at least one step removed from the oppression, is rarely discussed. Researchers present what is a select viewpoint as one which is more comprehensive and epistemologically powerful than others; it is often presented as being superior to that of other researchers (especially ethnographic researchers), and to that of people living out inequality. The net effect of interpreting the world from the perspective of the "expert" is that the viewpoint of the outsider is privileged over that of the insider who has experienced the inequality. The privileging of the expert produces perspectives on inequality and injustice, therefore, which are politically and emotionally detached from the experiences which generated their articulation in the first place.

While academic understanding involves abstractions, the abstractions need not revisit the research subjects as "expert opinions" which are superior to their own understanding.[5] It is possible to create knowledge and understanding through partnership between the researcher and the research subject, while recognising the differences between the two positions. Knowledge created in this manner is owned by the research subject in a way that non-partnership-knowledge is not. The fact that the subject is co-creator of the knowledge means that they can exercise control over definitions and interpretations of their lifeworld. They are also in a position to be introduced to research practice through their ongoing involvement in the research process.

4.   An example of how academics may inadvertently structure the exclusion of marginalised groups occurred at a conference organised in TCD on July 18 1997 on "Travellers, Society and the Law". All the lecturers were professionals and there was no space in the programme for the Travellers' perspective. In addition, the fee for the day was £100, so it was only those with access to resources could attend.

5.   At the Irish Conference on Civil and Social Rights in the European Union, Dublin, May 7-8, 1997, a number of working class community activists were highly critical of one of the speakers who made no attempt to communicate his academic ideas in accessible language (the audience included community activists from various non-governmental organisations, researchers, policy-makers and administrators). The response to this criticism was (unfortunately) one of dismissal; the speaker justified his approach on the grounds that it was only possible to communicate (sic) his ideas in a partiuclar type of language code.

III THE NORMATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE TRADITION IN CRITICAL AND FEMINIST RESEARCH

Both critical theory (in the Habermasian tradition) and feminist theory have played a central role in generating a critique of positivist discourse; in this sense, they have formed the intellectual backdrop to debates about emancipatory research. Given this, it is important to comment on the development of emancipatory research and theory to date.

Critical Theory

One of the important contributions which critical theory has made is to highlight the importance of the emancipatory potential of research. Research within the critical paradigm has had an "emancipatory interest" which seeks to free people not only from the domination of others, but also from their domination by forces which they themselves do not understand (Habermas, 1971). Although critical theory shared Durkheim's commitment to the scientific analysis of society, critical analysis was also oriented to the emancipatory transformation of society. The scientific analysis of the world was not seen as an end in itself. It was regarded as a necessary step towards understanding which would guide transformative action, and would help create a world which would satisfy the needs and powers of women and men. What distinguished critical theories therefore from the positivist disciplines was their emphatic *normative* and *transformative* orientation. They were theories with a "practical intent" (Benhabib, 1986, p. 253) working on the assumption that we live in a world of pain but that "much can be done to alleviate that pain, and that theory has a crucial role to play in that process" (Poster, 1989, p. 3).

Research within the critical tradition also tries to highlight the contexts and spaces where resistance is possible. In *Communicative Action*, Habermas notes that the "seams between systems and lifeworld" offer special scope for resistance in the contemporary era. He regarded conflicts and contradictions emerging in areas of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialisation (rather than distribution) as offering special scope for transformative action.

Both critical and feminist theory have also presented an enormous counterpoint to positivist hegemony and the values it endorsed. They have challenged the epistemological foundations of positivism, in particular the naive understanding of value freedom and objectivity. The work of critical theorists shifted interest from the almost exclusive concern with "how biased is the data?" (a concern most often expressed when the academic and policy interrogator did not like the findings) to concern about whose interests are served by the bias (Lather, 1991, p. 14). It has highlighted the interests of the "disinterested" researcher and her funders.

Overall critical theory encourages self-reflection on behalf of the researcher and the research subject. It promotes a deeper understanding, both on the part of those being researched and of the researcher herself, and of the issues being examined. The goal is not just to generate empirically grounded theoretical knowledge but to ensure that people know and understand their own oppressions more clearly so that they can work to change them. Dialectical theory building replaces theoretical impositions by experts. Research subjects are therefore actively involved in the construction and validation of understandings created about themselves. The relationship between researcher and researched is reciprocal rather than hierarchical (Fay, 1987); it is ultimately concerned with eliminating inequalities.

How effective critical theory has been overall in producing knowledge which has transformative outcomes is the subject of considerable debate. Some regard critical theory as having become estranged from its audience (Fay, 1987; Cocks, 1989) while others regard much of the research on women undertaken in the name of critical theory as being a new form of imperialism operated by western women on women in majority world countries (Lugones and Spelman, 1985). Apple (1991, p. ix) holds that critical theorists need to shift from being "universalizing spokespersons" *on behalf of* oppressed groups to "acting as cultural workers whose task is to take away the barriers that prevent people from *speaking for themselves*". Lather (1991) has called for the development of research approaches which empower those involved to change the world as well as understanding it. She has suggested that the methodological implications of critical theory have remained relatively unexplored.

Feminist Theory

Feminist scholars have been especially effective in challenging the core epistemological and methodological assumptions of mainstream social scientific practice. They have challenged patterns of bias in research design, including the absence of research on questions of central importance to women; the focus on elitest research topics; the naive understanding of objectivity; the improper interpretation and overgeneralisation of findings; and inadequate data dissemination (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1995, p. 218).

Not only have feminist theorists been to the fore in the critique of positivism, they have also been leaders in developing a theory of emancipatory action through education and research (Harding, 1987; Humphries and Truman, 1994; Lather, 1991; Lentin, 1993; Mies, 1984; Smith, 1987; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Weiler, 1988). They have encouraged women to engage in action both in and through education, and through research; they have also attempted to document the type of the procedures which must be followed in order to create an emancipatory research approach. Lather claims that:

> ... the development of emancipatory social theory requires an empirical stance which is open-ended, dialogically reciprocal, grounded in respect for human capacity, and yet profoundly sceptical of appearances and "common sense". Such an empirical stance is, furthermore, rooted in a commitment to the long-term, broad-based ideological struggle to transform structural inequalities (Lather, 1986, p. 269).

The challenge posed by critical and feminist theories for research in terms of reflexivity, dialogue and co-operation with marginalised people, are considerable. An even greater challenge is how to establish collaborative practices between theorist/researcher and marginalised peoples which will ensure that the understandings arrived at can work towards a transformative outcome. To confront the latter challenge is to confront the forces of interest within the academy itself.

IV CHALLENGES AND ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN DEVELOPING AN EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH MODEL

While several feminist theorists have engaged with the contradictions of their class position in relation to emancipatory research, critical theorists often tend to ignore the logic of the sets of cultural relations within which academic knowledge is produced. Critical theorists, no more than other intellectuals "tend to leave out of play their own game and their own stakes"...Yet, "the production of representations of the social world, which is a fundamental dimension of political struggles, is the virtual monopoly of intellectuals..." (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 37). Even academics who are themselves critical of the failure of critical theory to problematise its own fundamental assumptions, do not address themselves to the problem of the academically embedded context in which theory is constructed (Sayer's, 1995 critique of critical theory is a case in point). Academics create virtual realities, textual realities, ethnographic and statistical realities. These overhang and frame the lived existence of those who cannot name their own world; it is frequently in the context of these detached and remoter realities that public policy is often enacted. The frame becomes the picture in the public eye. Yet theoretical knowledge has serious limitations imposed upon it by the conditions of its own performance.

The relations of cultural production within which critical theory, feminist theory, and egalitarian theory are produced are generally no different to those that operate for the study of nuclear physics, corporate law or business and finance. Although some academics may view themselves as radical, reforming, feminist or emancipatory, they occupy a particular location within the class system (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 36-48). They are part of the cultural elite of society.

It is the designation of cultural elitism which provides them with the structural conditions to write; it gives them credibility over other voices and reinforces the perception of superiority which maintains the salary differentials between themselves and other workers. Being granted the freedom from necessity to write and discuss is a privilege which academics (be they liberal, radical or conservative) in well-funded universities are rarely asked to reflect upon, however.

Yet, academics are also subordinate to powerful corporate interest groups in the business and industrial sector. In a sense, therefore, they occupy a contradictory class location (Davies, 1995), being at once an elite in the cultural sphere and relatively subordinate in the industrial or financial sphere. Thus, while the concept of the "free-floating, disinterested intellectual" may be part of the ideology of academia it is not grounded in any sociological reality; even radical intellectuals are culturally, and relatively financially, privileged.

Operating within a contradictory state, of being personally radical and publicly privileged, makes it difficult for many politically left-wing academics to be progressive in cultural or university politics. It is much simpler to be progressive in general politics that do not touch the core values of one's own work. Bourdieu (1993, p. 45) suggests that there is no easy resolution to this dilemma for radical intellectuals. He proposes a radical, ongoing reflexivity wherein one prepares "the conditions for a critical knowledge of the limits of knowledge which is the precondition for true knowledge" as the principal protection available. In this way, researchers know where they themselves stand in the classification system.

Even if academics do engage in ongoing reflexivity, this does not alter the structural conditions under which they work. The dilemma posed by unequal power between researcher and research subject is not readily resolved, even when the researcher works with emancipatory intent (Lentin 1993, p. 128; Martin, 1996). It is generally the researchers who produce the final text, the written record of the research event. This gives them a power of definition which cannot be abrogated at will. Moreover, the very efforts of those interested in transforming the relations of research production (from those of dominance to those of partnership or emancipation) are deeply implicated in the exercise of power. One cannot escape the reality of power relations even within the language of emancipation.

In addition, intellectuals work in institutions which lay down working conditions based on the dominant meritocratic principles of our time — ostensibly at least, promotion is based on merit. The way in which merit is measured is in terms of conformity to the dominant norms of intellectual and academic discourse. This includes not only writing with the dominant paradigm (Kuhn, 1961) but writing about what is currently intellectually fashionable. Without at least a nodding recognition of the importance of the dominant discourses, then one's

work is not likely to be published.[6] And it is through their publications that intellectuals in universities are generally assessed. While "there is something desperate in the docility with which "free intellectuals" rush to hand in their essays on the required subject of the moment" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 43) the fact remains that academics jobs and incomes are often dependent on such conformity.

Not only does the academy generally only recognise those who conform to the intellectual norms of the day, it penalises those who attempt to redefine the purpose of the academy. Lectures, consultations and involvements with non-academic bodies do not count in terms of the enumerations of one's work or achievements.[7] This acts as a very effective control on academic work limiting and containing interests within the safe confines of the university. It also works effectively to preclude intellectuals from involving themselves, and the university, in radicalising initiatives. While "established or tenured" academics can afford to indulge in such developments, sanctioning *via* limited promotional opportunities continues to exercise control even over these.

Yet, public lectures and involvements with voluntary, statutory, community and other organisations is essential if research findings are to be circulated outside the narrow confines of the academy. Given that the production of scientific knowledge generally is often legitimated on the grounds that it will contribute to progress, and to the ultimate general good of humanity, it is difficult to see how this can happen without the dissemination of the findings outside the academy in accessible contexts and language.

What is interesting about the boundary maintenance which goes on in universities is that it is not confined to any one field (Bernstein, 1971). It occurs within and between disciplines, and between the university itself and the "outside community". Academic knowledge is defined as "superior" knowledge. The fact that the academic perspective is only one viewpoint, and that it may need to be complemented by other forms of understanding by non-academic research subjects is largely ignored (Lather, 1986). The parameters within which academic dialogue takes place, therefore, are narrowly defined thereby inhibiting criticism of academic discourse itself, and prohibiting academics from understanding the world from the perspectives of the "other" outside the academy.

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6.   While there are exceptions to this most notably intellectuals who are in the position of defining what is or is not in fashion, most academics, especially those without tenure, are not in that position.

7.   An interesting example of this is the way in which inventories of academic activities and research publications are compiled; only lectures to one's academic peers are generally counted as being of high standing; the same principle applies to publications. While this is understandable from the perspective of the academy, it shows how the University systematically devalues dialogue with persons and bodies other than academics.

V EMANCIPATORY METHODOLOGY

Resolving the dilemma posed by the colonising nature of research has been addressed by several feminist scholars and researchers (Bowles and Duelli Klein, 1983; Harding, 1991; Lather, 1991; Mies, 1984; Roberts, 1981; Smith, 1987), and more generally in the social sciences (Bernstein, 1983; de Koning and Martin, 1996; Oliver, 1992; Reason, 1988; Reason and Rowan, 1981). It is suggested that the alternative to illusory value-free knowledge is emancipatory knowledge. The aim of emancipatory research is to increase: "… awareness of the contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings", and in so doing to direct "attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes" (Lather, 1986, p. 259).

Ethical Issues

The research industry is a massive one across all fields and disciplines; it takes place not only in universities or research institutes but in government departments, private companies, local and national service agencies, and in voluntary bodies. Cultural capital, of which research is a fundamental part, parallels industrial, financial and agricultural capital as a source of wealth and power. Unless it is shared with those who are directly affected by it, research data can be used for manipulation, abuse and control. The importance of democratising research arises therefore because knowledge is power.

Although conventional human rights thinking focuses on political rights in the more restricted political sense, there is also a need to recognise the importance of human rights in relation to the operation of public and private institutions and systems which exercise control over people's lives but which are not democratically appointed. Research-generating institutions and Universities are such bodies, as they play a central role in validating and developing cultural forms and scientific knowledge which underpin social, economic and political policies in society.

Emancipatory research involves a recognition therefore of the moral right of research subjects to exercise ownership and control over the generation of knowledge produced about them and their world. As Heron (1981) observes this is a human rights issue. It constitutes part of peoples' right to political membership of their community. If people are structurally excluded from democratic engagement with research practice, they are precluded from assessing its validity in an informed manner. They are effectively disenfranchised from controlling the creation and dissemination of knowledge about themselves and/or about institutions and systems within which they live and work.

> For persons, as autonomous beings, have a moral right to participate in decisions that claim to generate knowledge about them. Such a right does

many things: (1) it honours the fulfilment of their need for autonomously acquired knowledge; (2) it protects them from becoming unwitting accessories to knowledge — claims that may be false and may be inappropriately or harmfully applied to others; (3) it protects them from being excluded from the formation of knowledge that purports to be about them and so from being managed and manipulated, both in the acquisition and in the application of knowledge, in ways they do not understand and so cannot assent to or dissent from. (Heron, 1981, p. 35).

Although the moral or human right to know applies primarily to research on persons, it is also of significance in other fields including research in the physical sciences. The most obvious example arises in relation to research involving experimentation within the natural environment (as in the case of the nuclear industry) or the development of genetically modified foods; these, and indeed many other forms of research, much of which is not so high profile, have serious health and environmental implications not only for the living generation but for future generations. Concealment of the scope and impact of research may add to the power and influence of the companies and states that produce it, but it also creates a world order in which ordinary people are politically and informationally disenfranchised. Research and information enfranchisement must complement political enfranchisement.

Often a research information deficit can be the differentiating factor between having a meaningful or an alienating experience in an organisation. An immediate and concrete example arises in the field of education. Parents who know the basic research findings regarding such practices as streaming and ability grouping can exercise control over schools and teachers in a way that other parents cannot. Knowledge about the effects of different forms of ability grouping enables them to act in a way that protects the interests of their own child; they can exercise strategic choices such as moving the child to a more supportive school if they find her or him in the "wrong" class. No such possibility exists for those who do not even know the implications of different forms of grouping in the first place. Similar examples could be taken from the health services where, for example, women and men are not aware of research findings regarding the long-term implications of taking different types of drugs and medication. Those who have access to (and can decode) the information are in control and can exercise choices in a way that those without it cannot.

Not only can people not make informed decisions if they lack information, neither can they participate effectively in public debates or policy partnerships. Even when and if people are given a partnership role, they may lack the technical knowledge to participate effectively. They can be physically present but technically absent, living in fear of a professional put down from those who are

part of the research-informed. What is at issue is not only the exercise of democratic procedures in research production therefore; the effective democratic dissemination of research findings is also essential. Much research is closeted and used selectively by researchers, policy-makers or service-providers as the politics of the situation allows. Such practices ensure that people are managed and manipulated from the top and outside.

Reciprocity in the Research Relationship

Emancipatory research also involves developing a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the research subject. This requires a democratisation of the research relationship so that the research process enables participants to understand and change their situation. This is especially important for research in the area of equality, as research which is not oriented towards transformation effectively reinforces inequality by default. It allows inequality to persist by diverting intellectual and public attention elsewhere.

Reciprocity involves engaging participants firstly in the research planning and design, as it is only through such participation that marginalised groups can begin to control the naming of their own world. If research participation is confined to the interpretation or theoretical elaboration stage, it may be too late as issues which are not central to the group or community may have become the focus of attention in the first place. Involving research subjects in planning poses numerous challenges to researchers and theorists, not least of which is the information and expertise differential between the researcher and the subject. Mutual education is at least a partial solution to this dilemma; there is an especially strong onus on the researcher to facilitate and promote education given the power differential between them and the research subject (Heron, 1981). Integrating education with research, imposes time and resource constraints on research, however, which cannot be easily set aside. And neither the funders nor the research subjects themselves may be interested in bearing the cost.

Reciprocity also demands that the research enables people to know and control their own world. This takes time, trust and negotiation; it is quite possible that the researcher and participants may not agree on the definition of the inequality, or indeed how it should be addressed. Kelly's (1996) research shows how working class community groups themselves interpreted unemployment according to quite different socio-political frames — ranging from radical to reformist to localist — although the formal class identity of all twelve groups involved was the same.

Recognising the very real practical difficulties posed by reciprocal research relations is not a sufficient reason to discount them. Operating out of principles of reciprocity, albeit imperfectly, would radically alter the way in which research

is planned and conducted; this is important in restructuring power relations and would be an important movement towards the democratisation of research in itself.

Dialectical Theory Building

Another feature of praxis-oriented research is its use of dialectical theory-building rather than theoretical imposition (Lather, 1991). Research respondents are not only involved therefore in the design of the research but also in the construction and validation of meaning. To undertake theory-construction in this manner represents an enormous challenge for researchers as it imposes a substantive educational commitment upon them (Heron, 1981). A dialogical approach to theory building is even more demanding, in many respects, than partnership in empirical research, as it involves the accommodation of two very different epistemological standpoints on the world, the academic and the local or particular. It demands theoretical construction in a language which is recognisable and meaningful across disparate communities; the theorist can no longer construct a view of the world without knowing and recognising the view of the "other", howsoever the latter may be defined. What dialectical theory building involves therefore is the democratisation of theoretical construction; a reordering of power relations between the academy and the named world. Yet theoretical imposition is the natural predisposition of most researchers given traditional academic training. The author assumes the superiority of their "framework"; grounding frameworks in the context of lived understandings challenges this tradition and informs and enriches understanding.

Reflexivity

Systematic reflexivity is also a requirement for emancipatory research as it is only through the constant analysis of one's own theoretical and methodological presuppositions that one can retain an awareness of the importance of other people's definitions and understandings of theirs. Although reflexivity is necessary, it is not a sufficient condition for emancipatory research. An ethically disinterested reflexivity would not suggest any change in research practice. If reflexivity is to facilitate change it needs to be guided by principles of democratic engagement and a commitment to change.

VI EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH IN PRACTICE: COALITIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

There are a number of practical problems posed by the emancipatory methodology. including the fact that it does increase the cost of the research. This is not necessarily something which will be supported by research funders,

although it may change over time when the importance of dialogue and its educational outcomes are appreciated. There is also very little research training available in most educational institutions on emancipatory methodology although there are exceptions to this (Reason, 1988) especially in feminist-led courses in recent years.

A further dilemma for the operation of emancipatory research is establishing procedures whereby radical understandings can be utilised for challenging structural inequalities. Even if radical understandings emerge from research, which for example, happened in Kelly's (1996) work, there may be no mechanism within the emancipatory method to move this understanding into discourses and political practices which would enable it to become active in the struggle for equality and social justice. Emancipation cannot be conferred by one group (academics) on another (oppressed or marginalised people) no matter how well intentioned the researchers might be (Martin, 1994, 1996).

While Mies (1984) shows how particular research led to important policy changes in Germany in relation to policies on women and violence, what is not clear is what makes it possible for this to happen. Is egalitarian development left contingent on a particular set of historical and political circumstances? One fact which does appear to be important is to involve marginalised groups themselves at all stages of the research, including the policy-related implementation stage, if action is to be taken. For this to happen, research organisations have to enter into new relations of dialogue and coalition with community or other groups which may be anathema to their organisational or cultural traditions. Certainly universities and research institutes have rarely established procedures for entering into dialogue with research participants in marginalised groups and communities. While liaisons with such groups may be permitted, they are usually kept at the periphery of the organisation where they exercise marginal power, often in adult education departments or women's studies departments.

Within current emancipatory discourse, the choice about whether or not to use emancipatory methods is left to the researcher; there is no serious attempt to identify the kind of structural conditions necessary to ensure that emancipatory methods are implemented on an ongoing basis. To institutionalise a truly radical approach to research, however, would require the development of new structures at both university and departmental level (and ultimately at central university and research planning level). Similar challenges would arise for institutes and bodies undertaking research elsewhere. Procedures would have to be put in place whereby those who are marginalised and oppressed in society can enter into dialogue about all research undertaken in their name. They would not simply be dependent on the good will of individual researchers allowing them to enter into dialogue on their own terms, Rather, community groups or

other representatives of marginalised groups would be involved on an ongoing basis in planning, monitoring and commenting on research They would play a very different and more powerful role than if they are simply research subjects being given the opportunity to participate or dialogue about research at the will of the researcher.

This would require a radical change in the structuring of departments in the university and the management of research operations. It would involve the establishment of Research Coalitions with those marginalised groups and communities who are so often the objects of research. Such groups would move from being objects to subjects, from being respondents to being partners; they would have the opportunity to define research agendas relating to their own lives. No one would have the authority to name, codify and claim scholarly understanding and ownership of someone else's world without debate, negotiation and, ultimately, consent.

Under a Research Coalition arrangement, power would be shared. The researchers would have to explain and justify the nature of their proposed research and theory about marginalised groups to the groups themselves. This is not to deny the difficulties involved. The academic voice is validated by virtue of its scientific origin; it is structurally defined as superior to the local or community voice. Thus any research partnership between researchers and the community is not an equal one, in the sense that prior cultural relations define it otherwise. To say this is not to suggest that the power differential in Research Coalitions cannot be managed and controlled. It merely highlights the importance of enabling those who are not full-time researchers to have the capacity and skill to name their research agendas in the partnerships. A further difficulty arises from the volatile character and composition of community groups themselves. Such groups are not necessarily constituted in a democratic or representative manner; they often lack formal procedures of accountability to their own constituency. Their effectiveness as representative bodies has to be constantly monitored therefore. While this is not essentially a research problem, it is nonetheless an issue which has to be addressed in partnership contexts (Sabel, 1996).

If Research Coalitions were to be established, it is evident that the onus of responsibility for setting them up rests initially with those who exercise control over the research process. Negotiations and discussions need to be set in train to identify the needs and interests of both parties, and to resolve the barriers which need to be overcome. These include barriers relating to differences in research expertise, language usage, life experiences, and attitudes to, and experiences of, research.

The experience of Local Area Partnerships in Ireland has shown that community representatives cannot be fully effective participants without resourcing

(Lynam, 1997). If marginalised groups were to participate effectively in the research process, training, resourcing and support would be essential, although the knowledge differential is not only confined to them. Academics also experience a (frequently unacknowledged) knowledge differential about the daily lived reality of the groups about whom they write. Such living knowledge represents an important resource which the community groups would bring to the Research Coalitions.

To be effective Research Coalitions would need to be complemented therefore by Learning Partnerships. These would be mutual education forums for academics, researchers and community personnel, so that each could share their definitions and interpretations of issues and events. In this way research agendas could be assessed and prioritised. The Research Coalitions and Learning Partnerships would inevitably facilitate action for change, as the communities where action is required would be directly involved in defining and interpreting their own situations. The research understandings available to them would be a powerful tool in negotiations with politicians and policy makers.

What is at issue here is the case for an extended epistemology within the academy (Heron, 1981, pp. 27-31). Most empirical research is in the domain of propositional knowledge. The outcome of research is stated as a set of propositions, which claim to be statements of facts or truths about the world. These theoretical constructs or empirical statements are artefacts or constructs about the world; they do not constitute the world in and of itself. They provide a framing of the world, a context for giving meaning; they are not synonymous with the experiential knowledge of the world. Experiential knowledge involves knowing the world in a direct face-to-face encounter. "It is knowing a person or thing through sustained acquaintance" (ibid., p. 27). Knowing poverty or racism through the medium of academic frameworks, and framing propositions about it empirically and theoretically makes an important contribution to human understanding. However, it is but one window on reality; it can only offer a limited perspective. While it is clear that academics do not claim to offer a "complete understanding" of any phenomena, the reality is that academic definitions of situations have status and power over and above other understandings. The meaning of poverty or inequality as it is understood and acted upon at policy level is as researchers have defined it; it is not as poor people see it (O'Neill, 1992).

The need to democratise the creation of academic knowledge therefore arises from the simple fact that such knowledge is acted upon as the defining understanding of a situation. With the advancement of information technology, the likelihood is that this trend will grow rather than retract. The scope for creating massive data bases on people of both a quantitative and qualitative nature has been greatly enhanced by computer developments in recent years.

With this, the scope for researchers to colonise the life worlds of those who are marginalised is likely to increase considerably unless democratisation of the research process is introduced.

While the democratisation of the research process is necessary across all fields, it is especially acute in the equality field. In general, those who carry the burden of inequality are far removed from the life-world of researchers. By virtue of their personal experience, however, they have a better vantage point for understanding the totality of the social world that creates inequality than those who enjoy its advantages. They have a much deeper understanding of how particular laws, policies and procedures operate to promote inequalities than those who are advantaged by same (Connell, 1993, pp. 39-41; Hooks, 1994).

The importance of establishing Learning Partnerships between researchers and the community arises not only from the point of view of respecting the fundamental human rights of those about whom we write, but also as a means of realising change. While critical theorists place considerable store on developing theories, including theories jointly created by researchers and participants, they do not make clear how such understanding will lead to change. Most academic productions remain confined to a narrow community of readers and listeners. No matter how radical the knowledge may be, its transformative potential is far from self evident unless it is available and disseminated in accessible form to those about whom it is written or whose lives are affected by it. Learning Partnerships arising from Research Coalitions would allow this to happen. They would ensure that an avenue of communication is established so that those who have most to gain from transformative action have the knowledge to act. The Learning Partnerships would provide a forum for challenging biases and deceptions thereby reinforcing the incentive to act. Those who have experiential knowledge of inequality and injustice can ally this understanding with academic knowledge to create a new and deeper knowledge of their world. This deeper understanding can challenge established "wisdoms" and "ideologies" around inequality and injustice. Learning Partnerships would provide the opportunity to link analysis directly into a community of participants with the potential to act.

Knowledge, no matter how radical in intent, is not inherently transformative. Even if critical intellectuals shift from being "universalising spokespersons" for marginalised groups to being "cultural workers whose task is to take away barriers that prevent people from speaking for themselves" (Apple, 1991, p. ix) this does not guarantee change. It is not self evident that deepening knowledge of injustices and inequalities, among marginalised communities or peoples themselves, will inevitably lead to transformative action outside of the research field; there is always an element of choice. Understandings need to be linked into a political forum so that knowledge does not become redundant and divorced

from action. If Learning Partnerships are created between academics and community representatives, then it also seems necessary to develop Equality Action Plans on a collaborative basis. Action needs to be planned and implemented for changing structures at the political and related levels. Without integrating planning for change into the entire process there can be no guarantee that it will happen.

VII A CHALLENGE TO THE ACADEMY

What is being proposed here in terms of Research Coalitions and Learning Partnerships would be seen by many academics as a challenge to their intellectual autonomy. And it does pose serious questions about the nature of independence for the universities and research institutes if taken seriously. However, the professional ideology of "freedom and independence" within the universities is itself in need of deconstruction. As Bourdieu (1988, 1993) has noted the nature of the freedom which academics exercise is in fact seriously circumscribed by numerous conventions and controls. There are many forms of subtle constraint and censorship which operate for intellectuals, although these are rarely named as such. To be published requires a high degree of conformity to the paradigmatic rules of the day within one's disciplines, and breaking out to create new forms of knowledge, either within existing disciplines, or through the creation of new disciplines can be heavily sanctioned.

> The secret resistance to innovation and to intellectual creativity, the aversion to ideas and to a free and critical spirit, which so often orientate academic judgements, as much at the viva of a doctoral thesis or in critical book reviews as in well-balanced lectures setting off neatly against each other the latest avant-gardes, are no doubt the effect of the recognition granted to an institutionalized thought only on those who implicitly accept the limits assigned by the institution. (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 95)

Freedom of expression is allowed, but the publication and dissemination of that expression is often dependent on working within the received wisdom. And this is even more true when trying to establish new forms of knowledge or understanding. While resistance to innovation may be concealed within established disciplines, more open resistance has confronted new disciplines such as Women's Studies and Equality Studies. There is a need therefore to establish the procedures and practices of those who control academic knowledge and discourse. This would help clarify the power relations within which intellectual life operates, and may be necessary before dialogue can be satisfactorily introduced.

What is being suggested here is that the forces of conservatism within the academy exercise a power over academic freedom which is too rarely named.

The forces countering innovation operate both within and between disciplines; the control which medicine has traditionally exercised over nursing is an example of the latter, while the marginalisation of feminist research within male-dominated disciplines is an example of the former. At other times, the forces of conservatism arise from the simple organisational dynamics of academic careerism itself. Although academics may have tenured posts (as most full-time academics do in Ireland) the freedom which flows from this does not always encourage people to think critically; rather people become beholden to the concept of the career — moving upwards promotionally within the system. All too frequently the line of least innovation is the line of ascent. Organisational recognition comes more readily to those who conform to the dominant norms and paradigms. This breeds a culture of conformity, silence and academic orthodoxy which belies the very freedom granted by the academy. While it is clear that people do innovate and resist the forces of conformity within the academy in many different ways, it is also evident that this often happens at considerable personal cost, especially when the innovations challenges traditional values and practices among dominant groups.

Giving a role to marginalised groups to set out the terms in which knowledge about themselves and their world is created is merely to recognise that such groups have hitherto exercised little power in relation to the definition of knowledge. If there is to be a serious attempt to decolonise the knowledge and understanding of oppressed groups in society, then it seems essential to put mechanisms in place to ensure that emancipatory methods are not always an optional extra, something to be granted on a case-by-case basis at the behest of experts. Without structures there can be no guarantee that partnership-based dialogue will happen.

The academy needs to be reconstituted in its structural relations with marginalised groups if resistance is to be effective. Otherwise systems of dialogue will be completely one sided, with all the choices about initiating or ending dialogue being with the researcher. Allowing the researcher to decide on all occasions whether or not their interpretations of other people's worlds will be shared and/or challenged is to perpetuate the highly unequal power relations which now underpin the social construction of knowledge in academic life. This perpetuates a practice wherein the naming of one's own world, especially by marginalised people, is effectively in the hands of academic power brokers, no matter how well intentioned these might be.

VIII CONCLUSION

Radical researchers occupy a contradictory class location in relation to the academy. On the one hand, like all other academics, they are part of a cultural

elite which receives salaries and work privileges in excess of many other occupational groups by virtue of their claim to expertise. On the other, they are working as agents for change and social transformation to create a more egalitarian society, one which may not endow their own groups with the same "freedom from necessity" to research and to write.

A genuine and ongoing commitment to change cannot be guaranteed in this type of situation by simply relying on some form of subjective reflexivity. While reflexivity is essential, it is but one element in the process of creating emancipatory research methodology. If the aim of critically inspired thought is to make theory, method and praxis inseparable from each other, then it is necessary to create structures which guarantee that this will happen rather than leave it to the good will or interest of individual researchers. Moreover, granting the researcher a veto on whether or not to utilise emancipatory methods on equality issues is to disempower the research participants in the very way that critical theorists have strongly criticised in other contexts. The only way in which people can exercise, ongoing, systematic influence on naming their own world is by being centrally involved at all stages of the research process, including design, interpretation and outcome-implementation. For this to happen, procedures for Research Coalitions would need to be developed between research bodies, universities (and their departments) and communities and groups who are being researched. In addition, Learning Partnerships need to be established to enable researchers to learn (in the doing of research) about the role of experiential knowledge in understanding and, to enable marginalised peoples to name their own world in their own words. Finally, if knowledge is to have transformative potential at a structural as well as an ideological level, then Equality Action Plans need to be developed from the research findings.

For Equality Studies and other cognate fields to have moral, intellectual and political credibility it is incumbent upon researchers to implement the emancipatory research methods as outlined. If it confines its emancipatory actions to the operational stage of the research and ignores, the conceptualisation, design, interpretation and action stage, then it is belying the notion of emancipation in its more substantive sense. To operate a more radical form of emancipatory method does present many new and exciting challenges not only for research but for other work in the University as well. Clearly, if emancipatory methods are being employed in research this also calls into question the authenticity and suitability of current pedagogical and assessment methods, most of which are based on strongly hierarchical view of both teacher student relationships and indeed of knowledge itself.

Many Irish Universities and Colleges of Higher Education claim service to the Community as one of their objectives. If this is the case, then there is a need to identify the many different Communities with whom we are to work. In this

paper, it is suggested that marginalised and excluded groups in our society are part of the Community; indeed very often such communities comprise the subject matter of social scientific research, but rarely the research designers or partners. The paper suggests that it is time that Research Coalitions were established between the Universities and social excluded Communities to enable the latter to control the naming of their own world.

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This paper analyses the role of research in relation to social change. It explores, in particular, the implications of utilising an emancipatory research methodology in the study of issues of equality and social justice. While recognising the difficulties involved in developing an emancipatory approach to research, it is argued that such an approach is analytically, politically, and ethically essential if research with marginalised and socially excluded groups is to have a transformative impact.
Date: 1999 References: View references in EconPapers View complete reference list from CitEc Citati Developing â€˜emancipatory interestâ€™: learning to create social change. Higher Education Research & Development, 33(2), 226-241. Cemlyn, S. (2008). Human Rights Practice: Possibilities and Pitfalls for Developing Emancipatory Social Work. Ethics and Social Welfare, 2(3), 222-242. Cornwall, A., Gideon, J., & Wilson, K. (2008). Â The concept of care and the dialectic of critique. Journal of Aging Studies, 22, 101â€“108. Freedom Aged Care (2017). Freedom Aged Care. https://www.freedomagedcare.com.au/. Goodwin, S. and Phillips, R. (2015). The marketisation of human services and the expansion of the not-for-profit sector. In G. Meagher and S. Goodwin (eds) Markets, rights and power in Australian social policy. Sydney: Sydney University Press, pp. 97-113. Duffy, F. (2016). Social studies can also be referred to as social sciences. Itâ€™s a field which deals with human behavior, relationships, resources, and institutions. Specific topics within social studies that are studied in school coursework include geography, anthropology, economics, history, sociology, political science, and civics. Photo by NeONBRAND on Unsplash. Aim And Purpose Of Social Studies. The main goal of teaching social studies is to teach students to become good citizens. We are living in a diverse society â€” one that requires knowledge of social studies to succeed.Â Key values of democracy are opportunity, equality, justice, and freedom of speech. These values should be echoed throughout all parts of social studies. 4. Challenging. Lynch, K. (1999) â€˜Equality studies, the academy and the role of research in emancipatory social changeâ€™, The Economic and Social Review, 30(1), 41-69. Available Online: [[3]]. Abstract: This paper analyses the role of research in relation to social change. It explores, in particular, the implications of utilising an emancipatory research methodology in the study of issues of equality and social justice. While recognising the difficulties involved in developing an emancipatory approach to research, it is argued that such an approach is analytically, politically, and ethically essential if resea... The role of perpetrator power in prejudice confrontation. Journal of Social Issues 70(4): 615-636. Athanasopoulou, A., and S. Dopson.Â Class analysis and the emancipatory potential of education. Educational Theory 63(2): 185-202. Gibson-Graham, J.K., J. Cameron, and S. Healy.Â 2000. Language ideologies: Education and the social implications of official language: Volume 1 of language ideologies: Critical perspectives on the official english movement. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English. Good, K. 2014.